From the Pastor

Have your actions ever left you feeling miserably separated from God? Do you feel like you’ve been trapped by some bad habits that prevent God from ever loving you?

If so, I want you to take in the first verse from Psalm 107: O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His faithful love endures forever! (Psalm 107:1)

What kind of love do we read about when we inquire about our heavenly Father?

His faithful love! His steadfast love! And not only that, His love endures. Not only does God’s love endure, but it endures forever! Forever!

You will never experience love like what you find with God!

I’ve known parents who loved their children. A precious love. A sacrificial love. A deep love. There is no love anywhere within the human race that loves like a parent’s love for their child. But human love can be tested by the belligerent actions of a spoiled child, a child caught in addictions, a child who steals from their own parents; who lies over and over. Yes, our love for a child can be tested, and I pray that you never have to endure that kind of test.

Your love for your children is glorious! And for that we are grateful! But regardless of the strength of that love, your love is but a mere shadow of the love God has for you! His love endures! His faithful, steadfast, sacrificial and suffering love endures! Forever!

You and I are a challenge to that love. We will make mistakes and look for satisfaction in a whole lot of things. When we look for our purpose or happiness in anything outside of our heavenly Father, we will end up feeling empty, wondering again whether

Continued on page 4

CAMP AT HOME OFFERED

The West Virginia Conference, in collaboration with the United Methodist Foundation, is proud to present: Spring Heights Camp @ Home: the perfect opportunity for your camper to connect (virtually) with their camp friends, grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ and learn new skills. We can’t wait to see you this summer!

To register* for Spring Heights Camp @ Home, please visit:

www.springheights.org

www.steelememorial.com
**OUR CURRENT WORSHIP PRACTICE**

We have opened our doors for in-house worship, inviting you to attend our weekly worship, 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Still practicing social distancing, we can't all come back at the same time. Along with other congregations, we will observe new standards for being present in the church building and in worship. We can seat between 44-64 people in the sanctuary, depending on your family make-up. If you are ready to come back, please contact the Church office, 304 736-4583. Our first Sunday back, we had 34 in attendance. Our second Sunday, we had half of that.

You can visit the June Newsletter for the guidelines as we re-open for worship. If you are content with live-streaming worship or you are in a health risk category, please practice caution and wait before returning. We are hearing how the COVID.19 is being spread in some communities through Church attendance; people are failing to maintain social distancing!

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**JOIN OUR STUDY GROUP**

Pastor Kevin is conducting a weekly Study Group using the popular Bible App that many of you have on your phones or tablets. We have experienced great inspiration in recent weeks with themes that have included a personal look at the dynamics of racism, the filling of the Holy Spirit, what it means to pray Dangerous Prayers, unlimited faith, and how to love people you don’t like!

If you’re interested in connecting with the group, please contact Pastor Kevin, at kiplantz@yahoo.com or 304 638-4840.

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**WOMEN’S CIRCLE**

We will NOT have any circle meetings in July or August (no summer "picnic" get-together in August) due to the many concerns about inside gatherings and closed spaces.

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**CHURCH POSITION**

A part-time position as bookkeeper to serve as treasurer at Steele Memorial UMC is available. If you know someone who may qualify for this involved position, please have them send a message of interest to the Church Office and a resume stating their qualifications. church@steelememorial.com
INDEPENDENCE!

This month we observe the holiday called "Independence Day" to commemorate the day when the American Colonies declared their separation from English rule. From a political and patriotic point of view, the American democratic experiment has proven to be the envy of history and the modern world. Even with the mistakes we have made, the good ole’ U.S.A. is still the greatest nation on earth, and we are blessed to be among her citizens.

That said, "independent" is not the way to live life successfully for God or others. The greatest freedom I have ever known came to me when I surrendered myself to the Lord Jesus Christ. I am more free as His "slave to righteousness" than anyone who lives totally for himself and by himself, (Romans 6:18-19). So while we celebrate our nation's independence from the tyranny of King George III of England today, let’s remain totally dependent on the One who is far from a tyrant; “for God proved His love for us,” while we were rebellious toward Him and hating Him, He gave His life for the punishment for our sins! (Romans 5:8)

“God’s purpose in redeeming men from sin is not to give them freedom to do as they please but freedom to do as He pleases, which is to live righteously.”

John MacArthur

PATRIOTISM – Pastor Kevin Lantz

I have spent many Independence Days in the heart of one of America’s great colonial capitals, Williamsburg, Virginia. Being there as the Fife and Drum Corps march down the street to the tunes of “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” the air is charged with a great sense of power and mirth as tourists stand shoulder-to-shoulder along the pebbled Duke of Gloucester Street! The drum major at the front with his lavish mace, and each of the young men march lock step in row after row, dressed in period uniforms or in the workaday garb of the time. That experience in Williamsburg concludes with an actor reading the Declaration as though the citizens are hearing it for the first time! And then an awesome fireworks display in the evening!

The sights, the sounds, the anticipation of the crowd along with the entire ambiance puts you back to those days when men, who were little-known outside their own state’s borders, put their lives and their reputations on the line to declare independence from one of the world’s most powerful war machines at the time.

By April of 1775, American colonists had already engaged British soldiers in battle. So it was natural for colonial leaders to begin the radical debate that would lead to independence. Thomas Jefferson put temper and thoughts on paper:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. – That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, – That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

Thomas Jefferson goes on to name specific actions of the King and the Parliament of England that caused flagrant injustice: “The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.”

Following the list of offenses, Jefferson continues: “In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.”

Take time this month to revisit the great history of our nation’s freedom! If you’ve never read the Declaration of Independence, you can easily find the text on-line! I’m a proud American for what our forefathers established at great personal cost! And I would encourage our young families to take an opportunity to visit the Colonial Village in Williamsburg at any time! It offers an awesome patchwork of early American history for everyone.

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

John 8:36 ESV
our mistake, our sin, has separated us from the comfort of His love.

That same Bible passage in Psalm 107 says: Some wandered in the wilderness, lost and homeless. Hungry and thirsty, they nearly died. (Psalm 107:4-5) But when they cried, “Lord, help!” He rescued them! That may be all you ever need to know! For He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things! (107:9)

Throughout scripture we find powerful words that describe our experience of God as a strong fortress, an anchor in the storm, our protector and defender, our conquering King! On and on it goes! What makes Him to be your sanctuary, your shade and shelter? Listen, here it is: His faithful love which endures forever! You can count on Him because you can count on His love!

In what places have you tried to find satisfaction outside of God? What price have you paid in order to pursue your own secret pleasures? And how is that working out for you? You can call out to the Creator, the King of the Ages, the One who loves you more than you ever imagine! “Lord, help!” for His word tells us that He rescues us from all our distress. He offers forgiveness that renews the soul. He brings you unto Himself so that you might know the assurance of a love you’ve needed, but dared not imagine. Yes, our God is for you!

Prayer: O Father, I come to You again. From out of my failures and faults, from my selfishness and pain ...I come to You. Please fill me with the calm assurance of Your love, the quiet confidence of Your acceptance. And I praise You for the promise of Your word to love me despite the fact that I have trouble loving myself at times. I come to You with thanksgiving through my faith in Jesus Christ. Amen

REDEEMING FATHERHOOD WHEN IT’S BROKEN

Jim Daly is President of Focus on the Family and host of their popular radio broadcast. The story of Jim Daly’s childhood is in many ways heartbreaking. The father figures in Jim’s life all struck out. His biological father was an alcoholic and left when Jim was 5. His step-father was a retired-military disciplinarian who abandoned the family after Jim’s mother died. His foster father wasn’t any better, and accused Jim of trying to murder him, at age 9!

Yet in this brokenness, Jim found redemption. By God’s grace, Jim found life, hope, and peace through Jesus Christ. He found a new Father, his Heavenly Father! And his desire is to see other men who had broken relationships with their fathers find this same redemption.

For more on redeeming fatherhood when it’s broken, and breaking the cycle of absent-fathers, visit: https://bit.ly/2YinBBr

REACH OUT to YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD with OUTDOOR GRILLING

One popular way that Church families Reach New People is through a simple neighborhood “block party.” These parties can take the shape of grilling together or gathering for an evening at a neighbor’s fire pit.

Even now, during the period of social distancing, you can invite your neighborhood to pull our their grills and lawn chairs and gather for a picnic in front of their homes – allowing you to visit from across the sidewalk and get to know each other! You can share grills if needed, inviting people to bring the meats and take turns at a grill.

Think about ways that you can join with others who are still feeling “stuck” by gathering and grilling or some other way.

Prayer Walks: Get out into the community and take a prayer walk around your neighborhoods, experience your community with fresh eyes as you ask God to help you pray for families you’ve not even met yet. Discover the "pulse" of your town and the way God is calling you to serve. When we take the focus off ourselves and look toward the needs of others, we get healthier.

Pray a lot! Church Coach, Jim Griffith says, "We are not starting Subway franchises; this is Kingdom work." If we want our church to move in a new direction, we need to pray fervently for God to open our hearts, deepen our faith and nudge us out of our buildings and out into the marketplaces of our community. Read the Book of Acts; it’s all about faithful Christians meeting people where they lived and worked. We can do the same!
YOUTH NEWS

Get ready to hear Steele Memorial SOS Youth Group ROAR! We are enjoying an 8 week summer session called: Fierce Faith. Because of God’s grace, we are learning to replace fear and doubt with love and boldness. No better time than now to love our friends and neighbors with the same fierce love that God has for YOU!

We are having an amazing time on ZOOM each Wednesday evening at 6:30 and want to invite the upcoming 6th graders to join as we discover how to follow God with a bold and heartfelt passion in every area of our lives.

~Ms. Becky

MISSIONS REPORT

We just wanted to update everyone on some Mission activities that occurred in the first quarter of the year before the general shut down associated with the Covid19 virus:

- **BUSY BEES** were indeed busy collecting almost 300 pairs of children’s socks for ECCHO, over 100 items for a local pet shelter, and at the end of March gathered almost 200 pairs of underwear which will be delivered to Uphsur Parish House next week. GREAT JOB kids!

- **HOSPICE HOUSE & HIMG ONCOLOGY** - we were able to provide almost $50.00 worth of snacks for these two organizations before restrictions were imposed on outside visitation.

- **SINGLES & MORE CLASS** were extremely busy during the first of the year with donations of over 600 food items to ECCHO (including almost 500 packages of Ramen noodles), 30 cakes to Recovery Point, 42 packages of cookies to Veteran’s Home, 200 diapers for a single mom, help with a car repair to a single lady, $200 aid for a medical wig, and $1400 to the Facing Hunger Food Bank (which will provide over 10,000 meals!) What a BLESSING this group is to our church!

We would also like to give a big thank you to Karen Turman as she was able to arrange to have our left over copies of Upper Room delivered to the Regional Jail and the left over large print copies delivered to HIMG infusion center. What a wonderful, resourceful way to spread the Word!

_There will always be poor in the land. Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow man who are poor and needy in your land._” Deuteronomy 15:11

-Gina, Kay and the Missions Team

ECCHO

Due to the COVID19 restrictions, the board of directors at ECCHO have SUSPENDED ALL DONATIONS OF CLOTHING AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS until further notice. They are still accepting food and personal care items (toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, deodorant etc) - we have left the ECCHO collection box in the ECCHO closet in the Narthex for any items you would care to bring in. Their wish list includes items suitable for easy use by children such as cereal, breakfast bars, drink boxes, microwaveable pastas, etc.

If you feel so lead, you may also make a cash/check donation - just mark your envelope “ECCHO”.

-Thank you, Kay & Brenda
CONGRATULATIONS to Carl and Rosemary Chapman who celebrated 72 years of marriage on June 19th. Happy Anniversary!

JULY BIRTHDAYS

JULY 1
Ryan Berry

JULY 2
Holly Fannin
Jacob Lingenfelter

JULY 4
Emily Lingenfelter

JULY 8
Rob Blake

JULY 11
Callie Nease

JULY 13
Rebecca Holton

JULY 16
Peggy Hicks
Eldon Paugh

JULY 17
Lee Blake

JULY 18
Mary Frances Burns
Lois Silling

JULY 19
Jim Allman
Allen Dutton
Ron Foss

JULY 21
Jeff Mast

JULY 24
Kati Higdon

JULY 25
Buck Conard
Gina Crews

JULY 31
Richard Jimison

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

AUGUST 3
Evan Conard

AUGUST 5
Brenda Morning

AUGUST 6
Suzanna Davenport

AUGUST 8
Don Barbour

AUGUST 8
Katie Hensel

AUGUST 9
Bob Chenoweth

AUGUST 11
Molly Fisher
Kara Insalaco

AUGUST 13
Bill Dutton
Claren Perkins

AUGUST 16
Steve Sebert

AUGUST 17
Brad Merritt
Nathan Nibert

AUGUST 18
Jack Perkins

AUGUST 19
Ron Wooddell

AUGUST 23
Robin Triplett

AUGUST 24
Rosemary Chapman
J.K. Fife
Lorri Jones
Laura Smith
Alexis Wiley

AUGUST 25
Johnna Adkins
Olivia Lingenfelter
Malinda Ross

AUGUST 27
Ben Maynard

AUGUST 30
Raymond Blake

AUGUST 31
Fern Allred
Sherrie Childers
Monica Jackson

ANNIVERSARIES

JULY 2
Rob & Teresa Blake
Chad & Molly Fisher

JULY 4
Chris & Rita Kelley

JULY 6
Nathan & Suzanna Davenport

JULY 7
Matt & Whitney Stead

JULY 16
Buck & Cathy Conard

JULY 19
John & Sue Cummings

JULY 23
Todd & Kathy Lester

JULY 25
Raymond & Rosetta Blake

JULY 31
Greg & Gina Crews

AUGUST 17
Seth & Ellen Stinehour

AUGUST 18
Bob & Becky Chenoweth

AUGUST 19
Ron & Rosie Wooddell

AUGUST 27
Eldon & Sherry Paugh

AUGUST 28
Willie & Johnna Adkins
Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:17, NRSV.