

**BEREA FRIENDSHIP NEWS**  
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**Friday—Closed**

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**TRAVELERS REST, SC 29690**

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**Methodist Church**  
**8001 White Horse Road**  
**Greenville, SC 29617**

**September 2020**  
**Berea Friendship UMC Newsletter**

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have spent the month of August considering the Parable of the Prodigal Son in four sermons. The messages took a corporate approach which challenges us, the church, to look within and consider how we are perceived by the greater majority of people within the community. This month's newsletter will be an overview of Luke 15 through 8/23/20. We will consider the enormous crowds attracted to Jesus, both the younger and older brothers, and the idea of home. Throughout the parable we see our prodigal God who loves us with reckless abandon. He will be our topic next month. Our text concerning the crowds was Luke 15:1-3. As you read scripture, please stop and ponder the enormous crowds Jesus attracted. The crowds consistently have two groups present; masses of common folk, both Jew and Gentile, and the religious elite. Jesus directed the parable to the religious elite, the Pharisees and Scribes. Here is the main point - Jesus' message of selfless love with no condemnation and no judgment appealed to the masses. Scripture tells us Jesus was winsome; he attracted people to God, and made people want to be with God. He was comforting to people. The church of Jesus Christ should have the same loving message of comfort and acceptance if we intend to attract the masses of people around us. God created His people as a blessing to all peoples, to all the masses. The premise of our sermon series has been that the two brothers represent two approaches to God and His kingdom. The younger brother was about self-discover; do what seems right to you. The older brother was about holding onto traditions and social respectability; he played by the rules. As we look at the text, we begin to see these brothers have much in common. The liberal extreme and conservative extreme are not that far apart. God looks upon the heart of man and sees the spirit, the source of motivation. In the parable the Father is God. Both brothers are interested in their Father's abundance, His blessings and His things. But they reject their Father's supervision in their lives. And we see in the text that both sons openly defy their Father before the family, and the community. Bottom line – initially neither son wants a binding personal relationship with their father; neither son wants their Father. Both younger and older brothers are lost, apart from their Father. The younger brother has much to teach us (Luke 15:11-19). He is more like the masses Jesus attracted; people getting by, doing what seems right to them. In the process of no supervision the younger son squandered all he had. Likewise, we have all squandered blessings and opportunities. The younger brother finally comes to the end of himself, which is the best place one can come to. He remembers the hired help in his Father's house. They had more than enough while he was starving, and no one would give him anything. The younger brother comes up with plan B, which is a viable life sustaining plan. He will get up, go to his Father and say"; I know I don't have the right to come back into the family. Let me apprentice as one of your hired hands and serve you". The Father and relationship with Him is now the motivation. The prodigal son is fully restored to the Family. In services we agreed there is some younger brother in all of us. The older Brother also has much to teach us (Luke 15:25-30). The church should be known for who we are for, not whom we are against. We are for Jesus Christ and the power of God to save. Jesus was never personally offended by anyone's sin. The grace of God excludes no one. In flesh God judged no one. If the church is to speak to the masses all around us; we will have to be like minded. The problem with the older brother was that all he could see was sin. Seeing his brother's sin he claimed himself superior, then judged and condemned. The older brother was much like the Pharisees and Scribes in scripture. He was always angry, and always in completion with people who were different, who were less. The older brother believed goodness and decency were the ways to a good life. He was hardworking, moral and smart, an elite group set apart. Jesus was very clear in His parable; the older brother had a particularly deadly spiritual condition. Do you think it is possible that the same spiritual competition still exists among God's chosen people today? In services we reluctantly agreed there is some older brother in all of us. Everything leads to God from which all have come (Luke 15:3a, 8a, 22-24, 31-32). In every person eternity exists. We long for the eternal from which we have come. Jesus was God in flesh and masses were attracted to His eternal presence. The Parable of the Prodigal son washes away every type of self-righteous imagined in the minds of men and women. The parable challenges believers to redefine sin, redefine what it means to be lost, and even redefine what it means to be saved. The parable challenges the church to ask, where are the masses Jesus so readily attracted? Is our message His message? Are we searching for the lost? Are we celebrating with them when they are found? Is God's power to save on our lips and in our hearts? Do we consider forgiveness essential or optional? In this fallen world of disorder and decay we know we are not home. Jesus Christ died so that we could come home. Home is coming to life. Home is where we have to celebrate and rejoice. Home is where we experience all that God has to give us. Home is where God is always with us. Next month we will consider our Prodigal God.

In Christ, Pastor Davon



## **Prayer Focus**

Our prayer focus for September is on the United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The non-profit organization was founded in 1902 by a group of Methodist women. Their mission statement reads “we aim to increase the ability of children, youth, adults, and families to succeed in a diverse community.” They have received a five star rating. They collaborate with area agencies to give people in the area access to community programs and resources. They offer a child care center and early intervention program for adults. Programs are continually adapted to serve a diverse community. Recently, with a focus on bettering their surrounding community, they have partnered with Metro Health to offer COVID-19 testing on site.

Birthday cards will be sent to missionaries Leslie Hobson in Minnesota and Rachel Patman in Virginia.

### **Helping Youth and Children Navigate Anxiety**

Through its mission and spiritual growth studies, United Methodist Women has helped children and youth understand the world around them and the work of the church in many regions. Through geographical, spiritual growth and social-issue studies, children have had a chance to expand their worldview and their understanding of God. This year’s spiritual growth studies help children and youth explore and manage their emotions and anxiety. These two studies, *Managing Our Emotions* and *Managing Our Anxiety*, help them identify and understand their responses and reactions to what is happening in their lives and to those around them. Response asked the writers of the children and youth studies, Trudy Rankin and Faye Wilson, to share their experiences of making understanding and managing emotions and anxieties into two engaging mission studies. response: How did you feel about being asked to write this year’s United Methodist Women youth and children studies?

Rankin: Writing for youth and children about their understanding of managing feelings was a dream come true for me. I have been spending 35 years sitting with one child or youth at a time as a psychotherapist. Many who come to me are anxious about school, peer pressure, family disruptions due to divorce, their future and the future of their families, violence and the stress of trauma. Young children have a hard time even naming a feeling or identifying differences in those feelings.

Wilson: I am always excited when I am asked to write for United Methodist Women. It is a privilege, it is a joy and it is a challenge. Once I was asked to write a comic book—I had never done that before! There are certainly times when I say yes and then ask myself, “What have I said I would do?” There are times when I feel I do not have anything fresh to add. And yet the Holy Spirit continues to unveil ideas. I am amazed that at times something I read in a magazine or a commercial on television or a song that pops up randomly serves as inspiration. As Trudy said, there was something energizing about bringing to United Methodist Women leaders and the children and youth the experiences of spiritual direction and other healing directives to help the students manage their emotions, and anxiety in particular for youth. Everyone may not need counseling or have access to counseling; however, everyone can learn

breathing exercises that can help them calm their spirit and pounding hearts. response: What was it like writing the books?

Wilson: This is the second time that I have had the chance to collaborate with another writer whom I had never met in person. This time we conducted our review and brainstorming sessions via Zoom, which enabled us to see each other face to face and have a clearer understanding of each other’s excitement about the studies. From the beginning, I was able to trust Trudy’s expertise and understand her passion for these resources.

The face-to-face aspect of using Zoom also provided additional comfort for me to share affirmations for our work as well as some frustrations with the writing process. We could say to each other: “I am not sure what you mean by that,” or “What a great idea—I have never thought about it from that perspective.” We could share our struggles and puzzlement and work out challenges in real time. Our roles had been basically defined as Trudy identifying key resources and me perusing them and writing the drafts. However, as the writer, I realized early on that I was not always able to interpret the jargon or language of psychology to make it understandable for study readers and leaders. I also needed specific guidance in developing ideas that would be useful with children and youth. I could ask Trudy to draft several paragraphs, and then I would use my experience in writing children and youth studies to tweak it. It was a wonderful collaboration. I was also free to suggest resources that we could use and to say whether I thought a resource

might not work well. We both tried to keep in mind that while there were a lot of resources available, we needed to be mindful of how much we were asking study leaders to absorb given that the topics and self-care resource ideas might be new for many of them.

response: What have you learned through your own experiences with United Methodist Women?

Rankin: Writing these resources with Faye gave me the opportunity to impact more than one youth or one child at a time, through education and self-understanding. And even more exciting was that the church, through United Methodist Women, saw the value of this training. We were able to explain that anxiety is a normal feeling that can become unmanageable, but we were also

able to give guidance in how to understand what was happening in the brain and in the mind through one’s thoughts, which distort the normal feelings of anxiety.

response: What surprises did you encounter in this process, and how have the books encouraged your faith?

Wilson: The biggest surprise for me was that we had to push to include a couple of healing directives that we had identified. One reviewer had cited a Bible passage about needing to rely on prayer to change our thoughts. We had a lengthy conversation about leaders—and therefore the children and youth—understand that mental well-being often also requires medication or healing directives. We are excited to share that exercises such as guided breathing and visualization are just as important to health as having persons treat their hypertension with medicine and exercise. Trudy and I both felt that mental illness is not clearly understood, nor is the spectrum of what constitutes mental illness or challenges widely accepted. We were glad to bring this information to a younger audience and its leaders. The books definitely encouraged my faith. The Scriptures we included, along with the hymns and songs we identified, are all designed to understand that God cares equally about my mental, physical and spiritual health. The experience of writing the books broadened my knowledge base so that I am more comfortable as a youth leader or friend or aunt to listen more deeply and advise more thoughtfully when someone opens up to me. God gives us knowledge beyond prayer. Managing our emotions is part of being healthy, both physically and spiritually.

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response: What do you hope United Methodist Women members get from these studies? Rankin: I was grateful that Faye and I were on the same page regarding expanding the resources of wellness to include the various aspects of self-care spiritually, emotionally, physically and mentally. We were excited that through a weekend's worth of conversations and experiences, these children and youth—and their leaders—would learn how to talk to one another about feelings creating a community of care. They would learn that asking for help is a healthy behavior, and that identifying the “bad” feelings and asking for help to deal with them was the sign of a winner. Through exposure to training videos and literature, the youth and children would learn methods that are cutting edge and scientifically researched. We were excited that youth and children could become teachers for their peers. I hope that anyone who reads these books, whether out of curiosity or in preparing to lead the studies, will find the information and exercises helpful. I hope that we all will see that, as caring adults, we need as wide a range of skills as possible—including prayer, meditation and reflections—to support children, youth and each other as we grapple with anxiety-provoking issues.

response: The COVID-19 global health crisis has affected everyone and in various ways. What advice do you have for children and youth during this exceptionally anxious time?

Rankin: Youth and children need elders to help them take the Hero's Journey into the unknown. They need people in their world who, while keeping them safe, can embrace this opportunity of deepening spiritual maturity so that they can see the spiritual practices that are necessary to make meaning of this life experience. Are these elders to be found, those who understand the depths that must be resourced to change things? This is the moment. We can go deeper than superficial remedies. Children and youth need leaders who can help them channel the energy of anxiety into understanding and growth.

Wilson: The children and youth books provide several ideas for children and youth to manage their emotions. Straw breathing is one of my favorites where children inhale through their noses and exhale by blowing through a straw. This activity is calming for some children and youth. Emotional freedom technique, also known as tapping, is also helpful in managing emotions and addressing anxieties. This is a time when children and youth need caring adults in their lives. For those in their primary circle of strength, such as parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, pastors, youth leaders: Check in with your children. Ask if they'd like a hug. Create ways in which they can safely interact with friends, with social media, phone calls, pictures, letters, texts or e-mails. For youth, acknowledge their sadness. They are mourning the loss of proms, graduations, sports

seasons and other ceremonies, gatherings and people. If possible, try to create alternate celebrations and recognitions. My family is planning an 18th birthday and graduation party on Zoom for my granddaughter. We are asking everyone to light a candle and say how she lights up our world. Most of all, make plans for the future. At least once a week, have everyone state their greatest dream for when COVID-19 is over! There are two Scriptures I would encourage families to read and remember: Habakkuk 3:17-19, living through the “even though” times, and Acts 2:42-47: having all things in common, looking out for one another. Have children and youth pray for others in their age range who are struggling with fear, frustration and despair, pray for those who are not part of a nurturing family and community, pray that the Holy Spirit will bring to their minds any good memories of being cared for and cared about, pray that they will have a doll or stuffed animal they can squeeze tightly in hopes that some of their fears will be eased. Encourage children to sing, write stories, draw pictures, imagine their lives after the pandemic wanes. For older children and youth, if they have access to the internet, there are several videos that provide suggestions for managing fears and anxiety. It could be fear of the dark or fear of being hurt. It could be bone-deep loneliness. It could be overcoming anxiety and handling sadness such as the loss of a pet or of a friend. There are several videos referenced in both the children and youth study books—now is a great time to use them.



**September Birthdays**

- 01 Elaine Collins Campbell
- 02 Carolyn Hunter
- 02 Bobby Nalley
- 04 Mary Grace Brown
- 05 Jaron Ferrer
- 06 Chance Crouch
- Samantha Smiley
- Brenda Johnson
- 10 Rick Greer
- 14 Carol Riley
- 15 David Presnell
- 16 Casey Galvin
- 17 Jim Durham
- 17 Debbie Gissendanner
- 19 Jeffrey Michael Gould
- 22 Pat Teat
- 23 Bobby Parks III "Tee" Evans
- 28 Kevin Patrick Gibbs



**September Anniversaries**

- 01 Carolyn & Ronnie Hunter
- 13 Bobbie & Miller Bogan

**Congratulations**

We wish Lynnsey Nalley a great start to her new adventure to Charleston Southern College for the fall. We wish her the best as she continues in her nursing career.

**Congratulations** to Eric H. Philpot for being voted the best trial lawyer in the upstate for the year 2020 at the Philpot Law Firm.

**Thank you.** Thank you to Carol Presnell who has made many of us masks and made some for the church to hand out to those who need them. during this time of Covid.

**Epworth Children's Day Offering**

Epworth's annual work Day offering is approaching on Sunday, September 13, 2020. This offering has been received for decades as church members would pledge a day's wages to support the children of Epworth. Even though the ways of receiving the offerings have been impaired, the goal is still the same: that each church member contributes a minimum of \$6.00. Epworth is not an apportioned item thus the success of these offerings is vital for the support of God's work through Epworth. If you would like to help you may write your check to Berea Friendship UMC and we will deposit the check and write another one to Epworth Children's Home. Please write on the bottom of your check to go toward helping Epworth or on the outside on your envelope **FOR EPWORTH**. You may also like to use the link to our online giving form:  
<https://www.epworthchildrenshome.org/give/>  
 Sheri Mims, Associate Director of Church Relations/  
 Sheri Mims email: [smims@epworthsc.org](mailto:smims@epworthsc.org)  
[www.epworthchildrenshome.org](http://www.epworthchildrenshome.org)

**PLEASE HELP UPDATE THE PRAYER LIST**

We are only listing those who we know are in nursing/Assisted living homes, the home-bound, those who are hospitalized at present, and those who are at present under going medical procedures such as chemo, etc. We do not want to leave anyone out so if you want your name or loved ones name listed, please notify the church office. We will up-date this list every 30 days—please help us with this important endeavor.



Janet Stone is at Foothills Presbyterian Community Rehab following her surgery  
Address: 205 Bud Nalley Drive  
Easley, SC 29642  
Room 320

- Alex Philpot healing from surgery
- Janet Stone healing from surgery
- Barry & Laura Childs
- Welbourne White, Ellen & Corky's nephew is in Charleston Hospital he had a stroke.
- Bobby Nalley is home and is doing better
- Caroline Shelton waiting on scan results prayers for Cy Rogers and Shelton family
- Lisa Nichols Family
- Joe Philpot
- Mildred Pollard
- Blanche Creswell
- Laura Childs
- Robert Moler, Linda Crouch's brother
- Mary Penland
- John Disher
- Allen Zorn
- Alex Stone
- Janet Stone
- Elmo Mann
- Molene McDuffie
- Mildred Bray
- Troy Clements
- Millie Dunn
- Shirley Dickson
- Jane-Hunt Grady
- Kathleen Griffin



The Pastor and Congregation express their deepest sympathy to Barry and Laura Childs on the death of Barry's mother Mary Childs who passed away on July 29, 2020. We extend our sympathy to Jeffery (Laura) Gould on the death of Jeffery's grandmother and to Lisa Nichol's and Susan Bates on the death of their aunt.

**Serving in September**

- Dawn Stewart
- Altar Guild**
- Ronnie Hunter
- Trustee**

**CHRIST OFFERS VICTORY IN DISTRESS 1:9 JOSHUA**

