

July-August 2018

THE WARNER MEMO



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF WARNER MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FROM THE PASTOR

Sabbath Keeping

It happened a while back. (And just so you know, I'll probably preach this story, so you might hear it again!) It was a hot, humid July Saturday in Florida, and yours truly was doing the all-pro pastor thing. You know, running around from dawn to dusk trying to be everything to everybody and be everywhere at once.

The day started with a church youth program that more members should've been helping with, but were not. Which left a whole lot of work for only a few people. Not good. But we worked our tails off to make it happen. But no rest for the weary, right? After that, I needed to finish a sermon. Something about healing, in Mark. And then it was off to the hospital for some visits and the YMCA for a quick workout before they closed. And finally, what better way to end the day than picking up some fast food? Sounds like a recipe for an ER visit, doesn't it?

And that's exactly where I was at 11pm. At St. Anthony's Hospital with a heart attack scare. I didn't want to go. You can ask Ceska. But my chest started hurting, the room started to spin (not literally) and my left side got a bit numb. And I felt, well, not good. Having a condition, I know about people having attacks but dismissing them and going to bed. Those folks don't always wake up. Still, I wanted to go to bed. Because I had to preach in the morning, and the ER was going to mess that up.

Well, I wasn't thinking straight, but Ces straightened me out. While I was arguing about it probably being nothing, she was calling the 24-hour nurse helpline. It took a minute or two, but once I spoke with the nurse, told her about what was going on, described how I was feeling, went over all the symptoms, well ... "Rev. Sutton, I can't diagnose you over the phone, but you need to go to the ER immediately." Ceska drove.

But even after all that, at 3am on Sunday morning, I still wasn't right. It was probably fatigue, dehydration, stress, overdoing it at the gym, lack of sleep and greasy food, but the doctors wanted to run more tests to make sure. I wanted to leave. "You can leave now, Rev. Sutton, but it will be against my orders, and that means your insurance isn't going to pay for any of this." Funny how money can help us think a little more clearly. "You need to stay here for a bit, and make sure you're OK." Which I did.

It occurred to me later while talking to my Baptist hospital chaplain friend just how ridiculous I was being. "I mean, were you really going to preach a sermon on healing after checking yourself out of a hospital against doctor's orders at 4am on Sunday?" Yes, I was. But no, I didn't. And it all worked out. I'll share the rest of the story with you another time. It's actually pretty cool.

For now, let me just say I learned a valuable lesson way back when. First, I'm glad folks work on the Sabbath (like ER nurses, doctors, techs, etc). That's OK with Jesus too. He says as much, numerous times. But having said that, keeping the Sabbath (in a more abstract way I guess) isn't just important, it's essential for our health. Because we all need time to rest, recuperate, re-create, revive, etc. All of us, church! Maybe you've got an "S" on your chest, but surprise, surprise, I'm not God, neither are you, and we don't need to be! So last but not least, if you've got vacation plans this summer (or whenever), really take that vacay! I know I will. For that matter, take time each and every week to let your body rest, recuperate, re-create and revive! Don't worry, God's got it under control.

Shalom,
Rev. Todd

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, July 1st

Acts 4:1-31

“That’s Bold”

Sunday, July 8th

Acts 4:32-5:11

“Money, Money, Money!”

Sunday, July 15th

Acts 5:12-42

“Down for the Cause and Up
for the Job”

Sunday, July 22nd

Acts 6:1-7:1

“Some People”

Sunday, July 29th

Acts 7:2-8:3

“Good Fruit or Religious
Nut?”

Sunday, August 5th

Acts 7:54-60

“Throwing Stones”

Sunday, August 12th

Rev. Holly Ulmer, Guest
Preacher

Scripture & Sermon TBA

Sunday, August 19th

Rev. Cheryl Cook-Posley,
Guest Preacher

Scripture & Sermon TBA

Sunday, August 26th

Acts 7:54-8:8

“A Growing Faith”

Sunday, September 2nd

Acts 8:4-13, 26-40

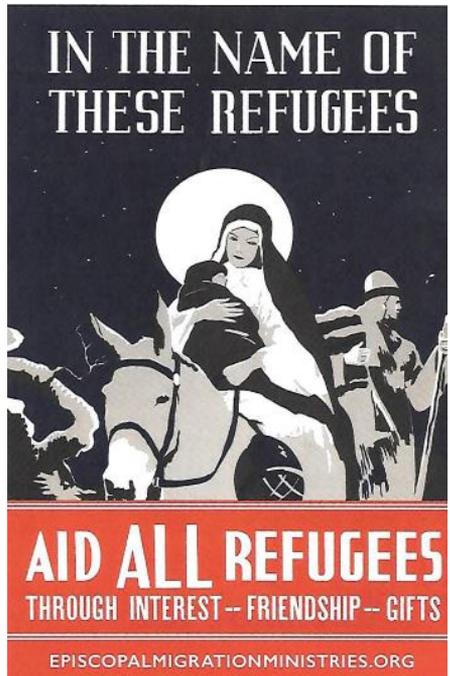
“It’s Absurd”

Please support the work of our Deacons by making a contribution to the Deacon’s Fund on the 1st Sunday of the month. Please also support the hungry in our community and across the nation by bringing your coins for Two Cents-a-Meal to the red wagon on every third Sunday of the month; and every day of the year, you can help the M.U.M. food pantry by bringing in cans and packages of non-perishable food for our barrel in the church narthex. Thank you for helping our neighbors in need!

SPECIAL NOTES

One Journey Festival

JoEllen LaPrade and I attended the One Journey Festival at the Washington National Cathedral Saturday June 2. The purpose of the Festival was to inform and motivate attendees to assist the 65 million displaced people worldwide (especially refugees) within our metropolitan community. Although we enjoyed watching colorful dancing and music, the heart of the Festival was a large tent with representatives from Washington area refugee and relocation services. As an



example of the scope and dedication of the organizations, the mission of the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) is to “resettle refugees and immigrants and to promote the educational, cultural, health, and socio-economic development needs of the refugee community in the DC Metro Area.” The ECDC invited Warner to participate in serving a Thanksgiving dinner in November (contact Miriam Chaponniere at Mchaponniere@ecdcus.org) to attend a Photo Exhibition the evening of June 20 at the Pepco Edison Gallery at 720 8th St. NW. The image [shown above] from the Episcopal Migration Ministries, of past refugees Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, reminds me of the plight of refugees forced today to leave their homes.

Susan Bresee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Since this is the summer Memo, I'm submitting an out-of-the-ordinary article centering on ordinary time in the liturgical year. I first review the basics of ordinary time before setting recent scientific research about the history of the universe in the context of ordinary time.

Background on Ordinary Time

Ordinary Time (OT) is a part of the liturgical year. In short, the liturgical year recapitulates the history of the Church in one year. Many aspects of the liturgical year trace back to the fourth century—which is also when orthodoxy begins to coalesce around the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD: the first ecumenical council, being convened by the Roman Emperor Constantine. This early history holds relevance today both in terms of expressing unity and division in the Church, even through seemingly mundane matters, such as OT. Specific to the liturgical calendar, this council set a common formula for determining the date of Easter, which in turn determines other dates; however, this formula has been interpreted differently among East and West (Antsaklis, 2010). Thus, common dates for even the most recognized days of the Church year cannot be taken for granted. Yet, common dates are needful for visible expressions of unity. As Presbyterians we have a particular witness to furthering that unity (BoO, F-1.0302a).

Introduction to Ordinary Time

The origin of OT is traced to the Catholic Church's Vatican II in the 1960s which was significant in a number of respects – including its introduction of a three year lectionary cycle. OT is ordinal time in the liturgical year– being Sundays counted 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Confusingly, due to the shifting date of Easter based on a calculation made from a particular full moon (referred to as

Paschal) and the Gregorian calendar (in our context), the Sundays of OT are not as easy as 1,2,3. In fact, “some of those Sundays [around Lent/Easter] always get absorbed depending on when Easter takes place” (Stookey, 1996). In short, when not in another season such as Lent, Easter, and Advent – or when not celebrating particular days, such as Pentecost – we are in OT.

OT is the most basic sense of time. Liturgically, OT is not a heightened focus on resurrection that is celebrated during Easter nor is it a season of fasting and repentance like Lent. OT is just plain ordinary. However, we need simple teachings to tell us most plainly about ourselves and God; we need faithfulness for all of life’s seasons. A blessing of the liturgical year is that the experience of seasons in the life of the Church keeps reminding us that the life of faith is a full life; it is not compartmentalized. A blessing of OT is the reminder that we keep time in reference to our location in God’s creation; hence, the Church is not siloed from the world and OT becomes an opening for dialogue with our neighbors who do not profess faith or who profess a different faith. Whereas other seasons focus on the birth (Advent/Christmas), death (Lent), and resurrection (Easter), OT is the time where we walk with Christ navigating our life in God’s creation among creatures such as ourselves.

Theology of Ordinary Time

A theology of OT must rest upon a theology of time. In our Book of Confessions we find the orthodox theology of creation *ex nihilo* maintaining that God created all things out of nothing (Heidelberg 4.026). The first verse of Genesis (In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth) is a good memory verse. The first verse of John is another (In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God). What is indicated here is that “all things came into being through God” (John 1:3), and the rhythms of days, seasons, and years provides life-giving order.

God's institution of the order of creation is deeply embedded in the landscape and stars, serving as a pattern for worship. The pattern of day and night, along with the rhythm of seasons or festivals, signifies time for human subjects by allowing a simple way to observe and count the passage of days and years (hence ordinary time), allowing us a visible form to appreciate and respond to God's grace

Problems of our not so ordinary time

Recent interpreters have suggested the word festivals is a better translation than seasons – which is the NRSV rendering – in the passage above (Rudolph, 2003). The definition of the Hebrew root in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance seems to overcome this distinction in its definition of the Hebrew root as “a fixed time or season; specifically, a festival.” Clearly, translators have a difficult task in balancing concern for conveying the full meaning of each word with vernacular readability and other concerns. More to the point, this particular translation issue highlights a difficulty for modern readers of the Old Testament: understanding the close relation of seasons and festivals.

In historical context, it seems likely this agricultural society – even one with significant urban contact – would perceive seasons and festivals to be so closely related as to be nearly indistinguishable. Certainly, the link would not be as vast as the gulf imposed by a world of nation states, globalization, and industrialization, etc. As noted above, Easter still corresponds with the paschal moon, though this dating has been disconnected from an actual full moon observation, due to standardization concerns, and additionally is subject to differing interpretations, due the use of different calendars across space/culture. Clearly, the Church universal is posed with particular spatial and cultural obstacles to unity. A more troubling obstacle concerns the nature of today's socio-economic context which, in broad terms, is characterized by rebellion against

seasonality, an interpretation of any appointment of specific times for specific purposes (particularly those that are not work oriented) as an inexcusable limitation, and a looming sense of life in terms of the arbitrariness of disconnected events. The recent increase in depression signals a public health crisis, and is not unrelated to our contemporary social life (Hari, 2018- *Lost Connections*). This is not to say that our current time is entirely novel or that depression is the only concern. Rather, it is to point out a particularly relevant concern that relates to social questions of meaning and identity as well as to point to the role of an understanding of origins in that concern.

Proposals following a scientific counting of time

The problems of our not so ordinary time have led to a variety of approaches from a variety of angles to resituate us within an ordinary time. Some have sought a “modern origin story” (see David Christian’s new book, *Origin Story*) that would serve to replace biblical origin stories or those of other traditions to provide a common, unifying story. Bill Gates has been supporting David Christian’s ‘Big History Project’ to provide this story in online curricula. Yet, others note that much of the foundational research on the most commonly accepted scientific theory of origins – the Big Bang theory – was conducted by scientists who were deeply embedded in Christian tradition (Dark matter to bright faith, thinkingfaith.org). Those to first propose a beginning point in time to the universe where energy and matter were then created in its rapid expansion (the Big Bang) included a Catholic Priest/scientist, Georges Lemaître. Needless to say, discussion of our origins will continue to be an active discussion in religion and science; the Church will need to continue to interpret its story to others, illuminate its close ties with scientific thought and practice, and minister to the great need for hope.

Creation in Ordinary Time

There is a beginning and end of OT/time, and it is counted. The most current age estimate of the universe (~14 billion years) is interpretable in the context of OT as our sense of the progression of time occurring within salvation history. In this way, OT allows us to consider the grandeur of God's creation at this scope and scale. Our discernment of God's call on our lives may be informed and inspired in this wide view of our time and place.

As Christians, we confess not only that God created heaven and earth but that God providentially sustains the conditions for life and is presently at work making all things new; we confess Christ has invited us into this new life. Thus, we confess not only that God created time – both in its physical sense as well as the calendar sense by extension – but that God is still present to us in our time, and that we have a hope for a future! Ours is a resurrection hope, and we groan with the rest of Creation in OT.

Our Response: Keeping time with God

While some have sought to dislocate a 'modern origin story' from tradition, discussed above, the approach I have suggested here is to seek understanding of new knowledge within its context and that of our own. Lutheran pastor, and family friend, Ron Birk writes of "The Time-Doesn't-Always-Change-Things Tenet" that states "never change a church tradition unless you know why it became a tradition in the first place" (*St. Murphy's Commandments*, 1995). After learning about the origins of the tradition in question, one must discern where God's call leads at that current time. Now is the time to answer that call. You are a person of conscience; you/we are also subject to correction.

A confession that God created heaven and earth, appointing seasons/festivals, does not hinge on strict adherence to a calendar.

Jesus's taboo-breaking healing on the Sabbath demonstrates that. His response to priestly, persecuting objection – voices saying now is not the time - was anger and grief, followed by a healing act (Mark 3:5); healing followed by rebuking statements such as “if one of you has a child or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a Sabbath day?” (Luke 14:5); also, “my Father is still working, and I also am working” (John 5:17). The Sabbath is intended for the fulfillment of God's purposes; the liturgical year should also be so purposed. God's purposes are for the world; the Church is an agent of achieving those purposes. Creation is the subject of those purposes; redemption, resurrection, adoption, glory, and freedom: the content of those purposes.

We are now in the ordinary time of Christ. Amen

--Dave Grace, Director of Christian Education



The recipe collection is growing! Have you prepared a dish, baked cookies, or fed your fellow Warnerites? Please send your recipe to Lisa at lcsmeallie@comcast.net or drop off a paper copy to the PW mailbox in the church office. This small committee is pulling together the recipes and creating an index, don't delay!



Our 2018 budgeted income of \$1,365 depends on your contributions. A regular monthly or quarterly offering is a healthy habit for you and our PW mission work. “A gift opens the way and

ushers the giver into the presence of the great.” Proverbs 18:16 NIV

Joy Circle celebrated the conclusion of our two-year study with a delicious dinner in Wheaton. We decided that our next study book will be “God’s Promise: I Am With You,” from Horizons. Once again we will use the two-year model. We are considering changing the meeting night from Tuesday to Wednesday and possibly meeting in member homes rather than the church library. We are also seeking co-leaders to take a turn “at the helm.” If you have any input/comment on this, please contact the present leader, June Eakin.



The 2018 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women will be held August 2-5, 2018, in Louisville, Kentucky. 2018 is also the year that PW celebrates its 30th anniversary! At each meeting of the Churchwide

Gathering, Presbyterian Women collect gift cards for local (to the Gathering) charities. June Eakin, along with other women from this area, will attend this year. You are invited to purchase \$10 gift cards

from Target, CVS, Walmart, or Walgreens that June will take to the Gathering. Should you wish to donate more than \$10, please purchase additional gift cards. The groups who will benefit

are: D.A.I.P.E.R. Project (Diapering Infants and Providing Emergency Resources) Charlestown IN, Kentucky Refugee Ministries Louisville KY, Lily’s Place in

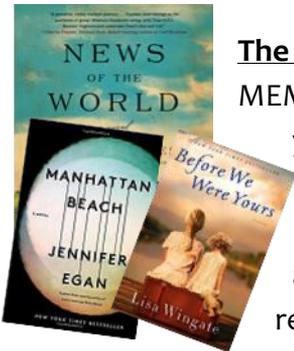
Huntington WV. **Place gift cards in the offering plate or church office by Sunday, July 29.**



SAVE-THE-DATE ! It's now mid-summer.... and you may not be thinking about fall, but PW is. We urge you to reserve **Saturday, September 22nd** now, so you can join us in the favorite Sun Porch Room at Bon Secours in Marriottsville, MD on that day for a Warner Women's retreat. The PW CT is busy planning the "order of the day." We'll begin with a short time of worship, then study time on the Apocrypha and "Who Is Jesus?" The afternoon will allow time to enjoy the grounds and join in a craft or yoga. We plan to gather around 8:30 a.m. and finish up between 3-4 p.m. Your registration includes breakfast and lunch. Look for registration information from the next MEMO and our bulletin Board.



Take a look at the Presbyterian Women bulletin board outside the church office. It's always changing, and you don't want to miss Sheri's artistic creations!



The PW Book Club met on June 22 (after the MEMO deadline) to choose books for the coming year. Lisa Smeallie compiled a list of two dozen for us to choose from! Look for the results in September, but meanwhile, if you are seeking summer reading recommendations, contact Lisa.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Recently, the commission's focus has been on our new door security and the building changes to meet school licensing requirements. We are presently in the process of professionally replacing one window in each of the four ground level classrooms to meet mandated emergency egress. This will involve volunteers who will move three window air-conditioners and do some touch-up painting.

Now that the weather has heated up, please remember to turn off all air conditioning units you turn on! Our building has “zoned” a/c. This means each room is cooled independently, so keep doors closed for efficiency.



Please be gentle with the tables in the Social Hall. The ring on the leg hinge must be at the bottom of the hinge to prevent collapse. If it won't settle there, don't use that table, but set it aside and label it for repair. We will soon need to purchase replacement tables. If you are inclined, a gift to allow this would be greatly appreciated. Each table cost \$110 when we bought them about 8 years ago.

Present volunteer needs: (contact June Eakin)

- Paint the edges of steps around the building (paint and tools provided)
- Recoat the outer sanctuary door (polyurethane provided)
- Paint the LCYC entrance ceiling while school is out.

COMMUNITY – MISSION

Update from the Refugee Ministry Network

There are now seven churches signed on as members of the Presbytery's **Refugee Ministry Network** that you read about in last month's MEMO. It has officially been upgraded from a “Team” to a “Network”, so it is now eligible for funding from the National Capital Presbytery. Please keep the group in your prayers!

--Ina Rae Kramer

Warner Mission Trip for 2018

This year Warner will be trying something new. Instead of having our mission during the summer when everyone is off doing other things, we will be going to Florida in November to help with the

relief effort from last year's Hurricane Irma. We will also be reuniting with a former Warnerite, Doug Seeley, who has been doing some of the leg work to find a good project to match our skills. Doug has recommended UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) for the November 4 through 10 time frame that we have chosen for our trip. The UMCOR ministry, which has identified the Southwest Collier County including Everglades City, Dublin, and Naples as the areas of greatest destruction and need, would be the easiest for Warner in terms of participation and preparation as the organization provides tools, materials, and housing.

The Commission to the Community will be organizing a meeting later on this summer to provide additional information including the required application forms for those who are interested in attending this year's mission trip. **Meanwhile, save the November 4 through 10 dates on your calendars!**

--Ty Bragg

Interfaith Works Clothing Center gets our support

Interfaith Works (formerly called Community Ministry of Montgomery County) was founded over 45 years ago. Today there are more than 165 affiliated congregations of all denominations united in support of IFW and its goal to prevent, stabilize, and empower residents who live below the poverty level so that they can lift themselves up and out of dire circumstances. In particular, the Interfaith Works Clothing Center offers gently-used clothes and related items that have been donated so that those in need can stretch their resources to pay for other necessities.

Warner members have long been among the active supporters. Also, some Warner members respond now by providing an unwrapped gift for a child to be given out on a child's birthday by the Clothing Center's Birthday Club. This follows the practice of Mary Margaret Gibson, a beloved member of Warner, who for many years anonymously gave a gift to a poor child on her own

birthday. The toy box where you may place a gift is in the church narthex as you come in. The toys, books and games you contribute are taken to be distributed to children whose families rely on the IFW Clothing Center. In addition, for the last two years the Warner choir has taken part in a spring concert to benefit the Clothing Center. This practice may become a permanent tradition. Finally, the IFW Clothing Center conducts an annual School Supplies Drive. Families on the economic edge often find that basic living expenses PLUS school supplies for each child are just too much. Therefore Interfaith Works tries to provide school supplies and new backpacks for over 2,500 school kids in Montgomery County every year. For many years The Commission to the Community has allocated a portion of its budget to support this drive. Last month, the Commission sent a check for \$400 to buy backpacks and supplies for school children to use in September 2018. To learn more and to watch an informative video, visit <http://www.iworksmc.org/about-interfaith-works/>

--Cory Atwood and Ina Rae Kramer
for the Commission to the Community

WARNER PEOPLE

The office received this lovely letter from Kathy Stell in an e-mail from her daughter Liz. Please note the apartment number, and make this correction in your 2018 Directory. Thank you!

May 2018



Dear friends,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm sorry I haven't been much of a correspondent in recent years. Please excuse this form letter, as I have important news to share. I'm moving! On June 15, I move into a wonderful independent living residence in the Berkshire hills of western Massachusetts. The area is home to

Tanglewood, the Jacob's Pillow dance festival, world-class art museums, several theaters — come visit! My new address will be:

Kimball Farms
235 Walker St., Apt. #131
Lenox, MA 01240
Telephone: (413) 637-7131

Though I welcome moving close to daughter Liz and her husband Bill (having enjoyed summer vacations at their house for many years), it's not easy leaving Kensington. It's been my home since 1965. The flowers in my yard are putting on an especially dazzling display this spring. Daughter Laura and son Ralph will drive me to my new home.

Sincerely,
Kathy

July Birthdays

- 1 Ginny Atwood
- 3 Susan Fulton
- 4 Doris Williams
- 6 Sophie deJesus, Shelley Swendiman
- 8 James Gorman, Rajesh Puri
- 9 Chris Bragg
- 11 Isabelle Koff
- 12 Joel deJesus, Helen Hancock, Susan Luff
- 16 Beverly Sceery
- 17 Doug Adams, Mary Butts, Lea Gallagher
- 20 Logan Smeallie
- 21 James Hancock, Remi Winter
- 25 Betty Ford, Alton Harvey
- 28 Chris Robins, Betty Sickinger
- 29 Chris Burns
- 30 Jennie Broadwell

August Birthdays

- 1 Dave Grace
- 2 Louise Koch
- 3 Marlene Montgomery
- 4 Sue Burns
- 7 Bob Koch
- 8 Carolyn Hollis, Irene Lee
- 10 Charity Singletary
- 11 Janice Landfair
- 14 Wilma Dunlap
- 16 JoEllen LaPrade
- 17 Takungo Mogo
- 18 Marjorie Parce
- 19 Jan Moody, Bruce Parce
- 20 Robert Vieira
- 21 Walter Victory
- 23 Ann Kirchhoff
- 25 Melissa Ketchum
- 26 Bob Brewka
- 28 Pat Brosnan
- 31 Evelyn Adams

September 2018 MEMO Issue

Please submit your completed article to memo@warnermemorial.org by **Monday, August 20** in order for the Memo team to get it published and distributed by the first of the month.

Thank you for your contributions!

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Please see bulletin boards outside the Main Office

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Director of Christian Education: Dave Grace

Director of Music: Peter Smeallie

Organist: Sungho Paik

Director of Learning Center for Young Children: Angela Goolsby

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Office Manager/Administrative Assistant: Dina Bickel

Sunday Morning Preschool/Nursery Aide: Shervonne Johnson

Warner Weekly: outreach@warnermemorial.org

Warner MEMO: memo@warnermemorial.org