



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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OCTOBER 2022

Volume 41, Issue 10



Answering Before We Even Ask

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." (Matt. 7:7-8)



Last month, I wrote about how frustrating it can be when God doesn't answer our prayers as quickly as we like. This month, I'd like to remind us that more often than not, it's actually the other way around — God is often answering our prayers before we even ask. I'm writing this on Wednesday morning, as Hurricane Ian is about to make landfall in Florida as an almost category 5 hurricane. By the time you read this, the storm will no longer exist as a named storm and the damage will be done. Take a moment with me to go back to just a day or two before the hurricane's landfall.

Yesterday, I was driving up the 29N Bypass to pick my daughter up from school, and I saw at least a dozen utility trucks heading south. As you know, Rt. 29 isn't really a major N/S artery in Virginia - that's I-81 and I-95. It struck me that if there were that many trucks passing our neck of the woods, how many more are on the interstates, also heading south?

Hundreds of thousands of people have evacuated Florida, which given the size and scope of this storm is a very wise decision. But thousands will stay behind for a wide variety of reasons. Given what Ian did to Cuba, and what Puerto Rico experienced last week, we need to be praying for God's mercy and protection for those in the path of this storm. This is going to be bad.

But this is what I saw yesterday: God was already answering those prayers. He was already moving into place the people and resources folks along the Gulf Coast are going to need to recover from this storm. God was already in the process of answering prayers that had already been lifted up, and anticipating the prayers that were yet to come. Thousands upon thousands were fleeing the storm, while hundreds were heading toward it. Utility companies from around the country and disaster relief organizations

were marshaling their resources and coming together, ready to spring to action the moment the storm passes.

Our God is an awesome, and a very, very good, God. I'm reminded of Psalm 18. I don't have the space to quote it here, so I encourage you to go read it. As you do, keep this in mind: When the storms of life (both literal and metaphorical) threaten God's children and we cry out to Him, He springs to action on a storm of his own. Amen, and amen again.

Blessings,
Rev. David Garrison

October Youth Ministry News & Info

Sunday evenings from 6:30-7:45 p.m.

All students from 6th-12th grades are invited to join us each Sunday as we explore **The Good Life**.

Do you want to live the good life? Of course you do—we all do! But which version? The traveling influencer? The star athlete? The brilliant artist? Something new and different than what most people think? No matter what version we hope for, many of us are looking for help with figuring out how to find it. In this series, we'll learn how the Holy Spirit helps us to experience more of the life we were created to live. And throughout these five weeks, we may just discover a version of life, and a way to do middle and high school, that is better than we ever could have imagined.

October 2 — The Holy Spirit guides you to the good life.

October 9 — No Youth Group

October 16 — Church Picnic

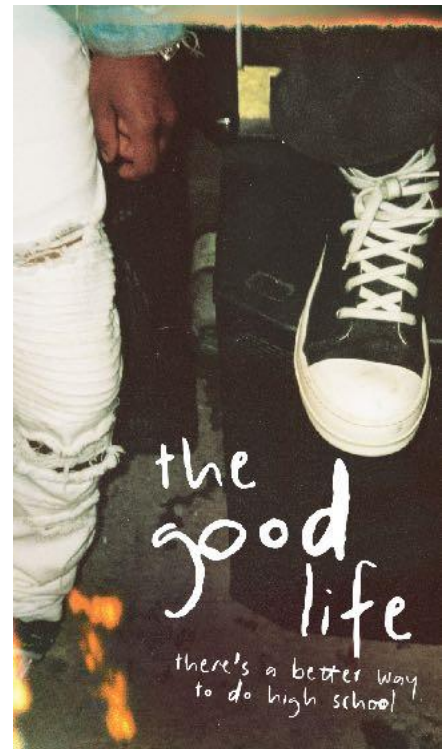
October 23 — Stay in step with the Spirit and be transformed.

October 30 — *Halloween Costume Party & Game Night*

November 6 — If you want to live the good life, you have to understand what the good life really is.

November 13 — Following the Spirit leads to experiencing the good life.

November 20 — The Spirit helps you see the good in life.



Join us @ Youth Group, Sundays, 6:30 p.m.

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



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

Prayer Requests:



Ray Vandall continues to heal from his hip replacement surgery. Praise the Lord, the surgery went well!

Barbara Baker asks for prayers for her niece, **Sheila Layton**, who is recovering from breast cancer surgery. This was to address a recurrence of the cancer after 26 years.

Residents of Florida and the Carolinas as they recover from the devastation and impacts from Hurricane Ian.

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, Dolores Wright and Peggy Wright.**

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 26 Jeb & Beth Clarke, 2003

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

GENERAL FUND

	August	Y-T-D
Income	8,284	82,839
Expenses	<u>11,270</u>	<u>92,997</u>
Balance	-2,986	-10,158



Our Deepest Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family of Leonard L. Rowe who passed from this life into Eternity on Thursday, September 1. Leonard was one of the founding members of Northminster. While we rejoice that Leonard is safe in the arms of his Savior, we grieve his loss here on Earth.

Missions Outreach and Evangelism

Christmas Cheer Boxes – Again this year we are partnering with Amelon United Methodist, Randolph Memorial Baptist, and Madison Heights Baptist churches to collect items for Christmas Cheer Boxes. Last year 140 boxes were delivered. The collection bin is by the front door.

October’s Christmas cheer items are pancake mix and syrup.



MOE Meeting – October 10, at 1:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker – On October 16, Susan May will be speaking to the youth group about Burundi Hope

Gleaning for the World – October 20. Meet at the church parking lot at 8:30 a.m. We will work from 9:00-11:00 a.m. If you have never participated before, please consider joining us.

Daystar Desk Update!

Thank you so much for your generosity! We were able to raise **\$408** for the desks that they need at Daystar!

Joan and Dick Ricketts Body Life Fund

Following the lead of Pastor Ray Steadman in his book, *Body Life*, Northminster seeks to be the body of Christ. One way of doing this is by reaching out not only to people in our community, but also assisting members of our own congregation who find themselves in a financial crisis.

When a family in the church has special needs that they were unable to meet, perhaps due to losing a job, or some sort of crisis, money from the Body Life Fund can be requested to help. While money does not usually solve people’s problems, it can be a source of great encouragement to a family that is struggling through a crisis. Although the church cannot fully support a family that is out of work, any financial help is usually appreciated greatly, and tells them that the church truly cares.

Northminster’s “Body Life Fund” was established in 2002 and named in honor of Joan & Dick Ricketts.

Funding for the Body Life Fund occurs through contributions made directly to Body Life, not from the general income. Over the past several years, we been blessed to be able to provide special assistance to many in our congregation. As a result, the balance in the fund right now is very low. We invite you to prayerfully consider making a special donation, above and beyond your regular giving, to help replenish this fund so that we might be able to bless others in our church family should the need arise.

www.facebook.com/npcmh

Website: www.npcmh.com

DAVID GARRISON, *Pastor*

ELDERS

Ron Reyburn, *Clerk of Session,*

Liz Boothe, Maggie Brockman

Sharon Bryant, John Lange, Judy Reyburn

Bob Mills, *Director of Music*

Liz Boothe, *Organist*

Sharon Bryant, *Sunday school Superintendent*

How We Worship – A Focus on Martin Luther and The Reformation

In my high school years, I sometimes filled in for our church organist by playing service music and hymns on the piano. When I started college, I learned to play the organ, taking lessons from the very patient Dr. Harvey Huiner, professor of music at

Lynchburg College, for four years. Dr. Huiner was Lutheran, and taught us much about organ music, music in church history, German composers such as J.S. Bach, and Martin Luther in particular.

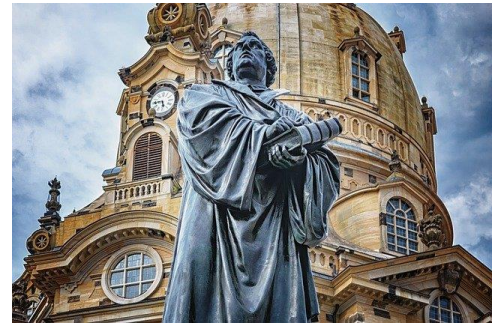
Martin Luther, 1483-1546, was a German theologian and religious reformer, and catalyst of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation. He precipitated a movement that reformulated basic tenets of Christian belief and resulted in the division between Roman Catholicism and new Protestant traditions, mainly Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism. Along with John Calvin, he is one of the most influential figures in the history of Christianity.

In the early 1500s some Roman Catholics objected to church practices including the sale of indulgences. If a person paid money to the church, then the church would forgive that person's sins. People could even buy indulgences to forgive sins of others who had already died.

In 1517 a German religious scholar named Martin Luther wrote the Ninety-five Theses. In this document he argued that the sale of indulgences was wrong. Today Protestants consider publication of the theses to be the beginning of the Reformation. The invention of the mechanized printing press meant that the Ninety-Five Theses circulated widely.

Luther wanted to reform Roman Catholicism. He believed that Catholic leaders misunderstood the Bible. Luther insisted the Bible was the only source of religious authority and that messages from the pope—or from Luther himself—lacked that authority. The sole authority of the Bible became an essential belief among most Protestants. Luther also believed that forgiveness for sins came entirely from God. This became another central idea of the Reformation. In contrast, Roman Catholic teachings held that forgiveness came both from God and as a result of the good works that people do.

Luther's actions angered powerful church leaders. The pope excommunicated him in 1521. Later that year Luther was declared an outlaw. While in hiding, he translated the New Testament into German so



Did You Know?

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (originally written in the German language with the title "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott") is one of the best-known hymns penned by the Protestant Reformer Martin Luther, a prolific hymnwriter. Luther wrote the words and composed the hymn tune between 1527 and 1529. It has been translated into English at least seventy times and also into many other languages. The words are mostly original, although the first line paraphrases that of Psalm 46.

"A Mighty Fortress" is one of the best known hymns of the Lutheran tradition, and among Protestants more generally. It has been called the "Battle Hymn of the Reformation" for the effect it had in increasing the support for the Reformers' cause.

Information Sources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Mighty_Fortress_Is_Our_God

that more people could read it. Before this the commonly used Bible was in Latin. Priests could read it, but ordinary people could not.

In addition to Martin Luther, John Calvin was one of the most important thinkers of the Reformation. He helped translate the Bible into French and led a Protestant community in Switzerland.

Liz Boothe, Worship Committee Chair

Information Sources:

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Reformation> ; <https://www.britannica.com/summary/Reformation-Key-Facts>

Ministry Opportunity – Holy Communion Preparation

Would you be interested in assisting with preparation of Holy Communion? Our Worship Committee has several people who faithfully help each month, but we can always use more willing workers! There are numerous activities you could help with, including:

- Purchasing or making communion supplies including bread and grape juice
- Setting up plates of bread and cups of grape juice and placing on the communion table
- Setting up paraments on the Communion Table
- Moving the heavy Communion Table from the front of the sanctuary down to the floor before the Sunday service and moving it back afterwards.
- After the service, removing communion cups from the sanctuary pews, cleaning bread plates, communion trays, and chalice, and removing paraments from the Communion Table.
- Take paraments to dry cleaners as needed
- Substitute in any of these activities when regular Communion preparers are away.

If you are interested in learning more, please speak with Liz Boothe. Thank you!

Shorter Catechism, Questions 92-93 (on The Sacraments) and Questions 96-97 (on The Lord's Supper)

The Church Picnic has been rescheduled for Sunday, October 16, at 5 p.m.

Join us for food, fun, and fellowship this fall! Bring a side; meats and dessert will be provided!



The Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will meet on **Friday, October 14, at 10 a.m.** at Sherry Meng's house. They will be reading *Love Does: Discover a Secretly Incredible Life in an Ordinary World*, by Bob Goff. All women are welcome!

This Is the Way

A Star Wars themed mini-series has been out for a couple of years, named “The Mandalorian.” This article is not an endorsement of it, because I’m still a little unsure about it, even though the series lead character (the Mandalorian) and others like him do seem to be on the side of “good.” So, without unreservedly saying he’s “OK,” I can say that he and others like him have a common standard of behavior and morals, and whenever someone asks him why he does things a certain way, his answer is always the same – “This Is The Way.”

His statement sums up the fact that he and the others like him behave as they do because they believe certain things, and are convinced those beliefs should determine how they live. In short, what they believe affects how they act, whether or not others understand or agree.

Does this remind you of anything? Hint – it’s a similar principal but of infinitely greater importance. Yes, of course it should remind us that as Christians, we are “people of the Way,” and we ought to act accordingly.

The Bible does not give an official explanation of that term, but it certainly seems to recall the words of Jesus when He said, “**I am the way**” (John 14:6). And, in Acts 9:2, Luke refers to the threatened Christian community as “the Way.” It seems to be at least one name by which the early church identified itself. Luke uses the term several times in Acts (19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

Similar to, but MUCH more important than the Mandalorian’s “Way,” there is a standard of conduct that OUGHT TO define us as Christians. We’ll never do it perfectly of course, but it ought to define the standard we strive for, and live out, as a rule of life.

It would take an extremely long article to even scratch the surface of what Christian Living means, but we all know the basics of what that involves – characteristics modeled and taught by Jesus, and other standards outlined in Scripture. Things like unconditional love, mercy, forgiveness, all the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5), the “Golden Rule (Matthew 7, Luke 6), putting others’ interests above our own, and on and on.

So...what about US? Is our love for and commitment to the Lord Jesus so strong that His ways are just a natural part of who we are? Would others be able to see the fruits of our lives, and readily be able to identify us as followers of “the Way” (Jesus’ way)? I have heard more than one preacher say that the problem most of the world has with Christianity is not so much with Jesus, but with Jesus’ followers (ouch!), who are good at stating what Christian “ways” consist of, but who are very inconsistent actually living by those ways. I’ll have to honestly say that stings, but I’ll also have to say that probably describes *me*, more often than I care to admit.

Can my dedication to “the Way” be deepened by realizing I MAY be the main view (maybe the ONLY view) of Christianity that some people witness? Can my love for the Lord cause me to pray more frequently and fervently for the Holy Spirit to keep shaping me to conform to “the Way” even when my sinful nature wants to resist such efforts?

The wonderful news is that of course it’s not all up to me. God is quite committed to His transforming work in my life! I’m eternally grateful for the way God promises to make me more like His Son, as verses like Romans 8:29 and Philippians 1:6 assure us. But I do have a part in *cooperating* with Him, of course. Here’s praying that the end of each day finds us cooperating with God’s conforming hand, having been more dedicated to the “hard right” (THE Way – His Way) than to the “easy wrong” (MY way).

Your brother in Christ – Harry, who still has much progress to make in conforming to “the Way.”