



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HEIGHTS

NORTHMINSTER EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

AUGUST 2023

Volume 41, Issue 8



PASTOR'S CORNER

Faith & Prayer

Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there, 'and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."

— Matt. 17:19–20

And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer." — Mark 9:28–29



Sometimes you come across something in the Bible that seems small and innocuous at first, but over time you realize what you thought was little is actually a lot bigger. Jesus is really good at doing that when he is teaching us things. In this case, the little thing I came across was a small difference in how Matthew and Mark relate the healing of an epileptic, demon-possessed boy. This scene takes places immediately after the transfiguration of Jesus. The disciples were not able to cast the demon out, and the Pharisees mocked them for it. Jesus, of course, was able. After Jesus and the disciples entered the privacy of the house they were staying in, they asked Jesus why they weren't able to drive the demon out. That's where the difference in the stories comes in, as well as the revelation the Holy Spirit impressed upon me.

As you can see above, Jesus gives a different answer in Matthew compared to Mark. But it's not actually a different answer, and that's the part that's stuck with me for the past few days. What did the disciples need to drive the demon out, more faith or more prayer? Yes. You see, faith and prayer are intrinsically linked together. As William Hendriksen writes, "Where there is little faith, there is little prayer. Conversely, where there is an abundance of genuine, persevering faith, there is also fervent, unrelenting prayer." When our faith lags, our trust in God erodes. If we aren't trusting in God, then why would we pray, for is not prayer itself an act and expression of trust? The more deeply I trust in God, the stronger my faith will be, the more constant will then be my prayers.

It is hard, sometimes, to know how our walk with the Lord is going. If someone were to ask you, "how strong is your faith today?" how would you know what to say? It's such a subjective question. We can often think our faith in God is strong, when we aren't actually trusting in Him very much at all. However, being asked, "how is

your prayer life going?” is much more concrete and objective. As the Holy Spirit has needled at me about this, I’ve come to see a strong and direct correlation between my prayer life and my trust in God. I encourage you to look at your prayer life as well. Are you trusting in the Lord as much as you say or think you are? Does your prayer life reflect that trust and faith? There’s no time like right now to pray!

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. — 1 Th. 5:16–19

Blessings,
Rev. David Garrison

Youth Ministry

Back to School Cookout

Sunday, August 20

5:00 – 7:00 PM

Bryant’s On The James

Join us for a back to school cookout at The Bryant’s place on the James River! You provide drinks, sides and desserts, we’ll provide the meats. Bring a swimsuit if you want to swim, poles and bait if you want to fish, or whatever else you might want to do while we’re there.



COMING SOON – A PRAYER PARTNER PROGRAM FOR ADULT CHURCH MEMBERS AND OUR 6th-12th GRADERS!

Fall Kickoff & Rally Day

Sunday, August 27

9:00 – 10:00 AM

Fellowship Hall



Exciting things are coming this fall (*see pg 5 for more*), and it all begins on Sunday, August 27. Join us for a special kickoff celebration in the Fellowship Hall at 9AM. What can you expect? You’ll just have to come to find out! We’re looking forward to all that God is planning to do in and through us, and hope you’ll join us as we get things started!

Life Together

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS:

11 Tatum Sieviewright
21 Jackie Hodges
21 Bob Mills
25 Emmaylnn Kidd
27 Kristin Kidd
29 Vonnie Rucker



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES:

John & Linda Lange – August 4, 1973



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT **2023 GENERAL FUND**

	June	Y-T-D
Income	9,395	59,527
Expenses	<u>9,686</u>	<u>64,506</u>
Balance	-291	-4,979

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

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.

June Hedrick is healing from bruising related to a fall on July 22. Please pray for her continued recovery.

Jimmy Wright continued to recover from the surgery to relieve pressure and improve mobility. Pray he continues to improve.

Dolores Wright continues healing at home from her broken leg.

Vera Campbell continues recovering from her broken leg. She is currently at Fairmont Crossing for physical therapy and rehab.

Lorraine Ledden fell on July 10. She is healing from surgery for a broken hip, shoulder, and knee.

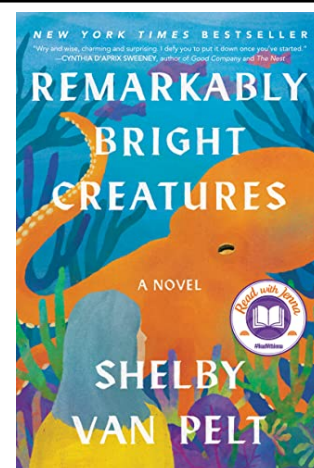
Remember others who cannot be with us in church: **Pat Callahan, Arlene Horton, Margie Seal, Dot Stinnett, Dolores Wright and Peggy Wright.**

The Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will be reading *Remarkably Bright Creatures: A Novel* by Shelby Van Pelt

Tova is a widow, working at an aquarium and trying to not think about the unsolved disappearance of her son over thirty years ago. Marcellus is a cranky, giant Pacific octopus who becomes friends with Tova and uses his sleuthing abilities to find out what happened to her son. It's an unlikely mystery featuring remarkably bright creatures.

All women are welcome!



Northminster Online Worship and Giving

Wondering how to find and connect with the life of Northminster online? There are several ways to do so. Read on to find out how!

Worshipping With Us Through YouTube

Beginning Sunday, June 2, 2023 we will be live-streaming our worship services through YouTube instead of Facebook. We will continue to provide a link to each service on Facebook, but the easiest way to find the service is to subscribe to our YouTube channel.

Finding Us On YouTube

On Your Phone or Computer

Simply go to www.youtube.com/@npcmh (don't forget the '@' symbol) and click the subscribe button. If you have notifications enabled, YouTube will send you a notification when the service begins. The service will also show up on your YouTube homepage.

On Your TV, Cable Box, or Streaming Device (Recommended)

You can also watch the service on your internet-connected smart TV or cable box. Open the YouTube app, and search for 'npcmh.' You can then select our channel (look for the church logo) to find our videos and livestreams.

Download the Bulletin Each Week

To assist your worship, the bulletin will be available on our website at www.npcmh.com/sunday-bulletins. Be sure to download and print it off prior to worship. The bulletin will have all liturgical elements as well as hymn and song lyrics included each week.

Making Donations Online Through tithe.ly

You can now make donations online! You can do this on a computer, phone or tablet. On our homepage, www.npcmh.com, scroll down until you see the blue "Online Giving" button (pictured on the right). Clicking on it will send you to a secure donation page. Once there, you can make a one-time donation or set up a recurring donation. There is a small processing fee for each transaction, and you can choose to include those fees in your donation if you would like (otherwise the church absorbs those fees).

Download the Church Center App

Scan the QR code to the right with the camera on your smartphone to download our app! In the app are the church calendar, small group and volunteer opportunities, the online church directory, and more. If you need help, see Peter Garrison before or after the worship service.

church center

- Service Times
- Easy Giving
- Event Signups
- Community Connection
- Family Pre-Check

Download the app



NORTHMINSTER ON THE 'NET

Website

www.npcmh.com

Calendar, Directory & more

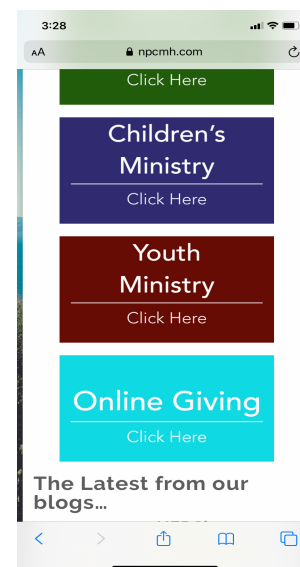
npcmh.churchcenter.com
(see below for how to find our app!)

Facebook

www.facebook.com/npcmh

YouTube

www.youtube.com/@npcmh
(don't forget the '@')



Scan the QR code to get started and connect with the life of your church.

Sunday Morning Worship Service & Sunday School Schedule Change

Beginning Sunday, August 27



Sunday School moves to 9:00 AM Worship moves to 10:30 AM

Beginning on Sunday, August 27, we are changing the Sunday morning schedule. Sunday School will now start at 9 AM, and the worship service will start at 10:30 AM. We believe this will enable us to be more effective in our discipleship, fellowship, and worship.

Discipleship: With a Sunday school time of 9-10 AM, we are able to provide a full, unhurried hour of discipling opportunities. While we currently schedule an hour of Sunday school each week, practically speaking it's usually 30-40 minutes. By spreading out the end of Sunday school and the beginning of the worship service, we will be able to focus more fully on our study and application of the Word of God to our lives.

Fellowship: With a "break" in the schedule from 10-10:30, we are able to offer a time of "purposefully unstructured" fellowship to the congregation. This provides time for those who attended Sunday School and those who are arriving for worship to visit together prior to the start of the worship service. This is separate from the regular fellowship receptions we offer, since with the earlier start time for worship, there will be ample opportunity for the receptions after the service without feeling like we need to dash off to lunch.

Worship: One of the challenges we face every Sunday is the transition from Sunday School to worship. Many of those attending Sunday School are also involved in leading the service, and often the transition is rushed and harried. By starting the service at 10:30, those who need to prepare for worship are able to do so without missing out on Sunday School and without feeling rushed. This also provides a better opportunity for us to be fully present in worship, knowing that the service will end earlier, leaving us with the sense that most of the day is still available. The service itself will also feel less hurried as a result.

Sometimes when we settle into a routine, it becomes comfortable. This change provides us with an opportunity to think intentionally about the rhythms of how we seek to "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). There are a lot of things in our lives that "compete" with Sundays — chores, sports, family gatherings, and the always important Sunday nap. Nevertheless, Sunday is meant to be given to the Lord and to worshipping Him first and foremost. Please let us know if you have any questions, and we look forward to seeing you at 10:30am for worship on August 27!

web - npcmh.com * facebook – [npcmh](https://www.facebook.com/npcmh) * phone - 434-929-2713 * contact – office@npcmh.com

DAVID GARRISON, *Pastor*

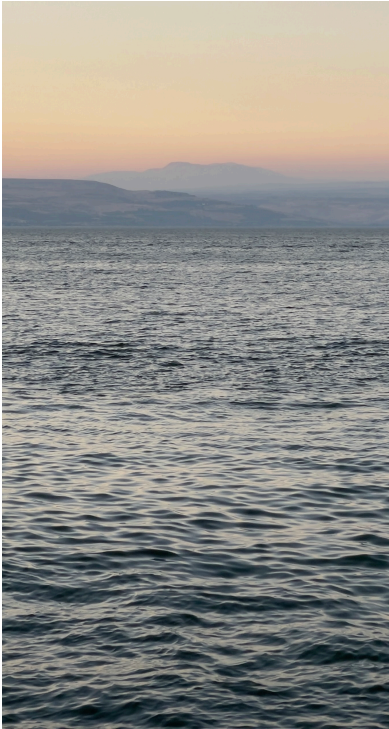
ELDERS

John Lange, Liz Boothe
Sharon Bryant, Anne Wilkins,
Mike Henderson
Ron Reyburn (Clerk of Session)

STAFF

Bob Mills, *Director of Music*
Sharon Bryant, *Sunday School Superintendent*
Christy Sechler, *Secretary*
Mike Henderson & Barbara Baker, *Treasurers*

Holy Land Pilgrimage with Pastor David June 21-30, 2024



**MOUNT HERMON, AS SEEN
FROM THE SEA OF GALILEE**

If anything becomes clear when visiting the Holy Land, it's how precious this particular place is to the Lord. While "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it" (Psalm 24:1), God chose this particular portion of land on the shores of the eastern Mediterranean Sea and made it holy unto Him, then gave it to the people He has chosen for Himself. We know that God has worked purposefully and intentionally throughout history, but you experience that tangibly when you visit these incredible places we've read so much about in our Bibles. Faith comes alive in a visceral way.

What begins to stand out as you tour the Promised Land is how much the land itself proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ, hence why it has earned the name, 'The Fifth Gospel.' As another pastor friend of mine said upon his return from the Holy Land, you'll never read your Bible the same again. We know the Bible is true, but when we visit the Holy Land it becomes *real*. It really is as transformative an experience as they say.

I firmly believe all followers of Christ should make plans to visit the Holy Land at least once in their lives. I promise you, it is absolutely worth it. To that end, I invite you to join me on a tour of the Holy Land next summer, June 21-30, 2024. This trip will bless you in every way, encouraging your faith and strengthening your walk with the Lord. There are few things in life that can compare to walking in the same places that Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and the Apostles went. This land has a special place in God's heart, and it should in ours as well, even as we wait eagerly for the new heavens and new earth to come down with Christ when He returns.

For more information, contact Pastor David.

Help Us Feed Them!

Our focus for the month of August is Amherst Cares, a collaborative effort of church, school, and community to feed hungry students in Amherst County Public Schools. This program provides weekend, holiday, and summer food to the neediest students. Amherst Cares has been in existence since September 2010 and since that time has provided over 70,000 bags of food to help our students succeed. This organization is very grateful and thankful for the support that comes from the churches and community. When the students ask where the food comes from, the school personnel reply "from people who care." There are opportunities for volunteering to help sort and pack, as well as helping donate bulk foods or providing monetary donations to purchase these foods.

Even though "Christmas in July" is over, we are still collecting canned meats and peanut butter and jelly in separate jars through August for the Christmas food baskets. Remember to please check the expiration dates so that they will still be good through December!



Sing With Us

What: Union Churches Music Service

When: Sunday, August 27 at 7 p.m.

Where: Madison Heights Baptist Church



Mark your calendars for an uplifting evening of praise, worship, and music this month! We will join with other area church on Sunday, August 27, at 7 p.m. at Madison Heights Baptist Church for the **Union Churches Music Service**. This summer's service will focus on God's good and perfect timing in all things – including the gift of His Son!

A combined choir from area churches will prepare anthems in a variety of styles from gospel to traditional to contemporary, including such songs as "Make a Joyful Noise," "Blessed Be Your Name," "A Time for Everything," "Great, Great Joy," and "Fly Away Medley," which includes "I'll Fly Away," "We'll Understand It Better By and By," "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder," "On Jordan's Stormy Banks," and "When the Saints Go Marching In!" Several of our choir members plan to participate in the combined choir this year.

The congregation will be invited to use their voices and sing their faith through hymns and choruses that are common to us all. As always, scripture will be the foundation that ties our worship celebration together.

Several members of our congregation attended last year's service and have expressed what a meaningful worship experience it was with anthems, scripture, prayers, and congregational singing being used to celebrate and proclaim the name of Jesus! In addition, the service was a help to our neighbors as the offering benefited Amherst County's own Helping Hands Ministry.

Please be sure to join us on **Sunday, August 27, 7 p.m. at Madison Heights Baptist Church** for this wonderful opportunity for praise and worship!





***Join us on August 5 at 2:15 PM at Regal Cinemas!
Tickets are \$16 each and can be purchased at the theater.***

World War II. Darkness has fallen over Europe, and the boots of the Third Reich echo through the streets. But on a quiet city corner in the Netherlands, some choose to resist. Corrie Ten Boom and her family risk everything to hide Jewish refugees by the hundreds, and they ultimately face the consequences when they are discovered.

The Hiding Place is their story—a story of faith, hope, love, and forgiveness in the face of unthinkable evil.

This powerful cinematic presentation was adapted from Corrie Ten Boom's The Hiding Place for the stage by A. S. Peterson, directed for the stage by Matt Logan, and filmed for cinema audiences in Nashville, TN.

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