

Food for thought from J

January 23, 2022

During the financial crisis of 2008, a politician famously – or infamously – suggested that you should “never let a good crisis go to waste.” At the time, I was a banker actually living through the turmoil of that crisis, and I still remember being struck by the apparent cynicism of that remark and joining in deriding that politician for the thoughtlessness I perceived in his remarks. Later, however, I learned this expression had also been attributed to such leaders and thinkers as Winston Churchill and the philosopher, Machiavelli, who, rather than being cynical, were suggesting that the crises we experience, as difficult as they may be, can be excellent catalysts for new ways of thinking and living that may not have been considered absent the precipitating crisis. So, as I endure my own little crisis (I use this term loosely) of the reality of a positive COVID test, along with sore throat, cough, congestion, body aches, and fatigue, let me not “waste” this opportunity to use it to illustrate our recent theme of how the reality of what we believe about God should affect our lives.

For nearly 2 years now, I admit to having experienced this pandemic in a fairly disaffected manner. For sure, I had initial concerns, for myself and others, about contracting the virus as hospitalizations and deaths mounted and uncertainty persisted about its severity. As your pastor, I took the situation very seriously, seeking counsel from trusted advisers, and attempting to walk that fine line between taking precautions to minimize risk to our church family, without giving in to irrational fear or disrespecting the feelings of all our constituents. Still, personally, while I got vaccinated and wore masks as required, I worried little about what it might mean to actually contract the virus. So, it has been interesting to observe and reflect upon how the reality of a positive COVID test, and its related symptoms, has impacted my thoughts and life over the last few days.

One of my first reactions to receiving the test results was to want to quickly notify those who had been exposed to me so they could take appropriate steps in their own lives to get tested and/or avoid unnecessary contact with others. I also experienced regret for unknowingly exposing people I love to the virus. Of course, despite my faith in God to be my “refuge and strength” and my “very present help in trouble,” I also had the normal concerns about whether I might be one of those rare cases for whom the virus is particularly deadly. Ultimately, I came to feel extreme thanksgiving to God for the miracle of vaccines that can reduce the risk of severe illness from COVID (as seems to be the case with me), and for the hope provided by new treatments that are available should severe complications arise. In short, the reality of COVID in my life has had a real impact on my life and thinking about the virus, beyond simply being sick.

But how does this experience with COVID apply to the question of how our lives are being changed by the reality of what the Bible teaches us about God? Well, as it turns out, the parallels are significant! A life changed by the reality of God will want to make sure others know about it so they can take steps in their lives to experience that reality for themselves. Similarly, while we may feel some sense of regret for not embracing and being changed by that reality sooner, we will also want to make up for lost time in sharing the reality of God with those around us – particularly those closest to us. Finally, we will be filled with thanksgiving for God’s gift of scripture, teaching, and the Holy Spirit who convicts us of the reality of God and causes us to be changed as a result.

So, while the old adage about not wasting a good crisis may be valid, why wait for a crisis to get serious about embracing the real God of the Bible? If you aren’t living a life that has been and is being changed by the reality of our omniscient, omnipotent, all loving God, it’s time to get busy. Do the work. Read the Bible daily and pray for discernment. Come to church and participate in worship. Pay attention to the sermons. Engage with a regular Bible study group and a Sunday School class. Open your heart and mind to the Holy Spirit.

...and prepare to be changed.



MEMORIAL GIFTS

In memory of **Ruby Screws** by Helen Screws

In memory of **Brad Trim** by Anne & Larry Spell

*The Chancel Flowers are given
to the Glory of God by Randy
and Cindy Autry.*

Flower Delivery

Lynda Massey

MIDTOWN CLASSIC

Planning is underway for a return of our 2022 Midtown Classic 5K race on April 23rd, but we need volunteers to host a successful event. If you are willing to volunteer to assist with race day activities, please call the office to have your name added to our sign-up sheet. Each of our Sunday School classes will also have sign-up sheets available over the next 2 Sundays. It is critical that we have sufficient volunteers committed to this event before we begin the process of promoting and finalizing plans for the race, so please let us know of your willingness and availability as soon as possible.

JANUARY IS BACKPACKS OF GRACE MONTH AT WYNNTON!

Backpacks of Grace is a primary ministry of our church through which we provide weekend food for selected students in need at our Partner in Education school, Wynnton Arts Academy. Each Thursday morning, volunteers pack bags that are distributed at the school on Friday. We purchase many basic items from Feeding the Valley at low costs, but other, supplemental items must be purchased from retail food stores at higher prices. This is where you can help!

If you wish to donate, please choose items from the list below. They must be packaged in INDIVIDUAL SERVING containers. Also, NO PEANUTS can be in the product or in the manufacturing process (see "Contains" label on packages). Items which are particularly helpful are:

- Individual macaroni and cheese cups
- Individual snacks (cookies, crackers, etc.)
- Individual breakfast food (cereal, oatmeal, grits, etc.)
- Individual fruit cups (diced fruit, applesauce, etc.)

Of course, financial donations are always welcome, and they may be made through the church office.

Thank you for your support of this important ministry. Please put your items in the blue bin located outside of the library.

WELCOME



Welcome Meghan Gross to our staff! A warm Wynnton welcome to our new Children's Ministry Director. Meghan graduated from LaGrange College in December of 2021 with a B.A. in Religion. She is a Columbus native and plans on enrolling online at Asbury Seminary in the fall for the MDiv. We are so excited to welcome Meghan and look forward to the fantastic plans she has for our Children's Ministry.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

We will have our first Church Council meeting of the year on February 6, 2021 immediately following our 11:00 worship service. If you are a member of Church Council, please make every effort to attend.

Children's Programs

The nursery is available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. as well as Sunday School for grades K-12 from 9:45-10:50 a.m. The nursery for infants through 3-year olds is on the first floor of the Grimes building. Children's Sunday School for K-5th Grade is on the 2nd floor of the Grimes building, and youth Sunday school is in the basement under the sanctuary. Children's Church will be offered for children through 5th Grade in the Children's Center in the Grimes building during the worship hour.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Through Old Testament stories and mission projects, our children have been learning who God is, how He loves us and is always with us, and how we are to love God and love others. These lessons have prepared us to meet Jesus during this Advent season. Children in Pre-K through 5th grade are welcome to join us for Children's Sunday School from 9:45 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. on the second floor of the Grimes building.

BE A WYNNTON WELCOMER

WE NEED YOU! - to sign-up as a Sunday morning welcomer. We are looking for volunteers to fill open slots through the end of February. Check your calendars for a few Sundays you are available to help us greet our members and guests on Sunday morning. Sign-up sheets will be available in the main hallway this Sunday. ...and also, please note that our sign-up sheets for the first quarter of 2022 are available on the sign-up table in the main hallway. Please be thinking of dates for which you can sign up over the next few months.

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The following dates are available to put flowers in the sanctuary: Feb. 6th, March 6th, 13 & 27th. If you are interested in filling any of these dates, please call the office.

Youth Sunday School

Four Acts of Love

We are starting a new series in The Basement called, "Four Acts of Love". Through Old and New Testament Bible stories about human encounters, we will talk about four Christian actions in response to Jesus' saving grace: radical hospitality, grooming a hunger for spiritual knowledge, practicing humility, and as J likes to say, always leaving room for the Holy Spirit.

SUPPORT FOR UMCOR

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is the primary arm of the United Methodist Church that provides vital support for such missions as domestic and international disaster relief, global health, missionaries around the world, and evangelism/church revitalization. If you would like to support UMCOR financially, you can do so in the following ways:

1. Send your check, designated to UMCOR, to the church office and we will make sure it is forwarded to UMCOR.
2. Go to their website: <https://umcmmission.org> and follow the links for designating your gift to the mission of your choice. For those wishing to support relief efforts related to the recent disasters in Kentucky, you can designate your gift for US disaster relief.
3. You can also support UMCOR on an ongoing basis with the Amazonsmile program that will make automatic donations to UMCOR based on your spending with Amazon.

Our Known Prayer Concerns:

Sue Rogers	Lexie McRae
Glenn Killough	Kathy Draughon
Matthew Allen	Debi Meacham Wright
Bobby Porch	Dorothy Robinson
Lillian Cox	Kerry Mess
Lynn Christenson	Jennefer Spell
Beverly Ragsdale	Jim Accordino
Jean McGlamry	Gwen Bolin
Lenore Ash	

Christian Sympathy for loss of loved one:

Family of Rubye Screws
Family of Stella Jambon
Family of Marjorie Croft
Family of Sarah Crawford
Family of Deanna Stevenson
Family of Wanda Jones
Family of Rick Mitchell
Family of Brad Trim

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, January 23

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
9:45 a.m. Sunday School for Adults, Youth & Children
11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
Streams Live on Facebook
11:00 a.m. Children's Church - Grimes Building

Monday, January 24

10:00 a.m. Women's Bible Study - Library

Tuesday, January 25

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Wednesday, January 26

10:00 a.m. Women's Bible Study
6:00 p.m. Prayer Chapel - Alpha Bldg.
6:30-7:15 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal - Fellowship Hall
7:15-8:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 27

6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
9:45 a.m. Backpacks of Grace

JOYFUL NOTES FROM THE CHOIR! 🎵

On the date of his conversion, May 21, 1738, Charles Wesley experienced the assurance of salvation from his head to his heart. On the anniversary of his conversion, he wrote a hymn to commemorate his experience. The hymn, originally titled *For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion*, would later become our familiar hymn *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*. This hymn title was the opening text for verse seven of the eighteen original stanzas. Charles Wesley's spiritual mentor, Peter Bohler, provided inspiration for the hymn text when he remarked to Wesley, "Had I a thousand tongues I would praise Him with them all!"

Sunday, our Wynnton Choirs will sing an anthem that pairs "He is Exalted" with "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing." We lift up our praise in song to a God who is worthy, a God who is our salvation.

"He is Exalted" (with "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing") arranged by Stan Pethel

He is exalted, the King is exalted on high, I will praise Him. He is exalted, forever exalted and I will praise His name! He is the Lord, forever His truth shall reign. Heaven and earth rejoice in His holy name. He is exalted, the King is exalted on high. O for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise, the glories of my God and King, and the triumphs of His grace. My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim, to spread through all the earth abroad all the honors of Your name. He is exalted, the King is exalted on high, I will praise Him. He is exalted, forever exalted and I will praise His name! He is the Lord, forever His truth shall reign. Heaven and earth rejoice in His holy name. He is exalted, the King is exalted on high.

Psalm 145: 1-3

I will exalt you, my God and King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

God's Great Peace to You!
Diana B.



READING THROUGH THE BIBLE

January 23: Luke 18:1-17, Genesis 29:31-30:43, Psalm 23
January 24: Luke 18:18-43, Genesis 31, Psalm 24
January 25: Luke 19:1-27, Genesis 32, Psalm 25
January 26: Luke 19:28-38, Genesis 34, Psalm 26
January 27: Luke 20:1-26, Genesis 35-36, Psalm 27
January 28: Luke 20:27-47, Genesis 37, Psalm 28
January 29: Luke 21, Genesis 38, Psalm 29

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

24 Hannah Fowler, Kate Harbison,
Meggie Kelly, Claire Mims
25 Austin Toelle, Holly Walker
26 Mike Goyne
27 Marsha Ellis, Beth Hendrickson,
Glen Hendrix, Janet Morris
28 Margaret Ellen Alexander

OUR STEWARDSHIP

1-16-21
General Fund.....12,741.00
Endowment.....50.00
Missions.....32.00
Backpacks of Grace.....1,015.00
Open Door.....100.00
Methodist Home.....100.00
Wesley Glenn.....100.00
Wynnton Neighborhood Housing.....500.00
Wynnton Neighborhood Network.....1,125.00

PASTOR ON-CALL
For emergencies Jan. 21-23
Rev. Greg Harrison 478-955-1577

