

# The Hilltopper

October 2020

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## *From Pastor Mike*

Fall has arrived and a new season is upon us. We are beginning to see and feel the familiar changes of autumn – cool breezes, changing colors, and shorter days. It is refreshing to experience this change. It also reminds me that Thanksgiving and Christmas are coming soon. Fall is my favorite season of the year and it always brings back so many memories and keeps me rooted. In an uncertain time, we need roots.

This season is new. We have never been in this moment. Fall has come year after year, but not this fall. None of us have been here before. Of course it is new because none of us has lived through a time like this with its challenges, its threats, and anxieties. Psychologists tell us we tend to respond to threats from our instinctive “fight or flight” impulse. Some people “fight” in a variety of ways to protect themselves from the threat and anxiety they feel. Others “flee” literally or figuratively to feel safe.

We do have options. We can choose a healthier response than “fight or flight.” What other options do we have? Isaiah 40:31 says, “but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary” (CEB). We do not have to give into this “fight or flight.” Isaiah says we can be renewed, and we can fly “on wings like eagles.” We need roots but we also need wings.

The question is “What are our expectations?” Isaiah suggests that those who hope in or expect the Lord are those who are renewed and who fly. When the stock market investors expect uncertainty or threats to stability, they and the market become volatile, erratic, and sometimes there is even a crash. What or who do we expect to meet us in this new season? How will we respond? Will we become volatile, erratic, or even crash?

What are we to do given the challenges we face in this new season? Well, here is an option to consider: What if we strengthen our roots – through prayer, sustained fellowship, communion with God through his word, and through serving each other and others? And what if we also fly on wings like eagles – by preparing ourselves and our church for renewed and new ministry, for running or walking toward what God calls us to do during and beyond this season of pandemic, political polarization, racial and economic distress, and spiritual wilderness?

Is God at work? Yes, always! Some believe God is sifting the church, or that God is disciplining America, or shaking foundations for his purposes. But here is the thing: Biblical prophets, like Isaiah, bring a vision of hope with messages of God's correction and judgment. Salvation and renewal wait for those who hope in the Lord. Let us act with hope in God!

Yours in Christ.

*Pastor Mike*

# Sermons By Phone

**Call 1-877-369-1437**  
to hear our latest sermon



sermonbyphone.com

**Our Annual Church  
Charge Conference  
will be on Saturday,  
October 24th  
@ 1:00pm via Zoom**





The following are the minutes from the **SEPTEMBER** meetings 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 - September 24, 2020**

Present: Pastor Mike, Dallas VanLear, Jennifer Strother, Cindy Sheets, Alicia Copeland, Robin Craun, Kevin Armstrong, Karen Whitmer, Wanda Harding and Bruce Rogers.

The meeting was called to order by chairman Dallas VanLear, with devotions (from D365.org) and prayer by Pastor Mike.

The minutes from the August meeting were accepted as distributed.

### **Finance Report:** *(Kevin Armstrong)*

~ We still have a 4 month cushion with cash on hand.

~ We still owe \$4,863.07 on our line of credit.

- We have \$1,132 in our Building Fund
- We have \$2,290 in the Wednesday Night Dinner Fund
- We have \$2,782 in our 50's Drive-In Fund
  
- Kevin made a motion to take the full amount from the Building Fund and equal amounts from the Wednesday Night Dinner Fund and the 50's Drive-In Fund and pay off our line of credit in full. The motion was agreed to and passed by all.

~ The proposed budget for 2021 is TBD; the Staff/Parish Relations Committee has to meet first and finalize the church staff salaries for next year before the budget can be finalized.

- Kevin made a motion for the Church Council to conditionally approve the budget as is; until the Staff/Parish Relations Committee has their next meeting and approves the church staff salaries. If the Staff/Parish Committee makes changes to the church staff salaries, then another meeting will be called to ratify the new changes. Jennifer seconded the motion; so the 2021 budget was agreed to as is, and passed by all members present, unless the Staff/Parish Committee makes changes to the church staff salaries next week.

### **Treasurer's Report:** *(Kevin Armstrong reported)*

- ~ We are averaging about \$2,900 per week received in donations.
- ~ In our checking account, we have enough money for about 4 months of operation.
- ~ We continue to pay our standard bills: utilities, salaries, etc. on time.
- ~ Last month we paid \$2,000 to Priority #1 apportionments.
  - Dallas made a motion to pay \$3,000 in apportionments (Priority 1) to the conference (for October), and \$674 to the district (for October). Kevin seconded it and it was agreed to by all.

### **Trustees:**

- ~ Last month the Church Council agreed to give the Trustees \$300 for raw materials to put up a temporary church sign. We are currently awaiting an estimate.

### **United Methodist Men:** *(Dallas VanLear reported)*

- ~ Now they are meeting on the 3rd Thursday of each month. And will begin meeting every other month - starting in November.
- ~ HOTS is officially canceled for this year. It was recommended that we put up local notices about HOTS being canceled this year, and to add that people need to look forward to having HOTS again next year, so that people will know that we will continue to have HOTS again as soon as we can.
- ~ The UMM are looking for some kind of small project to focus on this year. They may buy turkeys for some local people in need. Next year the UMM will probably have less money to donate and do community projects with, because there will be no HOTS this year to raise money for next year's projects.
- ~ The ability to have our annual Trunk or Treat in October was briefly discussed, and a decision will be made asap.

## **United Methodist Women:** *(Wanda Harding reported)*

~ Operation Christmas Child will continue this year, boxes are available in the Narthex. The boxes need to be returned to the church or to Wanda Harding by November 8th.

~ The UMW District is holding an online Bible Study via Zoom, every Monday evening. They are averaging about 20 participants each week.

~ The Circle of Love will start to meet again on the first Monday of each month. The meetings will be held in the church, with social-distancing; starting in November.

## **Membership:** *(Karen Whitmer reported)*

~ Juanita Ruby Howell passed away on September 21, 2020.

~ There was some discussion about trying to get an accurate record of membership. There will be further discussion on how we can achieve this goal, but it was stated that a record of this type gets to be very complicated, subjective and fluid.

## **Lay Leader:** *(Jennifer Strother reported)*

~ Starting January 1st, Jennifer can start teaching the chronological bible, at a local church. If you are interested, please contact Jennifer.

~ A question was asked: 'Can people join the church via Zoom?' Pastor Mike says he would prefer to go to their homes (and/or) meet in-person with social-distancing, for someone to join the church. But, he doesn't want to discourage anyone from joining the church, so all options are on the table for joining. If you are interested in joining the church, please contact Pastor Mike.

## **Missions/Outreach:** *(Pastor Mike reported)*

~ The trip to Tangier Island has been cancelled this year due to Covid-19 concerns.

## **Pastor's Report:** *(Pastor Mike reported)*

~ Our annual Charge Conference will be on Saturday, October 24th @ 1:00pm, via Zoom, for about 30 minutes.

- Reports for the annual conference need to be uploaded by October 14th, or give them to Wanda Harding by October 11th.

~ The Nominations Committee will have a meeting soon.

~ The sound quality for the live-streaming has reportedly gotten better since we met with John of John's Computer. By going with John's Computer, and with the help of some software that Pastor Shin installed before he left; we will be saving about \$4,000

~ Staff/Parish Relations Committee needs to meet to finalize the church staff salaries for 2021.

~ In-person Bible Study will begin on Wednesday, October 14th @ 7:00pm; for a 6-week bible study meeting in the social hall. There will also be plans for an Advent Bible Study coming soon.

### **Communications:** *(Cindy Sheets reported)*

~ John of John's Computer helped us get our live-streaming set-up, and hopefully the audio will continue to be improved. A long-distance Thank You to Pastor Shin for installing the software that we needed for live-streaming; which is going to save us at least \$4,000.

~ We still have DVD copies of the weekly Worship Services available to anyone who wants one, please contact either Pastor Mike or Cindy Sheets.

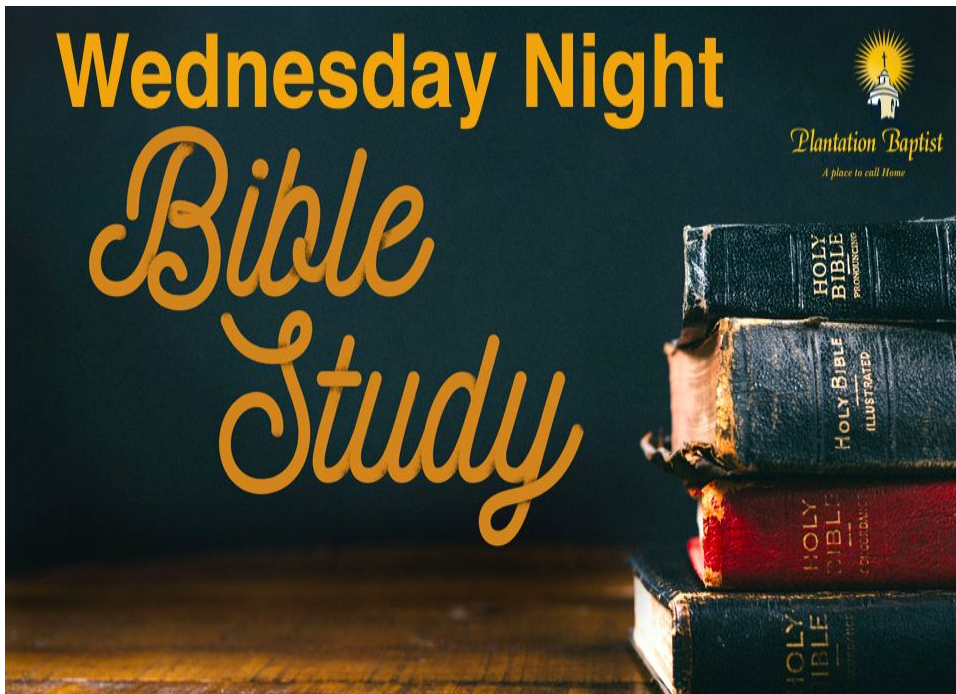
### **New Business:**

~ Dallas thanked everyone involved for their efforts in our online worship.

The meeting was closed by Pastor Mike with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Cynthia Sheets  
Recording Secretary

**The next Church Council Meeting will be on Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 6:30pm.**



**In Person  
6-week  
Bible Study  
starts  
Wednesday,  
October 14th  
@ 7:00pm**

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Ever had a tick on you? Ticks are small blood sucking mites. They spend a good bit of time just waiting in bushes, grass and woods for a victim—you! Once you happen by, they jump on and attempt to quickly crawl to a protected spot on your body. Then they sink their mouth parts into your flesh and begin to feed on life blood. If undetected, a tick will fill itself full and then drop off, often leaving its host inoculated with some debilitating disease such as spotted fever, relapsing fever, Lyme disease, tularemia, encephalitis or rickets. The tick is a lot like many kinds of sin:

- It may get on you when it is small and almost undetectable.
- It doesn't demand much sacrifice, but it may cause a lot of irritation.
- Once embedded, it's hard to get off.
- It gets bigger the longer it stays on you.
- It can leave you very seriously ill.

*Some advice for dealing with ticks and sins:*

**DON'T WALK IN PLACES THAT ARE INFESTED:** "See then that you walk circumspectly not as fools, but as wise." (Ephesians 5:15)

**EXAMINE YOURSELF DAILY:** "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith." 2 Corin.13:5

**HAVE OTHERS EXAMINE YOU, AND HELP EXAMINE THEM TOO:** "But exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today', lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Hebrews 3:13)

**IF ONE GETS ON YOU, GET IT OFF IMMEDIATELY:** "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed." (James 5:16)

**IF YOU REALIZE YOU ARE GETTING SICK, SEE THE DOCTOR:** Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Mark 2:17)



# Have a Laugh...

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HE HAD NO IDEA THAT HIS JESUS COSTUME WAS SO REALISTIC

What Do You

Call Wood When

It's Scared?

*Petrified!*

Why Don't

Skeletons Play

Music In Church?

*They have No Organs!*

## Ghostly Photo

There was this haunted house on the outskirts of the town which was avoided by all the townsfolk - the ghost which `lived' there was feared by all.

However, an enterprising journalist decided to get the scoop of the day by photographing the fearsome phantom. When he entered the house, armed with only his camera, the ghost descended upon him, clanking chains et al. He told the ghost "I mean no harm - I just want your photograph". The ghost was quite happy at this chance to make the headlines - he posed for a number of ghostly shots.

The happy journalist rushed back to his dark room, and began developing the photos. Unfortunately, they turned out to be black and underexposed.

So what's the moral of the story?

The spirit was willing but the *flash* was weak.





**BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES**

**3** - Mike Canipe

-  Donald & Amy Michael

**5** - Leon Sheets

**6** - Matthew Coffman

- Mary Beth Walker Hill

**7** - Ronald Booth

- Alison Coffman Markow

**8** - Carl Arndtl

**9** - Leigh Shaver

- Dallas VanLear

**11** - Rebecca Jo Kraisser

**12** - Mary Lu Lewis

- Lee VanLear

**13** - Daryl Deavers

**14** - John & Martha English

-  Thomas & Pat Ewers

**15** - Jean Critzer

- Pat Ewers  
- Philip Mabry

**16** - Brett Sundeen

- Kyle Kraisser


**17** - Cody Coffey

**19** - Braden Herman

- Courtney Stout

**23** - Cindy Deavers

- Berk Harner

-  Steve & Tonya Meier

**24** - Jonathan Walker

**25** - Amy Herman

**26** - Sarah Barr

-  Eddie & Vinda Shaver

**27** - Nancy Glass

**28** - James Howdysshell

**29** - Amy Michael

## Kids' Corner - How a Christian Is Like a Pumpkin



A lady recently being baptized was asked by a friend what it was like to be a Christian. She replied, "It's like being a pumpkin!"

God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off that you may have gotten from the other pumpkins.

The outside is what people see, the inside is like our heart and soul. God is the only one who can change our hearts. But, in order for God to change our hearts, we must first become open to him.

Then he cuts the top off and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, greed, impurity, etc. It's messy removing all of the stuff inside, but Jesus got messy for us when he got up on that cross and died for all of our sins.

But if we leave a pumpkin with just the insides taken out, then it's just hollow. We need to have a light inside that will truly make us alive!

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

When Jesus lives inside of you, you can glow! You will want to be kind and honest. You will want to please God, to help others, and to tell other people about your Friend and Lord.

Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see!

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# Newsletter

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***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](mailto:NewHopeUMC.Virginia@gmail.com)**

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