

NEWS & VIEWS

December 6, 2020

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Doylestown Mennonite Church

PASTOR'S PEN

A few weeks ago I mentioned in a sermon that it is rarely effective to tell another person to calm down. Even with masks covering much of our faces, I sensed that many understood. A few of you told me after worship that you sometimes find the need to say those very words to family members, even though they rarely are of help. Our Advent theme for 2020 is similar yet different to that call. Our theme is a phrase often repeated in Jesus' birth narrative, "Do not be afraid." This phrase frequently comes from the lips of angels announcing life changing news to individuals.

As we crawl to the end of 2020, how might the phrase "Do not be afraid" shape us to welcome the Prince of Peace? It is important to first understand what is meant by this phrase. The goal is not to have no fear but rather the goal is to not allow that fear to direct our path. The angels often declared, "do not be afraid" as a way to recognize the very encounter and then the news about to be shared will naturally cause a person to experience fear. It is a healthy instinctual behavior that cannot be controlled. However, beyond the fear is a promise that God is present to be with and sustain.



Whatever the news or circumstances, the steadfast love of God permeates the situation. The invitation is to trust God's sustaining presence when being confronted with news that elicits fear from within. I would suggest that the starting point is to take the time to sit in prayerful consideration to name those things which cause us fear. I encourage us to be as specific as possible and if helpful to make a list. In doing this, do not judge yourself or dismiss any of the fears that come to mind. Also, do not look to others to ease your fear but do feel free to invite others to pray for you.

In light of the fears you named, claim God's loving presence to sustain. Focus on God's saving power that you have witnessed in the past and your desire to trust in God for the present. Invite God to give you a sign of His presence and to direct any action you should take that demonstrates your desire to trust God. Continue to repeat this throughout this month as you sense fear increasing in your spirit.

A parting scripture to recite comes from Hebrews 13:6. We can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"

-Pastor Randy

COMING UP...SOME SPECIAL DATES

BIRTHDAYS

Lucy DeJesus	12/4
Robin Miller	12/10
Kathy Heckler	12/13
Blanche Althouse	12/22
Robert Schwabe	12/25
Phillip Zeo, Sr.	12/25
Doris Garges	12/28

KAREN'S PLACE

Karen's Place is not open to the public right now but will be live streaming its events. Tune in at 8:00 pm to watch the live stream, or later at your convenience, on our Facebook page or website.

Coming up:

December 5– Wendy Schettig

January 16– TBD



FROM THE CARE TEAM

The Care Team met via Zoom on Monday, November 23. Our discussion focused on the topic of suffering, prompted by viewing a sermon by Jason Edwards of Peace Fellowship of Washington, DC. Jason's sermon reflected on what he understands and doesn't understand about suffering, using the book of Job as a Biblical foundation, as well as his own recent experience when his wife suffered a brain injury following a car accident. He shared the value of mourning loss and admitting that we don't know the reasons for suffering, and the ways in which Jesus empathizes with us as Jesus himself suffered.

As a congregation, we too empathize with others when they suffer, while not being able to "fix" it. Our care for each other is based on believing God is present and above to provide support and strength in our suffering. Reach out to any member of the Care Team if you would like to view Jason's sermon on Facebook.

We also talked about the results of the Churches Care survey on mental health and addictions and look forward to discerning learning opportunities on these topics in 2021.

We prayed together for several individuals and families in our congregation and community. We continue to be available to respond to needs. Please feel free to reach out to any member of the Care Team for prayer, conversation around discernment, financial needs or other concerns. Our next meeting will be on January 12, 2021.

Sandy Landes, for the Care Team: Randy Heacock, Robin Miller, Freida Myers and Kendrick Garrido

FROM THE LIBRARY

The Way of the Wild Heart, a Map for the Masculine Journey, by John Eldridge. This book presents masculinity in a form I have never seen before. John Eldridge says, "Every male heart desires the spirit of adventure and a feeling of danger which would let him stand out as a hero." I think this is true in a lot of instances in life and shows the importance of father-like figures to mold boys into men, which turns them into the hero they are meant to be. Real life makes most men stay away from what they want to do, and this can be damaging because it leaves feelings of regret and dissatisfaction. This book also emphasizes how the church has changed men from what they should be. Their masculinity has had to suffer as a result of what is expected of them. Masculinity is something to build with, not leave on the sidelines, which makes men feel worthless when they have nothing to do.

-Justin Christiansen

FROM the CHURCH TREASURER

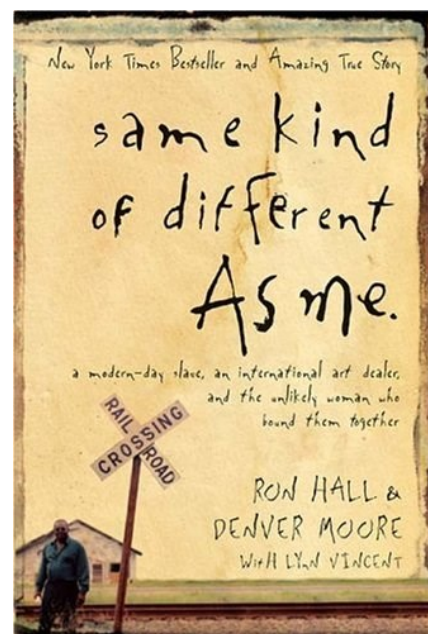
It is with much appreciation for our DMC congregation, during this unprecedented 2020 year with so many changes and restricted routines, that we can rejoice in one thing that has NOT changed. Your financial support has been constant and on-going and is such an encouragement! God's love and mercy are evident in so many ways and this is just one example of how we, His people, care for each other. Thank you! A special thanks to Gary Garges, Jim Beyer (and at times others) for faithfully counting the morning offerings.

-Mary Lee Chittick



Same Kind of Different as Me is a wonderful, informative, challenging book, especially as we talk about racism this month. Ron Hall, an upscale arts dealer, and Denver Moore, a dangerous, homeless drifter, share their story. They meet because Ron's wife "dragged" him to help at the food kitchen where she felt called to serve. Denver was frequenting the food kitchen after a childhood picking cotton almost as a slave. You will be richer for having heard their stories of pain, suffering and growing friendship. Initially they never dreamed they would become good, forever friends. It reminds me of Pastor Randy's suggestion that we make a friend with someone who is very different.

-Freida Myers, Librarian



THANKSGIVING

Included in our Thanksgiving offering this year was collection of food for Bucks County Opportunity Council throughout the month of November. Each Sunday more and more contributions came in. They were picked up by a beautifully decorated truck for distribution by the council at Thanksgiving.



DEADLINE for submitting items to the January 3, 2021 News & Views: **December 29, 2020**

PARTING THOUGHT -

"I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Psalm 34:4

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