



## The Presby

July 2020

Wytheville Presbyterian Church  
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### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday  
9:00am - 2:00pm

*Rev. Bob Button, Interim Pastor*  
*Jim Gearhart, Clerk of Session*  
*Becky Absher, Music Director*  
*Wendy Morrison, Office Mgr.*



Explore the

Ministry & Mission  
of the

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

### From the Pastor's Desk:

In chapter one of his book, A Crazy, Holy Grace by Frederick Buechner relates the story of his father's suicide. Buechner was only about ten years old. His father was a good man who had a problem with alcohol. At some point he simply goes out to the garage and turns on the motor and goes to sleep with carbon monoxide fumes filling the garage. It took years for Buechner to come to grips with the pain of that event in his life. Here are some insights that have come to Buechner as he has struggled with that pain.

First, pain is universal. In the words of Teilhard de Chardin, the French Psychologist, "God is imminently fair, everybody gets hurt." The reality of life is that pain comes to everyone. To some it seems it comes in an overabundance. We all know people whose lives are one catastrophe after another. Some of us have been blessed by having fewer painful moments. But the truth is: we all have felt pain. Buechner outlines four basic ways of dealing with pain.

- a. Try to forget it! When we deny the pain we cut ourselves off from growing through the pain. We lose that compassionate part of ourselves that opens us up to helping others to heal.
- b. Some of us get trapped in our pain. Buechner uses two characters from Dickens novels. Miss Havisham from *Great Expectations* and Mrs. Gummidge from *David Copperfield*. Why do we read these books in High School English? Because they give us excellent pictures of what happens when someone reacts to pain by locking themselves away and essentially, never growing beyond the pain.
- c. Make light of our pain. Laugh through it, may seem like a wonderful way to lower the pain level, but in actuality it only keeps us from taking the pain seriously and in reality makes us vulnerable to further pain.
- d. We compete with other people's pain. When someone tells you of their pain, you respond by telling a "better" story of your pain. It's kind of a one-up-man-ship approach that never really deals with the depth and effect of your pain.

There is a better way of dealing with pain. We need to learn how to grow through our pain. He uses the parable of The Talents to get his point across. The servant who hid his coins so he could give them back to the master did so because he could not handle the pain, or the anticipated pain should he have lost the money

in the market place. The other two servants invested their coins and grew through the possibility of losing it all. Their lives grew and expanded, while the life of the third servant shrunk and diminished.

Buechner calls on us to think of pain as a treasurer. It is so important that we engage others in their pain and in turn others will engage in our pain. I felt this in a wonderful way when Elaine passed away. I do not know how I made it through that painful time except that the members of our church and our friends from 53 years of marriage came and sat with me. They didn't tell me about their pain. They simply helped me to carry mine.

The end result of Buechner's understanding is that you and I are called upon to be good stewards of pain. Don't deny it. Don't persevere in it. Don't take it lightly. Don't try to overpower others with it. Instead, become a good steward of your pain. Live with it; grow with it; let it expand your compassion and sensitivity. When we speak out of our personal depths, we find ourselves and each other, and even God, in those depths. When we speak with each other out of our pain, that pain can become the gateway to the ultimate joy God has promised.

(Next month we will cover chapter two: AQ Crazy, Holy Grace.)

Blessings on You All, Bob

Motions Approved by the Session:

1 – The Session approved that through August, Church Services will be conducted at 10AM in the Sanctuary. The Drive-in Service option will continue as well in the parking lot. Some members and visitors have expressed a preference to worship in their cars at least for now. Session will review worship plans in August for the fall.

2 – The Session received with appreciation the annual Trustee Report.

Events: Summary

July 4, 2020 – Independence Day

July 19, 2020 – Cove Service

TBD – Session Meeting for July

Pastor Nominating Committee Update: The PNC continues its work in searching for our next Minister. After receiving resumes from potential candidates, the Committee meets in Hatcher Hall using social distancing practices or by Zoom Meeting. We know that God has already chosen our new Minister and we must seek his will and guidance moving forward. The PNC asks for prayers and patience from the Congregation.

Submitted for the Session by Jim Gearhart, Clerk of Session

### Session Digest:

The Session met for its Stated June Meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> in Hatcher Hall using Socially Distancing:

Pastoral Concerns: Kitty Baird, Sarah Bates, Kelsey Baugher, Shirley Cavender, Eural Clippard, Sousin Cottrell, Jared Crigger, Paul Cundiff, Agnes Davis, Colleen Dunford, Mimi Friedman, Nonia Gamble, Mary Gearhart, June Helton, Carola Hider, Maxine Manuel, John and Betty Matheny, David & Ida McElroy, Jack and Katherine Minton, Don Nance, Bill Pollard, Bobby Pulliam, Nancy Scott, Louella Williams, Millie Wilson.

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### 5 Cents a Meal:

Please remember the 5 cents a meal offering on July 19. You may bring it to the church, or mail it in with your pledge. Please make a separate check as it goes to another bank account. Thank you!

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**Newsletter & Office Information:**

The office will be closed on Friday, July 3 for the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. Information for the August newsletter needs to be in the church office by Wednesday, July 22.

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**Pentecost Offering:**

On Pentecost Sunday, May 31, we celebrated the gift of the Holy Spirit and the church's birthday. The foundation of faith established during youth helps instill in us a lifelong faith. The Pentecost Offering is used to help those children who are at risk. 40% stays in our community for this use. We received \$440.00. Thank you for your generous donations!

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**Cove Service:**

The Cove Service will be held on Sunday, July 19, at 7:30 p.m. It will be **outside** the old brick church, **so bring lawn chairs**. We will be safe distancing. If you need directions, please call the church office.

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**Flowers Needed:**

If you would like to place flowers in the church sanctuary or share flowers from your yard, please contact Nancy Crockett at 228-4050. You can sign up for a Sunday or just let Nancy know when you have flowers in bloom. Thank you for your help.

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