



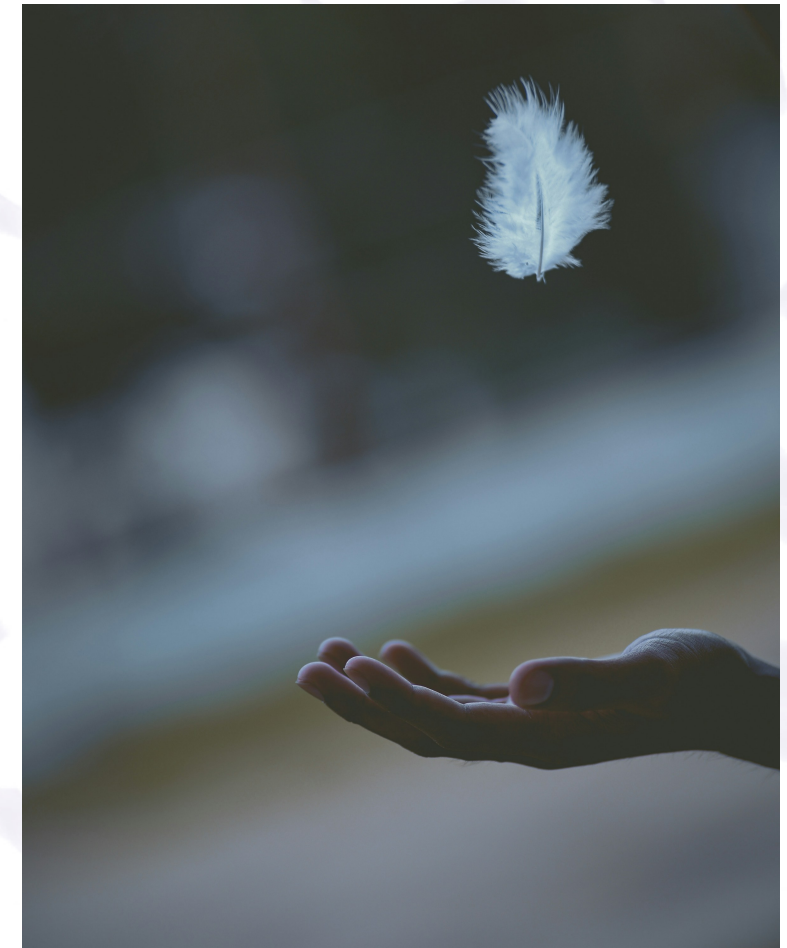
PASTOR'S CORNER – BLESSED NAÏVETÉ

Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.
 — 1 Corinthians 14:20

Has anyone ever accused you of being “holier than thou”? It’s a strange insult, when you think about it, but it’s also one that I think most folks dread having applied to them. There’s a good reason for that — the phrase is really directed at those who are arrogant and self-righteous in their “holiness” and look down on those who they deem not as worthy. However, our dread of this accusation has had a consequence that is deeply affecting the Church (capital ‘C,’ as in the church universal not just the local church).

Instead of striving after true holiness, as just about every page of the Bible calls us to, we strive to be relevant and relatable so folks will see us as just like and certainly no better than they are. We try to avoid the scarlet ‘H’ as much as possible. As NT Wright writes, “There are people who pride themselves on knowing about evil, but can’t be bothered to think through serious issues from a biblical or theological point of view. There are many Christians who can tell you which film star is getting divorced but can’t tell you where in the Bible you might find teaching on the subject.” We want to make sure that folks know we’re no different than they are. I doubt any Christian is trying to be an expert in evil; most likely we just want to make sure that we’re not being naïve about it. We want to be seen as mature, not childish.

Paul flips that kind of thinking upside down in 1 Corinthians 14:20. He says that what I just described



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isn't mature — it's childish. True maturity doesn't come from familiarity with or knowledge of evil, but rather by pursuing Christ and holiness. Those who are truly holy don't go around flaunting it in front of and over others. Somewhat ironically, the holier we become, we become all the more aware of the depths of our sin and brokenness. Consider Jesus. He was perfectly relatable and relevant to all with whom he came in contact. Sinners were drawn to him, so much so that He spent far more time with the "sinners" than He did with those who considered themselves "saints." Yet He never compromised his holiness or his righteousness, nor did He ever entertain temptation, sin or evil.

If we are striving to show the world that Christians are just like them, then what do we have to offer? The entire point of the Gospel is that the world can never provide that for which our souls yearn. The world can never heal our brokenness. The world can never help us atone for our sins and failures. The

world cannot provide life. The Gospel, the Good News, is that by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ we have been called out and set apart (that's what "holiness" means). Being mature and holy isn't about being perfect or sinless, but it does mean that we strive to leave sin and evil behind, focusing instead on Jesus Christ. True maturity comes from "pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14-15)

Instead of trying to show how much like the world we are, "let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrews 12:2-3)

Blessings,
Rev. David Garrison

Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

The Glory of God in Black & White

By Rev. Bob Mills

For as long as what's left of my memory remains, the image will stay fixed in my mind's eye.

It was April 8, 2024. Through special glasses designed for the occasion, I'd spent far more than an hour watching as a total solar eclipse gradually unfolded. Those glasses, I'd been told, blocked 1,000 times more light than regular sunglasses. When I put them on, I couldn't see anything – until I looked directly at the sun. Then I saw a small, round disc, plainly visible but not especially bright.

From where I stood at that moment – in Columbus, Indiana – the moon's diameter appeared slightly larger than the sun's. I watched as the moon inexorably erased more and more of the sun. When the last curved sliver of the sun finally was hidden by the moon, I took off my eclipse glasses.

That's the moment I remember.

What I found immediately striking was the blackness of the moon. It was blacker than any black I'd ever experienced, or even imagined. I've toured underground caverns where our guide flipped a switch that turned out all the lights, leaving us immersed in absolute darkness. And I've seen the first photo, taken just a few years ago, of a black hole, an astronomical phenomenon where gravity is so powerful that not even light can escape.

But this was different. I can't fully explain how or why, but I suspect it was related to the brilliant whiteness of the sun's corona. I'd been assuming the corona would be a yellowish orange. It was, instead, intensely white. The juxtaposition of such extremes of black and white was unexpectedly, staggeringly, beautiful. Only later, as I reflected on the four minutes of totality, did the words of the Psalmist come to mind:

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4, ESV)

Beauty is the way humanity experiences the glory of God. Without intending to do so, Marge, Tim, and I put ourselves in the path of beauty. Driving from Lynchburg to Columbus and back took almost 20 hours. It was worth every minute in the car to spend those four minutes seeing the glory of God displayed in black and white.



Women's Book Club

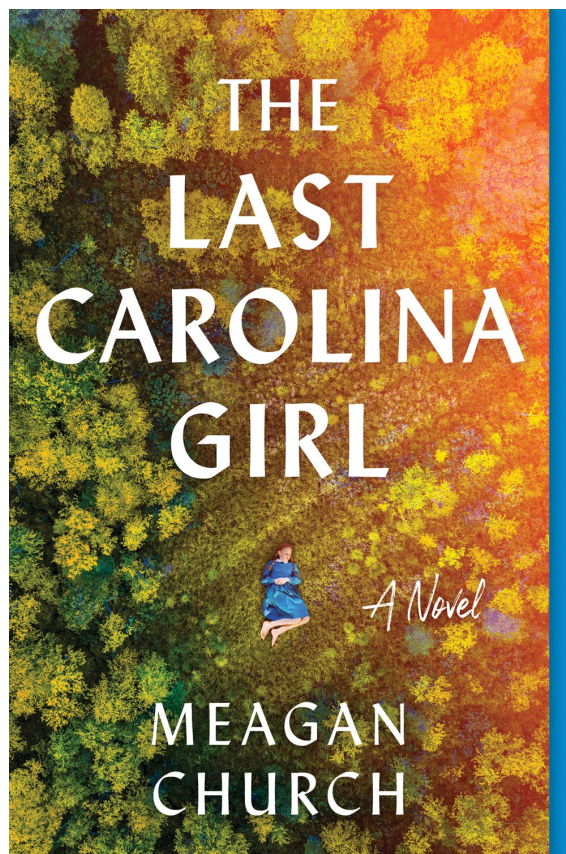
Please join us on Thursday, June 20 at the home of Sharon Bryant at 145 Adrian Street at 10:00 a.m. as we discuss the book, [The Last Carolina Girl](#) by Meagan Church. We have such a great time eating, talking and finally discussing the book of the month.

This month's book is about Leah Payne, a 14 year old girl, who lives on the coast in a Carolina town. Her life is simple and free. She is devoted to her lumberjack father and loves her country life where she can run through the forest and on to the shore.

When an accident takes her father's life, Leah is wrenched from her small community and cast into a family of strangers with a terrible secret. Separated from her only home, Leah is kept apart from the family and forced to act as a helpmate for the well-to-do household. When a moment of violence and prejudice thrusts Leah into the center of the state's shameful darkness she must fight for her own future against a world that doesn't always value the wild spirit of a Carolina girl.

Read the book to find out what happens and join us at Sharon's home on the 20th.

Call Sharon for questions or directions.



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Hunter Lee Brightwell
Amherst County High School & Central Virginia Governor's School

Hunter will attend Virginia Tech majoring in Fish Conservation, Policy, and Management and minoring in Water Conservation, Policy, and Management.



Cole Joseph Chapman
Amherst County High School

Cole will attend Randolph College after graduation from high school.



Jackson Markley Moore
E. C. Glass High School

Jackson will attend East Tennessee State University. He will be double majoring in Business and Appalachian Music.

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Danielle Joyce Caplinger
Amherst County High School & Central Virginia Community College

Danielle will attend Old Dominion University majoring in Cyber Security.



Brinna Elizabeth Midgley
Amherst County High School

Brinna will attend Liberty University majoring in Fine Arts. Her career aspiration is to be a Video Game Character Creator.



Colin Reed Scruggs
Amherst County High School

Colin will attend Central Virginia Community College majoring in Sports Medicine.

LIFE TOGETHER

Keeping in touch with one another

JUNE BIRTHDAYS:

- 9 Judy Reyburn
- 14 Marge Mills
- 21 Kaleigh Bennett



JUNE ANNIVERSARIES:

- Don & June Hedrick, June 12, 1960
- Bobbie & Debbie Irvine, June 26, 1971
- Bob & Marge Mills, June 28, 1980

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

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 what they need.

Jimmy Wright asks for prayer as he continues healing carpal tunnel and trigger finger surgery.

KINGDOM TRIUMPHANT

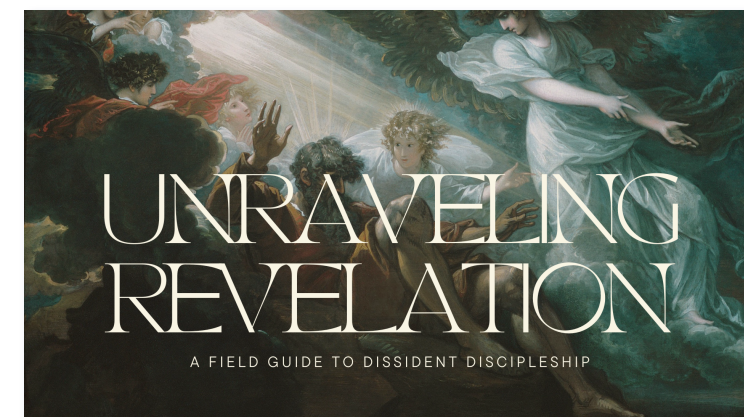
And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"
— Rev. 14:13

Peggy Wright entered the Kingdom Triumphant on May 27, 2024.

Nancy Glover, sister to Bobby & Larry Irvine, entered the Kingdom Triumphant on April 19, 2024.

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

**All active servicemen and women.
Law enforcement personnel, first responders.**



*A new Sunday school opportunity,
beginning Sunday, May 12 at 9 AM.*

If there's one book of the Bible that people have questions about or don't understand, it's the very last book, the Book of Revelation. In many respects, it is one of the most unique books in the entire Bible, bringing together all sorts of unusual imagery and confusing language. It's become quite popular to read it in such a way as to try to unlock the secrets to the future, but doing so actually robs the book of its true power and import. Revelation isn't so much about the future as it is a field guide to dissident discipleship in the here and now. Join us for Sunday School as we seek to Unravel Revelation.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2024 GENERAL FUND

	April	Year To Date
Income	\$10,115	\$42,765
Expenses	\$ 9,520	\$48,249
Balance	\$ 595	\$-5,493

Youth Ministry Update

Graduation Sunday is June 9.



Youth Group is on summer break, with plans for the fall yet to be determined. We are planning a couple of activities and events throughout the summer, so keep your eye on Facebook for news about those.

We will be celebrating our graduating seniors in worship on Sunday, June 9, and we hope you'll join us. We are grateful for their gifts and are excited about what God has in store for them!

ON SITE WITH: AMHERST COUNTY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

On Thursday, May 23, we had the opportunity to serve lunch to the volunteers and workers at the newest house that Amherst County Habitat for Humanity is building. This is a house utterly different from any they've built before.

Instead of the usual wood frame with insulation in the walls, this house is built with concrete poured between insulated concrete forms. The forms are approximately 8 feet long by 1.5 tall. One form weighs about the same as a 10ft 2x4. They stack like Legos. Window jams and door jams are placed as you stack the blocks along with voids to channel the electric and water. The center is then filled with concrete...and...you have an extremely energy efficient and safe home! When all is said and done, the homeowners should have an extremely small utility bill!

As work continues on this house, the foundation for a second house to be built with this method has already been dug. Plans are being prepared to build more houses this way. What's even more exciting is that not only is this building technique cutting edge, but cost saving as well! Much of the materials (including the concrete poured on Thursday) was donated, so this house will cost less to build and then cost even less to maintain over the years.

God is doing some great work in this county, and we're thankful for the opportunity to help out with a small part of it! Learn more by searching for "Amherst Habitat" on Facebook.



An Update on Construction at Daystar Junior School

Thanks to your donations last year, Daystar Junior School has begun construction on a new classroom building, to be called the "Northminster Wing." Here are some pictures of the progress they are making.



JUNE 2024 MISSION FOCUS: DAYSTAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

We all know how important it is to invest in the next generation, and Daystar Junior School is doing just that. This school for children ages 3 to 15 years is located in the slum areas of Kirombe Uganda, East Africa. It is fully registered with the Ministry of Education Sports as a nursery and primary day school.

Founded in 2014, it opened its doors on February 2, 2015, with the vision "Raising children who are good examples." The school's mission is "To help our children discover, develop, release and maximize their potentials in God."

Our contact with the school is Jude Nyanzi, the school's founder and principal who is a man full of vision and determination. He often sends us pictures of the school and occasionally joins us through the YouTube worship service, as well as in person to let us know how the

school is thriving. Our donations from here in Central Virginia have helped to purchase uniforms for the students and provide materials so that they can build new desks.

We are excited to see the ways that God continues to use Daystar in the lives of these precious children, and we feel privileged to be able to help the school in their vital mission of raising children who "maximize their potential" for the Kingdom of God.

Construction of the "Northminster Wing" is well under way (see next page for pictures), but they need more support to finish the building. You'll find an update on construction progress later in the newsletter. All donations for Daystar will go toward completing this project.