

The Falling Waters Messenger

Issue Two

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Volume XXXIII

Pastor's Corner

Some Thoughts on Spiritual Formation: AKA - Why That Pre-Chewed Food Is Haunting Me!

In the gospel according to Luke, an important question is asked. "When the Son of Man comes will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8).

One possible response to the question is offered by one of the leading theologians of our time. Suggesting God may find the evidence of our religious institutions and organizations, but it's possible that God may not find faith. He goes on to say that, "Faith is deeply personal, dynamic, ultimate. Religion, however, is faith's expression. ...Religion is important, but not ultimately important. Educationally, religion is a means not an end; faith is the only end. Faith, therefore, and not religion, must become the concern of Christian education."

This quote from John H. Westerhoff's classic book of 1970's, "Will Our Children Have Faith?", was meant to shake the very foundations of Christian education. Westerhoff stated that "there is a difference between learning about the Bible and living as a disciple of Jesus Christ. We are not saved by our knowledge, our beliefs, or our worship in the church; just as we are not saved by our actions or our religion. **We are saved by the anguish and love of God, and to live according to that truth is to have faith.**"

Christian Educator, Sara Little suggests, "Faith is a trust, loyalty, confidence, but it is more than a 'feeling.' It is a trust qualified by the One who is

trusted. It is, in fact, a gift from that One who reveals himself."

One of the more important tasks of a church is to provide opportunities for all of God's people to better understand who they are in relation to God and to others. Churches of all shapes and sizes are about the business of creating space and providing opportunities for people to know and experience God. As was suggested in the recent children's message, God doesn't want us to know about God. God wants us to know God. Personally. Intimately. God wants us to know God much the same way God already knows us. Furthermore, God wants us to live in ways that exemplify and honor this sacred, covenantal relationship so that others might observe and experience God's love for themselves.

What does this mean? Well, let's think about our favorite food for a moment. One of mine is dark chocolate brownies with nuts. When I close my eyes, I can smell them and taste them and relive the deliciousness of them. Now, if you've never had a brownie, first let me say how sorry I am for that and call me up if you'd like to remedy that unfortunate state of existence. Second, if you have enjoyed one of these delicious treats, I don't have to explain it to you. You can close your own eyes and relive the experience for yourself. But if you've never had a brownie, I can tell you a whole lot about them. How they're made. Nuts vs. no nuts. Dark chocolate vs milk chocolate. I can tell you how good they are when dunked into a cup of coffee or a glass of milk. But as I'm explaining, my mouth is watering because I can taste that brownie right then and there. You, unfortunately can only get a glimpse of what it might be like. You can try to imagine it. But its unlikely that your mouth will water

because no matter how you try, you won't be able to actually taste it while I'm describing it. Even if I offer you some of the brownie I've been nibbling on while we chat, you still won't be able to taste it because there's no flavor left in it. I've already chewed all the good stuff out of it before offering it to you. Although, if my description is good, you'll want to try a brownie for yourself. And if I'm a good soul, I'll invite you into the kitchen and teach you how to make them for yourself and we'll talk while we wait for them to bake and then we'll talk some more after you've had your first few bites. After all of this, we can get together often and make brownies together. We can also make brownies on our own and enjoy them all alone. Most importantly, we are now also able to help other people experience a brownie and teach them how to bake them and on and on it goes.

The church has the opportunity to share the spiritual nourishment we've learned to receive from God. The church is the place where we learn not just about God, but a place where we can experience God and Jesus Christ, the son, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The church is the place where all of us can be reminded and remind others who God is, who we are to God, and who we are to each other.

Westerhoff asks if our children will have faith. Jesus asks if he will find faith on earth when he comes. Let the church answer both questions with a faithful and resounding Yes!

Pastor Debra

February Greeters

Steve Aulabaugh - Head Elder

5 Steve & Dinah Aulabaugh, Bettie Jane Porterfield
 12 Steve, Marge and Richard Chamblin
 19 Steve, Amanda and Carl Lamb
 26 Steve, Maxine Taylor, Carolyn Linton

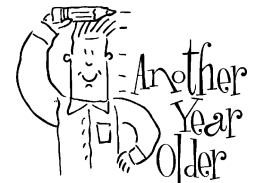
Pray Without Ceasing

Bill and Billy Berg
 Joan Chambers
 Jimmy Cloud
 Kenny Cushwa
 Susie Cushwa
 John Fleagle
 Mary Hodges
 Irvin Horst
 Tink Manor
 Ted Largent
 Pete and Scott Mekkelson
 Virginia Snyder
 Carolyn Weidman
 Bill Zombro



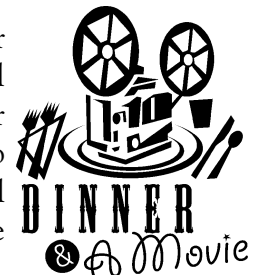
February Birthdays

1 Gail Cushwa
 1 John MacDonald
 2 April Higginbottom
 2 Diana McKinley
 4 Kathy Goodell
 8 Diana Manor
 11 Sue Mekkelson
 12 Pamela Fleagle
 17 Susie Cushwa
 19 Robin Brown
 21 Pete Mekkelson
 24 Nat Hylton



Movie Night

Join us on February 18 for **Dinner and A Movie**. We will meet at Ruby Tuesday at 5:00 for dinner followed by the movie, to be determined, in Fellowship Hall at 7:00. There will be refreshments and door prizes.





February 5 Robin Brown, Helen Brown
 February 12 Lyn Hansen, Elizabeth Kaetzel
 February 19 Audrey MacDonald, Pamela Fleagle
 February 26 Beth and Tiffany Henry

It's Music to Your Ears!



You are invited to a **Music Festival** sponsored by the Eastern Panhandle Mission Community on February 26 at Shepherdstown PC at 4:30 p.m. Come for a pleasant afternoon of praise by making a joyful noise!

Pancake Dinner Scheduled



SHROVE TUESDAY

The Sardines will host their annual **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner** on February 28 at 6:30 p.m. to thank the congregation for all its support throughout the year. Join them for biscuits, pancakes and sausage gray and other delectable fattening comfort food.



The “**Souper Bowl of Caring**” is an effort to glorify God and care for “the least of these our brothers” by encouraging people to give one dollar each as they leave worship on February 5. The Sardines will have a large soup pot to collect the donations as parishioners leave worship the morning of the game. This involvement teaches our young people that they can make a positive difference in the lives of others. All monies will be given to Hedgesville Loaves and Fishes at Hedgesville United Methodist Church. Let’s begin the new year by sharing one of the many blessings that we have so richly enjoyed — that delicious bowl of soup. Thank you to all who join with us in loving God in this simple but significant way.

The Lenten Journey Begins



The Lenten season begins with Ash Wednesday and lasts forty days excluding Sundays. The last week of Lent is called Holy Week and in that week are three of the most significant days on the Christian Calendar. These days are Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Several worship opportunities are planned for Lent to help children, youth and adults experience the Easter Season in a meaningful way. Please join us for an **Ash Wednesday Service** on March 1 at 7:00 p.m.

What's Up With Adult Sunday School...

Plan to join us beginning Sunday, February 5, for an 8-week study on the “**Fourth Gospel**”, to be led by Pastor Debra. We are also working on changes to our new Sunday School room downstairs (first door on the left at the bottom of the stairs) to make it more “adult friendly”, so come and give us another look.