

PeacePress

OFFICIAL PEACE CHURCH NEWSLETTER
A GLOBAL MISSION CHURCH



The mission of Peace United Church of Christ is to reach our community for Christ, develop disciples, and empower all people for ministry.

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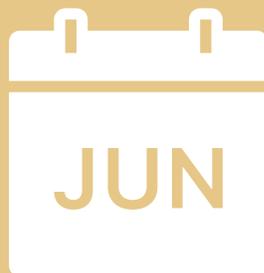
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PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

by Pastor Tom Warren



As we slowly crawl out of the worst aspects of the pandemic, our world is coming back to life. In our church, activities have begun to come back to life also. The Women's Fellowship is now holding their monthly meeting again. The "Hands On" pillow making ministry will have their first in-person meeting June 8th after a year of working remotely. And as is evident with this Pastor's Perspective, we are back to publishing our monthly Peace Press newsletter under the leadership of Anne Badgett, our new church secretary. It all feels good, and kind of exciting!

On the other hand, there have been a variety of articles in the religious and mainstream media pointing out that the pandemic has been hard on church life. As congregations reopen, many churches are discovering that some members have found other things to do on Sunday mornings. Other churches have suffered losses of membership due to death. Still other churches have seen members leave the area in the desire to live closer to family members. Each of these have deep impacts on the communal life of a church, from fellowship and ministries to budgetary shortfalls. It has not been an easy year for churches.

At Peace United Church of Christ we too have experienced a little bit of all of these pandemic-related stresses, but the good news is that we are still here and holding our own. But what comes next? If the worst of the pandemic is truly over, and a new normal is setting in, what needs to happen for our church to regain its traction?

At this time, I do not have any concrete answers in regard our "regaining of traction." But I do want congregation members to know that the Consistory has begun to have conversations in regard to strategizing for the future. These conversations, while having only just begun, have touched on long-term budgetary concerns, an aggressive need for membership growth efforts, continued evolution in terms of technological engagement (social media, livestreaming, advertising), and deeper engagement with our surrounding Greensboro community.

When the Israelites faced their rebuilding challenge after coming out of exile, central to their growth and well-being was their rediscovery of their sacred texts, most specifically the Book of Deuteronomy.

As told in Nehemiah 8: 7-8, Ezra the scribe, along with his associates,

"...helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. So they read from the book, from the Law of God, with interpretation.

They gave them the sense, so that the people understood the reading."

Ezra and his associates interpreted the old Torah teaching for their new historical situation, and through this new interpretation and commitment to the Word of God, they found renewed energy for mission and a deepened hope for the well-being of their faith community.

As we enter into this time of re-engagement with a post-pandemic world, let us read Nehemiah 8, and other biblical texts, through which we can center our lives and, through God's leading, find our emerging future. We have been here before, only to find out that God is still with us. So let's get to work.

With Blessings of Hope,
Pastor Tom

A NOTE FROM ELISABETH

I have had people wonder what I did while I was away from Peace. Two things I did regularly were playing piano at home and definitely worshipping with a variety of sermons each Sunday morning – things that I continue to like to do. I'm not on Facebook, so I enjoy services that broadcast on other formats. One in particular is St. Stephen's United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas. This is a community church in the area where Kendra lived, and where she was (is) a member even though she no longer lives there. Steven Fisher is their Family Ministries Director and usually shares the children's message. However, on May 16th, he also preached the sermon. They were doing a series of sermons on Eyewitness about people in the Bible. Steven's sermon was about Paul, and at the end he asked a profound question and offered a challenging statement which has made me really think. I e-mailed him at St. Stephen's and asked permission to share it, and he readily agreed. Here is the question:

"If you're ever written about as an eyewitness to God, what would you want your story to say?"

And the challenge that followed:

Then do it!

Perhaps it's time to deeply think and pray personally and as a church about our Eyewitness to God. What do others see and hear? What would be written about us? Are we reading and following God's Holy Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit to truly witness for God? What would an eyewitness account say about each of us personally and as a church? What do we need to do?

MISSIONS OF THE MONTH

Hands-On is Back!



Yes, it is June, our anniversary month, and once again we are blessed to be the Mission of the Month. As we say: Hands-On is on the move – Loving Hands: Filling Needs and Touching Lives. We are so grateful for the support the congregation has shown us. In 2020, despite our crisis, we had the second highest donations ever during Mission of the Month. This was an amazing, wonderful gift. Many functions everywhere were halted during the pandemic... but not Hands-On. There was no reason to come back to pillow-making.

WE WERE NEVER GONE!

We have continued to function during COVID19 delivering pillows every month. We were able to do even more for the entities willing to continue receiving our pillows. First it was just Moses Cone Palliative, Cancer, and Surgery. Then Wesley Long was added. Next came Cone Pediatrics, and finally, Hospice rejoined our recipients. How did we do it with no group meetings? Well, there were lots of drop-offs and pick-ups...drop of fabrics, pick up cut pillows; drop off pillows to be sewn, turned and pressed - drop off or pick up the finished ones; drop off pillows to be stuffed, pick them up; drop off or pick up pillows to be sewn closed - drop off or pick them up. Then, delivery - YEA!!

You get it... quite a year, my friends. But, we did it. Special thanks to Bill Kluttz, Dorothy Pauli, Yvonne Poffenbaugh, Femi Quakenbush, David Peeler, Sue Brittain, Tom Warren, Sharon Mitchell, Jeanne Bryan, Abbie Wheeling, Sherri Kluttz, and Debbie Shiner. They all helped me to "keep the lights on" during this difficult time. A few non-members even jumped in to help put tags on the pillows before delivery. We thank them as well. Now, our big news: We will resume in-person Hands-On on Tuesday, June 8 at 1:00 PM - 2:30 pm. We will be masked and socially distanced. We look forward to getting together again and having our usual good time. **WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS.** So just come on over and join us. It will truly warm your heart.

Gratefully In His Service,
Theo Scott
Chair

The History Room committee has been hard at work. All of the historical materials have been packed, labeled, and placed in the Bertha Work room. Many thanks go to Ava Chambers, Jeanne Bryan, Jane Ford, Rev Tom Warren, Rev. Jimmy Norred and Nora Norred who sorted and packed material. Pastor Tom and Rev. Jimmy went through the books and selected the ones that were pertinent to Church history, Bible study and denominational history. Tom took the outdated novels, self-help, and seldom checked out books to Good Will. The Stephen Ministry books will remain in the History room.

A letter has been sent to the entire congregation and friends of the Church explaining our plans for the History room and asking for donations for renovations and display furniture.

The committee met on May 23rd and made specific plans for the renovations to the room. We are grateful to Darrell Clark for construction guidance and for volunteering to repair the holes in the wall and to Cindy Spillers for research and ideas on decor. We plan to replace the flooring, paint the walls and trim and repair cracks in the ceiling, get custom shutters for the windows, and take down the built in book case which is falling apart and replace with glass display case and metal book shelves. Pastor Tom is recruiting strong men to move the furniture to the hall.

We have received \$1000 from the Women's Fellowship and \$1000 from former member Julie Fields, \$100 from Jennifer and Rob Fountain. So we can get started but we will need more donations. Please consider donating whatever you can in honor or memory of someone. Put history room on the check notation and make check to Peace UCC. Melinda Summers has agreed to receive this money and keep it in a separate line item along with a list of contributors and whom they honored.

At the end of our meeting, Pastor Tom shared his thinking that the history room will be not only a celebration of the storied past of Peace Church, but also a call to the future ways that God may use us if we are cognizant of and obedient to God's will. We must seek to serve the same Spirit as did our ancestors. God still has wonderful plans for Peace! So may we look to the past with thanksgiving, rejoice in the present, and move with faith and hope into the future!

Prayerfully, Nora Norred and all the history committee Ava Chambers, Jeanne Bryan, Doris Yeates, Cindy Spillers, Jane Ford, Darrell Clark, Larry Clapp, Una Lee Myers

CONSISTORY NOTE

Your Consistory has been meeting monthly in the Narthex as we continue to navigate through these challenging times. I would like to update you on our actions in the past five months.

With the assistance from an accountant, we updated the Endowment Fund, we changed some of the language to help us have a clear understanding of the purpose of our Endowment Fund. Some changes include stating, "The Consistory may also allow funds to be loaned from the fund for non-reoccurring, unbudgeted expenses with the specified loan repayment terms." If you would like a copy of the full Endowment Fund Declaration, please contact me.

We have learned in the past year that social media is vital in our church's life, it has been our connection. Our church web site is out of date and is in need of repair. We have obtained the services of Hue Tone to up-date our web site and train Pastor Tom, our church secretary and selected members. Also, we plan to continue streaming our Sunday worship service on Facebook. Currently we are using Pastor Tom's cell phone to video our Sunday worship services. We hope to purchase a web camera to video the service. We do need volunteers who can film the service and to be our social media team.

A special thanks to our treasurer, Melinda Summers who once again secured a PPE Loan for us to supplement our staff's salaries. Melinda works at the church every week on our finances and we greatly appreciate her discipleship. We do continue to have additional income from the NAIA meeting in our church. The Alliance Montegard Church meets every Sunday morning in our chapel and beginning in June, Narcotics Anonymous will be meeting on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

A special thank you to so many members who have faithfully conducted "church business" in the past months, Theo Scott, our Peace Care leader has led our Peace Care leaders in maintaining conduct with our members. Theo had the wonderful Easter Cross Project which allowed many of us to see our creative side, she also did the Pentecost flames for our Pentecost celebration. Theo is truly a blessing! Cindy Spillers and the Mission Team for their Advent and Lenten Mission Projects, Harold Poffenbaugh, our Mr. Fix-it man who maintains our property and grounds. David Murray, Jeanne Bryan, Jane Ford, and Linda Forotan who are always a phone call away and do whatever is needed! Thank you to everyone and to the members for your financial gifts that are so important in our ministry.

As we look to post-pandemic life, your Consistory has been in discussion about the life of our church and ministry of Peace UCC. We will have a Congregational Meeting on Rally Day Sunday, September 12.. We will discuss a proposed Three Year Plan for our church. I hope that all of you will "save the date" for this important meeting as we discuss our hopes and dreams for our church. C. S. Lewis said it much better than I,

"You are never too old to set another goal, or to dream a new dream."

Blessings,
Ava Chambers
Consistory President

CUBA MISSIONARIES TO VISIT PEACE CHURCH

On Saturday evening, June 19th, the Rev. Stan and Kim Dotson will be at Peace Church to talk about their recently completed stint as missionaries in Mantanzas, Cuba. Members of the Alliance of Baptists denomination, the Dotsons have been in Cuba for the past three years working with Christians and others on the island.

On Saturday, June 19th, the Dotsons will speak as part of a hybrid program (in-person and on the meeting platform Zoom) along with a representative (via Zoom) from the Pastors for Peace Cuba solidarity group. This program will be at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.

The following day, Stan and Kim will give the Sunday morning message as part of our regularly scheduled service of worship at 10:45am.

Join us for what promises to be a very enlightening program on the current realities in Cuba as the Cuban people continue to struggle with the health impacts of Covid-19, the U.S. embargo, and the complete stoppage of the tourism industry due to the global pandemic



AT THE CROSS

If you missed Easter in-person service, you missed the treat of seeing over 30 crosses displayed outside on a very windy day. It was an absolute delight, and we wanted to thank everyone who embraced the project. It really took on a life of its own, and many people just sitting at home during COVID found something fun and engaging to do. The goal initially was to brighten the Narthex, and the crosses have been on display now for 6 weeks. What was also achieved was a sense of community with people of all ages sharing a common goal. The crosses have now been removed, but they will probably be "resurrected" in 2021 when hopefully we are all back together for Easter. Sorry folks, but they will not be returned until we use them next year

HAPPY
Easter



CONGRATS GRADUATES!

- Avery Dole is graduating from Northwest Guilford High School on June 7. In the fall Avery will attend Canisius College in Buffalo, NY. She will be majoring in Sports and Exercise Health Care as well as continuing her volleyball career.
- Rachel Johnson is graduating from Western Guilford High School; she will be attending UNC Greensboro with plans to major in Elementary Education for Special Needs.
- Avery Fountain, is going to Sarah Lawrence College in Yonkers, New York this fall. Jack Fountain is finishing eighth grade at Swan and will be heading to Grimsley! Their parents are Rob and Jennifer Fountain. Grandparents are Rev. Jimmy and Nora Norred and Bob and Norma Fountain.



PENTECOST MAY 2021

When the Holy Spirit blew into the gathering early church, lives were changed and hopes were raised. On May 23rd our Pentecost service was filled with song, prayer, and scriptures of the Holy Spirit. The weather was perfect, if not a bit warm, and the fellowship, food, and fun was refreshing.

Worship began at 10:45am at the outdoor altar and included familiar hymns of spirit, light, and unity. We concluded our service with the South African hymn 'We Are Marching in the Light of God'. Lunch included a Pentecost cake, sandwiches, fruit cups, chips, and refreshing tea and water.

Pentecost is an acknowledgement of the power of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the early church. Then and now, it is an important observance in the Christian church, bringing hope and transformation to our lives and ultimately, to the world. Thanks to all who made our Pentecost Sunday a very special event!

PEACE CARE

CONNECTING,
COMMUNICATING, CARING



Thanks to everyone who has shown the PeaceCare spirit during this difficult time. I had more communication with PeaceCare leaders than ever, and I tried to encourage them to stay in touch periodically with group members. This is not a tightly structured ministry, and I have never set out exact functions for the leaders to perform. They do, I hope represent their best Christian personality as they interact with their group members. But remember, the onus is not entirely on them. We, as congregation members, have a responsibility to each other. So, please, remember the 3C's. COVID19 has "converted" us into believing that "We are all in this together."

God be with you,
Theo Scott
PeaceCare Chair

THE SPIRIT CAME

During the Pentecost Luncheon, paper flames bearing the names of attendees streamed from the ceiling.

Pentecost is the birthday of the church and the flame represents the Holy Spirit. Think on this as you can now view the flames on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Notice the flames touch each other representing our connection in the Holy Spirit as children of God.

If you were not there to "claim a flame" on Pentecost Sunday, you get a second chance. Just pick up a flame in the Narthex and put your name on the bottom. Your flame will be added to those already displayed.

Blogger Jean Wise writes,

"Fire transforms us into people of courage, boldness, and strength."

For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God,
which is in you. 2 Timothy 1: 6

Let's "fan our flames" for Peace Church and the world.



MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Don and Abbie Wheeling would like to thank all of their Peace family for the thoughts, prayers, calls and beautiful cards received since Don's diagnosis over a year ago. He is now at the maintenance level of chemo and goes to the Cancer Center every other week for a shot. He is feeling much better and stronger on this new level of treatment, and we are very thankful for that. Thanks again for bringing Peace Cheer into our home!
- Father's Day Bulletin - The Women's Fellowship is sponsoring a Father's Day bulletin which will be an opportunity for church members and friends to give gifts in honor or memorial of the Fathers in our lives. Father's Day is June 20th and collections will begin today with a sign-up sheet and donations basket in the Narthex. The last day to sign up is the 13th. Gifts will benefit the Tiny Houses Greensboro organization. Note: Our Mother's Day bulletin raised \$605.00 for the Out of the Garden Food Project, the most ever for our Mother's Day bulletin!!
- Please remember the first Sunday of each month is Oatmeal Sunday. Peace Church has a long term commitment to supply the Greensboro Urban Ministry Food Pantry with oatmeal. Donations of one pound boxes of oatmeal may be placed in the large basket in the Narthex. Monetary donations of \$1.00 per box may be placed in the small oatmeal box, the offering plate, or mailed to the church and I will make the purchases. Thank you for all the ways you support our missions.
- Cindy Spillers, Church Missions



IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES



Pastor Tom will be on vacation for the following dates:

- June 7th - Friday, June 11th (Family Trip)
- July 1st - Sunday, July 4th (Rev. Jimmy Norred will be leading worship on the 4th)

Church Secretary Anne will be on vacation for the following dates:

- June 24th - Sunday, June 27th
- August 8th - Friday, August 13th

Note: Anne will begin fall classes on August 17th and her office hours will shift.

Great news! Peace was awarded \$25,835 in second draw PPP loan funds from the Small Business Administration and distributed through TowneBank in Greensboro. To receive funding for the second draw we had to receive funds in 2020 AND show a 25% decrease in gross receipts between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020. The PPP loan will help defray our insurance costs for Tom and payroll costs for Tom and Rachel Johnson, our nursery attendant, as they were the only two people that remained on staff when the loan was secured. This year we also applied to have funds to help with utility costs. We have until August 2021 to use the PPP 2 loan funds.



Quick Look at Finances as of April 30, 2021

Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	Offerings		
			YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
4001	Pledges	8,210.00	33,520.00	107,081.00	73,561.00
4003	Loose Offerings	69.00	243.00	250.00	7.00
4004	Initial offerings	0.00	0.00	50.00	50.00
4006	Non-Pledge Offerings	925.00	4,488.75	37,102.00	32,613.25
4007	Sunday School	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
Total Offerings		\$9,204.00	\$38,251.75	\$144,583.00	\$106,331.25

	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
April 2021 Income Total	\$18,659.75	\$60,759.89	\$164,683.00	\$112,914.80
April 2021 Expenses Total	\$7,396.69	\$53,515.04	\$196,284.00	\$145,368.96
Income-Expenses		+\$11,263.06*	+\$7,244.85	-\$31,601.00

* The PPP loan was used to help defray the cost for Tom and Rachel's salaries for April as well as Tom's insurance and annuity. This is all part of payroll compensation. We also used the PPP loan to pay for our utilities. This is what helped our bottom line. Without the PPP loan funds, we would be in a deficit for April.

See the attached file for a look at the April Treasurer's Report for April 2021. It can also be found on the bulletin board in the church hallway.