

Journeys

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WHEREVER YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY WE WELCOME YOU HERE.

FROM THE
Pastor's Pen



Liberty and Justice for All

Many folks are looking at the first few weeks of 2021 wondering what additional wreckage will be wrought in our political culture before January 20th. Many others anticipate that unspeakable horrors will be inflicted on them after January 20th.

The worst case scenarios are unlikely in either case. What we can reasonably anticipate, however, is that a lot of noise will come from both ends of the political/cultural spectrum, and that many who call themselves Christian will be strongly present in both extremities.

Accepting the Republican presidential nomination in 1964, Barry Goldwater made a statement that has

been often quoted: "I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice! And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue!"

One wonders what Goldwater would have to say about how the far right of American culture leans heavily on the first part of that statement: "extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice"—while today's far left politics would likely adhere to the second part: "moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue." Of course, the meaning of these statements depends on how we define "liberty" and "justice."

We don't like to be reminded how our nation has been built on a very exclusivist use of those terms. At the very start—in our country's founding documents—liberty and justice were only for white, male property owners. Civil Rights, Women's Rights and Indigenous Rights movements have been challenging the original usage of those terms ever since.

But from a faith perspective, what do liberty and justice mean?

We see a key aspect of justice for the Hebrews in Leviticus 19:18: "You must not take revenge nor hold a grudge against any of your people; instead, you must love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord." This contrasts sharply with the *prosecutorial* justice that

characterizes much of America's legal system and that for most focuses on punishment and vengeance.

In contrast, Duke University Professor of Religious Studies David Pleins points out how "... many laws of the Torah, or books of Moses, are laws that govern how to treat the landless poor and those who lack the basic necessities of life. Laws of gleaning, for example, set aside crops on the margins of fields for those who don't own their own land or have suitable food stores. . . . Other laws in the Torah regulate the treatment of debt slaves, individuals who were forced by their poverty to pay off their debts by laboring for a set number of years before earning their freedom."

Such expectations are part of *distributive* justice, which emphasizes justice as fairness. This was fundamental to the ancient Hebrews. It is a concept that many today still consider essential to a just society.

20th century philosopher John Rawls asserts that justice as fairness consists of three components:

- the equality of people in rights and liberties;
- the equality of opportunities for all; and
- an arrangement of economic inequalities that focuses on maximizing benefits for those who are least advantaged.

The gospel writers link "love your neighbor as yourself" with Deuteronomy 6:5: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your being, and all your strength." Scholars tell us we should understand "love" in this verse as "obedience." God's covenant with the ancients required that they put aside allegiances to any other gods in the world around them—gods that in today's world include political and economic ideologies; me, myself and I values; social and cultural privilege. Obedience to Yahweh was paramount.

Yahweh wasn't anyone or anything the ancients could see or touch. Thus, the nature of Israel's God was to be reflected in all aspects of their socio-economic, political, legal and domestic life.

In the biblical context of justice, liberty is not an unfettered freedom for individuals to do what they want. Rather, when we truly trust God, we will always find our liberty, or freedom, in how we are obedient to God.

In biblical faith, liberty and justice are always aspects of living in community with others. They are not slogans for the tribal psychoses that spout from the fringes of our political culture.

Jesus, being a good Jew, brought all this together in the Great Commandment (Mark 12:29-31): "The most important one is ²⁹*Israel, listen! Our God is the one Lord,* ³⁰*and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength.* ³¹The second is this, *You will love your neighbor as yourself.* No other commandment is greater than these."

"... With liberty and justice for all." Christians have a distinctive way to talk about these words. We need to do so.

— Pastor Fogal



ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

Are you the chairperson or head of one of the groups or boards within our Carversville UCC? If so, I am urging you to submit an Annual Report by January 6 to the church office or to Jan personally. You may submit a hard copy or email your report to carversvilleucc@gmail.com or janheebner@yahoo.com. I'm sure our reports will be entirely different from those we've submitted in the past, but we need them for record keeping. Thank you for your cooperation.



BRIARLEAF ❧ JAN ❧ 2021

*"What is a letter? A bridge in the night
From my soul to your soul; and over it go
Envoys of darkness or envoys of light.
Ladings of blessing or burdens of woe."
Amos Russel Wells*

Briarleaf continues to remain closed to all visitors. In the meantime, we plan to continue to send 30 notes to cheer the residents each month. Last month we surpassed our goal, distributing 34 Christmas cards. If you would like to write a short note to a Briarleaf resident on behalf of Carversville UCC,

contact Catherine Halper at chalper@aol.com.

The small investment of your time will yield rich rewards!



HEARTFELT THANKS

A heartfelt thanks to the CUCC Christmas Elves for their generous Christmas gift.

It is an honor and a privilege to not only work for and with all of you (and the other members) but it's also a joy for me. In February 2021, I will have been here for 8 years and of the jobs I've had over the years, working with the wonderful CUCC members and our fearless leader, Bob Fogal, has been the most rewarding and the most fun. A heartfelt thanks to you all.

Sincerely, Chris Ochadlick.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY GIFTS



Even though we had to enjoy it virtually, the church was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season. A BIG thank you to Jeanne Brown, Bob and Edie Kling, Cathy Price, Walt Livezey III and Walt Livezey IV for making our church look so beautiful and festive for the holidays.

It wouldn't be Christmas without music, and we thank our organist, Lynn Bullock; soloists Ed Meyers and Pat Fogal; and harpist Becca Simpson for sharing the gift of music with us during this Christmas season.

Sadly, on November 23, Dr. Jeff Farber, husband of Catherine Halper and father of Alex, died suddenly. A graveside service for Jeff was held on November 24 at Shalom Memorial Park in Huntingdon Valley. Our thoughts, prayers and deep sympathy are with Catherine and Jeff's family at this sad time.

On November 24, our friend Doug Cannon went to be with our Lord. Doug had such a warm, friendly smile. Our heartfelt condolences go to Hellen and Doug's family.

Our heartfelt sympathy to Charlie, Debbie, Daniel and the entire Furst family on the passing of Charlie's mother, Corrine, on December 4. Corrine was 93 and had been a Bucks County resident for 60 years. God bless you all.

It is also with sadness that we share news of the untimely death of Kate Gunn on Friday, December 11. Kate was 41. Her parents, Barb and Dave Gunn, were active, long time members of Carversville Church until their move to Massachusetts a while back. Barb and Kate had stopped by church several months ago to reminisce, and Barb wrote a nice note about their visit that was in the December newsletter. Our deepest sympathy to the Gunn family.

And yet more sadness with the passing of Patsy King's twin brother, Jerry, due to COVID on December 18. Our thoughts and prayers are with Patsy and her family.



FLOWER SPONSORS NEEDED

Altar flower sponsors are needed for 2021. You can pick your altar flowers up at the church after the morning service about 11:30. Get in touch with Jeanne Brown at 215-348-3614 to reserve your special Sunday.

Card List for September

Pearl Howard - c/o Future Care Chesapeake, Room 208, 305 College Parkway, Arnold, MD 21012

Patsy and Jack King- 601 Mulberry Court, New Hope, PA 18938

Jim & Sally Seeton- 1850 Lower Mountain Road West, Furlong, PA 18925

CHECK THIS OUT!

from Sue Wulf



WHAT'S THE BOOK GROUP DOING?

from Sue Wulf

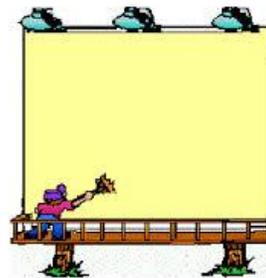
Erring on the side of caution, we cancelled our December gathering to discuss [This Tender Land](#). We hope to be able to discuss it at a later date as we enjoyed the book.

If anyone has a great book to suggest as a New Year's read for the group contact Sue Wulf!



PRAYING HANDS

Here is a list of those who would benefit from receiving cards. We encourage you all to reach out to these people.



Notice anything new along the road in the cemetery? We have a brand new signboard and Chris O Chadlick and I couldn't be happier. The old one had literally fallen apart making posting a

message very difficult. Kudos go to Chris and her hammer for making this signboard functional. Check it out when you drive by next time.

MODERATOR'S MINUTE

TIPSY PIE

"Thy breath is like the steeme of apple pies."

From Menaphoe by R. Greene, Poet. 1589.

Autumn has had me thinking about the Oyster Pork Dinner and pie memories: Boston Cream Pie, rhubarb pie, maple-sugar pie, mince pie, cranberry pie and pumpkin pie. Not to mention tourtiere, the meat pie from my Canadian youth, and seafood pies especially popular along the coast of New England.

It is from a New England periodical that I recently saw a story about Marlborough Pie – essentially an apple pie made with a generous helping of wine. Amelia Simmons' "American Cookery" published in Hartford in 1796 instructs:

TAKE 12 SPOONS OF STEWED APPLES, 12 OF WINE, 12 OF SUGAR, 12 OF MELTED BUTTER AND 12 OF BEATEN EGGS, A LITTLE CREAM,

SPICE TO YOUR TASTE; LAY IN PASTE IN A DEEP DISH; BAKE ONE HOUR AND A QUARTER.

The article lamented that Marlborough Pie disappeared in the late 19th century, but something niggled at the back of my mind – didn't we have Tippy Pie in my youth? It seems to me that it was not just Trifle that got a little boozy.

Sure enough, Marlborough Pie is alive and well across the states bordering Canada in its current incarnation as Tippy Pie – still made with apples (although I did find a version that incorporated peaches.) Food.com even had a version called "Amazing Interchangeable Tippy Pie" in a graham cracker or cookie crust that ditches the apples and sticks with gelatin & the spirits of your choice.

But I'm old fashioned and want some fruit and pastry with my spirits – here's the mid-20th century version.

Peel & cut up the flesh of 8 tart apples and 4 peaches, then marinate in ½ cp dark rum, 1 tbsp. cinnamon, 1 tsp each nutmeg & ginger, and ½ cup brown sugar. Let sit for about 2 hours.

Drain fruit and place in your favorite crust fitted into a deep dish. Add a top crust and slash decoratively. Brush with milk and bake 10 minutes at 425 deg F. Finish baking at 350 degrees F for around 35 minutes. Instead of discarding the marinade, thicken it slightly and serve over ice cream.

Catherine Halper

Articles for the February newsletter should be sent to Sue Wulf at slswulf@comcast.net and Cathy Price at cathyprice2@verizon.net by Friday, January 15. Thanks!

During our church closure please remember to send your church offering to Carversville UCC at P.O. Box 26, Carversville.PA 18913.

CONTACT US!

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In 2021 BE POSITIVE:
with God as your guide



