

Penitence During a Pandemic

I failed at giving up television for Lent. I gave up on the discipline when I contracted Influenza A several weeks ago. And then, it seemed like punishment to give up television during the pandemic that has us all quarantined in our homes. I didn't replace one discipline for another intentionally, but a new discipline has sprung up during this Lenten season. I give up sleeping in, and I spend an hour or two reading Scripture, praying, drinking tea, and hanging out with the dog. Because every day in this new normal is odd and difficult, this practice has helped me start my day with relative calm and in God's presence.

We give up our desires and make sacrifices during Lent because Lent is a season of penitence. "Penitence" means having a spirit of repentance: having a sorrowful heart that understands the weight of your sins and making a confession and turn towards God. In some ways, the heaviness of this pandemic feels penitent – like a global penitence. I am not saying that our human sinfulness caused this pandemic or brought it about. I *am* saying that the penitent or sorrowful heart, the contrite heart, feels like what *my* heart is feeling these days: weighed down with the troubles of the world.

If our lives feel as if penitence has been thrust upon them, then how do we intentionally practice penitence during this Lenten season? ***How can we be penitent during a pandemic?*** I offer you this suggestion: be penitent, but do so with a gentle spirit and with grace for yourself. Where has your faith life and its expression in the world fallen short of God's will for you? Examine your spirit. Offer it up to God with a contrite heart. And know that your confession and willingness to try to be better is all that God asks of you. Be humble, and God will be merciful.

A penitent heart need not be a heart that beats itself up over where it has strayed. A penitent heart is honestly sorry. A penitent heart understands that Jesus sacrificed life itself for the opportunity that our hearts have to seek forgiveness, mercy, redemption, and salvation. Even now – especially now – God loves us.

Penitence is not designed to foster a sense of self-loathing or all-encompassing guilt. Penitence is designed for freedom. Our confession and God's pardon frees our hearts from the fear of punishment. Penitence is designed for hope. Once we feel that sense of pardon offered to us through Jesus Christ, we can hope for a future of redemption and resurrection. Penitence offered with a gentle spirit and grace for ourselves (even during a pandemic) can free the soul and offer hope for the future.

I invite you now – ***yes, right now*** – to stop reading and to spend a few minutes in a personal prayer of confession. There are no magic words. There is only your heart communing with God and offering the sorrows of your heart for God to redeem. After you have taken a few minutes with God, end with the following prayer from the Church of England's Daily Prayers for the Lenten season, attributed to 12th century St. Anselm:

***How can we
be penitent
during a pandemic?***

*Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.*

*Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.*

*Your warmth gives life to the dead,
your touch makes sinners righteous.*

*Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.*

*In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness,
for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.*

Amen.

Grace and peace to you, friends in Christ,
Pastor Molly



Congratulations

to Pastor Adam and Pastor Molly...they found out last week that they were ordained as elders in full connection in the United Methodist Church. This was a long road of discernment, interviews, and written work, and Hayes Barton UMC is so proud. (Picture above from 2018 - be on the lookout for beautiful new stoles on their robes!)

Seekers Refund of Chicken Dinner Tickets

Unfortunately, the 32nd annual Seekers' Chicken Dinner, originally scheduled for March 15, has been cancelled and will not be rescheduled for this year. The Seekers are disappointed at the cancellation as the proceeds from the dinner are distributed each year among various charitable groups. For those of you desiring a refund, we will refund your money once the church is fully functioning again. Most probably, we will set up a refund table in the reception area for two consecutive Sundays, but please look for details in a later publication.

For those of you who wish to leave the ticket purchase as a donation, just do not turn in your tickets, and we will add those funds to our contributions to the various charitable organizations.

The Seekers appreciate your support over the years for this fund raising event, and we look forward to serving chicken to you in 2021. In the meantime, stay safe.

Sympathy and Love to

- ✦ Donna Merrill and family on the death of her daughter, Kimberly White, on March 23.
- ✦ Laurel Vadala and family on the death of her son, Thomas Michael Waterhouse, on March 21.

Births

- ✦ Olivia Scarlett Bonilla, daughter of Sara Bryant and Mario Bonilla, was born on March 20.
- ✦ Cooper Smith Clifton, son of Halie Sue and Colton Clifton, was born on March 23.

Attendance

- 03/22** online service only due to Covid-19 concerns
- 03/29** online service only due to Covid-19 concerns

Memorial Gifts through March 26

In Memory of **Eddie Bagwell** by Wes & Janet Chesson, Shelly Greer, Ronnie & Chris Harrell, Freddy & Helen Johnson, Betsy Anne Lumsden, Neill McLeod, Tom & Becky Oxholm, Calvin & Shannon Wells, George Whitaker, and Lynn & Carol Wiggs.

In Memory of **Patricia Crocket** to the Wee Care Fund by Debbie & John Day.

In Memory of **Ann Jones** by Janet Applegate and Betsy Anne Lumsden.

In Memory of **Mary Knapp**:

- by Jerry Alphin, Mike & Denise Bailey, Carson & Debbie Carmichael, Connie Masini & Fran Jones, Lisa Meares, Barbara Tanner, and UMW Circle 8.

- to the Stroud Music Endowment Fund by Joyce Stroud.

- to the Well Fund by Henry & Mary June Jones.

Worshipping with Us Remotely on March 29



Dear Hayes Barton family,

March 26, 2020

In recent days, we've become familiar with terms like "social distancing" and had to accept losses of connection in public spaces and places, including at our beloved church. Yet *we continue to connect as the body of Christ* by worshipping online and by serving others: calling our church friends, offering to run an errand for neighbors, and helping groups like Wee Care and Interfaith Food Shuttle provide for those hit the hardest by this crisis.

Now we ask you to help us continue the work of the church.

While our church is in strong financial health with sufficient cash reserves to meet our financial obligations for the next four to five months, **we want to continue to offer the bread of life** to our members and the community...

- by **providing counseling** to those in hard circumstances, **friendship** to those who are lonely, and **inspiring online worship and formation opportunities**.
- by **providing support** for our part-time nursery, janitorial, and preschool staffs during this time when programs and classes aren't held.
- by continuing to **financially support our partner agencies** including Family Promise as they serve increased numbers of families experiencing homelessness.

We cannot do these things without your gifts. We mourn that we cannot give much of our time and talents to Hayes Barton in these days, but with your treasures, we can continue the work of the church until the great day when we will be together again in God's house.

- If you are **fulfilling a pledge**, thank you! We appreciate you continuing your pledge payments, either online or by mailing checks to Hayes Barton UMC, 2209 Fairview Road, Raleigh, NC 27608.
- If you would like to set up **online giving**, please go to hbumc.org/give and click on **Give Online**.
- If you **give weekly**, thank you! Please continue to do so either online, by texting HBUMC \$x.xx to 73256, or by mailing a check.

Please contact Russell Wilcox, Controller, with any questions or concerns: rwilcox@hbumc.org or 919-832-6435 x1118.

Many will experience financial hardships at this time, and we want to be mindful of these challenges. If you are able to provide ongoing financial support, we thank you. We ask for all of our members to be in continuous prayer for our clergy, our staff, and our members, as well as our nation and world.

In Christ,

Ranse Stokes, Finance Chair

David Welsh, Stewardship Chair

Gena Jones, Staff-Parish Relations Chair

Debbie Walter, Chair, Church Council

Rick Clayton, Senior Pastor

Adam Charville, Associate Pastor

Molly White, Associate Pastor





Youth News



Students, Parents, and Volunteers,

Rachel and I hope that you are all doing well and staying sane and healthy amidst us all being quarantined at our homes.

Remember to follow our social media accounts and email communication each week for all the fun stuff we are doing:

- Mondays: Social Media Devotions
- Tuesdays: Featured Weekly Scripture
- Wednesdays: Video Message
- Thursdays: Interactive Posts
- Fridays: Student Spotlights

Follow us on Twitter (@hbumcyouth), Instagram (hbumcyouth), Facebook (Hayes Barton UMC Youth Ministries), and YouTube (Hayes Barton Youth Ministries) to keep up with everything we are doing.

Please remember that Rachel and I are here for everyone. Please reach out to us with prayer requests or anything else!

Davis - dcoster@hbumc.org & 919-696-8689

Rachel - rcarter@hbumc.org & 704-942-5240

Youth Scholarship Applications

The HBUMC Youth Scholarships Application is now available. Interested High School Senior church members who are active in the HBUMC youth programs are encouraged to apply. The application is available at hbumcyouth.com/scholarships.

Complete application packages are due by Monday, April 20, 2020. In a change from previous years, individual emails, letters, and invitations will not be sent to eligible church member youth. Questions? Contact Tim Crawford at 919-349-2842.

Reaching Out to Our Neighbors

During this time of social distancing, there are still ways that we as a church can respond and are responding:

- Check-in for members of the In Crowd and older members by Stephen Ministers, staff, and volunteers.
- Check-in and cards for members of the Starnes Class by teachers and members.
- Donations can be made to the Pastors Discretionary Fund for responding to people in need.
- Donations can be made to cover the cost of providing food and shelter for our Family Promise guests this week (*see below*).
- There are many community organizations that need our continued support, like Wee Care, A Place at the Table, Inter-Faith Food Shuttle, Oak City Cares, Meals on Wheels, Rise Against Hunger, and No Kid Hungry NC.
- Medical masks are being made by Pat Murray, Bev Norwood, and other volunteers. (*See photo at right.*) Elastic is needed: To arrange for pickup, please contact Jennifer Cates at lincolnetta@gmail.com.



Family Promise Update

A sincere thanks to everyone that signed up to help with our March 29th host week! In light of the COVID-19 crisis, and for the safety of both families and volunteers, Family Promise has elected to temporarily suspend weekly church rotations through minimally the end of May. The current group of 15 (5 families) will be staying in the Transitional Housing apartments next door to the Day Center on Method Road. Luckily, we have arranged for Ted Wheeler, our church caterer, to economically prepare and deliver all dinners to the families for each night of our host week; in tandem, Wake Forest UMC is providing groceries for each apartment.



Low-income families are some of the hardest hit by COVID-19, and hourly workers, which represent most of Family Promise families, have begun to feel the effects of layoffs and business closures. How can you help? Please consider a financial donation to Hayes Barton to offset the cost of food, or directly to Family Promise's COVID-19 response fund at www.fpgives.org (search for "Family Promise of Wake County").

Our next host week is scheduled for July 19; please contact Lisa or Nelson Brugh at nbrugh@gmail.com or 919-302-5055 if you have questions or would like to get more involved.

Prayer Bookmark 03-29-20

Death

Kimberly White, daughter of Donna Merrill

Health Concerns

Gloria Coe
Earla Creech
Lang Kerr
Rich Ruebesam

Birth

Cooper Smith Clifton,
son of Halie Sue and Colton Clifton, brother of Grey

Ongoing Concerns

Mark Angelo
Jimmy Ball
Dale Benson
Richard Birtch
Kent Burns
Kristin Byrd
Elly Cherry
Mary Lou Goodrich
David Hesmer
Finlay Carter Judy
Margaret Lucas
Jo Ann Moore
Robert Earl Phyllian
Don & Jane Preiss
David Robertson
Rhumell Ross
Carol Smith
Phil Templeton
Elvey Thomas
Susan Wagner
Georgia Webb

Deployed

James Hemphill
John Templeton, nephew of Phil Templeton

Our Church Leaders

Pastors Rick, Adam and Molly
D.S. Southern; Bishop Ward

Family Promise Guests

All Those Affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic

03/30/2020

Devotion: Sixth Week of Lent

Read: Matthew 27:24-54

Rest: Spend a few minutes in silence, resting in God's presence and pondering the scripture verses.

Reflect: Read Scripture again. Take any words or phrases from Scripture into your heart and mind, allowing them to interact with your inner world of concerns, memories, or ideas. Allow this inner pondering to invite you into dialogue with God.

Pray: Lord Jesus Christ, you suffered and died for us, winning victory over death for our sakes. Give us grace to lift you up as we follow the way of your cross so that all people may be drawn unto you. Amen.

Devotion: Easter

Read: John 20:1-18

Rest: Spend a few minutes in silence, resting in God's presence and pondering the scripture verses.

Reflect: We all face darkness and despair but it doesn't have to blind us from the new life God has called us to live. God didn't just defeat darkness and death for God's own sake. Christ rose from the grave so that we all would know the power of the resurrection, so we all could hear the risen Lord call our name and bring the resurrection to life in us, so we all can shout, "Alleluia! Christ is Risen!"

Pray: Holy God, thank you for Jesus. Thank you that he died to pay the price for my sins and thank you that Christ rose again so that I might have his abundant, resurrected-life within me in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit. I am not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your Table and yet you stooped to rescue me and adopt me into your heavenly family. To you be all praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Reflect: "Why Are You Crying?"

The morning air seemed crisp and sharp
but all was a blur
the hope
the love
buried and taken
Why are your crying?
at the empty tomb
fresh in the morning light
with the stench of death
gone
go tell Mary
beloved of Jesus
tell the others
what you do not see
and what is there
the tomb empty
and the Son of God
free from the bounds that held him
Go and tell
as the first to announce to the world
life
death conquered
and the gift
life given

Message from Bishop Ward

Dear United Methodist friends, March 23
Grace and peace to you in this challenging time for the entire human family.

This morning, I was in zoom conferences with faith leaders, public health professionals and several episcopal colleagues. In addition, with you, I received the directive of Governor Cooper for schools to remain closed through mid-May.

I urge you to continue the compassionate practice of not gathering for worship, funerals, weddings, studies, and other groups for the next two months.

Public health leaders are working tirelessly for us, for our families and our neighbors, for our communities and our state and our nation and our world. We give thanks for them and their selfless service. I urge you to help lower the number of people exposed to COVID-19 and to protect your family and also those you may never meet or know. Social distancing, or as a friend re-phrases, *distant socializing*, is the best way to slow the advance of COVID-19.

Let us make holy use of this unwelcome time, going deep in our reflection, going wide in our concern, going carefully in our ministry. Hope Morgan Ward

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PERIODICALS
POSTAGE
PAID
AT
RALEIGH, NC

Special Easter Offering

In this season of social distancing and worshipping via social media, we are encouraging a special Easter offering to be placed in the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for the purpose of assisting those with human needs during this crisis. This offering is in lieu of our traditional **Flowers for the Easter Floral Cross** (suggested amount \$12). A great number of people will struggle during this time of self-quarantine and will experience limited work time. We are an Easter People believing in hope and new life.

Please **clearly print** the names of those you wish to honor/remember and your name(s) **exactly as you wish them to appear in print**. Send this form and a check, made out to HBUMC, to arrive by **April 8**, to:

HBUMC Business Office
2209 Fairview Rd, Raleigh NC 27608

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Your Name(s) _____

Phone _____ Amt. Enclosed _____

APRIL 5: Palm/Passion Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11;
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Isaiah 50:4-9a; Ps. 31:9-16;
Philippians 2:5-11;
Matthew 26:14-27:66

APRIL 9: Holy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14;
Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19;
1 Corinthians 11:23-26;
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

APRIL 10: Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12;
Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25;
John 18:1-19:42

APRIL 12: Easter Sunday

Acts 30:34-43;
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;
Colossians 3:1-4;
John 20:1-18
or Matthew 28:1-10

WEEKEND WORSHIP ON VIMEO

During this season when social distancing is mandated to keep everyone safe, Hayes Barton UMC will be providing Weekend Worship through Vimeo. Due to the high volume of congregants watching services via social media, there is often a challenge in the service downloading while live streaming.

Each weekend, the service will be available at noon on Saturday so that you can worship at a convenient time for you and your family.

Go to vimeo.com/hbumc to view the service, or previous archived services. For questions, contact Susan at:
919-832-6435 x1135
or sbaldwin@hbumc.org.