

Tidings of Peace



Newsletter of Peace Memorial EPC

From the Pastor...

Dear Friends,

This month we are going to experience a transition unlike any we have experienced in our lifetimes. I am talking about the results of our recent national election. Elections, presidential elections especially, have always carried with them some contention, but over the past eight years, something has fundamentally changed along our foundations as a nation. The two primary parties have become so separated in rhetoric and philosophy that one is hard pressed to find the common ground upon which we could, in generations past, rest assured that despite our differences, we were all still Americans. Today, such unifying sentiments are hard to come by for even our core elements of Americanism are hotly debated by the parties of influence.

No matter who wins the presidential election on Tuesday (or months later should the integrity of the electoral process be brought into question) there will be some who are ecstatic and will celebrate the great victory, and others convinced that the world is doomed. I have my convictions too. I've developed my political convictions after being raised a certain way, with a set of political "beliefs and convictions" - and then after intense study of the political parties, their histories and their platforms, I became aware of how much of the political convictions of normal people are informed not by history or policy but by rhetoric. I experienced an about face in my political convictions due to my research beyond the rhetoric. I am a proponent of researching your own political party- study its history, its policies- past and present and compare them with the other options. Learn to listen to the voices of criticism against your preferred stance. Above all, learn beyond the rhetoric of the media. Most of the media we listen to is profit based. It's goal is not to report the news, but to SELL stories. They sell drama, intensity, scandal, and YOUR ATTENTION. They buy your attention from you with frightening and sensational headlines, they "spin" the facts to promote how you think and feel and make money off of your attention. This kind of media is alluring because it feeds upon itself like an addiction. As soon as we let down our critical guard, they have us- and draw us in deeper. As our emotions and thoughts conform to their spin, we go deeper. As we continue to hear what we want to hear- they take us even further in-radicalizing us without us even knowing. A recent documentary was released a few months ago on the predatory and addictive nature of Social Media, how it was developed to maximize your attention and how it functions to radicalize the population. I highly recommend you watch "The Social Dilemma" currently streaming on Netflix.

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From the Pastor... Continued

While I continue to have deep political convictions, as your pastor, I want to offer you an important caution. Our political convictions can form who we are and what we view as our purpose. Yet in the midst of all the political issues, policies and rhetoric, the voice of the Lord calls for our allegiance. The problem with this state- that we have political forces calling for our conviction and commitment, AND God's voice calling for the same, is that no world system will perfectly align with God's will and Word, yet it is very compelling to conform God's Word and our FAITH convictions to the World and ITS convictions. There are Bible-believing Christians who are devout Democrats and Republicans. Yet the rhetoric is developing contempt between these two groups.

We can be a passionate people- committed to politics and social formation, but it is critical for us as followers of Jesus to understand that while we may be American, Republican, or Democrat (or some other flavor), we are God's children by His grace through faith FIRST. In fact, that primal identity must manifest in all the other things that we are as well. When it comes to politics then, we must approach those convictions while submitting them to the Lordship of Christ, not to validate that way, but to submit them under the Lordship and Will of God our Father.

As I look at our country and its deep divisions and consider the implications of this National election and all that it could engender, I wonder what hope we have.

Therein lies the key: What hope indeed? I will share with you two critical instructions from Scripture that I believe speak profoundly to our present dilemma.

First, prepare your mind. I Peter 1:13 says: **"...preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."**

Take Peter's instruction- prepare yourself mentally. Be sober-minded, meaning do not get lost in passion, but settle down- distance yourself from the propaganda and then... "Set your hope FULLY" on the revelation of Jesus Christ. Our only hope is in God's grace through Christ and the work He has planned at Christ's return. That is our FULL hope. Do not hope in Christ PLUS the Democrat or Republican party. Christ is it.

The Second instruction calls us to engage one of the most powerful tools of our faith: Prayer. 2 Chronicles 7:14 says **"if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."** If we want to see God's power at work in our world, humble yourself, repent from your sin, and repent on behalf of this land, and pray with diligence- "seek My face" says the Lord. Perhaps a large reason our nation is so conflicted is that the heart of our nation, the Church has lost its humble zeal in seeking after God's face.

As your pastor, I can offer you no clearer direction, nor can I do so without such conviction that this is God's will for us:

- 1: Prepare your mind by setting your hope fully on the Grace of God in Christ
- 2: Humble yourself and seek God's face in prayer and repentance.

God rarely offers us "if-then" promises, yet here we have one. IF we will humble ourselves, pray and seek God's face, and repent from wickedness, THEN God will HEAR, FORGIVE and HEAL.

So may we be known more as a people of faith, and hope and prayer than we are as anything else- Democrat or Republican, conservative or liberal. Jesus is first and last.

From the Pastor... Continued

May we rejoice in the Lord, whether the election is a win or a loss for us. For when we are blessed and experiencing good times, God is good. And when times are dark and challenging, God is good. God's promise, and our hope for the grace at Christ's revealing are not on the ballot. Nor should our hope, joy and peace.

Together we will demonstrate a hope, joy and peace that transcends worldly circumstances. And we will do so across boundaries that divide this world.

May the Peace of Christ protect your hearts and minds today and always.

Pastor Aaron

FROM JACOB TO THE WILDERNESS

A study of Genesis, Exodus and Numbers

Sunday Bible Classes 9:00-10:00 AM Fireside Room

We have resumed our Sunday Bible classes before the worship services on Sunday. See you then!



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

14TH KRISTA BEATY

20TH LEONARD BARKEE

14TH HAROLD HEATON

24TH JOAN RIKER

19TH PATTI HARVEY

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

11TH SCOTT & BETTY DICKSON



Thank you to all who have been turning out to help with the Bucket Brigade cleaning project. So far we've done the sanctuary area and the fellowship hall and downstairs restrooms. Doing these tasks in concentrated spurts is working well. Our next meeting will be Monday, Nov 23 at 9:00 when we'll tackle the Fireside Room. Anyone who can give a couple of hours is more than welcomed, and just as a reminder, if you come to help, it doesn't mean you are obligated to come every time.

Thoughts from an Elder: by Joe Riker

Have you dug a hole? Read Matthew 25:14-30

Not long ago, while watching our 17 year old Grandson playing Monopoly, I noted that the streets were different. Instead of the familiar Marvin Gardens, Park Place and Boardwalk, in new editions you find Sunset Boulevard, Rodeo Drive, etc. Parker Brothers has made Monopoly a different game.

In any case, there's a common motif for many board games. Every player starts out with a certain amount of money, and the object is to make a lot more. As we all know, the goal in Monopoly is not only to have all the money yourself, but to wipe out everyone else so they don't have any. When everyone declares Chapter 11 except you, then you win.

Here in this Chapter of Matthew a kind of Monopoly game is being started, with one huge difference. There are three players, and the master of the house sets them each up with an initial fund and instructs them to see what they could do with the money. Let's pick up the story right there at verse 14: "[The Kingdom of Heaven] is like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand talents, to another two thousand talents, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. (Think of talents as dollars.) Then he left."

It's been a common theme in Jesus' parables so far that the math of God's kingdom is poles apart from what we ever learned in grade school or what you find printed inside the box of a Parker Brothers game. Because in this experiment, the master of the estate gives each of the men different amounts. When they pass "GO," they don't all collect \$200; in fact, one man—apparently the smartest of the three—starts the game with five times as much as the low man on the totem pole.

Now, the Bible tells us why the master does this. Note: he gave them talents "each according to his ability." The man with the greatest potential got the most, and the servant with very limited investment skills got a rather small portfolio.

And how do we as humans feel about this kind of skewed, biased math? Under the category of "unfair, unfair, unfair"; there are a lot of stories that rub the fur the wrong way. Why is it that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. We hear about those professional athletes the turn down multiple-million dollar contracts so they can get more with another team or every now and then there's a story in the paper about a person who hits the lotto jackpot TWICE! I mean the big prize. And why? They won \$25 million the first time around, and then later they match all six numbers a second time.

Well enough whining. In this parable you know all along, it's been clear that God represents the master. He's the one who know His servants; He's the one who determines who will receive what talents and in what amounts. He's the One who issues the challenge and who provides the resources for this grand project. And of course, ultimately, we all report to Him because we're all in this story, aren't we? You've got funds to manage and so do I.

And yet it might be well to amend our story a bit, or perhaps to grow in our understanding. Is it possible that Jesus Himself—who is also God, to be sure—was representing Himself in this Matthew parable? After all, in actual fact, he did indeed depart this world and return to heaven leaving behind men and women with an assignment to work hard in His absence.

Thoughts from an Elder: Continued

That adds some real dynamic urgency to the story for you and me. If it's Jesus who has placed these talents, these gifts, in your hands and in mine, wouldn't we want to do the very best for Him?

Remember the scripture said "Then he left." And in verse 19 it continues "After a long absence, the master... came back and settled up with them." Well a question comes to mind. How long is a "long absence"? We don't know. How many months or years was this master away? We don't know. Did he ever call in, or give them a pager number? We don't know. Was it longer than they expected? We don't know. But Matthew says that it was a long and unspecified time.

Now if we think of Jesus as being this master doesn't the parallel give us something to think about? He's been gone a long time, hasn't He? Far longer than most Christians ever thought it would be. Some thought they would live to see Him come back in the clouds. Some early Christians were positive it would only be a few months or years or decades that have now spread out to over 2000 years.

And so what's the lesson? Very simply this. The good servants just kept on working for their Master until He gets back. They don't get discouraged. They don't ever say, "Well, I've done enough"—and quit. They don't assume that the experiment has been canceled and cash in the funds for themselves. They simply keep on working with those talents, growing them, expanding them, adding to them... they work.

Which takes me right to the second conclusion. What would it feel like to meet Jesus on the great Homecoming Day and have to report that we did absolutely nothing with the gifts he gave us? In all that time. How would that feel?

When Jesus asks very gently: "I gave you 70, 80, or so years, what did you do?" "Uh, nothing." "I gave you the ability to earn money. What'd you do with that?" "Uh, nothing there either, Lord." "I put neighbors on both sides of your house and across the street. Did you share with them, help them, lift them up, introduce them to Me?" "No, I guess I never did." "I invited you to walk with Me and experience obedience and character growth? Did you do that?" "No, I'm afraid I didn't do that either. I meant to, but..."

Can you imagine what a sad experience that would be? Not because Jesus is a harsh judge, a cruel boss with a miserly, forbidding scowl. But because he was so generous! Listen to him: "The Kingdom of Heaven is for you...and it's done so much. What can you do—What HAVE you done—for My kingdom and My Father's kingdom."

The basic premise of the Christian faith is that we all are workers. We may work in different ways, our abilities may differ, but there is one common denominator. We all have something to tell about Jesus. And maybe that's the one ability: every single man and woman in the kingdom has been given. Others may have more, but we all do have that one gift: the ability to say something about the wonderful master we serve, Jesus Christ.

So let's ask ourselves this: have we been waiting on the sidelines? Have we invested zero so far? Have we dug a little hole in the dirt and put our gifts in there? Well, the Good News is this: We can dig those talents up right now! Shovels can bury, but they can also dig up! We can start today. The investment game for Jesus is still going on. Others may have already climbed higher than you, dreamed more and achieved more. But it's not too late for you to begin right now.

Thoughts from an Elder: Continued

And what's at the finish? I did a little bit of Bible math and figured out that even the man with just one talent had been given 20 years salary to invest. It was actually a whole lot of money! And then notice how God, the grateful owner, says to the good workers: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with small things. Now I have some big things for you!" And we think to ourselves: small? An amount equal to 6000 days' salary is small?

Well, if that's true, can you and I possibly imagine the wonderful things God has in store for us? His promise is that it will be bigger, more challenging and wonderful and abundant and rewarding then. Even a mountain as high as Mt. Everest will seem like nothing compared to the mountain peaks Jesus will lead us to scale together with Him.

Yes, your climb, and mine, begins right now.

DEACONS DOINGS

The Deacons will host the annual HARVEST DINNER on Sunday, November 15, after worship. This is a time to give thanks for the goodness of God as we enjoy the gifts from the earth. We'll have chili spuds, salads and desserts. The Stewardship Committee will be available to answer any questions you might have regarding the 2021 Proposed Budget. A basket will be available to receive your 2021 Pledges for those who have completed their cards.

Deacons will also provide a soup lunch on November 22 so we're nourished before the Greening of the Church as we head into the Advent season.

FALL BAZAAR IS FAST APPROACHING

The Peace Memorial Women's Group will hold our annual FALL BAZAAR on Saturday, November 14, from 9:30 to 2:30. Due to the craziness of COVID, we have decided not to include the soup luncheon this year, but we'll still have our Kountry Kitchen and Gifts New and Used Room. We'll be meeting on Friday, the 13th, beginning at 10:00 to set up for the bazaar. You may bring your donations- those canned goods, baked goods and candies- on Friday or Saturday morning. Please bring your donations for the Gifts Room on Friday. And do keep in mind that your used items should be appropriate for regifting, not rummage sales (PLEASE- no clothes).

As always, the Women's Group thanks the congregation for the support you give us.

Music Notes

At various times and in many places we hear and or have sung this inspiring hymn, **Amazing Grace**. The words penned in 1779 by John Newton are beloved by many. At age 10, a bullied John Newton became proficient in Latin while attending boarding school and even later acquired a Latin Bible. Being clever, outspoken and a direct person he soon found himself entertaining fellow "shanghaied" sailors on a warship with witty poems and songs, among them a parody of the 23rd psalm. Tied to the mast for insubordination and lashed 96 times, his life became dark. Much later as captain of his ship which purchased natives from Africa and resold them in the West Indies Islands, he acknowledged the transforming hand of God in his life and became a messenger for God. The hymn words are timeless. Verses 1 through 3 are credited to John Newtons poetry, verse 4 is ascribed to him. Verse 5 comes from The Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790. The melody is an Early American Harmony from Virginia.

Stewardship & Finance Committee

Financial Report

September 2020

At a glance

Operating Inc.:	\$9,192.00
Operating Exp.:	\$8,921.56
Monthly Net:	\$270.44
Ckg Acct Bal 9/30	\$33,481.32
MMkt Bal 9/30	\$45,373.64

September 2020

Here is our monthly update on finance:

August Operating Income: \$9,192.00

Expenses: \$8,921.56 Net: **\$270.44**

YTD Net: \$1,144.36

Hello Friends!

Welcome to Fall! Seems like summer just disappeared very quickly and things seemed to get very busy in October. There will be a lot of activity reported next month in regards to October expenses, such as payroll taxes, insurance, some landscaping activity and preparing for the upcoming new year.

The stewardship drive will begin in November, and we will be handing out or mailing the proposed budget package and explanation to you.

We hope that if you have any questions regarding our finances, you will come to an elder or your finance committee. We are happy to help and want to be an open book for your questions. Your pledges go directly into the checking account.

The operating budget is a zero-based, year-to-year budget. This helps us to track our expenses and keep spending to what is necessary for our church home to operate efficiently. It looks like we will enter the new year with more than adequate carry over in our checking account.

Our savings account, or money market account is what we refer to as restricted funds, and is not a part of general operations. These monies require session approval to be accessed for projects specific to a category use. Members and friends can donate to these categories at any time. They are not part of your pledge. If you wish to donate to one of these categories, it would be a separate transaction. The categories are:

Building Fund: Used for specific projects or repairs to the building.

Memorial Fund: Money donated in honor of a loved one. These can be used for specific projects with the donors permission.

Special Projects Fund: Used for a project that does not fit into other categories.

Sexton Maintenance Fund: This is a fund for the rental house behind the church to complete needed upgrades or repairs.

Equipment Fund: Part of Building & Grounds. To be used for equipment only, such as lawn mowers, weed eaters, etc.

Worship Fund: Used for larger non-budgeted items such as Bible or Hymnal replacement.

Organ Repair Fund: New category specifically for organ repairs that can sometimes be quite costly. (Pending approval.)

Endowment Fund: We are holding our endowment fund in this savings account until such time as the committee chooses a safe investment account. Originally set up for use for youth missions and education.

ODOT Sidewalk Fund: The church received payment for a right-of-way. We have used this for parking lot repairs recently.

Many thanks to you all for your support! I hope this information is of help to you as we get ready for the upcoming year.

Many Blessings,
Kathy Todd



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

Romans

11/1 - Romans VI
"Christ the Second Adam"
Romans 5:12-21

11/8 - Romans VII
"Sin's Dominion Broken"
Romans 6

11/15 - Romans VIII
"The Nature of Deliverance"
Romans 7

11/22 - Romans IX
"Heart of the Gospel: More than Victors"
Romans 8

11/29 - Romans X
"God's Righteousness in History"
Romans 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.*

