



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HEIGHTS

Northminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church

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

[office@npcmh.com](mailto:office@npcmh.com)

434/929-2713

[www.npcmh.com](http://www.npcmh.com)

OCTOBER 2020

Volume 39, Issue 10



## Pulling Together – for the Kingdom

*He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher to train Christians in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ. — Eph. 4:11–13 (THE MESSAGE)*

I've been watching a trend recently that has me concerned. It has become increasingly difficult to find people who are able and willing to serve in the various ministries and missions of the church. Our committees have been shrinking and appeals for folks to get involved and help out have gone unanswered. As a pastor, I am concerned about this trend and spend much of my time praying about why this is and what we might do about it.

Perhaps you might be thinking, well, we are in a pandemic. We are discouraged from participating in the very things that are part-and-parcel of church ministry. This is true. But what the pandemic has done is accelerate what was already happening. Even in my short three years at Northminster, I've noticed a very steady decrease in volunteer activity in the church. The pandemic creates problems with solving this issue; it doesn't explain the cause.



A better diagnosis might be found in the reality that we are an aging congregation. Many of you have served the Kingdom of God and this congregation faithfully for decades. You have tirelessly poured yourselves out for the sake of Northminster, and have done so willingly and gladly. There are not enough words to express the gratitude I, and everyone else, feels for your service. You have earned a rest, and you deserve a rest.

The hard truth is that aging congregation or not, global pandemic or not, the work, ministry, and mission of the church goes forward. No church can function without its volunteers — for small churches like ours, though, it's more than essential. God has gathered this congregation together, and He has given each of us gifts and abilities meant to be used for the building up of the Body of Christ. An essential part of our growth as disciples, of our maturing as Christians, is putting into practice "skilled servant work" as we read above. In order for the church to be healthy, we all need to participate. How we go about that work might look a little bit different in the midst of a pandemic, but nevertheless the work goes on.

Why do I bring this up? For several reasons. While some ministries are still on hold due to the pandemic, others are still moving forward and we need folks to serve in those areas. One such example is the youth ministry — we have enough students and a broad enough age range that we need to have separate high school and middle school groups. But more than that, it's time to find our next class of elders to begin serving in 2021. We have two or three elder positions to fill. One of those positions has remained empty since I arrived in 2017. Each year, the challenge before the nominating committee to fill the open seats has increased. This year, we go about this work in the midst of a pandemic.

I invite you to search your heart humbly and prayerfully to see if the Holy Spirit is prompting you to step into one of those positions. Under normal circumstances, that can be an intimidating nudge. I know that under these circumstances it's even more so. I leave you with these verses to guide your prayers:

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. — 2 Tim. 1:6–7*

*The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. — 1 Tim. 3:1*

Blessings,  
Rev. David Garrison

---



## **Pastor's Midweek Bible Study**

Every Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

Join us in person or online for a midweek Bible study with Pastor David! We're working our way through the book of Judges, with a focus on learning to study the Bible ourselves and apply it to our daily lives. As 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." It's easier to see this in some passages than others, but together we'll be encouraged and equipped. We look forward to seeing you there! Sign up at <https://npcmh.churchcenter.com/groups/small-groups>

# Life Together

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 13 Bobby Irvine  
Elizabeth Kidd
- 15 Robi Vandevander
- 16 Alayna Vandevander
- 18 George Brine  
Jonathan Bryant
- 19 Mickie Brine
- 21 Gabbi Scruggs
- 23 Debbie Irvine
- 26 Lois Stewart



## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 26 Jeb & Beth Clarke, 2003



### **FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2020**

	<b>August</b>	<b>Y-T-D</b>
Income*	10,795	89,475
Expenses	<u>11,977</u>	<u>84,780</u>
Balance	-1,182	4,695

**PC USA DEBT – 50,871**

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



### Prayer Requests:

**Jennifer Tucker**, Joel & Virginia Carnefix's daughter, has stage 3 breast cancer. Her chemo began the first week of March.

**Ron Reyburn** has received treatment for prostate cancer.

**Mary Wilhelm's son, Stan**, continues treatments for an immune deficiency. He underwent a bone marrow transplant on July 21.

**Sue Burnett** continues chemotherapy for lung cancer.

**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: **Dot Stinnett, Leonard Rowe, Margaret Watts, Dot Rucker, and Betty Reed.**

## With Gratitude

Over the last weeks, we have been going through John and Dick Collins' personal items. It has been so heart-warming to see all the cards, notes, and pictures that Northminster and members of the church sent to them over the past years. Northminster was their home church and the notes meant so much to them. Thank you all for the love, care, prayers, and support you gave them.

*Laura, Paul and Rick*





## Drive-in Picnic

**Sunday, October 4 @ 12:30 p.m.**

Hello Northminster Family,

Please mark your calendars for this fast approaching opportunity!

Everyone is invited to bring lunch or snacks and a drink (we will not be sharing food) and join us in the back parking lot of the church at 12:30 on Sunday, October 4. This will give those who are worshipping at home a chance to be there. Park at the library and back entrance on both sides of the parking lot leaving every other space vacant. If you wish, you may bring lawn chairs to set up at the back of your car. Please be mindful of those of us who are very careful about social distancing.

It has been a trying year and now we can't even have our traditional church picnic. However, people are still talking about the Pentecost drive through held in May. We want to have another outdoor, social distancing event.

Many of us have not returned for worship services in the sanctuary and we hope that everyone has been uplifted by the virtual participation on Facebook. Still we long for some real face time...to at least wave at each other in the parking lot. We hope you take advantage of this opportunity.

The really fun part of this event is that a very special music group, "Gospel on the Grounds" will begin their performance about 1 p.m. Several members of our congregation have heard this group and have given rave reviews. You don't want to miss this!

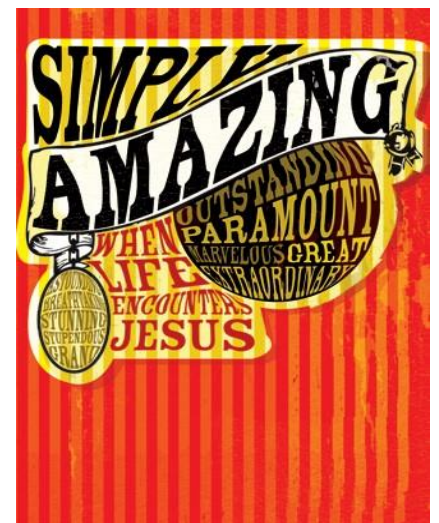
## Youth Group Is Back!

Every Sunday from 6:00-7:15 p.m.

Youth group (for all students 6th-12th grade) is back in action! Join us each week for fellowship, games, and digging into God's Word—all done with appropriate masking and distancing, of course. Here's what we're studying right now:

### Simply Amazing: When Life Encounters Jesus

Everywhere Jesus went people were amazed—at His presence, at His teaching, at His miracles. His enemies and followers alike were amazed. But what about now? Is Jesus still so amazing, over 2000 years later? In this three-week series, we'll take a look at encounters people had with Jesus and see just how important those lessons still are. This series challenges everyone—from non-Christians to old believers—with a face-to-face encounter with Christ and His miracles.



### Simply Amazing topics include:

- The Route to Greatness
- When Losing Control Is a Good Thing
- When You've Missed the Cut



## Operation Christmas Child

Merry Christmas everyone!! Yes, I know it is a little early to be saying that, but it is not too early for us to get busy on our Operation Christmas Child boxes. Things will be a little different this year because of COVID. We are going to ask each family to complete one or two boxes (or as many as they would like) by themselves and return them to the church by Sunday, November 1. There are a few boxes at the church now that can be picked up and signed out. However, the good news is that we can use the clear shoe boxes from the Dollar Store or we can just use a plain shoe box.

### What NOT to Send

I think most of you know what to put in the shoebox so I am going to share what not to put in a box. Please do not put anything related to war, like small military figures, knives, or swords. Do not put any kind of food or toothpaste. Please do not put anything in that would break, like a snow globe. And there should not be any liquids or aerosol cans of any kind.

### Monetary Support

We will also be taking monetary contributions for this project. When you put your offering in or send it electronically, please designate what you would like to donate to OCC. It will cost nine dollars a box to ship our boxes. Please let me know if you would like for me to shop for you and pack your shoebox. I would be happy to do that.

### Sharing Our Blessings!

I also wanted to remind you that the boxes go all over the world to children who often do not have many material goods and who may have never heard about Jesus. Not only do these boxes bring joy to the children, but OCC volunteers tell them about Jesus and send them home with a New Testament in their own language. Twenty-seven years after OCC began, the boxes have been delivered to 168 million children in 100 countries and we have been a part of this ministry for many years! Thank you for contributing to Operation Christmas Child!



I would love to help you in any way during this strange time. Please feel free to call me, **Sharon Bryant**, at **434-942-8566** for any questions you have or any way that I can help you with your Christmas box(es)!!

*It's (already) beginning to feel a lot like Christmas!!!*

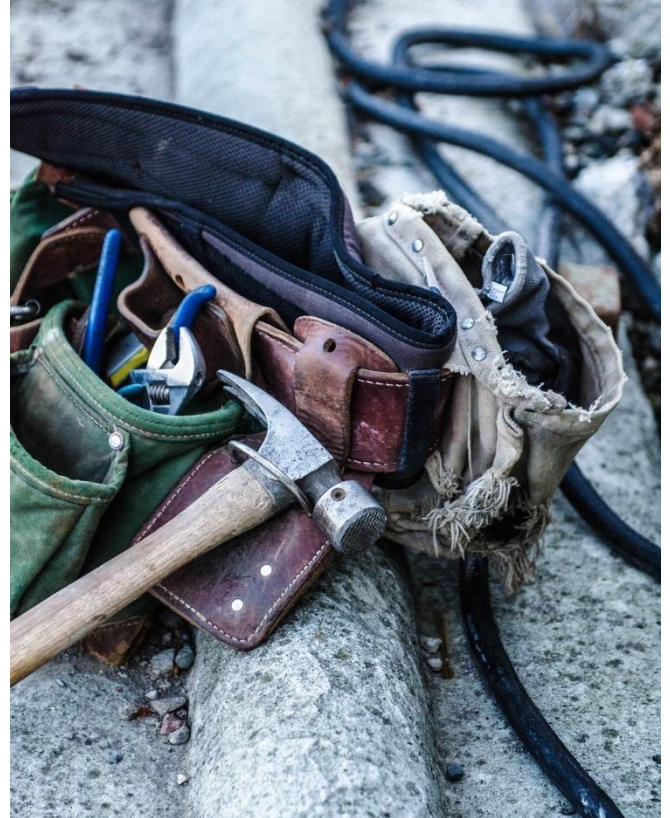
## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

In the past few months your session has been considering the continued property needs of our church. Most recently the air conditioning in the Fellowship Hall had to be replaced at the cost of approximately \$4,000. Other areas of concern include the following:

- **Paving** of the entrance and front parking lot
- **Removal** of dying tree in rear of property in the rear parking lot
- **Updating** plumbing and fixtures in the bathroom
- Concerns for the failure and **replacement** of A/C systems serving the classroom building and the system on the organ side of the sanctuary
- Needed **refinishing** of remaining linoleum floors
- Continued ability to address unexpected building issues

Over the past 5 years, we have spent a considerable amount in capital improvements, including:

1. **New A/C units** for the office areas, vestibule and Tatman room (\$10,980+-)
2. **Refinishing Fellowship Hall floors** (\$602+-)
3. **Leveling** of concrete entrance walks to the classroom building (\$2,025+-)
4. **Repairs** to protective coverings of stained-glass sanctuary windows (\$3,100+-)
5. **Cleaning** of church steeple (\$850+-)
6. **New entrance sign** and front of church name signage (\$9,600.00+-)
7. **Roof replacement** of classroom building (\$11,000+-)
8. **Repair** of damage classroom ceiling (\$2,150+-)
9. **Live streaming video equipment** (\$3,500+-)
10. **As needed repairs** of A/C systems, plumbing issues and other minor issues addressed as required.



The above improvements have nearly depleted our Capital Improvement funds. This list is not all of the money spent on building maintenance, but only focuses on larger items. This isn't to say that the Capital Fund has fully funded all of the items listed above. Funding has come through the selfless giving of honorariums, anonymous gifts, and designated contributions in times of need. As evidenced by the completion of the many building/property issues, we have been truly blessed.

Based on the desire to meet the needs of our church as identified in the bulleted items above, your session has decided to initiate a Capital Improvement endeavor. The intent is to strengthen our Capital Improvement Fund in order to move forward with the listed items.

Recently, quotes for the paving of the front entrance and parking area ranged from \$25,000 to \$35,000. Because of the amount of money involved your session felt it was prudent to establish a Capital Improvement Fund Drive. While your session feels the parking lot is a priority issue, we realize other maintenance needs may arise before funds are available for the parking lot. Therefore, this general Capital Improvement Fund Drive has been instituted.

Typically, a Capital Campaign has a defined monetary objective and timeline; however, this one is a little bit different. While the session would like you to consider meeting these identified needs within the next 3 to 5 years, there is no particular timeline for this campaign. Additionally, a total monetary goal has not been set because the needs will change over time. Initially, we are hoping to meet the cost of constructing a formal asphalt parking area and entrance to our church, which is estimated to be around \$35,000. Should other issues arise during the accumulation of funds, the use of available funds would have to be applied to that immediate need, thus delaying the completion of the original goal.

The leadership would like to remind you that capital campaigns are in addition to your regular, annual giving. It is important that we continue with our regular tithes and offerings in order to maintain the proper functioning of our church. However, it is also important to recognize the need to commit to the maintenance of our property that will soon be ours “lock, stock, and barrel.” It is to achieve that latter goal that we are instituting this Capital Improvement Fund Drive.

This letter is written so you can clearly understand the intent of your leadership in meeting the needs of service to the congregation and community. You are encouraged to discuss this matter with your session members, Pastor, and other congregants. We need to move forward to address such building/property needs.

In order to identify your contributions offered for this “Capital Improvement Fund” you can do one of the following:

- identify any contribution as “CIF” or write out “Capital Improvement Fund”
- if a check, write on the memo line “Capital Improvement Fund” or “CIF”
- an online option will be made available for “Capital Improvement Fund”
- specify “Capital Improvement Fund” or “CIF” on your offering envelope
- use a pew envelope and write “Capital Improvement Fund” on the envelope
- place cash in an envelope designated for “Capital Improvement Fund”

The next time offering envelopes are ordered and distributed there will be a specific line item listed on the envelope for the “Capital Improvement Fund.”

*Prayerfully and Respectfully Yours,*  
*NEPC Session*

[www.facebook.com/npcmh](http://www.facebook.com/npcmh)

Website: [www.npcmh.com](http://www.npcmh.com)

**DAVID GARRISON, *Pastor***

**ELDERS**

**Ron Reyburn, *Clerk of Session,***

**Michael Babcock, George Brine, Maggie Brockman**

**Sharon Bryant, John Lange, Anne Wilkins**

**Bob Mills, *Director of Music***

**Liz Boothe, *Organist***

**Sharon Bryant, *Superintendent***

***of Sunday School***

**Vonnie Rucker, *Treasurer***