



ToTell



NORTH MIDDLETOWN CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)

<http://www.northmiddletownchristianchurch.org/>

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Pastoral Word

I shared in the sermon yesterday about a chance encounter a church family and I had while awaiting news in the hospital. As you might have experienced, hospitals are often anxious spaces. There is much waiting, worrying, and perhaps even some prayer being uplifted. I also imagine that many turn to God after years of not having much of a relationship with the Holy One.

Although the woman we spoke with was one of great faith, her concern was for her loved one. He had recently been more interested renewing his relationship with God that he had long ago been abandoned. However, a Christian friend—well-intended, no doubt—told him he could not be “saved” without entering the baptismal waters. He had not made that decision, and if he had, he would not have been able to do so with his health problems.

She just needed to talk. It’s hard to “meet people where they are” when their faith language might be ripe with different meanings. What does she think salvation means? What is her understanding of the role of baptism in faith? Her understandings come from a lifetime of teaching, and she might have very different ways of experiencing the Divine in her life. She came from a different Christian tradition, and it is not the time to try to change someone’s understanding during a time of strife. She really needed comfort.

I shared with her my perspective, and one I thought you should know if I haven’t shared it already. While I am a big proponent of baptism and I rejoice every time a sister or brother enters the waters, I do not think God sees it as a prerequisite to being with God when our physical lives end. I encouraged the woman to understand that if her loved one’s heart had turned to God, God was already there ready to receive it. In fact, God never abandoned the relationship; it was the other way around. The God I know, experience, and find in our Holy book does not abandon his beloved children. We are never without the Holy One in life, in death, or in life after death.

The good news, I heard from Jeff McFarland after the service, is that the woman’s father had a rather miraculous healing. Rather than planning his funeral service, she is planning to transport him home. I wonder what will happen to his faith in light of this experience? Who knows? I can only pray that the lines of communication between him and his Maker will be fully operational. I hope he knows that he is saved (which often meant “healed” in the Greek) and free to new life.

I am grateful to be your pastor,

Stephanie

THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED NEXT MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD, IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY.

MUSIC NOTES

A reminder to everyone that choir rehearsals resume Sunday, September 2nd at 9:15 a.m. in the sanctuary. We are a fun, informal group and welcome anyone who enjoys singing. We require no audition or previous experience. Our primary goals are to help lead congregational singing and to select an easy anthem related to the worship theme.

While the choir was on break we enjoyed a variety of music from many talented individuals. Thanks to The Sheridan Trio, Stephanie and Steven, Sallie Evans, The Dulcimer Dames and Carolyn Kenton for inspiring us with your talents.

Our Prayer List

Let us remember everyone on our prayer list with calls, cards, visits and prayers.

Local Prayer Partner: Say a prayer for the neighbors who live closest to you, that God might bless and strengthen them.

Our Church Family: Betty Allman, Jackie Baber, Joe Manning, Mary Louis Evans, Jerry Ann McFarland

Long Term Care: Morning Pointe: Kenneth McFarland

Pine Meadows Health Care: Barbara Bowser

Bourbon Heights: Sue Davis, Bill Davis

Family and Friends: Bryan Moore, Addie D'Hondt, The family of Terry Burden, Celesta Etchins, Johnnie Coffey, Mary Anne Brown, Jane Lyle, Janice Biddle, Gina Slone, Wyatt West

I am thankful...

- for Mimi.
- for Mary Louis.
- for making it this far.
- for barefoot babies!
- for Carolyn's lovely solo.
- for the precious children.
- for Mary Louis' birthday!
- for being here this morning.
- for Mary Louis and her family.
- for friends who put up with me.
- and loved Ace's song Excellent!
- for such a clear and beautiful sermon.
- for Carolyn sharing her singing talents.
- for Carolyn Kenton's lovely singing voice.
- for good test results and a growing family!
- for Olivia's bare feet while lighting the candles.
- for all the dedicated volunteers in our congregation.
- for the repetition of the scripture and communion.
- for the prayer and concerns for Steve Monahan, he is doing great.

DWM GENERAL MEETING

DWM General Meeting will be Tuesday, September 4th at 2PM. The speaker will be Joy Graham (Imogene Haggard's daughter).

Bring Circle School Supplies and food for Operation Food Basket.

SERVING LIST September 2, 2018

Sermon:.....*Unstained by the World*
 Scripture/Reader.....James 1: 17-27/Jeff McFarland
 Worship Leader/Elders.....Johnny Evans, Diane Updike
 Deacons: . Ruth Grimes, Pete Bridges, Amanda Hale, Jack Royse
 Lemonade in the Breezeway.....Amanda Hale
 Communion (September).....Carolyn Kenton
 Greeter:(Town).....Linda Faris
 Greeter:(Cemetery).....Debbie Poynter

Attendance/Offering for 8/26/2018

Church Attendance:.....60
 Sunday School:..... 6
 Regular Offering: (Budget 2,573).....\$747.00
 Gift and Memorial.....\$15.00
 Total Income for Week:.....\$762.00
 YTD Budget:.....\$87,498.00
 YTD Budget Income:.....\$70,407.00
 Difference:.....\$-17,091.00

**Scripture Readers
SEPTEMBER**

- 2 - Jeff McFarland
- 9 - Betty Allman
- 16 - Debbie Poynter
- 23 - Doug Price

OCTOBER

- 7 - Linda Rainey
- 14 - Pete Bridges
- 21 - Aaron Gray
- 28 - Steven Osborne

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

- 3 - Office Closed/Labor Day
- 4 - DWM General Meeting/2PM
- 8 - Elders Breakfast/8AM
- 9 - Monthly board Meeting/Noon
- 16 - Collect for Backpack Program
- 19 - Pack Backpack/10AM

OCTOBER

- 7 - 185th Celebration for NMCC

Backpack Needs: The Bourbon County Backpack Program has simplified our giving needs to Granola Bars and Nabs of any kind. We will collect these items and any donations on Sunday,