

# *The Master's Message*

## *The Newsletter of the Church of the Master*

### *October, 2022*

*Virtual Adult Bible Study*  
*Wednesday, 7:00 PM*  
*Saturday, 12:00*

*2783 Lafayette Avenue*  
*Bronx, N.Y. 10465*  
*718-597-6298*

*Sunday Worship*  
*Sunday 11:00 am*

*cotm47@verizon.net*  
*Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor*

### *The Way...*

I looked for hope and did not find it;  
I looked for faith and could not pray –  
I looked for joy and just felt sadness;  
I looked for God and found the way!

Hope C. Oberhelman

### *True Faith*

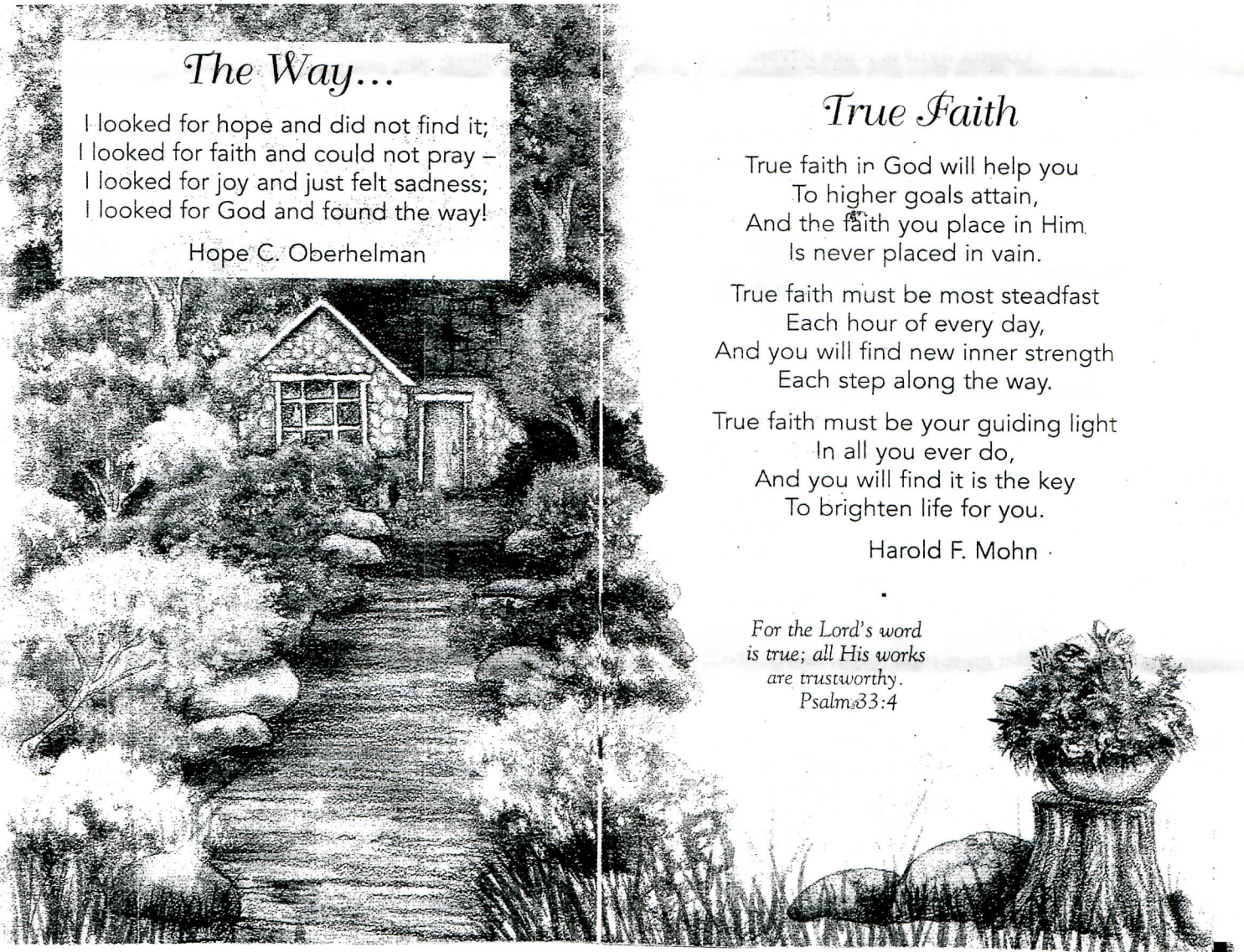
True faith in God will help you  
To higher goals attain,  
And the faith you place in Him  
Is never placed in vain.

True faith must be most steadfast  
Each hour of every day,  
And you will find new inner strength  
Each step along the way.

True faith must be your guiding light  
In all you ever do,  
And you will find it is the key  
To brighten life for you.

Harold F. Mohn

*For the Lord's word*  
*is true; all His works*  
*are trustworthy.*  
*Psalm:33:4*



## SPECIAL DATES\*

- Pastor Appreciation Month
- World Communion Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Reformation Sunday, October 30<sup>th</sup>
- Reformation Day, October 31<sup>st</sup>

## \*News From the Pews\*



Continued healing for:  
Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,  
Loretta Byrd & Alice Rivera

Everyone is invited to join our virtual "**Hour of Prayer Power**" every Wednesday at 12:00. The conference call-in number is 605-475-4860, code: 371231#

Our virtual **Bible Study** meets Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 12:00. Contact Ron Rivera (917-716-8273) for information on joining

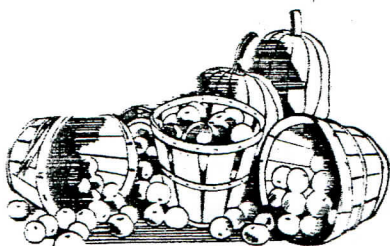
## Cents-ible stewardship

During a children's sermon, the pastor gave each child two pennies and told them to put one in each hand. "With full hands," he asked, "how would you do other things, like drink a glass of juice?" They'd have to let go of one penny. (Likewise, adults must be willing to "let go" of material goods and desires to worship God alone.)

The pastor let the children keep the coins. When my 5-year-old returned to her seat, I suggested she could put them in the offering. Her quite loud response was, "NO! I need more money!" (Maybe my at-home talks about generosity — not to mention the kids message — hadn't sunk in?) Granted, giving is a tough concept, even for grown-ups. But adults would gladly give away "worthless" pennies.

When the offering plate came by, my daughter put in her pennies all by herself. "Now maybe some little girl can eat tonight," she said. God's prompting may take some time to change our hearts. But may we all give so freely of ourselves and give up what seems important at the time.

—Julie Lee



## \*CHURCH CHUCKLES\*

All eyes were on the radiant bride as her father escorted her down the aisle. They reached the altar and the waiting groom. The bride kissed her father and placed something in his hand. The guests in the front pews responded with ripples of laughter. Even the priest smiled broadly. As her father gave her away in marriage, the bride gave him back his credit card.

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A Sunday school teacher was telling her students the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked them, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, wounded and bleeding, what would you do?"

A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd throw up."

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## CHURCH NOTES

When the pastor finishes today's sermon, please join us in singing "Joy to the World:"

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A Sunday school teacher said to her children, "We have been learning how powerful kings and queens were in Bible times. But there is a Higher Power. Can anybody tell me what it is?"

One child blurted out. "Aces!"

## New seat, new perspective

In older sitcoms, family members, especially parents, each had their own chair in the living room. No one else sat there. If its "owner" wasn't present, the on-set chair remained empty. Church can be like that too, with people claiming the same seat week after week. Our view of the service and of fellow worshippers is familiar and comfortable.

Recently, our family was "bumped" back a bit, which felt surprisingly different at first. But we interacted just the same with the service. As a bonus, I talked with different people. And after church we stayed to visit a bit longer.

I'm glad church seats don't have nameplates. And I'm thankful that God nudges me out of my comfort zone from time to time, giving me a new perspective.

—Janna Firestone

♥ *We learn something from everyone who passes through our lives... Some lessons are painful, some are painless... but all are priceless.*

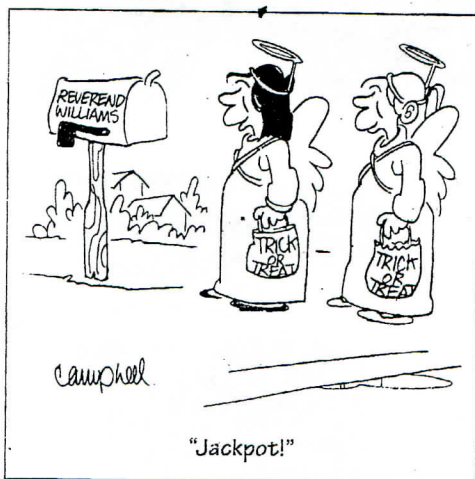
## Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty

Did you know that most human beings like certainty? We are hardwired to want to know what is happening when and to notice things that feel threatening to us. When things feel uncertain or when we don't generally feel safe, it's normal to feel stressed. This very reaction, while there to protect us, can cause all sorts of havoc when there is a sense of uncertainty and conflicting information around us.

A large part of anxiety comes from a sense of what we think we should be able to control, but can't. Right now, many of us continue to worry about COVID-19, Monkeypox, Polio, etc. We may feel helpless about what will happen or what we can do to prevent further stress. The uncertainty might also connect to our uncertainty about other aspects of our lives, or remind us of past times when we didn't feel safe and the immediate future was uncertain.

In times like these, our mental health can suffer. We don't always know it's happening. You might feel more on edge than usual, angry, helpless or sad. You might notice that you are more frustrated with others or want to completely avoid any reminders of what is happening. For those who already struggle with our mental wellness, we might feel more depressed or less motivated to carry out our daily activities. It's important to note that we are not helpless in light of current news events. We can always choose our response. If you are struggling, here are some things you can do to take care of your mental health in the face of uncertainty:

- Separate what is in your control from what is not.
- Do what helps you feel a sense of safety.
- Get outside in nature - even if you are avoiding crowds.
- Challenge yourself to stay in the present.
- Stay connected and reach out to trusted friends if you need more support.



## The beauty of learning



There is divine beauty in learning. ... To learn means to accept the postulate that life did not begin at my birth. Others have been here before me, and I walk in their footsteps.

The books I have read were composed by generations of fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, teachers and disciples. I am the sum total of their experiences, their quests. And so are you.

—Elie Wiesel

## Living in the present

During Martin Luther's great struggle to reform the church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Holy Roman Emperor sought to silence him. So he spent some lonely months in Wartburg Castle under protective custody. There, as he fought despair, Luther scribbled the words "I am baptized" on his desktop as a reminder that he was living according to an ongoing call from God. He did not write, "I *was* baptized" but used the present-tense verb. For he rightly understood that in his baptism, God had adopted him as his son, and no human could take that from him.

Later, in his *Large Catechism*, Luther wrote: "To be baptized in God's name is to be baptized not by human beings but by God himself. Although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God's own act."

—from *The Wired Word*



- "If you feel like you're losing everything, remember that trees lose their leaves every year and they still stand tall and wait for better days to come."

—Unknown

- "Laughter is the shortest distance between two people."

—Victor Borge

- "I am always doing what I cannot do yet, in order to learn how to do it."

—attributed to Vincent van Gogh

## Always room in God's kingdom

Jesus told a parable about a man who invited his friends and neighbors to a banquet, but they declined. So he told his servants to go find anyone who was hungry or lonely or in need. Still there was room. "Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in," the host said, "so that my house will be full" (Luke 14:23, NIV).

In *Searching for Sunday*, Rachel Held Evans retells this story and writes: "This is what God's kingdom is like: a bunch of outcasts and oddballs gathered at a table, not because they are rich or worthy or good, but because they are hungry, because they said yes. And there's always room for more."

We're all "outcasts and oddballs" in one way or another! May we know that God warmly invites us to his banquet — for no reason but that we're hungry.

**I wonder how many will join me in saying... Despite all my problems, my aches and pains, and things happening outside of my control, God has been SO GOOD — to me. Amen**

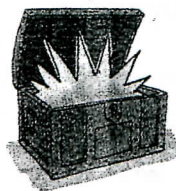
## No lone-ranger Christians

World Communion Sunday, celebrated this year on October 2, reminds us there's no such thing as solitary Christianity. "As Christians we're called to belong, not just to believe," writes Rick Warren. "We are not meant to live lone-ranger lives; instead, we are to belong to Christ's family and be members of his body."

After all, Christian fellowship can't occur without fellow Christians. We can't learn the intricacies of the Bible and theology without preachers and teachers. We don't baptize ourselves. We don't take Holy Communion alone; in fact, the sacrament's very name refers to interaction with God and others.

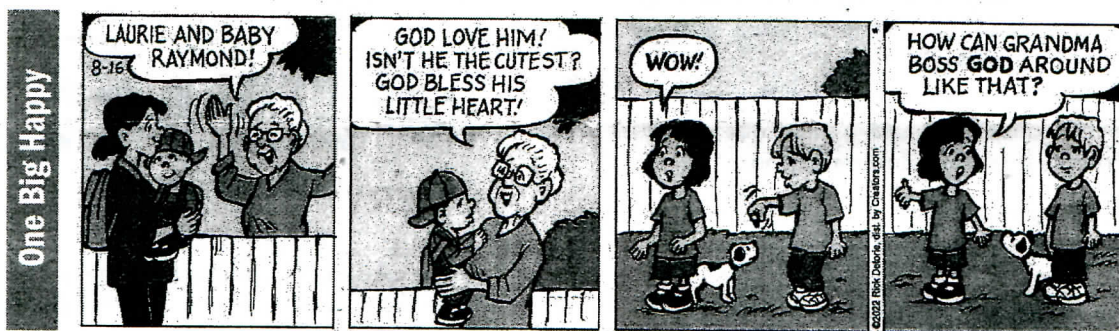
The New Testament clearly states that one cannot be Christian all alone. We are members of Christ's body (Ephesians 5:30). We belong to the family of believers (Galatians 6:10). We are "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Peter 2:9, NRSV). So don't be a lone ranger or a stranger — to worship or to Holy Communion!

## Hidden blessings



Dear friend, God may send you some valuable gifts wrapped in unattractive paper. But do not worry about the wrappings, for you can be sure that inside he has hidden treasures of love, kindness and wisdom. If we will simply take what he sends and trust him for the blessings inside, we will learn the meaning of the secrets of his providence, even in times of darkness.

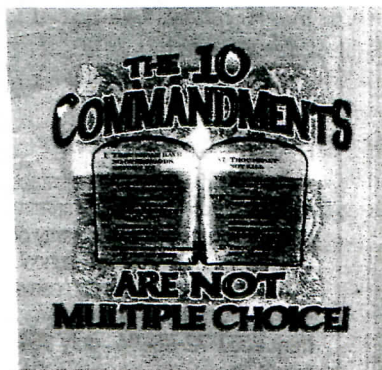
—A.B. Simpson

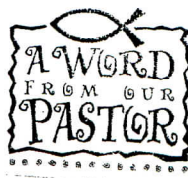


## Keeping the Sabbath

Oh, what a blessing is Sunday, interposed between the waves of worldly business like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan! There is nothing in which I would advise you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath day holy. I can truly declare that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable.

—William Wilberforce





September 22, 2022,

As I was prayerfully reflecting on what I should write for the Pastor's article in the September 2022 Edition of our Church Newsletter, *The Master's Message*, I came upon this September 2020 Newsletter Article I wrote about prayer when we were in the throes of the terrible, world-wide Covid-19 pandemic. Looking back to see where the Lord God has brought us from in the early days of the pandemic to where we are today, I contend that we have all experienced and benefitted from the power of prayer! I am not of the opinion that the pandemic is entirely ended, but I see the hand of God moving and bringing us out of this unprecedented health crisis. With that in mind, I offer you this reprinted September 2020 Newsletter article. I pray that it will be a blessing as you reflect back on where the Lord has brought us from! Please do not cease to pray that the Lord will continue to break the teeth of this terrible virus and pandemic and bring us, our loved ones, our country and indeed the world, to a full and complete recovery from this pandemic.

*Pastor*

***"It's Time to Pray: We Ought Always to Pray and Not to Faint"***

***September 2020***

Luke's gospel tells us that Jesus spoke a parable to his disciples "... that men ought always to pray, and not faint" (Luke 18:1). If ever there was a time for people everywhere to pray, that time is now! It's time to pray as never before. Given all of the evil and unprecedented recent events a world-wide Covid-19 pandemic, over 160,000 souls lost in the United States and undoubtedly hundreds of thousands more have died from the virus around the world; millions of people afflicted by the virus in hospitals on ventilators; families unable to say goodbye to their loved ones—unable to be by their bedside to comfort them as they transition; nurses, doctors and EMTs, police, firefighters, postal workers, teachers and childcare workers, transit workers, public utility workers, grocery clerks, food service workers and other essential personnel who have been at the front lines in this battle have lost their lives endeavoring to serve others so that they hopefully will not be afflicted by the virus. Our leaders and elected officials are bickering and fighting among themselves instead of coming together to help us defeat this virus and eradicate its spread and heal the hurt of our nation and peoples! Millions of people are unemployed due to no fault of their own when their jobs were shut-down; millions of small business owners have lost their businesses—businesses that they and their families have worked to build over their entire life times; children are unable to attend school; parents are struggling to work and school their children while in-person learning has been replaced by remote learning; children are getting sick and losing their lives to this virus that has no respect of persons; churches and houses of worship unable to open their doors and continue to serve their congregations and communities with much needed spiritual and community-based food programs and childcare programs; and the struggle to keep our sanity and our faith compels us

all to pray always and everyday—to pray our nation and our families through these trials and tribulations!

A few months ago, Elder Don, the Vice President of our Consistory at Church of the Master, had an epiphany from the Holy Spirit. He shared with me that the Holy Spirit had placed in his spirit that we have been given and inherited all the power that Jesus has been given as joint heirs with Christ Jesus. But, we have not been unleashing this great power of prayer! Elder Don shared that he has begun to pray asking God to unleash this power of prayer in him as he prayed for others in need of God's intervention in their circumstances and situations. Elder Don shared that many of those he had prayed for in this manner had gotten results—many were healed and delivered! Elder Don did not take any credit for their healing and deliverance but gave God all the glory for what he had done using Elder Don as an instrument to unleash the power of prayer.

Thanks and praise be to God, our Church of the Master "Hour of Prayer Power" was born! Every Wednesday at 12 Noon -1:00 PM members and friends of Church of the Master call in at (605) 475-4860, Code: 371231#. During this time, we join in collective prayer to unleash the power of prayer that is within each of us, our combined power of prayer is going forth faithfully. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We believe further what Jesus said "And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith" (Matt. 21:22).

I wanted to share this below link with you to access the article "The 7 Secrets of Effective Intercession" by Betsey Lee, found at <https://www.prayerleader.com/7-secrets-of-effective-prayer-ventures>. Prayer Ventures is a Christ-centered biblically-based ministry that offers retreats and resources to help people grow in prayer. Prayer Ventures has given permission to duplicate and freely share this article with others. If we want to grow and increase our ability to pray effective prayers for others to get results, I strongly recommend Prayer Ventures article "The 7 Secrets of Effective Intercession." May God bless and strengthen your prayer life and prayer power! Please stay safe and be well.

Shalom to you now,

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden  
Pastor  
Church of the Master

