

Putting First Things First At the First of the Year

January 2021

Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31

Before the days of electronic calendars, I used an old fashioned Franklin Planner—which was highly encouraged by managers in our company. It was chunky and heavy to carry around—but it kept me incredibly organized. There was also something incredibly satisfying about checking things off the To Do List. I also loved getting a fresh new set of calendar pages each new year. Those pages made me feel like the coming days were fresh with possibilities!



Today I use a calendar on my Iphone that automatically syncs with my laptop and reminds me of appointments. It is really handy, light weight and I always have it with me. Plus it takes photos—something my Franklin planner was never capable of doing.

But I have to admit it isn't as good as my old Franklin pages at encouraging me to prioritize everything I do. As we turn the calendar page (literally or electronically) to a fresh year, this is a good time to consider what takes top priority in our lives. Jesus calls us to love God completely and to love our neighbors as ourselves. What does that look like?

Our Methodist forefathers and mothers used the beginning of the year as a time to renew their commitment to making Jesus Christ and his Kingdom top priority. There is a special prayer used for this purpose. I memorized this prayer in seminary and have spent several years where I prayed it daily. Even now I go back to it often. It is a dangerous prayer—not something to pray lightly. But it is a prayer that helps us become a true Christian. Read the words slowly and reflect on what they mean:

A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition (UMH #607)

I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee. Exalted for thee or brought low for thee. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.



Are you ready to ask Jesus to truly be Lord of your life in 2021? I pray you are! If so please join me in praying this prayer daily this month.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Beth Ann

Finance Corner

We recently put the finishing touches on the First Church financial budget for 2021. Trying to be conservative, it pretty much mirrors 2020. We should all remember that budgets are just guides as to what we might spend in each area. Some areas like wages, mission giving, and apportionments are easy to budget, while other areas like utilities and repairs are more difficult. Over twelve months in most years things seem to even out. We pray that 2021 won't bring anything unusual.

Financial support for the budget comes from faithful members giving through their tithes and offerings. About half of our membership have turned in pledge cards for 2021. Those pledges support about 65% of our budget, the balance will come from the rest of our membership, who faithfully support our financial ministry. God's blessing to everyone for being caring Christians.

Blessings and Peace,
Jerry Miller, Finance Chair

Trustee Report



Things we've done this last month of the year:

1. Repaired fire alarm system cell communication unit
2. Repaired first floor air handler unit
3. Repaired heater in third floor classroom
4. Hot water pump repaired and reinstalled
5. Ordered replacement A/C unit for kitchen area
6. Completed annual floor cleaning in LCM areas and church offices.

Steven C. Longenecker
Chair, Trustees

PRAYER CONCERNS

Deb Swartzell
Phil & Karen Starkey
Pastor Mark McWilliams
Monte Wagoner
Family of Horace Smith
Steve Austin
Single Parents
Healing of relationships
Many unspoken requests
Those with Covid
Those undergoing cancer treatment
Medical personnel, care givers
LCM, local schools/staff



Continued Requests

Ed Hanawalt
Lauren Hanawalt
Sharlene Arnold
Tim Taylor
Dick Graf

Please email the church office at
loganfirst@comcast.net or call 574-753-3491
with prayer requests.

NURSING HOMES

McKinney Place: Beverly Hess
Beverly Vietti

Woodbridge: Mike Doering

MILITARY SERVICE:

Braxton Baker
Alex Karnafel
Oakley Lewellen
Tim Strubell
Jacob Kaley
Matt Karnafel
Joshua Lyons



Coping with loss

By Heather Platt



Many of us have experienced the kind of loss that knocks the breath out of us. Learning how to live without someone you hold close takes a long time and this process cannot be rushed. No matter what stage of grief you are in, remember to take a deep breath in to allow yourself to feel your emotions in that moment. Mourning is a natural process and the initial reaction to a great loss is shock, profound sadness and disbelief.

In these early stages, moving forward can feel impossible so be kind to yourself and seek the support from family and friends who love and care about you. Just hold on. Grief affects us physically, mentally, spiritually and with our other relationships. We often have memory issues, processing problems and absolutely feel lost. It is important to spend time sharing how you feel and realize that you have to give yourself the permission to prioritize yourself and allow others to step in and help. Don't fall into the trap of having to put on a front to protect others. God puts people in our lives who want to listen and just to be present.



Do what YOU need to do to heal. It's okay not to be okay. Each of us grieves differently and we need to take the time to process the loss at an individual pace. We also lose people very close to us at different times in our lives, which changes the way we step through the acceptance of a great loss. Grief is unpredictable and that's why a single trigger can cause a memory to flash in front of

us leading to sadness and flaring the feelings of loss. Remember that God is right beside us even when He feels far away during our suffering.

Sometimes we have to step away and spend 15 minutes alone without distraction to refresh and mentally handle the stress. That may mean crying our heart out in an act of acceptance and awareness of the deep emotion and pain we are feeling. It may mean reflecting on memories of our loved one. Others may just need to escape and simply breathe. Whatever you need to do is exactly what you need to do. Don't hide your hurt because that doesn't allow you to heal. Come before God in prayer and bring Him your hurting heart. Lean into Him and seek His peace.

As time passes, our grief will also evolve. But it's unpredictable and that's why a simple trigger can cause a memory to flash in front of us leading to sadness and flaring the feelings of the loss. Give yourself grace and find what works best for you. Take one day at a time and don't think too far ahead or fast forward through the process because your heart and brain are not ready for it. As the new reality of loss starts to settle in, the realization of the new normal becomes more obvious.

After acknowledging and accepting our loss, in time we are able to focus on what we can do to help others and ourselves. We need to remember to prioritize self-care such as resting, eating healthy foods and sleeping properly. It's also vital to connect with others around us. We need to free ourselves to think small. Limit time thinking about the future and focus on what we have in front of us. Make a list of the blessings in our lives; write them down and thank God for them.

Gratitude does not erase the sadness but it does show us how faithful and loving our God is. It helps us chose to focus on the good and not dwell on the negatives. It allows us to learn how to live without them by recounting the good

Continued on page 4

Dates & Information

Coping with loss continued

times and the happy moments. Months later, we are better equipped to handle the twists and turns. Then much later, when we see that sunset or visual reminder, we can appreciate the sense of connection with our loved one. We are not



grateful for the loss, but we are grateful for our loved one and the relationship we had. What's most important is that love remains forever and we were richly blessed because they were here.

Take care,

Heather



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|------------------|------------------|
| 1 Genesis 1-3 | 17 Genesis 48-50 |
| 2 Genesis 4-7 | 18 Exodus 1-3 |
| 3 Genesis 8-11 | 19 Exodus 4-6 |
| 4 Genesis 12-15 | 20 Exodus 7-9 |
| 5 Genesis 16-18 | 21 Exodus 10-12 |
| 6 Genesis 19-20 | 22 Exodus 13-15 |
| 7 Genesis 21-23 | 23 Exodus 16-18 |
| 8 Genesis 24-25 | 24 Exodus 19-21 |
| 9 Genesis 26-28 | 25 Exodus 22-24 |
| 10 Genesis 29-30 | 26 Exodus 25-27 |
| 11 Genesis 31-32 | 27 Exodus 28-29 |
| 12 Genesis 33-35 | 28 Exodus 30-32 |
| 13 Genesis 36-38 | 29 Exodus 33-35 |
| 14 Genesis 39-41 | 30 Exodus 36-38 |
| 15 Genesis 42-44 | 31 Exodus 39-40 |
| 16 Genesis 45-47 | |

BIRTHDAYS



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|---------------|--|
| Jan 7 | Chase Karnafel
Drew Sailors
Susan Swartz |
| Jan 8 | Kit Clary |
| Jan 9 | Susan Long |
| Jan 12 | Don Collins |
| Jan 13 | Vicki Byrd |
| Jan 14 | Marvellen Dunwoody |
| Jan 17 | Pat Wilkinson |
| Jan 21 | Conna Kitchel
Carol Easterday |
| Jan 22 | Dawn Fisher |
| Jan 23 | Donald Tribbett
Connie Graf |
| Jan 25 | Nolan Clary |
| Jan 26 | Brian Graham
Mark Hammons |
| Jan 27 | Kerigan Weese |
| Jan 30 | Ann Boonstra |
| Jan 31 | Cynthia Deane |



Little Children's Ministry

Happy New Year! We are all excited to leave 2020 behind us and pray that 2021 brings peace to all. LCM was definitely blessed last year. Thru all of the challenges that we faced in 2020, we are still in business and still providing care to over 100 children! This is thanks to God and all of the people who helped us make it thru! Thank you once again for all of the love and support!!

Thanks to donations from Joy Circle and the money raised from LCM Children's Christmas ornaments, LCM was able to provide an extra special Christmas to 30 children. Each family in need received multiple gifts to help with Christmas. They were all very grateful.

All of the classes were able to have their Christmas parties prior to our Christmas Break. A toy donation was given to LCM that made it possible for us to provide a toy to every child during their class Christmas Party. Children 6 weeks thru Preschool also received a book with their gift. The donation brought lots of smiles to LCM children! It was just one more blessing to add to the multiple ones that LCM received in 2020!



Although it was not our traditional Christmas Program Celebration, LCM was able to safely record each class to make a Christmas DVD. Due to a generous donation from a church member, every LCM family received a copy. We hope you enjoyed the program and pray that we can meet in person once again in 2021.

During our closure, carpets in the classrooms were shampooed. Rooms were cleaned and sanitized. All children were asked to take home their belongings so that we can start the New Year clean and ready to go.

The Little Children's Ministry's *Paths to Quality* review was in December. We were able to maintain our Level 3 rating. Level 3 rating takes a lot of hard work from our staff. They do an excellent job, and we are very grateful for all they do. Our annual FSSA inspection will be between January and March 2021. This is required to keep our Registered Ministry status.

LCM plans to resume lesson plans beginning January 4th. Lesson plans have been changed some due to closures and other events. Although the "school" year will take longer than originally anticipated, we are on track to finish these plans. We will have them completed and our preschoolers ready for Kindergarten prior to our Preschool Graduation. Dates will be given at a later date.

Happy New Year from the LCM Staff!

Sincerely,

Belinda Jordan, Director

LCM STAFF

Director—Belinda Jordan

Administrative Assistant/Treasurer: Stormie Rivera

CONTACT US:

Phone: 574.753.3491

Email: loganfirst@comcast.net

Web: www.loganfirst.org

SUNDAY SERVICES:

Open Sanctuary Worship– 8:15 AM & 10 AM

We practice safe distancing and require everyone to wear face masks when entering the building

LIVE STREAMING

10 AM: FaceBook Live @ LoganFirstUMC

CHURCH STAFF

- ◆ **Pastor:** Beth Ann Cook
- ◆ **Administrative Assistant:** Lori Shewman
Email: loganfirst@comcast.net
- ◆ **LCM Director:** Belinda Jordan
Email: fumlcm@gmail.com
- ◆ **LCM Administrative Assistant:** Stormie Riveria
Email: lcmsec@comcast.net
- ◆ **Treasurer:** Elaine Hall
Email: loganfirsttreasurer@comcast.net
- ◆ **Financial Secretary:** Nancy Hamilton
- ◆ **Worship Leader:** Ali Williams
- ◆ **Media Coordinator:** Luann Hamilton
- ◆ **Pianists:** Deb Binford, Jeff Smith, Elaine Hall

CHURCH LEADERS

Our Bishop

Bishop Julius Trimble

Conference Superintendent

Rev. Lori Blinn

Associate Superintendents

Rev. Rob Seewald

Rev. John Randall

Church Cluster

Crosswind UMC

Pastor Nick Robinson

First UMC

Pastor Beth Ann Cook

Main Street UMC

Pastor Doug Thomas

Wheatland Ave UMC

Bert Stover



Our Mission

The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our Vision

REACH • EQUIP • SEND

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

- Tuesdays:** Prayer, 11 AM, Sanctuary
- Wednesdays:** Dial-up Devotion & Prayer, 2 PM
Call 605-313-5919
Code 635572
Revelation Study– **On Hold**

JANUARY SCHEDULE:

- Mon, Jan 4** LCM open
- Wed, Jan 13** JOY Circle- **CANCELLED**

