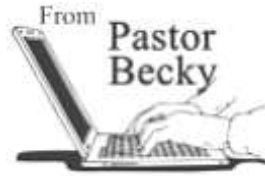


The Shepherd's Messenger



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God and You

Your attitude and behavior in any and all circumstances ought to be governed by your relationship to God. Paul had been in a ferocious storm on the sea for nearly two weeks (Acts 27:27). His relationship to God, however, enabled him not only to endure the stress, but to comfort and encourage the others on board: "And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' Therefore, take heart, men, for I believe God, that it will be just as was told me" (Acts 27:22-25). Notice three aspects of Paul's relationship to God:

Paul belonged to God (v. 23). He recognized the truthfulness of the words he had written earlier to Corinth: "You are not your own... You were bought at a price" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). One of Paul's own descriptions of himself is "a (bond)servant of Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:1). A bondservant (slave) is owned by someone else. Paul's owner was the Lord. Liberty-loving people that we are, we cringe at the thought of being owned by anyone! However, the sooner we acknowledge that God owns us, and that this is a good thing for us, the better off we will be.

Paul served God (Acts 27:23). As a slave, Paul's purpose was to do the will of his master, Jesus. Again, we flinch at the idea of subjecting our own will to anyone else's! We would do well, however, to swallow our pride and follow the example of the Son of God, Who "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28). Contrary to popular belief, true religion is not about doing whatever makes me feel good. First and foremost, we are to serve God. If our hearts are right, such faithful service will result in abundant good feelings.

Paul believed God (Acts 27:25). For many days the storm had pounded them. They had no idea where they were; the storm was not easing; lightning the ship had done little good; and "all hope that we would be saved was finally given up" (v. 20). Nevertheless, when God's messenger told Paul that he and all others aboard the ship would survive, Paul believed it. "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

Let us trust our Lord, believing what He tells us. Human wisdom may not agree with the Bible, but the Bible is right! You belong to God. Serve Him! Believe Him! Doing so, you can endure even the worst of times. Friends, we will get through this Covid pandemic together!

Blessings,
Pastor Becky

PLEASE PRAY FOR:
Our World situation



- 2 - Richard Pierce
- 10 - Dominic Berardi
- 14 - Elroy Brickey III
- 15 - Kerigan Pierce
- 18 - John Hupp
- Linda Nelson
- 19 - Mark Morris
- 20 - Chloe Karn
- 23 - Christopher Hupp



- 8 - Bill & Joyce Amundson
- 16 - Marshall & Sandra Allen
- Robert & Suzanne
Huddleston
- 22 - Bernie & Julie Hawks

Statistics Needed: \$1,736

Date	Worship	SS	Offering
1/6	28		\$2,822.00
1/6		Gil's Hills	\$ 50.00
1/10	19		\$2,194.93
1/17	28		\$1,218.00
1/24	24		\$1,235.00
1/24		Gil's Hills	\$ 150.00

Others to keep in prayer:

- Norma Andrus
- Todd Baxter
- Bob & Sandy Beard
- Russell Brown
- Hazel Cornell
- David Edwards
- Nancy Frazier
- Brian Fries
- Tyler Griffin
- Don Hall
- David Halstead
- Donna Hart
- Bernie Hawks
- Bob Huddleston
- Katie Kellogg
- Sandy Lathrop
- Bruce Metler
- Mark Middaugh
- Nellie Moses
- Justin Murphy
- Keith Pierce
- Laroy Spateholts
- Mary Lou Sprague
- Donald Thompson
- Jessica Veiders
- JoAnn Viglietta
- Clint Wilder
- James Woodruff
- Ken Wyant
- Judy Zayac



Please keep our prayer list up to date.

If someone should be added or removed from the prayer list, please submit their name in writing.

Thank you!

February
Helping
Hands



Greeter:
Kevin Kranock

Power Point:
Rob Cornell

Pianist:
Christine Berardi

Altar Guild:
Thela Snow
Holly Scoville



If you have a prayer request, call the prayer chain.

Call Ruth Holden at 968-1933



You can watch live streaming of Worship Services on our

website, www.cubaumc.org, and also on the Cuba UMC Facebook page.



Sue Simmons is the UMW's Cheer Person. If you know of someone who needs a note of cheer, please call her at **585-968-1135.**

Cornerstone District Superintendent Suzanne's January Meditation



January 14, 2021

We are almost halfway through the month of January 2021. Seems impossible. We have celebrated the New Year, Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord. This is one of my favorite times of the church calendar year and there are many. A time of beginning again.

Epiphany. Matthew 2:1-2, 9-12: *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and **the star** they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw **the star**, they were **overjoyed**. 11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and **worshipped** him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. 12 And having **been warned in a dream** not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.*

I am reminded of the faithfulness and obedience of the wise men. Historically, we believe Jesus was a toddler (between two and three years old) when the wise men came to worship him and offer him their gifts. A journey lasting between two and three years! Then the wise men paid attention to the warning they received in a dream and returned to their country by another route.

How faithful and obedient are you to God's leading in your life? How faithful and obedient am I to God's leading in my life? We continue to journey through this pandemic together, 10 months so far. Are you and I, like the wise men, willing to journey faithfully and obediently together, no matter how long it takes?

Baptism of the Lord. Matthew 3:13-17: *13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. 14 But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. 16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.**"*

On this Sunday in the church calendar year, the congregation and I would celebrate the "Congregational Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant." (The Baptismal Covenant IV, UM Hymnal pg. 50-53). The symbolic importance of water related to baptism would be explored and a step-by-step teaching of the "Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith," would follow.

How do we in our own lives, as faithful followers of Jesus, laity and clergy, live out our vows in this Baptismal Covenant? (UM Hymnal pg. 50)

§ Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?

§ Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

§ Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations and races?

§ According to the grace given you, will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?

The vows of this covenant have become more critical to me each year in my faith journey. Living as a faithful follower of Jesus Christ is not easy. Some days it is really challenging and some days I miss the mark. Our lives should have an eternal focus. I hope and pray through the power of the Holy Spirit that our lives will continue to be transformed – becoming more and more Christ-like.

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*

Continued on Page 6



DUDLEY TAILS

Submitted by Cheryl Wildrick

Dudley, you are a delight. Oh yes... there are times when you aren't. 'Like when you bark too much or too loud. Or when you take a juicy bone into the Livingroom and put it on the carpet. But I love you.

How do I love you? Let me count the ways. First, there are the mornings when your master gets up, and goes immediately to get dressed for the day. You sit there, wondering when you will be greeted. But, you don't wait long. As your master passes by, you quickly give a wet lick to the back of that passing leg. Thank you for that kiss.

Then, there's your tail... It's not a shinny tail or a long tail. It's not even a straight tail. It stands one inch straight up from your lower back and then it explodes into a black and white mushroom cloud. It amuses your master, especially when you wiggle it.

Next there is your back. It's long, compared to your short legs. In summer your fur is short, but in winter your fur is thick and long. You can't get deep enough to scratch your skin, so, the itch is never quite satisfied. That's when you ask to have your back scratched... and, as it is scratched, you show a silly grin of contentment.

It's fun to watch you, Dudley, when you get excited. Two things are certain to excite you. One is the question, "Do you want to go for a walk?" And, the other is the question, "Would you like a treat?" Both receive the same response: a motor (which can't be found) sets your body to wiggling. Then, the site of a Milkbone Soft Chew (or a hand on the door knob) intensifies the wiggle. It brings an involuntary smile.

Dudley's night time routine includes sleeping on the loveseat while the TV is on, and then going upstairs to the bedroom for the night. However, Dudley is intimidated by twelve steps that lead to the second floor. So, he waits to be carried up by his master. It's a tender moment that is shared by both. Then... when Dudley is kissed on his floppy ear... he does not resist.

Did you know, that when God's chosen people (the Jews) were returning to the Promised Land (after slavery in Egypt)... Moses told them that things would be much better. They would again, "obey the Lord and follow (the Lord's) commands." (Deuteronomy 30:8) At that time, not only would the Jews become prosperous... but, the Lord would also, "DELIGHT" in them. (Deuteronomy, end of verse 9).

Later in history, King David wrote a psalm of praise to God that conveys a similar idea. "The Lord 'DELIGHTS' in those who fear him, who put their hope in His unfailing love." (Psalm 147:11) Don't let the word 'fear' confuse you. We are not to cower like a naughty child who see a spanking coming. But, we should be humble and respectful, knowing that indeed, God has the power of life and death, and we are sinners. As Moses said, we also should put our hope (for the future) in God's unfailing love.

Think what it would be like, to be so close to God, that we talk with Him, walk with Him, and obey Him. Think what it would be like for our Master to DELIGHT in us!



If you have not felt comfortable to return in person to worship, please check out the church's live broadcast each Sunday. Live streaming of the worship service has been available since the end of November and each week the quality of the broadcast has improved. There is even closed captioning for we people "of an age". **Thanks to Doug Clayson and Jim Travis** for recognizing the need, researching the technology and making it happen. *Peggy Pearce*

("Suzanne's January Meditation" Continued from Page 4)

A new year gives us the gift of a new beginning. Each day gives us a new beginning. Each hour gives us a new beginning.

Ephesian 4: 1-7,22-24: I (Paul) therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Today, as I write this article, I am well aware of the world's happenings. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 5:9: *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."*

The need for prayer is overwhelming. Thank goodness we are called to pray continually! The world needs the hope and love found in Jesus. Continue to boldly share the good news! Remember, we are in this journey together.

Grace, Peace and Love,

Suzanne

COUNCIL OF CHURCHES NEWS

Submitted by Peggy Pearce



The Cuba Council of Churches met on Sunday, January 10 at North Park Wesleyan Church. Social distancing was observed and face masks required.

The Thanksgiving-Advent Service held at the North Park Wesleyan Church November 29, 2020 was well attended (40-50 people) given COVID concerns and restrictions. All Cuba clergy participated, some in person and some by pre-recorded messages. The service was live streamed for those who chose not to go in person.

The Council's Holiday Assistance Program offered help in the form of vouchers to area stores for 70 households that included 176 children. Even with COVID guideline restrictions in place (social distancing, face masks, etc.), the program proceeded very well.

At this time, the Food Pantry is well stocked in some areas: canned vegetables, canned soups, pasta sauces and dry spaghetti. Other areas not as well supplied include fruit in cans and jars, broths, gravy, Jell-O, juice, coffee, tea, personal care items and cleaning supplies. Eleven households were provided with food assistance during November and December.

Reports from the various church representatives were received:

- Christ Episcopal Church radio and online services continue to do well and grow in numbers. There were 500 listeners in January.
- Cuba First Baptist Church held a pre-recorded Christmas Eve service and is preparing for their annual meeting for later in January. They are also working to improve their online experience.
- North Park Wesleyan Church held their annual Living Nativity plus two Christmas Eve services. They are installing new audio/video equipment.
- Our Lady of Angels holds worship attendance by COVID rules and a new Bishop is being elected.

The next meeting of the Council will be Sunday, March 14 at Cuba First Baptist Church.

No groups and activities are allowed to use the church at this time due to COVID-19.

February 2021

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
11:00 AM
Mask & Social Distancing Required

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1		2	3 Trustees Mtg. 6:00 pm Management Team Mtg. 6:45 pm	4	5	6
7 UMW Food Pantry Collection	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 March Newsletter Deadline Noon	16	17 ASH WEDNESDAY	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Gil's Hills Offering						

The Shepherd's Messenger

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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The Shepherd's Messenger is a publication of the Cuba United Methodist Church, and is published monthly to report news & keep members and friends informed of church programs and events. Deadline for article submission is the third Monday of each month at noon. Please email articles to Editor's email address, or drop articles off to the church office.

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Home: (716) 373-4332

Romans 5:5, ESV

