



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HEIGHTS

Northminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Experiencing and sharing God's love to transform our homes, community and world

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Liminal Spaces

...but [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. — Hebrews 7:24–25



Liminal is from the Latin word *limen*, which means threshold. A liminal space is the time between 'what was' and 'next.' We see and experience liminal spaces in all sorts of ways, some more obvious than others. Examples of liminal spaces include turning the calendar to a new month or year, the solstices and equinoxes, sunsets and sunrises, the shore (being the threshold between sea and land). The picture above captures several liminal spaces at once — the beach at the transition from low to high tide at sunset. Many religions, such as the druidic religions of medieval England, make a big deal about these liminal spaces, believing that they are places and times where the veil between heaven and earth is particularly thin, thus allowing better access to the gods and the afterlife.

The idea of liminal spaces is something that we recognize intuitively, if not consciously. We are drawn to liminal spaces like the beach, because something about it makes us feel closer to God. We make new years resolutions each year because we see the start of the year as an opportunity for a "new beginning." We try to take advantage of these times and spaces because we hope they will enable us to reconnect with, draw near to, or simply grow deeper in our relationship with God. But what we learn from Jesus Christ and Scripture takes the idea of liminal spaces and simultaneously transforms it and deconstructs it.

Jesus Christ has transformed liminal spaces by making our entire faith, at least at this time, a prolonged spiritual liminal space. When Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead, He inaugurated the Kingdom of God. However, the Kingdom of God will not be fully consummated until Christ returns at the end of the age. Until then, we live on the "threshold" of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is already here, but it is not yet here. Martin Luther speaks of our walk with God as a liminal space when he says that we are at once justified and yet still sinful; we are both sinner and saint. Paul describes this

tension so well in Romans 7:7-25. The life of faith itself is a liminal space, between what was and what is next.

However, Jesus Christ has also deconstructed liminal spaces and times. We don't need to find liminal spaces and times in order to draw near to God. When Jesus died on the cross, "the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split" (Matt. 27:51). The curtain in the temple separated the Holy of Holies, the place where heaven touched earth and the high priest would commune with God. It was a liminal space. Because of Jesus Christ, the barrier between us and God has been removed. Thanks to the presence of the Holy Spirit, we don't need liminal spaces or times because God is always near to us and with us. That is the promise of Emmanuel, "God with us."

This year is a little bit unique. On January 1, we not only start a new year and a new month, but also a new week. It's quite natural to want to take advantage of this particular liminal time to commit to some changes. There's certainly nothing wrong with making new years resolutions. However, don't forget that, as our Scripture above reminds us, we do not need liminal times and spaces in order to draw near to God, because Jesus Christ has already done everything needed for us to do so. We are able to draw near to God any time, any where, because He has already drawn near to us.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. — James 4:7–8

Blessings,

Rev. David Garrison

January Youth Ministry News & Info

Sundays from 6:30-7:45 pm

Have you ever searched YouTube for advice on how to do...anything? If you have, you know exactly how helpful a pro tip can be. In this series, we're going to look to one of the wisest people ever to live for some pro tips about life. We'll spend a few weeks in the book of Proverbs discovering the one thing that can make us better at everything. In the end, we will learn how to develop the wisdom it takes to be better at life now and in the future.

January 15: Wisdom is the one thing that makes you better at everything.

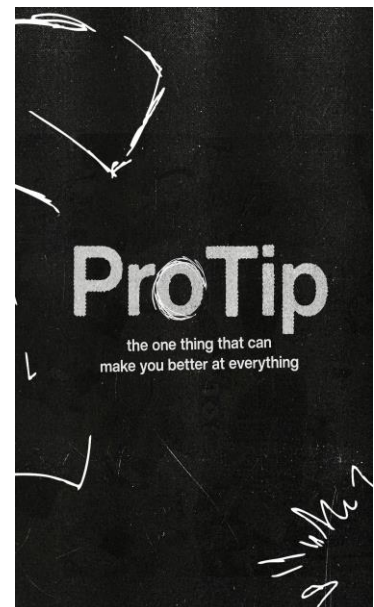
January 22: Loving God = Living like Jesus.

January 29: The decisions no one sees build the reputation everyone remembers.

February 5: If you want to be heard, use gentle words.

Note: Youth Group resumes on Sunday, January 15!

Join us @ Youth Group, Sundays, 6:30 PM.



Life Together

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

- 3 Andrea Sievwright
- 4 Jack Thomasson
- 7 Rob Sievwright
- 12 Mason Brine
- 15 Barbara Baker
- 16 IvyElizabeth Mann
- 18 Mandy (Rucker) Newsome
- 19 Mary Wilhelm
- 30 Cheryl Bray

I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears. Psalm 34:4 NIV

Prayer Requests:



Several members have asked for prayers for needs that they'd prefer not to share publicly. Please lift up these prayers, knowing that God knows for whom you pray and just what they need.

Please remember **Rudy Burnett & the Higgins families** as they grieve Sue's recent passing.

Ray Vandall continues to heal from his hip replacement surgery. Praise the Lord, the surgery went well!

All medical personnel who have continued serving those with coronavirus in spite of the possibility of getting infected themselves.

Remember others who cannot be with us in church: **Arlene Horton, Mary Murray, Margie Seal, Dot Stinnett, Delores Wright and Peggy Wright.**

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

GENERAL FUND

	October	Y-T-D
Income	7,080	111,410
Expenses	<u>11,011</u>	<u>126,271</u>
Balance	-3,931	-14,861



With Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Rudy Burnett and the family and friends of Sue Burnett who departed this life on Sunday, December 18, for her eternal Home. While she will be deeply missed on Earth, we rejoice that she is now face-to-face with her Savior in Heaven.

Resting in Jesus



Have you been around folks who seem to think that resting or experiencing a quiet time is not acceptable? Their take *seems* to be that there is always work to be done, always things to do, things to worry about, things that need attention. Therefore...inactivity just doesn't cut it.

There are of course times to be "doing something," but those with a Kingdom focus know there are also times of just resting in the presence of the Lord. That can be awfully confusing and irritating to those who insist that worry/activity/busyness is the only sign of someone who really cares or is truly doing something productive.

Folks like that would likely have been a bit irked with Lazarus, as we see in John 12:1-3. In these verses Mary is anointing Jesus, Martha is busy serving, but...ol Lazarus is described as "among those reclining at the table with Him (Jesus)." Oh-oh...that's not gonna go over well with some people. That reclining stuff seems WAY TOO lazy or uncaring or unproductive. Apparently, resting in God can seem a lot like not caring. But – is it really?

I believe Lazarus has chosen a good thing. Honestly, what could be better than being quiet and reflective around Jesus, and just enjoying His presence? I wonder what bits of wisdom and insight Lazarus heard and experienced simply because he was willing to look unhelpful or uncaring by the "busy folks"? Chris Tiegreen says that the heart of faith refuses to get upset over the details that others may think are necessary.

The past few weeks presented us with plenty of opportunities to be busy. And many, if not all, of the things we chose to occupy ourselves with were likely good, fun, and harmless. But, if they distracted us from spending time resting in Jesus' presence, listening for His voice, and taking in the bits of Kingdom advice that He shares only with those who will sit still to hear Him, then those other things were, in reality, not as valuable as they seemed on the surface.

Here's praying we find the right balance. The balance that puts resting and reflecting in Jesus first, and then letting all those other events and opportunities and tasks take their rightful place in line behind Him. Again, from Chris Tiegreen: "We are called to believe, trust, test, and be patient. Those are difficult postures for alarmists to observe, and they are difficult to maintain in the face of criticism. But the life of faith compels us..."

Your friend and brother in Christ – Harry Rucker

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DAVID GARRISON, Pastor

ELDERS

Ron Reyburn, Clerk of Session,

Liz Boothe, Sharon Bryant,

John Lange, Judy Reyburn

Bob Mills, Director of Music

Liz Boothe, Organist

Sharon Bryant, Sunday school

Superintendent



The Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will meet on **January 19, at 10 a.m.** at Barbara Baker's house; we'll be reading *The Perfect Love Song* by Patti Callahan Henry. Christmas may be over, but why not enjoy Christmas in January with this book about love, a special song, and a Christmas miracle? All women are welcome!

Thoughts on the New Year

I look at the calendar with its clean, empty pages,
Each day blank with the promise of what could be
Or the fear of what could come.

Twelve months filled with unknown happiness
Or untold grief.

But for God, who holds the galaxies in His hand
And has written all our days in His book,

The calendar holds no fear or mystery.

In His mercy, He will walk with us

Each day until our journey ends.

And there in His eternal Kingdom

Calendars are no longer needed

Years have no meaning

And every moment is filled with the joy of

Worshipping in His glorious presence.

by Christy S.

**TAKING DOWN
CHRISTMAS
DECORATIONS**

Mark your calendars!
Undecorating of the Church
Saturday, January 14 from 9
a.m. – noon
Please Join Us!

