

# Tidings of Peace



*Newsletter of Peace Memorial EPC*

## *From the Pastor...*

Dear Friends,

August is usually a time of looking forward for me. With the church program year starting up again (hopefully) next month, I usually take the month of August to pray and develop class, sermon, and other discipleship ministry plans for the upcoming year. This year is unique in the sense that we don't even know if we will be able to meet together at all! Will churches be forced to close down again? Will virus concerns continue to spiral out of control? Will actual sickness and death reports rise? And what about the civil unrest? With a presidential election coming up in the fall, will things settle down or will they erupt into new levels of insanity? Will we be able to return to normal, or will crazy BE the new normal as so many media outlets declare?

We don't know.

What we do know is that we have been praying. Not only our congregation, but the Church all across the world and from all different denominational facets, has devoted herself to prayer seeking God's intervention, protection, and deliverance from this season of struggle. And while I can say that God is faithful and good, He is ever present and all knowing, the stresses continue.

It can be frustrating when we endure stress, frustration, anger, fear, pain, or even just the seemingly crazy views of others for a long stretch of time, especially when there does not seem to be any end in sight. It is also one thing to endure the crazy views of others, it is another when those crazy views are given a platform and seem to be lauded by media and leaders in our land.

It is flat out crazy to think that justice can be attained by engaging in Injustice. It is insanity to invest in hatred and division in order to bring about love and unity. And yet these expressions of delusion represent the wisdom of today's world. Unbelievable.

But I am not writing to you today to decry the failures of our culture's philosophy or praxis. I COULD go on about all the things that are wrong with our world right now. But that would not help any of us much- aside from maybe feeling a little better at being able to scream at the wind for a bit. In the end we would be right back where we started. Today, I want to engage you on a deeper level, one that can really only be addressed during times like these- times when it seems that nothing is going in the right direction, and even in our prayers, God seems silent. That deeper level is where we choose faith, hope and joy in the midst of suffering.

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IN our sermon series through the Minor Prophets, we looked at Habakkuk. This prophet was struggling through a season where it seemed that all the world had gone mad, and despite his prayers, God seemed to not only let it happen but to be silent in response to the prayers for deliverance. But as the prophet prayed to God, an amazing transformation took place. Habakkuk took his eyes off of the misery of the world and redirected them to the living God. There he saw afresh the Holy, Sovereign, Loving and Patient Lord of all things, and heard His voice speak words of assurance.

Assurance that God is in control

He knows the righteous and the unrighteous

He offers mercy and shelter to those who seek refuge in Him

And He brings judgement down upon the wickedness of the world in the fullness of time.

The transformation took place in the heart of Habakkuk and he concluded his 3 chapter book with a hymn of praise. The hymn concludes with these powerful lyrics:

Though the fig tree should not blossom,  
nor fruit be on the vines,  
the produce of the olive fail  
and the fields yield no food,  
the flock be cut off from the fold  
and there be no herd in the stalls,  
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord;  
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.  
19 God, the Lord, is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the deer's;  
he makes me tread on my high places."  
-Habakkuk 3:17-19

This is the deeper call of faith. Did you hear it?

“THOUGH: the fig should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines  
The olive fail to produce, the fields yield no food  
The flock be cut off and the herd desolated.

YET I WILL REJOICE IN THE LORD.”

That is empowered faith. It is the faith that looks through the circumstances of desolation, loss, pain, grief, fear, anger, and oppression, and chooses to rejoice in the Lord.

King David declared such faith in Psalm 23:

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for You are with me,  
Your rod and staff, they comfort me.”

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego demonstrated this faith in the threat of death by fire recorded in Daniel 3:17,18:

“If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. **But if not**, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

The Apostle Paul records this faith beautifully in Romans 8:35-39:

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,  
‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long;  
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In this time of confusion, fear, pain, suffering and death- and the equally disturbing philosophies of unreason and hostility, I invite you to look through the fog of spiritual war and see the glory, sovereignty, and supreme love of God our Lord, and join me in choosing to rejoice in Him.

Even if things don't change

Even if COVID-19 continues to ravage

Even if governments continue to impose restrictions

Even if people continue to celebrate evil and deride good

Even if hatred seems to win out over love...

As Habakkuk concluded:

“Yet I will rejoice in the Lord;  
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.  
God, the Lord, is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the deer's;  
he makes me tread on my high places.”

May the Lord bless you and keep you, for He is Risen!

-Pastor Aaron

## DEACONS DOINGS

The Deacons will host the annual RUMMAGE AND BAKE SALE, Friday, Aug 14 and Saturday, Aug 15, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm both days.

We welcome your items to donate, and they can be brought to the church any time. If you want to bring your items during a time when the church is closed, just give Geri a call at (541)884-7297 and we'll arrange a time to meet. PLEASE remember that we would like items that are in usable condition and able to be sold. We don't want our hard-earned funds to be eaten up by dump fees. Baked goods can be brought the days of the sale.

We'll be setting up for the sale on Thursday, Aug 13 at 12:30 (after the TOPS meeting) and can use all the help we can get. So don't be shy about lending a hand. Our resident yard-sale expert (aka Jocelyn) will be on hand for pricing advice, but we pretty much let you go crazy with the price stickers as the idea is to see stuff go OUT the door.

EXCITING NEW ITEM! We'll have bags of AUTUMN CROCUS BULBS for sale! That's right- bulbs for those beautiful purple flowers that grace our church each fall can be yours! The Building and Grounds Committee, in preparation for landscaping our west side beds this fall, has dug up about a zillion crocus bulbs and Sheryl has packaged them for sale. You can't just waltz into a local store and get these, so here's your opportunity. Let your friends know. I was told once these are called "Naked Ladies" because in the spring they appear as lovely mounds of green leaves but no flower, and come back later as the large flower with no leaves.

The proceeds from this sale will be used by Session to support our church activities. Thanking you all in advance for your support.

**Thoughts from an Elder: by Joe Riker**

Micah

Micah. Little is known of this prophet. In his own words he claims he was a prophet in the days of King Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of the southern kingdom – Judah, in the early 700's B.C.. A contemporary of the better known prophet Isaiah. Micah was a man of peasant extraction with a suspicion of city life. When he spoke, he used coarse expressions with swift strokes of imagery and a play on words. Yet, it is this same Micah who is quoted in Matthew 2:6 and John 7:42 foretelling of the birth in Bethlehem of a King of peace who will pasture God's flock.

Imagine you are in a court room. Listen to the prosecution, feel the passion and persistence of Micah. This is Micah as the prosecutor, speaking for God. Read Micah 6:1-8

Micah recalls God's mighty acts of the past. Then he questions what one must do to be loved by God. Micah asks one of the most profound questions in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the question: **What does God want?**; and the answer is that the nature of true dedication to God, the divine ideal for you is, "to do what is right, to love loyally, to walk humbly with God."

What does God want? Does this sound familiar to you? Haven't we all, from time to time, asked ourselves similar questions? Aren't we asking them today.

What does God ask of me, us?

What does God want of Man?

What does God require?

Yes, you heard that word in verse 8 "require". Yes, all these questions clamor for our attention. And like Judah in Micah's time there is great concern of how each of us meets what God expects of us.

Where are we? Our nations stand in a posture of sinfulness before God. Sinfulness, in a love for power and money which causes leaders of nations to cheat and oppress the common man. This same greed leads merchants to cheat their customers and officials to hold out their hands for bribes.

**Thoughts from an Elder: Continued**

Did you see the recent news report that the world's richest 85 people control the same amount of wealth as half the world's population. That means the world's poorest 3.55 billion people must live on what the richest 85 possess.

We see today a covetousness that, in addition to infecting our political and judicial leaders, has also infected our religious leaders to proclaim whatever those who pay, want said. A society whose social sins of drinking, drugs and indiscriminate sex are accepted as normal. Where God's love is answered with indifference.

A world where we recognize the possibility of the destruction of nations and the earth by man; but will man destroy it or because of sins will God destroy?

We all have a myriad of questions.

How do we make a difference in this chaotic world? Will one person's effort make a difference? How do I respond to the needs of the world? Should I spend more time in church? Pray longer and harder? Do I give my stocks and bonds to the church, my laptop computer, I-pad, my new car, my house...to God? Or do I offer Him the first born of my first marriage?

Why do we have this desperate quest to find a sacrifice which God will accept? Why do we have this underlying assumption that in dealing with God, it is God who has the problem; and we must do something to change his attitude?

No, God does not yearn merely for material sacrifices, but for a quality of inner commitment. We have heard with certainty what God requires. Just three things: to do justice, to have mercy and finally to walk humbly with God.

The prophet Micah says God's people are to walk humbly with God. Walking with God can be treacherous, easy, fun, or difficult. Sometimes it requires great concentration to decide what is the right thing to do, how to act in a tough situation. Sometimes it's easy; we know exactly what to do from the beginning. Sometimes it's frightening, because walking the right path can lead to change, and change isn't always what it's cracked up to be. Sometimes it's dangerous to pursue justice, or even to love kindness. When we challenge the social norms, we can put ourselves at risk of being ostracized, or worse. But how to walk with God?



## BUILDING AND GROUNDS

The Building and Grounds/Trustees Crew have been busy this summer working on church maintenance projects. Here is a list of projects that have been completed or that are in the works.

Parking lot repaired, sealed, and striped

Window trim painting in progress on Westminster Hall

Landscaping: Shrubs removed and new ones will be planted in the fall

Preschool Bathrooms: painted, new linoleum installed, and installing new toilets

Carpet installed in entry way into Westminster Hall

Lawn maintenance

*A special thank you to :*

*Stephen, Sheryl, George, Geri, Chuck, and Sally L. for your hard work!*

Submitted by, Jim Zeller

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

4<sup>TH</sup> MELISSA MOULTON

6<sup>TH</sup> JIM ZELLER

8<sup>TH</sup> JANET VERCRUYSSSE

9<sup>TH</sup> BILL DART

14<sup>TH</sup> KATHY TODD

24<sup>TH</sup> STEPHEN GOODE

25<sup>TH</sup> KEVIN GORHAM

27<sup>TH</sup> MADYSON GREEN

29<sup>TH</sup> BEV THROOP

## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

12<sup>TH</sup> HAROLD & SALLY HEATON

12<sup>TH</sup> BOB & ANN WINCENTSEN

18<sup>TH</sup> STEPHEN & SHARRON GOODE

29<sup>TH</sup> BILL & LINDA DART

# Stewardship & Finance Committee

## Financial Report

### June 2020

#### At a glance

Operating Inc.:	\$11,268.22
Operating Exp.:	\$11,058.14
Monthly Net:	\$210.08
<b>Ckg Acct Bal 6/30</b>	<b>\$28,688.06</b>
<b>MMkt Bal 6/30</b>	<b>\$55,177.96</b>

June 2020

Here is our monthly update on finance:

June Operating Income: \$11,268.22

Expenses: \$11,058.14      Net: (\$210.08)

Year-to-Date Net: (\$834.56)

Greetings All!

Again, many thanks to all of you for your consistency of giving during this difficult

season in our lives. With your dedication, we have been able to operate somewhat normally during this time. Wishing you all peace, health, and love! May Christ's blessings be with you!

Kathy Todd



Give



Serve



Attend



Grow

*Stewardship*  
a way of life



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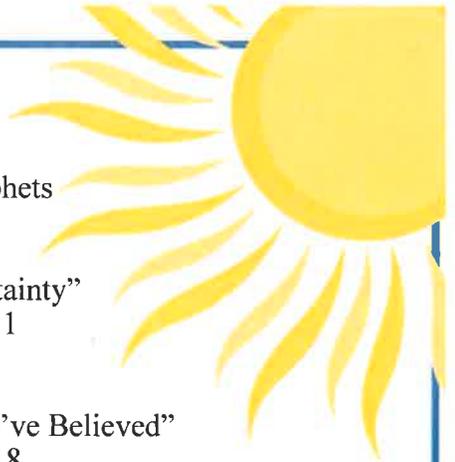
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We're on the web!  
[www.peaceEPC.com](http://www.peaceEPC.com)  
"like" us on Facebook

*"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight"*  
-Prov. 3:6



The Minor Prophets

8/2 - Habakkuk  
"Faith in Uncertainty"  
Habakkuk 1:1-11

8/9 - Zephaniah  
"Three Lies We've Believed"  
Zephaniah 1:1-18

8/16 - Joel  
"Rend Your Heart"  
Joel 2:11b-14

8/23 - Obadiah  
"The Pride of Your Heart"  
Obadiah 1:1-9

Your **SESSION**

Elders

- Pastor Aaron Beaty- Session Moderator
- Noreen Rhoades- Clerk of Session
- Kathy Todd- Finance & Stewardship
- Don Perryman- Christian Education
- Linda Dart- Mission and Outreach
- Jim Zeller- Building and Grounds
- Sally Heaton- Worship

Your **DEACONS**

Geri Coker- Chair

- Bev Moulton
- Susan Orton
- Jocelyn Shellito
- Vicki Zeller

*The Deacons meet the third Sunday of each month following worship.*

Your

**TRUSTEES**

- Harold Heaton
- Stephen Goode
- Sharron Goode
- Sharon Haddock

*Session meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6-8PM.*

