

From
the
Pastor



Adjustments. How many adjustments have you made during the last four months? You have groceries delivered rather than going to the store. Or you shop in the early morning to avoid the crowds. You learned how to make masks and you adjusted to wearing masks in public. You were a student rushing to the classroom and now your campus is a virtual classroom at the end of the dining room table. You learned how to teach online, though never quite mastered how to sense the students' stress levels because of the absence of non-verbal cues. You hadn't prepared a home-cooked meal in four months, and now for four months, you are cooking seven days a week. *If they could talk, your pots and pans and spatulas are rejoicing that they have not been forgotten!* You used to travel by air four times a month and you have not even darkened your office doors in four months. Zoom is your new best friend. As a parent, you discovered creativity buried underneath the endless daily responsibilities that have consumed you for years. You planned a week long backyard camp experience for your children, and enough picnic menus for a book.

Amazing. If you find yourself a little weary from continually adjusting to new ways of doing things and constant changes in your daily routine, you are not alone. Most of us have daily activities and special events that we miss and yearn for... whether it is lunch with a friend, church, the vacation trip out west, the wedding that was cancelled, or just shopping without a mask. **You are, however, amazing.** You are making the adjustments and you are persevering. I would enjoy writing a celebratory article today with the proclamation "*We did it!*" For today, however, the theme is "*We are doing it. We are persevering. We are making the needed adjustments. We are more creative than we thought. We are more flexible than we imagined.*"

The reality is that we are in the middle of this crisis and the light at the end of the tunnel has not yet come into view. I am ready to settle in to the reality of limitations and ask God what He wants me to learn. The necessity of perseverance is a given, but how we use this time to gain a more holy perspective and to examine priorities is a choice.

A more holy perspective for me is first a renewed sense of gratitude. I have practiced a number of gratitude behaviors throughout my life including gratitude journals and even accepting the 365 Days of Gratitude Challenge during which I wrote a thank-you note every day for an entire year. The past four months opened my eyes to endless daily gifts I had been taking for granted. Out of gratitude grows generosity.

A more holy perspective for me is a renewed sense of responsibility towards others. As with gratitude, I felt like I have encouraged, participated in, and even started outreach for those in need. Our ongoing cultural pandemic reminded me that *I can do more*. In the famous passage from Micah 6:8, the prophet reminded the people that their worship services had not met the requirements, and we read:

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (NRSV)

The pandemic of COVID-19 brought to light that the struggles of our brothers and sisters of color and our brothers and sisters in poverty are too heavy and they are bearing too much pain. I had become comfortable. The Bible has numerous calls for justice throughout it. One of Jesus' first sermons in his hometown makes it clear that Jesus came for justice:

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A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR—Continued from Page 1

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4: 18-19 (NRSV)*

Justice is something you have **to do**. Micah did not say to “love” justice, but to “do” justice. I recognize that I need to not only examine myself, but our institutions and our society for the ugly persistence of racism and the pain of those living in poverty. I need to keep learning and to work for change.

A more holy perspective will necessarily reorder my priorities. I pray that when the light at the end of the tunnel shines brightly, a vaccine for COVID-19 is in use and our longing to be with people and back to more familiar routines is met - that I will not take one moment for granted, that I will listen, learn, and **act** on behalf of those whose struggle is ongoing because of viruses in our hearts. I pray that I will keep making the adjustments in my life that honor God’s command to love our neighbor as ourselves.

It will be wonderful when we can celebrate “in-person” worship. Worship, however, is every time we do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God. Let us accept the call to gain a more holy perspective and examine our priorities that our worship never ceases.

Pastor Brenda

WE NEED YOU! - CONNECT WITH STORIES AND REFLECTIONS

August Camp Meetings are rapidly approaching! This year, we are working to publish a devotional booklet. Staff will write a portion of these reflections, but we are looking for your contributions as well! This is a fun way to keep us connected by sharing with one another our stories and insights. There is no central theme for these devotions, but ponder the questions below if you need inspiration or direction. Include a scripture and we hope and encourage you to share a picture with your devotion. The picture can be of you, your pet, a family activity, nature - anything that helps us feel connected to you. Please aim at a word count of around 500 words.

Deadline: July 22nd

Drop your reflection by the office or email it to Pastor Brenda at pastorbrenda@muirschapelumc.com.

Questions for Inspiration:

- What is most creative thing you have done during the pandemic?
- What are three things that you are more grateful for than you were four months ago?
- What new spiritual habit have you engaged in during this time of COVID-19? (a new prayer routine, reading a book of the Bible, new ways of reaching out to another)
- Tell of a time you helped to bring people together when they had differing views on an issue or different experiences. How did you offer a place of grace for people to come together?
- Tell of a time someone helped you feel welcome.
- Reflect on the quote offered in our discussion questions recently:
“*Rather than confining the life of faith to Sunday mornings, where it can be kept safe and predictable, or to a “personal relationship with Jesus Christ” that can be managed from the privacy of your home, ministry should cultivate a deep, holistic discipleship that touches every aspect of our lives.*” by John Pattison.
- What is your most memorable worship experience?
- What is one thing you learned in confirmation class that has stayed with you?
- If you grew up in Muir’s Chapel, tell of some of your experiences in youth group or missions or worship from decades ago - we would love to hear them!!

THANK YOU

A **BIG THANK YOU** to everyone who donated and volunteered at last week's Blood Drive. From the Red Cross: "Your commitment to host a blood drive with the Red Cross truly made a difference! Your team registered 29 total donors, collected 30 pints of blood and recruited 4 first-time donors. Your efforts have helped boost the community blood supply and ensure hospital patients have the lifesaving blood they need."



JULY Birthdays

16	23
LeAnn Love	Mark Kellum
18	24
Joan Noell	John Cord
19	25
Malena Martin	Rev. Ray Hahn
Nancy McGee	26
Archie Morris	Jo Kay
20	28
Lauren Kennedy	Blake Cummings
Bud Maxson	Alana Nottage
21	30
David Coleman	Brandon Martin
Cathy Ferguson	31
Becky Hinerman	Thomas Gould
Josie Peascoe	Don Gray
22	Leanne Sessoms
Melinda Mann	Sammy Southard
Buddy Nance	Collin Whiting

GRADUATION CORRECTION

Please note the correct colleges the following graduates will be attending in the fall.



MICKI MAXSON
Vance Charter HS
Mars Hill



SETH WILLIS
Northwest
Gullford HS
GTCC



"Summer Blockbusters"
Sermon Series
for July



Join us for our next: **Outdoor Worship**
(Weather Permitting)
Sunday, July 19th
10 am

Back Parking Lot (Outside KCC)

Nursery Available (4 and under)

Wear casual clothes
Bring a hat /or umbrella/ sunscreen
Bring your own chair
Practice Social Distancing-
Members of the same household sit together.

Restrooms
(For emergency use - restrooms in Kincaid Building open)

MASKS REQUIRED
Lots of smiles and conversation, but refrain from hugs and handshakes!

DISCIPLE NEWS

The Disciple 3 class of 2019/2020 has completed its study and will do a Zoom Communion on July 8th.

Class members are Cathy Ferguson, Rosemary Post, Nancy Elkins, Ellen Smoak, Zona Ridout, and Reba Maxson. In addition, Robyn Parsons studied Disciple 3 for a second time, and Steve Ludemann has now completed all four Disciple studies.

Taking a Disciple class is a big commitment; all of this year's members rose to the challenge, learning much from each other and lessons on the Prophets and the books of the Bible authored by Paul.

Plans for Disciple 4, primarily the book of John and the book of Revelation, are in limbo at this time. It will be offered when a decision has been made and open to this year's group as well as those who would like to study it again or those who would like to be part of a Bible study and the fellowship that develops.

Thanks to all.

Co-leaders:
Cammie Berrier and Susan Morrow

LUNCH BREAK

Sandy and I have missed visiting with so many of our Muir's Chapel friends!

We would love to invite you to join us for a time of food and safe fellowship!



Sandy and I will be outside on the covered walkway on Wednesday, July 8th & 15, from Noon to 1:00 pm eating lunch and we'd love to have some of you join us! To do this safely, we ask that you call ahead to let us know you're coming (max of 10 people), bring your own chair (6ft from each other) and your own lunch.

Can't wait to visit with you!

Alison Ludemann

THANK YOU

Dear Church Family,
Thank you so much for your generosity and caring spirit! Justin and I have been busy with work during the pandemic but we have been fortunate to be loved and supported by our church family! The cards, phone calls and gift certificate for dinner were greatly appreciated! We miss you and look forward to worshipping with you again! Stay well!

Love,
Justin and Brandi Ollis

Thank you Pastor Brenda, for your love support and prayers during my dad's illness and death. I appreciate each card and phone call from my loving church family. My heart is at peace.

Blessings,
Sue Blanton

SYMPATHY

Our sincere Christian sympathy is extended to the following families:

- Helen Angel and family on the death of her husband and church member, Irvin Angel, who passed away on June 19, 2020.
- Margaret Brown and Family on the passing of her sister, Frances Satterfield, on June 27, 2020.
- Casey Duncan and family on the passing of her son-in-law.

CAMP MEETING

August is around the corner, and we are preparing for a unique experience in 2020. We will be worshipping outdoors EVERY Sunday in August, celebrating "UMC's Greatest Hits," and sharing in a new Devotional Resource.

June 21st

Offering	
Giving	\$4,325.00
Other Income	\$328.12
Budget	\$6,730.12
Designated Funds	\$

June 28th

Offering	
Giving	\$3,885.00
Other Income	\$200.00
Budget	\$5,335.65
Designated Funds	\$1,620.50

GIFTS FOR THE CHURCH

In memory of Irvin Angel
For the Budget
By David and Susan Millikan

PRAYER CHAIN

If you would like to receive messages from the prayer chain, please send your email address to Sandy or Alison in the church office.