

Dear Friends:

A couple of weeks ago I was playing around on YouTube and came across some highlights from the movie "Apollo 13." I remember the movie and went to see it when it was out, but what I really remember, even though I was just a child at the time, are the actual events. Most of you are familiar with them, I'm sure. Fresh off the successful moon trips of Apollo 11 and 12, Apollo 13 was a very different story. There was an explosion, a loss of power and oxygen, and for several days the world clung to the news, hoping and praying for a safe return.

One of the trickiest parts of the journey home was the "re-entry," when the Command Module had to plunge through the Earth's atmosphere on the way to splash down. It was tricky because the heat shield that protects the Command Module during re-entry had been damaged, and no one was sure if it would hold up. It did hold up, of course, and thanks to heroic efforts, the astronauts made it back safely to earth.

This idea of re-entry, and the dangers it entails, has been on my mind a bit lately. It is on my mind because we are beginning to face a dangerous re-entry ourselves, a re-entry into our lives, our world, and our society, into so much that seems to have been left behind during the pandemic. How do we re-enter our lives, and do so in a safe and faithful way? Here are a few thoughts.

- Take your time. Don't rush back into everything you did before until you feel good and ready. I know there are voices out there that are saying everything is fine now, but you must make your own decision. Don't let anyone push you to move faster than you are ready to move.
- Pay attention to what you are feeling. The levels of anxiety and depression have sky-rocketed during the pandemic. As I mentioned in my last article, take time to slow down, pause, and name the emotions that you are feeling. I have found myself to be very much on edge at times, and that edginess has bled over into my encounters with friends and family. Has that happened to you? Sometimes it is the people to whom we are the closest that bear the brunt of our anxiety. Have you had disagreements with anyone lately? Then pay close attention to what you are feeling.
- Pray, pray, pray, and when you finish with that, pray some more. Take your feelings, the good, the bad, and the ugly, to God in prayer. It is perfectly ok to feel stress, anxiety, and worry about everything that is going on right now, especially about getting back out into the world. Remember, however, that you do not have to deal with all of this on your own. Turn to God, lay your concerns at God's feet. Philippians 4:6-7 says "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Yes, re-entry back into our lives may be tough. It may be filled with peril, fear, and trepidation. But remember this: we do not go back by ourselves. God is with us, God loves us, and God will be with us every step of the way.

Yours in Christ, John Pruitt

CHURCH INFORMATION

First Presbyterian Church 611 Oakhurst Street Kernersville, NC 27284

Office: (336) 993-7358 Fax: (336) 993-5526 www.fpckernersville.org

> Rev. John Pruitt Minister

Ms. Jane Johnson Church Secretary

Services:

Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.

CHURCH (USA)

Birthdays

July

- 2 Joyce White
- 5 Gerry Sharp
- 12 Deryel Clark
- 13 Joy Lynn Budkey
- 17 Winnie Theobald
- 27 Konnie Conrad
- 29 Jan Roney

August

- 1 Kae Mattingly
- 4 Rusty Sudderth
- 14 Marcia Newton
- 19 Burch Idol
- 20 Dottie Roudabush

September

- 4 Robert Kerr
- 7 Kerry Kerr
- 12 Robert Myers
- 14 Nick Nitkin
- 16 Floyd Conrad
- 17 Norman Self
- 18 Donna Carmichael
- 18 Jim Carmichael
- 25 Debbie Dillon
- 26 Lynda Self
- 27 Judy Maxwell
 - 9 Rocky Newton
- 30 Karen Mills

If your birthday is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office. Thank you.

Anniversaries

July 6 Allen & Kae Mattingly 8 Skip & Shirley Smith 16 Rocky & Lisa Newton 22 Mike & Darcy Polinsky

August
10 Deryel & Ginger Clark

SeptemberNothing on File

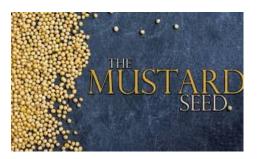
If your anniversary is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office. Thank you.

First Presbyterian Church Session Members

Class of 2019

Lorna Foster Lynda Self Class of 2020
Dee Barham
Rich Tincher

Class of 2021 Kerry Kerr Rusty Sudderth



The Parable of the Mustard Seed

by Mike Southern

The field stood empty,
just gently rolling hills and wild grass
where birds scratched for food.
A man walked by,
whistling as he enjoyed the sunshine
and the fresh country air...

Then he stopped.

He looked out across the empty field then reached into his pocket. He pulled out a small bag and poured something onto his palm.

SEEDS.

Seeds of many sizes and colors,
a gift from his young son,
gathered while he played in the garden.
There weren't many of them
and he didn't want to waste the gift...
but the field was so empty

and the birds looked so hungry so he walked out into the field and flung the seeds around him.

Then he walked away.

The birds quickly gobbled up the seeds

EXCEPT for one small mustard seed,

so small that the birds missed it

as they gobbled down the rest.

That tiny mustard seed fell through the grass

and onto the ground...

and it grew

and it grew

and it GREW

until it was so large the birds

came and built their nests in its branches.

And the field wasn't empty anymore.

Worship Service Schedules

To be determined due to Coronavirus.