

BRETHREN BRIEFS

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR SCOTT DUFFEY

TUESDAY – APRIL 23, 2019

“Joy Unspeakable, Faith Unsinkable, Love Unstoppable, Anything is possible.”

“God cannot bless what you do not invest.”

“Do not be afraid, God is still guiding the church.”

PASS ON OUR WEBSITE TO A FRIEND! – www.stauntonbrethren.org

When did you last invite someone to Worship with you? Why not now?!

When did you last check on someone whom you’ve been missing at Worship?

*****Help us Welcome Guests on Sunday Mornings by directing them to the NEW WELCOME CENTER in the narthex. The Welcome table is full of helpful information, under the “Welcome” sign, and next to the new monitor that is scrolling information and picture slides.***

IT’S A SECRET!!!!!!

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 28, WE WILL RECOGNIZE LINDA ABSHIRE FOR HER 21 YEARS OF SERVICE AS DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. SHE DOESN’T KNOW THIS (so far). WE ARE INVITED TO BRING CARDS OF APPRECIATION AND THANKS, AS WELL AS GIFT CARDS FOR HER TO USE. WE WILL DO SOME SHARING IN WORSHIP AND AT THE BUSINESS MEETING WITH A SPECIAL CAKE. JOIN US AND HELP KEEP IT A SECRET!!!!!!

A Sermon Out-take From Sunday –

“Jesus had told them that he would send the Spirit, the Advocate. “When the Advocate comes, whom I am sending to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have seen me from the beginning.” (John 15:26-27) This is John’s Pentecost moment. Luke tells us of the Pentecost festival where the Spirit came to them again as tongues of fire, but this is their first empowering. Maybe it’s that we humans just have a hard time trusting the first time? But Jesus is here passing on his mission to the church, and giving them the power to do it. And power it is. Psalm 33:6 reminds us “By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all the hosts.” There is power in the breath of God, the wind, the Spirit. It empowers, it changes, it leads, and it enables God’s people for their calling.

If the story ended right there, it would have been enough. But one of the disciples was not in the room when all this was happening. Thomas was not there. We don’t know why. Up till then he was strong. He didn’t deny or betray, though he did run away with the rest of them. Maybe he was out getting some food. Maybe he was just clearing his head. Maybe he thought it was over and he was making plans for what he would do now. A lot of things run through our heads when we lose a loved one. Ah, but this gave the other disciples a chance to try out their new powers, their new mission, filled with the Holy Spirit. Let’s tell Thomas the good news!

“Thomas, we have seen the Lord.” Can you imagine their excitement at being able to tell Thomas the story? This was easy. Thomas would understand right away. He was one of them. They trusted each other. I can hear them all telling him with joy in their hearts. “We have seen the Lord.” But Thomas’ reaction was not what they expected. “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails, and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” Did he really want to do those things? Was he imagining a ghost that he could just poke his fingers through? Or was he just saying, this is too impossible to believe, it’s

too good to be true. You had your moment, unless I have mine, it can't be true. You're all crazy. He was not believing without seeing.

I am glad this story is told. It reminds us that no matter how excited we are about our faith, no matter how eager we are to share it with a friend, some will find it hard to believe until they have their own spiritual experience. It might come when we invite them to worship or to a study or just reach out and befriend them, but we all need our own experience. I will not believe based on your experience, but on mine. The only thing we can do is to try to help people get in the right place for that experience to happen.

Obviously, the disciples in their eagerness did not scare Thomas away, because a week later they were all together, including Thomas this time, and Jesus came again, through the walls. The doors were shut. "Peace be with you." And Jesus knew about Thomas' doubts. "Go ahead Thomas, put your finger here and see my hands...put your hand in my side...do not doubt, only believe." At that moment, there was no poking necessary. "My Lord and my God!" is all he could say. And Jesus then offered the blessing that reaches even to us and beyond, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

And when we have our experience, when the breath of God comes to us in the Holy Spirit, we, too are witnesses, not just to Easter morning, but to the peace that Jesus gives us, a peace and breath that changes our lives."

Read all of my sermons on the webpage at www.stauntonbrethren.org.

CDs are also available for Worship Services. They're on the table in the south lobby.

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This Week

Thursday	6:30 PM Contemporary Chorus
	7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal
Saturday	Men's Chicken Barbecue – Volunteers Welcome
	Come get yours and "One for the Mission"
	9:00 AM Seniors Bake Sale – Picnic Shelter

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Next Sunday – April 28

Start a new habit – a good habit – Bring a Friend to Sunday School and Worship!

10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES

11:00 AM WORSHIP

The Worship theme is "Do You Love Me?", based on Jesus' resurrection time with Peter. The text is John 21:1-14,15-19. Candy Smith is Worship Leader, and the Puppets will lead our Children's Time. The Choir and Chorus will sing.

12:00 NOON MORTGAGE BURNING CEREMONY

12:15 PM LUNCH PROVIDED BY YOUTH FOR WORKCAMP DONATIONS

1:00 PM SPRING CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

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Remember to Pray –

Pray for Rena Swink, Marguerite Sanger (Bridgewater), Ferne Rohr (The Legacy), Don Markle, Libby Tusing (Waynesboro Manor), Stanley and Brenda Shackelford, Jay and Rosalie McLearn, Melba Cline, Judy Collins, Fred Wilkerson Sr., Fred Wilkerson Jr., Cindy Spitzer, Gwendolyn Spitzer, Roy Pilson, Bonnie Cale, Bill Cline, Barbara Mooneyham, Charles Phillips, Mary Huffer, Claude Simmons, Eva Frederick, Logan Shortridge (Nancy Canter's nephew), Dick and Helen Bartenslager, George Sullivan, Laura and Chad Houston and new baby Samantha, Bob Weiss.

Continue to pray for the healing and the safety of the Nigerian Brethren, the Chibok girls, and so many others who have had their lives uprooted. Keep praying.

Let us also pray for those who have had their churches burned in Louisiana in the past two weeks.

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Dates to Have on Your Calendar –

- April 27 – Chicken Barbecue by Men’s Fellowship and Bake Sale by Seniors**
Buy one extra chicken for the Valley Mission – Order yours NOW
- April 28 – LUNCH AND CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING – Pick up a packet**
- May 1 – First Wednesday – Spring Picnic and Vespers – 5:30 PM – Sign up**
- May 5 – Youth Sunday**
- May 5 – INQUIRERS CLASS FOR NON-MEMBERS Begins at 10 AM**
- May 5 – Mexico Team Lunch and Meeting**
- May 12 – Mother’s Day and Graduate Recognition Sunday**
- May 17 – District Disaster Golf Tourney – Lakeview GC**
- May 17-18 – District Disaster Auction at Rockingham Fairgrounds**

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SCOB OPPORTUNITIES

Childcare is an important and ongoing ministry for our church. Talk to Debbie Clark about being on the Childcare List for special events, or to Donna Wells about being trained to help on Sunday Mornings.

The Women’s Circles are selling Cookbooks and “Happy Home Flavorings” (Vanilla, Lemon, Coconut, Butter, Butter Nut, and Almond). The Flavorings are \$3 each; and the Cookbooks are \$10. Great for your kitchen and for gifts. Cookbooks in the office hallway; Flavorings, see Debbie Landes.

We’ve added an ongoing food collection for students at Shelburne Middle School through May 19. Homelessness and poverty are affecting a number of students and school personnel have created a special food pantry. We can contribute: breakfast bars, juice boxes, crackers, fruit snacks, applesauce cups, microwaveable single cup meals, mini-cereal boxes, pudding/Jello cups. There’s a clear bin in the main hallway. It will be there through the school year.

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VISION STATEMENT

“Worshipping Christ with Joy, Living Together in Peace, and Serving the World with Love.”

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THIS IS A MINI-NEWS PAGE FOR WEEKLY UPDATES

GOD BE WITH YOU THIS WEEK! PASTOR SCOTT

(‘LIKE’ us on Facebook and “SHARE” church activities with your “FRIEND” Lists)

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