

Journeys

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

Two major changes are coming on Sunday, September 13th: we will open the church for in-person worship, and we will begin to live stream our worship services.



A few folks are eager to return to worshipping in church, so we will begin in-person worship the Sunday after Labor Day, September 13. Strict guidelines will be in place. Everyone MUST wear a mask. People will enter through the door along the road driveway and temperatures will be checked before entry. Strict social distancing will be followed. Hand sanitizer will be readily available. There will be no congregational

singing. Everyone will exit using the back door and the downstairs area will be off limits.

As part of in-person worship, we will live stream our services. Since March, Pete Putman and Pastor Fogal have recorded Virtual Village Church on Fridays. Pete has videoed using three cameras in different locations. He has then compiled and edited videos from the different cameras to produce a seamless viewing experience. After Chris sends us the posting notice, we have been able to link with YouTube through the church website to view Virtual Village Church whenever we have wanted to.

In contrast, live streaming will broadcast the worship service as it happens on Sunday morning, beginning at 10:00 AM (our traditional hour for worship). We will all be able to worship together at the same time from different places. With what we expect to be a small in

person congregation, we will do a service similar to our usual practice (except for being shorter). The service will be recorded as it is being broadcast, so anyone who misses worship at 10:00 AM will still be able to see the service later. We will be able to access that video recording through our website as we have been doing.

Those who do not have computer access will continue to receive a full manuscript of the live streamed service, just as you have been for Virtual Village Church. All others will receive via email a “bulletin” prepared for the live streamed Sunday service.

We are indebted to Pete Putman, who has done an outstanding job providing us with the professional, high quality virtual church services we have enjoyed over the past few months. We are blessed to have had Pete share his talent and countless hours of his time with us. Many, many thanks, Pete. A big thank you, too, to our web designer, Wayne Anderson of Time for Design, for sharing his time and talents to make the necessary hook ups possible, and to Elizabeth Richardson, our liaison and coordinator.

Whether you choose to worship in-person or via live stream at Carversville UCC, we remain a strong church family striving to serve God and care for one another.



What's Normal?

I've heard a lot of people say one or the other of the following statements:

"I can't wait to get back to normal."

"We will live in a new normal when this is all over."

The first statement points primarily toward the economic routines of our lives: going to work (and school), shopping, vacations, and such. We want to return to how life has always been—or at least how we have thought it has been.

The second suggests that, on the one hand, all the disease and disruption we're dealing with had better be worth it. (That's sort of a corollary to "I can't wait to get back to normal.")

More significantly, the second is an expression of hope: all this disruption, disease and death has to lead to improvements to how life has been for so many people. And we will all be better people for tending to these deficiencies in our commonwealth: food insecurity; living wages for "essential" workers; meaningful public health policies; equitable education systems; rightful healthcare delivery—and more.

Will things get better?

Canadian writer and Episcopal priest Martha Tatarnic observes: "I'm skeptical [that] 'We'll be different after this'—we have said this in response to 9/11, to mass shootings, to floods and hurricanes and forest fires, to the slaying of unarmed black men by police. And then we keep operating as if each of these events hasn't clearly spoken into the business-as-usual of our lives and demanded a response.

"We keep shopping and driving and burning forests and fueling extremism and overlooking systemic racism and polluting the ocean and throwing out plastics and pumping our skies full of carbon, as if all of these behaviors should be able to go on unchecked. We live as if we're separate beings who get to set the rules about how we'll exist in creation. We terrorize the very fabric of relationship on which our lives are built—until it all collapses in one telling disaster. Then we pick ourselves up and continue on as before."

Continuing on as before means that we have been ignoring for a very long time—through our lifetimes and well beyond—the connectedness of all of life. Denying that we are connected has been the primary culprit in the spread of the coronavirus to all regions of our country.

Using simple logic, assuming that we individually set the rules for our lives is twaddle. Beginning in earliest childhood, we absorb rules—ways of living that enhance our survival. The vast majority of these rules help us interact positively with others. (Sociopaths manipulate or ignore the rules, violating the trust we humans depend on to thrive.)

As people of faith, these connections—these relationships—are covenant relationships. When we interact with others in covenant, we act in ways that Jesus teaches us. We commit ourselves to promises and obligations toward each other and to God.

The Great Commandment is the keystone of such covenant: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind”; and ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’” (Luke 10:27; GNT).

The primary place we practice covenant relationships is in church—we promise to practice attitudes and behaviors that reflect Jesus’ teaching.

The foundation for these, and all, covenant relationships is our covenant with God. We are surrounded by God’s grace, which God promises to us. One writer states it this way: “Grace is the unmerited favor of God that pursues, permits, purifies, and mends [our] relationship [with God].”

In return, we commit ourselves to the Great Commandment. We promise to live in ways that demonstrate we are God’s kinfolk—that with loving God, we also love our neighbors and care for ourselves so we can love God and our neighbors to the fullest.

So we really shouldn’t be talking about returning to normal (as people commonly understand it), or envisioning a new normal.

When we live as God’s people, “normal” always has been and always will be well defined. It’s up to us to determine how we practice the love for God and neighbor and self that God’s grace empowers us to share.

- Pastor Robert E. Fogal



WHAT’S THE BOOK GROUP DOING?

from Sue Wulf

Smiling humans!!!! What a wonderful sight! We enjoyed a socially distanced lunch and a great discussion of The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek. We applauded Cussy’s strength and kind heart in the face of hardships and great loss. Sadly, we acknowledged that discrimination against those who are not like us still is very much alive. Happily, it seems like the grandchildren’s generation is accepting and colorblind, so the future looks promising. As with all our discussions, there are always unanswered questions and we are still wondering- What happened to those killer hornets that were headed our way? Anybody know the answer?

We lined up our next two books. On August 31, we’ll meet at the church at noon in the social hall for a socially distanced brown bag lunch and a discussion of our new book, The Authenticity Project by Claire Pooley. Then on September 28, we’ll enjoy lunch together again and discuss Rules of Civility by Amor Towles (author of A Gentleman in Moscow).

Stay well! Stay cool! Happy reading, humans!



THEY'RE BACK!!!!!!

Pastor Fogal has returned to a regular office schedule and will welcome folks to visit with him--masked, of course. He is in the office on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM until Labor Day. After Labor Day, he will be in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It's a good idea to check before going to the church to assure that he's available to visit when you'd like to. In addition, he is available to visit with folks other days by pre-arrangement.

Pastor Fogal's sidekick, office manager Chris, will be in the church office on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8-11 AM. Chris also frequently checks church email and voicemail from her home and can respond to that.



"Letter writing is the only device combining solitude with good company."

- Lord Byron

Briarleaf continues to remain closed to all visitors and will be reviewing this policy on a week by week basis. We have heard from their Activities Director that the cards we

send are greatly appreciated. We are planning to continue to send 30 cards each month!

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!

"More than kisses, letters mingle souls."

- John Donne

So, in retrospect, in 2015 not a single person got the answer right to "Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?"



PLAN YOUR VOTE!

In light of Covid-19 and the importance of social distancing, voters should consider voting via Mail-in Ballots in the safety of their homes.

Any qualified REGISTERED voter may choose to apply for a Mail-in Ballot without giving a reason.

To apply for a ballot, go to **votespa.com**. The application can be completed and submitted online. Applicants will be asked to provide their driver's license number.

When filling out the application, select Mail-in-Ballot and check NO to the first 3 questions.

Applicants will get confirmation of their application via email, and the ballot will arrive via USPS.

Individuals without access to a computer can contact the Bucks County Board of Elections at 215-348-6163 to request a ballot be mailed to them.

The deadline to apply for a Mail-in-Ballot is October 27 BUT due to the high demand for Mail-in Ballots and delays in mail delivery, it's important to apply well in advance so do it now!

Articles for the October newsletter should be sent to Sue Wulf at slswulf@comcast.net and Cathy Price at cathyprice2@verizon.net by Wednesday, September 16. Thanks!



TROOP 64 UPDATE

We have had an exciting summer with the Scouts. After virtual campouts in the spring, we were able to come together for a few in-person campouts! Eight of our Scouts even participated in a weeklong camp at the end of July. The Scouts had an opportunity to work on many requirements and several advanced to the next rank. The dedication of our leaders who came

together to create a week of advancement opportunities for our Scouts, when traditional summer camp through BSA was canceled, is unparalleled. We also celebrated Russell Mercatanti in an Eagle ceremony during our camp week. Congratulations to Russell for such a profound accomplishment!

Looking toward fall, we would like to advise church members that we will be offering our holiday wreaths and garlands as always. We may move the timeline up to obtain orders in late October and deliver during the Thanksgiving weekend. Our sale may look a little bit different this year but count on us to provide the same beautiful wreaths with curbside pick-up and/or delivery. More details to follow in October.

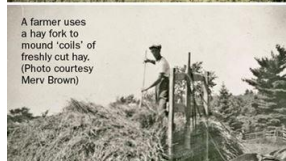


"AUTUMN- THE YEAR'S LAST,
LOVELIEST SMILE."

- WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Moderator's
Minute 

BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES



Making hay used to mean stacking with forks- a pre-baler art form in the early 20th century. Note: The

Bible translates sheaves from the Hebrew root עִמָּמַר
Amar which meant “to heap.”

When I was a young woman, I spent some time homesteading on Vancouver Island. We had a Crown Lease on 25 acres on a mountainside high above the Koksilah River. We built a log cabin, dug a well and fenced off a garden. Upon receiving a grant to “rehabilitate” young wards of the court, we added a geodesic dome as a bunk house. Juvenile Justice grants were slim, so we also worked a five-acre garden on an accommodating neighbor’s land, learning farming skills as we labored. We weeded vegetable beds, learned the art of grafting fruit trees and spent long hot days heaving hay bales onto a flat-bed truck. Late-summer still evokes my memories of fresh-cut hay and the scent of pine trees mixed with wood smoke on the evening breezes.

-Catherine Halper



PRAYING HANDS

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

Card List for September

Pearl Howard - c/o Future Care Chesapeake,
Room 208, 305 College Parkway,
Arnold, MD 21012
Jack King- 503 Windrush Bay Drive, Tarpon
Springs, FL 34689
Jack McKenna- PO Box 223, Carversville, PA
18913
Jim & Sally Seeton- 1850 Lower Mountain
Road West, Furlong, PA 18925

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

“Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go.”

-Unknown



YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND SOME GOOD NEWS!



Friends Angela Sun, Madeleine Zheng, and Mae Zhang want to make things easier on parents who are trying to juggle work and helping their kids with school, so they launched a free virtual tutoring service that provides assistance with everything from biology to economics. Sun, Zheng, and Zhang are graduates of University High School in Tucson. They started Cov Tutors in July, and when they opened registration, five students signed up; the next day, their numbers

doubled. They offer one-on-one Zoom sessions, with each student receiving one to two hours of tutoring, up to three times a week. Zheng, a student at Arizona State University, told KOLD that by offering free tutoring, it "takes that burden away from the parent, especially because they have to work and right now it's kind of a financially stressful time as well."

CONTACT US!

Dr. Robert Fogal, Pastor

- Tues. & Fri.: Office- 9:30 AM.-3:00 PM and by appointment

Cell: 610.945.4955

Email: pastorfogal@gmail.com

Chris Ochadlick, Office Administrator

- Tuesday and Thursday: 8 AM. - 11:00 AM

Catherine Halper, Church School Supt.

Cell: 215.285.0670

Email: carversvilleucc@gmail.com

Website: www.carversvilleucc.org

Church Phone: 215.297.5166



READINGS ON THE INTERSECTION OF TWO WORLDS

*"What is the neuroscientific basis of consciousness?
What is the neuroscientific basis of a spiritual
experience? ... These are the fun conversations to have."*

Dr. Francis Collins, geneticist & physician¹

Francis Collins is in the company of giants, including Mother Teresa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama. In May of this year, he was awarded the prestigious Templeton Prize on 20 May 2020 for his

long-term commitment to challenging the idea that science and religion are at odds.

The prize², established in 1972 by the philanthropist Sir John Templeton, is meant to honor those who demonstrate *"the insights that science brings to the deepest questions of the universe and humankind's purpose and place within it."*

It has been more than two decades since Dr. Collins stood beside President Bill Clinton to announce that the first draft of the human genome – the human instruction manual written in our cells – had been mapped. He compared this human sequence map to the map that Meriwether Lewis had unfolded in front of President Thomas Jefferson in that very room nearly two hundred years earlier. Clinton said, *"Without a doubt, this is the most important, most wondrous map ever produced by humankind."*

More than that historic comparison, it was this quote that shook conventional thinking: *"Today we are learning the language in which God created life. We are gaining ever more awe for the complexity, the beauty, and the wonder of God's most divine and sacred gift."*

Born into an agnostic family, Francis Collins began to examine the idea of faith in God in response to a question raised by a patient. He was deeply influenced by C.S. Lewis' work in *"Mere Christianity,"* and captured his own faith journey in *"The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief"* (2006) which became an instant best-seller.

The Language of Life: DNA and the Revolution in Personalized Medicine Dec 16, 2009

In 2010, his *"Belief: Readings on the Reason for Faith"* was published. It has been called *"a wide ranging and powerful series of readings on the possibilities, problems and mysteries of faith"* and *"the definitive reader on the rationality of faith."*

Dr. Collins childhood was immersed in music and he continues to perform today with a 12-member band.

¹ Anthony Fauci's boss (Head of National Institutes of Health) and winner of the Collins is the most prominent scientist to have won (in 2020) the Templeton Prize, which has been awarded to Mother Teresa, Billy Graham and the Dalai Lama, as well as the late Princeton University physicist Freeman

Dyson and the Russian novelist and historian Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

² The prize, at \$1.3 million (US) is one of the world's largest individual awards.

He has a working group studying the intersection between healing and music.

A must-listen is a wide-ranging podcast covering the intersections of music, science, faith and spirituality that opens with a clip from his performance³ of “Hallelujah / Leonard Cohen, and closes with a clip from his performance with Aerosmith followed by his own composition Disease Don’t Care / performed Live at the NIH – 2019 see <https://abovethebasement.com/132-dr-francis-collins>

FAITH FORMATION STORIES & READINGS	
DATE	ORDINAL TIME
08/30/20	Psalm 119:33-40: <i>Turn, Turn, Turn</i>
09/06/20	Psalm 114: <i>Strange Language</i>
09/13/20	Psalm 105:1-45: <i>Opening the Rock</i>

³ performed by Francis Collins, Renee Fleming and the National Symphony Orchestra – 2017