

The Courier

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May 2021

Court Street United Methodist Church

Loving

I John 4:8 says, “*God is love*”. We know this. We heard it as children. It’s perhaps the most quoted verse in the Bible. We teach children the song, “*Jesus loves me, this I know.*” We see buttons and stickers, bookmarks and greeting cards which all say some version of “*God loves you.*” We have many reminders of God’s love. Years ago, I told myself many times a day, “*God loves me.*” Still, do we really get it? Do we really understand how much he loves us? We cannot possibly comprehend the depths of God’s love for us. Yet, do we have some deep appreciation of his love? Have we apprehended it? Do we sing songs of joy knowing his love? Or do we sing out of obligation, knowing that we should praise him, after all he has done for us? Does the love of God grip our hearts? If not, then why not? My idea on this is that we expect ourselves to earn God’s love, which only blocks us from receiving his love. Earned love really is not love. We cannot obligate God in any way, shape or form. We minimize how truly loving God is when we claim any merit for it. God loves us because his nature is to love. We deserve his wrath. He loves us despite of what we deserve, not because of it. We can do nothing to earn his love. He gives us his love. Learning to receive God’s love is a process. We need time and help to receive his love. We need to give ourselves grace in the process. Expecting ourselves to have it all figured out now only blocks our healing process. Psalm 36:5-9 says, “*Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O Lord, you preserve both man and beast. How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.*” We need light to see God’s love. We need a revelation of his love to awaken our hearts to it. Romans 5:7-8 says, “*Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us.*” God has shown us his love in sending his own Son to die for us. What more could he do? God loved us even when we were dead in sin. We did nothing to earn it. God loves because he is love.

~ *Pastor Bill Burleigh*

GOD LOVES YOU. ALWAYS HAS, ALWAYS WILL.

Musical Musings

Inspirational songs for Pentecost

Excerpts from an article on [The Christian Post](#) by [Michael Gryboski](#). Gryboski pens a regular column titled “This week in Christian history,” which briefly sums up the anniversaries of notable events in the long and diverse past of Christianity.

Pentecost Sunday is a major holy day on the liturgical calendar that hundreds of millions of Christians observe every year. Pentecost falls 50 days after Easter, and commemorates the events of Acts 2:1–13, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and the early Church with tongues of fire. Many churches celebrate Pentecost with sanctuary decorations featuring the color red, young people undergoing confirmation, and a broad selection of sacred music to choose from. Here are inspirational hymns that are often used for Pentecost Sunday. They include popular pieces from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing ~ Hymn No. 57

One of the most notable hymns from prolific songwriter Charles Wesley, “O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” was written in 1739 to commemorate his born-again Christian experience the year before. The original hymn text has 18 stanzas. The seventh stanza eventually became the first in the hymn text most commonly used in the English speaking world. “The hymn was first published in *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* (1780). The significance of this hymn in the Methodist tradition is symbolized by its appearance as the first hymn in the *United Methodist Hymnal* (1989).”

Breathe on me, breath of God ~ Hymn No. 420

Nineteenth century British scholar and Oxford University faculty member Edwin Hatch wrote “Breathe on me, Breath of God” as a musical prayer. The repeated stanza opening alludes to Bible verses like Genesis 2:7, in which God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being” as well as John 20:22, which describes Jesus breathing on his disciples and saying “Receive the Holy Spirit.” “This hymn prays that God will breathe on us and fill us with life anew, even as God breathed life into Adam. It prays that God will breathe on us to purify our hearts,” [stated sermonwriter.com](#). “It prays that God will breathe on us until we are wholly devoted to God. It prays that God will breathe on us so that we might never die.”

O Thou Who Camest From Above ~ Hymn No. 501

Another hymn from Charles Wesley, “O Thou Who Camest From Above” was originally published in *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* in 1762. According to the Rev. Dr. Norma Lee Kerns Barnhart, the basis for the hymn was Leviticus 6:13, “The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall never go out.” “This passage is the Lord speaking to Moses to command Aaron and his sons about the ritual of the burnt offering,” [wrote Barnhart](#).

Come Down, O Love Divine ~ Hymn No. 475

“Come Down, O Love Divine” traces its origins to the fifteenth century, having been authored by Bianco da Siena of Venice and published in a book entitled *Spiritual Hymns*. In the nineteenth century, the hymn was translated into English, along with several other da Siena works, by a British priest named Richard Littledale. “This hymn is a prayer—an impassioned plea for God to come down from heaven to reside in our hearts and set our hearts afire with a holy flame. It prays that God will shine a glorious light to illumine our pathway,” [stated sermonwriter.com](#).

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart ~ Hymn No. 500

An Anglican minister born in Dublin, Ireland named George Croly wrote the popular hymn “Spirit of God, Descend Upon my Heart,” originally publishing it in the 1850s. Croly wrote several sacred music pieces for his lower class London-based congregation, however this one was the only one known of in the present day. “The words of this sung prayer are among the most passionate in the history of hymnody,” [wrote C. Michael Hawn](#), professor of sacred music at Perkins School of Theology. “... there is a floating quality to the ending of each stanza, reminiscent of the hovering of the descending Dove, one of the metaphors of the Spirit.”

MAY’S ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS

May 2: “**God Declares Who God Is**”

In-person classes resume after worship service.

May 9: “**God in the Quiet Sound**”

May 16: “**Jesus Transformed**”

May 23: “**The Indestructible King**”

May 30: “**God is Love**”

EXAM SURVIVAL KITS!! our students in college are getting “Finals Care Boxes” from the members. Our college students can always count on Court Street to send them a treat to let them know we are thinking of them and hoping for great success in their studies.



Care packages were sent to: Julia McConnell ~ attending Virginia Tech; William Sweeney ~ attending ODU; Chaz Sweeney ~ attending CVCC; and Jenny Burleigh Lloyd ~ attending Grad school for her Doctorate at Shenandoah University. We are so proud of our students and their persistence, especially during a pandemic!

IN-PERSON WORSHIP SCHEDULED TO RETURN MAY 9TH!!! Please join us for worship service starting at 9:30am. The church will follow COVID rules. Masks are required as well as social distancing; we can have printed bulletins AND if you are fully vaccinated you can sing the hymns while masked. A recording of the service will still be available for those who are unable or not ready to return in-person. **Worship service time has changed to 9:30am with Sunday School to follow.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RETURNS MAY 9TH!! Plan to join the Sunday School class downstairs after worship for our weekly lessons. Even if you had never attended before; we encourage you to join us in fellowship as we continue our studies of the bible and how it leads us in our daily lives.

FROM BISHOP SHARMA LEWIS:

Hello Virginia Annual Conference: We are beginning to see, in falling case numbers and rising vaccination rates, the promise of a new day. Last year I created the Back to In-Person Worship Work Group to help us employ the best practices in fighting the pandemic as we returned to worship. Later, I created an additional Mission and Ministry Work Group to extend that work to other forms of ministry in the life of the church. The dedicated clergy and lay people who have served on these groups have done exceptional work, committing many hours on a weekly basis to helping us develop policies using the best expertise available.

However, the pandemic is not over and the resources created by these groups are still important for our churches. **As of May 1**, I am discontinuing the two work groups, (In-Person Worship and Mission & Ministry), with gratefulness for all that they have done. In their place, I am establishing a new Post-COVID Re-Entry Group (PRG) that will help us move confidently into this new day. The new group will continue to offer resources to keep us safe during the remaining months of the pandemic but it will also offer new resources that focus on doing ministry in the changed environment we now face. The Rev. Seungsoo ‘R.J.’ Jun, our new Associate Director of Serving Ministries, is convening this new group which will include members of the previous work groups.

Also, I am asking local churches to develop their own PRG teams to develop plans for worship and ministry. These groups will take the place of the Healthy Church Teams (HCTs), which have done so much great and important work on the local church level. **By July 1, all major decision-making for mitigation methods will revert to local churches.**

These changes are not an invitation to remove all restrictions. **We will still need to be vigilant for months to come and I am asking that local churches submit any new plans to their district superintendents for review after July 1.** But it is time to make this shift and to rely on the wisdom that all of our local churches have developed through this crisis.

FOR THE FULL PRESS RELEASE GO TO: <https://vaumc.org/prg/>

Birthdays and Anniversaries

May Birthdays	June Anniversaries	June Birthdays
Brad Diuguid May 01	Karen & Randy Speer June 01	Cameron Jackson June 03
John McDaniel May 04	Susan & Keith Leazer June 12	McKenzie Lynn Larkin June 07
Bill Phillips May 14	Samantha & Matthew Turner June 17	Rob McDaniel June 09
Dottie Scales May 14	Elizabeth & Josh Larkin June 23	Andy Whitehead June 16
Matthew Turner May 26	Barbara & Bobby Brown June 26	Rick Kinne June 17
Jason Brooks May 31	Ellen & David Petty June 30	Katie Thaxton June 18
		Ellen Petty June 20
		Samantha Turner June 29



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

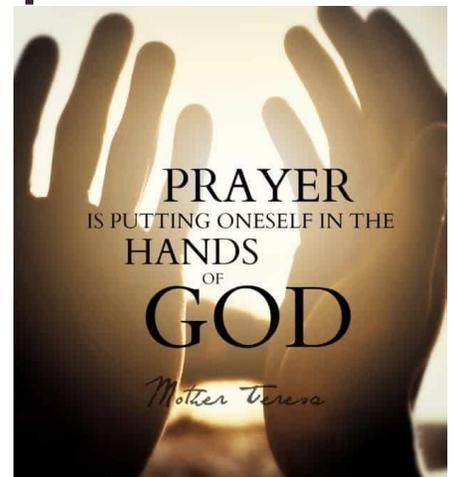
PRAYER CONCERNS

All Men and Women serving in the Military

Travis Dean Burleigh – 7425 Snowy Owl St., N. Las Vegas, NV 89084
son of Shelley and Rev. Bill Burleigh

SICK (Church members*)

- Anne Burleigh ~ 2608 Plum Branch Road, Concord, VA 24538
mother of Rev. Bill Burleigh
- Phillip Burleigh ~ brother of Rev. Bill Burleigh
- *Noel Draper - 501 VES Road Drinkard 619, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- Susan Dwyer – sister of Rev. Bill Burleigh
- *Christopher Lilly – 1705 Rivermont Ave. Apt 8, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- *Dane Peterson - 901 Jefferson Street – Apt. 3E, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- *Phil Ripley – 60 Jill Alison Circle, Ormond Beach, FL 32176
- *Alicia Speer – 1815 Rivermont Ave #68, Lynchburg, VA 24503
- *Robert Tyree – 1404 Brookville Lane, Lynchburg, VA 24502
son of *Mary Tyree, brother of *Debbie Chaffin
- * Church members



Gifts to the church

A gift was made to the church by Elaine St.Vincent's Estate.

A Memorial Service is planned for Saturday June 26th at the Old City Cemetery.

Update on Capital Campaign:

Campaign Goal	\$300,000
Promised as of 4/25/21	\$248,981
Balance needed to reach goal	\$51,019
Received to Date	\$211,266
Received since last update	\$50.00
Elevator fund	\$10,328

Court Street UMC
621 Court Street
Lynchburg Va. 24504



In worship, praise and ministry, we respond to God's call by reaching out to all people with light, hope, and a vision of God's love.

COURT STREET UMC WEBSITE: www.courtstreetmethodist.com

EMAIL: 621courtstumc@gmail.com

PHONE: 434-845-3427

Please contact the church office at:

621courtstumc@gmail.com or (434) 845-3427 on or before Wednesdays to have events and notices posted on the church website.

