

The Hilltopper November 2020

From Pastor Mike

As we enter November, our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving Day. For many years, twenty to twenty-five members of my extended family have traveled from all over the Commonwealth of Virginia to my brother's home in Henrico County. Since COVID-19 infection rates are rising and studies suggest large in-door gatherings where food is shared are high-risk events, we have decided not to have the traditional gathering this year.

As much as I would love to have a "normal" Thanksgiving, it was not a hard decision. My parents are in their 80's and my brother's 90-year-old mother-in-law lives with them. Rachel's fiancé has an underlying chronic medical condition. We have five teachers in the family who are worn out from doing their jobs and managing the extra burden of safety protocols.

I am sure every family is having the same or a similar conversation. Whatever the outcome of your deliberations, be kind to one another. This will pass someday.

Thanksgiving Day makes us think about what we are thankful for. Even in 2020, with the Covid-19 pandemic and all that came with it, there are still things that we are thankful for.

- I am thankful for the church that started to reach out to one another as we entered quarantine back in March.
- I am thankful for Cindy Sheets for filming our services so that we have videos online for each worship service.
- I am thankful for Alicia Copeland who does her best to encourage folks to offer their musical talents to our worship services.
- I am thankful for Austine Belsky playing the prelude, postlude, and special music for our worship.
- I am thankful for all those who have sang and shared their gift of music in our worship services.
- I am thankful for the members of the Healthy Church Team who developed a plan to return to in-person worship on July 5th.

- I am thankful for Kim Maugans who makes sure we have enough ushers and volunteers for Sunday morning.

All these people have made it possible for us to worship together whether online or in-person.

- I am thankful for the Sweet Hour of Prayer team that continues to meet in person on Saturday mornings to offer prayer for our church, our community, and our nation.
- I am thankful for the technology and social media we now have, such as, Facebook, YouTube, email, and Zoom that allow us to continue to worship and communicate with one another.
- I am thankful for our volunteers who put together school supply bags for children, youth, and teachers.
- I am thankful for our volunteers who organized a drive-by Halloween event where 74 bags of goodies were passed out.
- I am thankful for the 14 people who are attending our first in-person Bible study with the safety protocols in place.
- I am thankful for the UMM and the UMW who are working to maintain their ministries despite the limitations.
- I am thankful for our Church Leadership for maintaining a positive attitude even with all the challenges we have faced this year.

When I think about what would we have done if we did not have all of this technology during this time, I cannot stop thanking God that we are living in a time where we can still serve God and one other.

I am mostly thankful for my immediate family, church family, and friends. I know that I have been able to overcome some obstacles, deal with a new way of doing ministry, and adapting to what is happening in the world around me because of the love and support of all those who are in my life. I know that it is the love of everyone that has keep me going in the last several months.

The year 2020 has been challenging but I have seen Christ amid tragedy, anxiety, and fear. So, I will focus on all the things I am thankful for and praise God for all the blessings that are around me. I hope that you can also take a moment to see how God has blessed you and share the gratitude with love.

Yours in Christ.

Pastor Mike

Special Worship Music



Just like other churches, we have tried to find new and creative ways to enjoy music during worship at this difficult time.

You can view any of our special worship music, that has been provided by members of our church family, on our website:

NewHopeUMC.online/special-worship-music-2020

And if you have a musical talent that you would like to share, please contact us, we'd love to hear your musical offering!



On All Saints Day We Remembered...

Jesse Hartman
John Western
Marguerite Howell
Glenna Powers
Sherry Rankin
Juanita Howell



The following are the minutes from the **OCTOBER** 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 - October 22, 2020

Present: Pastor Mike, Dallas VanLear, Cindy Sheets, Alicia Copeland, Kevin Armstrong, Karen Whitmer, Wanda Harding, Larry & Nadine Hinebaugh, Cindy Deavers, Samantha Brensinger and Bruce Rogers.

The meeting was called to order by chairman Dallas VanLear, with devotions (from BillyGraham.org / Matthew 6:26) and prayer.

The minutes from the September meeting were accepted as distributed.

Finance Report: *(Kevin Armstrong)*

- ~ Our line-of-credit has been paid off, but the money is still available if we need the funds.
- ~ Thanks to Wanda & Karen W. for counting the donations each week.
- ~ Donations last week (October 18th) were \$3,158
- ~ The Staff/Parish Relations Committee met and it was decided that there will be no salary increases for any of the church staff for 2021.
- ~ Kevin made a motion to approve the 2021 budget. Dallas seconded, and it was passed and approved by all.
- ~ Kevin suggested we pay regular apportionment payments and also attend to local charity needs, including the Weekday Religious Education, WRE. (\$2,500 is our usual yearly donation to the WRE in years past.)
- ~ Cindy D. made a motion for the month of October, to pay \$2,156 on our Priority #1 Apportionments, \$337 to the District Apportionments and \$2,500 to the WRE. Kevin seconded it and it was agreed to and passed by all.

Treasurer's Report: *(Cindy Deavers reported)*

~ As of October 2nd; we have paid \$7,000 on Priority #1 Apportionments for the year. We still owe a \$14,828 balance on priority #1 apportionments for this year.

~ As of October 2nd, we have paid \$1,011 to the District and we still owe \$3,033 to the district for the year.

~ There was a lot of discussion about the budgeting and paying of apportionments.

~ There was \$982 taken out of the Building Fund to help pay off the line-of-credit. And \$1,400 was taken out of each of the 50's Drive-In account and the Wednesday Night Dinner account to help pay off the line-of-credit. We now have a \$0 balance on the line-of-credit.

Trustees: *(Larry Hinebaugh reported)*

~ \$3,000 is budgeted for church maintenance, and there is about \$1,100 left for the remainder of the year.

~ There's \$250 left for maintenance of the grounds for 2020.

~ Four downstairs Sunday School rooms need to be painted.

~ We will get a new church road sign soon for \$320. It will be made of plywood and aluminium. The post and screws will be donated. And the work will be done by some of the men in the church.

United Methodist Men: *(Dallas VanLear reported)*

~ Did not meet in October, will meet again in November.

United Methodist Women: *(Wanda Harding reported)*

~ Circle of Love will start to meet again at church, with social-distancing on Monday, Oct. 26th @ 7pm

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

~ We have an offer from Comcast to get faster internet speed. We will look further into this option. Currently, we are paying \$110 each month for the internet service. For an extra \$58 per month, we can get 6 times the internet speed and upload speeds would increase by 3 times what we have now.

~ Still holding in-person, social-distancing bible study. Two classes are being held with 14 people participating.

~ The 20 year-old man who hit our church sign has pleaded guilty to 2 charges and there will be a plea agreement made. Part of the agreement is that the young man make restitution to our church. There was some discussion about how much we should ask for. It was agreed that we would ask the court for reimbursement of the cost of the sign, \$320 or not to exceed \$500. Pastor Mike will go in December to the court hearing and let them know the amount that we will request from the young man.

Communications: *(Cindy Sheets reported)*

~ Thanks to everyone for bearing with us through all of this, and as we work out the new bugs that continue to pop up along the way.

~ We are still in Facebook jail, due to an honest mistake made by one of our page's administrators. We will give facebook a little more time to let us out of fb jail, if they do not we will try to set up a new page, so that we can all stay connected easier.

~ We are trying to offer our live-stream worship service on our youtube page. You can also watch past worship services on our website at: NewHopeUMC.online/past-sermons

New Business:

~ Polls will be set-up on Monday afternoon, November 2nd for the Election on November 3rd.

~ Currently, the General Conference is scheduled for September 2021. A proposed split of the church is expected during this time. If this split does happen, then each Conference will have to decide which direction they want to go, after the conference makes their decisions; then each individual church will have to decide whether they will stay with their conference or leave. If a church decides to leave, the Trust clause will not be enforced, but each church that leaves will have to pay an agreed upon amount.

~ Pastor Mike expressed his appreciation and thanks to Dallas for his strong and steady leadership throughout this time.

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, December 3, 2020 at 6:30pm.



Thank You! UMCOR Collection

This collection is usually taken at Annual Conference, but due to the conference being held by Zoom, the kits for UMCOR were collected locally at Grottoes UMC.

The collection from the Harrisonburg District was:

9 Cleaning Buckets

558 School Kits

326 Health Kits

Value of collection was \$11,325

United Methodist Women for 2019-2020

Our United Methodist Women consists of 40 members and were very generous in mission giving. They sent \$1,849 to the Harrisonburg District for undesignated missions. For designated mission, \$1,010 was sent to Henderson Settlement, Red Bird Mission, Camp Overlook, Henry Fork, Legacy Fund, Valley Mission and the Society of St. Andrews. Total mission giving was \$2,859.

Clothing and financial support was given to the District Mission Central in Harrisonburg. Ladies who knit, crochet and/or sew have participated in the Prayer Shawl ministry providing shawls, lap blankets, baby blankets, prayer squares, face masks and scarfs during the year. Gifts were sent to our children, youth and college students during the year; as well as goodie bags delivered for a variety of occasions (summer, graduations, beginning school). Cards were sent to shut-ins.

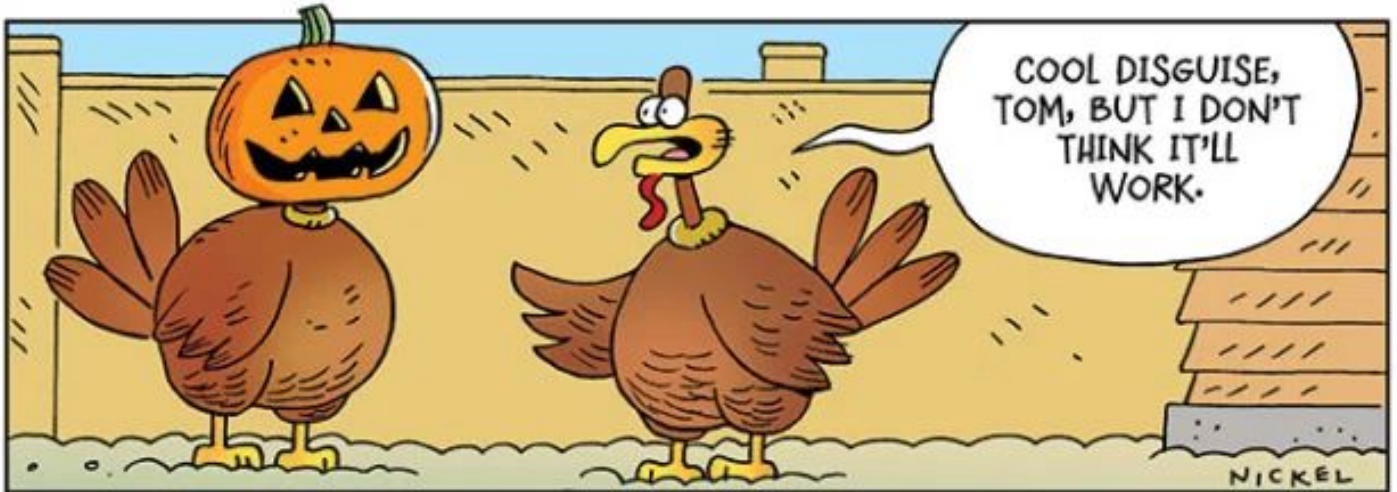
Due to the Covid-19 pandemic our ladies served only one meal to the United Methodist Men. We hosted a United Methodist Women's Sunday with guest speaker, Barbara Phillips, when our pastor was on vacation.

We have participated in some of District UMW events by Zoom. We sent school kits for UMCOR and Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. At a recent District UMW Annual meeting, we received a Certificate for Six Channels of Mission Giving and a Certificate for Living Into Our Purpose.

We have lost several members this year; including Glenna Powers and Juanita Howell who passed away; and Linda Wheatley who moved away from our area.

Wanda Harding ~ UMW President

Happy Thanksgiving!



Which side of the turkey has the most feathers?

the outside

What always comes at the end of Thanksgiving?

the letter g

Why did they let the turkey join the band?

because he had the drumsticks

Can a turkey jump higher than the Empire State Building?

yes, a building can not jump at all

What did the mama turkey say to her naughty son?

if your papa could see you now, he would turn over in his grave

If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring?

prilms

How do you keep a turkey in suspense?

i will let you know next week



BIRTHDAYS and
ANNIVERSARIES

1 - Larry Shiflett


2 - Susan Coffman

3 - W. B. Harner, Jr
- Cathy Killough
- Kerry Fretwell

5 - Linda Gail Johnson

6 - Joseph Bragg
- Steven Price

7 - Kevin Bell

8 - George Taylor
-  Earl & Jackie Wilberger


10 - Donald Michael
- Roy Randolph
- Jim Gruber

13 - Chuck Wagner
- Cindy Sanger
- Cheyenne Canipe

14 - Katherine Garber
- Beth Rogers

17 - Lynn Tuten

18 - Lydia Hough

19 - Aggie Selmon
-  Lloyd & Kay Moore



20 - Christopher McCray
- Curt Rosen

22 - Nancy Evers
- Jeff Kraisser

23 - Cindy Deavers

25 - David Critzer

26 - Maureen Morris

27 - Steven Broyles
- Wendy McLaren
-  James & Linda Howdysshell
-  Aggie & Betty Selmon

28 - Corey Stogdale

29 - April Selmon

30 - Jennifer Broyles
- Kimberly Hinkle

In considering the two questions that were asked regarding our present and future. I looked to our past.

Since the early 1800's when Round Hill Meeting House stood on this land until today now known as New Hope United Methodist, this very site has witnessed the horrors of the Civil War when it served as a hospital for the wounded; we have sent our young men and women to serve in two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and in places like Afghanistan today. The Depression years, the protests of the 1960's, the horror of 9-11 have touched the members of this congregation in personal ways.

Earlier this year, a new enemy challenged us, Covid-19. And even through there are. No doubt, a great number of people buried in the cemetery outside of walls died during the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918, Covid-19 was not something any of us could have imagined disrupting the flow of worship and fellowship at New Hope Church. But it did and with the guidance of conference and district leaders we have been navigating this "new, and I pray temporary, normal."

In light of this, one ministry and mission of the church which we are most pleased with has been our ability to maintain an online presence in light of current restrictions and to find creative ways to continue the fellowship which is a hallmark of ministry. Many of our most well-attended events needed to be cancelled (HOST, 50's Drive In, VBS), but we have continued reaching out to the community and globally with a prayer shawl ministry (3 shawls were dedicated earlier today), Sweet Hour of Prayer, and Christmas Shoeboxes. We have celebrated special occasions with drive-by parades. The Post Office has processed and delivered notes of encouragement to those we miss.

We stepped up our presence on Facebook, YouTube, and our website by offering live-streaming of worship, zoom bible studies and Sunday school classes. Next Friday night we will hand out in goody bags by way of a drive through Harvest Party event. People of all ages have overcome their stage fright by preparing and taping musical performances to be played during our Sunday morning Worship.

2020 challenged us and we did, and are still stepping up to that challenge. Creative juices have been tweaked and we continue to explore new ways to minister and disciple in our current era of social distancing.

Even though we have been willing and able to make adjustments, we still have hopes and dreams for the future. Great revival can happen when the people of God are most challenged. And so we look toward 2021, weathered by our experiences from this year, but anxious to continue the work of the church, it is likely we will continue to deal with the threat of a virus for a bit longer. And even if it were to magically disappear tomorrow, there will still be its shadow to deal with. As the people of God, we must respond to concerns driven by the fear that has manifested itself in 2020. We must continue the practices that are designed to provide the safest environment for members and visitors of all ages, following the guidelines and expectations of the experts.

But it is abundantly clear – we pant like a deer at the water's edge for full return to Worship. Worship is what we are created for and while we have been grateful for the imaginative ways to have used to express this desire, we long for the day when the doors can be thrown open wide and all can return to the sanctuary. I, personally, hope that the first Sunday that we can sing our praises will be celebrated with music driven Worship. I imagine a hymn sing of sorts.

But beyond Worship, we long for reconnection – to the community and to one another by again celebrating all those events that had to be tabled in 2020. We also hope to be able to address the many concerns that our local congregation has regarding the upcoming decisions to be made with the UMC regarding human sexuality, with special emphasis on how to discuss this issue with grace and love toward one another even when disagreements exist.

I often turn to Paul's letter to the Ephesians when considering ways we can hold and encourage one another in bad times and good.

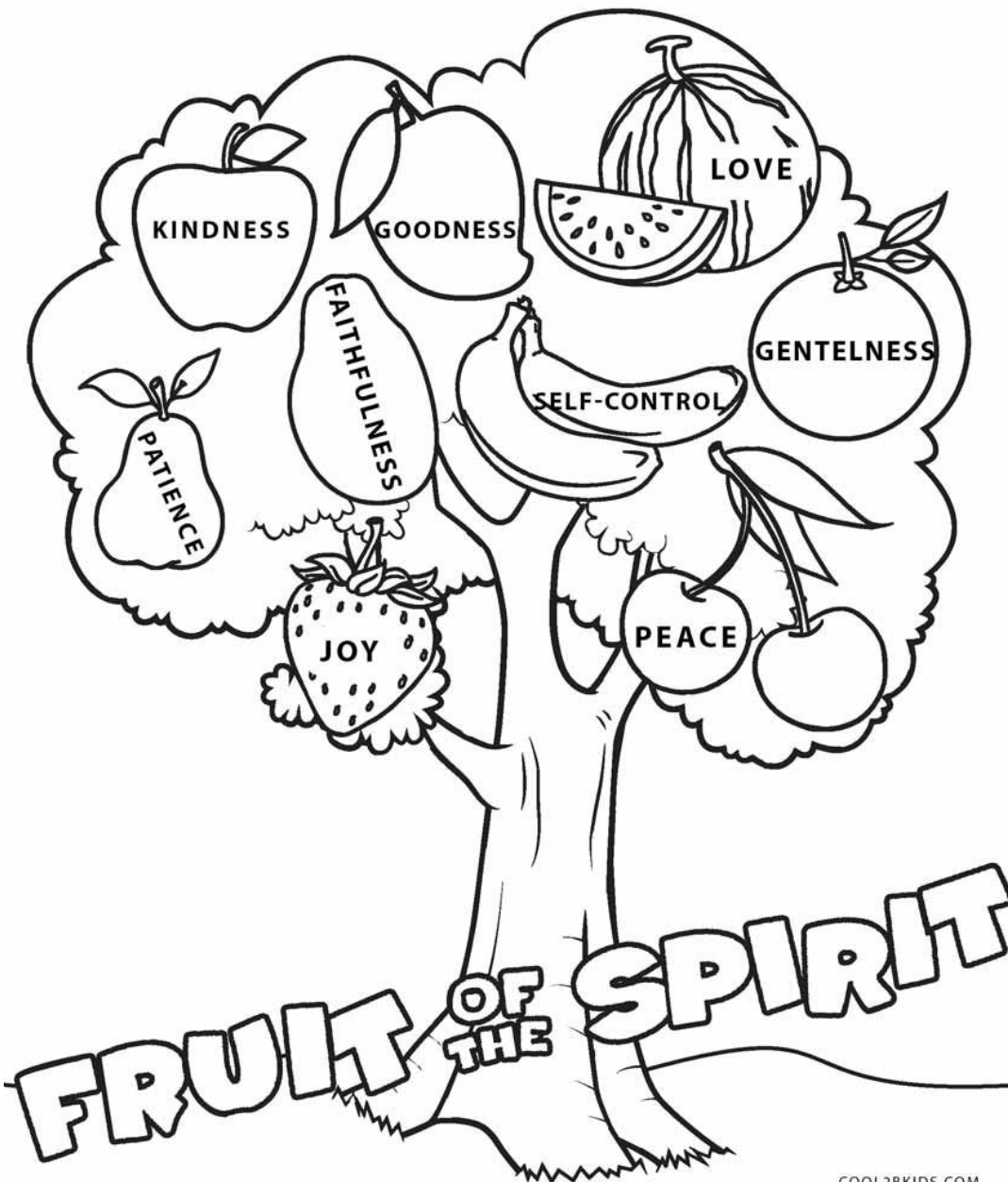
Ephesians 4: 2-5

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Amen

Jennifer Strother, Lay Leader

Kids' Corner - The Fruit of the Spirit



Today we are going to talk about fruit. Do you like fruit? What is your favorite fruit? All fruit is different. It tastes different, it looks different and it feels different in your mouth (sometimes fruit is crunchy, sometimes soft, sometimes juicy, etc.)

The Bible talks about fruit but its a different kind of fruit, it's called the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is a little like real fruit because they are each special and different too.

It's really neat because when we ask Jesus to live in us his Spirit stays with us and He will give us some of this special fruit. As we grow and learn more about Jesus, the Spirit will give us more and more fruit and become more Christ-like.

I will tell you in a minute what this special fruit is but first I want to explain how God can be God, Jesus (His son) and the Spirit all at the same time.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

All of these fruits are good to have and the Spirit wants to give them to us.

God wants us to try to be good and have the fruit of the spirit in us. We can try to have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control but the Spirit will give us the kind of gifts he wants us to have. It's hard to do it on our own, we need the Spirit to help us with each of these things.

The next fruit is joy. Joy is like being very, very happy, it's being happy inside even when things aren't going great. Again, we can try to be joyful but only God can give us the kind of happiness that makes us joyful, we can't just be joyful on our own.

When we think of peace, we usually think of no more fighting or war. That is right, but the peace of the spirit is a bit different. This is the peace we get when we get to know God really well (by reading the Bible, praying, asking questions, etc). If we have this peace we will feel a calmness inside and know that all our sins are confessed and that God forgives us.

Patience is the next one and I'm sure we know what this means. Have you ever been told to have patience?

The patience God is talking about is for those little things like waiting to open your Christmas presents or being patient to go to the park. But it also means to be patient for answers to prayer that might take years to be answered.

Next is kindness and it should be easy although sometimes it's not. Is it easy to be kind to someone who has been mean to you or to a beggar on the street? When God gives us this gift, it's more than just being kind to others. He might help us be kind to someone who really needs it and we're not even aware of it. For example, maybe you feel like you should write a letter or call a grandparent. God might be urging you to do that because they are having a bad day and that's exactly what they need to cheer them up. Sometimes your kind deed to someone else is all they need to remember that someone special loves them.

Being good or goodness is the next fruit of the spirit. Having the gift of goodness means God can depend on me to be honest, repent of my sins, and turn away from bad things. We also need to try to act this way towards others through our actions so they can see the fruit in us. The only true goodness we have is the goodness of God living in us.

Faithfulness is next and this one might be a little trickier to understand. Being faithful is keeping your promises, being a loyal friend even when times get tough, being trustworthy and doing the things you said you would do. When I think of faithfulness I think of my grandma who prayed for me every single day of her life. She was faithful in praying for me, which also meant that she prayed everyday.

When I think of gentleness I think of holding a brand new baby. For some reason we think they might break if we don't hold them so carefully. The kind of gentleness God is talking about is similar to this. No matter what situation comes up we are supposed to be gentle. That doesn't mean we shouldn't stick up for ourselves, if someone is doing something you know is wrong you should still tell an adult or tell them to stop. Just do it in a gentle way like Jesus would do it.

The last fruit is self control and is a very important one, it means to be in control of what we say and do. Without self control we can't do the things we should. To be able to live the way God wants we have to be in control of the things we do. Just like when a brother or sister bugs you so much you just want to hit them, we know that we have to control ourselves and not hit them. We know we just can't do whatever we feel like sometimes because it's not right and we'd be punished.

Just remember that with all these gifts we need help from God to be able to use the gifts properly. We need to remember that God made us and he is perfect. If you want the fruit of the spirit first you need to ask God to live in you, and then the more you get to know him the more fruit or gifts he will help you have.

Sermons By Phone

**Hear Pastor Mike's
Weekly Sermon**

1-877-369-1437



CoronaWeen 2020 at New Hope UMC





The local VFW will be doing a 'drive by' to local nursing homes on Veteran's Day. They need our help by providing cards for the Veterans that are residents of the homes. There will be a box in the Narthex during the first week of November, for anyone who would like to leave cards that will be given to the directors of the nursing homes to give to the Veterans. Veteran's Day Cards and regular greetings cards are needed, signed by folks that are willing to provide the cards. Thanks for your help!

***If you would like to add an article or announcement
to the Hilltopper, please contact us!***

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