

McAllister Messenger

May 16, 2021

A Word From Your Pastor A Pentecost Wind

The timing was perfect. It was Pentecost of last year, and the folks at WestRock could not have picked a better time to blow off steam. If you've ever been near the mill when they blow off steam, you know how loud it can be. It can almost sound like there is a hurricane wind blowing outside. Which is why it was so appropriate that they chose this particular Sunday morning in May to do it.

Pentecost is a special day on the church calendar when we remember the fantastic story from the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. In this story, the disciples of Jesus Christ were gathered together in Jerusalem. All of a sudden, they were overcome by the sound of a rushing wind, and tongues of fire rested over each of their heads. Even though they were from different places and spoke different languages, they could understand each other. The Holy Spirit had descended and was at work among them!

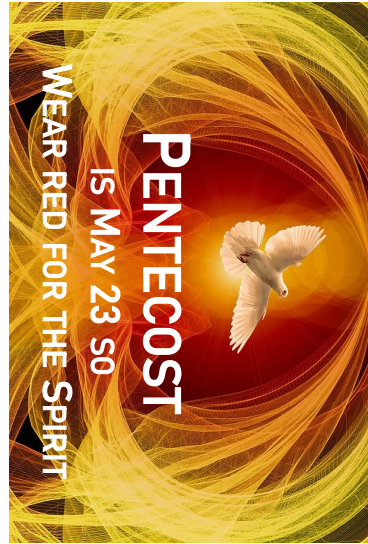
This is why it was so appropriate for the mill to blow off steam on Pentecost morning. As I stood in the empty sanctuary (at the time, we had suspended in-person worship because of Covid), I read the story of Pentecost to my phone camera to broadcast on Facebook Live. The sound of a rushing wind was literally coming through the walls as I read the story. So although the congregation could not be gathered there, it still felt like the Holy Spirit was present, because of that loud sound. It was loud enough to be heard on people's devices as they watched the broadcast.

This year, the timing is perfect again. Not for the mill to blow off steam, but for the Holy Spirit to descend. First, it will descend because we once again have people in the sanctuary for worship. But it will also come down because we are at a critical moment in the life of our church.

As we come out of this Covid crisis, we have the opportunity to let the Spirit lead us. We have the chance to do some new things in our worship and in our

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McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church
900 North Alleghany Avenue
Covington, VA 24426



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mission. I don't think we are being called to simply go back to the way things were. Yes, we will try to recapture some of what was lost during the Covid time. But at the same time, we will also look toward a "new normal" that goes beyond just returning to our old practices. One way we are doing this is through our livestreaming of the worship service. Another is how we are combining Sunday school classes when we start back on June 6.

What other ways are we being called to do something new and exciting in the post-Covid era? How are we letting that rushing wind blow through our church life and re-energize and re-inspire us? May we not just hear this wind blow. But like a sailboat, may we catch this wind and let it carry us to exciting new places!

Dead Ducks Don't Flutter

Many years ago, a wealthy man went duck hunting with a hired hand named Sam. They took a horse and carriage, and along the way a rim came off one of the wheels. As Sam hammered it back on, he accidentally hit his finger. Instantly he let go with some bad words. He quickly fell to his knees, asking God's forgiveness. "Lord, it's difficult at times to live the Christian life", he prayed. "Sam" said the man, "I know you're a Christian, but tell me why you struggle so, I'm an atheist, and I don't have problems like that."

Sam didn't know what to say. Just then two ducks flew overhead. The man raised his gun and two shots rang out. "Leave the dead one and go after that wounded bird!" he shouted. Sam pointed at the duck that was fluttering desperately to escape and said, "I've got an answer for you now, Boss. You said my Christianity isn't any good because I have to struggle so. Well, I'm the wounded duck and struggle to get away from the devil. But you, Boss, you're the dead duck!"

That insight fits Paul's description of his Christian experience in Romans 7:14-25.

Struggle is one evidence of God's work in our lives.
Forgiveness of sin is available, so don't despair.
Remember, dead ducks don't flutter.

—Dennis De Hann, from *Heavens Inspirations*



May Birthdays

- 16th James Bush, Sr.
Maggie Webb
- 17th Butch Curtin
Lee Fadley
- 19th Amelia Nicely
- 21st Shirley Ferris
- 22nd Jenni Hinton
- 23rd Brenda Walker
- 24th Dwain Tyree
Gary Walker
- 25th Jacob Downer
- 26th Ruth Caul
Bunny King
- 28th Gus Hayslett
Jenny Crawford

May Anniversaries

- 22nd Amanda & Eric Webb
- 30th Cody & Katie Nida

Prayer Concerns:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Tillie Agnor | Marshall & Donna Fox | Dr. Calvin McClinton | Dennis Whitehead |
| Mildred Akers | Calvin Fridley | Pearl Miller | Pat & Larry Whitmer |
| Evelyn Scruggs Amos | Thomas Fridley | Sonya Milton | Christy Wiley |
| Hershel Andrews | Betty Gibson | Priscilla Moncus | Martha Wilhelm |
| Jan Armentrout | Eddie Gibson | Doris Mottern | Megan Williams |
| Mary Austin | Robert & Gail Gibson | Patty Nicely | Donna Wilson |
| Erskine Back | Carol Grady | Travis O'Rourke | Dot Wimer |
| Miki Ballengee | Teresa Griffith | Berkley & Joyce Persinger | Joey Wimer |
| Bob & Leta Bartley | Evan Groves | Billy Powell | Linda Payton Wolfe |
| Linda Bogar | Scott Hamilton | Teresa Powell | Ray "Lumpy" Worley |
| Anita Boone | Don Hampton | Paula Pruitt | Connie Wright |
| Sue Burns | Richard & Cora Hastings | Betty Ray | Buddy Young |
| Emily Byer | Danny & Rhoda Hill | Frank & April Reynolds | Kassie Young |
| Elwood Cadd | Sandra Hill | Jim Reynolds | Margie Young |
| Benny Capps | Robert "Buzzy" Hoke, Jr. | B. R. Rupert | |
| Jean & Harry Casey | Connie Holloway | Sheldon Shue | <i>Our Nation</i> |
| Betsy Caul | James Hoover | Libby Simpson | <i>Caregivers</i> |
| Anne Chalker | Neil Horn | Pat Smith | <i>Covid-19 Patients</i> |
| Junior Clark | Shana Hotzapolous | Monzell Sovereign | <i>Elected Officials</i> |
| Minnie Clark | Lori Wolfe Isaacs | Angie Sponaugle | <i>Essential Workers</i> |
| Sandra Clemmons | Charlie Jeffries | Matt Sponaugle | <i>Non Believers</i> |
| Kenzie Cline | Wendell & Judy Jones | Natalie Sponaugle | <i>President Biden</i> |
| Ricky Cooke | Susan Kennedy | Sally Steele | <i>Prisoners</i> |
| Donna & Steven Craft | Mary Kern | Pat Tacy | <i>U.S. Troops</i> |
| Luke Crawford | Pam Key | Susan Terrell | <i>Students/Teachers/WRE</i> |
| Kathy Crutchfield | Richard & Tammy Law | Ethan & Marcy Thompson | |
| Corky & Janice Downer | Debi Leitch | Adena Tingler | |
| Leslie Downer | George Leitch | Carolyn Tolley | |
| Priscilla Downer | Susan Lindstrom | Darrell & Donna Tucker | |
| Kaylee Elmore | Dianne Lockhart | Pete Turner | |
| Joyce Emerson | Jackson Lowe (age 7 ~ cancer) | Buddy Vass | |
| Lee & Lelia Fadley | Jennifer Markham | Danny Warlitter | |
| Barbara Flint | Mike & Kathy McCauley | Sandra Watson | |

BRIAN CENTER—Andy Howell, Bill Lockhart, Ruby Stull

VIRGINIA VETERANS CARE CENTER—Roy Lee Reynolds

SCOTT HILL—David and Phyllis Lynn, Sara Mays, Mary Whitehead

SHUT-IN—Joyce Bartley, Jean Broughman, Hallie Dressler, Shirley Ferris, Etha Hayslett, Frankie Marshall, Bonnie Patterson, Shelby Rock

DEATHS

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Richard Bowen | Brenda Ledford |
| Gary Wayne Jennings | Alberta Pritt |
| Johnny Meadows | Gerald Pullin |
| | Larry Scott |

MILITARY

- Kristen Bennett
- Kristopher Hoffman
- Ryan Pritts
- Chris Whitehead

MISSIONARIES

- Tom & Judy Harvey
- Esslinger/Lee

New Address:

Luke Crawford #1663392
Augusta Correctional Center
1821 Estaline Valley Road
Craigs ville, VA 24430



Newsletter Information

Please submit newsletter information and prayer request by email, post mail, or by phone.

(Deadline for next newsletter is Monday ~ May 24 @ 4 p.m.)

The Church Office is open, but we encourage people to refrain from stopping by if a phone call or email will suffice. The office contact information is located on the back page.



Graduate Recognition

Our graduates from high school and college will be honored in the May 30 newsletter.

If you are graduating or know someone who is, please contact the church office by mail, phone or email no later than Monday, May 24 with your bio information. *(If we don't know them we can't include you!)*

Scholarship Applications

Scott Scholarship Applications are available in the church office.

Any member of McAllister Church attending college in 2021 may apply. Application deadline is June 1, 2021.



Rain

One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my son, Matthew, spoke up from his relaxed position in his seat. "Mom, I'm thinking of something."

This announcement usually meant he had been pondering some fact for a while, and was now ready to expound all that his six-year-old mind had discovered. I was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" I asked.

"The rain!," he began, "is like sin, and the windshield wipers are like God wiping our sins away."

After the chill bumps raced up my arms, I was able to respond. "That's really good, Matthew."

Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little boy take this revelation? So I asked... "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?"

Matthew didn't hesitate one moment with his answer: "We keep on sinning, and God just keeps on forgiving us." I will always remember this whenever I turn my wipers on.

In order to see the rainbow, you must first endure some rain.

We must continually come to the Lord and seek His forgiveness.

-Brenda Hunter, from Heavens Inspirations



Musical Minute:

One of the coolest things about being a church musician (And believe me, there are so many cool things . . .) is the opportunity to enjoy Christmas music, completely guilt free, in the month of May. This is not like the slightly uncomfortable secret that you enjoy watching Christmas movies on the Hallmark Channel out of season. That's something that you share only with the closest of friends, and only after they've admitted first that they do the same . . . No—a church musician exploring Christmas music in May is “work” or “research.” Let's call it “advanced planning.” And I have definitely been indulging in Christmas music over the last couple of weeks, preparing what I might play on the organ and piano later this year, as well as picking out some choral pieces for when we are able to sing together again. (This may be a while yet, depending on our progress with Covid-19 vaccination, the further spread of virus variants, advice from the CDC and the wisdom of McAllister's Session, but I want to be ready!)

I love so many of McAllister's Christmastide standbys—“Joseph Came Walking to Bethlehem,” “The Snow Lay on the Ground” and “Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella.” I've also found some new pieces and some fresh arrangements of well-known carols that I think we should try. Much of my choral planning will come down to you guys, however. When we can finally hold Adult Choir Practice, how many of you will come back? Will we perhaps have a few newcomers? Will we have rehearsal at the same time as always, or is now the time to reevaluate when it is most convenient for the majority of choir members? We've got lots to think about as we begin to reopen the church facility and restart some of our activities, but one thing that I hope you'll consider over the coming months is joining us for choir practice once we resume regular rehearsals. All that is required is a love of singing, the desire to lead your fellow congregants in worship, and the commitment to attend as regularly as you possibly can. Choir can be fun, relaxing, and spiritually rejuvenating. Studies have even shown that singing can be beneficial for both body and mind. And don't forget, whenever we get back to practice, the Christmas anthems will be...waiting for you with “good tidings of great joy...”!

Take good care.

Beth

Notes From Pastor Jim

- ◇ I am getting back out in the community and making pastoral visits again. If you would like for me to come visit and have prayer with you, please let me know. Or let me know if there is someone you know who might need a visit. My number is 434-738-8841.
- ◇ We are starting back with Sunday School on June 6. The adult classes will combine and meet together in the Fellowship Hall. The youth will meet in their classroom downstairs, and all the children will meet together in the 3rd-5th and 1st and 2nd grade rooms downstairs. We will open up the dividers and have one big room where they can social distance. Please join us!
- ◇ We will be having Vacation Bible School, but it will be a one-day event held on a Saturday later in the summer. Please stay tuned for more specific information on this event.

“Thank you”... these two words don't feel adequate for all you have done for me. I successfully completed my “Preaching the Bible” class...yet your influence on my life goes further back. From an 8 year old child...to a 60+ adult, you (and the church family now living in God's presence) have encouraged me throughout my life's journey. A journey that when I look back, all the pieces fit together as they should. Yet at various times, difficult decisions were made. You have welcomed me with open arms when I've needed comfort, laughter, encouragement, and guidance. You have been God's presence in so many ways. I truly am thankful and blessed.

Love you, *Linda*

**Kids!
They're smarter
than we think.**



**A pastor giving a children's sermon on vestments asked:
“Why do you think I wear this collar?”
One kid answered:
“Because it kills ticks and fleas up to 30 days?”**

The Centre of The Bible

Q: What is the shortest chapter in the Bible?

A: Psalms 117

Q: What is the longest chapter in the Bible?

A: Psalms 119

Q: Which chapter is in the center of the Bible?

A: Psalms 118

Fact: There are 594 chapters before Psalms 118

Fact: There are 594 chapters after Psalms 118

Add these numbers up and you get 1188.

Q: What is the center verse in the Bible?

A: Psalms 118:8

Q: Does this verse say something significant about God's perfect will for our lives?

The next time someone says they would like to find God's perfect will for their lives and that they want to be in the center of His will, just send them to the center of His Word!

Psalms 118:8

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."

Now isn't that odd how this worked out (or was God in the center of it)?

When things get tough, always remember...

Faith doesn't get you around trouble, it gets you through it!!

-Author Unknown