



# NEWSLETTER

WALLACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Dr. Philip K. Gladden, Minister

JULY 2020

Cheryl Brinkley, Editor

**Live Stream Worship Continues Through July**  
Worship at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday or view an archived service at  
[www.wallacepresbyterian.com](http://www.wallacepresbyterian.com).



**Birthdays in July**  
Happy Birthday to You!



- 2- Karla Casteen  
Charles McNamara
- 4- Freddy Hall  
Nancy Gladden
- 5- Danielle Sills  
Candace Knowles  
Wallace Strickland
- 8- Bobby Ives
- 9- Bill Carone  
Joyce Rau
- 12- David Johnson
- 17- Charley Farris

- 18- Linda Burroughs  
Ellie Carone
- 19- Ann Carter
- 21- Nell Sloan
- 23- Bill Walters
- 24- Andrew Williams  
Jenny Blair
- 25- Joe Wallace
- 26- Todd Minchew  
J.P. Phillips
- 29- Kevin Johnson

## CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Sunday, July 5

**Live-Stream Worship at 11:00 a.m.**  
[www.wallacepresbyterian.com](http://www.wallacepresbyterian.com)

We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper "virtually" during our live-stream worship service on Sunday, July 5. You may watch the service live on our church website [www.wallacepresbyterian.com](http://www.wallacepresbyterian.com) or at a later time by accessing the archived service on YouTube (see church website).

You are invited to prepare your own elements of bread and cup at home in order to participate in the sacrament. Rev. Cynthia Williams will be our guest preacher and worship leader on July 5. She will administer the sacrament from the sanctuary and invite the congregation to participate from home.

Dear Friends,

I shared the article below from *The Presbyterian Outlook* with the session at our meeting on June 23. When I read the article online, I realized the author was expressing feelings, questions, and thoughts that many of you have shared with me. When the elders and I talked about this article, I asked them two questions: *What losses and disappointments have you experienced because of the coronavirus pandemic? and What silver linings and joys have you experienced because of the coronavirus pandemic?*

I encourage you to read Psalm 46 and the article by Rev. Julie Raffety. As we make our way through these challenging times as individual believers and as a congregation, it is good to remember Jesus' promise to his disciples (and us) at the end of Matthew's gospel: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

Many of you often comment on the tagline at the bottom of my emails, which asks, "Ask yourself this question: Where is God already at work in this situation?" That question helps me remember that God is at work in our lives and in our world. We are invited to pay attention to how and where God is at work and to join in that work as we bear witness to our Lord Jesus Christ. As Rev. Raffety writes to end her article, "Because God is not only with us when things are great; and God is not only with us when things are horrible. God is with us in the in between, in the gray. May we find God there."

Be safe, and may God bless you and your families.

In Christ,



**Gray, thin spaces**

by Julie Raffety, June 17, 2020

Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Franklin, New Jersey.

<https://pres-outlook.org/2020/06/gray-thin-spaces/>

During this time of fear, disease and sadness, it seems we, more than ever, desire concrete answers.

We want accurate tests for this virus. We want to know the exact symptoms. We want to know exactly how effective masks are (even though they are not all alike). We want to know the exact "damage" that is caused by re-opening our community "too soon." We want a vaccine.

And it makes complete sense, in a world of uncertainty, that we would long for concrete answers. It makes sense that we would want black-and-white answers so that we can make the right decisions to protect ourselves, our families and others around us. But I am not certain that God always works like that. (Continued)

**ACTIONS OF THE SESSION**

At the Tuesday, June 23, 2020 session meeting, the elders and minister:

- \* were led in an opening devotion and prayer by Dr. Philip Gladden;
- \* conducted the meeting as a worship service;
- \* studied God's Word in Psalm 46 and discussed an article called "Gray, thin spaces" by Julie Raffety, about the uncertainty due to the coronavirus pandemic;
- \* approved the minutes from the May 26, 2020 and June 6, 2020 session meetings;
- \* transferred memberships for Mark and Sherry Roberts to the Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Raleigh, NC and for Georgette, Lydia, and Kennedy Thompson to the Hayes Barton Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC;
- \* approved a request from the minister for vacation time Monday, June 29 - Monday, July 6;
- \* voted to continue live-stream worship only during the month of July due to health and safety concerns from the coronavirus pandemic;
- \* prayed for members of the congregation and community;
- \* prayed together the Lord's Prayer.



**Prayer For Our Nation and Our World**



## “Messages from Matthew”

The sermons during July and August will be based on scripture passages from the gospel of Matthew. This schedule is provided so you can read the scripture text as part of your preparation for Sunday worship.

Sunday	Text	Theme	Preacher
July 5	Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30	The Yoke of Christ	Cynthia Williams
July 12	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	The Parable of the Sower	Philip Gladden
July 19	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	The Parable of the Weeds	Philip Gladden
July 26	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	The Parables of the Mustard Seed, Treasure, Pearl, Net	Philip Gladden
August 2	Matthew 14:13-21	Feeding the 5000	Philip Gladden
August 9	Matthew 14:22-33	Jesus Walks on Water	Philip Gladden
August 16	Matthew 15:21-28	Canaanite Woman's Faith	Philip Gladden
August 23	Matthew 16:13-20	Peter's Declaration	Philip Gladden
August 30	Matthew 16:21-28	Jesus Foretells His Death & Resurrection	Philip Gladden

### CHURCH NEWS . . . For Your Information

- \* **We will continue** to have live-stream worship only through the month of July.
- \* We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper “virtually” during worship on Sunday, July 5.
- \* **The church office** will be closed on Monday, July 6 in observance of the 4th of July holiday.
- \* **Dr. Phil** will be on vacation July 1-6. Please contact the church office or Elder Hope Turnbull, Clerk of Session, in an emergency.
- \* **Bible Study** is held on Monday nights from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. and Wednesday mornings from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. We gather via Zoom teleconference and study the scripture passage for the sermon on the following Sunday. The Zoom invitation/log-on information is sent by email beforehand.

I am sure you have seen those memes going around that insist, “We cannot go back to normal, because normal wasn’t working.” No gray space in that statement, and yet, in reality, I believe there still is. Because, there are people whose normal was more than working before this. I have friends who God had brought together and were joyfully planning their weddings. I have friends who had just begun relationships full of hope and promise. I know parents and families who were getting ready to celebrate a huge milestone for their child. There are people in my life who were finally getting medical attention for an injury or illness. Others had trips planned to see family and friends. It is impossible, and completely untrue, to say to these people that “normal” or “before” was not working. For many of them, it was more than working; they were thriving. The gray space here is that it is completely possible for there to be room for improvement even when normal is working (or more than working). It is also possible for different people to have and hold completely different experiences simultaneously in this world.

As I write these words, the states of our union are split on when it is safe to re-open. Some states have already fully done so. I happen to live in one where we are on the other end of the spectrum. All of that said, there is much gray space when it comes to churches re-opening. It can be completely true at the same time in this pandemic to say that people need church more than so many other spaces and places that have been allowed to re-open, but it might also be true to say that the way churches operate makes them some of the most dangerous spaces and places to be in right now. Whatever your experience or feeling with online church, church can exist as a spiritual safe place for us, but not a physical safe place for all of us right now. Thank God that our God will not be confined to one idea, one building, or one space.

This pandemic has invited conversation over the individualistic culture of our country. Many would argue that our culture that places high value on individualism makes it more difficult for us to put methods and measures in place to social distance and quarantine. And yet, you could also argue that people need to put themselves and their hygiene care first during this pandemic to stay safe. And you could also argue that individuals could be more successful at this isolation piece. In the spirit of gray, it doesn’t have to be either/or. It can be both/and.

Perhaps you have had some of the same thoughts I have had during this pandemic. And perhaps you have recognized a lot of gray space even while yearning for black and white. Just one more gray space for you: In this time of so many restrictions, there still exists many opportunities to create new ways to do the things that we have been told we cannot do (and safely and while following guidelines, I might add).

Our God is a God of creation, so I have to believe that God is in these gray spaces. God is most assuredly with us when we grieve and lament. God is most certainly with us when we protect one another yet still refuse to let anyone truly be alone. And God is absolutely with us even when we make mistakes and try to go it alone.

In whatever gray space you find yourself today, my prayer is that we all recognize it as gray – that we are aware enough to be sensitive to more than just ourselves. And I pray that in that thin, gray space of fear, sadness and uncertainty we might find God. Because God is not only with us when things are great; and God is not only with us when things are horrible. God is with us in the in between, in the gray. May we find God there.



## A Message from the Session Worship in July

Dear Friends,

At the Tuesday, June 23 session meeting, the elders and I made the decision to continue with live-streaming worship only through the month of July. Our decision was made after much prayerful thought and discussion. To a person, each of us looks forward to the day when we can gather together again safely in the sanctuary to worship.

The decision was based on concerns for the safety and well-being of our congregation members and our wider community. As of the afternoon of June 23, Duplin County ranked #7 out of the one hundred counties in North Carolina in the number of confirmed Covid-19 cases (1,355). Perhaps more concerning is the number of cases per 10,000 population. While most surrounding counties report anywhere from 25-61 cases per 10,000 population, Duplin County has 230 cases per 10,000 population.

As we have done since mid-March, the elders and I will continue to monitor the Covid-19 situation in Duplin County, heed the guidance from the governor's office and the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, and take into account the best interests of our congregation and community. When conditions are right, we will implement a carefully developed re-entry plan that will allow us to gather safely for corporate worship. Until that time, I continue to give thanks to God for the dedicated efforts of our worship team of Karla, Vera, and Bill. I encourage you to make use of the technology available to us and join us on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. for our live-stream worship or watch the service at a later time (archived on YouTube).

Finally, the Covid-19 pandemic, with the disruption it has caused in the life of the church and society, is one of the greatest challenges I have faced in thirty-seven years of ministry. We were not taught in seminary how to do ministry during a pandemic. I am grateful for your faithfulness in worship "attendance," for your continued pastoral care of church members, and your concern for the church staff. Your messages of encouragement mean very much.

There has been much in the news recently about our rights as Christians being suppressed during this pandemic, especially our right to worship as we choose. I happen to disagree with that sentiment. No one has prohibited us from

# zoom



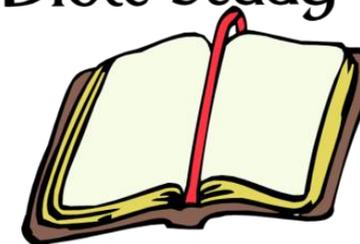
**WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY ON ZOOM**  
**Monday night, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

or

**Wednesday morning, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

Join Dr. Phil for a weekly Bible study on the scripture lesson/sermon text for the following Sunday. The Zoom invitation with log-on information is sent weekly via email.

## Bible Study





*Congratulations to Myles Teachey and Lauren Clapp who will be married on Friday, July 24 at the River Landing Clubhouse.*



*We extend our Christian love and sympathy to Bill and Susan Walters and their family on the death of Bill's brother, Al Elgin, on June 3, 2020.*



<b>Hospital &amp; at home:</b>	<b>Verlie Wells (The Gardens)</b>
<b>Cathy Wells (Fayetteville)</b>	<b>Bruce Lyon (Dayspring)</b>
<b>Judy Robinson (home)</b>	
<b>Dan &amp; Eva McLaughlin (The Gardens)</b>	

freely worshiping God. While health and safety circumstances may keep us away from the sanctuary for a season, remember that whenever we gather for worship (even by virtually live-streaming), we are united in the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

In Christ, we are called to a way of life that is focused on the well-being of others, not only in the faith community but also in the wider community in which we live. During these challenging times, as we all are called to make difficult decisions in an uncertain world, I am reminded of the apostle Paul's advice to the churches of Galatia, in a section entitled in my Bible "Freedom to Love." Paul writes, "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Galatians 5:13-14)

Be safe, and blessings,

*Phil*



# July 2020

- Home
- WPC Calendar
- [cheryl@wallacepresbyterian.com](mailto:cheryl@wallacepresbyterian.com)
- [cheryl@wallacepresbyterian.com](mailto:cheryl@wallacepresbyterian.com)



June 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2020

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2020

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 ■ 11:00 AM Live Stream Worship	29 ■ 7:00 PM Bible Study, Zoom	30	1 Minister on Vacation ■ 10:00 AM Bible Study, Zoom	2 ■ 7:00 PM Prayer at home for Nation	3	4 Happy Independence Day!
5 Minister on Vacation ■ 11:00 AM Live Stream Worship—Rev. Cynthia Williams/Sacrament of Communion	6 ■ 7:00 PM No Bible Study, Zoom	7	8 ■ 10:00 AM Bible Study, Zoom	9 ■ 7:00 PM Prayer at home for Nation	10	11
12 ■ 11:00 AM Live Stream Worship	13 ■ 7:00 PM Bible Study, Zoom	14	15 ■ 10:00 AM Bible Study, Zoom	16 ■ 7:00 PM Prayer at home for Nation	17	18
19 ■ 11:00 AM Live Stream Worship	20 ■ 7:00 PM Bible Study, Zoom	21	22 ■ 10:00 AM Bible Study, Zoom	23 ■ 7:00 PM Prayer at home for Nation	24	25
26 ■ 11:00 AM Live Stream Worship	27 ■ 7:00 PM Bible Study, Zoom	28 ■ 7:00 PM Zoom Session Meeting	29 ■ 10:00 AM Bible Study, Zoom	30 ■ 7:00 PM Prayer at home for Nation	31	1