

ON THE JOURNEY

A Note From Pastor Phil: *These are unprecedented times, and it seems that each week we drift a little further from what life as normal looked like just a few weeks ago. And we don't know how long this will continue. And since our spiritual lives, with church having an important role to play in our spiritual lives, cannot be put on hold for very long without showing signs of spiritual malnutrition, and if neglected long enough will die. We need to do something to feed and care for our souls. This is how I plan for us as a church to proceed in the near future, since we cannot meet as a church family each week.*

Many churches have resorted to livestreaming a service of some kind. I have decided not to do that for several reasons. One is that we are not really set up to do that. We could probably do a livestream on Facebook, but a significant number of people in church do not have Facebook and I do not want to exclude anyone from whatever we do. Another reason, and for me this is a big reason, a livestream feels to me like a TV show, or TV church. It is a monologue with no opportunity for interaction. And for those who are confined and cannot get out, that certainly has its place. To hear the Word of God proclaimed can always be a blessing and a comfort to one's soul. But church was never intended to be a show. Church should draw us into a dynamic relationship with the living God, it's a place of interaction with God and with fellow Believers. And while we do listen to a sermon, we also talk about it, along with a lot of other things. Church must be a place where we dialogue. We listen to each other's prayer concerns, then we pray, and we care for each other. In other words, there is interaction between believers, and that is what strengthens our faith. A church is a place where we interact, where we share and build faith, where we love and are loved.

So, going forward, we are going to try something new. I am planning to prepare a Bible study each week, and you will get this in the newsletter. The format is pretty simple. There will be a devotional with some Scripture readings, then a couple discussion questions. These will be designed to get us talking about our faith to people who are important to us. The discussion questions are very important. Too much of church these days is simply a consuming of religion, and it never gets integrated into people's lives in a way that shapes us into the image of Christ.

I would like for families to gather together on Sunday morning, at the same time we normally gather for our worship service, and go through these Bible Studies together as a family. And if you live alone, perhaps you could get with one or two other people and go through these together. If you need to practice social distancing, bring your coffee and sit six feet away from each other. And if that is not possible, call someone. But please, let's talk about our faith. This can be a significant way to pass your faith on to a loved one or to learn faith from someone you love. For too long, we have feared talking about our spiritual journeys, because our journeys are not "squeaky clean." But if we will do this, I am confident those around us will develop a new appreciation for how God has come to us and led us on our individual journeys in life, and together we can proclaim that God is with us!

CALENDAR

You will find attachments to the newsletter for the Bible Study, one for this week and one for next week. There will not be a newsletter next week.

Administrative Assistant Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

Closed Friday

Phil Yoder Office Hours:

Monday 12:00-4:00 PM,

Wed. 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, Thursday 1:00-6:00 PM

- All newsletter submissions need to be in to Maribeth by noon on Tuesday.**

March/April Birthdays

Linda Miller – 25
Bernie Miller – 28
Michelle Mullet – 1
Al Yoder – 3
Sam Graber – 6
Dave (Patty) Yoder – 10
Jim Wyse – 12
Bill Johnson – 14
Dorothy Miller – 15
Marge Miller – 15
Shari Graber – 16
Lavera Hooley – 17
Jena Bontreger – 18
Bryce Rheinheimer – 24
Enos Miller – 30

WORSHIP

Focus statement:

Background scriptures:

Coffee Prep Volunteers

This Sunday:

Next Sunday:

Welcome Center

This Sunday:

Next Sunday:

ADMINISTRATION

Stewardship Report for March 22:

Money Given to Budget \$1,370.00

Amount Needed Weekly for Budget \$5,343.12

Year-to-date Money Given to Budget \$147,218.99

Amount Needed Year-to-Date for Budget \$160,293.60

Administration Commission met in March through email. Financials were reported for two Sundays. No new news to report.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Wednesday Evening Meal Hosts:

Thank you for the encouragement shown to us after my Dad's passing. Cards, prayers, phone calls & at the visitation. It means so much to us. Thanks, Charles & Kathy Hartzler

Please sign up online to take a meal to Jim and Arlene. Go to takethemameal.com and under Find, put in Schrock as last name and 9083 as the password. Then click on Find. On the next page by Jim Schrock, click on Lets Go. That should open it up so you can sign up for a meal. Please contact Jean Shriner at 574-596-3376 if you need help.

DISCIPLING

OUTREACH

First Mennonite Women's next project is providing items for the Food Pantry. Items needed: cereal, feminine pads & tampons, body wash, deodorant, razors, tooth paste, tooth brushes, jelly, chicken noodle soup, cleaning supplies, and empty laundry containers.

