

“THE MEADOWS MESSENGER”
A Communication of Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church
September 2020



Late September on the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina

July and August 2020 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 2020 = \$1,485.13. This figure is based on a total 2020 spending plan of \$77,227.00 which was approved by the Session.

JULY

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (4 weeks)	\$5,940.54
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (4 weeks)	\$5,115.00
This results in a budget shortage for this month	(\$825.54)
Total Expenses (4 weeks) resulting in a shortage for the month	(\$356.87)

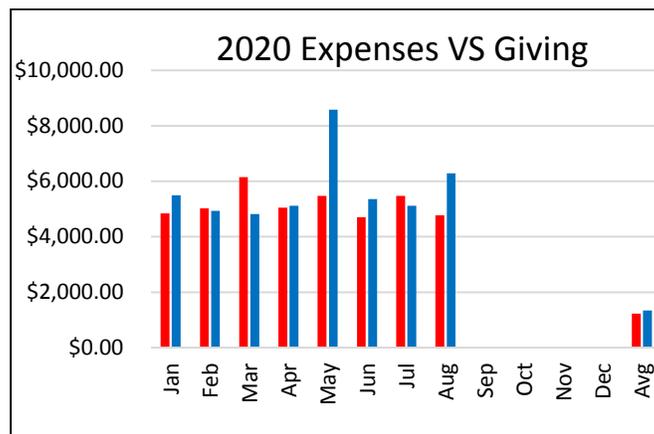
AUGUST

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (4 of 5 weeks)	\$5,940.54
Actual Tithes and Offerings received (4 of 5 weeks)	\$6,282.00
This results in a budget overage for this month	\$341.46
Total Expenses (4 of 5 weeks) resulting in an overage for the month	\$1,514.11

YEAR-TO-DATE

Total Tithes and Offerings needed (34 weeks)	\$50,494.58
Actual Tithes and Offerings (34 weeks) received	\$45,700.00
This results in a budget shortage to this point	(\$4,794.58)
Total Expenses (34 weeks) This results in an overage to expenses for the year	\$4,221.61

For those of you who understand a chart better than a bunch of numbers, below is the 'picture' of our finances for 2020 (34 weeks):



Expenses VS Income

Some Bible Trivia

The theme for this month is: the company of the apostles

1. Who was with Jesus at the Transfiguration?
2. Who was the only apostle we know for sure was married?
3. In which Gospel is John not mentioned by name?
4. Who requested special places for themselves in Jesus kingdom?
5. Who was absent when the risen Jesus appeared to the apostles?
6. Who had Silas as a traveling companion on his second missionary journey?
7. Which apostle was a Roman citizen?

Session Highlights

Stated Meeting – July 26th

The Session:

- Reviewed and approved the June financial report
- Decided to cancel homecoming for the month of August with the option to hold homecoming in October, if the COVID-19 pandemic lessens significantly.

Called Meeting – August 02nd

Rev. Thurmond called a meeting of the Session to act on her request that the Session call a congregational meeting for Sunday, August 16th, following worship. The purpose of the congregational meeting was to allow the congregation the opportunity to concur with Rev. Thurmond on her request to Presbytery to dissolve her pastoral relationship with this congregation, effective Monday, September 28, 2020. The request was approved unanimously, but reluctantly.

Called Meeting – August 18th

The main purpose of the meeting was to meet with Rick Porter of Alternative Green Energy Solutions, LLC to discuss the options for replacing the HVAC systems in the sanctuary and the manse. The meeting was necessary because of recent failures in the church HVAC system.

After looking at the 5 different proposals and asking questions about them, Donna Harney made a motion, which was seconded by Lelia Bruder, that the Session choose the option shown below:

- Church with a mini unit for the narthex for a cost of \$21,000.00.
 - 2-York 48,000 btu 14 seer Heat Pump units with 2-coils and 2- York 96% 2 stage 80,000 btu gas condensing propane furnaces. New control system.
- Manse for a total cost of \$9,000.00.
 - 1-York 30,000 btu 14 seer Heat Pump system for main level. 1- York 18,000 btu 14 seer Heat Pump system for upper level. New control systems. – This will eliminate the need for fuel oil and therefore eliminate that cost to the church.

After assessing all the possibilities for funding, the Session unanimously decided on the following plan:

- 1) to have the HVAC system in the church replaced immediately to be funded from various accounts in the budget as shown

below:

\$ 18,000.00	replacement of both sanctuary AC units
\$ 3,000.00	mini unit for narthex
\$ (5,000.00)	donation from a member family
\$ (4,000.00)	confirmed Presbytery grant
\$ (3,000.00)	million pennies fund
\$ (2,000.00)	donation from a member
\$ (5,000.00)	donation from Circle # 2
\$ (2,000.00)	reserve account
\$ -	amount needed now
\$ 9,000.00	replacing furnace in sanctuary with a 2-stage unit
\$ 9,000.00	amount needed before work begins

- 2) to replacement of the HVAC system in the manse when the funding is available. To make the \$9,000.00 funding available, \$2,100.00 will be moved from the General Fund to the Special Projects Fund on a monthly basis, from October 2020 through March of 2021. This \$2,100.00 is the salary cost for a full-time installed pastor, which this congregation will no longer have beginning September 28, 2020.

Since the congregation will not go into debt to complete these projects, congregation approval for this decision of Session is not required.

Stated Meeting – August 23rd

The Session:

- Reviewed and approved the July financial report
- Approved paying Christine Rose \$10.00 a month more to remove the weekly trash from the property, beginning in September. Our dumpster was removed at the end of August to eliminate that cost to the church. Trash removal after dinners and other events will

be decided later.

- Decided that they would prepare the budget for 2021. This is necessary because no one has agreed to replace Ruth Pershing as chairperson of the Finance Committee.
- Set a meeting with Barbara Ross, as Presbytery representative, to begin working together for the transition of this congregation following the resignation of Pastor Yvonne.

The Pastor's Ponderings

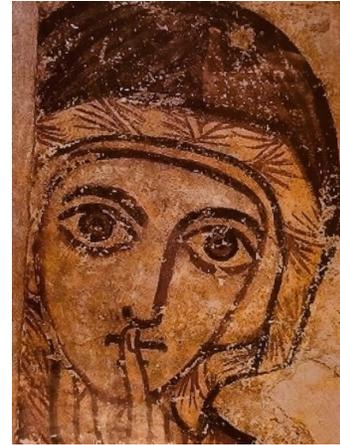
Several months ago, a person recommended the reflections of Carol Bechtel¹ to me. I try to read one of her scripture meditations each Sunday in addition to my regular devotions.

Carol Bechtel grew up on a farm in Fulton, Illinois – a place her husband and children appreciatively refer to as “The Shire.” Educated at Hope College and Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, she went on to earn a Ph.D. in Old Testament from Yale University. She began her teaching career at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia and has taught at her alma mater, Western Theological Seminary, since 1994. She describes her writing this way: “My deepest sense of call has always been in helping people understand that the Bible is a book about and for them.”

As we finish our ministry together, we are experiencing the uncertainty of what comes next. I found Carol's reflection on Mark 4:35-41 helpful in providing a perspective on change and the challenges and anxiety that often comes with it.

³⁵ *On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.”* ³⁶ *And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him.* ³⁷ *A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped.* ³⁸ *But he was in the*

stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹ *He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm.* ⁴⁰ *He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?”* ⁴¹ *And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”*



Sometimes my brain feels like a bug in a jar. If I'm honest, that was true before the Coronavirus lockdown. Present circumstances seem to have [aggravated] the condition, however. Something tells me you may know what I mean.

It isn't just the physical confinement – though, goodness knows, that is part of the picture. It's also the sense of helplessness. I feel like I ought to be able to DO SOMETHING. So I clean. I wash my hands. I scavenge the internet for news. I wash my hands. I post prayers to friends and family. I wash my hands. I write in what I'm only half-jokingly referring to as my “plague journal.” I wash my hands. I listen to the news to “keep on top of things.” I wash my hands. Every so often, I wait in line; I get groceries; I haul them home. I wash my hands.

Many of these activities really do help to combat the spread of the virus, and may even enhance my personal safety. But in recent days, I have also come to see that they are symptomatic of a

¹ <https://carolmbechtel.com/blog/>

desperate bid for control. I don't like feeling helpless. So, I beat my little wings against the glass and wonder why a day of lockdown is so exhausting.

So, I have considerable sympathy for those desperate disciples when they shake Jesus awake and demand, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

Evidently he does care. Rubbing the sleep from his eyes, he tells the wind to give it a rest. Then he stills the sea as if it were a troublesome toddler. Then, he turns to the disciples and asks, "Why are you afraid?" The Bible does not record their answer. Perhaps they were momentarily speechless. It simply says they were "filled with great awe," and began asking each other the obvious question: "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Who, indeed. The storm was not all Jesus stilled that day. **He also stilled the disciples.** That may have been the bigger miracle.

In the midst of this [turmoil], we often feel helpless. But we are in the care and company of One who is not helpless. We don't know why the storm continues to rage. But it does not have to rage inside of us.

So, several times a day, I look at the picture at the top of this post. I imagine that it is Jesus, looking at me and saying, "Peace, be still." Then I take a deep breath and wait for my miracle.

A strange thing happens when my personal storm subsides. First, I realize that "keeping on top of things" does not have to dominate my every waking moment. God's got it. So, I turn off the news and turn on some music. Then, I press "pause" on sending prayers to all my Facebook friends, and I actually pray. Then, I resist the temptation to go out to get the thing I could probably do without, and I read a novel instead. Then, I wash my hands. But I enjoy the feel of the water as it washes some of my fear down the drain.

Ponder: What parts of your present situation make you feel like you are in the center of a storm? How might your [life] change if your inner storm was stilled?

A Prayer by David Adam

I weave a silence onto my lips,
my mind, my heart.
Calm me, O Lord, as you stilled the storm.
Still me, O Lord – keep me from harm.
Let all the tumult within me cease.
Enfold me, Lord, in your peace.

My prayer is that you all will allow God to still your anxiety so that you can "enjoy the feel of the water." God has blessed you in astounding ways over the last 8 years and I fully expect God to continue his blessing into the future. God is with you and has promised never to forsake you in all the twists and turns of life, so take a deep breath and enjoy the continuing journey.

Pastor Yvonne

Some Bible Trivia Answers

1. Peter, James and John – Mark 9:2
2. Peter – Mark 1:30
3. John
4. James and John – Mark 10:39
5. Thomas – John 20:24
6. Paul – Acts 15-18
7. Paul – Acts 23:27

Birthdays

Marvin Paschall – Sept 04th
Anthony Burkett – Sept 17th
Riddle Smith – Sept 18th
Betty Williams – Sept 20th
Rita Whisnant – Sept 22nd
Elaine Burkett – Sept 29th
Agnes Shook – Sept 30th

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