



“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

—Matthew 11:28-30

Kicking Back, Letting Your Feet Curl into God’s Sand . . .

It has certainly been one for the record books, one for posterity, as this strange and alien pandemic gripped our lives and turned our routines upside down and inside out. For the last 16-months we have lived in an alternate universe, an alternative reality, adapting to physical distancing, mask coverings, lots of handwashing--all of it accompanied by buckets of fear and anxiety. Who was safe? Who was in our bubble? Who could we trust in our family circle not to carry COVID-19 into our safe havens?

We cordoned off our pews, we put out hand sanitizer as if it were the new balm in Gilead, we removed all touchable items like Bibles and hymnals from our beloved sanctuary, we went LIVE from Laurel Pres, we greeted each other with smiling eyes and air hugs and we gave up our morning joe before and after worship and our Lingerings. Yes, it has been one for the record books, but we have emerged, much like the butterfly, from our own cocoons. We may be a bit more tattered than whole, a bit more stressed than relaxed, a bit more weather beaten than seasoned. This storm put us on lockdown, yet somehow and some way, our Beloved God has steered us through these tsunami swells so that we might know freedoms that we once took for granted and look again at some old ways and patterns that might need to stay in our past.

As we enter this summer season, now is the perfect time to bring our trauma of this pandemic year and leave it with our Beloved one, like unwanted relics from our attics. Now is the perfect time to let go of all that has stressed us in order to bask in the sunlight of renewal, re-creation, and new life. Now is a good time to kick back in the sand, or our favorite happy spot, to both reboot and to reflect on this past year and what we may have learned. Is there anything we want to

keep from this experience and continue to practice, like protecting time for long walks and noting the buzz and life force of creation around us? Or relishing “time,” without the hurry-up demands, to just be? Protecting time to read a book or to create art, just because it brings us joy? What are some ways the pandemic was a gift? And what are some ways that the pandemic highlighted for us how we want to connect and to begin again? What are some things we took for granted before that we want to make sure we take in fully now?

As we reflect intentionally about what we have been through, let us take time to notice that God is doing a new thing in our midst as much as God is restoring us from this walk in the wilderness. Take time to notice how we are different than we were before this pandemic. How have we adapted, stretched, strengthened? How have we experienced loss, grief, and disconnection? Take time to notice the changes inside of us and to notice where we see God’s presence. To really take in this moment, to clearly see all that we have been through, and to note these God sightings.

What new things are springing forth in ourselves, in each other?

- What new things do we see springing forth from our beloved community?
- How are we called to be in this moment?
- What is our gift? What is God calling us to contribute to Laurel? How do we want to be part of this beloved community?
- What is God doing now?

Let us take the time to notice as much as we can . . . through all our senses . . . so that when we gather again, we are not only refreshed by the tonic of summer living, but we are also recharged with passion for what we can be as our Beloved Community, as Laurel Love, as kingdom people in this time and space. Let us let God show us who we are as we look with fresh eyes at where we have been and where we are headed. So just kick back and let those feet curl into the sand . . .





The **Shepherd on Call** for the month of **July** is **Judy Smith**. Judy may be reached at 273-6007.

The **Shepherd on Call** for the month of **August** will be **Carolyn Stinger**. Carolyn may be reached at 755-7150. Please reach out to them if you know of anyone who needs a call or visit.



JULY

JULY 4 Outdoor Service

July 11 To the glory of God

July 18 Ann Cherry-To the glory of God and in honor of the Cherry boy's spring and summer birthdays.

July 25 Michelle & Rob McBane-To the glory of God and in memory of Michelle's sister, Carol Dunbar Miller.

AUGUST

August 1 Karen Johnson-To the glory of God and in honor of Carl on his birthday

August 8 Clint & Glenda Miller-To the glory of God and in honor of their daughter, Laurel Miller Roeder, on her birthday.

August 15 Phyllis Perross-To the glory of God and in memory of her father, J. Ewell Perross.

August 22 Jim & Judy Smith-To the glory of God and in honor of their sons, Drew Smith and Scott Smith.

August 29 Rick & Carol Short-To the glory of God and in honor of Carol's mother, Corinne Augustine, on the occasion of her 97th birthday.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF LAUREL!

- Riley, Sharon (2)
- Perross, Phyllis (3)
- Scarce, Mary (6)
- MacRae, Sara Bailey (9)
- Cooper, Katherine (12)
- Fitch, Reggie (13)
- Poff, Bonnie (13)
- Scarce, Steve (22)
- Deisher, Marcia (25)
- Stratton, Trish (25)
- Anderson, Jake (29)
- Carpenter, Carl (31)



- Peter Coulson (1)
- Horigan, Kathy (4)
- Cherry, Ann (5)
- Roeder, Laurel (9)
- Cross, Matt (11)
- Sprowl, Holly (13)
- Dorman, Cheryl (14)
- Berger, Emily (15)
- Bowlin, Mary Jane (16)
- Duff, Lorraine (25)
- Augustine, Corinne (26)
- Scarce, Melanie (27)
- McBane, Meghan (28)
- Anderson, Maureen (30)



Ann Leveridge
 Spring Arbor of Richmond
 9991 Ridgefield Parkway
 Room 305
 Richmond, VA 23233
 (Phone number is the same: 804-755-6422)



Let us keep the following people in our prayers, sharing in both their joys and needs:

***New additions will be in bold.**

Our First Responders – Police, Fire, Rescue
Our Military Personnel, Healthcare Workers
Jake Anderson

Corinne Augustine – mother of Carol Short
Sue Bell

Marshall and Gladys Chamberlayne

Vickie Chaplain

Bonnie Clatterback-mother of David

Jean Cole

Jackie Cooper and Family

Wayne & Marcia Deisher

The Doering family

Reggie Fitch

Claudia Hicks

Sherrie Kolb

Howard Lawrence

Ann Leveridge

Eddie Ann Mathewson

The McArthur family-Denis Ramdas sister's family

Ann McDermott

Jahria Paige-Great Grandson of Diane and Gene

Jackson

Phyllis Perross

Sharon Riley

Cathy Roeder

Nana Sarfo-Kantanka

John Schutrumpf

Becky Zolnai

Prayers for the World

Prayers for Ruling Elders

Prayers for friends and families

Prayers for the homeless

Prayers for Laurel's vision

If you know of someone in need of prayer or you need prayers, please call Barbara Rose@ 270-6978

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Thank You!

I would like to extend many thanks for the calls, cards, and prayers during my medical recovery journey. I appreciate the support and caring from my Laurel Church family. Thank you, Rick Short.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! UPCOMING SUMMER EVENTS AT LAUREL!



JULY

Outdoor Worship and Cookout – Sunday, July 4, - 10 am

Join us for a celebration of pandemic free living. We will convene for a hymn fest at 10 am followed by a cookout. Bring a dish to share.

Fireside Happy Hour (FHH) and S'mores Night – Wednesday, July 7, 7:30pm

Bring your favorite libation and come create your version of s'mores as we gather in the church parking lot around our firepit to swap camp stories.

Women's Circle – Tuesday July 13, 10 am – Journey into Joy

Join Carol Short, who will lead us through this remarkable book to examine our Christian practices. We will be meeting in the comforts of the fellowship hall during this summer heat.

Bruster's Night Out – Thursday, July 22, 7 pm

Come bring your summer love and join us for some ice cream (Dutch treat) as we enjoy a summer's night and each other's company at our local Bruster's.

AUGUST

Women's Circle – Tuesday August 10, 10 am – Journey into Joy

Join Carol Short, who will lead us through this remarkable book to examine our Christian practices. We will be meeting in the comforts of the fellowship hall during this summer heat.



Fireside Happy Hour (FHH) and S'mores Night – Wednesday, August 18, 7:30pm

Bring your favorite libation and come create your version of s'mores as we gather in the church parking lot around our firepit to swap camp stories.



Bruster's Night Out – Thursday, August 26, 7 pm

Come bring your summer love and join us for some ice cream (Dutch treat) as we enjoy a summer's night and each other's company at our local Bruster's.

LAUREL VISION TEAM CONVENING JUNE 27– PICTURE YOURSELF HERE



Does rethinking how we are as the church draw you in, give you energy, excite you? If so, please reach out to Reverend Ann. Our Session authorized Vision Team to launch in June. If you feel led to be a part of this exciting process, please let Reverend Ann know. We would love your collaboration as we discern how to make love known through LPC.

MASKS OR NO MASKS: IF VACCINATED IT IS YOUR CHOICE.



Starting June 20, the choir will be singing without masks because they are all vaccinated, the coffee station will be back in place with an

extra hand sanitizer station, social distancing will be a thing of the distant past, and Lingerings will begin again in the fall. Communion will stay the same . . . what is not to love about the all-in-one cup? We will include the offering once we have the ushers in place, and we can begin meeting in person without regard to social distancing. Look for our hymnals and Bibles to return this summer, and for you to enter through the front doors. And last, but not least, you may sing to your heart's content, or as you are comfortable. Rejoice, people of God, we are in a good place! However, we continue to encourage people to wear masks if that feels more comfortable or if they are not yet vaccinated.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: DUANE BERGER



What drew you to Laurel? Carson Rhyne suggested we give Laurel a try.

Favorite thing about Laurel? The family of friends we found there.

Favorite food: Favorite vegetable is popcorn.

Favorite book: Anything by Louis L'Amour, John Steinbeck, Garrison Keillor, Conan Doyle

Favorite movie: *Tender Mercies*

Favorite thing to do: Going out to dinner with my family.

What is on your bedside table? Stuff and dust

What is your favorite TV show to binge? *Monk*

One thing we might never guess about you I bicycled 3,600 miles in 49 days.

Motto you live by: True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less - C.S. Lewis.

Favorite way of making love known: Clearing my street of litter every week.

Favorite Bible passage: Isaiah 40:31 but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Your dream for Laurel: That we grow in relationship with the Holy Spirit.

How you know when love is spoken Whenever I sense a positive direction, guidance, encouragement, and enthusiasm.

SMALL GROUPS COMING TO LAUREL. LEADERS NEEDED

This fall we are going to pilot a small-group ministry at Laurel. It can be hosted at your house, the church, a park, a local eatery, or even by Zoom. Groups will meet at least once a month. Ideas for group themes are listed below. This is all optional and a great way of deepening our walk with God and with each other as a beloved community of Laurel Love. Have the gift of hospitality? Of Listening? Then please pray about whether God is leading you to facilitate one of these small groups. Leaders will be both equipped with training and supported for this ministry.



Ideas for group discussions:

1. ***The Way to Love***, written by Anthony De Mello: one meditation each meeting.
2. The spirituality of Harry Potter and J. K. Rowling: small segments each meeting.
3. God sightings: where have we seen God in action in our lives and in the world?
4. Sunday's scripture and sermon: what spoke to us, moved us, changed us?
5. Lectio Divina as a way to pray the scriptures and open God's word for us.
6. ***Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life***, written by Tish Harrison Warren

7. **Everything is Sacred**, written by Richard Rohr and Patrick Boland, 40 Practices and Reflections, one each meeting

8. **Dusk, Night, Dawn**, written by Anne Lamott, one chapter each time.

LAUREL LOVE SHOUT-OUTS...



There is so much that happens to keep our church flowing, and if you see love in action, please send Brenda a quick text or email, and help us to capture a snapshot of our love.

Can we get another Amen? Another big shout out to Glenda and Clint Miller and Pete MacRae for keeping our grounds looking sharp. We know you would be out there if you could, Wayne, so you are there in spirit.

A big shout out to Marshall Chamberlayne for fire marshalling our S'mores campfire.

This month, Mary Jane Bowlin is bringing floral summer love to our hallways. Check out her latest bulletin board creations.

A hearty "thank you" to Michael Henderson for completing our audit.

A huge shout out to our COVID Task Force for keeping us safe this past year! Hugs to Ann Whitby, Brenda MacRae. Mary Searce and Sue Bell. Your love made us safer and better.

A big thank you to our Member Care and Mission Team for making Laurel Love known to all of us. To Mary Jane Bowlin, Nana Sarfo-Kantanka, Gladys Chamberlayne, Linda Coulson, Carolyn Stringer, Barbara Rose, Marcie Deisher and Diane Jackson.

Continued deep appreciation to Michael Henderson, who is serving as our liturgist.

A big shout out to Linda Coulson for serving as our Session and church representative at our June Presbytery stated meeting.

A big note of gratitude to Sue Anderson for keeping us in prayer and for finding ways to connect us with resources.

Lots of gratitude to Michael Whitby, Duane Berger, Steve Searce, Rudy van't Riet and Ann Whitby our fearless Worship Production Team.

Thank you to Steve Searce who is keeping us all glued together inside and out and bringing home the mail.

Thank you to David Clatterbuck, the choir, Mary Jane Bowlin, Diane Jackson, Gladys Chamberlayne,

Michael Henderson, Clint Miller, Duane Berger, Sue Bell, and all those who brought class and honor to Ruth Doering's memorial service.

Lots of love to Brenda and Pete MacRae for their monthly gift of editing the *Gazette*. You bring us joy month in and month out. Enjoy July off.

A huge thank you to Carolyn Stinger and LaVerne Miller for running our bulletins and keeping us in liturgical order.

Another AMEN to Wayne Deisher, who continues to prepare our monthly financial reports even when under the weather. That is dedication and Laurel Love in action!!

A big shout out to Barbara Rose, who is our Shepherd on Call for the month of June, and to Judy Smith, who is our Shepherd on Call for July.

Thank you to Rob McBane, Karen Johnson, Marcie Deisher, Ann Whitby, Steve Searce, Pete MacRae, and Jim Clark for serving as counters and bank deposit runners.

A hearty thank you to Karen Johnson for managing our flower orders and for preparing the memorial gift letters to the Doering family.

Lots of love to David Clatterbuck and our awesome choir for lifting our worship each week to a whole new level. We appreciate you all.

Thank you to Barbara Rose for keeping our prayer chain alerted and mindful.

A warm shout-out to Carol Short for offering a summer women's circle to study the practices of our Christian faith.

A big shout-out to Janice Berger for communion and flower love.

Thank you to Michael Whitby for being a part of our Worship Production team.



DEADLINE FOR GAZETTE – 19th OF EACH MONTH

Consider going paperless and receiving the Gazette via email. Just send me a message at the below address and I will take care of the rest.

Gazette email: pamacrae@comcast.net



Bulletin credit to Mary Jane Bowlin

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