



The Courier

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

September 2021

Court Street United Methodist Church

Where were you when 9/11 happened?

This is a question that seems to come up in discussions from time to time. I think it's because we all realize that, though we may not have known it at the time, almost all of us now remember vividly what we were doing the moment we found out about the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. I still have a clear memory of sitting in a court room waiting for a case to be heard by the judge. I remember that all of a sudden, the judge, the bailiff, and all who were involved in the workings of the court exited the room. When court resumed court was suspended for the day. There were many questions about what had happened. It wasn't until I got back into my vehicle and turned on the radio that I began to realize what had happened. I remember after returning home seeing footage of the planes flying into the Twin Towers. Like many people, that footage has been seared into my mind and I can still see it, even though I was a long way from New York City. It always leaves me with a sense of awe and wonder at the country's connectedness as I have met people years after September 11, 2001, and we have talked about where we were and what went through our minds on that day. It boggles my mind that someone so far away from me geographically at the time was thinking about the same event at the same time I was. As we approach the twentieth anniversary of this tragic day, I think I know why so many of us recall 9/11 so vividly and why it has impacted us so greatly: it's the power of a shared experience. As I write this, I am seeing our soldiers and civilian leaving Afghanistan after many years of war, and I'm reminded that even tragedies and terrible disasters, whether manmade or acts of God, have great power to unite people and to dispel differences. That's why America is so amazing, when something like 9/11 happens, people from Los Angeles and people from rural Montana and people from New York City and everywhere else come together. That is truly amazing and truly beautiful. And I can't help but think that this also applies to the Christian faith. No matter your faith journey, no matter how you came to find Jesus, no matter how windy your road, as believers, we are all sons and daughters of God, and we have a shared experience that is more monumental than anything else. At some point in time, we all made the same decision and we are all on the same road, with the same Savior leading us. There is a lot of tragedy, a lot of suffering, a lot of sin in our world. We see it in obvious ways like the evil that was carried out on September 11, 2001, and we see it in more subtle ways in our own hearts, but we can rejoice because God's Word tells us that he is greater than all of it. Christ has overcome the world and the sin that weighs it and us down.

~ Pastor Bill Burleigh

**FAITH IS NOT MERELY A JOURNEY FOR THE FEET,
IT IS A JOURNEY FOR THE HEART**

Musical Musings

Worship Music Versus Group Singing. What We've Gained and What We've Lost

Excerpts from an article by Phil Cooke on philcooke.com

Worship music has won the Sunday morning song battle – there's no question about that. Even in big traditional services, I've seen choirs in robes singing modern worship songs. (Admittedly, it looks strange to have a robed choir trying to be cool).

Make no mistake, I love worship music. My wife Kathleen and I often play it in the car driving around Los Angeles, and I listen to it from my phone on the road. But I also grew up before the worship music era. Back then I grew up playing the piano in church and signing classic hymns, so I have the perspective from both sides of the fence – *and here's what I've observed:*

Worship music has given a platform to remarkable musicians in the church. I'm amazed at the skill level of many church singers and band members. And with more and more school music programs being dropped, church is becoming a powerful draw to young people interested in pursuing music.

Worship music has gained the respect of music lovers *outside* the church as well. Numerous worship albums have been recognized by The Grammy Awards, as well as received other secular honors. Whether they identify with the spiritual aspects or not, they recognize the high quality and excellence of many Christian artists.

It's just good music. While I do have a beef with some simplistic songs (particularly those that repeat a single line 50 times or others that aren't even scriptural), much in the genre is very engaging. Plus there's a wide range of worship styles which makes it even more widely received and accepted.

But I do have one issue: *The congregation doesn't sing anymore.*

In most churches today, the worship time has become a concert. People love the music, but they don't know the words, and so *they just watch*. I visit churches pretty much for a living, and as I look around during the services, the vast numbers of the congregation are watching the stage and listening – *not singing*.

I get that classic hymns are a music style of the past. Back then (many of the best were written between 1750-1910) they were the worship songs of their day. They were contemporary for the times, and many were based on popular, secular tunes. But today, I understand why they're not so popular in the same way today's worship songs will be less popular 100 years from now.

So the question becomes – in spite of today's worship music often being meaningful, well done and engaging, what have we lost when a few hundred members of the congregation stand there watching 5 or 6 members of the worship team do all the singing?

Is it more important to have great music, or for the entire congregation to sing songs of praise to God? Is it either/or? Or can it be both/and?

The bottom line is that if we don't answer the question, we may be in a position where a generation from now, we'll completely lose the idea of congregational singing at all.

And since the Bible tells us over and over again to sing praises to God, *what will we have lost?*

The Chancel Choir returns September 12th!!!!

SEPTEMBER'S ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS

September 5: **"Hospitality to Strangers"**

September 12: **"Being Bold to Join"**

September 19: **"Opening the Door to Christ"**

September 26: **"Citizens of God's Household"**

Join us every Sunday after worship service in the Wesley Guild Room!!!!

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

My name is Jesse Jackson. I am delighted to come on board as your new Associate Pastor. I am both excited and hopeful regarding the wonderful opportunities that lie ahead and firmly believe that God has many great things in store for Court Street UMC.

I am the husband to my wonderful wife, Janice. We are privileged to be the parents of our eight children. They range from eighteen to one years old, four boys and four girls. We consider each of them a blessing and gift from the Lord.



Janice and I have been married for 20 years. She is from Bedford, Virginia and I am from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We met at Liberty University in the late nineties, and then moved to Philadelphia after I received my M.A.R. and M.Div. degrees. I have served in various ministerial positions, yet primarily as a Pastor, Executive Assistant to the President, Director of Admissions, and also as a Student Recruiter for Faith Theological Seminary.

Our family has established a classical/folk band that enjoys sharing the wide range of musical talents from each child, and most importantly, presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ simplistically at different venues.

I look forward to getting to know each of you and equipping "*...the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God...*" (Ephesians 4:12-13).

Yours to make Jesus Christ known,

Jesse Jackson

Jesse M. Jackson



Congratulations

We are pleased to share the announcement of the birth of Maren David White, daughter of Madeline and Barrett White. Madeline is the Virginia Conference Director of Communications. Maren weighed 7 pounds and was born August 27, 2021, at 8: 54 a.m.

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.

