



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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Pastor's Corner

Winter Growth

And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come." — Mark 4:26–29



It's usually right about this time of year that most of us are getting tired of winter. I say "usually" because we haven't really had much of "winter" this year. Other than the cold snap in late December, we've pretty much just had a long, protracted fall. But whether it's snowed or not, or if it's been as cold as we expect, everything else is pretty much the same. The ground is a bland brown, the trees are bare, and even on sunny days everything just looks kind of dead.

However, underneath that bland brown ground, inside those bare, grey trees, there are a lot of things happening. What seems dead on the surface is full of life underneath. Roots are spreading, seeds are sprouting, water is being absorbed, nutrients are being processed, new life is preparing to burst forth. It looks like very little is happening right now, but in a few months our yards, gardens and trees will burst forth with new life.

Sometimes we feel like there's nothing happening in our lives, our souls or in our community. We might feel as dead or bland as the trees and ground in late January and early February. In the midst of the cold days and long nights, we wonder if God has given up on us. We look for evidence of spiritual growth in or around us, but can't find anything at all.

Just like the flowers and grass in the winter time, just because you can't see any evidence of God at work in your life, doesn't mean He isn't at work. Sometimes, the work the Holy Spirit is doing is happening under the surface, behind the scenes of our heart and soul. It's necessary work that has to happen in order for the new spiritual growth to spring forth in the next season of life.

I think something very similar is happening in the life of Northminster right now. Sometimes we look around and struggle to see evidence that God is still at work. It's easier to find things that look like death rather than life. But just because we can't see what's going on doesn't mean nothing is happening. God is moving and working behind the scenes, working under the surface to prepare each of us individually and us as a community of faith for a new season of growth and life.

Each spring, we take time to prepare our yards for the new growth that's about to come. We should be intentional about doing the same thing spiritually. If God is in fact preparing a new season of spiritual growth and life, we should be preparing ourselves for it — as individuals and as a community of faith. Let's intentionally spend time in prayer and in God's word, asking the Holy Spirit to prepare us for the work He is already doing in and around us.

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. — 1 Cor. 3:6–9

Blessings,
Rev. David Garrison

February Youth Ministry News & Info

Sundays from 6:30-7:45 pm

Maybe you've tried on many different identities as you work out the answer to "who am I really?" Having an authentic and unique identity comes from knowing that everyone, including you, is created in the image of God. Enjoy the journey of discovery, but don't lose sight of who you really are. Get ready to discover the confidence that comes from knowing your value and the value of others.

February 5: ProTip: The decisions no one sees build the reputation everyone remembers.

February 12: **Super Bowl Party @ Garrisons**

February 19: You can express yourself uniquely while you stay true to who you really are.

February 26: Everyone is someone made uniquely in God's image.

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



Exclusive Drop®

For you created my lowest being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful. I know that all will.

ONE OF ONE



Life Together

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS:

3 Janel Babcock



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 passing.

Arlene Horton is healing from hip surgery. Praise the Lord that she is doing well.

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

2022 GENERAL FUND

| | December | Y-T-D |
|----------|---------------|----------------|
| Income | 14,615 | 126,025 |
| Expenses | <u>10,318</u> | <u>136,383</u> |
| Balance | 4,297 | -10,358 |

But **God** demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners,

Christ died for us.

~Romans 5:8



Congregational Meeting and Potluck Lunch

Sunday, February 12 @ 12:15 pm

Come on Sunday, February 12 for the tastiest Annual Meeting you've ever attended! Following the worship service, we'll enjoy a potluck lunch together and hear reports from each ministry area. We'll learn what God has done over the past year and what we're anticipating joining Him in doing in the year to come. This is an event you won't want to miss!



Please bring a main dish or a side to share! Beverages will be provided.

Paper Hearts & the Old Rugged Cross

Love is in the air. Or at least Valentine’s gifts are on the shelves. Boxes of candy, paper hearts, fluffy stuffed animals all proclaim “You are loved!” Our society is fascinated with love; according to an article on CNBC, Americans will spend nearly \$26 billion on Valentine’s Day this year (nbcmiami.com). That’s a lot of money to prove you love someone!



All of those things are wonderful to enjoy, but as I think of Valentine’s Day this year, I’m picturing a hill that’s shrouded in dimness. People stand around it, some yelling accusations, others quietly crying. Three crosses stand upon that hill, stark and tragic. From the middle cross Someone speaks, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

The Apostle John stood at the foot of that cross. Years later, he would write: “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins” (I John 4:10, ESV).

This is love—painful, agonizing love. This is God dying for the sins of His beloved people who turned against Him and cursed Him to His face. This is a love beyond our understanding, freely given to us. What a joy and a blessing to know on this Valentine’s Day that our hearts are worth more to God than even \$26,000,000,000. He gave us His Son, and He calls us His children. What more could we need? We are loved perfectly and completely—forever! Happy Valentine’s Day! ~ Christy



The Women’s Book Club

The Women’s Book Club will meet on **February 16, at 10 a.m.** at Sharon Bryant’s house. They will be reading *Carolina Moonset* by Matt Goldman. While caring for his ailing father, Joey begins to realize there are secrets long buried that might be accidentally uncovered. All women are welcome.

Upcoming Books

March - *How the Penguins Saved Veronica* by Hazel Prior

April - *The Man Who Died Twice* by Richard Osman

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