

The Hilltopper

September 2020

From Pastor Mike

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. -- *Proverbs 3:5-6 (NRSV)*

I have been reading about “quarantine envy” this week. That is right – quarantine envy! I will admit that sometimes I experience it. You know, that feeling that others are having much more fun than you are during COVID-19.

Social media fuels this envy. We see our friends’ Facebook or Instagram posts where everything seems so much better than what we experience.

Envy is not new, but the pandemic has fueled the fire. Essential workers envy those working at home. People who were laid off envy those who were not. Those home-schooling young children envy those who are not. Those who have family far away envy those whose children are near. We envy others whom we think have it better than we do.

Envy was seen by the Apostle Paul as a real danger even within the first Christian communities. In the tenth commandment, God forbids us from coveting our neighbor's house, wife, and other things. Paul urges us to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Christian love seeks to banish envy from our hearts.

The source of my own quarantine envy was our drive home from Douthat State Park last Sunday morning. As we drove toward Lexington on I-64, I decided to take US-11 for the rest of the ride home. We saw dozens of churches driving from Lexington to Staunton. Most of the parking lots were empty or had a handful of cars. It made me a bit sad and my thoughts turned back to a time before COVID-19.

My envy was fueled by a longing to a return to pre-pandemic days – to get back what has been lost. That is really a waste of time and energy. God gives us today. Each day is a precious gift.

Susan and I pulled into the driveway at 1:00PM. The first thing we both noticed was the newly mulched and cleaned up flower beds which looked wonderful. It was good to be back home.

After we unpacked the car and had lunch, I went to our Facebook page and watched the August 30th worship service. Barbara Phillips’ message focused on the image of the poor widow’s offering. The story of the poor widow’s offering reminds us that God wants our heart. I needed to hear that again.

How about you? What word from God do you need to hear again today?

Yours in Christ.

Pastor Mike



The following are the minutes from the **AUGUST** 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 - August 20, 2020

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

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

The minutes from the July meeting were accepted as distributed.

Finance Report: *(Kevin Armstrong & Pastor Mike reported)*

~ Thanked Wanda and Karen W. for continuing to count our weekly donations.

~ We need approximately \$15,000 a month for monthly operating costs. We have been taking in about \$10,000 per month. We currently have about 4 months operating expenses.

~ We still owe about \$6,000 on our line of credit.

~ We need to start planning for our 2021 budget.

~ Pastor Mike recommended that we try to pay some of our apportionments.

Apportionments: *(Pastor Mike)*

Going into the year of 2020, we were scheduled to pay \$30,000 in apportionments to the conference, and \$4,000 to the district. After the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the conference changed our apportionments into two different priorities:

- **Priority #1:** Expenses already budgeted for that need to be paid. After Covid-19 hit us, it got changed to us owing \$21,828 for the year. We have paid \$5,000 so far this year (before the end of February 2020), so we still owe \$16,828 in apportionments for the year of 2020.

- **Priority #2:** Money goes to Universities and other outreach missions. Usually we paid \$8,172 per year to these missions.

- We have paid \$674 to the district for the first two months of 2020. We still owe \$3,370 for district apportionments.
- Pastor Mike suggested that we send in 50%-60% of what we owe each month in apportionments, since we are receiving (in donations) about 50%-60% of what we normally take in each month in past years (pre-Covid-19).
- Cindy D. suggested that we send in one monthly payment of \$1,819 for now and reassess each month as we go along to see where we stand financially as we finish out this year.
- Dallas made a motion to pay \$2,000 to the conference for Priority #1 Apportionments and also \$337 to the district for one month and then we reassess each month thereafter. Kevin seconded it and it was agreed to by all.
- *(A side note: As of May 1st, 2020: The conference has issued a hiring freeze and a 20% reduction in conference expenses through next year).*

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

- ~ We still owe \$6,019.03 on our line of credit.
- ~ We received a \$2,000 donation for the new carpet in the nursery, the total bill was \$1,744.04 - and the rest of the money (\$256) will be applied to the line of credit.
- ~ We have received \$900 in memorial gifts over the last few months. There was some discussion on what to do with this money, no definite decision was made yet.
- ~ The utilities, telephone, propane, etc. are all being paid on time and all bills are current.

Trustees: *(Larry Hinebaugh reported)*

- ~ There has been discussion among the Trustees that it's important that we have some kind of church road sign up, so that people know who we are here.

~ The Trustees asked about putting some kind of temporary, simple and inexpensive signage up for now, that will have at least our church's name, Pastor Mike's name and contact info on it. It's possible that some of the damaged sign may be able to be salvaged and reused for this purpose. They were asking for \$300 for raw materials to put up a temporary church sign.

- Larry made a motion to spend up to \$300 on a new temporary church sign. Jennifer seconded it and it was agreed to by all.

~ Larry asked about why the Medical Room door downstairs is unlocked and opened. Dana Breeding and Susan Coffman will be contacted for more information on this issue.

~ It was reminded that the old Scout's Room is now being used as the new Crafting Ministry Room (since last year.)

~ John's Computer will come back on September 2nd, to fix the wifi wires downstairs that are falling down - instead of double-sided tape, more permanent clips will be used.

United Methodist Men: *(Dallas VanLear reported)*

~ On August 27th, the UMM will have another Work Night at 6:30pm, with no meal. They will work on trimming back some of the trees, mulching and weeding.

~ Looking to have a UMM Meeting in September with no meal.

~ There was some further discussion about having HOTS (and also the 50's Drive-In) for this year. After some discussion about not being able to have meals in the church, and not having the room to social distance and have people eat in the social hall; and based on the guidelines set by the Bishop and the state and federal government - it was recommended by the Church Council to not have the Ham, Oyster, Turkey Supper (or the 50's Drive-In) this year.

- Larry made a motion to the UMM to not have HOTS, Jennifer and Karen W. seconded it and it was agreed to by all.

United Methodist Women: *(Wanda Harding reported)*

~ The UMW continue to not meet in-person.

~ On August 29th, they will hold a virtual District Prayer Breakfast at 9:00am via Zoom.

~ On August 30th, we will celebrate United Methodist Women's Sunday with special guest speaker Barbara Phillips, the Harrisonburg District Vice President.

Membership: *(Karen Whitmer reported)*

~ 3 members have gone to be with the Lord: Marguerite Howell, Glenna Powers and Sherry Rankin

Lay Leader: *(Jennifer Strother reported)*

~ Special thanks to Kim Maugans for filling in for her on Sunday, August 16th at the last minute.

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

~ Orientation for Charge Conference will be on September 3rd; and we will find out more details about our annual church charge conference then.

~ There are currently no 2021 projected apportionments yet.

~ We are trying to improve the sound quality in our online worship. Looking into getting an external microphone for the camera or a stand-alone computer for the a/v; and we're trying to do it as cost effectively as possible.

~ Pastor Mike started a new way to hear the sermon by phone - SermonsByPhone.com. It's \$20 per month, but pastor Mike is going to pay it out of his own pocket. You dial a toll free number and you can hear about a 20-25 minute sermon by Pastor Mike.

~ Upper Room books are available in the Narthex.

~ Looking to hold another Bible Study in September. This one may be in-person with social distancing, etc.

Communications: *(Cindy Sheets reported)*

~ Cindy thanked everyone for their patience as we have tried to quickly navigate online and live-streaming of the worship services during these past months.

~ Dallas thanked Pastor Mike, Cindy S., Alicia and Austine for continuing to bring the worship services to everyone online during these difficult times.

New Business:

~ Thanked Wanda and Karen W. for continuing to count the donations received each week.

The meeting was closed by Pastor Mike with appreciation for everyone making an effort to be there and he ended the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted by:
Cynthia Sheets
Recording Secretary

The next Church Council Meeting will be on Thursday, September 24, 2020.

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



Have a Laugh...

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11-17-2014

**WE VALUE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP HERE,
WHICH IS WHY WE ONLY HAVE SEATING FOR
EIGHT**

ROPE WILL HELP YOU CURSE

A priest buys a lawn mower at a yard sale. Back home, he pulls on the starter rope a few times with no results. He storms back to the yard sale and tells the previous owner, "I can't get the mower to start!" "That's because you have to curse to get it started," says the man. "I'm a man of the cloth. I don't even remember how to curse." "You keep pulling on that rope, and it'll come back to you."

TOO MUCH PRAISE

A Christian guy named Bill saw an ad online for a Christian horse, so he went to check it out. The horse's owner said, "It's easy to ride him. Just say 'Praise the Lord!' to make him go and 'Amen!' to make him stop." Bill got on the horse and said, "Praise the Lord!" Sure enough, the horse started to walk. "Praise the Lord!" he said again, and the horse began to trot. "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" he yelled, and the horse broke into a gallop. Bill was enjoying his ride so much that he almost didn't notice the cliff he and the horse were about to go over. Bill shouted "AMEN!" at the top of his lungs, and the horse stopped right at the edge of the cliff. Relieved, Bill said, "Phew! Praise the Lord!"



As many of you know, the 3rd through 5th grade Sunday school class collects loose change, dollar bills, and deposits these into the Heifer Project account on Sundays. As we roll the change in our classroom, we discuss the cows, pigs, sheep, goats, water buffalo, llamas, rabbits, chickens, ducks, and honey bees that we can choose from when we place our next order. Luckily, we made a list of our choices in January.

Lane - Llama

Harlow - Chickens

Wayne - Cow (We ordered a female water buffalo "cow")

Abby - Pig

Kenleigh - Rabbits

Aaron - Llama

Becky - Honey Bees

As we had collected over \$800, it was a good time to place our order. Thanks to Cindy Deavers for sending the check and order form last week. I want to express how proud I am of the children in our classroom that show such excitement to collect the change on Sunday mornings. I have, at times, let them all participate, invading the Adult Sunday School classes because they all wanted to go (and I couldn't pick just one.) Thanks to all of you for your donations to Heifer International, and thanks to the children who put their hearts into this effort every week.


As a result of this order, seven families will receive a gift from Heifer International, including training for care of their animals and how to sell their products as a source of income for families in need of food, clothing, clean water and other needs. As each recipient pledges to donate one offspring to another family, and they, in turn, do the same, it improves lives in their village, or community. We want to thank everyone for their spare dollars and change, and memorial donations to the Heifer Project.

~ Becky Tate



BIRTHDAYS and 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

Kids' Corner - Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man

by Sharla Guenther



Today's story is about a man who was paralyzed. Being paralyzed means that he couldn't walk and probably couldn't use his legs. He would've had to sit or lie down all the time.

Just think for a minute how hard it would be to do things if you couldn't walk around. How would you go to the bathroom? What kind of games would you play? How easy would it be to make friends?

This story actually took place a few days after Jesus had touched a man who had leprosy and made him better. Jesus was going from town to town performing

miracles and everyone wanted to see Him.

People were excited whenever they heard that Jesus was in their area because they either wanted to see a miracle or be the one who was healed.

So, as Jesus entered one of the homes in Capernaum, people quickly gathered around Him. So many people came that there was no room left, not even outside the door.

I can imagine that people were pushing each other a little bit to squeeze everyone in; plus, there were people gathered outside to see or hear Jesus when He came out. That's where things got interesting.

There were four men who heard that Jesus was in town who decided to carry their paralyzed friend on a mat to Him, to see if their friend could be healed. As soon as they got to the house where Jesus was, they realized that they wouldn't be able to get through to see Him.

I'm thinking that the man they were carrying was getting pretty heavy and was desperate to see Jesus. They didn't know how long Jesus would be in town so they had to see Him today!

Someone decided to take him to the roof of the building that Jesus was at! That might sound impossible but houses were built differently then. Most houses had staircases outside to get to the flat roof.

With a flat roof, people could use this area as an extra living space. It might have been like having a deck on the roof of your house.

Plus, the roof wasn't made with large pieces of wood and didn't have shingles, but had tiles or plaster that could be lifted or broken through easily to make a hole.

The Bible says that, after digging through the roof, the men lowered the mat that the paralyzed man was lying on down to where Jesus was.

Imagine listening carefully to Jesus when all of a sudden you hear something coming from above you. The ceiling is crumbling a bit and everyone stops and looks up to see what's going on.

I'm sure Jesus was smiling as the man was being lowered down. These men were so sure that Jesus would be able to heal him; otherwise they wouldn't have gone to so much trouble.

The first thing Jesus said when He saw that they believed was, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Probably not what the man expected since he came to Jesus because he wanted to walk. However, Jesus knew what this man needed most because he knew what was in his heart. Jesus knew that being paralyzed would be difficult but it was even worse not to be forgiven.

Well, some of the teachers of the law heard Jesus forgive the man and they began thinking, "How dare this man forgive sins, only God can do that." Immediately Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Why are you thinking these things?" This probably startled the men because Jesus knew what they were thinking!

Jesus also asked them, "Which was easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

This might be a bit hard to understand but I think Jesus was trying to get through to the teachers of the law and tell them that He was the Son of Man, and God has given Him the power to forgive sins and heal people. These things could not be done by just a regular person but only by God.

Then, before He was finished Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

The Bible says that the man got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. I just have to wonder how the man reacted when he was suddenly told that he could get up and go home...

I'm thinking he thanked Jesus and maybe even gave him a big hug! He could've laughed and maybe did a little dance on his way out. He probably didn't go straight home either...what a day that would've been for him and his friends!

The crowd was very amazed and they praised God saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"



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

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