

# The Hilltops

Monthly Newsletter | September 2019

Published by New Beginnings United Methodist Church  
serving Pepperell, Townsend, and the surrounding communities.

Editor - Krissy Miner, Lynne Connors, & Brenda Bennett



## New Beginnings

United Methodist Church

*We are followers of Jesus, who tend God's garden, serving the mind, body and spirit of all God's children.*

Pastor - Christopher Jones  
Church Secretary - Krissy Miner  
Financial Secretary - Jean Whitman  
Church Treasurer - Lynne Connors

### Church Council:

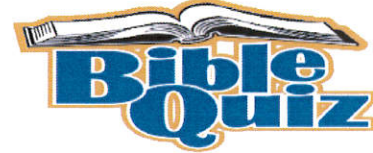
Chair: Jeff Rice 978-300-5150  
Trustees Chair: Rick Oakley 978-821-0830  
Lay Leader: Shirley Hult 978-433-6622  
SPRC Chair: Christine Silver  
Stewardship: Open  
Worship Ministry:  
Jean Whitman 978-597-2511  
Community Outreach Ministry:  
Open  
Spiritual Formation Ministry:  
Brenda Bennett 802-318-7563  
Youth Ministry:  
Linda Jones 978-877-1923

**Membership Committee:** Lynne Connors, Linda Jones, Brenda Bennett, Louise Thorpe, Rick Oakley and Shirley Hult

**Nominating Committee:** Chris Silver, Rick Oakley, Brenda Bennett, Lynn Grimes

**SPRC:** Chair - Christine Silver; Committee Members: Margie Wilson, Lynn Grimes, Susan Siart, Barbara Bourdon

**Trustees:** Chair- Rick Oakley; Treasurer - Marcia Scofield; Secretary - Krissy Miner; Committee Members: Al Higgins, Al Harris, Shirley Hult



According to the Gospel of Matthew, where does Jesus' first public sermon take place?

(August question: What is the name commonly given to the first five books of the Old Testament: Is it the Pentateuch, Doxology, Apocrypha, or the Septuagint?)

Answer is *Pentateuch*, meaning 'Five Volumes'.)



Ken & Susan Gerken, Sep 9<sup>th</sup>



Gale Durno, Sep 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Lynne Connors, Sep 5<sup>th</sup>  
Alberta Dearborn, Sep 6<sup>th</sup>  
Denise Batchelder, Sep 17<sup>th</sup>  
Heidi Bouchard, Sep 20<sup>th</sup>



Debbie Alger; Lily Andreasen; Joan Arsenault (in the hospital; Lynne's friend); Kathryn Bruen (Louise's sister, stroke); Judy Bureau; Patrick and Collette Burns; June Carr (Louise's lifelong friend); Betty Conley; Ralph Cusano (cancer); Mary Ann DiStefano (The Poehler's dear friend, ovarian cancer); Philip Durno (cancer); Keith Edmonds (cancer & heart problems); Emma Ermel; Marcus Ermel; Delaney Fallon; Bill and Gail Felton (homebound); Sandy Freeman; Donna Gallagher (brain injury); Andrew Garbino; Shirley Gibson & family; Steven (Ann Goebel's brother, cancer); Merle Grant; Jimmy Harnish (cancer); Kathy Harris; Lucky & Penny Howie; Michele Kelley; Jean Krikorian; Dondi LaRue; Tommy Maciorowski; Joan McCorquodale; Chloe Miner; Herman Miner; Dick & Judie Moore; Bob & Terry Newton; Lance Osborne; Debby Parker; Prayers for the O'Brien & Parker families; Wallace Powers (cancer); Terry Quinn; Leslie Rice; Gloria Roddy (multiple myeloma); Peter Sheldon; Sue & John Siart; Rita Signoretti (Krissy's mom); Richard Simmons; Al St. Croix (cancer); Louise Thorpe; Patty Thorpe (MS and graves disease); Jimmy Tompkinson; Christine & Roy Walker; Don Waye (cancer); Rev. Joan-Anne Westfall; Emma Whitman; Sheila Wick; Nevaeh Wilder (cancer); Edward (Margie Wilson's brother, cancer); Robert Withee; Bonnie Wozniak; the victims of natural disasters all over the world; all those unemployed.



**Yard Sale Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at Pepperell UMC from 8am-2pm.** Please help us

by signing up to help set up and we would be grateful for donations as well. Signup sheets will be in the fellowship hall. Bring small donations to the church. Any questions, ask Church Council members Lynn Connors, Brenda Bennett or Jean Whitman.



## CommUnity Supper

SEPTEMBER 11<sup>th</sup> is the next Community Supper! The kitchen helpers will be back in the kitchen on Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm serving up another delicious dinner of sloppy joes, salad, and desserts. There will be a sign-up for desserts, helpers, and other food ingredients, please check it out. Again, we are blessed to be receiving meat from Pepperell's PACH, and a BIG THANK YOU to them for their support! So please mark your calendars, and join us and our community for a great dinner and gathering.

Lynne



Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> we will hold our annual charge conference at 11:30am (SPRC 10:00am). **Please get all committee reports to Krissy by September 12<sup>th</sup>.** You can leave a copy in the office, or email to [kristinaminer@gmail.com](mailto:kristinaminer@gmail.com). Thank you!

## "DID YOU KNOW?"

For many years services were held in this building to honor the memory of Henry Price, known as the "father of Freemasonry in America." On April 13, 1733, Henry Price was made "Provincial Grand Master of New England and Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging." He was a businessman in Boston (tailor), and when he retired, he came to make his home in Townsend, where he owned several hundred acres. He operated a farm, mill shops, wood lots, and worshiped in this Meeting House. Henry Price played an active role in town government and in 1764, was elected to represent Townsend in the State Legislature. In 1780, at the age of 83, Price died and was buried in Townsend. In 1888, the body was moved to present location within the same cemetery. M.W Henry Endicott, Grand Master of Massachusetts and Governor of the state, dedicated a marble monument at his gravesite. The original gravestone was removed and is on the third floor of the Grand Lodge Building on Boylston and Tremont Streets in Boston. Price's life is aptly summed up in the last sentence on his marker "An honest man, the noblest work of God."

Lynne

(Information gathered from "Townsend's Second Meeting House" notes, Michael S. Kaulback, Past Master, and Denslow's 10,000 Famous Freemasons.)

**"HYMN HISTORY"** No one really knows how many hymns have been written in the history of the Christian Church. Some say over three million; some say over five million; and some say more. The sweet poet of Methodism, Charles Wesley, wrote 6,500! There is drama in the story of the hymns: a drama of courageous struggle, earnest conviction, consecrated dedication, and spiritual victory. Here, for you, is the history of *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee* (Henry Van Dyke, 1852-1933). The joyous music in this famous hymn is an arrangement from the famed composer Beethoven's "Ninth

Symphony." Many hymn writers had tried their hand at creating verse which would measure up in some degree to this which was some of the world's greatest music. It wasn't until a few years before the first World War, about 1911, that Dr. Henry Van Dyke, while on a preaching visit to Williams College, finally succeeded in writing words that caught the fullness of the joy of Ludwig von Beethoven's music. Together, the words and music of this hymn combine to make one of the outstanding pieces of hymnody in the Church. "Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee. Hail Thee as the sun above." (Taken from "Stories of the Christian Hymns," by Helen Salem Rizk.)

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**Submitted by Brenda Bennett**

**God Is In The Small Stuff By: Bruce & Stan**

### **Chapter Seven Give God Time**

If there's one thing we need in the midst of our busy, loud, and nervous lives, it's the inner peace and quiet and assurance that only God can give. It's the only way to see God's purposes for us, let alone keep our sanity.

The thing is, God doesn't yell out and say, "Hey, you're neglecting me. Sit still for a moment so you can hear me." Oh, He is fully capable of getting our attention when we really need it, but you don't want to make a habit of giving God a reason to chase you down (and He will).

Rather than waiting for God to whack you over the head with a spiritual two-by-four, wouldn't it be far better to give God some time each day to quietly speak to you? Actually, this is God's preference. "Be silent, and know that I am God!" He says (Psalm 4:10 NLT). Being still may be the hardest thing you will ever do, but it may be the most important. Look at it this way. When you give God time, you show Him respect. In effect you're saying, "God, You're important enough to me to set aside some time each day. I want You to teach me, and I want to learn."

Will God talk to you if you let Him? Most definitely. Not in an audible voice, but through your thoughts and emotions. God also talks

through His Word, the Bible. Remember, the Bible is God's voice for us. The only way to hear it is to read it.

The doorway to letting God into the details of your life—into your concerns and dreams—is time. We know this won't be easy. Many other voices will call out for your time and attention, and many of them are worthwhile. But if you want to hear the one Voice who will make all the difference in your life, you'll need to let God in...quietly.

Ask God to give you the desire to set aside a place and a time just for Him. The details of your life will wait. More than that, they'll take on more meaning when you give them over to God.

### **...In The Small Stuff**

- Make an appointment with God every day and then keep it as if you were meeting with the most important person in the world.
- Set aside a designated period of time each day, each week, each month, and each year to focus on God.
- The advantage of meeting God at the same time each day is that you don't have to decide when you are going to do it.
- Sometime in the next month, try giving the Lord a day out of your life. An entire day.
- Make moments of stillness, quiet, and solitude part of your daily routine.
- Rising early to meet the Lord gives you a jump on the day. Meeting God at night enables you to reflect on the day. Either option is good.
- If you hurry through life without giving God time, this world will seem like a hospital, a place to get sick and die.
- If you go through life with God, this world will seem like an inn, a place to stay while you're passing through.
- Buy a book of blank pages and keep a journal. Even if you only write a few words. Record your spiritual and

personal thoughts and feelings as you give God time each day.

- Time cannot be controlled. You can only control yourself.
- Depending on your spiritual condition, being alone with God will either be unnerving or invigorating.
- The time to find moments of stillness and quiet is when it's the most difficult to do so.

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## **Chapter Eight**

### **Prayer: The Great Connector**

One day the disciples requested of Jesus: "Teach us to pray." Jesus responded by giving them—and us—a marvelous model of prayer. What is so powerful about the Lord's Prayer, as it is known, is its utter simplicity.

Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored. May your kingdom come soon. May your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven. Give us our food for today, and forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. And don't let us yield to temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Matthew 6:9-13 NLT

The key to prayer is to start simply and quietly. That's the idea behind Jesus' model prayer. We need a touchstone, a place to start. Then as we get to know God better, we will feel comfortable sharing the most intimate details of our lives with Him.

If the Bible is God talking to us, then prayer is us talking to God. It's the primary way of connecting to the infinite, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving God.

Try it. Start small. Start with the small stuff in your life. Talk to God about it in a quiet, isolated place where your self-consciousness isn't an issue. As you continue daily, your capacity for prayer will grow larger. That's because prayer is like a muscle. If you exercise it regularly, your prayer muscle will gain strength and your appreciation for God will grow immeasurably. On the other hand, if you don't use it, your prayer muscle will shrivel up

and your capacity for God will shrink. And in those times of crisis when you suddenly feel compelled to pray, it will likely be a painful experience.

The good news is that God doesn't put conditions on your prayer life. His feelings don't get hurt when you don't pray. But when you do, He connects with you in a powerful way. Try it today. Try it right now. Talk to God, He's listening.

#### **...In The Small Stuff**

- Prayer changes things.
- Pray for people who dislike you
- Pray for people you dislike.
- When you pray, be careful to distinguish your needs from your desires.
- Prayer without effort will be insincere. Effort without prayer will be ineffective.
- If your prayers don't mean anything to you, they mean even less to God.
- Life humbly and pray likewise.
- Don't pray for a lighter load. Pray for a stronger back.
- Become quiet before God in the busiest and noisiest part of your day.
- Prayer involves listening to God as well as speaking to Him.
- You can't stand up to Satan if you don't kneel before God.
- Pray with perseverance and expectancy.
- At its core, prayer is giving yourself to God.
- Pray as if the task depends on God and work as if it depends on you.
- The next time you feel weak in the knees, try using them to pray.
- There is no such thing as a successful or unsuccessful prayer.
- People of God may not talk about their prayer habits, but their lives speak volumes.

Ever so innocently, we've let our English language distort the meaning of the word *church*. Sometimes, that word means a place (as in "I left my Bible at church"). Other times, it refers to an activity (as in "What time does *church* start?"). Often *church* is used to describe an *institution* (as in "His behavior was frowned upon by the *church*"). While such definitions are appropriate, they miss the meaning of that *church* is all about.

The essence of *church* is your Christian family – those people around the world who follow Christ and commit themselves to Him and to each other. When the apostle Paul wrote about the church, he wasn't talking about the building, an activity, or an institution. For Paul, the expression of *church* meant a personal relationship among Christians. He most often compared the *church* to a human body.

In a body, all the parts and details are important, and they must function in harmony:

- If one member of the body is injured or sick, then the entire body suffers.
- The members must operate in unison, because if they try to go in opposite directions, they won't get anywhere.
- Some members are more visible, while others play a vital role on the inside. But both types are necessary. There are no small parts in the body of Christ.
- If every member were the same, the body would look really weird, and it wouldn't function very well. (Just imagine a five-foot-eight-inch ear. Oh sure, you would have excellent hearing, but try driving a car that way.)

The next time you go to church, don't look at the building or think about the schedule of events. Instead, look at the people. Appreciate them for who they are, what they need, and what they contribute to the "body." Then think about yourself. What is your role in the church? How do you fit into the body? Are you making a contribution to the overall health and fitness of the body?

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## **Chapter Nine**

### **Church: Where God's People Gather**

Being part of the church means a lot more than just attending a service on Sunday morning, tossing a few coins in the basket, and shaking the pastor's hand on the way out. Being a part of the church involves an interactive relationship between people with Christ as their common bond. With that definition, you can't walk out of the church" on Sunday morning. You are part of the body all week long.

#### **...In The Small Stuff**

- Get involved at church.
- Hers's how to make Sunday worship more meaningful: Think of yourself as a participant rather than a spectator.
- If God hasn't called you to be a church leader, be careful how you criticize those who are.
- Express appreciation to your pastor.
- Don't leave the sermon at church.
- Give money to your church regularly.
- Teach a Sunday School class at least once a year.
- Next time you're in church, sit in the front row. You'll be amazed how much more you'll learn (not to mention how it will affect the pastor).
- If you tend to fall asleep in church, sit in the back row. You can lean your head against the wall so it doesn't snap forward when you *doze* off.
- The measure of a good sermon is the listener's response, not the pastor's speech.
- It is true that Christianity is good. More important, Christianity is true.

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#### **Submitted by Brenda Bennett**

This is an article I read in 2002 that I take out every so often and reread. I was really taken by the premise and thought you might like to read it also...very inspiring. Because it is so long, I will do it in two parts. I hope you find it as inspiring as I did!

#### **Wildly Improbable Goals, by Martha Beck**

I was 13, doing my homework in front of my family's broken-down television, when I felt strangely compelled to look up at the screen. It showed an athlete running around an indoor track. I heard myself say out loud, "That's where I'm going to college." A split second later the TV narrator's voice came on: "Here at Harvard University's athletic center..." My heart stopped. Not in my most fevered dreams had I ever considered applying to an Ivy League school. Such behavior would be unusual, if not downright bizarre for a girl from my deeply conservative Utah town. Besides, going to Harvard required several thousand times more brains, talent, and money than I would ever have. On the other hand, I felt the truth of my own strange words in the marrow of my bones. Okay, I thought nervously, maybe going to Harvard isn't utterly unthinkable. Maybe it's just barely, barely possible. Right there, in front of the TV, I surrendered to the first of what I would one day call my Wildly Improbably Goals (WIGs, for short)

Decades later I have a couple of Harvard diplomas stuck in a closet, and a happy expectation that sometime soon another WIG is going pop, unbidden, into my consciousness. I've watched this happen repeatedly, not only to me but to loved ones and clients. I suspect it may have happened to you, too. Perhaps it was just a flicker of thought that transported you for a moment, before you dismissed it as nonsense. Maybe it's a dream that simply will not let go of you, no matter how often you tell yourself not to hope for anything so big, so unlikely. Or it may be an ambition you've already embraced, even though everyone else thinks you need serious medication. In any case, learning to invite and accept your own WIG can awaken you to a kind of ubiquitous, benevolent magic, a river of enchantment that perpetually flows toward your destiny.

#### *Time travel*

I might as well admit what I believe about these minor prophecies I call WIGs. I suspect they're not so much mental constructs as literal

glimpses of the future. I stand behind Albert Einstein's comment that "people like us, who believe in physics, know that the distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion." Physics tells us that time can be stretched or compressed like Silly Putty, and I am just woo-woo enough to believe that we humans might sometimes sense truths that are ordinarily veiled by our assumptions or self-imposed rules.

Prescience—knowing about events that haven't yet occurred—is not altogether foreign to behavioral science. In one study, experimenters show test subjects a series of images, including both pleasant pictures and violent or otherwise emotional ones. The researchers were not surprised to find that the subjects' blood pressure and heart rate increased in response to the upsetting images. They had not anticipated, however, that this reaction would occur seconds before the subjects saw the violent pictures—a result that has been replicated in other studies but never satisfactorily explained.

What occurs infinitesimally in laboratory experiments takes on huge dimensions in the lives of some extraordinary people. Joan of Arc had goals so wildly improbable that she was burned as a witch for achieving them. A young Winston Churchill once said to a friend, "I tell you I shall be in command of the defenses of London... In the high position I shall occupy, it will fall to me to save the Capital and save the Empire." Do such people accomplish great things because they dreamed near impossible dreams, or were their dreams previews of what they were destined to achieve? I'm open to either explanation. To me, one seems as mysterious as the other. Whether our WIGs are the cause or effect of our actions, they have a peculiar power to lift us beyond what we thought to be our limitations.

### *Wild Kingdom*

At this point, I hope you're wondering how you can set your own Wildly Improbable Goals. The problem is, you can't. WIGs are to normal thoughts what Siberian tigers are to house cats,

and your "right mind" doesn't have the hunting skills to find them. Fortunately, your WIGs can find you. The knowledge of your destiny may stalk you for years, undetected except for occasional moments of longing or hope that glint like eyeshine in your darkest hours. Then when you least expect it, a WIG will leap out of nowhere and overwhelm you in one breathtaking burst. I've had the privilege of watching many clients recognize WIGs. It's thrilling to see people who thought they were directionless realize they're about to run for office or buy a house or publish a novel or have a baby. If these moments were broadcast on cable – the Wildly Improbable Discovery Channel -- I'd watch it all day long.

Speaking of having babies, that process is somewhat similar to the procedure for inviting WIGs into your life. You can't force a WIG to happen, but you can create conditions that will either prevent it or invite it. One precondition is absolutely necessary: You must befriend, protect, and nurture your own spirit. This means paying attention to your real needs, treating yourself not just fairly but kindly, and standing up for yourself even if that displeases people around you. Just as a run-down body may be unable to conceive a healthy new life, a run-down soul can't support the healthy development of the life you were meant to have.

To Be Continued Next Month...

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*We're just a drop in the bucket, and that's meaningless. But we say, "No, wait a minute. If you have a bucket, those raindrops fill it up very fast. Being a drop in the bucket is magnificent." The problem is we cannot see the bucket. Our work is helping people see that there is a bucket. There are all these people all over the world who are creating this bucket of hope. And so our drops are incredibly significant.*

(Frances Moore Lappe )

Source: Studs Terkel, *Hope Dies Last*

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> 9:30am Choir practice  11:30am Church Council	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 12:30pm Women's Bible Study at Elaine Aho's	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 8:00am-2:00pm Yard Sale at Pepperell UMC
<b>8</b> 9:30am Choir practice	<b>9</b> 10am-12pm Wesley Group	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 4-6:00pm Free Community Supper	<b>12</b> Charge Conference Reports Due	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Newsletter Articles Due
<b>15</b> 9:30am Choir practice  11:30am Church Council	<b>16</b> 10am-12pm Wesley Group	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 12:30pm Women's Bible Study at Elaine Aho's	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 10am SPRC 11:00am Charge Conference
<b>22</b> 9:30am Choir practice	<b>23</b> 10am-12pm Wesley Group	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 12:30pm Women's Bible Study at Elaine Aho's	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:30am Choir practice  11:30am Positive Pot Luck	<b>30</b> 10am-12pm Wesley Group					


**Worship Times:**

9:00am Casual Service  
10:30am Traditional Service

**Meetings and Social Events:**

11:30am Church Council (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday)  
11:30am Positive Pot Luck (Last Sunday)

To learn more, visit

[www.newbeginningsumcma.org](http://www.newbeginningsumcma.org)

