

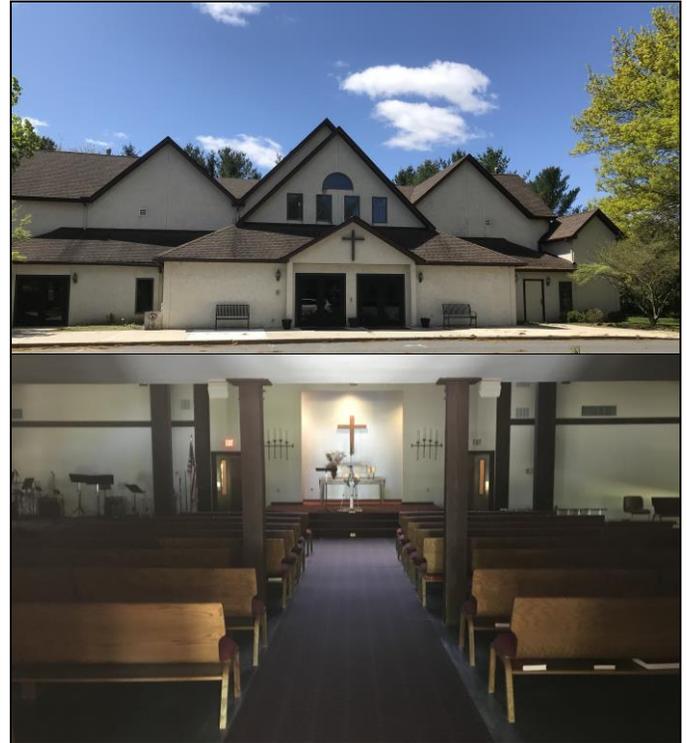
Those Who Abide in Christ Have Nothing to Fear

By Dr. Steven John Bassett

During this pandemic, there is little doubt that you have heard a message or two on why Christians should not be fearful and place our faith in God. Truth be told, our minds are constantly bombarded with negative thoughts of what could go wrong in times like this and as humans, this is a normal reaction to the unknown that challenges our status quo or norms. The many changes to our daily lives, routines, and ways of interacting with others have increased the stress level for many, because they no longer feeling “safe” or “in control” of their lives. We have been forced to adjust to the new norms in life as things are changing almost daily; thus, this is the exact time for us to place our full trust in the Lord as we face these challenges and unknowns. This may be an easy thing to do when things are going well or our way, but now, in the midst of this pandemic, is the time when we as followers of Christ must find our refuge in Him.

So, even as dreadful as things may seem during this pandemic with sad and overwhelming stories and circumstances, there still remains great blessings for those who actively seek to draw closer to the Lord; even if this seems impossible. In other words, this is a time for us to strengthen our walk with Christ and find a deeper prayer life as we turn over our worries to Him, since we are not meant to bear our burdens alone. The scriptures tell us that we can be confident that God is in control and working things out for the good of those who belong to Him. *“And we know that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose”* (Romans 8:28). Therefore, we can place our total faith in Him, no matter the circumstances or whether we feel worthy of His great blessings or grace, since nothing is too big for God to handle; really. Those who truly abide in Christ stand equipped by the Lord to live a daily life of sacrifice and surrender in our service to the kingdom of heaven no matter the challenge.

Consequently, if we abide in Christ, we know that a
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While we wait during this pandemic for science and professionals to determine how and when it is safe for us to gather together in our church home, we will continue to connect via YouTube and Zoom, and take comfort in God's promises.

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*Don't you know that you yourselves
are God's temple and that God's Spirit
dwells in your midst?*

1 Corinthians 3:16

*For where two or three gather in my
name, there am I with them.”*

Matthew 18:20

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong
and courageous. Do not be afraid; do
not be discouraged, for the Lord your
God will be with you wherever you go.”*

Joshua 1:9

~ ~ ~

"Those Who Abide in Christ..." continued...

life in Him is not based on going to a building once a week or following religious practices. On the contrary, we know we are called to serve every day whether at home, work, traveling, or wherever life takes us. Moreover, we know our true fellowship is built upon the tapestry of our lives in Christ as we reach out to our brethren in the Body of Christ each and every day. We are blessed with the ability to do so regardless of the social distancing restrictions in place because of this pandemic. Through the many resources (phone, email, video, etc.), we are not denied the opportunity to display a serving heart to someone in need no matter the physical boundaries placed on us. Thus, we can and should celebrate fellowship as Christians every day. This is what Jesus taught us to do and the term "Christian" is best defined as one who is like Christ. Therefore, *"Whoever claims to abide in Him must walk as Jesus walked"* (1 John 2:6).

Jesus said, *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples"* (John 15:4-8).

Therefore, we know that Jesus is the True Vine, and the branches who abide in Him are those who have surrendered everything in this world to gain a true connection to the Christ producing within us a new life. The "withered branches" not abiding in Christ are those people who remain spiritually dead because they elect not to fully surrender their lives in this world to have a close relationship with Jesus and walk the path He did: where he owned nothing, wanted for nothing, but surrendered His very life for us as God asked him to do. Thus, those not abiding in Christ remain disconnected from Him and can bear no fruit or enjoy eternal life offered through full surrender. Although they may claim to abide in Christ, they possess only an artificial attachment to the Vine and cannot draw life from Him.

Unfortunately, those who claim to know Christ

externally, but have not truly given their life over to Our Lord, are just make-believers having no true attachment to True Vine through Christ. Remember, for quite a while both Peter and Judas seemed identical in their walk with Christ. Nonetheless, Peter proved to be attached to the Vine and we know that Judas was not. Conversely, those who do abide in Christ can boldly trust Him in all things fearing nothing in this world. *"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power, love, and self-control"* (2 Timothy 1:7). Jesus said, *"Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"* (Luke 12:25). *"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell"* (Matthew 10:28).

The Gospel of Mark illustrates how fear is simply a lack of faith. One day while Jesus and His disciples were out at sea a violent windstorm came up, and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was being swamped. During this time, Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. The disciples, filled with fear, woke Him saying, *"Teacher, don't You care that we are perishing?"* Then Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and the sea. *"Silence!"* He commanded. *"Be still!"* And the wind died down, and it was perfectly calm. *"Why are you so afraid?"* He asked. *"Do you still have no faith?"* (Mark 4:39-40). After that, the disciples were filled with a new fear as they asked one another, *"Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"* They quickly learned that mankind should learn to fear God not the things of this world.

In conclusion, those who abide in Christ have nothing to fear in this world. Paul wrote, *"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain"* (Philippians 1:21). Thus, knowing we will spend eternity in heaven once we leave this world, we truly should fear nothing. Nevertheless, we must realize that a life in Christ comes with a great price. Jesus said, *"If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, yet lose or forfeit his very self?"* (Luke 9:23-25). Thus, those who are willing to lose their lives in this world will abide in Christ and those who choose to not let go of everything will not. My prayer is that everyone surrenders all to abide in Christ and truly become fearless.

Restoring Hearts Ministry

Volunteers from Windsor Chapel recently joined others from Restoring Hearts Ministry, which now has five locations in and around Trenton. It also runs a Family Shelter in Levittown, Pennsylvania. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, RHM has installed four hand washing stations in locations located near homeless camps.



Pastor Andy, Steve Bassett, Allen Bush, and Tim Hurd distributed food, clothes, blankets, face masks, and toiletries to a homeless camp that was near a large section of woods behind the Family Shelter. It was a very cold day, and people literally came out of the woods to meet with them. The volunteers prayed and shared the Gospel with all who would listen.



Happy Birthday!



Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes!

June 4	Kate Taylor
June 5	Bob Seiboth
June 6	Charles MacQueen
June 14	Jessica Klippert
June 21	Kevin Simme
June 23	Darrell Bernheisel
June 23	David Simicevic

Larry and Janet Berrill have been blessed with their first grandchild Luke Christopher Berrill.



Luke was born on May 12, 2020. He weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces. His parents are Stephen and Rikki Berrill

Father's Day Appreciation

To all our wonderful fathers, grandfathers and all who have acted in the role of a father, we thank God for your life and service. God has placed you as spiritual leaders that model to us the person and character of Christ. We love you and appreciate all the ways God has used you to fill our lives with His goodness.

Financial Update

(Through April 30, 2020)

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."

	Actual	Budget
Income	\$67,762	\$96,667
Expense	\$87,742	\$96,644

Windsor Chapel has sent \$13,095 to our missionary partners this year. That's 19% of your giving!

Elder's Corner

By Pastor Andy Straubel

Waiting on God

No one likes to wait—especially me. I wait in line at the grocery store. I wait at the bank. I wait at hospital. I don't like it. For the people of God waiting can be a lifelong challenge. I was reminded recently that waiting can have a purpose, maybe a number of purposes. Over the last two months I have waited for answers. Why me? Why us? Why now? Learning to wait on God was one answer.

John Piper once said that waiting on God was an invitation to trust and hope. As we seek the Lord we pray and listen as well as talk. In the quiet He reveals so much: His person, His purposes, His promises, and His plans. But we don't like to wait! The Covid-19 pandemic has cause me to *have* to wait. Here are few lessons I am learning.

First, God is closer than I thought. It is not about feeling his presence; rather, it is affirming He is already here! Many of us are like those on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:13-32), plagued with questions, confused by circumstances, fearful. Yet the Lord was right next to them, and they couldn't see it.

Second, questioning God is okay. God is not thwarted by questions or doubt. Believers through the ages questioned God. Sarah questioned God's promise for a child. Thomas doubted Jesus' resurrection. Peter questioned his own ability to walk on water. I find no words of rebuke or condemnation to those who sincerely question the actions of the Lord.

Third, silence is a matter of perspective. Just because God seems silent to me does not mean He is not speaking. Actually, it may be my inability or unwillingness to hear Him. We sometimes ask for answers but don't like the answers He gives us. Throughout the Scriptures we are admonished to "hear." Sometimes the Lord whispers (1 Kings 19:12). We hear from Heaven on the Mount of Transfiguration, "*This is my Son, my Chosen One, listen to Him*" (Luke 9:35).

Fourth, life can be a dark place. Token faith will not survive the dark night of the soul. Everybody has something. The temptation to give up or give in can be great. But Jesus said that He is the light that shines in dark places (John 8:12). Our challenge is to keep walking through the valley of the shadow of death and not to fear the evil there. Martin Luther was given to bouts of depression and despair. On one occasion his wife Kate was said to have dressed up in black as if going to a funeral. When asked by Martin what she was doing she replied that she was going to a funeral because God must have somehow died. He got the picture.

Perhaps you have your own list of lessons learned. For now, I am content to just stop for a moment! Take a deep breath! Wait on God! Be ready! When the time comes for movement or action, we will know it.

*Congratulations to
Ed and Barbara MacQueen
on the birth of their new son
William Lamar MacQueen*



*William was born May 12, 2020.
He weighed 8 pounds and 9 ounces.
William joins his eight
brothers and sisters.*

Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

The Masked Man and the Masked Woman

We are living in an entirely unexpected time. Masks have become a required component of our public wardrobe. I don't know anyone who likes, or wants, to wear a mask. But the whole mask thing gives us a good bit to ponder.

The invasion of the Covid virus has generated a good bit of controversy as to how seriously we need to take it. Some see it as no more than a bad flu, though the mainstream view is to take it far more seriously. Along with the diverse opinions about the virus itself and how to best respond to its presence, there are diverse opinions about masks. On the one hand, some people regard mask wearing as personal protection and then extend that perspective to regard mask wearing as a symbol of fear, and optional. On the other hand, others view masks as a necessary and appropriate means of participating in community health. Regardless of your perspective on the matter, wearing a mask carries with it a good bit of biblical support.

Medical professionals have made it quite clear that the purpose of the wearing a mask is not to protect ourselves nearly as much as it is to protect others from our own virus particles should we be housing any. And from that viewpoint, Christians have a vested interest in mask wearing. It is now what love looks like. In his letter to the Philippian church, the Apostle Paul tells his readers to regard others as more important than themselves. We believers now have a unique opportunity to choose to wear an uncomfortable and stifling mask as a way of caring for others; more particularly, our mask wearing honors our Lord's regard for the weak and vulnerable. And if we apply Romans 14 to this situation, we would use our freedom in Christ to regard the weak from a position of humility rather than superiority.

There is yet another Christian aspect to mask-wearing. Since the point of wearing a mask is to help us keep our germs to ourselves, a mask can be a symbol of our taking responsibility for our "stuff" and not inflicting it on others. In a world of blame and shame, of the good offense as the best defense philosophy, taking responsibility for our germs—literal and metaphorical—is also a most appropriate and powerful way to love others.

But even though wearing a mask can be a contemporary way to demonstrate love, there is still a part of mask wearing that bothers me. God is the God of truth, and when Christ walked on earth as God Incarnate, He strongly denounced any form of hypocrisy, pretense, and self-righteousness. The Gospels are full of accounts involving the redemption of ragged sinners, misfits, and outcasts. The woman wishing to be healed by merely touching Christ's robe encountered a Lord who rejected her desire to be anonymous, wishing instead to initiate a genuine, personal, real relationship with her. Wearing a mask carries a historical connotation of hiding something, of pretense, of not being completely honest and transparent: everything that Christianity is not.

So, what can we do about the inherent tension in wearing a mask? There is no one perfect, universal answer. I would suggest that a good part of practicing Christianity as we wear a mask involves our thought-life as much as anything else. If you are like me, I fumble to get my mask secured well enough behind my ears to not slip off, and I become hot and claustrophobic quickly. It is easy to get cranky! But if I set my mind to the association between wearing a mask and loving others, I will be in a much better position to treat others with patience and kindness as I wear my mask and deal with those around me. And if I remain mindful that my mask is for safety purposes and not a screen to hide behind, I can intentionally be genuine and authentic in my words and behaviors.

There is no doubt that this is a time of uncertainty, anxiety, and suffering. But it is also an opportunity to love others, and in doing so, to invite the Holy Spirit to conform our character to that of Christ in order to love better and more deeply. May we wear our masks to God's glory.

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

Opposition or Advancement

By Janet Berrill

Imagine you want to start a ministry to serve people in need in your local community. You fill out the necessary paperwork to get permission from the town to operate your new ministry and all of a sudden, a group of people step forward who oppose the ministry you want to start. What do you do? If it were me, I would pray and ask God to either change the hearts of the people who were opposing me or ask Him to have the town approve my request despite the opposition.

While it is not bad to pray that opposition goes away, Scripture gives us another view to consider. In Matthew 27:62-64, the chief priests and Pharisees come to Pilate and ask that he post a guard at the tomb so that the disciples cannot steal the body and say that Jesus rose from the dead as He predicted He would. Pilate agrees and a guard is posted. The purpose of the guard was to prevent stories from circulating that Jesus had resurrected from the dead and was alive.

But what happened? Sunday morning there was a violent earthquake, the guards were so afraid of the angel who appeared that they became like dead men. The stone was rolled away, and the empty tomb was there for all to see. Jesus had risen from the dead just like He said He would! The guards went into the city to tell the chief priests what happened. Not wanting this story to get out, the chief priests paid the guards to say that they fell asleep and that the disciples came during the night and stole Jesus' body. Although that story did circulate and some believed it, the truth of Jesus' resurrection was believed by many, many people.

The chief priests wanted the guard posted so they could be sure there were no stories of Jesus resurrecting. But, as it turned out, the presence of the guard actually helped the story of Jesus' resurrection to be even more believable! In Rome, the penalty for falling asleep on duty for a guard was death, so you can imagine that few, if any, guards actually fell asleep. They made sure they

stayed awake for their life truly did depend on it. The chief priests had to pay the guards a lot of money and assure them that if the governor heard the story that they fell asleep they would keep the guards out of trouble. So the people knew that if there were guards posted at Jesus' tomb, the disciples could not have stolen the body which means that Jesus truly had resurrected.

How ironic! The opposition from the chief priests actually turned out to bring glory to God. That is another perspective we can have on opposition. We can pray and ask God to use the opposition we are facing to further our cause and bring more glory to God. The situation in the first paragraph actually happened to the Christian organization Answers in Genesis (AiG) and God used the opposition brought against them to actually help their ministry. They submitted plans to build a life-sized replica of the ark, and there was a lot of local opposition. Because of the opposition, the story made the papers and people all over the world heard about the project. As a result of the publicity, AiG received lots of donations from people who wanted to see the ark built! (AiG's Ark Encounter opened in Williamstown, Kentucky, in July, 2016.)

When you are faced with opposition of any kind, whether large scale like the owner of a business being sued for not wanting to compromise on Christian principals, or on a relatively smaller scale such as from an annoying neighbor, don't just pray that the opposition goes away, also ask God to use it for His glory. You will likely be amazed at what He will do!

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

Susan Seiboth at

susan@quiltingsquare.com

Dorothy Soi at

dsoi@windsorchapel.org

Chapel Office (609) 799-2559

www.windsorchapel.org

Contributing Photographers:

Bob Seiboth & Pastor Andy Straubel