



THE PIPER

Piping Along News of Interest

SEPTEMBER 2020

Dear Covenant Partners,

Folks in their 20s and 30s have said one of the main reasons they avoid the Church is because it is so “judgmental”. In their view we talk about sin too much. Relatedly, given the tensions in our nation around Covid-19, race, police issues, and an upcoming, highly partisan election, many think the Church should preach comfort and hope. So, you might be wondering what we are thinking by doing a series on the 7 deadly sins this fall. The answer to that is simple, sin is deadly. Sin blinds us and binds us. We are held captive by sin as it robs us of the abundant life Jesus died to offer. If you think sin is no big deal because it is so common, think again. That which Christ died for in our place is a big deal, and we don’t deal with it by ignoring it. Sin is something we are at war with, but the very good news is we can totally win the war. Sin thrives in the dark, but when we confess it and hold it up to the light it withers and dies while we find new life. Sin, or vice, can be replaced by virtue. In this sermon series, we’ll learn both the theory and practice that will allow us to do this and experience the life God intends for us.

Church history, rather than scripture, has identified the 7 deadly sins of pride, envy, sloth, greed, anger, gluttony and lust, yet each of these is well documented in scripture. Understanding them helps us understand scripture. Understanding them helps us understand human nature and, thus, ourselves and our neighbors. We can understand and evaluate common social practices like how fashion and lust play off one another, how gluttony drives inventions like diet drinks, and the way workaholicism relates to a misunderstanding of sloth. More importantly, understanding the 7 deadly sins can help us grow in Christlikeness as we put to death our old self with its sin and put on Christ.

I’m convinced this is going to be a rich and helpful series. To help you get the most out of it, I invite you not just to listen in, but to dive in. One way to do this is to join me after each worship service on Zoom to do a 30-minute deeper dive into the particular sin under consideration that week. I’ll host these from 10:30-11:00 and again from 12:30-1:00 each Sunday in the series starting September 6th. Another way to dive in would be to read on your own. Two excellent books that are informing the series are “Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies” by Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung and “Sinning Like a Christian: A New Look at the 7 Deadly Sins” by William H. Willimon. The best way to dive is not simply to grow in your head knowledge but to change your practices. With each sermon, we will prescribe some practices which can help you win the war against your destructive desires. I hope you will join us. *Pastor Jon*



Save the Date!
Church Picnic
October 4th
4:30pm
Brix and Columns

The Intercessory Prayer Group meets on Wednesdays at 11am on the church steps. All are welcome to join! *“Prayer doesn’t fit us for the greater work, it is the greater work.” Oswald Chambers*

Stephen Ministry

In this time of the Covid pandemic many of our lives have been turned upside down. Nothing is the same and everyone is having to adapt and learn new ways of doing things. With social distancing, it's easy to feel isolated and alone—especially if you're going through a challenging time. The Stephen Ministry Team would appreciate the prayers of our congregation as we prepare to come alongside others by restarting our training.

Stephen Ministry is a way congregations can provide high-quality care and outreach to hurting people in the congregation and community. Stephen Ministers are congregational members who have gone through 50 hours of training to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care. Each Stephen Minister is matched with a hurting person—men are paired with men, women with women—and meets weekly with that person to listen, care, pray, and encourage. Stephen Ministers care for those dealing with grief, divorce, job loss, hospitalization, financial struggles, loneliness, convalescence, terminal illness, and many other life difficulties. In this time of Covid, depending on each circumstance, meetings may be in person, by phone, or by zoom.



**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

Back to School

By Katie Hylton

August is typically a time of excitement, eagerness, and even a little apprehension as we begin a new school year. This year looks very different than years past. My daughters are devastated that they can't be at school, and as a second grade teacher, I am trying to learn how to teach seven and eight year olds virtually. There can be frustration and tears in the unknown. However, through all of this I have experienced peace in knowing that God is with me, loves me, will never leave me, and has good plans for my family. We have been trying to focus on the positives rather than what we are missing. We are able to spend more time with each other and grandparents, as well as hike, fish, swim, watch movies on Disney Plus, and take walks together. One daughter has shed tears over missed experiences (it's dreadful for an 8-year-old to not be able to ride rides at the fair), but those have also been teachable moments and reminders of the blessings we do have. I am reminded of this verse from Zephaniah 3:17, *"The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."*

Mission Affinity Group Meeting

By Annette Sprinkel

On Saturday, August 15th, we had the privilege of being part of the MAG conference. Our leader for the first two sessions was Don Evert. I really didn't know what to expect. However, Don was very engaging. What he shared was really related to how I feel about telling others about Jesus. He talked about why we as a society are so reluctant to witness to others. He told us about a "spiritual conversation curve card" which we have at church. The curve tells us that there are "three spiritual postures people have toward the Gospel and the six types of conversations that are most helpful in either gaining a hearing, giving good news, or guiding toward faith." What I took away from this conference is that I need to specifically pray for a certain individual or a group of people. I need to pray for opportunities and be a good friend to the person I wish to tell about Jesus. I also need to be continually reading and studying God's Word. Thanks to First Presbyterian for giving me the opportunity to attend the conference!

Summer JAM Camp—Virtual

"THANK YOU for the virtual Summer Jam Camp lessons, activities, music, and plans allowing us to teach God's children. My granddaughter and I did one lesson a week. What a resource for families as it was easy to assemble materials, make choices, and even adapt plans to make it age appropriate. Madelyn's favorite was making a 3D campfire out of construction paper and setting up an indoor tent. Or maybe it was making a boat out of corks."
Kimly Schlabach

Helping Our Neighbors in Need

The good news is that we will begin serving a “Brown Bag” meal to our neighbors in need in September! We will keep our regular schedule of Soup Kitchen every Tuesday at 4:30pm.

The “Brown Bag” meal will be a sandwich, chips, fruit, dessert and bottle of water. Each of the items will be either pre-packaged or put into an individual baggie to insure safe assembly for the bags. The meals can easily be completed by two people with assembly 3-3:30pm and distribution outside in the church parking lot at 4:30pm.

This renewal of our Soup Kitchen program gives covenant partners an opportunity to serve those in need in our community. We are very grateful that a couple has already told us they will be the “Team Leaders” for meals the first week (Tuesday) of every month. They will begin with the “Brown Bag” process and then transition to the full meal served in Showker Hall when that is again possible.

We need three more teams that will commit to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th week of each month. In addition, there are five weeks in a month a few times per year and we need leaders for those special weeks. As “Team Leader” you would coordinate your team for your week, plan and prepare your menu, serve the meal, and clean up.

Our goal is to organize the “Team Leaders” now for each week. This will help acquaint them with the kitchen and the basic process. We will help you develop your team and assist with the process once we are able to serve an actual “Soup Kitchen” meal.

We ask that you prayerfully consider serving in the Soup Kitchen. “Team Leaders” are essential. Couples, two friends teaming up, however you wish to form a team, we need three additional teams serving 12 times per year and one team a few times on the 5th week.

Contact Mary or Pat if you would like to serve!

Mary Scott

540-908-7312

mmillertwin@ntelos.com

Pat Haden

540-271-0055

pfhaden@comcast.net



Elder Nominees

for the Class of 2023

Bob Augst, Mal Lane,
Rich Ours, Mike Robison
and Don Shiflet

Deacon Nominees

Class of 2021:

Russ Lawrence

Class of 2022:

Bea Ammons

Class of 2023:

Marnie Godfrey,

Janice Pence,

and Mary Scott

Read more at:

firstfreshbg.org/nominees



Renew Camp, like many things, was cancelled this summer, but our youth got in at least one evening of outdoor worship along with other youth from across the area.





September 3 – Pat Haden, Gerald Strite, Trudy Ham,
Karen Hart, Magdiel Gonzalez

September 4 – Richard Williams, Bill Stoner, Janice Pence

September 5 – Bill Sammon, Patrick Werner, Ethan Irons

September 6 – Joel Davis, Gabe Godfrey, Lily Kistler

September 7 – Mary Beth Rhodes

September 8 – Layne Miller

September 9 – Bettye Davis, Joe Barnes, Hallie Pence

September 10 – Felix Chujoy

September 11 – Cathy Westwood, Kimberlee Hartzler-Weakley,
Matthew Conklin, Jack Werner

September 12 – Ann Niland, Andrew Lam, Finn Birdsong

September 13 – Pat Rooney, Sue Foster, Mac Garrison,
Ashley Blatt, Katherine Blatt

September 14 – Jim Nelson, Matthew Lee, Haley Kubler,
Esther Kiser

September 15 – Maureen Pearson, Karl Stoltzfus, Dick Miller,
Tanya Thompson

September 17 – Maureen Lane

September 18 – Margie Kite, Toni Snyder

September 19 – Jerry Roberson, Teresa Lee, Erin Conklin

September 20 – Chris Furry, Christiana Cole

September 22 – Peyton Campbell

September 24 – Kim Brantley, Alex Ortigosa

September 25 – Douglass McDonald, Kelly Sweet

September 26 – Kathy Hancock, Jenn Bryant, Reed Miller

September 27 – George Pace, Rachel Lemn

September 28 – Chuck Runyan, Glenda Rooney, Vicki Krauss

September 29 – Kaye Crowther, Rob Frank, Aaron Green

September 30 – Gretta Evick, Samuel Kuster

October 1 – Ralph Nix, Bill Callender

October 2 – Kim Harper, Kimberly Darrah, David Shull

October 3 – Wilma Thomas, Judy Augst, Pam Heeringa

October 5 – John Buchanan, Angel Gonzalez

September 2—John and Gene White celebrate 65

September 5—Joseph and Kathy Bowman celebrate 61

September 5—Gene and Libby Stevens celebrate 38

September 5—David and Lynn Briggman celebrate 22

September 5—Randy and Amy Kubler celebrate 11

September 8—Todd and Brittney Bacon celebrate 2

September 10—J.R. and Patricia Copper celebrate 54

September 14—Ron and Jean Hylton celebrate 46

September 17—David and Elizabeth Kistler celebrate 15

September 18—Burns and Karen Earle celebrate 27

September 19—Stan and Judy Gray celebrate 39

September 21—Greg and Kim Harper celebrate 29

September 22—Bill and Hope Stoner celebrate 64

September 22—Mike and Wanda Delaney celebrate 31

September 24—David and Dona Hinkle celebrate 32

September 25—Steve and Holly Albrite celebrate 38

September 26—Steve and Bee Heitz celebrate 39

September 30—Brian and Lisa Shull celebrate 31

October 3—Jeff and Doris Martin celebrate 33

October 4—John and Karen Hart celebrate 28

October 5—Bobby and Bev Miller celebrate 35

We Express our Sympathy to:

Brent and Karen Holl in the passing of her father, Edgar Flora, on June 27th. He was 100 years old.

Tiny Palmer in the passing of his wife, Lois Palmer, on June 28th.

Lil Southard in the passing of her cousin, Dawn Glick, on July 2nd.

Keith and Betsy Dishman in the passing of Betsy's mother, Carol Stuart, on August 11th.

Jeff and Doris Martin in the passing of Jeff's mother, Ideva Martin, on August 15th (granddaughter Brittney Bacon and husband Todd).

Adam and Caitlin Berkey in the passing of Adam's grandmother, Rhoda Peifer, on August 26th.