



The Messenger

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The Rev. Wes Shields

Several people have asked me lately why I place so much emphasis on the Scriptures. I think that this is an important question for all of us so I thought I would put a few of my thoughts on paper.

First of all as Christians we have to decide whether or not the Bible has meaning for us in our lives. That may sound like a strange question given that we read from it every Sunday and that we call it Holy Scripture, but I think that for many of us this is an important question. Does the Bible contain something that God wants us to receive? I want to give you a bit of history before I continue on.

In the Middle Ages, Holy Scripture was viewed as something that only the clergy were fit to read. Often times, because it was written in Latin, the clergy were the only ones who could read the Bible. This meant that for many Roman Catholics their prayers were the only means by which they had to know God other than the Scriptures that were interpreted for them on Sunday morning. When the Church of England broke away from the Roman church many Roman traditions came along with the split. One such tradition was the fact that the reading and interpretation of the scriptures was left mainly up to clergy and scholars while lay people found great comfort and discipline in their Prayer Books. This tradition is still a part of our church today. Many people do read their Bibles, but there are a lot of us who freely admit that we know very little about the Bible or what it has to say.

I believe that the Bible was given to us as a gift from God. A source of comfort, challenge, strength, and wisdom. Furthermore, as it says in our Catechism, "The Bible contains all things necessary for Salvation." That is everything that we need to know to attain salvation, that is being in right relationship with God, is contained in the Bible. That's pretty amazing.

Unfortunately the Bible is a controversial topic in our society right now. This is partly to do with the misconception that everyone who reads and studies the Bible is somehow a "fundamentalist" or a "Bible Thumper". As far as I can tell the only thing that this attitude accomplishes is that it strips countless numbers of Christians from one of the greatest gifts we have been given; the Holy Scriptures. The Scriptures were intended for all of God's children as a guide and beacon on our journey.

So I'll raise the question once again, does the Bible have meaning for us in our lives? If not, then we have a tremendous amount of thinking to do about who we are as Christian people and where we go to find our standards and our truth. If so, then why wouldn't we want to emphasize its importance as a guide and a standard for our lives? The Bible is full of Truth and Wisdom and we need to take advantage of that. One of the prayers in our Prayer Book asks God to help us "read, learn, and inwardly digest the Word of God." In other words we are praying to make the Holy Scriptures a part of our very being. To let it guide us into the men and women that God has called us to be. That's why it's important to me and that's why I place a great deal of emphasis on it.



Diocese of Western North Carolina 96th convention at Kanuga, November 11, 2017



Marta and I had the privilege of attending this year's diocesan convention. If you have not attended a convention Marta and I urge you to consider it. And talk to anyone who has gone and you will get the same message. It was a meeting of heartfelt, committed Christians joyfully bringing their gifts of love. It was inspirational to hear what parishes are doing, would like to do and how the diocese is actively supporting churches to go beyond their walls.

The Friday sermon was taken from Matthew 25:34-40. "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Bishop Jose is passionate about ending poverty. He assigned a youth task group to research poverty in our diocese and these young people did an amazingly thorough job!

He and his staff have worked to put resources in those hands who need it while streamlining unnecessary expense. One of the ways they

accomplished this was to organize a convention that could be accomplished in one day instead of two, helping those who traveled and stayed overnight as well.

Fr. Wes agreed to be on the Executive Council of the Diocese and it was approved. Thank you Wes for agreeing to serve the diocese in this way.

It's difficult to say in a few words all we heard, felt, and experienced at convention. We were urged to go beyond caring for our physical structures and even our own congregations to care for the "least of these", to go beyond our walls or even without walls.

Julie Maziarka



M&M News: The community again turned out for a delightful afternoon of hand crafting greeting and Christmas cards. Thanks go to Penny Watkins for her generous gift of Stampin' Up supplies, jewels, paper, etc. and her vast creative knowledge as she showed us how to make beautiful and thoughtful cards. Thanks also to Cathy Erickson her able assistant! As always the food was delightful and Harriet's themed gifts were a big hit! See you next time on December 6 for the Gingerbread Houses at the Grovepark Inn! Julie



Back Yard Sports News...

Thanks to All of you, we have just finished our first successful fall soccer season of BackYard Sports. We had 12 kids in the program, averaging 10 kids each Monday. We had 9 different adults helping on the field with an average of 5+ per afternoon. Six church families and 1 participant's parents provided snacks for the kids. We finished the season this past Monday with a special treat for the kids: One of our volunteers funded an afternoon of Foot Golf at the municipal golf course and the kids had a blast. We brought them back to the church for a pizza party and holiday movies... a fun way to end the season.

I think everyone involved had the opportunity to see the kids learn some basic skills, get a lot of exercise, develop some self-confidence, become better team members, all while HAVING FUN.

This could not have been accomplished without the commitment and support of everyone of you. This program needs ALL of you...coaches, snack providers, contributors, kids, parents and our vestry and congregation. Please know how much your participation is appreciated.

In January we will begin our 7 week winter program of basketball at the church. We hope you will continue to be a part of this ministry as we work to increase community awareness and student participation.

Many thanks. Marily



Please visit our website to see more photos of all events.

Back Yard Sports resumes on January 8. Come out and support this ministry.

Articles and photos from November & December 2017 ...



Sunday School continues to grow. We have had a few visitors and we have seen some church children who are not regular

attendees. Please continue to support the children's parents and the children.

Advent began this past Sunday, Dec 3rd. The children crafted an Advent Jar. It is our version of an Advent calendar. They decorated a wooden bucket with a coloring sheet about the Nativity. Then they added beads, pipe cleaners, and charms. We created a list of 23 questions or activities - one for each day of advent - wrote them on popsicle sticks and put a set in each child's jar. The children are to choose one stick per day and do what it says. We hope this will be a fun and meaningful family activity. The following is the list of the prompts for this activity.



Thank God for your family
"Love God. Love each other. Love _____"
Do a chore
Name one of the Ten Commandments
Who was born on Christmas Day?
Say something nice about your brother, sister, or friend
Draw a picture for someone
Clean your room
Thank God for Jesus
Help do the dishes
Proverbs 3:5 – Trust in the Lord with all your _____
Do something nice for someone at school or church
Sing a Christmas song
What food do we ask God to give us in the Lord's prayer?
Who was the Son of God?
What is the name of Jesus' mother?
Help make dinner
Draw a picture and give it to someone at Church on Sunday
Take a can of food to Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach this week
Put out seed or bread for God's birds
Draw a picture of Baby Jesus and give it to someone special
Play with someone you don't usually play with at school
Jesus was born in _____



Carlann, Gloria, and I wish you all a wonderful holiday season, Amy

A new ministry, Pastoral Care...

A new Ministry, Pastoral Care, has been added to assist members of our Church Family. The goal is to help to fulfill the Mission of Pastoral Care through the ministry of Servanthood. The group is committed to meeting the well being of members of our congregation, both spiritual and life needs, through compassionate caring, support, and kind actions. This group will be known as Caring Friends.



The members of the Committee are: Wendy Field, Coordinator; Visitation, Heyward and Nancy Nettles; Cards, Barbara Mauldin; Calling, Harriet Taylor; Respite for Caregivers, Marion Wilson; Meals, Carlann Scherping; Transportation, Joselyn Watkins; Lay Eucharistic, Harriet Taylor, and Checking In, Marily Floyd.

All requests will be given either to Wes or Wendy Field. All transactions, all observations or impressions, and all records made concerning the person being assisted are, and will remain, confidential.

If you would like to serve on any of the above Committees, or wish more information about the Committee, will you kindly speak with the Chair of that Committee.

Service of Remembrance December 10th ...

Thirty-five or so people attended this wonderful service to remember loved ones who had died.



January Birthdays

05 - Mike Boff
09 - Jack Stanier
14 - Mary Williams
18 - Joselyn Watkins
21 - Connie Connell
29 - Lynn Morehead
29 - Mary Stroman



January Anniversaries

12 - Nathaniel & Roberta Smith
28 - Joe & Linda Carter
31 - Don & Anne Hinton



Please pray for our men and women in the military and those serving in other areas of conflict. Daniel Crane, Ralph Salamone, Hamilton Jordan, Hunter Fitzpatrick, Zach Poole.



Please pray for members who are in the hospital and who are sick.

Gertrude, Ackie Okpych, Berta Whitt, JoAnne Woodcock, Anne Hinton, Barbara Freeman, Betty Zieger, Gloria Anders, Charlene Efrid, Nathan Scruggs, Chelsea Parks, Barbara Meliski, Kaitlyn McElreath, Brendan Parks, JoAnne D'Onbro, Barbara Parks, Carlton Pernell, Jordon Mangyn, Teresa Wheeler, Shirley Martin, Joe, Don, Joe Carter, Watts Stroman, Marshall Brooks, Don Connell, Nancy Hobbs, Angelique



January Calendar of Events...

Firewood Ministry

Every Monday at 9 am
Cutting and delivering
firewood to those in need
Call Wes for more information

Vestry Meetings

Second Wednesday of the month
12:30 in the Parish Hall. All are welcome

Jan 3 - Bare Necessities from 4-6

Jan 8 - Back Yard Sports resumes

Jan 9 - TCW Meets at 12:30

Jan 17 - M&M from 1—3 pm. Games, prizes, fun, friends, hot cider, cocoa & snacks. Come Join us!

Wednesdays: 10 am Eucharist w/ healing and 11 am Bible Study. Please join us.

Jan 28 - Church's Annual Meeting



Please go to church's website ectransfiguration.org to see schedules for:

Lay ministry (coffee hour; ushers, music, lectors, chalice, nursery, altar); Community dinners, etc.

November 6, 2017 Vestry Minutes Summary

Present: JoAnne Ellingson, Marta Campbell, George Desjardins, Julie Maziarka, Danny Holland, Patrick Warncke, Fr. Wes Shields, Mike Boff

Absent: none

Clerk: Julie Maziarka

Prayer: Fr. Wes opened with a prayer

We each shared our responses to these questions about Shared Life Lessons that Wes sent out for vestry:

- What has God taught me from failure?
- What has God taught me from lack of money?
- What has God taught me from pain or sorrow or depression?

What has God taught me through waiting?

We will answer the next 2 questions at the December meeting:

- What has god taught me through illness?
- What has God taught me from disappointment?

Fr. Wes urged us to remember why we shared our responses to these questions. Evangelism is about sharing our life lessons and relationship to God with others.

Greening of the church will be November 26th.

Rector's Report: Backyard Sports is off and running. We have had lots of volunteers from the community as well as church members. There were 8 kids the first week and 12 the next. Healthy snacks, safety, weather contingencies and scheduling were discussed.

The mold at the rectory will be cleaned out by professionals. We will then put plastic on the floor, and install a fan at a cost of approximately \$1,500.

Father Wes will work on an AA user agreement and a liability waiver for people helping with Firewood.

Outreach disbursements - We had a discussion about the importance of donations being made to the General Fund instead of specific outreach activities such as Backyard Games. That happens sometimes but generally we want to avoid everyone designating their pet projects.

December 10th there will be a candlelight Remembrance Service at 5:30.

Please pray daily for the leaders of our church.

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Worship & Education	Fr. Wes Shields	625.9244
Senior Warden	Marta Campbell	432.300.9950
Junior Warden	Patrick Warncke	828.722.9258
Finance/Church Treasurer	JoAnne Ellingson	625.9637
	Danny Holland	
	George Desjardins	
Clerk	Michele Yackel	



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Weekly Services

Holy Eucharist: Sundays 8:00 am and 10:00 am
 Holy Eucharist and Healing: Wednesdays 10:00 am

Bible Study:

Sundays 9:00 am & Wednesdays 11:00 am
 Children's Sunday School 10am

Choir Rehearsal: Sunday 9:15 am

Our Annual Meeting will be held Sunday January 28th. At that time we will elect delegates to the 2018 Diocesan Convention. If you would like to be a delegate or an alternate please let me or Marta Campbell know. Thanks

Wes

