

Beyond the Columns

First Presbyterian Church

June 2021

194 YEARS OF "KNOWING CHRIST AND MAKING HIM KNOWN"

Pastor's Column:

A tribute to a Godly Father ...1913-2010

George was an oak tree of strength and fortitude and set an example for us of how to be strong and steady in the midst of both joy and adversity. Yes, at times that definitely translated into exasperating stubbornness. In fact, the last words I said to him as I returned home to Pennsylvania were, "Pop, if God calls you home while I'm gone, don't be stubborn and try to wait for me to come back. Just go home."



But even with that advice, I was shocked when the call came saying he had drawn his last breaths just a little over twelve hours later. As Aunt Lowella remarked, it's hard to believe he's gone ... he was like a cat with 9 lives. But, I guess it's true that old age catches up with us no matter how hard we run or how stubborn is our nature. I think, even today, I'm still in shock that he finally gave in to rest.

That same stubbornness allowed him to set a course with unwavering faith in a God who is the ultimate example of steadfast fidelity.

Through the years we saw Dad display this type of steadfast fidelity in his relationships with others. He took the vows of "in sickness and in health" to a new level as he cared for four wives who preceded him in death... showing a capacity for compassion that perhaps was not a natural trait given to him but one which he developed out of necessity. It is a true lesson to us as we learn to care for one another.

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*Train a child
in the way
he should go,
and when he is
old he will not
turn from it.*

PROVERBS 22:6

Happy Father's Day



A tribute to a Godly Father ...

His example of hospitality never wavered. If you were in need and he could help, he never hesitated. When someone needed a cup of cold water or a meal or help with a financial crisis, whatever he had was freely extended.

Dad also exhibited a love for all humanity and was just as honored by a visit from a hobo as he would be if the President of the U.S. would have appeared on his doorstep.

Still, there was a special fondness for his children and grandchildren and in later years his great-grandchildren who appeared. His eyes would always light up with pleasure and those rare grins would surface over the briefest of visits. Whether it had been five hours or five months, he was always thrilled to hear our voice. And, he always knew when some special need arose and often, his gifts were the ones which made things possible for us.



His patience must have been tried again and again, but I have no memories of him being angry - although I'm sure I provoked him many times. He would always smile or shake his head - I'm sure knowing that sooner or later I would figure out how wrong I was ... but still no recriminations - just encouragement to learn from the mistake.

Dad embodied God's grace.

People wonder sometimes why I've done so many things - and I think it's simply because Dad planted in me a firm understanding that if it needs done - figure out how to do it - if doing it one way doesn't work, try something else - and by all means use what you have available to do it and don't whine about what you don't have.

I don't think I ever heard him say - you can't do that - or even you've done it all wrong - he was always a steady source of encouragement.

Dad exhibited a contentment that is rarely encountered in today's world.... a joy and peace in whatever his circumstances... a gift given by God which he cultivated.

But most of all, Dad planted a deep seed of loving God's word. From my earliest memories, he would sit down in a chair, have me crawl on to his lap and out would come the King James Bible and slowly and carefully he would drag his finger across the words for me to follow. Then he'd pause long enough for me to put in a familiar word and pretty soon I was reading. In later years, I talked to him about different versions of the Bible - explaining they were easier to read - and he just laughed and said, "you were reading it in the first grade - what's so hard about it?"

Truthfully, those words, "what's so hard about it?" pretty much summed up Dad's view of life.

You get up, put on your boots and your overalls and get out and get it done - whatever the days hold - God will strengthen you for the task.

Thanks, Dad, for being there for all of us over the years. You weren't perfect but you left us sitting in the shade of a giant oak. The roots of that oak have spread and have intertwined with our hearts and the very fabric of who we are. We could not have asked for a greater blessing.

Today we rejoice that you know the true extent of the blessings which God has in store for those who believe.

Young Disciples

Youth

Youth group will meet June 2nd, 16th, 23rd, and 30th from 6—7:30 p.m. We will NOT meet June 9th!

Sunday August 1st will be Youth Sunday. We will also recognize our graduates.



Join us for VBS this year! Mark your calendar and save the dates we will be having lots of fun for all ages starting Monday July 26th thru Thursday July 29th. More info to come...



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----|------------------|
| 4 | Malcolm Mallery |
| | Carol Stoakley |
| 8 | Emma Jones |
| | Nicole Bracey |
| 9 | Lib Cuttle |
| 10 | Anne Pritchett |
| 11 | Jean Pritchett |
| 12 | Eddie Blount |
| 13 | Marissa Meadors |
| 17 | Erin Parris |
| 23 | Diane Shelton |
| 24 | Mikayla Kassa |
| 25 | Royal Motley |
| | Carpenter Walden |
| 28 | Sallie Abreu |
| | Susan Mathena |
| 30 | Sue Miller |
| | Betzy Wilson |

Anniversaries:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| June 14, 1952 | Betty & Bill Fitzgerald |
| June 8, 1963 | Carol & Charles Ellis |
| June 5, 1966 | Bernadine & Jay Hayes |
| June 19, 1976 | David & Donna Parris |
| June 24, 1972 | David & Sally Clark |

Let us know if we've missed your special day !

UPCOMING EVENTS

Opportunities to Connect and Have Some Fun!

The Membership Committee is busy working to connect our congregation in some creative activities that allow us to feast and frolic while abiding by Covid 19 restrictions. Details will be announced prior to the event, but we wanted to give you some idea of dates so you can keep your calendar free.



June 20 Get ready for some baseball action when the Danville OtterBots face the Princeton Whistlepigs. Details to be announced.

July 17 Pastor Beth will host their annual birthday bash from 5 to 8 p.m. Plan for hotdogs and all the fixings, birthday cake, and a covered dish bevy of picnic food.

August 1 Take a kayak trip from Angler's Park to the Milton boat ramp, followed by a meal at Aunt Millie's Restaurant. For those not wanting to kayak, you can meet us at the restaurant. Details to be announced.

September The world-famous low country boil is on the table for a to be determined date in September.

Session has also given the tentative green light to resuming our Wednesday Night Suppers in the fall.



MISSION FOCUS

Rev. Dr. Tom and Judy Harvey ^(PCUSA)

Tom Harvey and his wife are missionaries with their home in the United Kingdom. He is with the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies. This is a charity in Oxford, England, located in St. Anthony College. Established in 1983 its focus is to educate church leaders from non-western countries. Tom received his PhD from Duke and has published numerous books and is a well known speaker around the world. We are missionary partners with the Presbyterian Church USA in supporting Tom.

Because most of the students are from third world countries; support is needed to keep this work going. We are happy to be one of his sponsors.



VIP OF THE WEEK

Please remember our VIPs in prayer each week and drop them a card or note to let them know how much they are loved.

June 7	Lois Hayes Roman Eagle Nursing Home 2526 N. Main St. Danville, VA 24540
June 14	Grace Litzenberg 954 Main St. Danville, VA 24541
June 21	Alice Bradshaw Colonial Suite 1111 Main St. Danville, VA 24541
June 28	Fae Smith 661 Timberlake Dr. Danville, VA 24541

If you feel visiting the elderly is your gift, please consider joining our VIP Committee. Talk to one of the following members: Pat Argyrakis, Joan Reynolds, Bernadine Hayes, Susie Crews, or Kent Shelton.



Congratulations!

High School

Claudia Belk
Elliot Jones
Joe Perez, Jr.

College

Brooke Atkinson
Colin Meadors

"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and with re-proach, and it will be given to him." (James 1:5)

A Prayer for Our Graduates

Dear God, we ask that you help our young people to walk in your wisdom and grace. We pray for spiritual eyes and discernment in all things. Help them to be wise leaders and influencers in this generation, not conformed to the world, but transformed by your power. We ask that you would equip them with all that they need to make a difference for your purposes. Help them to live as salt and light in a dark world that so desperately needs to know your truth. We ask for your power to help them to walk continually in honesty and integrity. Build within them deep godliness, that they would be more concerned about their character than their reputation. We pray that they would seek to bring honor to You throughout their lives, that they would have a vision and heart for the world. Extend their boundaries and give them incredible influence with people and nations. Make their hearts and spirits open to every plan and purpose you have for them, and to be willing to boldly go wherever You call. Amen.

Prayer & Praise

PASTORAL CONCERNS— Chuck Ayuso (Gail & Doug Jones son-in-law), Chuck Bolt, Amy Bracey, Gretchen Campbell (Pat A.), Judy Cox (Kristen Cox’s sister-in-law), Kathy Cropp, Lib Cuttle, Janet Cutright (Barry Cutright’s mother), Matthew Dolianitis, Bill & Betty Fitzgerald, Lois Hayes, Ina Ingram, Linda Kile, Peggy Lackey, Bob Lowther, Charlotte Lowther, Larry Mann, Ruth Meadors, Alexander Miller, Anderson Miller, Alice N. Saunders, Diane Shelton, Judy Small, (J. Rochford’s sister), Mary Lou Snead, Debra Bolt Thompson, Easton Zunker (K. Meadows)

ON THE MEND--(Praise & Gratitude for improved condition) Gwen Baucom, Mrs. Helen Harris

OUR VIPs—Chuck Bolt, Alice Bradshaw, Lib Cuttle, Bill & Betty Fitzgerald, Lois Hayes, Charlotte Lowther, Grace Litzenberg, Fae Smith, Jean White

CAREGIVERS

THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

THE PEOPLE OF TOGO



Sunday Flowers

June 13 The flowers today are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Tom Gillespie, Dickie Green, Ray Hayes and Mack Williams by the Thomas Barrett family.

The Seekers Class will be in charge for the month of June.

If you would like to place flowers in the sanctuary, please contact Rebecca Moore at 434.203.1666 or rebeccaatkinson@comcast.net, for more information. After the service, flowers are distributed to those persons on our prayer list or as directed by the sponsor.

Guest Column



Some Father's Day Memories

With thoughts of Father's Day approaching on June 20, I find my feelings going in reverse to when I knew him in the 1950s and 60s, but not very far into the 1960s, as he passed away from cancer in 1966 when I was 15 years old.

He was a wiry man (I took after my mother, as most boys do). But he wasn't "wiry" in his dealings with others.

Since my father always enjoyed talking with people and making comical remarks to them, that's mixed in with my "thicker physicality" and "heart" from my mother.

My father demanded respect. When my brother, Joe (in high school then) wanted to go somewhere of which our father disapproved, he just took his screwdriver and just calmly removed my brother's license plates (much to my brother's verbal protestation).

I also remember my father sitting on the old granite steps of our front porch and telling my Senior high school brother to not listen to those individuals saying there was no God, for there definitely is! (essentially advising him to "gird his loins" for encountering the world).

My father worked for Southern Railway at the Spencer Yard in Rowan County, the same Spencer Yard to which Danville's "Old 97" was headed in 1903 (but that was long before my father worked there, as he was born in 1906, during the Theodore Roosevelt Administration.

As my parents and brother lived in Danville before moving to Salisbury (where I was born), I remember an old fall photograph of my father seated and leaning against a tree in the early 1940s at Ballou Park, while dressed in a suit and fedora. On my regular exercise walks at Ballou Park, I try, in vain to figure which tree may be the one, judging by the time passed. When I see the park crews removing an old, large, dead tree, or happen across an old dead stump, I wonder if I've found it.

Additionally, I wonder what had been the causes of the deaths of those trees, whether by accident or disease, the same overall sorts of things which might have a hand in the death of a man once resting against a tree on a sunny fall day.

Submitted by J. Mack Williams



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - DANVILLE

Founded in 1826, we were the first organized congregation in Danville.

Our sanctuary and offices are located at 937 Main St, next door to the Sutherlin Mansion and Museum and a few blocks west of downtown.

You can reach us at

(434) 792-7822 or

vickie@fpcdanville.com

Day School fun day with bounce house and ice cream cart.



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