

THE NORTHERN LIGHT

MAY 2020

ISSUE 5



Greetings in Christ, Session has voted to suspend all in person worship and use of church building by the congregation and other groups until May 19th. We (session) will meet again on May 19th to reassess the situation based on what we learn after the gradual opening of businesses and organizations in Ohio. Because our church population by virtue of age alone falls within the “high risk for infection” demographic, we are seeking to remain cautious and prudent. We have great hopes and anticipation with joy when we will get to see one another again in person. Plans are in process to arrange for what gatherings will look like when we return to in person activities. The session meeting on May 19th will have this as a primary focus. So far plans include using masks, having hand sanitizer prominent and available, doing without Café, and marking off seating spaces six feet apart. Further details will emerge, and they will be shared with you via email, Facebook, webpage and mailings. Shifting gears, I write the following to convey some experience, strength and hope for the common good of our lives together in Christ, while apart physically.

Zoom Conference Calls have become a regular part of my week since the shelter in place began. I know not everyone has access to these calls, so I count it a luxury. For those who are not familiar with what a Zoom call is, think of a video phone like on the cartoon the Jetsons or FaceTime on Apple Products. The difference (besides it being in real life and not in a cartoon) is that a Zoom Call is a *group* video call where people’s live video images are sometimes arranged on your screen in blocks kind of like the Brady Bunch.

Thankfully, some church meetings, several denominational meetings and some social meetings can take place in this way to help us stay connected. Adult Visionary Ministries is going to host some Zoom calls once a month beginning May 17th at 1:30PM. Please log in on your favorite computer or mobile device and join other Northminster folks ready to catch up with one another and fellowship. Please check the rest of the newsletter for login ID and Password information and the dates and times of these Zoom social gatherings in June and July.

Continued on next page



SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:00 A.M.

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PASTORS

Dwight McCormick II, Pastor
W. Franklin Sparks, Pastor Emeritus

CHURCH STAFF

Tammy Hickman	Office Manager/ Financial Secretary
Bill Harrison	Treasurer
Adam Veith Debbie Husted	Custodial Staff
David Hapner	Choir Director
Dawn White	Organist
Kali Lawrence	Bell Choir Director
Terry Rigio	Presbyterian Women
Angie Curtin	Librarian

The Northern Light is published monthly September thru May with one summer issue.

If there is an omission or an error, please contact the editor so a correction can be made.

Thank you,
Tammy Hickman, Newsletter Editor

During one of the Zoom Calls I got to be a part of last Wednesday with the Vital Congregations Initiative folks in Louisville KY, I heard someone mention how when we read Scripture **FROM** a different life situation, that the meaning of the text may deepen or shift.

Seminary trains we preacher types to look at a Scripture taking into account the life situation of the original author, the original community to whom the text is written and the life situation of the people participating in the action of the text itself. The interpretive task of the preacher also considers the life situation of the congregation with whom she or he is ministering.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has affected the life situation from which we read Scripture. It alters the texture of meaning we glean from the texts. For instance, the following text from Philippians chapter 1 is the Apostle Paul writing to a church he started in Philippi. We can see he loved the congregation from this opening to the book. He writes Philippians 1:3-11:

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In every prayer for all of you, I always pray with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will continue to perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

It is right for me to feel this way about all of you since I have you in my heart. For in my chains and in my defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partners in grace with me. God is my witness how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and profound insight, so that you can discern what is best, that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God”

From *our* current physical separation from some family, many friends, most church folks and physical separation between pastor and congregation, I believe we can all find points of contact with this text. This longing to see one another while not caused by prison, it is no less real. I pray we remain in touch with our connection to Jesus Christ and how being connected to Jesus Christ connects us with one another.

I pray that even though we are separated physically that we remember with joy our partnership in the gospel. I pray that also during this time we imagine with anticipation what our partnership may look like in the future. I pray we learn more what it might mean in our context to live as “partners in grace.” I look forward to discerning that with you.

I pray that as we continue on this strange and unfamiliar path that through prayer, meditation and reading of Scripture that our “love may abound more and more in knowledge and profound insight, so that WE can discern what is best, that WE may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God”

One last Scripture I encourage us to examine also comes from the Apostle Paul is from Romans 8:38

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

I look forward to seeing you in person as soon as it is safe to do so. I look forward to seeing you on some of the Zoom Conference Calls too. Until then, you remain in my prayers, and in my heart and mind.

In Christ,
Dwight

Session Highlights

The Session met in stated meeting April 21, 2020, by Zoom conference call. Rev. Dwight McCormick opened the meeting with prayer and Ruling Elder Diana Harrison offered a devotional reading.

Pastor's report: Rev. McCormick reported that he will continue posting Sunday worship services on Facebook live stream until we are able to hold in person services again. Beginning April 26, he will be leading a study from the Thoughtful Christian (online, via Zoom) from 11:00 am to noon.

Finance Committee report: The financial report for March showed an income, year-to-date of \$55,505 (this includes several pledges that have been prepaid for the entire year) and expenses of \$45,887.

The main topic for consideration was planning for when and how to resume in person worship, meetings, and other activities at Northminster. After discussion and consensus building, **session approved motions cancelling in person worship, committee meetings, and other activities through May 19th, and use of the building by outside groups for the entire month of May.** At its May 19th meeting, session will reconsider resuming in person activities.

Session meetings will be held in an online format, using Zoom. Committees will conduct necessary business by phone, email, or Zoom.

The next stated meeting of Session is online on May 19, 2020 at 7:00 PM.

Please continue to pray for the Pastor and Session as we serve this congregation and our Lord Jesus Christ.



Happy Birthday to:

- | | |
|----------------|--------|
| Mark Mussman | May 1 |
| Kevin Creager | May 3 |
| Gini Collins | May 8 |
| Jerilyn Hines | May 16 |
| Diana Harrison | May 27 |
| Helen Parker | May 29 |

Happy Anniversary to:

- | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| May 4 | Donald and June Hughes (1991) |
| May 7 | Bill and Barbara Benston |
| May 18 | Andrew and Kristen Wheeler |
| May 31 | Chuck and Lisa Mansfield (1980) |

I'VE SEEN THE MORNINGS RISE

I've seen the mornings rise on rainy days
In silent ways
Before the sun comes to.
I've seen the evenings set on stormy nights
Without the lights
To guide the people through.
I've watched the mothers bring their daughters home
And sit alone
And wait for storms to break.
I've watched the fathers take their only sons
When they were done
And teach them how to take.
I've watched the rivers run through wounded field
They could not heal
Until they'd turned to sand.
I've watched the hillsides empty of their trees
Without a breeze
To cool the brow of man.
But now
But now
Now I see the mornings rise on sunny days
In gentle ways
To bring alive our souls.
I see the evenings set on starry nights
Let forth the lights
Remind us we are whole.
I watch the mothers bring their daughters home
Teach them on their own
And show them how to live.
I watch the father take their only sons
To watch the rivers run
And teach them how to give.
I watch the rivers run through fields of green
Bring back where they have been
And show us what to do.
I watch the hillsides growing full of trees
Remind us life to see
For we will make it through.
We will make it through.

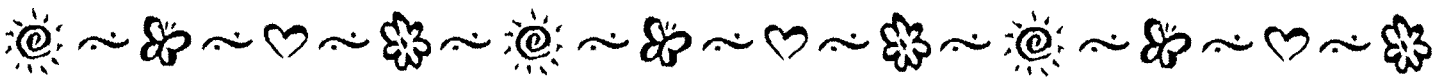
Kevin Creager

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

First, I want to thank those members that have continued pledge payments by using the PayPal portal on the church website. It works! Also, I thank those who have mailed, or hand delivered their pledge payments. Northminster continues to have expenses and payroll responsibilities.

Second, The IRS has suspended RMD's for 2020. RMD is the required minimum distribution that many of our members are required to do regarding retirement funds. This might change the way support is directed to Northminster. If this is new information, I suggest talking to your investment advisor.

Stay Safe, Bill Harrison



"We may not ever understand why we suffer or be able to control the forces that cause our suffering, but we can have a lot to say about what the suffering does to us, and what kind of people we become because of it."
Rabbi Harold Kushner



2020 Gifts Remembering

Dick Johnson

David Hines

I used to be addicted to the hokey
pokey

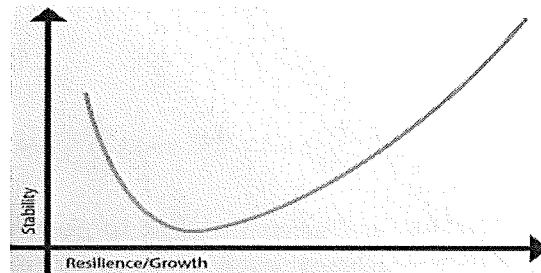
But then I turned myself around.



ADULT VISIONARY MINISTRY

Flattening the J Curve

There is wisdom in the J curve, for it helps us to understand what we experience during times of significant change and disruption.



*Adapted from *The J Curve: A New Way to Understand Why Nations Rise and Fall* by Ian Bremmer, 2006.*

Note from the diagram that the vertical axis of the J curve is "Stability," while the horizontal axis is "Resilience/Growth." When change occurs in our lives, the graphic shows that stability begins to decline. When change is significant—a move, the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, or as now, experiencing a pandemic, the decline in stability can be steep.

One natural reaction to a sudden experience of instability is, "I want to go back. If only I could back to the way things were, everything would be okay." A second common reaction is "I want this uncertainty to be over *NOW*--I want to be on the other side of the "J" curve as quickly as possible," even if it means trying to minimize or deny the significance of what is currently happening.

While these two responses are natural, we soon realize that we can't go back, and we also cannot force or rush the resolution of what we are going through. There are, fortunately, choices we can make that will significantly affect how deep our J curve experience will be.

We are quite familiar now with the term, "Flatten the curve," and so here are four specific things we can do to flatten any J curve.

Befriend Solitude: Turn off all your screens and try to spend at least ten minutes each day being still. You might pray, or meditate, or practice mindfulness. Or you might simply sit still and focus on your breathing.

(continued)

ADULT VISIONARY MINISTRY

If anxious or distracting thoughts arise, just note them and let them pass, as if you were sitting on a riverbank watching a leaf float by until it eventually floats out of sight. The mindfulness app Headspace has free meditations available now that are easy to access.

Connect With Others: We know that distancing ourselves from others flattens the pandemic curve. Making time each day to connect with others helps to flatten the J curve. Fortunately, there are many options for connecting with others. Use the ones that work for you. Connect with at least one person or more for at least fifteen minutes each day. If you are living with others at this time, make intentional time each day to meaningfully connect with each person in your household.

Nurture Your Spirituality: Nurturing your spirituality is crucial for supporting your journey through change and disruption. If you are a praying person, pray. If you are a religious person, deepen your practice of your faith. When possible, spend time in nature. Read poetry. Listen to music. Do whatever feeds your spirit.

Offer Kindness to Others: Offer one act of kindness to others each day. Call someone who is alone. Call someone who is grieving. Donate to a group that is helping others. Give a larger tip if you do takeout from a restaurant. My daily runs benefit from the kindness of children who use chalk to regularly write words of encouragement for those passing by on the sidewalks in front of their homes.

Every one of us is experiencing some degree of change and instability, some degree of a J curve right now. None of us planned for or chose this particular pandemic J curve. We can, however, make choices that will help to flatten the curve by practicing the things I have outlined here.

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Weekly Words of Wellness
Scott Stoner

HEART • SOUL • STRENGTH • MIND

ADULT VISIONARY MINISTRY

Keeping yourself healthy!

The running joke with the stay-at-home orders is, “How much weight have you put on?”

There is no need to let ourselves slouch on the couch and binge-watch reruns of NCIS Los Angeles or Baby Shark. There is a better way. If your TV is connected to the internet or you have a computer you can move to YouTube. YouTube is not just for the youngest generation out there. There are many videos that can keep us moving. One category is “Exercise for Seniors.”

Many studies have shown that if we keep exercising, even in small amounts, we stay happier, live longer, and enjoy our children and grandchildren more. When I typed “exercising for seniors” in to YouTube I got 517 different videos available to watch. These ranged from the 8- or 9-minute workouts for balance, to exercises you do while seated in your chair, to strenuous workouts over 50 minutes long.

One of the most popular balance exercise videos features two physical therapists, Brad and Bob, one short and one tall, doing easy exercises that focus on keeping us upright and being physically able to lift ourselves from our couches. Their approach is slow enough to follow without getting lost or frustrated with ourselves and our lack of practice.

The more vigorous exercise programs range from HASFit 20 minute video with exercises you can do from a chair or a standing position. The exercises involve some movement and are set to music. None of the exercises are difficult nor are you likely to work up a sweat.

A popular exercise leader, Jenny McClendon, has a lot of exercise videos. One of the more popular ones is, *Fit Over Fifty*. This one is done in a gym with a class of senior women joining her. It starts with a warm-up and moves to more serious exercise then to cooling down. Her most recent video is *Quarantined Home?? 20 minute exercise routine for seniors and beginners*. Ms. McClendon is exercising in front of her garage and really moves along. This one will raise a sweat.

Leslie Sansone has several “walking” videos. I thought that they were misnamed. They are not walking but are slower aerobic moving in-place, back-and-forth, and side-to-side. They were not for the senior in me. I would suggest them to folks a lot younger than myself.

Okay, with all the videos out there, there is no reason for you not to get off the couch and work those muscles and come out of this quarantine a healthier you!

“Times That Try Our Soul”

Over 200 years ago, Thomas Paine said: “These are the times that try men's souls” In today’s uncertain world with Covid-19’s cold, dark hand resting on the world, it feels as if we are living in a modern “valley of the shadow of death.” Although it is all certainly disturbing, it does not matter as God is with us ~ and so is Northminster. If you need anything, please call the church office. Also, check on your loved ones; call your friends or neighbors to see how they are doing or just to visit for a while. We are all a family in Christ. Today this has never been truer.

Remember, for the next several Sundays, some version of online worship will continue to be available on Northminster’s Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/northminsterpresbyterianspringfieldohio

We at Northminster are a Christian family. So reach out! Love one another. Help each other in any way we can ~ even in prayer. With God’s help and each another, we will emerge from the darkness into a safer and brighter world. Stay Safe.

“Making Your Offering During These Uncertain Times”

Without a Sunday Service, it is hard for us to give our gifts to God, thus honoring our pledge. However, we all can still submit our offerings in several ways: (1) mail a check or (2) drop it off at the church. For Internet users, (3) you can even pay by credit card, debit card, or Pay Pal. In order to do this, first, go to Northminster’s web page: **www.northminsterspringfield.org** ~ then at the bottom of the page in the blackened area, click on “Make a Donation.” When the next screen comes up, click on the gold “Donate” button. Then, select the amount of your offering and the method of your donation: Pay Pal, credit, or debit card. Then simply finish filling in the prompts. This internet donation method for Northminster is available at all times of the year.

Stay safe. If you need anything, please call the office. With all of us watching out for each other, with prayer, and with God’s grace, we will all find a brighter and less threatening tomorrow.

Blessings ~ the Finance Ministry

NORTHMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

400 Villa Road
Springfield, Ohio 45503



THE NORTHERN LIGHT
Issue 5

← **BE STRONG** ↗

and
↗ **COURAGEOUS.** →

Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged,
for the Lord your God
will be with you wherever
you go
Joshua 1:9

Upcoming ZOOM Special Meetings:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Sunday, May 17 | 1:30 p.m. Adult Visionary Meeting—Quarantine
Cantina |
| Sunday, June 28 | 1:30 p.m. Adult Visionary Meeting |
| Sunday, July 19 | 1:30 p.m. Adult Visionary Meeting |

Access Codes Needed:

Meeting I.D.—227-047-6564
Password—093151

*Northminster Presbyterian Church will develop disciples of Jesus Christ
and learn how to follow the way of Jesus.*