

Living in Exile

By Pastor Andy Straubel

I miss church. I miss everything about it. I miss the atmosphere. I miss worship. I miss singing. I miss the gathering together. I miss the little people. I miss you all. It feels like we have been exiled to a foreign land and not permitted to return.

After the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD 70, Jews of the diaspora or scattering longed to return to their homeland. I can relate. In exile, at a traditional Passover Seder and at the end of Yom Kippur, a ceremonial glass would be broken under foot saying, "Next year in Jerusalem!" It serves as a reminder of the experience of living in exile.

For centuries faithful Jews would leave their homes three times a year and travel to the Holy City, always "up" as it was located in the mountains. Songs of Accent were sung along the way (Psalms 120-134). These psalms reflect the attitude as well as the actions of worship. Each night of their pilgrimage toward the city, the faithful would stop and sing one Song of Accent. On the eve of entering Jerusalem, they would sing Psalm 133 which says, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity [peace]! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountain of Zion! For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore." Can you sense the excitement, the anticipation? For centuries Jews corporately celebrated the gathering. They celebrated the Passover, remembering their deliverance from slavery.

On the Day of Atonement they celebrated the forgiveness of their sins. As a child Jesus was well acquainted with the custom and walked
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ZOOM Sunday School



Growing in the knowledge and love of the Lord with one another, while practicing social distancing in this time of the Covid 19 pandemic.

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with his family and friends (“according to the custom”). On one occasion Jesus “lingered” to speak with the religious teachers in the temple (Luke 2:41-52). I can only imagine what Jesus talked about on that day. What I do know is we were meant to be together! And we will be together soon. I look forward to that day, perhaps sooner than we might think, that we will all be together again.

If there are lessons the Lord wants us to learn, I want to learn them. I have already come to appreciate time: time with family, time with my daughter, intentionally talking with family. I have also come to appreciate slowing down, reading more, reflecting, and learning new things.

The Covid19 crisis is not over, and, it may be some time until life returns to a relative normal, but the church will regather. And when it does, I am going to celebrate. I want to have lots of worship, a lot of singing; I want to celebrate communion and have a huge church luncheon. If there are stories to be told of God’s faithfulness, I want to hear them. No doubt it will be a sunny day, kids will be able to play outside, and adults can gather under the trees. Hopefully, it won’t be “next year!”

Have a Blessed and Happy Mother’s Day

On Sunday, May 10, we will celebrate Mother’s Day. It is an opportunity to honor, love and cherish the special women who have given us life or have cared for us as their own. These unselfish women have nurtured us, taught us and prayed for our well-being. Our hearts are overflowing with gratitude to all mothers.



Restoring Hearts Ministry

By Steven Bassett

Windsor Chapel is scheduled to go out alongside Restoring Hearts Ministries on May 9, 2020. We will be limited to four people from Windsor Chapel to go out, first come first served. These four servants will be meeting up at the mission house (30 Iowana Avenue, Ewing Township) at 8:45 am.



We will still be under social distancing. Whoever wants to serve cannot have any underlying medical issues, nor can they be regularly interacting with those who are medically fragile. Lastly, you will have to wear a mask while you serve. Please let me know as soon as possible if you want to serve for this event, and I will

place you on the list knowing that we will need more than four in case someone cannot make it. That way I can reach out to others outside of Windsor Chapel should we not have the four servants needed for the day.

Please contact Steven Bassett at 609-346-1127 or email hensoma.onebody@gmail.com

Join Our Virtual Worship Services

Although we are unable to physically gather for worship, you are invited to join us for a wonderful time of peace and encouragement during our virtual worship service every Sunday, at 9:30 am. Visit our website (www.windsorchapel.org) to easily listen to Pastor Andy’s inspiring messages and a playlist of beautiful worship songs.

You are also welcome to join our Sunday morning Bible Study classes as we seek to grow in our love and knowledge of the Lord. If you haven’t signed up for Sunday School and would like to “attend” via Zoom, please email chapel@windsorchapel.org. An invitation and link will be emailed to you every week by Pastor Andy for the Men’s class, or Cindy Bills or Janet Berrill for the Women’s class. Feel free to invite your family, friends or neighbors who may like to join us on Sundays, too. All are welcome.

Elder's Corner

By Ken Bills

In the context of the many hardships accompanying the COVID-19 pandemic, being unable to hold Windsor Chapel's annual Good Friday service was no doubt a small one. For me, however, there was a real sense of loss. On Good Friday, we gratefully commemorate the sacrificial death of Christ, the second member of the triune Godhead, for the sins of each and every one of us, past, present, and future. The march toward this monumental event began millennia earlier when Adam and Eve sinned and changed the course of history for the entirety of God's glorious creation. Christ's death on the cross deserves our full attention at least once a year.

At the center, of course, is Jesus, the Messiah, fully God and fully man, the only-begotten Son of God, fully without sin, the Savior of the world. Around Him, we see the sad and fascinating swirl of fallen humanity: Peter and the disciples, King Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Chief Priest and the Sanhedrin, the Roman soldiers, Simon of Cyrene.... The list goes on. And in the light of the unprecedented, unrepeatable sacrifice of Jesus, we see these people (and ourselves) more clearly.

This year I have been thinking about Pontius Pilate. His basic story is well-known. Pilate is the procurator of Judea. He has authority over the Roman soldiers and has power to both judge and rule. He has the right to appoint members to the Sanhedrin, the supreme ruling body of the Jews that has religious, civil, and criminal authority, and he exercises control over Temple funds. The Roman government expects him to maintain order in the rebellious Judean province. Jewish writers depict him as offensive and corrupt. There is a saying that "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." While Pilate must answer for his actions to Rome, the power he has over the province of Judea is immense, and he exercises that power arbitrarily and for his own gain.

The Sanhedrin brings Jesus to Pilate seeking authority to put Jesus to death. They accuse Jesus of sedition against Roman rule, of interfering with the payment of tribute to Caesar, and of defying Roman rule and Caesar himself by declaring

Himself to be King. Pilate examines Jesus. Somewhat surprisingly, Pilate announces that he has found no basis for the charges against Jesus even as the Jewish leaders accuse Pilate of disloyalty to Caesar. Pilate's wife sends word that he should have nothing to do with this "innocent man," since she has been troubled in her dreams on account of Him. Pilate cannot understand why Jesus says so little in His own defense. When Jesus says that He has been sent into the world to bear witness to the truth, and that everyone who is of the truth listens to His voice, Pilate famously responds: "What is truth?"

Pilate comes before the crowd that has gathered and offers to release Jesus or a criminal named Barabbas in accordance with his custom of releasing a prisoner at Passover. The crowd cries for Barabbas to be released and shouts that Jesus should be crucified. Pilate sends Jesus to be mocked and flogged by the Roman soldiers, and then presents the beaten and bleeding Jesus again to the crowd, which continues to call for Jesus to be crucified. Pilate washes his hands in front of the assembled mob and declares himself innocent of Jesus's blood before eventually turning Jesus over to be executed.

Although we have limited information and can only speculate about Pilate's motives and thoughts during the events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus, the Gospel accounts of Pilate's encounter with the Light of the World do give us plenty to think about.

Pilate's question: "What is truth?" is an intriguing starting point. Perhaps Pilate thought truth was a matter of little importance in comparison to matters of power. Or maybe he believed it was, in this world, impossible to know what was true with any certainty. It could be that Pilate had lived so long in the deceit and schemes of Roman politics that he had lost the ability to differentiate between what was true and what was expedient.

Now, centuries later, we find ourselves living in a culture in which many doubt or even deny the existence of a universal, objective truth, exchanging it for relative truth that varies from person to person

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and from time to time. And even if we still believe in the concept of absolute truth, we are no doubt tempted many times to hide, bend or ignore truth for a large variety of reasons in our personal lives. Jesus, who is the Truth, calls us to live in truth, but like Pilate, we all fall short.

One could almost feel sorry for Pilate if he were a person committed to truth. He had two obligations as procurator that seemed to be in conflict: to administer justice and to keep order. Pilate found no evil in Jesus, and no basis for the charges against Him. But it is also clear that the Jewish leaders and crowds threatened to cause a disturbance and perhaps a riot if he set Jesus free. In this fallen world, good things—like justice and order, grace and truth—can be, or can seem to be, in conflict. But this conflict is not forever. Justice and order were intended by God to work together in harmony. In Christ, and particularly, at the cross, we see God’s reconciliation of apparent opposites. Jesus was “full of grace and truth,” and at the cross we see justice and mercy powerfully combined for our salvation. The cross points to a coming day when the lion will lie down with the lamb, and the good things that now seem to be in conflict will be brought together in the perfect harmony intended by God.

It’s odd, isn’t it, that Pilate, who had some serious doubts about even the idea of truth, finds himself unwilling to take the easiest way out and pronounce Jesus guilty. Was he superstitious and afraid based on his wife’s dreams? Did he, when confronted by the one who is Truth, find himself uncharacteristically unwilling to cast a dishonest judgment? We don’t know. What we do know is that in the end he sacrificed his obligation to dispense justice in favor of pleasing the Jewish leaders and quieting the crowds. It is possible that he had decided that a civil disturbance would threaten his career as a Roman governor. And if we are honest with ourselves, we, too, can be tempted to put pleasing others and personal interests above doing what is right.

Pilate is perhaps most famous for the public washing of his hands at the conclusion of Jesus’ trial. Clearly, he intended to demonstrate in the clearest way possible that he was not responsible

for the travesty of justice that was occurring. We can wonder if he also sensed that, despite his protestations, he was guilty of Jesus’ death by abdicating his responsibility and that the washing of his hands also symbolized his attempt to wash away his guilt. But no amount of hand-washing can rinse away sin. Ironically, the One with the power to make Pilate clean was standing before him, and only through His blood shed on the cross could Pilate then, or any of us now, be made clean.

Further Up and Further In

Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in and among us



By Cindy Bills

Eternal Truth Vs. Temporal Trials

In these days of Coronavirus lockdown, time has taken on new dimensions in our household. Without the rhythms of everyday life out in the world, we are finding it quite easy to lose track of time. The uniformity of our day-to-day lives that is associated with our virus-imposed seclusion has created a sense of suspended animation that seems quite contrary to linear time. As the world continues to fight Covid-19 and restrictions remain in place, it is easy to feel that life will never change.

But the good news is that eternity has nothing to do with Covid-19; the virus has no place there. The Apostle Paul tells us at the end of I Corinthians 13 that only three things remain: faith, hope, and love. And while Coronavirus news may dominate our lives at the moment, we would be well served by considering that when all is said and done, it is faith, hope, and love that will define our reality. At the moment, I would like to take a brief look at faith.

The author of Hebrews describes faith as the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. It is a settled and secure position that rests on a firm foundation. The world offers many possible alternative faith foundations: government, science, the intrinsic goodness of people, community, and a generalized spirituality are popular examples. But the Bible tells us that

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reliance on such worldly powers will certainly and eventually lead to disappointment rather than fulfillment.

If we want a faith that will in truth provide the unseen things that we hope for, we must choose our foundation carefully. In the Gospels of Matthew (Chapter 7) and Luke (Chapter 6), Jesus uses the analogy of the foundation of a home to teach his listeners the importance of an unmovable spiritual foundation: Just as it is important to build a home upon a deep, strong foundation, it is vital to build our spiritual foundation on a solid and immovable base. In the spiritual realm, it is truly a matter of eternal life and death. What we believe is what we will have to cling to when storms and trials come. C.S. Lewis has this to say: “You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death to you. It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong and sound as long as you are merely using it to cord a box. But suppose you had to hang by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn’t you then first discover how much you really trusted it?”

While science, government, and the good will of people and community may well be used by God and may help in the midst of this pandemic, they have little to offer in regard to eternity. If we want to live by eternal values, we must build our faith upon the only truly trustworthy foundation. We must indeed be sure that our foundation will resist the worst of storms, that our rope will hold us as we dangle from it. The Apostle Paul makes this observation:

Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith is in vain. Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still dead in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have

hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

It is of the utmost importance that we build our faith on a real, unshakable foundation. How can we be sure? We return to the words of Paul:

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep....thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The bedrock truth of Christ crucified and Christ risen becomes the foundation of our faith. We can bet our eternal kingdom on it!

And once we have our firm eternal foundation of faith in place, we can live in the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things unseen in the here and now. Even though we continue to battle an unseen virus among us, there are other unseen realities of an eternal nature that deserve our attention as well. Here are just a few:

John 14:2—*In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*

John 16:33—*These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.*

Philippians 1:6—*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

As we find ourselves living in unprecedented times, we will need to find our hope and confidence, choose the foundation of our faith, every day, moment by moment. May we choose wisely and encourage others to do so as well!

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or clbills@verizon.net) to continue the dialogue....



Working Towards Flawlessness

By Janet Berrill

Certainly there are a lot of negative consequences of being ordered to stay at home during this pandemic. But there are some benefits as well and one of those for me is having time to work on projects. My first grandchild is due to be born at the end of May, and I wanted to make a baby quilt for him. Earlier in the year I had too many other things going on that left me no time for this project, but all of a sudden I found myself with the time I needed to get it done.

The pattern I chose is a simple one, made up mainly of squares and just a few triangles. The triangles are sewn together to form a square, the squares are sewed into rows, the rows are sewed together to form the top and then the three layers of the top, batting and back are sewn together to make the finished quilt.

After I had completed the top, I noticed that the edge on one side wasn't quite straight. I took a closer look at the row and it was one that contained triangles sewn together to form a square. But something wasn't quite right. The square formed



by the two triangles was a bit smaller than the other squares, so when the row was sewn together, it was a little shorter than the other ones. This threw off the edge of the top. What was I to do? My first thought was to leave it as it was and fudge it as I

sewed on the back, after all it was only a little off. But I didn't like the thought of giving my grandson a quilt that was flawed, and every time I saw it I would be reminded of that. So I decided to rip out the triangles and make new ones to replace the ones that were too small. When I finished doing this, the top of the quilt, much to my delight, now had a straight edge.

A few weeks ago I got a text that I did not have a good reaction too—for some reason it annoyed me.

It surprised me that I found the text annoying for there was really nothing bad about it. I stopped to consider the situation and asked myself what was going on. I knew my attitude was wrong, and at first I decided I would just choose to have a better attitude. I would not be annoyed. But I realized that that was not the right solution. Yes, I could choose a new attitude, but it wasn't going to get rid of the problem that caused the bad attitude in the first place. In order to do that, I needed to go deeper. I prayed and laid it all before the Lord. I told Him I was sorry for my bad attitude and that I didn't understand why that was the reaction I had. I acknowledged that He knows me better than I know myself, and I asked Him to expose whatever was at the root of my reaction and then to heal me from it. I told Him I wanted to fully cooperate with Him in removing this sin from my life.

Just like the quilt top, if something in the center of our life is not right, it is going to show up on the outside, in our behavior. My first reaction to just changing my attitude was like trying to fudge the pieces in the quilt and make it work. It can be done, but it doesn't eliminate the problem. In order to make the quilt right, I had to rip out the problem part and replace it with the correct size pieces. In order to make my attitude right, the underline sin needed to be identified, confessed, and removed. Once the root of the sin is removed, the behavior that comes from the sin will no longer be there.

Fortunately for me, the quilt had only one place where it was faulty, and when I fixed that everything was as it should be. But that is not the case in my life. As I said before, God knows us better than we know ourselves. God knows my heart, He knows what sin lies within, even if I am not aware of it. I thank God and praise Him that He lovingly brings it to my attention and works in me to rid me of it. I am a work in progress. He is working on making me flawless for His glory, and I want to cooperate with Him as He works in me.

If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:

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