

The Hilltopper



September 2021

Surrender Where You're Planted!

by: Kole Farney

Earlier this summer as I was leaving my Dad's farm I noticed a grouping of small plants near the edge of the cornfield close by the house.

In an area about the size of a tennis court, the plants were all about half the size of the the plants that covered the rest of the field.

To a farmer, this kind of variation on such a small scale is nothing to be worried about because the field will yield just fine even if that small area doesn't produce as much. But if the stunted corn plants could talk and feel like they do on Veggie Tales, you better believe that *they* would be worried!

"Why is this so hard?" "Why did the farmer plant me here?" "Will I ever grow?" "Ugh, this ground is so rocky and dry, how does the farmer expect me to bear any fruit?"

Maybe you have the same questions.

Maybe your life has been one big disappointment this week, or this year. You may even think that if you could just find success, then you would find happiness, but what you are really longing for is *surrender*.

The Problem of Concern in Corinth

"Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches" (1 Cor 7:17).

Paul wrote these words to a group of people that just couldn't wait to modify their lives. Some wanted to change their ethnic classification, some wanted to be free, and others wished to get married.

The problem was not that these desires were bad. In fact Paul advocated for marriage and for freedom from slavery - problem was the overriding concern for a different situation than the Corinthians had fallen into.

They had bought into the lie that if they just focused enough on themselves and what they needed to do to change their circumstance, they would be satisfied.

And this problem of concern wasn't limited to them! Paul said that his directive to find contentment in the life sovereignly assigned by God was a rule in *all the churches*. In all the churches of the 1st Century world that Paul knew of, he said, "In whatever condition each was called, they let him remain with God".

The Bible is saying that just as the farmer decides where the seeds are planted, so God calls people to Christ in the midst of life situations that he has assigned. This means that God's responsibility is the assigning of the circumstance that you are in, and your responsibility is to surrender to his calling right where you're planted.

Remaining with God

This is an invitation into a brand-new way of living! A life *with* God. It is the difference of Christianity - that we humans, though sinful and failing, are meant to be with God.

If God is with me right down in the difficulty and disappointment, what else do I need? If he is with me in my inadequacies, why do I need better qualifications? If Christ himself is by my side in singleness, why am I so concerned with a spouse? If my Jesus who suffered for me holds my hand in distress, what comfort am I waiting for?

The secret to life isn't success, it's surrender. It isn't in a modified circumstance, but in contentment right where you are.

And if you learn this, little by little, you will enjoy Jesus more and more and you will declare with great power, even in your weakness, that the God who is with you never fails.



This year is the 20th anniversary of 9-11. And on Saturday, Sept. 11th, New Hope UMC will be hosting one of the rest stations for the 100+ bicyclists that are participating in the Valley Veterans Ride for Heroes fundraiser.

This is a charity bicycle ride to raise money for the Boulder Crest Retreat, a therapeutic and wellness center in Bluemont, VA that is dedicated to helping America's combat veterans and their families by enabling them to learn to deal with the stresses and trauma of their combat experiences.

If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to the program, please stop by New Hope UMC on September 11th from 8:00am-12:00pm.

For more information please contact: (540) 324-3310 or (540) 290 2275.

The United Methodist Men will meet on the third Thursday of the month, September 16th at 6:30pm.

The meeting will be an opportunity to discuss important issues and planning for the upcoming year.

A meal will not be served. Please plan now to attend the meeting. Contact Kim Maugans or Bruce Rogers if you have any questions.





The following are the minutes from the **AUGUST** meeting of the Church Council. The minutes are available for you to help the entire church family Stay In The Know about how this group is caring for New Hope UMC!

Church Council Meeting Minutes - August 26, 2021

Present: Kevin Armstrong, Alicia Copeland, Wanda Harding, Nathan Kutz, Pastor Mike, Bruce Rogers, Cindy Sheets, Dallas VanLear and Karen Whitmer

The meeting was called to order by chairman Dallas VanLear, with devotions and prayer read by Nathan Kutz.

The minutes from the July meeting were accepted as distributed.

Finance Report & Treasurer's Report: *(Kevin Armstrong)*

~ Administrative and Technology is the only area that we have gone over budget for this year. This is due in part because we have not been accounting for the cost of the church website hosting and domain name hosting.

~ There is \$1,143 in the general fund that is not yet included in the current Treasurer's Report.

~ Payroll has not been done yet for this month.

~ We can pay our standard apportionments payment for this month. We think that the apportionments payment will go down for next year because our annual budget will go down as well.

~ The proposed 2022 budget was introduced, there were modest increases in a few areas including: Administrative/Technology, Church Salaries and Groundskeeper services for 2022.

~ We will need to get a new groundskeeper for next year, as our current groundskeepers are retiring. Hopefully we can find someone cheaper, but we have budgeted for \$10,000

~ Kevin made a motion to accept the proposed budget, Karen seconded and it was passed by all.

Trustees: *(Pastor Mike)*

~ Lewis Whitmer fixed the faucet in the kitchen.

~ We need to hire a new groundskeeper for next year. Will be talking to a number of local companies and taking bids on the job.

~ The current groundskeeper will continue to remove the snow from the parking lot.

~ Kevin Armstrong and Jeff Hitt have troubleshooted the back tv monitor for all possibilities that they are aware of and they have exhausted their resources. The new receiver did not work as hoped. We will talk to the company who installed the equipment to see if they can come in and fix the monitor.

Pastor's Report: *(Pastor Mike)*

~ PRG (Post-Covid Re-entry Group) met on August 18th. And they decided to go with the latest CDC recommendations to reinstate and recommend voluntary masking; since Covid rates are rising and we are back up to March 2021 levels. Vaccinations are going up slowly though - at about 1% a week.

~ It is undecided if we will have Communion in September.

~ We will do a survey to ask people about their thoughts on children's ministries.

~ Wanda is having 2-3 people in her Sunday School class each week. And Jennifer had 4 people in her first Sunday School class back.

~ We have a lot of plans to restart up some of our ministries, but we really can't do anything different until individuals feel comfortable coming back and participating. We are hoping that the survey will shed some light on what we can do to make more people more comfortable with safely reinstating ministries within the church and encouraging more people to volunteer to help us in needed ways.

~ S.W.A.T (Singles With A Testimony) had their first meeting since the pandemic's shutdown in the spring of 2020. They had 5 people and met at Little Maria's for pizza, devotions and fellowship.

~ Our annual Charge Conference will be on September 20th. All reports need to be uploaded by September 11th.

Worship: *(Pastor Mike)*

~ We will decide if / how we will participate in World Communion Sunday, as that day gets nearer and we will reassess where we are then, as far as local Covid rates, etc.

~ All Saints Day will be celebrated on Sunday, October 31st.

Evangelism: *(Nathan Kutz)*

~ Continuing to deliver the remaining 'welcome back' baskets to local nursing homes when able to get into the residencies.

~ Nathan requested an updated contact list of current addresses, etc. Wanda will get that info to them.

United Methodist Men: *(Bruce Rogers)*

~ Everyone enjoyed the cookout that we had after Vacation Bible School last month.

~ The Ruritans have decided to let the New Hope United Methodist Men run the New Hope refuse dump for one week each month in order to earn some money for their mission projects this year. A number of the men in the church have agreed to volunteer to help out in this endeavor and the UMM will earn \$350 each month for their efforts. They start their first week on August 30th.

~ They may restart their monthly meetings in September, but no official decision has been made yet.

United Methodist Women: *(Wanda Harding)*

~ The UMW met on Monday, August 16th with 14 people. They had a guest speaker, Retired Col. Melissa Patrick. She is coordinating the Valley Bikers Ride for Heroes being held on September 11th. The journey begins at Stable Craft Brewery at 8:30am and they will be traveling throughout the valley with a designated rest stop at our New Hope UMC. The VFW post from Harrioburg will be providing water and snacks here at New Hope UMC. Our church is encouraged to come out to greet the bikers who are expected as early as 9:30am. This is a fundraiser for the VFW, and specifically for the Boulder Crest Retreat in Blue Mount, Virginia; serving veterans and their families.

~ The District UMW Prayer Breakfast will be held at Donovan UMC in Singers Glen, VA on September 18th at 9:00am. A continental breakfast will be provided by the District Executive Committee. A free will offering will be taken to cover the expenses and Mission Giving. The deadline for registration is September 8th.

~ The Circle of Hope will meet on Monday, September 13th at 7:00pm in the church's social hall.

~ The Circle of Love will meet on Tuesday, September 14th at 7:00pm in the church's social hall.

- Both circles will have a program and a service project as part of their meetings.

Staff / Parish Relations Committee: *(Pastor Mike)*

~ They met the first week of August and they recommended salaries for 2022 and submitted those recommendations to the Finance Committee.

Membership: *(Karen Whitmer reported)*

~ On July 18, 2021 - Pastor Michael Reaves received Ronald E. Broce as a new member of New Hope UMC by letter of transfer from Verona United Methodist Church in Verona, Virginia

~ On July 18, 2021 - Pastor Michael Reaves received Doris E. Broce as a new member by Reaffirmation of Faith - New Hope UMC in New Hope, Virginia

Lay Leader: *(report from Jennifer Strother)*

~ The Lay Academy training will be held at Otterbein UMC in Harrisonburg on Saturday, October 2nd. There will be 3 classes offered: the Basic Class, Leading Worship and UMC Heritage.

Our own Melissa Fretwell will be teaching a class called Congregational Care - this class will be held via Zoom and the times and dates will be announced soon.

Please see Jennifer Strother for additional information or any questions that you may have.

Announcements: *(Wanda Harding)*

~ Doug & Sue Snider sent a thank you note to the people of the church for all of their love and well wishes on the birth of their granddaughter.

~ The Stonewall Brigade Museum in Verona will be hosting an event on October 9th from 10am-4pm. Crafters and vendors are encouraged to rent a space for \$25

~ First Presbyterian Church in Staunton is collecting toiletries for an Afghan family that the church will be hosting.

Dallas thanked everyone for helping our church to function and carrying out God's work. Pastor Mike sent us off with a prayer. The meeting ended at 7:17pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Cynthia Sheets
Recording Secretary

The next Church Council Meeting will be on Thursday, September 23, 2021 at 6:30pm.

The logo for United Methodist Women features a stylized flame in red and white, with a white cross superimposed on it, all enclosed within a blue, teardrop-shaped outline.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The New Hope UMW met on Monday, August 16th with 14 present. We were delighted to have as our guest, Retired Colonel Melissa Patrick (U.S. Army). Melissa shared with us some of her experiences of travel with the Army during her 28 years of service including Afghanistan, Bosnia, Germany, South Korea, Ft Bragg, Ft. Belvoir, West Point as well as two years as ROTC leader of the program at Mary Baldwin College.

She has made many parachute jumps in her career and was chief intelligence officer. She is currently serving as the District Commander for Regional VFW which includes areas from Lexington, Harrisonburg and Bath County (12 stations).

Melissa is coordinating the upcoming Valley Veterans Ride for Heroes scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 11th starting at the Stable Craft Brewery.

There are three biking trail options: 26 miles, 53 miles and 64 miles with 5 rest stops which are manned by VFW units.

New Hope UMC will be one of the hosting rest stops. This is a fundraiser by the VFW for the Boulder Crest Retreat in Blue Mont, Virginia for veterans and their families.

Since Ride for Heroes began in 2017, they have raised \$73,500 for this veteran's retreat. It is anticipated there will be 100+ bikers this year.

We are encouraged to come out to New Hope UMC and cheer on these bikers as they travel through New Hope.





(See Genesis 6-8)

09-26-2002

THE ANGELS HAD BEEN KEEPING THEIR DISTANCE EVER SINCE THE FLOOD BECAUSE THEY KNEW THIS WAS COMING...THE WATER BILL

Where was Noah when the lights went out?

In d'ark

What is Adam and Eve's least favourite word?

In-sin-u-ate

The story of Adam and Eve was being carefully explained in the children's Sunday School class. Following the story, the children were asked to draw some picture that would illustrate the story. Little Bobby drew a picture of a car with three people in it. In the front seat was a man and in the back seat, a man and a woman. The teacher was at a loss to understand how this illustrated the lesson of Adam and Eve. Little Bobby was prompt with his explanation. "Why, this is God driving Adam and Eve out of the garden!"





Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 - Cheryl Bragg
 -  Kevin & Gail Armstrong
 -  Carl & Polly Caricofe
- 2 - Hunter Joyner
- 3 - Nadine Hinebaugh
- 7 -  William & Arlene Crist
- 9 - Beth Howdyshell
- 10 - Chris Botkin
 - Lester Herman
 -  Dallas & Pam VanLear
- 11 - Steve Carter
 - Brandan Whitmer
 -  Mike & Becky Breeding
- 12 - Terri Carter
 - Christy Aldhizer
 -  Jeff & Becky Kraisser
- 14 - Judy Critzer
- 15 - Barry Powers
- 16 - Josh Walker
- 17 - Thomas Ewers
- 18 - Robert Morrison
 - Roger Aldhizer
 -  Greg & Jolene Farrar
- 19 - Mia McLaughlin
- 20 - Susie Hong
 - Billy Price
- 21 - Jacob Botkin
- 22 - Michael Morris, Jr
- 24 - Dawn Miller
 - Dylan Anthony
 -  Darryl & Cindy Deavers
- 25 - Brandon White
 - Betty Stout
 -  Henry & Margaret Breeding
- 26 - Jim Joyner
- 27 - Beth Breeding
- 28 - Donna Walker
- 30 - Martha Fretwell

Every Word that Comes from the Mouth of God

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”” Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”” Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”” Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.” Matthew 4:1-11 ESV

This morning this passage was the first that came to mind. It’s honestly a very well known passage. Many excellent preachers and teachers have expounded on this passage, just like Jesus had no doubt read the passages many times that he quotes from the Old Testament. These verses truly are timeless. The verses that Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy would have been written roughly 1,436 years before he quotes them. Nearly 2,000 years later they have the same amount of power they did then. I hope at the end of this we will value them in the same way our Lord Jesus did.



We see that Jesus knew that he would be tempted, after all we are talking about the devil here. But of course he came when Jesus was starving. If you’ve lived on this earth for any amount of time, you know the hard times only come at the worst times. I’m sure as a man Jesus would have loved some fresh bread. Yet the word of God was sustaining him as he quotes in verse 4. So the devil quotes from Psalm 91, which is a sharp reminder that he knows God’s word also. Yet once again Jesus quotes and states that we shouldn’t test the Lord our God. And then the icing on the cake, the devil shows him the whole world and tries to make an offer Jesus can’t refuse. The devil knows that everyone has a price. The difference was and what we should be so thankful for is that Jesus couldn’t be bought. He knew he would be paying our price. And his last quote ended the temptation. “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.” Can you imagine what would have happened if Jesus hadn’t known who he was and had not put the Word into his own heart? I’m so thankful he is who he is.

To me the biggest take away here is that what stopped the tempting of the literal Son of Almighty God was simply quoting the word of God. Jesus did not do anything extravagant. He gave us a perfect template to follow. In our trials and tribulations it is so quick and easy for us to try to do something about them. Yes obviously we are supposed to walk in them, keep the faith, keep on keeping on etc. But we can’t just live on physical material means, we have to remember that what sustains us in life is not our own works. Jesus told the devil, “every word that comes from the mouth of God.” You see when we come to the fortress of god’s word, everything we will possibly ever need is there. Jesus later says that heaven and earth will pass away but his words will never pass away. He also said that in this world we would have tribulation, but not to fear that he had overcome the world. When you live on his words the load that you carry in life becomes a lot lighter. I invite you today to not live by bread alone, but to live by every word that comes from the lips of God. Human words will fail, but the words written on the pages of your Bible are much more than ink. Come to Jesus today and you will find his words are easy to obey.

Kids' Corner - Ruth and Naomi

By: Sharla Guenther



Does everyone remember the story of Joseph and his coat of many colors? This story takes place many, many years after Joseph - actually it happened about 200 years later!

The people who were from the family of Joseph were called Israelites or Hebrews. As it happens there were more and more Israelites than ever before. The Israelites had children, and their children had children and soon there was too many to count.

Most of the Israelites lived in Egypt where there were also a lot of people called Egyptians. Too bad they couldn't all just see each other as the same.

But as you'll soon find out the Israelites and the Egyptians were treated very differently.

Anyway, a new king who was called Pharaoh came into power in Egypt. He didn't like it that there were so many Israelites and he thought they would one day take over the land. So he decided to make all the Israelites into slaves.

He made them work from early in the morning till late at night doing very hard work. Even if they were tired the Egyptians wouldn't give them a break, they would just make them work harder. It was very bad.

Pharaoh did all this and he still wasn't happy. The Israelites were still growing in number so he decided to make a law. If any boys were born to the Israelites he would have them killed.

At this time there was an Israelite couple who were expecting to have a baby. When they had a baby boy (whose name would later be Moses) they decided to hide him because they wouldn't let anyone kill this beautiful, precious baby of theirs.

They hid Moses for three months, but as he got older he didn't sleep as much and he cried louder than before. So his parents did the only thing they could do, they made a strong basket (sort of like a mini baby boat) and put blankets around the baby and placed the basket in some tall grass in the Nile river.

Baby Moses had a sister named Miriam, and she watched from a distance to see what would happen to her baby brother. While she was watching she saw somebody coming, she realized it was Pharaoh's daughter and her servants. They were dressed like they were famous, and she had seen her before and remembered what she looked like.

Pharaoh's daughter had come for a swim. While she was swimming she noticed a basket floating a little ways away in the tall grass. So she asked one of her servants to go see what it was.


The girl brought the basket over to her, and when Pharaoh's daughter opened it, the light startled Moses so he woke up and started to cry. "What a sweet, beautiful little baby. It must be one of the Israelite's," Pharaoh's daughter said to her servants.

Miriam had seen what had happened, and she hurried over and asked, "Would you like me to go find an Israelite woman to feed the baby for you?"

"Yes, go and find someone who can nurse the baby." she answered. Miriam ran as fast as she could and told her mother that Pharaoh's daughter had found him and wanted someone to come nurse him.

They went and found Moses with Pharaoh's daughter, and she asked them, "Please help me and nurse this baby, and I will pay you for helping me." (She didn't realize that this was actually Moses' mother).

Later he became the son to Pharaoh's daughter, and that's when she named him Moses, which means she got him out of the water.



If you would like to add an article or announcement to the Hilltopper, please contact us! Call/Text: (540) 280-1860 or NewHopeUMC.Virginia@gmail.com

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