

NEWS & VIEWS

November 1, 2020

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Doylestown Mennonite Church

PASTOR'S PEN

Early in the year, pastor Sandy led a group in the process of crafting a prayer for our church, a prayer that we could all come back to again and again throughout the months of the year, to focus our minds and hearts and spirits on what God is asking of us no matter what we are facing. Here, I offer a few reflections on the five sentences of that prayer as we approach the end of the year:

Yes, all praise to you, God, because you are who you say you are, our Peace. Yes is a powerful word of agreement. As I prayed this prayer throughout the year, I found that beginning with “yes” was a helpful reminder as the pandemic, racial tensions, and the challenges of daily life threatened to unsettle my sense of peace and rest in God. Yes, He is my peace. Yes, I will rest in His peace. Yes, though my feet may stumble and my heart may doubt, I say again that the Lord Almighty is my Peace.

Help us to be still and wait on you as we learn to trust. This year has been one of uncertainty and complexity. Churches, families, organizations, and small groups have had to make difficult decisions about meeting together, vacations and travel, education and other events. I found myself coming back to this prayer as a powerful reminder to call on God for help... help to be still... help to wait patiently... help in learning to trust in His guidance for the decisions we face.

Make us a people of peace and welcome, just as you have welcomed us. As I read the news and browsed comments on social media this year, I did not notice much peace nor a spirit of welcome among people. There is a lot of rage, judgment and rejection in our society. As I prayed this part of our 2020 prayer, I was struck by the powerful witness

we can be when we demonstrate a different spirit than the world. When we welcome those who look different, think differently, speak differently than we do; we are demonstrating the welcome of Jesus Christ. When we actively seek reconciled relationships with each other and our neighbors, we are being a witness to the Good News of Jesus and that is powerfully transformative!

Give us the courage to use our gifts freely in the world, knowing the outcome is in your hands. I'm a dreamer. I get ideas and visions for what “could happen,” and then when things don't go as I imagined and hoped they would, I can feel pretty disappointed. This part of our congregational prayer reminded me that God is God and I am not. God's plans will not be thwarted. God's Kingdom will prevail. So my little dreams and small visions can come and go... some will succeed and some will fail... and that's ok. I can just do my part and trust God for the final outcome.

We praise you as we eagerly anticipate what you will do this year. Hallelujah! Amen. This closing often reminded me throughout the year, to remember how I have seen God bringing about His good purposes and to thank Him for these things: how I have grown, how our family has grown, how our church family has grown, how I see God restoring and redeeming Creation even beyond my small community. He is faithful!

I'm so grateful to pastor Sandy for leading us in this process and I look forward to our 2021 DMC crafted prayer and how God will shape us as a praying people.

-Pastor KrisAnne Swartley

COMING UP...SOME SPECIAL DATES

Birthdays

Denny Bartels	11/11
Zachary Schwabe	11/21
Marge Swartley	11/25
Hunter Ryan	11/30
Lucy DeJesus	12/4

Anniversaries

Phillip & Heather Zeo	11/5
Michael & Aimee Gourley	11/11
Ray & Marge Swartley	11/27

KAREN'S PLACE

Karen's Place is not open to the public right now but will be live streaming its events. On November 7, **Joe Miralles**, a singer-song writer from the Philadelphia area, will perform. He sings, plays guitar, drums, bass and keyboards. He has released five recordings over the years. Tune at 8:00 pm to watch the live stream, or later at your convenience, on our Facebook page or website.



FROM THE PRAYER CORNER

As we enter into the month of November, I want to remind all DMC participants of the opportunities we have for prayer in our congregational life together.

If you desire to have prayer for a need, a decision you are facing or want to share a word of praise, there are several ways to do that:

- ◆ Stop in the prayer room on Sunday mornings before and during worship to pray with the **prayer ushers**. This is confidential and prayer ushers are practicing social distancing and wearing masks.

- ◆ Contact Sandy Landes to have your need shared on the **prayer chain** (email/phone). The prayer chain is a group of persons who are committed to pray as needs are shared. If you would like to join the prayer chain, please contact Sandy.
- ◆ We have a **prayer guide every week in our bulletin** and you are welcome to request a prayer item for the prayer guide. To include something in Sunday's bulletin, please send it to Sandy by Thursday evening.
- ◆ Sometimes we are facing an important decision and need others to discern with us. **The Care Team** is open to meeting with you. Please reach out to Pastor Sandy to arrange this.
- ◆ **There are two zoom prayer meetings every week, Tuesdays at 9 am and Fridays at 1pm.** Feel free to join whenever you are able.

God invites us to prayer in all of life. As we continue on the journey of following Jesus, we receive strength and wisdom through prayer together.

"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." Hebrews 4:16

Sandy Landes, Prayer Minister



FROM THE CARE TEAM

Pastor Sandy, Pastor Randy, Kendrick Garrido, Robin Miller, and Freida Myers participated in a Care Team meeting via Zoom Tuesday evening, October 27. We began by focusing on Matt. 22, 34-40 where Jesus was tested and said “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... and love your neighbor as yourself.” We talked about some fears we or others have: violence, lack of peace prior to elections. There can be tensions when hearing persons with opposing views. One person appreciated a pastor who shared this centering principle: “God is enough.”

We reviewed the DMC call to prayer in our bulletin this past Sunday which gives us some things to pray about: for example, refocusing on God for hope and security, and trusting in the power of the Spirit to bring change rather than the power of politics.

Sandy reported the current balance in the compassion fund and remembered some ways funds have been used in the past year. There should be a report soon from the mental health survey recently submitted from the congregation. During the Pandemic there seems to be a lot of stress for children in different settings and for elderly without social visits with families and friends. We noted that there have been many good connections with some persons who have not been comfortable attending services.

We joined in prayer to conclude our meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday evening, November 23.

Freida Myers, for the Care Team

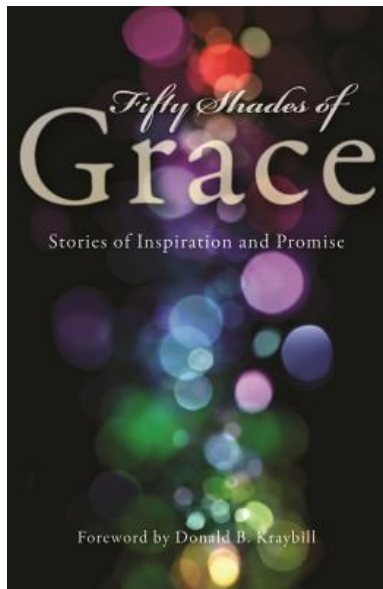


PASTORAL CALL TO PRAYER

As we head towards this year's presidential election, there is no question tensions are high within our society. Fear is evident in much campaigning and reports. Christians have lined up behind both candidates to give their support. We, your pastoral staff, wish to call us to pray for the following:

- ⇒ Pray that Christians will refocus on God for hope and security.
- ⇒ Invite God to search our hearts and to identify any attitudes and or actions that call for repentance.
- ⇒ Pray that leading up to the election Christians will be more interested in showing God's love than convincing others for whom to vote.
- ⇒ Pray that Christians will seek to live God's peace for all people after the election.
- ⇒ Pray that our actions will cause others to want to follow Jesus.
- ⇒ Pray that Christians will trust in the power of the Spirit to bring change rather than the power of politics.

From pastors Randy, KrisAnne and Sandy



FROM THE LIBRARY

There are many categories of books in the library! Many offer wonderful alternatives to the news these days; they can be entertaining, challenging, encouraging, or all three.

There are books focused on spiritual life, family, biography, community involvement, fiction, children and youth. Books recently added to the library in the last year are in a separate section. But there are many, many golden oldies throughout.

I would be glad to help you find something enjoyable. *Fifty Shades of Grace* is a collection of stories edited by Herald Press and compiled by Melodie Davis. One story that touched me was by a pastor who needed to visit a dying parishioner, who was as close to an enemy as she got. This dying woman would be nice to her face but said nasty things behind her back. The pastor was not feeling loving toward this woman and prayed for grace and God's Spirit as she went to visit. In response to her prayer, the pastor was overwhelmed with God's love for this dying woman as she touched and blessed her. Both were blessed with God's great love and changed in this experience.

Freida Myers, Librarian

FIFTH SUNDAY DAY OF SERVICE

November 29 is our next Fifth Sunday! We will be partnering with **Ripple Community Inc. in Allentown**. This is a Mosaic Mennonite Conference ministry that grew out of Ripple Church, a church plant begun in 2006. Ripple Community Inc. was established in 2015 to offer support and community to those in Allentown experiencing housing instability, social isolation, mental illness, trauma and poverty. This ministry serves over 150 residents of the city. They partner with local agencies for mental and medical health care, housing assistance, employment assistance, etc. They also offer 13 apartments (called RCI Village) at affordable rates for those who apply and meet criteria.

Here is a link to their website to learn more: <https://www.ripplecommunityinc.org/>

Ripple Community Inc. has invited us to come from 1-4pm on November 29th to do some decorating, cleaning, painting and possibly a few small building projects at the Community Center. We will also bring supplies for an evening "to-go" meal (sandwich fixings, bananas, soft cookies, chips, water bottles). One of our projects will be to pack those meals and have them ready to hand out to residents following Ripple Church's 4pm worship service. Any who desire to do so are invited to stay for the 4pm worship service and help distribute meals at 5pm.

A worship service will be recorded and available on DMC's facebook page at 10:00am. Randy's sermon will focus on racism (our December discernment conversation topic).

-Pastor KrisAnne

IF ONLY.... Ronda shared these thoughts with the congregation during worship on Oct. 18th, reflecting on the story of Lazarus' death and resurrection:

"Oh God, if only..." How many times have I started a thought out like that? Many. If I am being honest, though, many of them were using God's name in vain, just in an act of frustration or exhaustion. But many times, it was because I wanted God to fix what was breaking before it broke and was lost forever. "If only you had stopped me from getting married." That is one that I have thought about. Of course I would never give up my daughter, but the title of Mrs. I would gladly have done without. God has used my broken heartedness in a way that I could not have imagined. What God has resurrected in that part of my life is not the husband of it at all, but the relationship I have with Him, his Son, and the Spirit. I know now that His love is enough. God's love can bring us everything we need. He can do all things. God let the death of my marriage come because he wanted to be glorified. Don't get me wrong, I don't think God killed my marriage any more than Jesus made Lazarus sick, but I do believe he loves me enough to do miracles I didn't even know I could ask for.

Like Martha, most of us know that we will win with God in the end, that all the pain and loss in this world will end in glory. This leads us sometimes to believe that what's done is done. But our hearts want something different. How many times have we wished for a different life or a different outcome? How many times have we pointed out to God a particular incident in our lives and said, "If only you had done something different my life would be better."? We have trouble reconciling an all-powerful God with how he calls us to be patient and to persevere. If we seek his glory he can and will do far more than we can ever imagine.

I leave you with this - a prayer from Ephesians 3:14-21: "For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know that his love surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

-Ronda Hestand



DEADLINE for submitting items to the December News & Views: **December 1**

PARTING THOUGHT— "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16

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