



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HEIGHTS

Northminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church

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

office@npcmh.com

434/929-2713

www.npcmh.com

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Reset

We are a biblically-based Presbyterian church seeking to experience and share God's love to transform our homes, community and the world.

Last year was something special, wasn't it? The trouble we knew was brewing when the year began pales in comparison to how 2020 actually unfolded. We faced challenges and difficulties that we never could have dreamed or imagined. We found our lives disrupted in unprecedented ways. And what we thought was going to be a problem and challenge for a few months has persisted into this new year as well. Out of necessity and concern for our own well-being, and that of others, we have found ourselves retreating from much of the normal rhythms and patterns of our lives. Some of us haven't left the house, other than for work or groceries, since April. In times of trial and struggle, it is a natural, human reaction to withdraw and become insular, to focus on yourself and your family. Sometimes, doing so is a necessity in order just to survive.

What is true for us as individuals has also been true for us as a church. We have had to adapt to an entirely different way of being and doing the work of the church, and that adjustment is still ongoing. The changes and shifts in our culture over the past decade or so kicked into overdrive because of this pandemic, and to be honest, we were kind of caught off guard. While some adjustments happened quickly and relatively smoothly (such as shifting to online worship), many of the changes and shifts we need to make are still ongoing. As we've wrestled and struggled this year, as a church we have focused more on ourselves than on our community and our mission. Not entirely, but significantly.

Time for a Reset

When your computer or phone starts acting weird, one of the first things to try is to reset your device. Often, this is as simple as doing a restart — just shut it off and then turn it on again. Sometimes, you might need to reset the device — erase everything and restore it from a backup. A reset is more time consuming, but is also more effective at cleaning out the bugs and the junk that build up over time. I wonder if we, as individuals but perhaps more as a church, aren't in need of a "reset" as well?



The quote at the top of this article is the first sentence on our church website. It is Northminster's purpose statement, a sentence that explains in a succinct manner why we exist as a community of faith. While the world and culture around us has changed, our mission and purpose have not. While we are all struggling to address and adapt to our pandemic-ravaged world, the Gospel has not changed. How we present the Gospel might change, how we go about Gospel work might change, but the Gospel itself is timeless and unchanging. *"...to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."* (John 1:12–13)

Perhaps we need a reset — as Christians and as a community of Christians. Reset our faith and our mission by doing a "factory reset" on our spiritual lives. Get back to the simple basics of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God. Let's start this year off by asking if we are truly experiencing and being transformed by God's love in our lives and in our homes, and if not, why not? Let's resolve to get rid of anything in our lives that is keeping us from knowing that love which surpasses all understanding (Eph. 3:12) so that we might love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:28-34). Then, let us come together as a community of faith ready to take the Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ to those who don't yet know the hope, life, and love that can only be found through Him.

The challenges of 2020 haven't stopped with the flipping of the calendar, but the Gospel has never been hindered by worldly circumstances. In fact, the Gospel has often thrived in circumstances much more challenging than what we've faced this past year. I believe the best is yet to come for Northminster and that God is going to do some amazing and special things through this congregation in the months and years to come. Let's commit together to resetting our faith and lives so we can embrace the mission He is inviting us to join Him in doing.

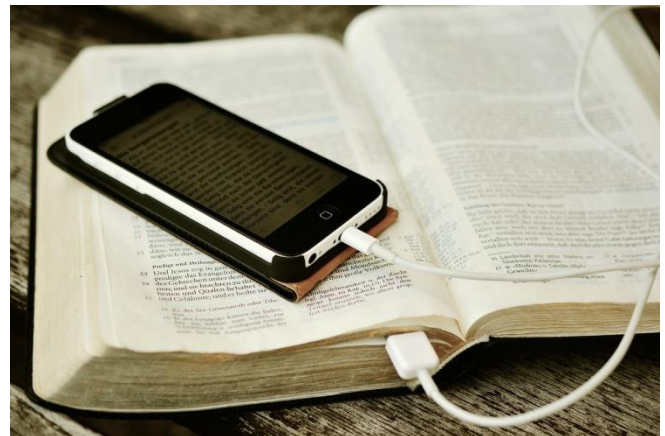
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." (2 Cor. 5:17–19)

Blessings,
Rev. David Garrison

Pastor's Midweek Bible Study

Resumes Wednesday, January 6
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

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

- 2 Virginia Carnefix
- 3 Andrea Sievewright
- 4 Jack Thomasson
- 7 Rob Sievewright
- 12 Mason Brine
- 15 Barbara Baker
- 16 Ivy Elizabeth Mann
- 18 Mandy (Rucker) Newsome
- 19 Mary Wilhelm
- 30 Cheryl Bray
- 31 Karen Aspengren



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Graham & Larisa Neilson, 2020
- 16 Mandy & Christopher Newsome, 2016



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



Prayer Requests:

Larry Irvine is scheduled for an MRI in January to follow up on his heart issues.

Ron Reyburn is doing well since his treatments for cancer.

Several of our folks have developed the coronavirus:

Peggy Wright is in Lynchburg General Hospital and also has pneumonia; a number of her family have the virus but are improving. They are **Janice Butler, Tim Wright, Tim's son and daughter-in-law.**

Dot Stinnett has the virus. Dot is also recovering from a fall and broken nose. **Ron & Judy Reyburn's son, Shawn and his wife and 2 children** have the virus.

Larry & Sue Irvine's son, Chris, is in the hospital in critical condition but has shown some improvement.

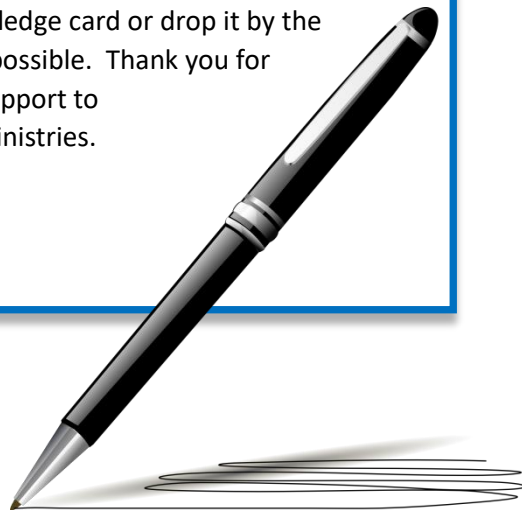
Sue Burnett continues chemotherapy for lung cancer.

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** (who also has COVID), **Leonard Rowe, Margaret Watts, and Dot Rucker.**

2021 Pledge Cards

Please remember to turn in your pledge cards for 2021. It will help us plan our programs for the new year. As things get back to "normal" in 2021, we are excited to see what God has planned for our church! Either mail your pledge card or drop it by the office as soon as possible. Thank you for your continued support to Northminster's ministries.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2020

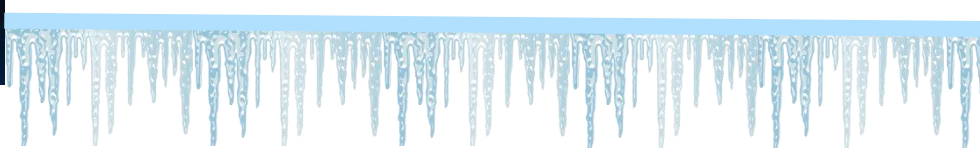
	November	Y-T-D
Income*	11,931	122,797
Expenses	<u>10,426</u>	<u>115,092</u>
Balance	1,505	7,705

PC USA DEBT – 50,420



Women's Book Club

The next book we will read together is ***Before and After: The Incredible Real-Life Stories of Orphans Who Survived the Tennessee Children's Home Society***, by Judy Christie and Lisa Wingate. The date for this meeting has not been decided yet, so keep watching for more information.



Youth Group Resumes Sunday, January 10

Every Sunday, 6:00-7:15 pm

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:

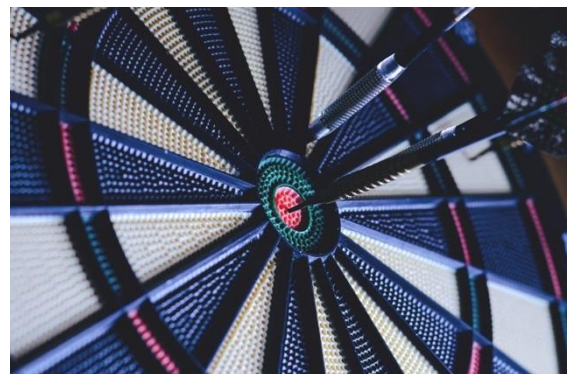
Bulls Eye Living: Staying On Target In Our Walk With God

There are many things that surround your life — friends, school, family, church, sports, band, and maybe a lot of other things. Think about a bullseye, the target an archer uses. There are different circles, but an archer's goal is to hit the bullseye right in the middle. If all of the different things that make up our lives are the circles on the target, the bullseye for our life should be God. Through this series, we'll be talking about what does it mean to have bullseye living. What does it mean to live for God?

Through this series, we'll be looking at :

- What On Earth Am I Here For?
- The World's Values vs. God's Values
- Defining My Life's Purpose
- Living Out My Life's Purpose

Join us @ Youth Group, Sundays, 6:00 PM.



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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