

BRETHREN BRIEFS

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR SCOTT DUFFEY

MONDAY – MAY 20, 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.***

A Sermon Out-take From Sunday –

"As covenant people, we are in a relationship with a God who always acts first. Did you notice that God took the initiative in the covenant with Abraham, saying, "I will make my covenant between me and you" (v. 2). God acted before Abraham did anything, and this is true in God's relationship with us in every time and place and situation. God is always at work even before we know that God is acting, paving the path for us in ways that will heal us and help us. Theologians call this "prevenient grace," meaning the grace of God that comes before any human decision. In his book, *The Silver Chair*, C.S. Lewis tells the story of a lion named Aslan, who can be thought of as a symbol for Jesus Christ. In the book, Aslan hears two children calling to him for help, and after rescuing them he says, "You would not have called to me unless I had been calling to you." That's prevenient grace, the grace that comes before.

We call to God because God has been calling to us. God always acts first. Because God offers us forgiveness, we ask for forgiveness. Because Jesus is a healer, we pray for healing. Because the Spirit has been moving since the first day of creation, we ask for the Spirit to fill us today. "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them," says John. "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:16, 19). God's love comes first -- prevenient grace.

As people in covenant with God, then, we can see the entire Bible as the story of promise-based relationships. God first makes a covenant with Noah (6:18), and then with Abram (15:18). When God hears the groaning of the people of Israel in Egypt, he remembers his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 2:24). God speaks with Moses on Mount Sinai, and gives him two tablets of the covenant, the Ten Commandments (Exodus 31:18). After the Israelites enter the Promised Land, the angel of the Lord says, "I will never break my covenant with you" (Judges 2:1).

Unfortunately, the people of Israel break their side of the deal, over and over again. "They have broken my covenant," says God through the prophet Hosea, "and transgressed my law" (Hosea 8:1). So, God promises through Jeremiah to "make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah" (Jeremiah 31:31). This new covenant comes to life in Jesus, who offers his own body and blood on the cross to show us exactly how much God loves us. At the Last Supper, Jesus gives his disciples the cup and says, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28). The letter to the Hebrews tells us that Jesus is "the guarantee of a better covenant" (Hebrews 7:22)."

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.

This Week

Thursday 6:30 PM Contemporary Chorus
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Next Sunday – May 26

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

10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES

Inquirers Class for non-member adults meeting in the Parlor.

11:00 AM WORSHIP

This week's theme is "Real Peace," from Romans 5:1-5. Bryan Quick is Worship Leader and Linda Abshire will do the Children's time. The Choir and Chorus will sing.

12:15 PM Mexico Mission Team Meeting – Bring your own lunch.

Remember to Pray –

Pray for Rena Swink, 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, Bonnie Cale (Kings Daughters), Bill and Mary Cline, Barbara Mooneyham, Mary Huffer, Claude Simmons, Eva Frederick, Logan Shortridge (Nancy Canter's nephew), Dick Bartenslager, George Sullivan, Laura and Chad Houston and new baby Samantha, Bob Weiss, David MacMillan, the Walsh family on the death of Gwen Walsh, Jimmy Ross, Sue Botkin, the Phillips family in the death of Charlie Phillips, Marilyn Garber, Vernon Simmons, Sandra Roberts, Steve Stultz, David Shearer's brother

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.

Dates to Have on Your Calendar –

June 2 – Collections Due for Heifer Project Emphasis

June 9 – Holy Communion

June 10-15 – Mexico Mission Week

June 17-21 – Vacation Bible School – Time to Register!

July 3-7 – Annual Conference, Greensboro, NC

SCOB OPPORTUNITIES

****Are you sponsoring a child in Mexico through Bittersweet Ministries? Our Mission Team invites you to send your child a card and we will take it with us to deliver. Have the cards to the church by June 9.**

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 Favorings" (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.

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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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