

“THE MEADOWS MESSENGER”
A Communication of Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church
July 2019, Issue



meganmakes.com

**April, May and June
Financial Reports**

We hope that you find this information helpful as you pray for this congregation and evaluate your giving and participation in the worship, work and mission of this part of the Body of Christ. Sincerely, the Session and Pastor.

Tithes and Offerings needed for each week of 2019 = \$1,709.06. This figure is based on a total 2019 budget of \$88,871.00 which was approved by the Session.

APRIL

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (17 weeks)	\$6,836.23
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (17 weeks)	\$7,422.00
This results in a budget overage for this month	\$585.77
Total Expenses (17 weeks) resulting in an overage for the month	\$1,247.99

MAY

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (21 weeks)	\$6,836.23
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (21 weeks)	\$4,113.00
This results in a budget shortage for this month	(\$2,723.23)
Total Expenses (21 weeks) resulting in a shortage for the month	(\$2,951.31)

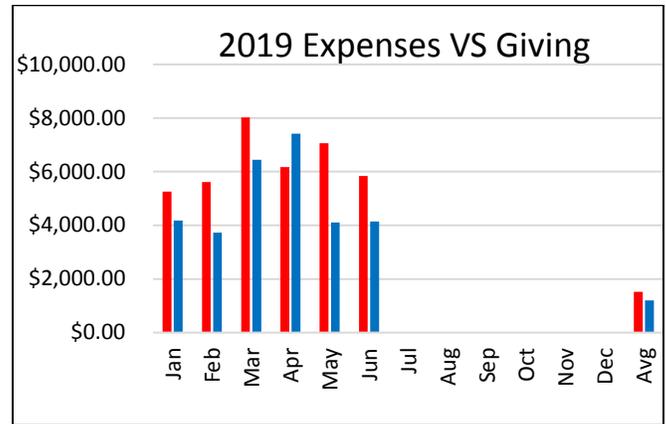
JUNE

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (4 of 5 weeks)	\$6,836.23
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (4 of 5 weeks)	\$4,137.00
This results in a budget shortage for this month	(\$2,699.23)
Total Expenses (4 of 5 weeks) resulting in a shortage for the month	(\$1,704.02)

YEAR TO DATE

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (25 weeks)	\$42,726.44
Actual Tithes and Offerings (25 weeks) received	\$30,020.00
This results in a budget shortage to this point	(\$12,706.44)
Total Expenses (25 weeks)	\$37,977.10
This results in a shortage to expenses for the year	(\$7,957.10)

For those of you who understand a chart better than a bunch of numbers, below is the ‘picture’ of our YTD finances for June 2019 (through week 4 of 5):



Expenses VS Income

Some Bible Trivia

The theme for this month is: farmers

1. What was the farmer Elisha doing when Elijah threw his mantle upon him?
2. What suffering man was a farmer?
3. Who planted the first garden?
4. What judge was a wheat farmer?
5. What king of Judah loved farming?
6. Who was the first man to plant a vineyard?
7. What barley farmer married a Moabite woman and became an ancestor of King David?
8. What lieutenant of David had his barley fields destroyed by Absalom?
9. What patriarch farmed in Gerar and received a hundredfold harvest?

Session Highlights

Due to Pastor Yvonne's sabbatical and study leave, the Session did not meet in May.

A Letter from Sheriff Steve Whisenant

If you were in worship on Mother's Day, then you know that the service was interrupted by a young man who needed some help contacting the police. Several of you responded quickly and others responded a little later when it was discovered that the young man had left two children in his truck. I learned about the incident when I returned to the manse after worshipping in town and saw two sheriff's deputy cars in the parking lot. I immediately went to the fellowship hall to investigate.

Last week, we have received a letter from Sheriff Steve Whisenant which reads in part:

Dear Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church and Church Members,

I want to express the Burke County Sheriff's Office's gratitude for your church and your members' Christian service involving a situation involving needy children on May 12, 2019.

Unfortunately, our duties routinely necessitate duties responding to situations where innocent children are the victims of neglect and living in unsuitable environments. However, the difference in this situation was a "hands on" response of caring people who took their time and their money to express their love and compassion for others.

We would like to specifically commend [you] for opening your fellowship hall and your supplies. Thank you, and may God bless you and your church.

From all that I know of this incident, it was a shining example of who you are as a congregation. Thanks to all who participated in this act of Christian grace towards a neighbor.

The Pastor's Ponderings

Well, by the time you receive and read this newsletter I will be back from my six weeks of sabbatical and two weeks of study leave. It was a good time of resting, spending time in prayer and reflection, working on 'clearing out' some of the emotional clutter of my life (Jesus might call those things tares or weeds, because they suck up the energy of life in our minds and hearts and give us nothing good in return), and study.

One of the themes in my times with God over the eight weeks was "being grounded". The image of a tree was presented to me – a tree with many and deep roots which go deep into the soil. What is the soil into which these roots go? It is the love and presence of God in my life – in all of our lives – which helps us understand who we are in Christ and helps us remember who we are when the storms or droughts of life come upon us.

A scripture passage with talks about being rooted and grounded in Christ is found in Ephesians 3:14-21:

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. ¹⁶ I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, [Christ] may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, ¹⁷ and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are **being rooted and grounded** in love. ¹⁸ I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰ Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

To help you reflect on this passage, I offer you a commentary by The Rev. Dr. Alan Brehm¹ who the pastor of Hickman Presbyterian Church in Hickman, Nebraska.

“Grounded”

There are some in our world today who view faith as something of an aberration, a mental illness. In fact, there are many who would associate religious faith more closely with a break from reality than with anything healthy. Think about it: we worship a God that no one has ever seen. We follow a Savior whom none of us ever met in person – face to face – and nobody we’ve ever know has ever met. And we practice a religion that is based on the premise of having a relationship with this God we’ve never seen and this Savior we’ve never met. It’s no wonder some people think we’re either deluding ourselves or simply hallucinating! From their perspective, those who practice faith are anything but “grounded.”

Unfortunately, that sentiment has at times been all too true – people with serious mental illness have used religion as an outlet for their obsessions and fantasies. And yet, it would be too simplistic to paint all faith with that brush. The fact of the matter is that there are many more people who have practiced the life of faith through acts of devotion and kindness, over and over again. Their lives are a testament to the best of humanity. They embody compassion and generosity. And they do so without any thought of praise or attention or reward for themselves. We would consider them incredibly grounded people.

It’s tempting at times to be cynical and assume that those people must have had it easy in life. That’s why they’ve made it through with their faith intact. They’ve been spared the abuse and tragedy and heartbreak that define this world where it often seems that there are no happy

endings. But to attribute faith to an “easy life” would be a mistake. The fact of the matter is that the life of genuine faith is not an easy one at all. If you take a good look, I think you will find that the deeper the faith, the more hardship and suffering in that person’s life. We might expect faith to make life easier, but in fact the opposite often seems true.

So what is it that keeps us going in this life of faith that can be so very difficult? Is it simply habit – we were raised in the faith and we simply cannot imagine life without it? That’s not much of a motivation for sustaining a life-long practice of faith. Is it the external aspects of serving others, worshipping God, and supporting our sisters and brothers in our community? Those aspects of faith are important, and they do play a role in sustaining faith. But I think the answer to our question is found elsewhere.

I believe St. Paul speaks of it in ... Ephesians [where he] uses some puzzling language to describe the life of faith. In his prayer for the Christians in that city, he speaks of being “strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit” (verse 16). That’s not language that is common in our vernacular; you don’t hear people talking like that at the mall or at work. We’re in a realm here that is mysterious and confusing. How do you talk about the internal aspect of our experience of God? It’s incredibly difficult, yet that’s what Paul is talking about. And the reason is because what sustains the life of faith is something that happens to us, something that happens inside us.

Part of this internal reality that St. Paul is trying to describe is that “Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (verse 17). This is also strange language, if you think about it. We believe that Jesus Christ lived and died and rose again, but Paul goes beyond that here – he views the life of faith not simple as a matter of looking

¹ Adapted from: <http://thewakingdreamer.blogspot.com/2012/07/grounded.html>.

Rev. Dr. Brehm holds PhD in Biblical Studies and has taught New Testament, Greek, Biblical Interpretation, and Philosophy of Religion various seminaries.

back to the life and ministry of Jesus, but as a matter of Christ living in our hearts in the here and now. And he says this happens through faith.

He also says this happens “as you are being rooted and grounded in love” (verse 17). Now he’s talking about things that seem more down-to-earth. He says that the life of faith is grounded in the experience of God’s love. And how do we experience God’s love? I think he answers that question in the next verse: “I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge” (verses 18-19). It’s “with all the saints” that we come to know this love. The idea is that it is in the community of faith that we experience the love of God. We enjoy this mysterious internal relationship with God as we support and encourage and love one another! Most of us who have pursued the life of faith have known people who communicated God’s love to us at various times in our lives. Sometimes that’s the only way we made it through a crisis. But it’s in those times when we really experience the life of faith at its best. That’s when, as St. Paul describes this life, we find ourselves “filled with all the fullness of God” (verse 19).

In my life’s journey, it seems to me that there is nothing so “grounding” as the experience of being loved. That’s what enables us to go on living this difficult and sometimes confusing life of faith. That’s what enables us to go through the ups and downs and twists and turns of life with stability and serenity and strength. We may never understand fully what it means to live in faith, to live in this mysterious relationship with an unseen God, to be strengthened by internal resources granted by the Spirit of God, to be grounded in the love of God. But even if we don’t understand it fully, the experience of God’s love continues to give us the internal strength to believe where we have not seen. It gives us the strength to keep praying the prayers and listening for God to speak through the Word. And it keeps

us grounded enough to go on serving others every day with peace, calm, kindness, and compassion.

(This is your pastor speaking now.) For some people – especially during the summer – it is tempting to slip away from the activities of church to do other things – picnics, trips, family reunions, sports events, etc. And as one who has just returned from taking some extended time off, I will certainly not entirely condemn the need to spend some time away. However, we must remember that God calls us to be a part of the community of believers where our faith roots can become entwined with the faith roots of others which will increase our grounding in the love and the presence of God, so that we can endure whatever comes to us in the rest of our lives. So, I encourage you over the next months, to be present with us for worship when you are in town and to visit other worshipping communities when you are not. In that way you will help maintain the health of your faith root system.

Pastor Yvonne



<https://ucccogs.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/aspen-roots-1030x773.jpg>

Some Humor

- Q. What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?
A. Ruthless.

Q. What do they call pastors in Germany?

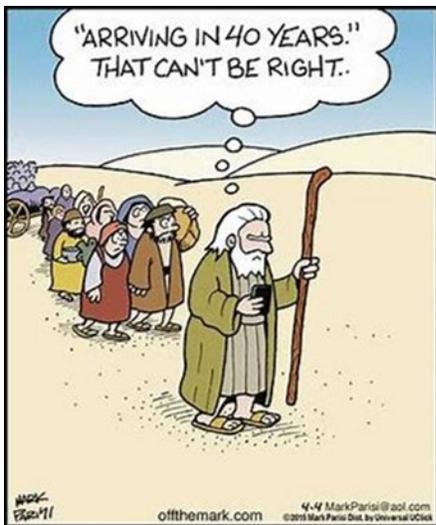
A. German Shepherds.

Q. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

A. Samson. He brought the house down.

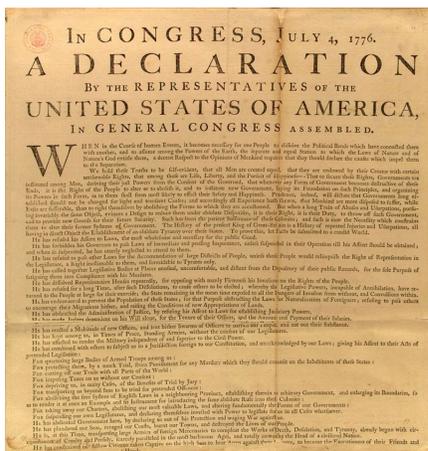
Q. What kind of motor vehicles are in the Bible?

A. Jehovah drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden in a Fury. David's Triumph was heard throughout the land. Also, probably a Honda, because the apostles all left in one Accord.



I'm glad that my GPS never said this on my trip to Pittsburgh in June!

Some "Little-known" Facts about the Declaration of Independence



• There is something written on the back of the Declaration of Independence, but it isn't a secret map or code. Instead, there are a few

handwritten words that say, "Original Declaration of Independence/ dated 4th July 1776". No one knows who wrote this, but it was probably added as a label when the document was rolled up for storage many years ago.

- Once the Declaration of Independence had been written and signed, printer John Dunlap was asked to make about 200 copies to be distributed throughout the colonies. Today, the "Dunlap Broadside" are extremely rare and valuable. In 1989, someone discovered a previously unknown Dunlap Broadside which was sold for over \$8 million in 2000. There are only 26 known surviving Dunlap Broadside today.
- Although Thomas Jefferson is often called the "author" of the Declaration of Independence, he wasn't the only person who contributed important ideas. Jefferson was a member of a five-person committee The Continental Congress appointed to write the Declaration, which included Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman.
- Robert Livingston, one of the members of the committee, never signed it. He believed that it was too soon to declare independence and therefore refused to sign.
- One of the most widely held misconceptions about the Declaration of Independence is that it was signed on July 4, 1776. In fact, independence was formally declared on July 2, 1776, a date that John Adams believed would be "the most memorable epocha in the history of America." On July 4, 1776, Congress approved the final text of the Declaration. However, it wasn't signed until August 2, 1776.
- After Jefferson wrote his first draft of the Declaration, the other members of the Declaration committee and the Continental Congress made 86 changes to Jefferson's draft, including shortening the overall length by more than a fourth.

- When writing the first draft of the Declaration, Jefferson primarily drew upon two sources: his own draft of a preamble to the Virginia Constitution and George Mason's draft of Virginia's Declaration of Rights.
- The two youngest signers of the Declaration of Independence were both from South Carolina. Thomas Lynch, Jr. and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina were both born in 1749 and were only 26 when they signed the Declaration. Most of the other signers were in their 40s and 50s.
- Thomas Jefferson and John Adams both died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the congressional vote to approve the Declaration of Independence.
- The oldest signer of the Declaration was Benjamin Franklin, who was born in 1706 and was therefore already 70 at the time of the Declaration. Franklin went on to help negotiate the Treaty of Alliance with France in 1778 and the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War in 1783.
- The only signer of the Declaration of Independence to survive beyond the 50th anniversary of the signing was Charles Carroll of Maryland. He died in 1832 at the age of 95.
- The copy of the Declaration of Independence which is housed at the National Archives is not the draft that was approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. Instead it is a formal copy that the Continental Congress hired someone to make for them after the text was approved. This formal copy was probably made by Timothy Matlack, an assistant to the Secretary of Congress. This copy was signed on August 2, 1776.
- No one who signed the Declaration of Independence was born in the United States of America, however, all but eight of the signers were born in colonies that would become the United States.
- The first public reading of the Declaration took place on July 8, 1776, in Philadelphia. A

fictional story written in the 1840s suggested that the bell, now known as the Liberty Bell, was rung that day to bring the people together. However, historians now doubt that this happened, since the steeple which housed the bell was in very bad condition at the time, making the bell unusable.

Photo: <https://christiansread.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/declaration-of-independence.jpg>

Text: <https://www.constitutionfacts.com/us-declaration-of-independence/fascinating-facts/>

Some Bible Trivia Answers

1. Plowing – 1Kings 19:19
2. Job – 1:14
3. God – Genesis 2:8
4. Gideon – Judges 6:11
5. Uzziah – 2 Chronicles 26:9-10
6. Noah – Genesis 9:20
7. Boaz – Ruth 1:22-23
8. Isaac – Genesis 4:2

Doings at Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church

Ministry with the Children

- July 07th – Pastor Yvonne (sermon), Rita Whisnant (downstairs)
 July 14th – Ruth Pershing (sermon), Christine Rose (downstairs)
 July 21st – Heather Kramer (sermon), Lelia Bruder (downstairs)
 July 28th – Kathy Staton (sermon), Lelia Bruder (downstairs)

Upcoming Events

- Monday, July 08th – Circle #1, Ruth Preston's home @ 10:00
 Monday, July 22nd – Circle #2, fellowship hall @ 6:00

Birthdays

- Heather Kramer – July 15th
 Randy Caudill – July 19th
 Yvonne Thurmond – July 26th
 Geri Lowdermilk – July 28th