



From the Pastor

Why is it important for us to live in Community? While this is mostly a general, human question, it is equally an important Christian question as we are called to coexist with others within the body of believers. The need for community is quite nearly a necessity for the survival of humanity. I say nearly, because there are always going to be exceptions to the rule in terms of those who feel a need for community. There most always seem to be a few individuals who pursue complete and utter isolation and who cannot seem to function any other way. And then there are others who in obtaining that level of isolation do not seem to thrive very well at all, with the occasional loner making their way into the news.



As history has shown us, even the early monks who initially sought out seclusion ultimately began building communities of people sharing the same mind-set.

One of my favorite Christian writers, Fr. Henri Nouwen, puts it this way: "When we claim and constantly reclaim the truth of being the chosen ones, we soon discover within ourselves a deep desire to reveal to others their own chosenness. Instead of making us feel that we are better, more precious or valuable than others, our awareness of being chosen opens our eyes to the chosen-ness of others. That is the great joy of being chosen: the discovery that others are chosen as well. In the house of God there are many mansions. There is a place for everyone - a unique, special place. Once we deeply trust that we ourselves are precious in God's eyes, we are able to recognize the preciousness of others and their unique places in God's heart." — Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World*

Therefore, when we come to realize that the vast majority of people do not seek isolation, the community that you are drawn to becomes an essential part of your life. I am certain that there are many communities that make people worse than they were when they arrived, however, I am confident that there are numerous communities that have improved people as well. For this reason, community is of the upmost importance. It is through community that we are shaped into the person that we are meant to be.

In regards to the Christian community, we find this to be of far greater significance. Christianity is a religion that thrives on participation. It seeks involvement from us, not for our salvation, but in response to our salvation. As Christians, when we reach the point where we truly comprehend that we are already saved by the act of Christ giving up his life for us, we are freed to react to that salvation. We are freed of the burden of feeling that we must perform specific acts in order to save ourselves. Instead, we find the freedom to answer in ways that give glory back to God for the salvation that has been so freely and graciously given to us.

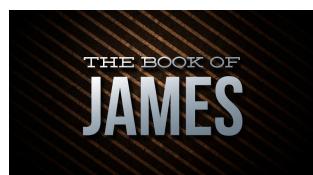
It is at this point that community becomes our lifeblood. Community becomes the place where we join with others to give God the glory for our salvation. Without community, how do we respond? Can we effectively choose not to participate? I suppose we can try. However, our salvation is far more than just another item to check off on the bucket list of life. Through our salvation we are adopted and accepted into God's eternal family. If we choose not to go to a place where we can celebrate this together in unity, then how do we keep the joy and excitement associated with our salvation from dying on the vine? I'm afraid that our salvation mutates from joy into complacency. The Good News

that should bring the most joy to our hearts on a daily basis instead ends up in the recycle bin with the rest of yesterday's tired stories. On this basis, are we still saved? Salvation is from God, what we do isn't part of that equation. However, if we are saved, it seems to me that we should act like it.

If being in "community" is important to our Christian life then let's live it by being a part of it. Here are some ways that you might draw closer: by attending church events, by attending worship services more frequently, by sharing fellowship after services, by attending bible studies, by getting involved in committees or small groups. If you don't particularly see a small group that fits your Schedule or interests, start one! If there is a ministry need in the community, then make it aware to the church leadership/pastor and offer to start a ministry team to meet the need. There is no limit to what we can create if the interest and the energy is there!

In a nutshell, the Christian community is simply those who love Jesus and live in fellowship with each other. And when the world sees this in action, they will see the true love of Jesus and perhaps find themselves attracted to Christ by our example. How can we lose? Let's be God's community!

Pastor Tim



Pastor's Bible Study

Beginning Thursday May 6, we will begin a new in-person Bible study featuring the Book of James.

Materials will be provided at the class, please bring your own Bible. Start time will be 7:00 p.m. We will also hopefully be putting this on Facebook Live. Hope you can join this study.



Mother's Day Breakfast

A Mother's Day Breakfast will be hosted by our men on Mother's Day, May 9, at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome, please join us!!



Graduate Recognition Sunday

Graduate Recognition Sunday will be held on Sunday, May 23. Please let the church office know of those graduating from high school or college by May 10.

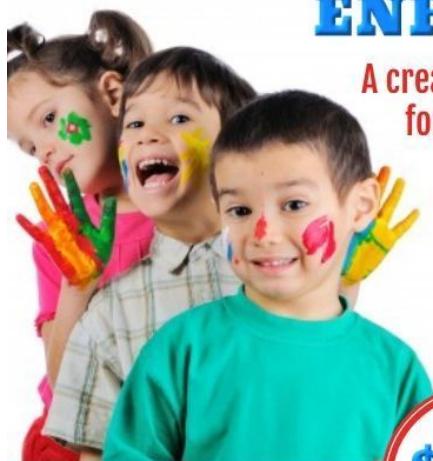
VBC Preschool

The Victoria Baptist Church Nursery School students have been celebrating all month long. Easter, our 100th day of school, and Earth Day have been exciting occasions to enjoy and utilize to learn more about God's love.



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Tithes and Offerings

As we strive to maintain the ministry of our church, we hope and pray you will continue to tithe during this time.

For online bill pay or mail in offerings (please no cash), send to:

P.O. Box 911
Victoria, VA 23974

We have added online giving and text giving for your convenience. There is no charge to the church or you to use it through the rest of this calendar year. To give you have three options now:

1. Mail
in
Offering
2. Click
here
to
give
3. Text
GiveVBC
to
73256

We appreciate your faithful support to Victoria Baptist Church as we weather these difficult days.

OUR GIFTS TO GOD FOR APRIL 25, 2021

REGULAR OFFERING (weekly goal \$3,619.67) \$2,527.00

BUILDING FUND \$50.00

TOTAL \$2,577.00



Remember Those on our Prayer List and Our Shut-Ins During this Difficult Time:

PRAYER LIST UPDATES - Names in bold print are new this week to our prayer list or are experiencing new difficulties. If you have a family member or loved one on our prayer list, please contact the Church Office with an update. If the Lord has answered prayers and all is well, please ask us to remove their name from our list.

You can help our shut-ins by writing a letter, sending a card or giving a call! Phone calls are an especially good way for them to hear your voice and be comforted during this time of isolation. No visitors please as we observe social distancing and respect the rules of nursing and care facilities.

PRAYER CONCERNS 4/25/2021

Members Who Need Prayer

Buddy Whittaker
Bay Tomlinson
Susan Hawks
Millie and Jon Coffman
Dianne Griffin
Stephanie Millican Powell
Peppi and Gary Dayton
Elizabeth Lacks
Claude and Sandra Tomlinson
Roger Pennell

Peggy Green
Vernon and Jean Harding
Tammy Moody
Suzi Sherwood
Ella Harrell
Lucille Wood
Alice Mauer
Holly Crenshaw
Margie Paynter
Nancy Crenshaw

In Our Community - Keep In Your Prayers

Philip Kallam
Nancy Green
Martha Clark
Helen Fitzgerald
Dr. Andrew Apostle
Rev. Mike Day
Amanda Garrison
Jonathan Stroup
Ray Martin
Peggy Townsend
Danny Dawson

Carol Driver
Kevin Ashworth
Mark Coming
Trevor Pegrann
Christy Fanus
Bill Finch
Kimberly Smith
Jason Peele
Rev. Dan Lipp
William Marker

SYMPATHY to the family and friends of Marilyn V. Coffee

PRAYER LIST UPDATES - Names in bold print are new this week to our prayer list or are experiencing new difficulties. If you have a family member or loved one on our prayer list, please contact the Church Office with an update. *If the Lord has answered prayers and all is well, please ask us to remove their name from our list. We want to include everyone who needs our prayers, so please keep us informed. Thank you.*

AWAY FROM HOME PRAYER CONCERNS

| | |
|---|---|
| Phyllis Hood Heritage Hall 900 S. Main Street Blackstone, VA 23824 | Nancy Smith Hundley Center 125 Buena Vista Circle South Hill, VA 23970 |
| Wayne Pennell Chase City Nursing and Rehab 5539 Highway 49 Chase City, VA 23924 | Anne Hudson Heritage Hall, Room 203 900 S. Main Street Blackstone, VA 23824 |
| Betty Schumaker Amelia Nursing and Rehabilitation Center 8830 Virginia Street Amelia, VA 23002 | Jackie Clement Heritage Hall, Room 126 900 S. Main Street Blackstone, VA 23824 |
| Faye Loury Heritage Hall 900 S. Main Street Blackstone, VA 23824 | |

SHUT-INS

Louie and Jean Overton, 2003 6th Street, Victoria, VA 23974
Betty and Aubrey Lindsey, 1505 Tidewater Avenue, Victoria, VA 23974



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