



LAUREL  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

# Laurel Gazette

June 2021



## Sharing the Same Fate as God

In Genesis we find our spiritual ancestral.com story. We are made in the image and likeness of our Creator God and declared both good and a blessing. Our root DNA is crafted from love, to be love, and to return to love. This also means that we share in the same fate as God. Jesus told us many times that to embrace him means that we also embrace our cross and follow in his footsteps. We intuitively understand that this means that we will try to practice love in all kinds of circumstances – just like he did – on both our good days and not-so-good days (and there is plenty of grace for our not-so-good days). It also means that we will know suffering along the way. Joy and love we understand, but suffering we naturally reject and turn away from. Yet, the way of the cross includes this piece too.

Jesus, our wounded healer, took into himself all the pain, hatred, contrariness, disease and contradictions of the world and reconciled these things in his dying and rising. He was resurrected with wounds and shows us as the Risen One that this is our path too – life, death and resurrection repeated over and over and over again. He shows us that this is how we are to live the transformed life. How we are to continue to grow deeper and deeper in the image and likeness of our Creator God.

Pain and suffering are organically part of loving deeply, and these elements are part of our healing and transformation. This means that our wounds have meaning and that our God stands in complete solidarity with us, sharing our pain with us. We do not get over a wound, we heal from it. It is part of our story of loving deeply. These are sacred places where love is made known. Like the center of a tree that has one

ring for each year of life, our wounds tell our story of loving deeply.



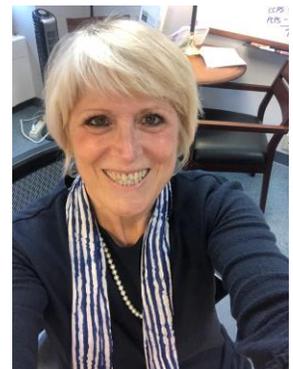
Living out this cruciform life (life, death and resurrection continually) is hard and emotional, and depleting.

Even though we want to make it stop, there is so much more freedom when we just yield to it. To honor our wounds by simply letting them be present. It is the strength of our beloved community, Laurel Love itself, that God provides to help us to stand amid this transformation process towards healing.

Even though pandemic living has further isolated us from this warm embrace, it is ever present. The Body of Christ reminds us that there are no words for our pain, but there is always hope, as we share this broken place together. It tells us that our wounds are honorable, and that our God is right here alongside each of us. As C. S. Lewis described in his aptly titled book *A Grief Observed*, we need each other to observe our grief, to give voice to its power to break us and to heal us simultaneously. That is where healing happens where we least expect it... when we stop fixing and just see and honor our pain.

Loving deeply adds to our story line of our trees — for life, death, resurrection is the way of kingdom love, and these wounds are as sacred as they come. They signal that love was made known in us and through us. Our gift to each other as the Body of Christ is that we observe, honor and embrace these wounds. That is how Laurel Love shares the fate of God and makes God's heart known.

## Ann's Page



## Ruth Doering Service Saturday, June 26, 10 am

Ruth and Roger Doering have been long time beloved members of our Laurel community. On Saturday June 26 at 10 am we will celebrate Ruth's life in a worship service with a reception to follow outside. You are cordially invited to share in giving thanks to God for this spirited gift of life.



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF LAUREL!

Pete MacRae (1)  
Chris Berger (3)  
Wayne Deisher (5)  
Michael Henderson (7)  
Nana Sarfo-Kantanka (10)  
Ann McDermott (14)  
Linda Coulson (17)  
Ginger Lanier (20)  
Pete Rose (23)

### MASKS OR NO MASKS: LAUREL TO FOLLOW VIRGINIA AND CDC GUIDELINES



With recommendations from the COVID Task Force, the Session voted that starting July 4 all those who are vaccinated may opt to go without masks indoors. We want you to know that you are welcome at Laurel and to follow the medical advice of your doctors and to do what is best for you. You are welcome to wear a mask if that makes you comfortable too. The Session also voted to ask the COVID Task Force for further guidelines about our communal life together and our expectations for our business partners.

**The COVID Task Force:** is at work studying how we might phase in the other elements of our worship and community life. When more information is available, we will let you know.

**July 4<sup>th</sup>:** Save the date. We are doing the big reveal, an outdoor worship and cookout to celebrate how God has brought us through this ordeal. No masks required.



The **Shepherd on Call** for the month of **June** is **Barbara Rose**. Barbara can be reached at 270-6978 if you know of anyone that needs care and concern.

Laurel Family,



Many thanks for your cards, phone calls, flowers, and meals during my time home with hip surgery. Not only did I appreciate it, Jim, who was the caregiver and cook, double appreciates all you did to lighten his load. Laurel is a

special place with special people. Love to all. Judy Smith



### SANCTUARY FLOWERS FOR JUNE

**June 6** - Michael Henderson - to the glory of God and in honor of all our Laurel Saints who have worked so hard to keep the church going through these crazy times.

**June 13-** To the glory of God

**June 20** - To the glory of God

**June 27-** To the glory of God

\*Sanctuary Flowers - Please consider signing up to provide flowers for worship this Summer. Sign up on the bulletin board and fill out the slip (found in the envelope to the left of the Flower Chart) with name and dedication information and give it to Karen Johnson.

Alternatively, you can provide the information to her by email at [ksjohnson1904@gmail.com](mailto:ksjohnson1904@gmail.com). Checks for payment in the amount of \$22.50 can be included with your offering. Deadline to make the July/August newsletter will be June 18. Karen Johnson



**FATHER'S DAY SUNDAY JUNE 20!**



**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

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

Ann McDermott

Andy, Evie, and Jamie Meyers

Phyllis Perross

Sharon Riley

Cathy Roeder

Nana Sarfo-Kantanka

John Schutrumpf

**Judy Smith**

Ann Whitby and family

**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.**

**HUNGRY FOR SOME LAUREL LOVE? HERE ARE SOME UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES:**



**Women's Circle – Tuesday June 15, 10 am – Journey into Joy**

Join Carol Short who will lead us through this remarkable book to examine our Christian practices.

**Fireside Happy Hour (FHH) and S'more's Night – Wednesday, June 16, 7:30pm**

Bring your favorite libation and nibble and come enjoy some s'mores as we gather in the church parking lot around our firepit to enjoy each other.

**Chats with Ann: Processing our Pandemic Life – Church parking lot Wednesday, June 30, 2:30-4pm**

Come to continue the conversation of processing this past year of pandemic life and re-entry.



**THE SHEEP IN ACTION**

**Michael Henderson Elected Acting Clerk of**

**Session** -Michael was elected the Acting Stated Clerk through the end of the year. He graciously agreed to this 7-month term and has been working his way through the Clerk Training provided by our Presbytery. The Session was thrilled that he stepped in to fill this critical role. A big shout-out to Michael for taking on this big responsibility on top of his already full plate of church work and work life. We are grateful.

**Gladys Bowls Elected Secretary of our**

**Corporation**-Gladys Bowls was unanimously elected to serve as the Secretary of our Corporation effective immediately. Linda Coulson was named President earlier in the year.

**Diane Jackson and Michael Henderson, Elected**

**Co-Chairs of Personnel**-A new Personnel Committee is forming for a 6-month term to be re-elected in January 2022. Diane and Michael will be chairing the committee which is charged with 3 tasks: review of staff, creating our Family Leave Policy and identifying employee/church holidays.

**Members sought for the Nominating Committee**-It

is that time of year again where we tap the gifts of this Body of Christ to serve as session members. We particularly need Worship and Education and Stewardship and Property team members. Pray about whether God is calling you to serve either on the group that is charged with discerning our leaders or whether God is calling you to serve as a leader at this time.

**Reverend Ann has a new cell phone and a new number:**

You can reach or text her at (804) 508-3850. As always, if it is an urgent or time sensitive matter, please let her know in your message.



## MEMBER CARE AND MISSIONS

Member Care and Missions continues to reach out and touch lives in our congregation and community.

Recently, a visit was made to the Meyers' home in our community. Andy was our minister here at Laurel several years back and resides here in our community. In a recent accident, he lost his wife, Shannon. Gift cards were presented to him on behalf of our congregation. Andy sends his love and appreciation to Laurel members.

We have ongoing concerns and health issues in our congregation which we have addressed through cards, phone calls, visits (when possible), plants, small tokens of love, and food.

Each member should be getting a birthday card from the church recognizing them on their special day.

Consideration is being given to a baby shower to honor our new little ones.

A reception or some type of recognition for Ruth Doering to be announced.

As you hear of member needs, please let our committee know and we will continue to pour out Laurel Love.

Mary Jane Bowlin

+++++

### Celebrate July 4th at Laurel with Outdoor Worship and a Cookout.

We will gather outdoors for worship followed by a cookout to celebrate our walk through this pandemic year. We will be ringing the bell and enjoying the gift of freedom that God has brought us through this difficult time. Look for more information to come in our weekly bulletins.



### 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 or at the church or at a park or at 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.

### FINDING YOUR SOCIAL SKILLS A BIT RUSTY? JOIN THE CLUB

**Growing great relationships will take some practice, but we've got this!!** According to many social scientists, our social skills took a huge nosedive during the pandemic. When we weren't simply isolated from each other, we had to manage the difficulty of communicating through a mask, while physically distancing, with the fear looming inside that any one of us might carry and share this invisible virus. It is no wonder that our usual "merry and bright" greetings got lost in translation! Professor and author Brene Brown ends each podcast with these words: "stay awkward, brave and kind." I like the grace this closing provides. One of the signature marks of our beloved community is our love and care for one another. Let us welcome each other back into the fold with this same spirit, even if we are a bit rusty. What better place to practice reconnecting than among friends? There is plenty of grace to "stay awkward, brave and kind," especially when we speak Laurel Love.

### JUNE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Ann Whitby

#### What drew you to Laurel?

When I first tried Laurel, I showed up at 10:45, thinking all church started at 11. :-) Dixie Mertens was getting ready to do the offering and stopped to talk to me even though the other three people were walking up. I ended up going to Mt Vernon Baptist because of the large children's program. After being there for a few months I still didn't know anyone. No one said hi or greeted you when you came in. And



then I remembered the little church where someone went out of their way to greet me. So, we went back and tried Laurel again. Someone spoke to us every week and gushed over Michael (because he was pretty darn cute). I decided that we needed that kind of welcoming environment, where we were a part of a faith group and not just a seat filler, more than we needed a children's program.

**Favorite thing so far about Laurel?** The people!

**Favorite food:** Pizza

**Favorite book:** *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*

**Favorite movie:** *Star Wars*

**Favorite thing to do:** Sit at the beach.

**What is on your bedside table?** Remote Control and dust. HAHA!

**What is your favorite TV show to binge?** 911

**One thing we might never guess about you.** I love to play poker.

**Motto you live by:** Try to remember you don't know what the other person is going through.

**Favorite way of making love known:** Making someone laugh.

**Favorite Bible passage:** Psalm 23-28, The Lord is my shepherd.... My Mom made me memorize it when I was young. I would say it in my head when I got scared or nervous, and it would make me feel better.

**Your dream for Laurel:** To attract some of the younger generations that have drifted away from church and show them what they are missing!

**How you know when love is spoken ...** When you can have laughter through tears.

+++++

**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.

A 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.

Lots of love to Mary Jane Bowlin who is keeping our

bulletin boards lively and seasonal and lovely. Your creativity lifts our spirits!

A huge shout out to Duane Berger and Michael Henderson for bringing the magic on Pentecost Sunday with the red balloons and petals. Our sanctuary had spirit! And thank you to all who wore Red. Very festive.

Thank you to Pete MacRae for keeping our parking lot weed-free.

A big shout out to Steve Scarce for becoming our property manager! He has been coordinating and caring for the needs of Gingerbread Cottage Preschool and Faith Revival Church.

A big thank you to Michael Henderson for the communion bread this past month and to Janice Berger for setting the table.

An enthusiastic high-five to Duane Berger, Clint Miller and Michael Henderson for putting up and taking down the tent for the Chamberlayne memorial service.

A hearty thanks you to Mary Jane Bowlin and Diane Jackson for serving as point people for the Chamberlayne reception, from food to hospitality.

A big thank you to Gladys Chamberlayne and Mary Jane Bowlin for bringing love to a Laurel member.

A gigantic thank you to Denis Ramdas, Rob and Michelle McBane, Carolyn Stinger and Michael Henderson for preparing our space for worship each Sunday.

A huge thank you to Duane Berger and Michael Henderson for filling our sanctuary with balloons and red pedals as the Spirit touched down and we celebrated Pentecost.

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.

Lots of gratitude for our COVID Task Force who continues to steer us in the right direction. Thanks to Ann Whitby, chair, and Brenda MacRae and Mary Scarce.

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

To Brenda and Pete MacRae for their love month in and out. You have brought the joy to us once again.

Thank you to Carolyn Stinger and LaVerne Miller for running our bulletins and the extra bulletins for the Chamberlayne service. We value you!!

A continued hearty thanks 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.

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

A big shout out to Rob McBane and Diane Jackson for picking up our mail.

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

A big air hug to David Clatterbuck and our 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.

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 perking up our flowers each Sunday before and after our Worship service.

### **NEW KID ON THE BLOCK!**

Congratulations to Alex and Sara MacRae on the birth of their first child, Theodore Thompson MacRae! "Teddy" was born on May 27, 2021, at 12:46 pm weighing 7lbs 9 oz. Grandparents Pete and Brenda MacRae are thrilled to welcome their first grandson and new cousin to their granddaughter Maeve.



### **FOR A BIT OF HUMOR...SIN QUOTES IN CHURCH BULLETINS** by Stacie Marshall Sept 2019 in *Funny Stories*

This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The Senior Choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir. The choir will meet at the Larsen house for fun and sinning.

The beautiful flowers on the altar this morning are to celebrate the birth of David Alan Belzer, the sin of Rev. and Mrs. Julius Belzer.

Next Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the carpet should come forward and do so.



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](mailto:pamacrae@comcast.net)

Laurel Presbyterian Church  
9675 Staples Mill Road  
Glen Allen, VA 23060



This page left intentionally blank