

Countryside Trinity Church Connections

September 3, 2020

From Pastor Brant...

*"Work, work, work; big pile of it and the boss is a jerk,
Just want to disappear, wishin' I were somewhere other than here.
-Jimmy Buffett*

This is Labor Day weekend. Usually this is a day in which we are invited to take a rest from our labors. For some of you it may be something different. For others, whether at work or play, it will be the same old, same old. You might be an essential worker, wearing your mask, just one more thing you have to do. You might be lucky enough to be one who is continuing to work from home, and have satisfactorily adjusted to your work and home schedules. You may be readjusting to having your young ones back in school, working to help them once again create a schedule and a setup that is helpful for you and them as they work to learn.

This week invites us, in whatever situation of labor we find ourselves, to reflect on our work and wonder of its significance in the light of our faith; perhaps to see it as our sacred tasks, the work that God has placed before us. In the second letter of Timothy, the pastor is sharing his thoughts around his life work. For him, as he reflects on it through the life work of Jesus Christ, he sees it as a sacred sacrifice in which he has poured himself out for the work of the kingdom of God.

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing. --2 Timothy 4:6-8

The pastor who penned these words for his church has begun to see a time when his work will come to an end, when he "sees the days, as they fade away, and he finally disappears." With a sense of confidence in his efforts to serve Jesus Christ, he sees the time when his blood will be poured out, like the blood poured out on the base of the altar as the last act of sacrifice. He then uses the imagery of a runner on a race, seeing himself near the finish line, almost to the point of sticking out his chest to touch the ribbon at the end. This race was not for him a sprint, a short burst of speed, soon coming to an end. It was for him a marathon, a long enduring struggle in which he was

constantly challenged to be faithful, and to bring his best, to give his all. And as he looks back there is a sense of satisfaction that he has done just that.

Poured out is not a bad term for many of us when we are finished with our work. Drained of our emotional and physical energy, we look forward to the end of the day, grateful for the gift of rest. You find your easy chair, take off your shoes, change into your most comfortable shirt, take in some refreshment. And in this moment of refreshment there is also a moment of reflection. Does our work have meaning and purpose? Does our limited efforts to impact the people around us make a difference, or are we just fooling ourselves that it is not futility. Like this pastor, we would love to share in his sense that in pouring out of our lives there is a sense of satisfaction in the sacrifice we have made, but we are not certain.

One place we gain an understanding of the sacred nature and purpose of work goes back to the creation stories in Genesis, wherein we discover God as Creator. Turns out the very character of God is about creating. God didn't just create one time and then step away, God is always in the process of creating, God is always out there at work making things new. As people created in God's image and likeness, we share in this ability with God. We are called to be coworkers with God in God's work of creating. The mission that the man and the woman are given in the garden is to be about the work of creating. Go forth and produce. The brokenness that results from disobedience insures that our work will be frustrating and at times be futile, but the mission remains the same.

As people of faith, we are to see our work as being not only for the generations that follow us, but part of the bigger task that God is undertaking to rebuild the whole world. Our work is just a small part of a much bigger picture, part of a much bigger effort that God is behind to make work. We are sustained by a sense that we are participating in something much larger than what we can do. We are sustained by the knowledge that it is through the work of Jesus Christ our efforts are blessed. We are sustained when we recognize that the work of our hearts and hands are an offering to God that God will use and reshape into something meaningful.

Take care,

Brant

Online Worship on Sunday Mornings at 10:30 on YouTube CTC Saginaw

We continue to place on our FB public and group pages our order of worship for the day. We are hopeful that it will enhance your worship experience by displaying words to the hymns and other parts of the service so that you may participate more fully.

Presently we are prerecording the services during the week. We are doing this partly because our camera had a flaw in it that led to us being disconnected from the internet in the middle of our service. It is now being repaired. We are also doing this so that we can get experience in editing the services and inserting prerecorded musical pieces into the service. The learning never stops.

We continue to pray for the end of our forced isolation due to the virus that we may soon be together in worship. We believe God can and will use this time to strengthen our ministry, if we seek God's guidance and consolation.

We ask that you are patient with us as we work out the kinks in the technology and learn the finer details of creating audio visual presentations. If you have feedback about any of our digital outreach content, we'd love to hear your gently phrased criticisms.

We ask that you continue to be in prayer for the volunteers who provide assistance for our services, as well as for new volunteers to step up for these positions. If you have an interest in serving in the ministry of the gospel as a camera person, a computer assistant, or a worship planner working with media, please contact the pastor so that you can review the job description and the responsibilities of these positions.

Many thanks this week to Chuck Davis, and Dan and Randy Groom for their efforts to bring order to our new technology center.

Suspension of Inside Worship Continues

At its meeting on July 28th, the session, following the recommendation of the presbytery and the guidelines set out by the Governor, authorized the continued suspension of indoor worship for an indefinite period.

Financial Report

Your faithful giving empowers us to continue our witness to the work of Christ in the world as it allows you to strengthen your relationship with God. Our goal for September is \$8,500. Please remember you can make an online donation through our app, and if you need help with this, or if you want to run your donation by the church, please call the church office. Our online service includes its usual time of thanksgiving and dedication for our gifts, so you may want to have your

money and envelopes or perhaps even your phone ready so that you can more fully participate in this time.

Christian Outreach

Please remember our local ministries during this time, as they work to provide additional resources to our community in this time of pandemic and need your support. We have received "Thank You Notes" from the following organizations for our contributions: Habitat for Humanity and Emmaus House.

Our Mission of the Month for September is the City Rescue Mission.

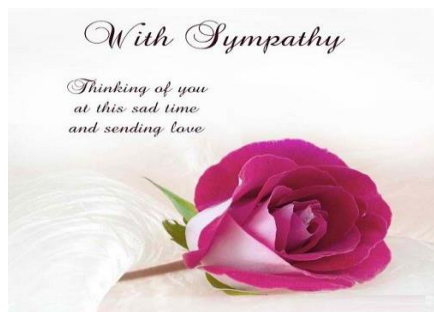


Greeting Cards: Shirlee Scovill continues selling cards each Wednesday in the church parking lot from 1:00-2:00 p.m. Proceeds from the sale of these cards will support the mission work of the Women's Association. In addition, when available, Shirlee is bringing fruits and vegetables from Roger's garden. There may be sweet corn, melon, tomatoes and more! They are giving these items free of charge for those who would like to come pick it up when they have an over-abundance ripe and ready for your enjoyment.

Please wear a mask and remember to practice social distancing. The cards will be arranged differently than in the past and will be on tables next to her van. The cards will be self-service with a container for the money at the tables. Shirlee will be there to answer questions. Shirlee has kept busy during the time we have been home and, therefore, has many cards to choose from – Birthday, Get Well, Sympathy, Thinking of You, Wedding, Anniversary, Retirement, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Hope to see you on Wednesdays in the near future.

Facebook Prayer Group: We have created a FB Prayer Group on our newly created FB Page. It is a private group where only those who are invited can see the messages posted for those in need of prayer. If you are on Facebook and would like to be invited, please call Kathy in the office so she can invite you to join.

Don't forget to let Kathy in the office know about any change of yours or a family member's address, phone numbers or email addresses so she can update the church records and mailing lists. Please email changes to countryside@ctcsaginaw.com or leave a message at 989 793-0125. Thank you.



We wish to extend our prayers and blessings for healing to the family of Carol Williamson who recently passed away. Her funeral was held at Case Funeral Home - Mackinaw on Monday, August 31st. If you would like to send a card to the family, please call the office at 989 793-0125 for the address.



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Becky Pequignot
- 3 Rob Halase
- 3 Dora Fitzgerald
- 5 Charles Davis
- 6 Jerry Brachear
- 13 Louis Diechman
- 14 Michael Patrick Groom
- 17 Lois Krzak
- 22 Amanda Dean Groom
- 25 Thomas Kennedy
- 28 Brant Piper
- 29 Tom Ladner
- 30 Vincent Martinez

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Zachary Plater
- 2 Drew Pequignot
- 2 Dan Groom
- 3 Joseph Ruth
- 5 Mary Longstreth
- 6 Amanda J. Groom
- 11 Dick Easlick
- 13 Ethan Parker
- 13 Ruth Marsh
- 13 Charlotte Armstrong
- 13 Jerry Paquette
- 14 Mike Yusaf
- 14 Tania Yusaf
- 16 Randy Groom
- 17 Elizabeth Jacob
- 19 Christopher Davis
- 22 Jean Anne Miller
- 22 Pat Denno
- 25 Ezra Yusaf
- 25 Aaron Plater
- 27 Marie Lemmer
- 29 Scott Jacob
- 29 Lori Halase

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Paige Pequignot
- 3 Sam Nolan
- 7 Judi Westendorf
- 7 Christine (Dowling) Greenwood
- 8 Duncan Redfield
- 9 Stephanie Plater
- 10 Anjel Vernon
- 11 Dave Fitzgerald
- 12 Jacob Plater
- 15 Dick Woodke
- 16 Pervez Yusaf
- 19 Martin Bethune
- 20 Judith Lorenz
- 21 Ronald Miller
- 22 Jacob Groom
- 22 Lucas Gonzales
- 23 Bethany Scovill
- 23 Virginia Jarvi
- 28 Jennifer Nolan-Heyn
- 28 Avis Leach

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Rhashell Hunter
- 8 Garth Westendorf
- 12 Melissa Paterson (Shalhoup)
- 16 Alexa Mahan
- 17 Nancy Easlick
- 18 Paula Plater
- 22 Ed Halase
- 24 Nancy Scott
- 25 Brecque Woodke
- 26 Craig Gates

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 9 Roy and Nancy Erndt (1967)
- 9 Shirlee & Roger Scovill (1978)
- 16 Peter & Isabella Dominguez (1961)
- 20 Sidney & Kermit Diggs

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Aaron & Paula Plater
- 8 Robert & Marie Lemmer
- 10 Eric & Sue Smith

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 17 Jerry & Virginia Brachear (1962)
- 22 Dave & Dora Fitzgerald (2014)

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 15 Joseph & Doris Ruth (1956)
- 24 Bruce & Patricia Denno (1984)
- 27 Dick & Nancy Easlick