



The LINK

Volume 8 | August 2020

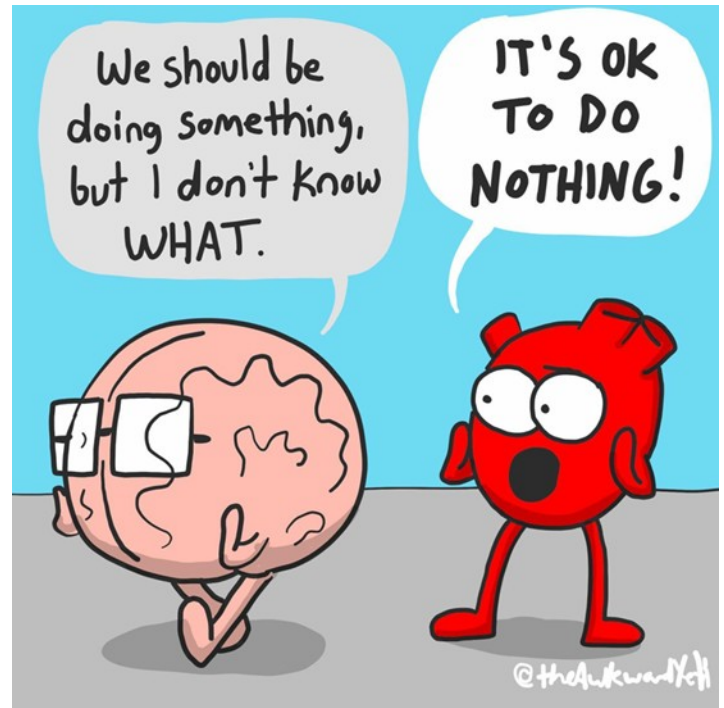
Through Stained Glass: Resting as Spiritual Renewal

The other day when I was between meetings [yes, I still have these even in the midst of pandemic], I stumbled across this cartoon and it gave me a much-needed chuckle. It captures exactly how I've felt since March 15th, the Sunday we suspended in-person worship. Even in the midst of these days of limited social interaction, I still feel like I keep getting lost in the busyness of life. It is strange that even while I am doing my part to flatten the curve, I still feel the need to be doing something.

This reality isn't surprising. Our lives today are so fast-paced that we continually battle exhaustion—if not the physical kind from work, then definitely the mental gymnastics we perform trying to keep up with the never-ending demands. It doesn't help that we are constantly being stimulated by social media, advertising, and our own inner clamor to do something. The temptation is to believe that if we aren't keeping up with all the people doing all the things, then we are somehow doing something wrong. The frantic pace is exhausting.

Of course, this isn't true. Resting is a good thing. Doing nothing can be a good thing. Now, especially as the world around us gets antsy "to go back to normal," is a good time to engage in those spiritual practices that remind us that we are loved by God. This is why I love this cartoon. Too often we believe our spirituality is defined or limited to the physical interactions or spaces of our faith. What I have learned over these last few months (and I hope you have too) is that we can encounter God anywhere—especially our homes. Remember Jacob met God unexpectedly in a liminal space and was so moved by it he made an altar indicating that "God is in this place."

I need rest. I think we all need rest. A break from the news, the constant bombardment of messages from floating heads and yard signs, and the general negativity being produced by society, will be good for our spirits.



I invite you to take time this August to be intentional about rest. We don't always have to be doing something. There is wisdom in doing nothing. Rest is essential to our faith and our wellbeing. Rest—like the kind that unplugs us from the noise around us—is essential to our spirituality: it allows us to commune intimately with God.

If you aren't sure what to do when you're resting or want a prayer to pray, here is one I use often in my prayer life. The instructions are simple:

- 1) Find a quiet place, gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Prepare to pray Psalm 46, specifically verse 10, in five consecutively diminishing sentences.

- 2) Either aloud or quietly to yourself, say the words, "Be still and know that I am God."

- 3) After a couple deep breaths, pray, "Be still and know that I am."

- 4) After a couple deep breaths, pray "Be still and know."

- 5) After a couple deep breaths, pray, "Be still."

- 6) After a couple deep breaths, pray, "Be."

- 7) When ready, pray, "Amen."

It is okay not to do something. It is okay to feel so overwhelmed the only thing to do is sit. It is okay to

take time—amidst the chores and homework, the shopping, and the cleaning—to be. Remember, in our struggles and in our celebrations, God is with us. Remember, God rested on the seventh day and the people of God are to sabbath as well. Your worth isn't defined by how much or how little you get done in a day. Nor is our faith determined by how many times we do or don't go to church. Sometimes it takes resting, or doing nothing, to remember that in our baptisms we have been named and claimed by God—we are God's own.

So, friends, be like [cartoon] Heart in August. Do what you need to do—and then rest. Turn off the TV, put down the cell phone, and step away from social media. We have a lot of potentially hard and challenging days ahead of us. Use this month to rest in God's presence, to sit at Christ's feet, and to allow the Spirit to pray for you. Be still and know that God is with you.

! Keep the faith, friends,

Adam

WORSHIP NOTES FOR AUGUST

Sunday, August 2, 2020: *The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost*

Sermon Title: The Blessing we Choose

Sermon Text: Genesis 32:22-31 & Matthew 14:13-21

Communion Sunday

Sunday, August 9, 2020: *The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Sermon Title: Choosing to be Sent

Sermon Text: Genesis 37:104, 12-28 and Matthew 14:22-33

Sunday, August 16, 2020:

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: Choosing Forgiveness

Sermon Text: Genesis 45:1-15 & Matthew 15:21-28

Sunday, August 23, 2020:

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: When Things Move On—A New King

Sermon Text: Exodus 1:8-2.10 & Matthew 16:13-20

Sunday, August 30, 2020:

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Title: When Things Move On—The Ground Shifts

Sermon Text: Exodus 3.1-15 & Matthew 15.21-28

From the Fellowship Team

The Fellowship Team co-ordinated drive-by greetings on 3 Sundays in July. This has become a fun way to at least see people in their cars, and to let members of our church family know that we are thinking of them at special times. On the 12th, we drove by the home of Jim and Carolyn Reynolds as a send-off as they prepare to move to Iowa. On the 19th, we honked and drove by Sandy Blane's home to let her know we're thinking of her at this difficult time of illness. And on the 26th, we helped Judy Busby celebrate her birthday with a boisterous drive-by.

We will try to continue this practice as we become aware of ways we can let our church family members know we are thinking of them.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Samantha Brown
- 3 Charlise Leesman
- 3 Sheila McCallister
- 6 Rebecca Deilkes
- 8 Michael Kasa
- 24 Linda Zinser
- 25 Bill Opper
- 27 Susan Harmon
- 27 Doug Williams

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Ken & Debbie Schweitzer
- 8 Julius & Marilyn Kasa
- 10 Jerry & Cince Bowns
- 14 John & Angela Stoltzenburg
- 28 Les & Gretchen Plotner
- 30 Kenneth & Margo Schwab
- 31 Jim & Carolyn Reynolds

SESSION NOTES: July 9, 2020

Approved the contract with GFI Digital to lease the office copy machine. Approved the proposal from Barrick Enterprise to sealcoat the parking lot. Approved the new electric rate from Homefield Energy. Approved all Committee reports as well as the Treasurer's report. Due to the recent increase in COVID outbreaks in the community approved to suspend in-person worship and building use indefinitely, but to be re-evaluated monthly.

Submitted by Connie Boss, Clerk of Session

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

During the first week in August work is scheduled to begin on the construction of a new church ramp. This project is long overdue and could take from 4-6 weeks to complete.

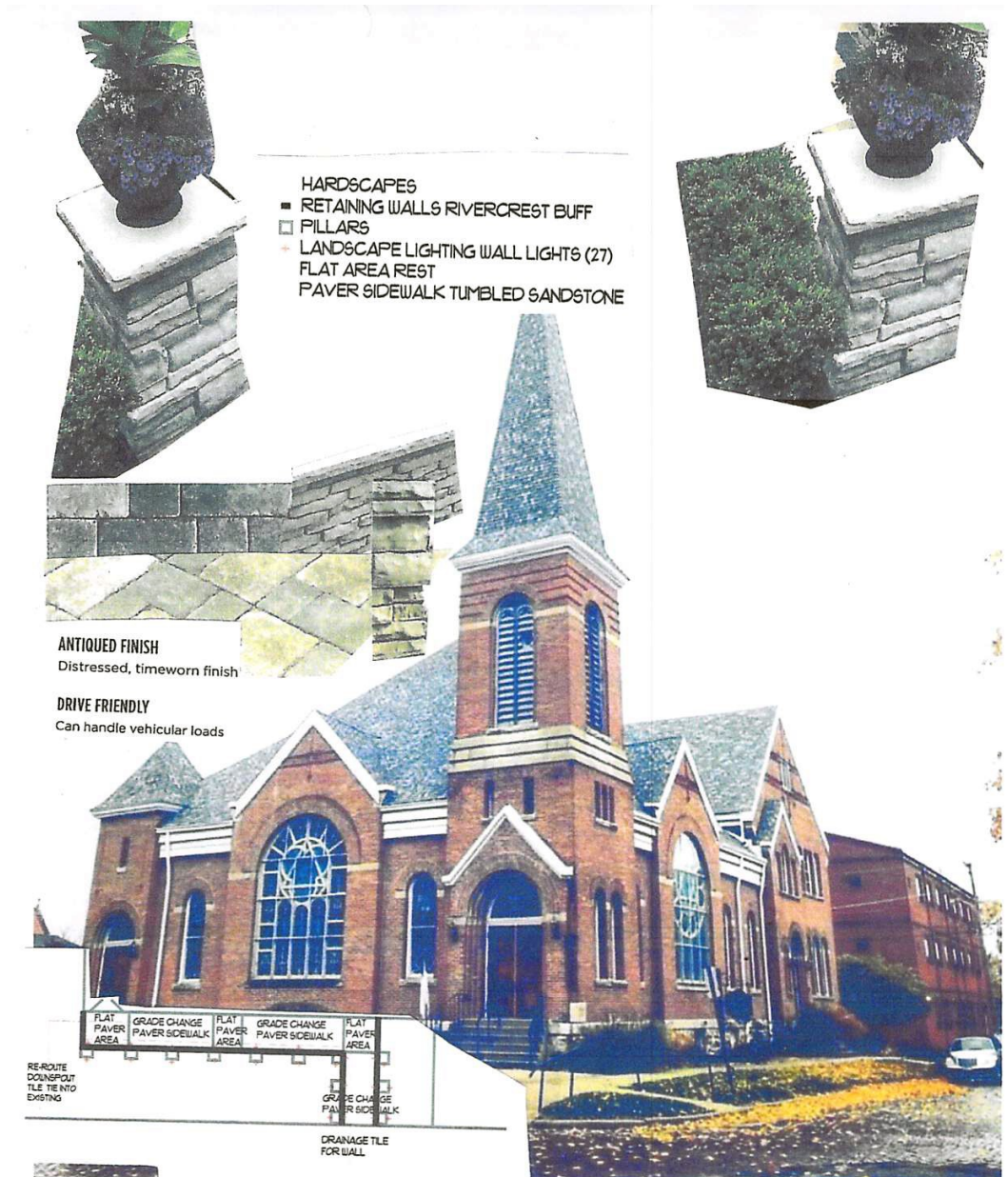
Unfortunately during this process there will be **NO HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY TO THE CHURCH.**

The landscaping in front of the current ramp will be removed. (The mosaic artwork has been removed to a safe location during this time.) The church sign will be removed. The old ramp will be demolished. Drainage for the roof downspouts in the ramp area will be improved. The new ramp will be built with stone retaining walls and rock-fill under pavers for the walkway. Stone pillars along the ramp will contain lighting. Appropriate hand railing will be installed. Hilltop Nursery and Landscaping of Spaulding has been contracted with for the work on the ramp. Don Bode will build and install the railing work. All will be in compliance with ADA guidelines. The current ramp has served us well for nearly 50 years. We expect the new one to provide much needed safe and reliable accessibility for many years. It will be a fine complement to the architecture of our building.

Other projects coming up include: the resealing of the parking lot; the replacement of the downspout by the Ottawa Street doors which leaks and water pools at the base; and the portion of the garage last used by the Boy Scout troop will be renovated for storage; it should provide a better space for storage for items such as those now stored behind the organ.

We have been unable to find suitable door options for the main Sanctuary entrance on Pekin Street, appropriate electronic handicap accessible doors for the entrance at the top of the ramp, as well as replacement doors for Ottawa Street. Numerous inquiries have been made and options looked at, but thus far we have **been** unsuccessful. We will continue to look at other options. It appears this project will be an on-going one.

Scholarship Applications for persons wishing to pursue their education at a college or technical school may be obtained from Chris at the Church office.



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To the members of First Presbyterian Church —

It is with mixed feelings that we leave First Presbyterian Church. The drive-by honking was truly appreciated - thank you! Eighteen years ago you welcomed us with your friendship and active church programming. It was a "no-brainer" that this was the church for us. These eighteen years have been full of activity, friendship, wonderful music (thank you, Julie, Chet, Deb, and choir members), and powerful messages (thank you, Adam, as well as those who served while we were here before Adam was installed, and a few members who have provided wonderful messages when Adam was away). Some special highlights have been the Pork BBQ, always hot, always fun work, and appreciated by the community, Worship in the Park...again, always hot, but such and fun and meaningful time of fellowship and good food, all the while enjoying the outside environment. Fellowship at the women's Saturday coffees were always special, as it was relaxing to enjoy a special treat and conversation with those in attendance. The fall cookouts at the Boss's was a great time of fellowship, too, including delicious food, and always a terrific bonfire. The members of FPC are welcoming to all, and provide wonderful opportunities for learning through book studies, Bible studies, Wednesday night fellowship

and programing, and an occasional road trip to Springfield, Peoria or another destination. Holy Week services were special to me. I could go on, but we want you to know how very much we have appreciated our years at FPC. We will do our best to find a church in Corning that can measure up to what we have enjoyed and learned at First Presbyterian Church. Thank you!

Carolyn and Jim Reynolds

We thought you would enjoy a last look at the plant that survived winters in the CE Building. It looks wonderful now

