



LifeinFaith September 2020

A not so “NORMAL” newsletter.

*“Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.”
-Hymn 306 in “Glory to God”*

I can't express how deeply I have missed seeing all your faces these past months. 2020 has not been any easy year for anyone, but I am deeply encouraged by all the efforts of this congregation to remain in contact with each other and connected through the worship of Christ our Lord.

This September things will look a little different than they have in the past.

Beginning August 30, we will be streaming the service live at 11 AM on Sunday mornings. Everyone will receive a link to the service in their email. At 11 AM you click the link to participate in the service as it is happening. Sunday afternoon the video of that service will be available if you'd prefer to worship later in the week. There will be some changes to the worship service in order to accommodate the addition of an in-person worship option the following week.

Beginning September 6 at 11 AM, we will have an in-person worship option available for those who would prefer to worship in person and feel comfortable doing so. Although we will worship in the sanctuary this is not “back to normal” yet. In order to do our best to mitigate the risk of spreading Covid-19 everyone will be required to wear a mask to worship. When you get to the church you will see ushers outside in the parking lot. Ushers will guide everyone by household into the sanctuary from outside. The ushers will mark down your attendance so that we can make sure we have a comprehensive list of everyone who attends each service. If we learn that anyone in the congregation was exposed to Covid-19 before attending worship we will be in touch with everyone who attended that day as quickly as possible. If this happens we will go back to online worship only for two weeks.

In the sanctuary we will have blocked off specific areas that are available for people to sit, this will allow us to maintain social distancing. Instead of a bulletin the order of worship and any responses or words you will need will be projected on a screen.

Although we will not be singing as a congregation there will be plenty of music in the service. We will have dedicated times for reflection and meditation on topics related to the sermon which will be guided by music on organ or piano. We will also take some time to listen to the music behind our hymns and examine the words of the hymns more closely since we are not singing.

We will not be passing offering plates or communion plates. Offering plates will be available at the back of the sanctuary for you to put offerings in as you exit the worship service. When we have communion we will use prepackaged communion cups and wafers.

At the end of the worship service the ushers will dismiss us from the pews starting at the back, not unlike a wedding service. This will allow for better social distancing. We ask that once you are dismissed you make your way to the front doors where Allison will be standing to say a socially distanced goodbye.

This will definitely feel very different than the service we last celebrated together in early March. I encourage you all to remember that these changes are temporary. We pray for those working on a vaccine that will allow us to share fellowship meals and hugs as we used to. Remember that whether you worship with us online or in person we are all drawn together in Christ's love and grace.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Allison Smith

NORTHWOOD NEWS

It is with great sadness that I share with you that Northwood Nursery School will be closing as of this month. The board made this very difficult decision after evaluating the number of registrations the school had received. Because of the pandemic we are facing, the uncertainty of upcoming school years and the tender age of the children Northwood has served, many parents have understandably made the choice to keep their little ones home if they can. Deb Mercurio explains more below:

The Northwood board of directors was very excited about the upcoming school year. Thanks to the support of the church, volunteers, and staff, things were looking very positive for the 2020/2021 school year. Activities had been planned for the spring to promote Northwood and encourage enrollment. Unfortunately, all of that changed due to the pandemic. Instead of enrolling, parents were calling to withdraw. Others who were planning on registering were in a "wait and see" mode.

Ginny Stimmel organized a Zoom meeting of the Northwood board on July 21 to discuss what should be done. The Board voted to present to Session not to open in September. Everyone was very saddened to have to make this decision but needed to do what was best for the children and the church. The guidelines put in place by the CDC would have made operating Northwood very difficult.

Parents have been notified and refund checks have been sent out. A financial statement has been put together for Session's review. Any monies left in the Northwood account will go into the general fund of Faith Immanuel.

The Northwood board and others have volunteered to help organize the classrooms for whatever the future may hold.

I would like to thank everyone for their support of Northwood. Continue to pray that a good use will be found for the classrooms and the beautiful property that surrounds us.

Sincerely,
Deb Mercurio

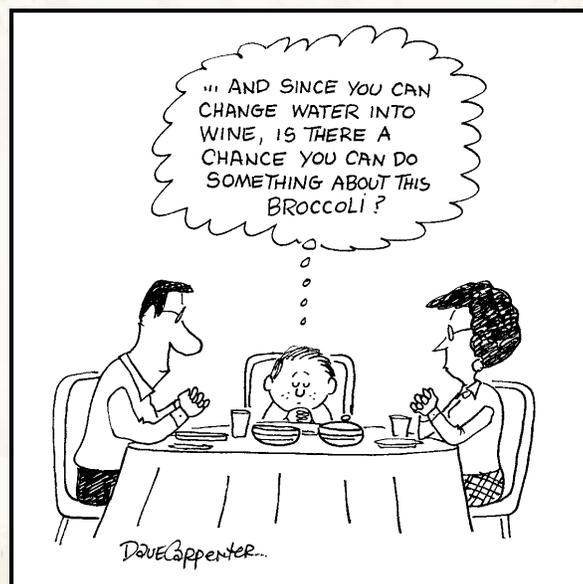
Though we say goodbye to this ministry of 57 years with heavy hearts, I am also left with incredible gratitude for those 57 years of educational ministry to the community. I'm left with gratitude for all the teachers, aides, directors, parents and families that made Northwood what it was. This year especially, the teachers and aides, our director Deb Mercurio, went above and beyond serving students and their families through the pandemic, often volunteering their time. Additionally there were many volunteers from our congregation that stepped up to make the last school year possible. Although this chapter has now come to a close, the legacy of Northwood will remain for many years to come as those young and old who attended continue to grow and learn. In order to celebrate this legacy I'd like to ask anyone who has memories to share or gratitude to share for Northwood Nursery School to write out your thoughts and mail a card to 1801 Colonial Rd. Harrisburg PA, 17112. We'd like to display these cards in order to remember and celebrate the impact of Northwood Nursery School on our community.

Sincerely
Rev. Allison Smith

WEDNESDAY FAITHFUL

"All meals seasoned with Love!"

*Dear Friends, after much consideration and prayer,
we have decided not to hold luncheons for the remainder of the year.*



MUSIC NOTES

Greetings, Dear Friends!

It is hard to believe that at long last we will be offering an in-person worship option on Sundays at 11 am beginning on September 6. I have appreciated the generosity of all our worship volunteers during this time. You have recorded prayers, you have made special music videos, you have come into the church to record hymns. Thank you. An especially great, big thank-you goes out to Rose Jewell Jordan who worked tirelessly on the production end of our pre-recorded services for several months. It has been a blessing to so many.

There will be new approaches to music starting on September 6 whether you join us in person or worship from your homes. In addition to the possibility of occasional special musicians, there will be a musical meditation as well as a hymn. There will be no congregational singing during these or other musical moments. By the time you are reading this, you may have already gotten a glimpse of how this might work during our August 30 broadcast. Simply put, you will be invited into times of reflection as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship or are invited to focus on certain aspects of a text.

Allison and I have chosen a number of texts that we will be using during the month of September, and I am delighted to share a sampling of them here.

On September 6, as we prepare for a series on Truth Speaking, we will reflect on the words of “O Word of God Incarnate” (Tune: MUNICH) which praise God for the wisdom and truth of Christ revealed in the scriptures, and exhorts us to take hold of these gifts for our own edification and to enable us to share the example of Christ with others.

*O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky:
we praise you for your radiance that from the hallowed page,
a lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.*

*The church from you, dear Savior, received this gift divine;
and still that light is lifted on all the earth to shine.
It is the chart and compass, that all life's voyage through,
amid the rocks and quick-stands still guides, O Christ, to you.*

*O make your church, dear Savior, a lamp of purest gold
to bear before the nations your true light, as of old;
O teach your wandering pilgrims by this our path to trace,
till, clouds and storms thus ended, we see you face to face.*

At this point, if you have not been reading this article aloud, I encourage you to go back, and read the text/ lyrics in italics out loud. Play with its rhythms and inflections, temporarily freed from the setting of a familiar tune, and seek the meaning for yourself, as our next hymn exhorts us.

On September 13, we will pray for illumination with the words of “Open My Eyes, That I May See” (Tune: OPEN MY EYES). The words and music of this hymn were written in 1895 by Clara H. Scott, who was the first woman to publish her own collections of original pieces for worship. You might consider praying these words in the days and weeks ahead:

*Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes; illumine me, Spirit divine!*

*Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear.
And while the wave notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes; illumine me, Spirit divine!*

*Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere.
Open my heart, and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart; illumine me, Spirit divine!*

It is often easiest for us to enjoy our favorite hymns (or to lament not being able to sing them together in person for the time being!) However, there are wonderful texts, set to wonderful tunes, which are laments. One less-than-familiar example, for September 20, is Martin Luther's stellar paraphrase of Psalm 130, "Out of the Depths" set to the deeply moving tune AUF TIEFER NOT which retains the German language of the original 16th Century text. Join Luther as he cries out to God in deepest sorrow.

*Out of the depths I cry to you; O Lord God, hear me calling.
Incline your ear to my distress in spite of my rebelling.
Do not regard my sinful deeds. Send me the grace my spirit needs;
without it I am nothing.*

*All things you send are full of grace; you crown our lives with favor.
All our good works are done in vain without our Lord and Savior.
We praise you for the gift of faith; you save us from the grip of death;
our lives are in your keeping.*

*In you alone, O God, we hope, and not in our own merit.
We rest our fears in your good word; uphold our fainting spirit.
Your promised mercy is my fort, my comfort, and my strong support;
I wait for it with patience.*

Finally, on September 27, we turn to a particularly familiar text which echoes both the Apostles' Creed as well as 1 Corinthians, which hardly needs any explanation, but which nevertheless rings differently in this light.

*The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.
She is his new creation by water and the word.
From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride.
With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.*

*Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.*

*Though with a scornful wonder this world sees her oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up: "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.*

*Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore:
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.*

*Yet she on earth has union with God, the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we,
like them, the meek and lowly, may live eternally.*

We are indeed grateful for the ways which we can enjoy the mystic sweet unity which comes from our shared identity in Christ. It is my prayer that in sharing these texts with you, you will find additional ways in which to share in and to participate in the experience of worshipping God through music without ever opening your mouths.

Blessings,

Caleb



Sept. 3 Karen Shallcross
Sept. 4 Dominick Christeleit
Howard Snyder
Sept 10 Virginia Henning
Sept 11 Susan Ricci
Sept. 15 Janet Elam
Sept. 16 Charles Kannegieser
Michael Legg
Sept 17 Bob Dash
Shirley McLaren
Sept. 19 Peggy Keiser
Sept. 21 Carol Becker
Sept 26 Mary Knapp
Sept 27 Elena Germaine (Stimmel)
Sept 30 Amy Christeleit
Anita Klaboe
William Marshall

Oct 4 Nicholas Gillette
Oct 5 John Mease
Oct 8 Debbie Kissinger
Oct 9 Marcia Shore
Oct 10 Linda Graham
Oct 12 Dorothy Baynham
Oct 13 Susan Anthony
Oct 15 Frances Burd
Oct 18 William Given
Oct 20 Shirley Cleaver
Lauren Barrett
Oct 21 Barbara Hablett
Oct 23 Brent Sapen
Oct 25 Jean Harden
Oct 26 Corey Bowerman
Oct 28 Lois Dean
Eric Linn
Oct 30 Christiana Quartey



Nov 1 Sheila Kannegieser
Nov 2 Charles Zwally
Billie Hawk
Nov 3 Tony Phillips
Nov 4 Kelly Berry
Nov 5 Merry Ann Kish
Nov 6 Melvin Longenecker
Nov 9 Bub Manning
Nov 13 Madelyne Key
Nov 17 Larry Dinges
Greg Linn
Irene Brightbill
Nov 18 Carolyn Souders
Lysle Frew

Nov 19 Alex Caplan
David Coad
Nov 20 Joan Bowerman
Nov 21 Julia Page (MacIntyre)
Nov 24 John Bowerman
Nov 25 Nicolette Sorensen
Nov 26 Ken Zimmerman
Nov 27 Susie Ayi

*We're sorry if we missed your birthday.
Please notify the church office at 717-545-4631.*