

Westminster Times



Greenwood, South Carolina

Volume 2, Number 4

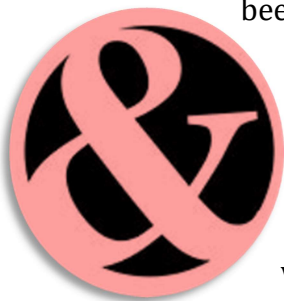
Strangers in a Strange Land

Dear Westminster@Home,

This morning, I am thinking about Abram. That was father Abraham's name before he answered God's call to pick up stakes and head west. Abram left everything he had ever known with only the promise that God would go with him.

Like you, I am headed into May, a land with which I have

been familiar. In former years, it has been filled with spring concerts, a big horse race, a big car race, end of school exams, proms and graduations, and Memorial Day celebrations. Like you, I am headed into a new kind of May, into a land with which I am entirely unfamiliar. There are so many questions. The students will graduate, but how? The church will continue to worship, but in what way? The people will continue to work, and play, and sing, and eat, and cry, and argue, and help. But what will the needs be? What tools do we need to bring along into this new land?



When Abram left Haran for the land that God had promised to him and his descendants, Abram did not yet know God very well. He only knew him well enough to say, "Yes." Along the way, Abram grew to trust God. He came to more fully understand just what God's promise of companionship would mean. Along the way, God changes Abram's name to Abraham, which means "Father of a Great Multitude."

We are part of that great multitude, ready now to do what our common ancestor Abram did. We are ready to put our hands into God's hand, and walk with trust into this unfamiliar territory, knowing the only thing we *can* know, that God goes with us. Along the way, I believe, we will discover new things about the One who promises to be with us.

And I wonder—what name God will give *us*, along the way?

I hope it is something like, "Those Who Trust in the Lord," or "Those Sent into a Strange Land to be a Blessing."

Friends, with hope and trust, let us go into this new land, as people called out *for* blessing, to *be* a blessing.

In confidence in the One who goes with us, I am your pastor and friend,

Caroline

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out not knowing where he was going."

Hebrews 11:8

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Hebrews 11:1

At Home with God: We are All in This Together

Our current situation gives us a brand new lens on so many things, and especially, I think on God's word. I don't know about you, but so much of scripture just seems spot on today. I believe it is because so much of scripture speaks to the suffering that people endure. So much of scripture is an encouragement and a balm to those who are weary, grieving, confused, and losing hope.

The lectionary has given us a letter to the early church, First Peter, for our consideration in this Easter season. This is a letter to people who were suffering. We who have known such blessing can commiserate with these early Christians, as we see our planned for and expected lives upended, and wonder just what faithful Christians are supposed to do now.

We will find some familiar and *not* so familiar words there as we dwell on them in worship this month. I pray that they will build us up and urge us on, as we continue to live as people called out by God's grace to make God our home, wherever we are.

Sermon topics and lectionary readings:

May 3: For Goodness Sake *Good Shepherd Sunday*

- † Psalm 23
- † Acts 2:42-47
- † 1 Peter 2:19-25

May 10: A Holy Household *Mother's Day*

- † John 14:1-7
- † 1 Peter 2:2-10

May 17: A Ready Defense

- † John 14:15-21
- † 1 Peter 3:13-22

May 24: What God Will Do *Ascension Sunday*

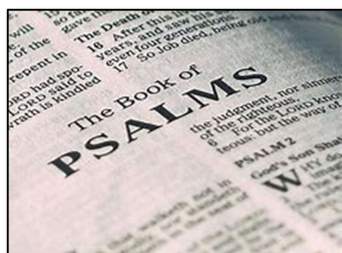
- † Psalm 68: 1-10, 32-35
- † 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

May 31: (Re)Creating Spirit *Pentecost*

- † Acts 2:1-21
- † Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Sunday Study: The Book of Psalms

A little thing like house arrest...I mean, shelter in place...will *not* prevent Westminster from pursuing our Christian education and faith formation goals. According to committee chair



Kathy Gillespie, Sunday Studies will continue at 9:00 A.M. every Sunday morning via Zoom technology.

For the next several weeks, we will be diving into the Book of Psalms. As Kathy noted, "This seems like the perfect study for these times. I think many of us turn to the Psalms to find comfort, foster hope, and share praise. I know I do."

Look for the Zoom link and your study materials in the weekly *Come Sunday* publication (usually emailed on Fridays). The materials come from TheThoughtfulChristian.com, an ecumenical site dedicated to helping Christians and seekers understand, share, practice, and be challenged in their faith.

The Christian Education Committee would love to hear from you regarding the best ways to meet your needs. Would you like to have studies sometime *other than* Sunday morning? Are there topics you'd like to study? Email Kathy at: gillespiekat53@gmail.com.

The Importance of Ascension Day

From *pcusa.org*

Forty days after the Resurrection of the Lord (Easter Sunday), we remember and celebrate the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven. (See Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:1-11; see also Mark 16:19-20.) On this day, the church gives thanks for Christ's sovereign rule over all the earth, as well as his priestly intercession for us at the throne of mercy (Hebrews 4:14-16).



Christ is Lord

Given that John Calvin's theology placed great importance on the ascended and regnant Christ, Ascension Day is in some ways *the* Presbyterian feast day. Christ is Lord of the world and head of the church, we proclaim. Christ's ascension, therefore, concerns us not only with ecclesiastical matters but also with social and political ones. If Christ has ascended, then there are no other rulers — all others are merely pretenders. Christ reigns supreme.

With the raising of Christ to a position above all worldly powers, the earthly ministry of Christ begun at Christmas's incarnation now concludes. The path of faithfulness obediently followed by Christ traveled through the suffering of the cross to the exaltation of the glory. From glory to suffering to glory again is the shape of Jesus' ministry as well as ours. We too, are destined for the glory we share now in Christ only by faith. "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when Christ appears we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

Pentecost: Come, Holy Spirit

From *pcusa.org*

On the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church's proclamation of Christ's rising and to empower its mission and ministry to the world. (Acts 2:1-13; see also Joel 2:28-32)

Pentecost is new creation

According to the Day of Pentecost story in Acts 2:1-13, God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower witnesses to the resurrection. Sounds from heaven, cosmic language, the rush of a mighty *ruach* (wind, spirit, breath) invaded the house in which the apostles gathered, and appeared to them as a burning fire. Tongues of fire touched their nerve centers. A power—the *unseen* power of God—moved among them and gripped them. The Holy Spirit is unseen, like the wind, which is why the Old Testament calls it *ruach YHWH*, "the wind, or breath, of God" (cf. John 3:8).



Therefore, on the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate God's gift of Holy Spirit which draws us together as one people, helps us to comprehend what God is doing in the world, and empowers us to proclaim, in word and in deed, God's plan of reconciling all people in the name of Christ (Ephesians 1:10).

Without the gift of the Spirit, Christ's church dries up and withers away, and we are left with only our broken selves. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible. A spirit-filled community of faith opens eyes to needs in the world and sees its missing as God's new people. The Day of Pentecost is the climax of the Great Fifty Days of Easter, celebrating as it does the gift of the Spirit to the body of Christ: the church.

Westminster Happenings

Wednesday Apr 29	Quest: Youth Fellowship for All God's Children 7:00 P.M. via Zoom Stay safe, stay connected.
Sunday May 3	<i>Good Shepherd Sunday—For Goodness Sake</i> Sunday Study at 9:00 A.M. via Zoom Worship at 10:00 A.M. via the WPC YouTube Channel Flock together virtually as the sheep of God's pasture.
Wednesday May 6	Quest: Youth Fellowship for All God's Children 7:00 P.M. via Zoom Continue your faith journey with your church friends.
Sunday May 10	<i>Mother's Day—A Holy Household</i> Sunday Study at 9:00 A.M. via Zoom Worship at 10:00 A.M. via the WPC YouTube Channel Honor the Lord and your mother, wherever you are!
Wednesday May 13	Quest: Youth Fellowship for All God's Children 7:00 P.M. via Zoom Finalize faith statements as you prepare to meet with the Session.
Sunday May 17	A Ready Defense Sunday Study at 9:00 A.M. via Zoom Worship at 10:00 A.M. via the WPC YouTube Channel Praise God, our defense and shield. Stated Session Meeting 4:00 P.M. via Zoom Meet with confirmands to hear their faith statements.
Wednesday May 20	Quest: Youth Fellowship for All God's Children 7:00 P.M. via Zoom Learn more about God and His plans for His people.
Sunday May 24	<i>Ascension Sunday—What God Will Do</i> Note: NO Sunday Study–NO service at Cokesbury campus <i>WOW Kickoff:</i> Worship at 9:00 A.M. at Camp Fellowship Worship the Lord in the beauty of His creation.

Westminster Happenings, *continued*

Wednesday May 27	Quest: Youth Fellowship for All God's Children 7:00 P.M. via Zoom The journey continues.
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Sunday May 31	<i>Pentecost Sunday—(Re)Creating Spirit</i> Sunday Study at 9:00 A.M. via Zoom Worship at 10:00 A.M. via the WPC YouTube Channel Be filled afresh by the Holy Spirit. Worship on the Water Worship at 9:00 A.M. at Camp Fellowship Come by boat, come by car, come as you are!
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Supporting Presbyterian Communities on Mother's Day

Mother's Day is a time we set aside to remember and thank the mothers who have given so much to us. Associated with Mother's Day, South Carolina Presbyterians have a long tradition of generously supporting the PCSC Mother's Day Offering.



This offering has been a special way of remembering and caring for older adults since 1954. The monies received from the Mother's Day Offering are used exclusively for those residents who, through no fault of their own, have outlived their financial resources and need assistance to remain in Presbyterian Communities.

After years of living with us, some residents inevitably find themselves unable to pay for the full cost of their room and board. The Mother's Day Offering is essential to providing the necessary funds, helping ensure that no one in this situation has to hear that PCSC no longer has the means to care for them. Rather, the witness of the Mother's Day Offering and benevolences from church budgets assures them that they are cared for and not forgotten.

Westminster is collecting this special offering the week beginning on Mother's Day Sunday, May 10th. When you mail in your offering, be sure to note that it is for the annual PCSC special offering. Make checks payable to Westminster Presbyterian, and send them, along with your pledge and other contributions to: 2330 Cokesbury Road, Greenwood, SC 29649.

Socially Active While Socially Distanced



Even when Westminster's Presbyterian Women are not gathering in person, they are still making a difference in our community. PW Circle gave a \$500 donation to Camp Fellowship to help meet the immediate and unexpected challenge of hosting Uganda's Imani Milele Choir (including 21 children plus their support team of 16 adults).

Circle meetings remain on hold for a while. The members feel that practicing social distancing and sheltering at home are still appropriate at this time.

Showers of Blessings—No Umbrella Required!

You are cordially invited to a Baby Shower Parade honoring Elizabeth & Hamp Watkins, and soon-to-be-Big-Sister, Callie Rose. They, and we, are eagerly anticipating the impending birth of Macie Hale Watkins.

We will meet at the church at 11:00 A.M. on Saturday, May 2nd, and parade over to their home. Decorate your car to add to the fun!

Suggested gift items: Pampers or Huggies diapers, gift cards

Bonus Mission Opportunity: We will also be collecting non-perishable food items for Greater Greenwood United Ministry. Bring your contributions to the church on May 2 at 10:30 A.M. as we form up our cavalcade.

Items most needed: canned meats, pasta sauce, pasta, canned fruit, instant mac & cheese, peanut butter, jelly, small bags of rice, small bags of beans, soups.

If you have any questions, please contact Emily Kienker at 803.920.0490 or Nancy Dozier at 864.941.2199.



Speaking of Birthdays...

Best wishes and sincere prayers for these members and friends with May birthdays:



- ❖ 3rd - Flora Hobson
- ❖ 6th - Jacob Dennis
- ❖ 21st - Len Bornemann
- ❖ 28th - Jennifer Sholar
- ❖ 29th - David Bell

Congratulations are also in order for these amazing couples celebrating their wedding anniversary:

- ❖ 5th - Len & Lynn Bornemann
- ❖ 14th - Ody & Jennifer Sholar
- ❖ 26th - Arthur & Kathy Gillespe

If you haven't already done so, please send your family's special dates to Lee Haskins at the church office (wpcgwd1@gmail.com) or call 864.229.3595.

Poetry Corner—Ode to Caroline

Submitted by Delilah Doggerel

Have you met our amazing new Pastor?
You sure can't get anything past her!

She keeps moving faster and faster
In response to the viral disaster.

At this point, it's more than a hunch
That she'll always come through in a crunch.

I think that she's more saint than sinner,
And thank God that He sent us this winner!

Your Stewardship is Essential

Westminster is blessed to have many faithful givers! Your continued support is essential to sustain WPC through this unique chapter in our history. Please remember to mail in your check for His tithes and your offerings:



Westminster Presbyterian Church
2330 Cokesbury Road
Greenwood, SC 29649

Westminster Spotlight: Benjamin Watkins

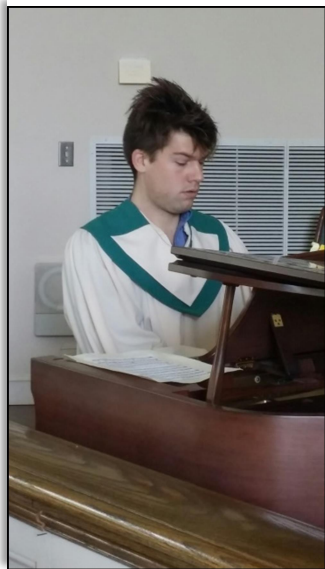
Difficult times can bring unexpected blessings. Such is the case for Westminster, as university shut-downs in Indiana made it possible for Benjamin Watkins to lend his monumental musical talents to our worship while he spends time in Greenwood with his family.

Originally from South Carolina, Benjamin attended the South Carolina Governor's School for Arts & Humanities in Greenville. After graduation, he continued his studies at Northwestern University (Bachelor of Music), and Indiana's Jacobs School of Music (Master of Music; Doctor of Music in progress).

He has studied piano, conducting, and music history, and he is currently the music director at United Presbyterian Church in Bloomington, IN.

His Doctorate of Music degree is in progress at IU, with a final thesis on cryptology and hidden meanings in the late music of Johannes Brahms. He is president and music director of Bloomington Chamber Opera, which just presented its first production, Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, featuring 26 up-and-coming opera singers and a 19-piece chamber orchestra. He is thankful for the chance to be back with his family during this pandemic.

While balancing practice time with family time, Benjamin was kind enough to pause and respond to our spotlight's traditional Five Essential Questions:



1. What gives you joy? Nature, particularly the mountains and the night sky

2. What drives you crazy? Loudspeaker music/commercials in grocery stores. Sometimes I wear headphones with no music playing just to get away from it.

3. What's your favorite piece of music? Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony*, particularly this recording of it:
<https://youtu.be/gaz3-ZKeSjQ>

4. What's your favorite thing to do in your spare time? I love to cook, especially when basil is in season.

5. What's your favorite meal? Fourth Meal

Greenwood Place April Update

Submitted by Fred Murphy, Executive Director



Greenwood Place continues to follow the guidelines that have been established for businesses in South Carolina. At this time, the Clubhouse will remain closed at least through April 30th, and because of the risk to our Membership, we may elect to remain closed for a longer time.

While we are closed physically, the Clubhouse is still active in reaching out to our Members. For the first 3 weeks of April, the Clubhouse has had over 200 points of contact with our Members. These points of contacts include phone calls, cards and, in some cases, personal visits. It is rewarding to hear from the Members and their families about how they are dealing with these difficult times, and to hear how much the Clubhouse means to them and their need to come back. We are hoping that we will be able to accommodate this desire in the near future.

As we look at how we will reopen the Clubhouse, we are reaching out for a couple of items of need. One of those is digital thermometers. As we open, we will be checking Members for potential infection by taking their temperature digitally when they are picked up or come to the Clubhouse. The Clubhouse currently has one thermometer, but would like to obtain two additional ones, so that we can test at the time members are picked up at their home.

Greenwood Place applied for and was approved for the Payroll Protection Plan during April. This will allow us to obtain so funding for salaries that will enable us to keep our staff together.

Please keep our Members and Staff in your thoughts and prayers that we stay safe, and that we will soon be able to come back together to experience the benefits and fellowship that the Clubhouse can offer.

NOTE: Greenwood Place has postponed its Spaghetti Dinner that was scheduled for April 23rd. We will reschedule this event for a later time.

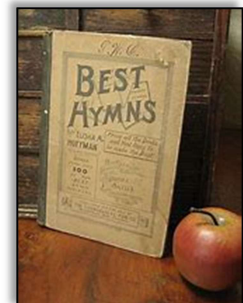
Play It Again, Sam...I mean Larry



Your volunteer musicians are soliciting recommendations and requests from the entire congregation regarding hymns you would like to sing in the coming weeks. Email your requests to the church office: wpcgwd1@gmail.com.

You can hark back to your growing-up years with the Presbyterian Red Hymnal, or perhaps with Baptist, Methodist, or any other denomination's favorites that are not

sung that much anymore. And don't forget the great songs you learned in Sunday School and enjoyed singing as a child, or the ones that your grandparents taught you "back in the day." Let us make a joyful noise!



Part of a series on mental health issues

Mental Health Resources Related to COVID-19

Excerpted from an email from the Mental Health Ministries Division of the PC(USA) Compassion, Peace, and Justice Mission Agency

Many people are asking about mental health and looking for resources. Many excellent resources are available, with more being generated every day. Here is a link to a curated “short list” of COVID-19 Mental Health Resources gathered from trusted sources and grouped by intended audience. Categories include resources for: Everyone, Children, Congregations, Clergy & Mid-Councils, People with Pre-existing Mental Health Concerns.



- www.pcusa.org/mentalhealth . Click on ‘COVID-19 Mental Health Resources’ in upper right menu sidebar.

In closing, I invite you to think of the circles of caring that you are part of—within and beyond your immediate faith community—and to consider sharing this link if you think they would find these resources helpful. Thank you for all you are doing where you are.

Donna Miller, PsychD

Associate for Mental Health Ministries



New Prayer Partnerships Keep Us Connected

To support one another and strengthen the closeness of our community, the Fellowship & Congregational Care Committee recently published a Prayer Partners list. As a part of the Westminster family, you are paired with someone to pray *for*, and who will also pray *for you*. Our hope is that

during this time—and beyond—you will find a bright light of comfort and peace in praying and caring for one another in this small partnership.

Tips for how to pray with your partner:

1. Set aside time to pray. This is important, so that prayers can be spoken and heard.
2. Take turns praying for each other.
3. Ask for follow-up on previous prayers. How are they doing? What has changed?
4. Allow your conversation to flow naturally. This is a friendship!

Ideas on how to reach out and stay connected:

1. Make a phone call.
2. Write and mail a card or handwritten note.
3. Send a photo of something that brings you joy.
4. Share an interesting news clipping or comic strip.
5. Get creative!

We look forward to hearing about how your prayer partnerships are growing, and what fruits you see in your life as you plug into the power of shared prayer. If you need help connecting with your prayer partner, please contact the church office. We will be glad to assist.

Let Us Pray...



For Those in Our Church

We lift our prayers for those dealing with health issues, including especially:

- Kathy Felder
- Lynn Bornemann
- Mary Corley
- Larry Dozier
- Lee Haskin's sisters
- Laine Horowitz
- Lucia Horowitz
- Fred Taber
- Elizabeth Watkins and family
- Tommy Wilson

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now."

Philippians 1:3-5

We pray for those who are caring for friends and family.

We pray for students and educators whose lives are disrupted by the COVID-19 restrictions, including all of our youth and children, school administrators Martha Brothers and Nickie Templeton, and teacher Phillip Dennis. Also, we offer special prayers for high school and college seniors deprived of many special moments and memories, including Logan Bruce and his family, Wendy Bruce and Robby Corley.

We pray for the ministries of our church, especially:

- Quest: Youth
- Prison Ministry
- Thornwell Home
- Greenwood Place
- NAMI
- Camp Fellowship
- Greenwood Food Pantry
- Greater Greenwood United Ministries



For Those in Our Hearts

We pray for these members of our wider community:

- Charles Alexander
- Sissy Brockenbrough
- Tom & Lucia Bryson
- Ashlyn Buchanan
- Ronnie Case
- Clara Costello
- Scott Crandall
- Debbie Dill
- Kiersty Duncan
- Charlotte Gero
- Betty Gossam
- Dee Greene
- Lois & Bob Grice
- Jimmy Hughes
- Norma Hoviss
- Di Litwer
- Ashley Mahon
- Bill & Suzy Mitchell
- Margaret Rada
- Terrance Reece
- Howard Thomas
- Jack Waldrup
- Ed Watkins
- Frank & Karen Whitt
- Jeff Williams
- Sarah Willis



For the World

We pray for all our neighbors everywhere who we are called to love as we love ourselves:

- For all those everywhere affected by the COVID-19 pandemic
- For those seeking work
- For those living with mental illness
- For the Gartrell family, our mission partners in Brazil

WPC Joins Greenwood Chamber

Westminster is now a member of the Greenwood Area Chamber of Commerce. The relationship has three immediate benefits for our congregation. The first is that we can now share announcements and information with hundreds of other Chamber members via the Chamber communication network.

Second, we can now participate in

the NonProfit Network. As Caroline has already learned, this is a great forum for identifying needs and sharing solutions to help those *in need*.

And finally, this new connection gives everyone in the congregation access to Chamber resources, including free or reduced cost participation in Chamber events. So be on the lookout for information and invitations to selected Chamber events. The Greenwood Chamber is always cultivating growth and progress for our community. **Visit their website at: GreenwoodSCChamber.org.**



Give Blood—Save a Life

“Blood centers are open now and in need of your donation,” Surgeon General Jerome Adams said in a recent press conference.

Blood donations in Greenwood County are handled by The Blood Connection. They are taking extra precautions based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including placing donation beds

6 feet apart, and encouraging donors

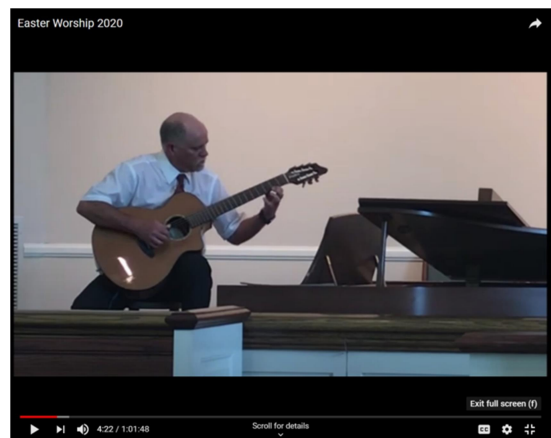
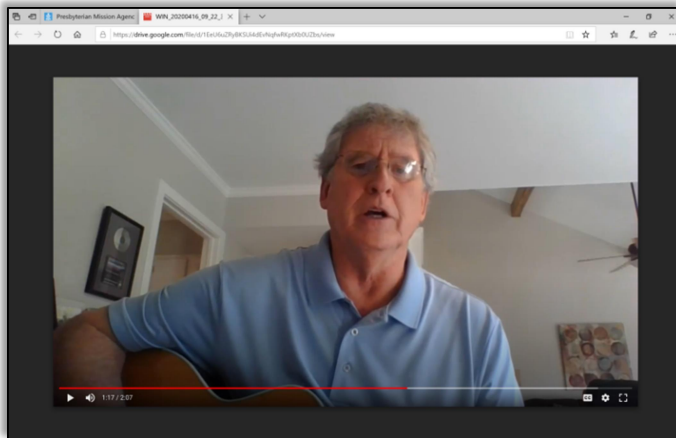
to schedule their appointments a few days ahead of time.



“Social distancing doesn’t mean social disengagement,” Adams said. “So give blood today, you’ll feel good about it.” Call today to schedule a visit.

The Blood Connection
341 Old Abbeville Highway
Greenwood, SC 29649
864.227.8333

“Make Music from Your Heart to the Lord” *Ephesians 5:19*

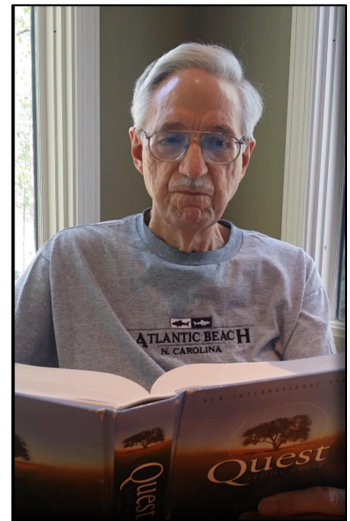
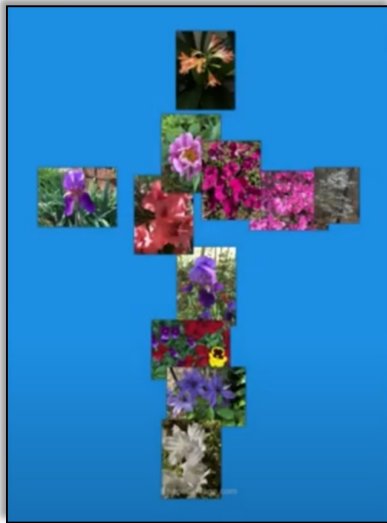


Talented guitarists David Bell (above left) and Ashby Stokes (above right) enhanced our worship experience through music.

And God Saw That It Was Good



Flowering of the Cross—old school and new school



Liturgist in his native habitat



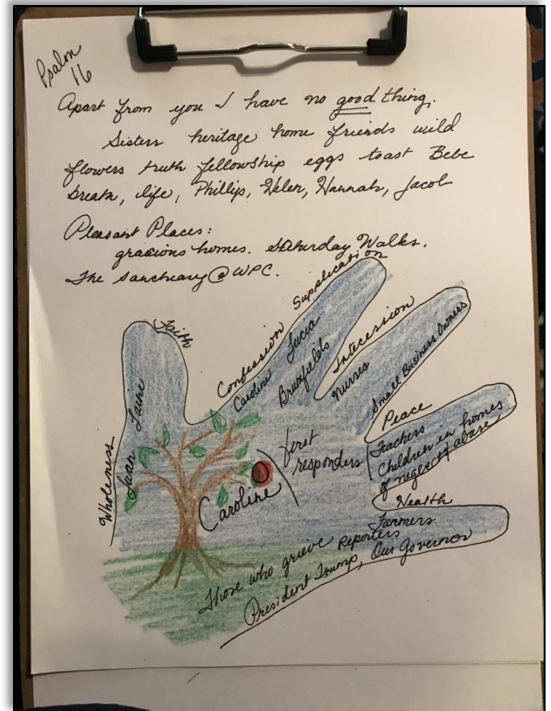
*Session (above) and Youth (below)
Zooming together*



*Communion in the sanctuary (above) and
at the Horowitz home (below)*



And God Saw That It Was Good, *continued*



*"Let all creation rejoice
before the Lord!"*

Psalm 96:13

