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PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
 SPECIAL OFFERINGS
 PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

World Communion Sunday
October 4, 2020

The Peace and Global Witness Offering which is usually received the first Sunday in October, will be one of the choices on our website for giving or you can send a check to the office!

Pastor
 Rev. Kerra English

Admin. Assistant
 Susan Vitale

Director of Music
 Karla Bloom

Organist
 Austin Wachsmuth

ASHLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

401 Virginia Street
 Ashland, VA 23005

Ashland Presbyterian Church

APC Connections

Volume 13, Issue 1

September 2020

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 6—Election of Elders, 9 AM
Zoom online
- Sept. 13—Rally Day Prayer Service, 11 AM & 11:30 AM at the church
- Sept. 20—Installation and Ordination of Elders, 9 AM online; Adult Book Study begins, 10:30 AM Sundays on Zoom
- Sept. 22 & 29—Meet with the Pastor, 11 AM—Noon



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Pastor's Page

Friends,

What can I possibly say about where we left off in March, where we are now, and where we are going that even starts to make sense of the world we find ourselves in? It's not easy. However, I am comforted by observing a pattern that seems to be baked into the very reality of human life on this planet that reminds me that God is with us in ORDER, DISORDER, and the transformation that leads us to RE-ORDER either a particular life, or our lives together. But as someone who tries to speak of God's truth in any situation – here are a few thoughts I've been having...

What do I miss about where we left off? Back in the time where we didn't see what was coming.

ORDER

- ◆ We had an order, a rhythm of weekly life leading up to Sunday mornings that was predictable.
- ◆ I liked that order where I could count on seeing familiar faces, singing familiar songs, having familiar conversations.
- ◆ I miss hugs. I miss lunches at the Caboose. I miss the bustle of our food pantry.
- ◆ I even miss driving the highway back and forth from my house to Ashland.
- ◆ I miss what I didn't even know was a carefree casualness about where I could go and what I could do on any given day.
- ◆ What I didn't account for was that order will always be disrupted. I'm Presbyterian after all where we do things decently, and in ORDER. The order that I thought was a given – turned out to be not the full picture of reality after all.

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Then came DISORDER

- ◆ My sense of order was compromised by a pandemic – COVID 19.
- ◆ Much ground to a halt this past Spring.
- ◆ And we scrambled to address the concern at hand, first and foremost for safety, then for connection.
- ◆ How would we learn to connect in different ways? Online? Over the phone? By email and social media?
- ◆ Then, that disorder exposed the fragility of the order that seemed to be holding it all together.
- ◆ Unemployment skyrocketed.
- ◆ Health systems bent toward breaking.
- ◆ And silence was broken on the not-so-secret American sin of racism.
- ◆ Protests and prayer vigils were happening in Ashland.
- ◆ What could we say? What could we do? To love our neighbors fully.
- ◆ As much as I don't want to admit it – we are still in the wilderness, we are still in the waiting between Good Friday and Easter morning. Dis-order and discomfort aren't done with us yet.

But we have prayed that prayer. Maybe I have a tinge of regret for praying that prayer:

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships – so you will live deeply and from the heart.

The way through dis-order is to sit with the heavy stuff, and allow it to change our hearts.

Which brings me to the hope of RE-ORDER

- ◆ We are now in a time where returning to the previous order is not an option.
- ◆ Too much has changed.
- ◆ Some of it feels awful; some of it bears the seeds of promise.
- ◆ The next time of order won't look like the one before.
- ◆ We have more changing, more transforming to do.
- ◆ And it may be the most uncomfortable time that many of us will go through in a lifetime.
- ◆ But the good news is that God is present with us as we learn to lead with our hearts.
- ◆ Biblically speaking – those transformations can happen in 3 days (in the tomb), 40 days (being tempted) or 40 years (before seeing the Promised Land). I can't tell you how long we will wait until we can, with clarity, say that we have been “re-

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*November 1 - Plans are being made for All Saints Day Worship and Christian Education, your October newsletter will have those details.

Beginning November 22 and running through Advent - an Advent theme will be selected, details to come out in early November.

Dr. Richard Voelz also owes us a "lesson" from our Lenten Series cancellation. Pastor Kerra and Rich will be planning that for the Fall.

Small Groups

The Session has heard the concern that you are missing in-person contact. Our goal is to be able to host a few small groups in the church space, but we need your full cooperation to be able to do that. Currently, we are only cleaning once a week (THURSDAYS), so any space that is used, cannot be used again until it has been cleaned and disinfected for the next group. We are open to having a prayer group, fellowship group, or study group gather, but we will need to have sign ups and limited spaces, so if you are interested in starting one of your own – please contact Pastor Kerra for scheduling. We will NOT schedule on Thursdays to give Shelby the opportunity to fully clean for the following week.

To get this started – Pastor Kerra will host a “**meet with the Pastor**” group on **Tuesday's from 11 a.m. – noon on September 22, and 29**. You will need to **RESERVE your spot** to attend. This is a time to share what your needs are for in person gatherings.



Happy Birthday: September

- 2 Terry Alexander
- 7 Robert Lybrand
- 14 Sallie Moncol
- 20 Grace Arey
Pat Dunn

October

- 3 Jane Glazebrook
- 11 Marty Jones
- 12 Larry Hasbrouck
- 14 Charles Sthreshly
- 17 Karen Hasbrouck
- 29 Caroline Schutte

November

- 1 Susan Vitale
- 17 Kathleen Pugh
- 21 Linda Allison
- 24 Delores Dunn
- 29 Vicki Neeley

PW Circle



If anyone would like a copy of the new Horizon Bible study, please contact Debbie Moncol!

Congratulations! to Terry and Charles Blair on their retirement. We will miss Ashwood Gardens and Nursery in the community! Congratulations, also, to Caitlin Blair for starting her own business "Sunshine Gardening and More."



Our Rally Day this year will be on September 13, live at the church. (Rain date, September 20) It will be quite different from other Rally Days in the past. Here is the plan – from 11 a.m. to noon, Pastor Kerra will host one BRIEF prayer time in the garden at 11 a.m. and another one in the sanctuary at 11:30 a.m. with time to "visit" in between. Please choose ONE of the prayer options to attend so we can space out participants. ALL who participate will be expected to wear masks and maintain physical distancing practices. Folks are welcome to do “drive up” and open windows

to hear and wave at friends they’ve been missing if you don’t feel comfortable in a more open space. We know that you’ve been missing your friends and being able to see faces, so we want to start off Fall with the opportunity to do just that. (Following that gathering, we will post a video to Facebook of our time together. If you prefer not to be on the video – please tell Ryleigh not to aim her iPhone at you!)

Christian Education: Adult Book Study

Starting September 20, we will begin an adult book study of Timothy Keller’s book, *Generous Justice: How God’s Grace Makes Us Just*. Pastor Kerra and our incoming intern Sam Zeigler will co-lead a Zoom discussion on this book on **Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.** We have one extra book in the office and can order more by request if you need one. Please give the Zoom format a try so we can help Sam interact with adults in the congregation!

The series of Lessons is as follows:

- Sept 20 - Introduction and Chapter 1 -What is Doing Justice?
- Sept 27 - Chapter 2 - Justice and the Old Testament
- Oct 4- Chapter 3 - What Did Jesus Say About Justice?
- Oct 11 - Chapter 4 - Justice and Your Neighbor
- Oct 18 - Chapter 5 - Why Should We Do Justice?
- Oct 25 - Chapter 6 - How Should We Do Justice?
- Nov 8 - Chapter 7 - Doing Justice in the Public Square
- Nov 15 - Chapter 8 - Peace, Beauty and Justice



The Zoom link/phone number will be sent out in weekly emails when we begin, or you can use this Meeting ID and Passcode to log in with your Zoom account.

Meeting ID: 849 7594 9766 Passcode: 362643

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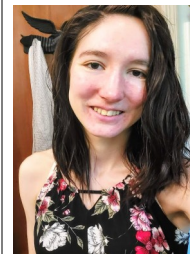
ordered.” It may be staggered – some changing quickly, some changes not happening until a generation or two have passed. The unknowing is difficult.

- ◆ But it isn’t without hope.
- ◆ We have hope because God continues to be with us.
- ◆ Some forms of Christianity will die – with good reason.
- ◆ As faithfulness becomes a condition of human life, eventually there will be flourishing again.
- ◆ Why do I say that – because it’s always been true!
- ◆ Beware the half-truths that worry for the loss of church buildings and finances –
- ◆ They come and they go. But the Real TRUTH is that the community of God’s people has a way of enduring and thriving – even through the hardest of times.

I love you all. Would I have preferred to keep you comfortable and safe in the bubble of the previous ORDER? Yes. But God has put me here with you for this journey – perils and all. And for that I am grateful. Dream of what is yet to come. That’s what Jesus did – imagined the fullness of God’s Kingdom in a world that was full of the same kind of hardships and disorder we face – because all human beings have this pattern in their lives – with or without a pandemic amplifying it.

This summer has been hard. Maintaining connection in an age of isolation is hard. More times than not, I have been exhausted, or terrified, or both. It was the time to feel – differently. And now I turn to face the Fall with hope, and with God’s blessing even as my heart is trying to go deeper. May God bless you too!

Peace, Pastor Kerra



Meet Our New Intern, Sam Zeigler

Hello! My name is Sam Zeigler (she/her) and I’ll be serving as your ministry intern this coming year. I am very excited to get to know and to work with each of you! A little bit about me...

I am from a small town in Ohio near Kent State University, though I have lived in Pennsylvania, Florida, and France along the way to Richmond. In 2018 I graduated from Westminster College (PA) with a Bachelor of Arts in French with Secondary Education and a Music minor. I am fluent in French, and attended a French university for a semester while in college. I love to travel, and am eager to go back when it is safe to do so.

I’m an only child, but I have over thirty cousins just on one side of my family, and

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holidays are a big thing in my family. Grandma is in her nineties and cooks dinner for her extended family- sometimes up to forty of us- each December. This year we are talking about ways to do a 'virtual holiday'. My other, chosen family includes my boyfriend, Mike, my church parents Chris and Will, and my cat, Leo. Leo is a very fluffy, black, part-ragdoll cuddle machine. He is a very strange cat: he comes when he is called and will happily play fetch for hours.

When I'm not reading books and writing papers for my classes at Union, I enjoy reading even more in my free time. My favorite genres are fantasy, fiction, historical fiction, sometimes history, and more frequently than I expect, theology and other spiritual topics. Otherwise I enjoy gardening, usually with my collection of indoor plants: three African violets, a coleus, a yellow miniature rose, a philodendron, a dragon's tongue, and an orchid. Right now I have a garden on the back deck as well, which includes mostly vegetables, and one small azalea.

My other passion is art, or at least, making and designing various things, including mechanical keyboards. I build and program keyboards of various shapes and sizes, which can be both a lot of fun and a lot of problem solving. Art usually takes less problem solving, and I enjoy painting whenever I can, almost every day.

***NOTE:** As Sam will be studying from home her first semester, we encourage you to send her "Welcome" cards or emails. Introduce yourself, tell her what you love about the church, something "getting to know you better." Her contact information is:

Sam Zeigler, 5079 State Route 14, Ravenna, OH 44266

Email: sam.zeigler@upsem.edu

Covid Policy

The Session has adopted a COVID care policy for the health and well being of the congregation that's compliant with other business standards but involves everyone who might be in the church buildings rather than just employees of the church. Here are our standards and expectations. Not following these guidelines will result in you being asked not to attend in-person activities.

1. When attending group meetings at the church, wear a mask (over your mouth and nose) and practice physical distancing.
2. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms related to COVID – do not attend any in-person functions at the church. (Fever, shortness of breath, excessive fa-

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tigue, coughing, etc. ...)

3. If you have been in direct contact with anyone who is positive for COVID, you will not be in any of the buildings of the church for a minimum of 14 days.
4. If you have tested positive for COVID, a negative test is required before entering any church building.
5. You will notify a church staff member or Session member if you were a participant in a group or present at the church and test positive for COVID so we can share (confidentially) with those who might have been exposed.

For those who are in need of a COVID test, local testing locations include:

Better Med Urgent Care, 300 North Washington Highway, (804) 537-2905
Bon Secours Good Health Express, 9851 Brook Road, Glen Allen, (804) 893-8702



Mark Your Calendars

All Services will be on FaceBook Live and/or Zoom unless otherwise indicated

CONNECTING ONLINE – If you need help connecting to our online options – Zoom and Facebook live, Pastor Kerra is happy to help. That she is able to do these things is proof that anyone can! Set up a time for a tutorial!

Worship News

Our full **worship service** will continue to be **live on Facebook through** the end of **October** for the safety of the congregation. Pastor Kerra will send out the Worship Guide beforehand, and email the direct link once the recording is up. The weekly sermon will also be posted in manuscript form to the website www.ashlandpresbyterian.org, and can be mailed to anyone who requests a paper copy. We are working on some opportunities for SMALL in-person prayer gatherings.

Election of Elders Sunday, September 6, 9 AM on Zoom



On the first Sunday of the month, September 6, we will host online worship over Zoom beginning with a congregational meeting to elect the slate of officers for the upcoming year (September – August). Nominated for 3-year terms are Roger Cole and Vicki Neeley, and for a 2-year term, Terry Alexander. PLEASE attend if you are able, this requires a quorum.

Service of Ordination and Installation

Sunday, September 20 at 9 AM