



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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APRIL 2020

Volume 39, Issue 4



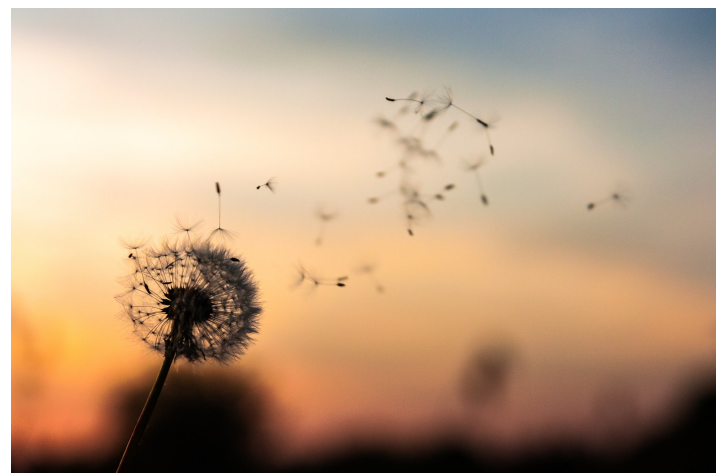
The Conundrum of the Cluster

We are creatures of habit; it's a part of human nature. Part of that habit is grouping together with like-minded individuals, collections of people with shared beliefs, routines, customs, vision, etc. This is very normal and natural, it's how communities form—including church communities—and it's encouraged. We need the mutual support, accountability and encouragement that comes from the Body of Christ. In fact, in adolescent development theory, the "cluster" is an important and necessary part of the social development of the teenager. Where "cliques" are unhealthy and exclusive, "clusters" are not only inclusive and healthy, they are necessary for proper and appropriate development.

But this "clustering" also presents a problem, a problem we've been talking about in the church for several decades now. We aren't called to be the church "gathered in" or "clustered together" but rather the church "sent out" (we've called this being a "missional" church) But the "sending out" part is hard—well, it's very easy to talk about theoretically, but gets harder when we actually go to put it into practice. Why is it hard? Because it means leaving our comfort zone, our "cluster," and going "out there," wherever that may be. Our natural inertia is toward the cluster, not away from it. Throughout history, it has taken an outside force acting on the cluster to force it to disperse and be sent out.

The Church Scattered

There is an interesting word used several times in the book of Acts, *diaspeiro*. It appears in Acts 8:1, 4 and 11:19, and it means "to scatter abroad." After Stephen was stoned to death in Acts 7, there was "a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem" (8:1) that caused the Christians to be "scattered" (*diaspeiro*). And what happened? "Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). From the very beginning, Christians preferred to cluster together (see Acts 2:42). It took a persecution of the Christians in Jerusalem to send them out to Phoenicia, Cyprus, Antioch, and further. It was the persecution of Christians by Nero



in AD 64 that sent them out to “the ends of the earth,” spreading the Gospel far and wide. But God doesn’t always use persecution to scatter the church.

The Church Closed. Or Is It?

We are, in many respects, in an unprecedented time. It certainly isn’t the first time humanity faced a pandemic like this, but for most of us it’s the first in our lifetime. It’s forcing us to rethink much of how we understand being “church.” How do we “do church” if we can’t meet for worship on Sunday mornings? But the church never was a building or a time on Sunday morning. For the sake of the health of each other and our community, we *can not* gather in groups of 10 or more until this pandemic passes. But that doesn’t mean the church is closed. A colleague of mine posted this on her Facebook wall the other day,

A couple of years ago, God gave my associate pastor a vision of our church having transparent walls. For two years, we have been wondering how on earth God was going to turn stone and stained glass into transparent walls. We got the interpretation today. He’s making them transparent by locking our doors. Suddenly people will be able to see in from the outside! May God make transparent all the walls of our churches, that the world may know the Good News of Jesus Christ... He has been preparing us for this since November. We just didn’t understand what he was saying until now. Our church is being called to love and serve one another. We are the church sent out, not the church closed!

Through the wonder of modern technology, we will still “gather together” for worship, but in our own homes. Each Sunday morning, we will still worship in our sanctuary, and you can join us for the worship service at www.facebook.com/npcmh (no, you don’t need a Facebook account to get to it, just a phone or web browser – look for more instructions about how to worship with us online on page 5 of this newsletter). The service will be adapted to focus on and facilitate at-home worship as families and individuals.

The Church Sent Out

We are still Northminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church, but we are not closed. We are the church dispersed, scattered, sent out, like dandelion seeds. Even in the midst of the social distancing of this pandemic, we have an opportunity to love our neighbor in ways we’ve forgotten or lost. If your neighbors are elderly or in the higher-risk categories for the coronavirus, offer to go to the store for them and leave the groceries on their porch. If your neighbors have kids and jobs that don’t allow them to work from home, offer to watch the kids during the day. There are many other ways to serve our neighbors, and we’ll help you explore some of those in the weeks to come. This is going to be a difficult season, let there be no doubt. But the Church has faced pandemics and difficult seasons before, and every time the light of the love of Jesus Christ has shined brightly in the darkness. Hold fast to your hope, stand firm on the foundation of Jesus Christ, and don’t be afraid.

Blessings,

Rev. David Garrison

Life Together

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Vera Campbell
- 5 Ed Campbell
- 6 Liz Boothe
- 15 Arlene Horton
- 15 Dorothy Rucker
- 16 Harry Rucker
- 19 Sue Burnett
- 24 Peter Garrison
- 24 June Hedrick
- 24 Linda Lange
- 30 Anita White



ANNIVERSARIES

- 13 Vonnie & Harry Rucker
- 17 Debbie & Ian Moore
- 17 Christy & Michael Sechler
- 28 Andrea & Rob Sievwright

APRIL NURSERY ATTENDANTS

- 5 Linda Lange & Judy Reyburn
- 12 Debbie Irvine & Ron Reyburn
- 19 Sharon & Gerald Bryant
- 26 Maggie Brockman & Anne Wilkins



Thank you for being willing to dedicate your time even though you won't be needed this month!

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

Prayer Requests:

Michael Babcock's mother who is recovering from her recent stroke.

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

Bobby Irvine, Debbie Irvine's husband has had serious stomach surgery. Pray for Debbie and Bobby as he will have a long recovery.

John Ledden is in the hospital in Bedford with congestive heart failure.

Ron Reyburn has received treatment for prostate cancer.

Mary Wilhelm's son, Stan, continues treatments for an immune deficiency. He is consulting with doctors about his next steps.

Sue Burnett continues chemotherapy for lung cancer.

Bobbie Garrett has numerous health problems. Also pray for Albert as Bobbie's main caretaker.

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



With Sympathy

Our sympathy and Christian love are extended to Dick Collins whose brother, John, passed away March 11. John, Dick, and their mother Frances, joined Northminster in 1974. John was a fan of trains and travel. John and Dick are cousins of Laura Ricketts Hoffman (Paul) and Richard Ricketts Jr.



We're Still Connected!

From the Fellowship Committee

Because of the coronavirus, we don't have any fellowship events scheduled for the near future, but we encourage you to keep in touch with each other through phone calls and the internet. And most of all, let's keep each other in our prayers! We look forward to the day when God graciously brings us back together for sweet times of joy and fellowship.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Evening Circle:

The evening circle finished its current Bible study and will not be meeting in April. We are tentatively planning an end-of-the-year outing in May. (At this point dates are obviously subject to change.) We are planning on starting a new study in the fall.

Missions, Outreach, and Evangelism

God's work continues! Please remember to be in prayer for our missionaries and various outreach ministries. Please pray that God will equip them with the supplies they need and fill them with compassion and love during these difficult times.

Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club was canceled in March, as all church activities were. A new date has not been scheduled.



Working Behind the Scenes

Our Finance Committee and Tech Team have been working hard over the past few weeks to find the best online giving solution for our church and it's now live! Details about how to give online are included at the bottom of Page 5.

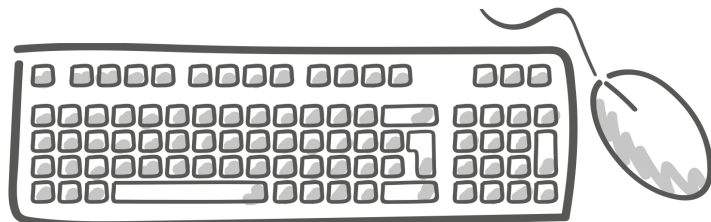
As always, your giving is anonymous to everyone except the treasurer. And using **tithe.ly** (our online giving service) is as secure as any other online bill paying or donation service.

Be sure to share a big "thank you" to George, Vonnice and Harry the next time you see them (just make sure you share it from at least 6 feet away). Or send them a note of appreciation!

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2020

	Feb	Y-T-D
Income*	9,885	21,007
Expenses	<u>9,797</u>	<u>20,648</u>
Balance	88	359

*Tatman 1,690.25



Northminster Adds Online Worship and Giving

As we continue to adjust to what is hopefully a short-term “new normal” of social distancing and quarantine, Northminster is working hard to take advantage of various online resources to help us stay connected during this season. Right now, our efforts are focusing on helping you join us for worship on Sunday mornings through live-streaming the service, and providing ways for you to make your donations to church online. Here’s a basic tutorial for these services.

Worshipping with us through Facebook Live

On a Phone or Computer

On any internet-connected device, go to www.facebook.com/npcmh to find our worship service. You *do not* need a Facebook account to access this. If you don’t see the Live feed, refresh your browser to reload the page. We expect to start the live stream right at 11am (or whatever time the service is scheduled), but we might be a minute or two late every once in a while. To make it easier for you, if you have a QR scanner on your smartphone (built into the camera on most newer phones), you can scan the code you see to the right.

If You Have a Facebook Account

Make sure you “Like” our page and set it to notify you whenever we go live, and Facebook will send you a notification when the service starts. You can find our page by searching for “npcmh” in the Facebook search bar, or scanning the QR code.



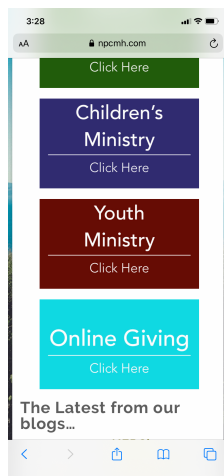
We do encourage you to watch the service on the largest screen you have available, to help give the sense of “being there.” Many modern TVs allow you to “send” a video from your phone or laptop directly to the TV.

On A “Smart” TV, Roku device or Apple TV

If you’ve purchased a TV in the past 5 years or so, most likely it is a “smart” TV that includes a variety of streaming services and apps. On those TVs, or if you have a Roku or Apple TV, you can download the Facebook Watch app. Again, you do not need a Facebook account to use this app. Once downloaded, search for “npcmh” to find our page and our videos.

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 the 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. Simply go to our homepage, www.npcmh.com, and scroll down until you see the blue “Online Giving” button (pictured on the left). Tapping or 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). You **do not** need to make an account with tithe.ly in order to make a donation.

If you have a smartphone with a QR scanner (built into the camera on most newer phones), you can simply scan this barcode to go directly there!





www.facebook.com/npcmh

Website: 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*