

FALL HAS BEGUN...

A  
COMMUNITY OF  
FAITH  
STRIVING  
TO

**KNOW**  
CHRIST  
PERSONALLY

**GROW**  
WITH CHRIST  
INTIMATELY

**SHOW**  
CHRIST  
PASSIONATELY

**Our Mission**

Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

**Our Vision**

To Know

Christ personally,  
**Grow** with Christ intimately, and **Show** Christ passionately

Fall has begun; the temperatures (at least on some days) are a little cooler. Leaves are beginning to change color, to dry out, and to drop. Most of the time, I claim fall as my favorite season. I'm not really sure why that is, though. When I stop to look beyond the availability of pumpkin spice latte and a split-second display of color, autumn is really not such a happy season – it is, in many ways, all about endings. If I stop to look too long at the leaves, I realize that they are changing color only because they are dying. Seeing death in any form can call us to face questions we would rather avoid - questions about life and death, about who we are and what we value, and about God.

Paul addresses some of this in his letter to the church in Corinth, whose members were having some doubts about resurrection: "If there's no resurrection, there's no living Christ. And face it—if there's no resurrection for Christ, everything we've told you is smoke and mirrors, and everything you've staked your life on is smoke and mirrors." He goes on to remind them that we plant "dead" seeds; there is nothing in the way a seed looks that resembles the plant. In the same way, our lives here on earth are nothing compared to what we will be in heaven. "The seed sown is natural; the seed grown is supernatural—same seed, same body, but what a difference from when it goes down in physical mortality to when it is raised up in spiritual immortality!"

So what, does ancient Corinth and a debate about resurrection from the dead have to do with us? And didn't we start out talking about fall leaves? There truly is a connection! Paul's words about resurrection bring us great hope for our lives after death. But they offer another great hope, as well – the same hope as falling leaves. Autumn can be a harsh reminder of death, but it can also encourage us to enter into the mystery of life. A movement toward life takes place in the fall. Dead leaves are transformed by winter snows and spring rains into rich soil for new growth. Empty branches of trees have the potential for new growth in their buds (it is this new growth that causes the old leaves to fall). No new growth will come unless autumn agrees to let go of what has been. It is impossible for us to look with human eyes at a crumpled up leaf and see a new tree—and yet...spring and new growth will come. In all areas of our lives, loss must happen, death must happen, in order for us to grow – in order for God to do the supernatural seed growing. We must be emptied in order to be filled.

This is so hard for us; we like to know what is coming. If only the seed looked exactly like the plant – THEN we would have faith enough to drop it into the soil and wait for new growth. But life doesn't work that way. Instead, we see seeds of death and pain, disappointment and fearfulness all around us, and it becomes hard to believe in resurrection. Where is God in the midst of a global pandemic? How can God be good when babies die, when relationships implode, when dreams blow away? How can I believe in grace when disease eats away at people and loneliness aches? In the midst of this kind of suffering, where can I find the joy of the Lord, the one who fills the earth with good things?

We do not have the gift (or perhaps curse) of knowing what will be, so it is hard to accept the autumn moments of life. But here is the hope: God DOES know what will be – and God's love for us is perfect. Earlier in his letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, "His secret purpose framed from the very beginning is to bring us to our full glory." (1 Cor. 2:7). God wants us to be filled with his grace. He wants us to be resurrection people – right now, not just after death. In order to do that, in order to choose grace, we must first be like autumn trees, shedding our old lives in order to allow new growth.

What "seeds" do you need to plant today? Is something dying in your life right now? What do you feel called to let go of? Perhaps it is an old dream that must be released before it can be replaced by the great dream giver. Maybe it is resentment or disappointment that has to be allowed to die before a relationship can be reborn. Maybe it is grief or sadness, or overconfidence or self-reliance. Maybe it is the safe, secure, comfortable place you find yourself in. All of us, as imperfect humans, have a tendency to cling to the known. Today, I invite you to allow dead leaves to fall and to step into a time of new growth.

Blessings,  
Pastor Melissa



October

## *Finances for 2021*

Total Budget Income for 2021:	\$ 92,850.30
Jan. Budget:	\$ 12,087.16
Feb. Budget:	\$ 8,603.34
March Budget:	\$ 12,904.60
April Budget:	\$ 10,706.21
May Budget:	\$ 10,992.11
June Budget:	\$ 9,107.91
July Budget:	\$ 15,576.44
August Budget:	\$ 12,872.53
September Budget:	\$
October Budget:	\$
November Budget:	\$
December Budget:	\$

## *October Birthdays*

Melissa Scott	October 3
Christy Knott	October 4
Bill Felton	October 4
Tim Thornhill	October 6
Cathy Flory	October 7
Isaiah Bush	October 7
Bob Conner	October 9
Barry Bailey	October 16
Mary Valentine	October 23
Freda Guill	October 24
Darren Petty	October 25
Donna Watters	October 27
Tamara Bailey	October 28
Betsy Ogle	October 29
Jordan Poff	October 31

## *Prayer Concerns*

Those affected by COVID-19, including Elizabeth Jenkins' parents, Joyce Short's mother & grandson, Patsy Water's sister & brother, Melissa Scott's parents

- Those who are homebound or in retirement and nursing homes: Betty Brown, Madaline Brown, Lois Burge, Jane Byrum, Mary Durrer, Freda Guill, Evelyn Hutcherson, Yvonne Metz, Nadine Minnix, Shirley Moore, Betty Obenchain, Bill & Liz Parker, Louise Parris, Evelyn Ragland, Katie Wood
- Those with cancer including Alison Ziegelmeir (Ric Scott's cousin), Barbara Kern, Richard Rader, Bob Padfield (Kati Padfield's father-in-law), Jack Cooper, & Brian Britt (Ron Britt's son)
- Paula, daughter of Reatha Linkenhoker
- Buck Conner
- Doug Heptinstall
- Marie Maddox
- Vicki Wray, recovering from surgery for colon cancer

## *Brown Bag Bible Study*

• **Wednesdays, 12 pm:** Join our mid-week "Brown Bag Bible Study" of the book of Jeremiah, led by our Minister-in-Residence, Rev. Steven Harris. Bring your lunch, if you like, and come be fed by God's word! The study will also be available on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/cabciblestudy>. If you are asked for a passcode, it is CABC.

## *Youth Dinner & Discipleship*

• Sixth-twelfth grade students are invited to join us for Dinner & Discipleship on **Sunday evenings, from 5-7 pm** in the picnic shelter at Colonial Presbyterian Church. Because we are outside, masks are not required most of the time, but please bring one just in case it is needed. Bring your dinner, and we'll provide dessert! This month, we'll be learning about "Faith in an Anxious World."

## *CAB Kids Family Pumpkin Party*

• **Saturday, October 23, 5-7 pm:** Children of all ages are invited to bring their grown-ups for some family fun! We will be gathering outside, weather permitting, for pizza and some fall fun: pumpkin decorating, games, & a short movie about Spookley the Square Pumpkin. If it's cool, we'll build a fire in the fire barrels to stay warm.

## *Thank You for Supporting Our Church*

• Thank you for your faithful support of the ministry of our church. If you wish to give an offering, you may do so by placing it in the offering plates in the foyer, mailing a check or giving electronically through our website: ([www.cabc.us/donations](http://www.cabc.us/donations)) or through your bank.

## Centering Prayer Group Begins this week!

• Join us **Tuesdays at noon** in person or on Zoom (<https://bit.ly/pbjcenteringprayer>) to learn more and practice this form of contemplative prayer. Want to learn more? Here are some thoughts from our Minister-in-Residence!

*Moving to a deeper spiritual life is a process never finished. This movement in spiritual life calls for a dedication that is more than Bible readings and studying, worship, prayer, giving of time, talents and finances. To deepen one's spiritual life can be intimidating because it calls for our interior life to expand. We like routine, what is familiar, habits all which directs our life's compass to help us deal with anxiety, fear, uncertainty and keep us on the path which we travel. Centering Prayer is a way of praying that is different than the way we were taught at table or bedside of our youth. This prayer is a way to go deeper into the interior life. Those of us who do Centering Prayer daily call it a practice. It is meant says M. Basil Pennington, "to open the way of living constantly out of the center, to live out of the fullness of who we are. It is a way to open the door- wide – all the way-to let him {God} in" (From *Centering Prayer*: M. Basil Pennington: p. 19 & 21). Centering Prayer is being intimate with our Lord.*

I have practiced Centering since the 1990's privately and with a group. There is no question Centering Prayer is important to me because I am a contemplative person by personality and vocation. I have always had a religious life and the spiritual life continues to grow. A relationship with a spouse or partner should be one that grows in intimacy, that is it becomes deeper into the interior life. The same is to be with God. Pennington speaks of this intimacy when he writes, "We are summoned not only to intimacy but to take possession of our very oneness with the Son of God in the inner life of the Trinity in the communication of the very love of Father and Son the Most Holy Spirit. This is what Centering Prayer is all about" (From *Centering Prayer*: M. Basil Pennington: p. 22).

There are so many personal stories that I could tell about Centering Prayer's opening space for God to work in my interior life. There is so much buried deep within those needs released. I have felt releases that opened more of my interior life. I remember so well a time during Centering I jumped completely out of the chair. I did not know then, nor now, what God released, however I do remember the sense of peace and comfort that was over me. There have been many times that Centering sent me into a deep rest.

Centering Prayer is not some hocus pocus prayer or God's waving a magic wand. Rather Centering is really what Pennington said, an intimacy with the Lord.

Our practice each Tuesday at noon will be for an hour. The Centering Prayer will be for 20 minutes. There will be a short discussion on Centering Prayer and a reading from Holy Bible. At first 20 minutes will seem long. You will have many thoughts and some of them will grab your attention away from Centering. No worries, you will simply call yourself back with a centering word you choose. Centering Prayer is not something you "get right", rather it is your showing up with intention to allow space for God.

I hope you will join me in person or by Zoom on Tuesdays at noon as often as you are able to open space for God.

Rev. Steven  
MIR



Centering Prayer

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Minister in Residence

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