

Highlights *From the Heights*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | NORTHMINSTER EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MARCH 2025 – VOLUME 3

PASTOR'S CORNER — HOW HAS HE LOVED US?

"I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" — Malachi 1:2

It's a conversation that happens with all too much regularity in a marriage. A husband tells his wife, "I love you," to which she replies, "How have you loved me?" As the 90s rock band Extreme famously crooned, it takes more than words in order for someone else to know they are loved and valued. Words matter, but just as much are the actions and symbols of love. Every relationship goes through periods of complacency, where we take the love and presence of the other person for granted and just assume they know they are loved. Sometimes, though, the husband might be doing everything right, but the wife has stopped paying attention. It isn't just our relationships with other people that go through these seasons, we also experience it in our relationship with God — perhaps even moreso.

In our Bibles, the book of Malachi is the last book in the Old Testament. It's one of the shortest books in the entire Bible and is unique in that it is basically a series of six disputations. "God lays a charge against his people concerning some failure in covenant, to which the people respond by asking how they have failed. The response always begins with "But you say" (which was perhaps not stated verbally—Malachi may be exposing only half-conscious resentment and resistance to God). The third step in this pattern shows God answering his people's question; the fourth closes each section with the Lord applying this answer, with warnings and



promises for the future.” (ESV Expositor’s Commentary)

We don’t know exactly when Malachi delivered his prophecies, but we do know it was after the exiles had returned to Jerusalem and the temple rebuilt — at least partially. And yet, the Messiah had yet to return. It had been hundreds of years since the Israelites had received God’s promises of restoration and redemption, and even longer since they had last seen the miraculous works of the Lord. It would still be yet another 300-400 years before Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, finally came, bringing with him miraculous works and fulfilling all of the promises of God. But over the course of hundreds of years of waiting, the Israelites began wondering if God still loved, let alone cared, for them. No word from the prophets, no miraculous signs and wonders, no change in their circumstances. At best, the people and the priests started taking God’s love for granted; at worst, they began to treat God with disdain and disrespect — going through the motions of love but without any feeling or intent.

In the big-picture sense, like the Israelites we’ve been waiting a *really, really* long time for Jesus to return and come through on His promises. How close we are to that moment depends on who you ask, but it’s probably pretty safe to say it’s not going to be tomorrow. But that’s not the only way we’re waiting on God or wondering if He still loves us. We’re all waiting on God for something. Maybe it’s deliverance from a particular sin we’ve been struggling with for a long time, or fractured relationships in our family, or a job situation that is... less than desirable, or a medical diagnosis we didn’t see coming and don’t know how to endure. Maybe it’s something else entirely. When

God goes silent, it becomes really hard to continue to trust Him and we begin to wonder if He still loves us.

Lent is the season in the Christian calendar that provides us with an opportunity to sit in the silence of God and raise our broken-hearted plea to the Lord, “How have you loved me?” Lent is an old English word that means “springtime.” Spring is the season when the blossoms break forth and new growth appears, but before that the dross and refuse left over from winter needs to be cleared away. In the earliest days and weeks of spring, it doesn’t look like anything is happening. It looks as if winter succeeded in killing everything off. But appearances are deceiving. Through the long, cold, dark weeks of winter, a lot has been happening underground and out of sight. Necessary work without which the blooms and blossoms of spring will not thrive, if they sprout at all. It might seem like God has forgotten His love for you and that He is no longer at work, but the truth is the exact opposite. He has never stopped loving you, nor has He stopped working for and on you. Hold fast. Pay attention and look for the evidence of God’s presence and His love. Be patient. Easter is coming, and the Son of Righteousness has come and will come again for you.

Blessings,
Rev. David Garrison

Malachi 4:2

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

GET IN S.H.A.P.E. CLASS COMING SOON!

No, not physical shape – spiritual S.H.A.P.E.! God has given every believer gifts and shaped us for ministry and service. If you’re asking questions like, What are my spiritual gifts? How has God shaped me for service and ministry? Where do I “plug in?” What is God calling me to do in this phase of my life? Then this class is for you! We encourage every member of Northminster to join us for this, coming this spring.



LIFE TOGETHER

Keeping in touch with one another

MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

7 Ron Reyburn
8 Beverly O'Brien
24 Ernie Baker
28 David Garrison
31 Bryce Brine



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.

Sue Irvine continues healing from a stroke and surgery for a brain aneurysm last month.

Jeremy Bryant is healing after surgery for a broken leg last month.

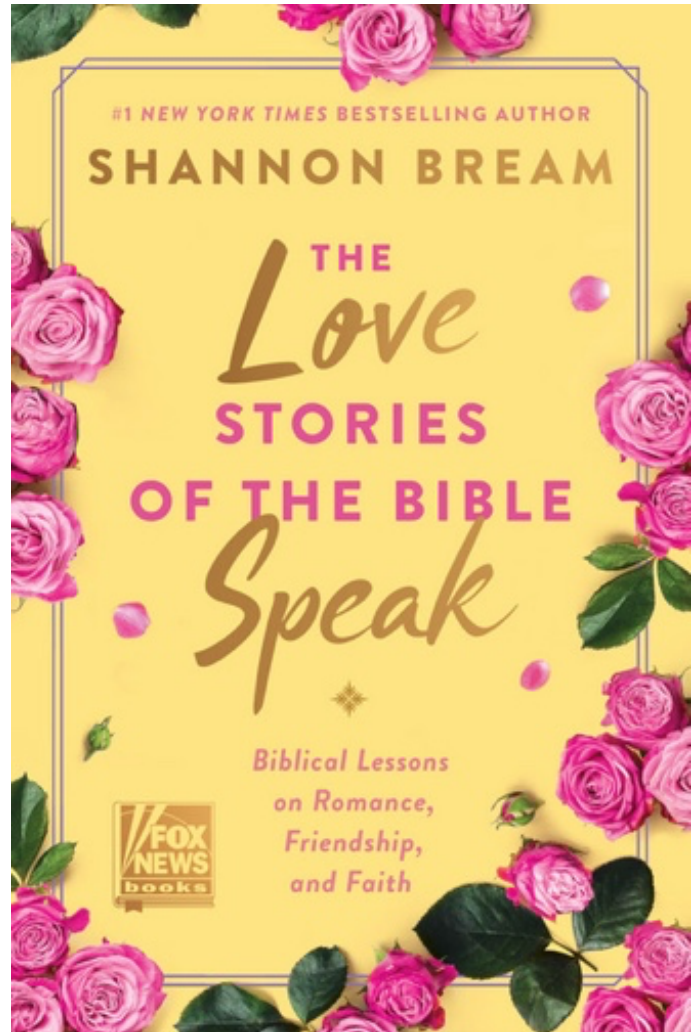
Remember others who cannot be with us in church:
Pat Callahan, Arlene Horton, Mary Murray, Mary Wilhelm and Dolores Wright.

All active servicemen and women, law enforcement personnel, first responders.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2025 GENERAL FUND

	January	Year To Date
Income	\$ 9,394	\$ 9,394
Expenses	<u>\$10,343</u>	<u>\$10,343</u>
Balance	\$-950	\$ -950

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY MEETS MONDAY, MAR 3



The Women's Bible Study will meet on Monday, March 3 at the church at 7:00 p.m. We will be picking up where we left off at our last meeting. We are working on "The Friendships of Paul" (The Love Stories of the Bible Speak by Shannon Bream) and we will begin on page 206. We are continuing to work on the lesson together. We ask that you finish reading "The Friendships of Paul" and complete the questions in your workbook. Come prepared to share what you got out of the reading and any questions you might have.

Once again we are going to ask you to bring something to share related to our refreshments.

Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday night. And, as always, bring a friend. Please enter through the library doors so that the Young Life Group can have our front parking lot.

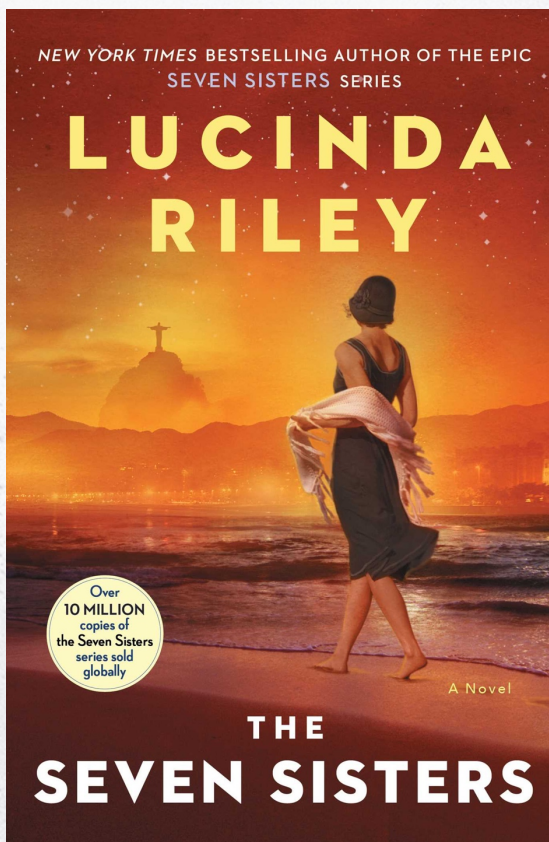
MH UNION

2025 Lenten Services

Date	Host Church	Preacher	Topic/Scripture
Mar 5	Amelon UMC	George Harris (MHCC)	Grounded John 15:1-11
Mar 12	Randolph Memorial	Josh Beeler (MHBC)	Beloved Ephesians 3:14-21
Mar 19	MH Christian Church	Dave Edinger (AUMC)	Imagine Luke 17:20-21
Mar 26	Northminster	Rose Chapel BC	Humbled Matthew 5:1-12
April 2	Rose Chapel BC	David Garrison (NPC)	Wrestle Gen 32:24-28/Rom 7:15-24
April 9	MH Baptist Church	Derik Hamby (RMBC)	Dance! Matthew 21:1-17

Notes

- A meal will follow the **April 9 service** at Madison Heights Baptist Church--all churches will be contacted as to what they can provide for the meal.
- **On all other weeks, participants are encouraged to go out to lunch with one another!**
- All services will begin at 12pm each Wednesday and will last approximately 30 minutes.
- An offering will be collected weekly for the **Helping Hands community ministry**.
- *In the case of snow, the host church for the week will decide if the service will continue.*



WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB MEETS THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 10 AM @ NORTHMINSTER

The Women's Book Club will meet Thursday, March 20 at the church. The book that we are reading this month is "The Seven Sisters" by Lucinda Riley. "The Seven Sisters" is the first book in a seven book series. We are not planning to read all of them, but you might find the series so enchanting that you want to read them all.

When Pa Salt dies suddenly, the bereaved sisters (all six of them were adopted) gather together at their childhood home, a spectacular secluded castle on the shores of Lake Geneva. Each of the six sisters is handed a tantalising clue to their heritage and Maia finds herself on a journey across the world to a crumbling mansion in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Read the book to find out what Maia discovers about her past!

Again, we will ask you to bring a food item to share during our meeting.

Looking forward to another lively discussion about our book and many other topics that randomly come up. Feel free to bring a friend!!

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

5 pm Wednesday, March 27
at Monelison Middle School

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MONELISON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Join us as we partner with Randolph Memorial Baptist Church to provide a meal for families of Monelison Middle School students and staff! On March 27 at 5 p.m., our churches have the opportunity to reach out to our community. Randolph Memorial is providing the dinner and Northminster is providing the dessert. If you are interested in bringing cookies, brownies, or cupcakes, please bring them to Monelison Middle School by 4 p.m. on 3/27. We also would like to have church members attend the event and engage with the students, staff, and families. This is a wonderful chance for our church to be out in the community getting to know people and share God's love. Please let Karey Garrison know if you're able to provide a dessert and if you'd like to attend the dinner. 828-329-8915 or kareygarrison@gmail.com.



THE NEW CLASSROOM BUILDING AT DAYSTAR JUNIOR SCHOOL IS OPEN FOR STUDENTS!



MILLS' MUSINGS – Rediscovering Rhythms

I'm teaching a music appreciation course at CVCC this semester. In the opening unit, I covered major elements of music including melody, harmony, and rhythm.

When we think about a piece of music, the melody is usually the first thing that comes to mind. Melody is defined as “a succession of single pitches, perceived by the mind as a unit.” When you look at the bulletin on Sunday morning and see “Amazing Grace” listed as the opening hymn, you probably hear the melody in your mind.

Harmony is the result of three or more pitches sounding at the same time instead of one after another. The way chords are constructed and how they follow each other fall under the heading of harmony. By the end of the course, I expect my students to listen to the harmony of a musical example and identify the musical era in which it was written.

Then there's rhythm, from a Greek word that means “flow.” Music takes place in time. When we hear a melody or a chord, each pitch lasts for a specific number of seconds or fractions of a second. Rhythm helps us perceive the order inherent in music.

But rhythm isn't confined to music. One author writes:

The ancients discerned in rhythm the creative principle of the universe, manifested alike in the regular movement of planets, the cycle of seasons and tides, of night and day, desire and appeasement, life and death. ... This universe was art, and its controlling principle was rhythm. The symmetrical proportions of architecture, the balanced groupings of painting and sculpture, the patterns of the dance, the regular meters of poetry – each in its own sphere represents man's deep-seated need for rhythmical arrangement.

Christians long have felt those needs, and the Church has responded in a variety of ways. One is through its music. For the first millennium of Christian history, almost all Christian music was written in triple meter. That is, each beat was divided into three equal parts, an intentional expression of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Another way the Church acknowledges the value of rhythm in our lives is through our observation of the Christian year. We start with the season of Advent, a time of preparation for the celebration of Jesus's coming. We move through the seasons of Christmas and Epiphany. Then, this month, we enter the season of Lent, a time of self-examination as we prepare to celebrate Jesus resurrection. After the season of Easter comes Ordinary Time, which leads back to Advent and the repetition of the rhythm of our life as the people of God.

This year, as I was teaching about melody, harmony, and rhythm, I came across the following quote: “In our global digital age, many Christians are *rediscovering* the importance of community, *the value of rhythms and routines amid chaotic circumstances*, and the need for deeper commitment to spiritual formation.”

For many of us the past year or two has seemed especially chaotic. As together we continue our journey through this still fairly new civic year, may we also share the joy and peace that can result as we rediscover the value of rhythms and routines amid chaotic circumstances.



DUST TO DUST

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First-
Class
Postage
Here