

Countryside Trinity Church

Connections

June 9, 2020 Edition

From Pastor Brant...

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Acts 2:1-4

Images of fire have been in our eyes and on our hearts these last weeks. We've felt them after watching the video and hearing the cries of George Floyd. Many of us have been enflamed with rage, pain, despair, and numbness. The murder of George Floyd fanned the flames of righteous anger already burning in a community afraid to walk down the street. His gasps of "I can't breathe," was a splash of gasoline that fed a fire roaring for generations. The burned-out police station, stores and cars are not just about "thugs" and looting. They are tangible signs of a broken and unjust social system.

Images of fire have been in our eyes and on our hearts this week. And that's ok, because we need more fire, not less. I don't mean the fire of wanton destruction and violence. I'm talking about sacred, holy, Pentecostal fire. As Pentecost people, you and I should aspire to be on fire. Like our spiritual forefather, John Calvin, we should pray for our spirits to be impassioned. Calvin's crest was an open outstretched hand holding a flaming human heart. His motto was "My heart I offer to you, O Lord, promptly and sincerely."

John Calvin knew God's sacred flame burns within us. We might not be able to feel it. We might ignore it. We might suppress it. But we cannot put it out. God's divine spark cannot be quenched. It blazes deep down in our bones. It's a part of who we are as God's sons and daughters. This divine spark within is not just about our personal relationship with God. It's not just about a warm and cozy feeling you and I have with Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to empower and embolden us to be God's messengers and change agents in this world.

I see the Spirit burning in peaceful protestors who take to the streets demanding an end to racism and inequality. I see the Spirit burning in health care workers and medical staff who put their lives at risk every day caring for COVID -19 patients. I see the Spirit burning in every act of commitment and generosity, in every act of hope and joy. Yes, I see the Spirit alive and active in your life and mine – guiding us, inspiring us, directing us, and rekindling us to be living candles for Christ.

Images of fire have been in our eyes and on our hearts this week. What happened in Minneapolis and across this nation isn't new. We've been here before and it may happen again. But instead of

being enflamed with rage, pain, despair, or numbness, maybe as Pentecost people we should see the flames as signal fires. Maybe as Pentecost people we should let the shouts and signs against injustice and oppression alert us. Maybe as Pentecost people we should identify with the fiery pain and radiant rage burning in our brothers and sisters of color.

As on the Day of Pentecost, let us call on the fire of the Holy Spirit to ignite us and the Church in our work of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Let us follow the One who sided with the oppressed, who flipped tables and demanded reform, and who breathed his last breath at the hands of a corrupt empire. In the spirit of Pentecost, and in memory of George Floyd, and all who died violent deaths, let us commit to extinguishing the fires of white supremacy and policy brutality. Let us commit to stoking the flames of anti-racism, justice, and love across our nation and around our world.

Come, Holy Spirit, heav'nly Dove, with all Thy quickening powers;
kindle a flame of sacred love in these cold hearts of ours.
Come, Holy Spirit, heav'nly Dove, with all Thy quickening powers;
come, shed abroad a Savior's love, and that shall kindle ours.

Combined Worship Continues

Continue to join us on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am on YouTube for our Combined Worship Services with First and Second Presbyterian Churches. Go to www.YouTube.com, and in the search for First Presbyterian Church Saginaw. Pastor Piper will be preaching on June 14th and Pastor Philomena Ofori from Second Presbyterian will preach on June 21st.

Combined Services Available on your Phone

If you do not have internet you can still listen in on the livestream of the service on your phone. To listen in, here are the steps to follow:

- Call 1 312 626 6799
- When you are asked for your Meeting ID enter: 868 9628 9319
- Ignore the request for a participant number, do not enter anything. It will take you to the next step
- When you are asked for your Password: enter: 1838

Session Actions, May 19th

The session met via Zoom on Tuesday, May 19th, and suspended worship through June 28th. Presently, as things begin to open up, the session is considering what protocols the church will follow in welcoming back people to public worship.

The session also expressed its desire to explore what technologies we might install in order to continue our online presence started through our combined worship. This effort is being made

partly because the session wants to continue an online worship time for our members who are not certain whether a return to public worship is safe for them. It is also being made because our online presence has allowed us to stay connected to church members who are away from home and want to continue to participate in the life of the church in some way. And lastly, the effort is being made because the session has become aware of a larger audience in our community which is being fed by our worship services and it wants to continue to offer to them the gospel of Christ. These technologies will include cameras and upgrades to our present audio and wireless network. In addition, as the restarting plan includes a ban on bulletins and hymnbooks, these upgrades may include monitors which would provide the words to any liturgies we would use, and in the future, when we can once again sing, the words to the hymns as well.

To facilitate this process, the Spiritual Life committee has engaged Will Westerfield, the technology person at First Presbyterian Church in Saginaw to help us in our first phase of understanding our options concerning live streaming our service. Will oversees the combined worship services you may have been watching on YouTube every Sunday, and his business, Enterprising Bytes, specializes in helping churches not only with their technologies, but also training church members to run the technologies.

We are also thankful to Duncan Redfield for his assistance with this project.

Return To Worship Taskforce

In a previous session meeting, the session appointed a taskforce to plan for the eventual returning of the congregation to face to face worship. This taskforce includes as its members: Mary Ann Parker, chair, Kevin Barnum, Kathy Loviska, Lynne Groom, and Pastor Piper. Its initial guidelines it is proposing to session at this point include:

- Waiting until permission is given by the state to meet in groups of 50 or less
- Screening all who wish to participate in worship before they enter the sanctuary, including questions about symptoms and having a temperature taken through the use of an infrared thermometer
- All participants will enter through the Eastern doors in an orderly fashion that maintains proper social distancing of family groups
- Masks are required and provided for those in need of one
- Participants will be seated only in designated seating, keeping at least 6 feet between them and any other family group throughout the service
- There will be no choir nor singing
- There will be no bulletins. Information will be provided through technology.
- The bathrooms immediately adjacent to the sanctuary will be designated as Unisex and participants are asked to use them only in times of great urgency
- Participants will be dismissed in an orderly fashion so that social distancing can be maintained at the end of the service.

The taskforce trusts that those who do not feel safe will not return to the service until they do feel safe. The online services at First Presbyterian will continue as long as it is agreed to between the three churches involved. The session is currently pursuing the technology that would permit us to livestream our service from our own sanctuary.

Thursday Night Bible Studies, 7pm

The weekly Zoom Bible Study on Acts is moving to Thursday nights at 7 pm. This week we are exploring Acts 6:8 through 8:3, the stoning of Stephen. If you are not currently getting an invitation through your email, please leave a message on the voicemail at the church and you will be included in the mailing list.

Flooding Relief Efforts

The Christian Outreach Team has invited those who want to provide financial support to the relief efforts either send checks designated to "Flood Relief" directly to the presbytery office on McCarty Rd. or donate to the Midland Flood Relief on the Presbyterian Disaster Relief or the Presbytery of Lake Huron websites.

Condolences

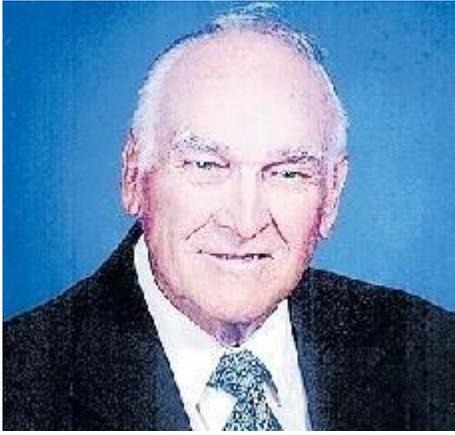
Our condolences to the families of Bessie Daugherty and Richard (Dick) Shaner Piper.



Loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother passed away Monday, June 1, 2020 at Bavarian Comfort Care in Bridgeport. Age 100 years. The daughter of the late George and Essie (Durkee) Ross, Bessie was born March 2, 1920 in Saginaw, Michigan. She was married to William P. Daugherty on July 19, 1947. He predeceased her April 16, 2013.

Surviving to cherish her memory are one son and daughter-in-law, Thomas and Linda Daugherty, Frankenmuth; four grandsons and seven great-grandchildren; a very special niece and her husband, Marilyn (Charlie) Lefler; several other nieces and nephews. Bessie was preceded in death by her sister, Myrtle (Lew) Anger and her brother, David (Nell) Ross.

Private Funeral Services took place at The Snow Funeral Home, 3775 N. Center Rd., (between Shattuck and McCarty). Pastor Brant Piper officiated. Interment in Cook Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, those planning an expression of sympathy may wish to consider memorials to Countryside Trinity Church.



Richard(Dick) Shaner Piper On Sunday, May 31, Richard(Dick) Shaner Piper, beloved father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother and friend, died at the age of 93 at his home in Miami. Born May 19, 1927 in Olean, NY to Ruby (Shaner) and Archie Piper, he grew up in Bradford, PA, and attended Mercersburg Academy (MD) and Bradford High School, where he threw the javelin for the track and field team. He graduated high school in 1945, then served 2 years in the US Army. Afterwards he earned a degree in business at Penn State University. During his time at Penn State, he befriended his neighbors, Dr. Haskell Curry, a mathematics researcher and professor, and his wife Virginia. He was later introduced to a beautiful young woman at a party and soon discovered she was the Curry's daughter, Anne. He was immediately smitten, and the two married in 1952. Shortly after, they moved to Miami and eventually settled in Miami Shores, where they raised their five children. Dick was a State Farm agent for 38 years, as well as an avid golfer, voracious reader, deft card player and a devoted fan of Penn State football. He was extremely proud of his children and their accomplishments, and relished spending time with family and friends. He was known for his quick wit, his infectious smile, and his kind and compassionate spirit. He is predeceased by his wife Anne of 52 years, and is survived by his sister Eugenia Nelson; his five children: Lisa Warren (Richard), Rev. Brant Piper (Rev. Leslie), Mark Piper (Sheryl), Wendy Weant (Robert), and Kimberly Heffernan (Timothy); his thirteen grandchildren: Timothy Warren (D'Arianne), Leslie Rosenberg (Brian), Natalie Synhavsky (John); Emily and Brooks Cameron Piper; Helen and Margaret Piper; Virginia, Robert, and Kathryn Weant; and Anne, John, and David Heffernan; two great grandchildren, with more on the way; and many nieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Miami Shores Presbyterian Church.

Thanks to the many people who have offered their condolences to me on the death of my father. Because of the pandemic, we have chosen to put off a celebration of his life until our family can safely gather in Miami.

Brant



BIRTHDAYS JUNE

- 2 Michael Wayne Groom
- 3 Eric Smith
- 8 Christian (Volker) Saxton
- 11 Robert Bortner
- 11 Dana Hansen Cooper
- 19 Kitty Blehm
- 20 Marilyn Leffler
- 21 Jasmyn Volker
- 29 Eleanor Farnum
- 30 Darren Woodke
- 30 John Furlo

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Dawn Curtis
- 11 Graham Parker
- 12 Robert Lemmer
- 13 Jean Bortner
- 18 Sidney Diggs IV
- 23 Bobby Diggs
- 24 Zayden Evans (M= Alexa Mahan)
- 24 Dick Mallette
- 27 Susan Anderson
- 29 Holly Furlo
- 30 Lynne Groom
- 31 Rachael Plater

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Taylor Hansen (M = Dana Woodke)
- 4 Marianne Bird
- 4 Kathryn Barnum
- 5 Dan Groom

- 8 Chad Parker
- 10 Randy Jacob
- 12 Fran Prueter
- 13 Kyle Redfield
- 15 Ainslee Mahan
- 15 Aubree Mahan
- 17 Joan Comstock
- 21 Karla Parker
- 21 Casey Redfield
- 22 Brooke Vernon



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ANNIVERSARIES JUNE

- 21 Edward & Lori Halase
- 29 Ronald & Jean Anne Miller

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 28 Charles & Irene Ohmer

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 8 Louis & Jean Diechman
- 11 Dan & Barb Groom
- 17 Dallas & Jackie Williams
- 29 Darren & Joann Woodke
- 29 Duncan & Sandy Redfield