



Buckle FIRST

Newsletter of First Church
Barboursville United Methodist Church WV

This issue:

HAPPY NEW YEAR?

BY PASTOR TERESA

I went to Walmart the other day and no one said Happy new Year to me or anyone else. And when I said "Happy New Year to the workers as I left, they just looked at me and said, "Thank you for shopping at Walmart. 2021 is not starting off very happy. I find it even more uncertain in many ways. We are all waiting for a list of things to happen and nothings happening. People are tired of face masks and tired of staying home. We are more inward focused than ever before. We feel isolated and forgotten. How do we share the love of Christ in this New Year still facing COVID, our Nations divided, the church doors are still closed and small businesses are closing affecting families financially?

Clergy scrambling to find new ways to keep in touch with their members. Families struggling to connect with loved ones in Hospice and senior centers. People separated from loved ones due to COVID cases. And not to mention the cost of it all!

If you look at 2021 through the world's view, yes, nothing is happy in it. But as Christians, we have the choice to look at everything another way. The way filled with hope, love, joy and peace. And when we choose to see our life through the eyes a Christ, the year is wide open for amazing things ahead. This could be the year, that one person you've been praying for comes to know Christ. God can do anything! The world will always be in chaos causing worry and despair, but one thing remains the same. God loves you. And this year could be your best year yet, with God.

Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

HAPPY NEW YEAR?
PAGE 01

OUR FAITH DURING
UNCERTAIN TIMES
PAGES 02-05

ANNOUNCING NEW
WEBSITE!
PAGE 04

HIS SONS BRAVE
BATTLE...
PAGE 05-08

CLM CORNER
PAGE 07-10

FAITH

OUR FAITH DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

Trusting God in All Things

By Charles F. Stanley

JULY 03, 2019

No matter our circumstances, God responds when we turn to Him. When we are in a right relationship with Him and walking in obedience and submission, He determines the limits of our trials and suffering. This doesn't mean He'll remove all pain and trouble from our lives, but He guards us through it. And even if we lose our lives, He promises that we will immediately be in His presence (2 Cor. 5:8).

He is also available to us. Nothing is beyond His control, and He is ready to hear our concerns and requests when we come to Him in prayer. Whatever our needs may be, He has provided assurances and promises in His Word. "The LORD is in His holy temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven" (Ps.11:4).

In addition, we must remember that God sees everything. "His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked" (vv. 4-5).

From His divine perspective, He sees and knows everything, and He uses our trials to test us. We have no reason to fear evil because we are secure in our relationship with the Lord. He hates violence, and promises that one day He will punish the wicked (vv. 5-6). With all this in mind, what attitude should God's people have during tough times? Let's consider these four acts that will reveal our faith:

Continued on page 3





OUR FAITH DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

CONTINUED

1.

We must trust the Lord. No matter what our circumstances may be, we can believe God. It may seem as if He's inactive, but He's not. When situations get worse, He is not sitting in heaven wringing His hands. The Lord rejoices in the opportunity to intervene and show Himself strong for His children. Therefore, instead of running away, we should learn to wait upon the Lord and seek His direction.

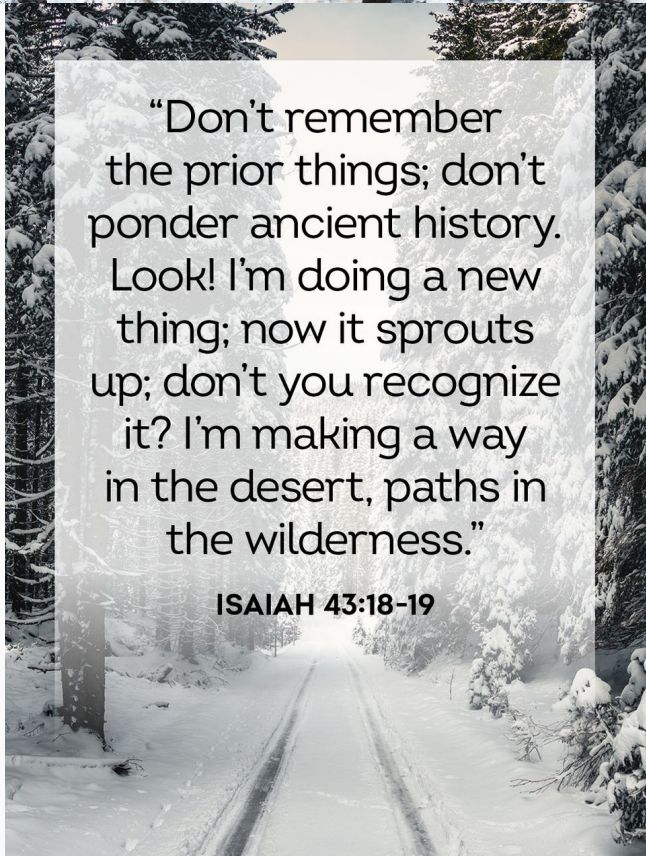
2.

We must ask God for cleansing. When the foundations around us crumble, it's time to look within ourselves, asking the Lord to reveal any sin in our lives. Then we must confess it and repent by making a determined choice to turn away from that sin and to the Lord. If we don't deal with our sins, they will hinder our prayers. Only after our lives have been cleansed will He be able to use us in whatever ways He chooses.

3.

We must be willing to encourage others. People who don't know Christ become frightened when the foundations around them crumble and circumstances become difficult. They look for ways to protect themselves, but we can encourage them to look to the Lord, who is the only true source of security. He will show Himself strong to those who are willing to trust Him. As believers, we have a responsibility to share the teachings of God's Word.

Continued on page 4



"Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history. Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness."

ISAIAH 43:18-19

I Can Do
ALL THINGS
through
Christ
who
Strengthens Me
PHILIPPIANS 4:13

I am
with
you.

I am
listening
to you.

I care
about
you.

I am
praying
for you.



OUR FAITH DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

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4.

We must pray for revival. The difficult times we face are larger than our own issues; our entire country is in trouble. The solution is not found in voting new candidates into office, but in pleading with God to send a revival. According to history, revivals always begin with just a few people who humbly seek the Lord. If we'll sincerely turn away from sin and to God, a handful of individuals could become a crowd joining together to cry out to the Lord for our country. As our society continues to abandon its former foundation, the last thing we should do is give up hope. Instead, our country needs people committed to interceding for our nation and asking God to revive His church. God is listening, and He will respond to His people's repentance and petitions for help.

This article was originally published on June 4, 2017, and is adapted from the Sermon Notes for Dr. Stanley's message "If the Foundations Are Destroyed" which aired this weekend on TV.

**A LINK WILL BE SENT TO YOU
VIA EMAIL WITH YOUR BULLETIN.**





HIS SON'S BRAVE BATTLE TO RECOVER FROM POLIO BOLSTERED A FATHER'S FAITH

IN THIS STORY FROM THE OCTOBER 1954 ISSUE OF GUIDEPOSTS, A FATHER WRITES A TOUCHING LETTER TO HIS SON.

BY T. W. KIRKPATRICK FROM **Guideposts**.

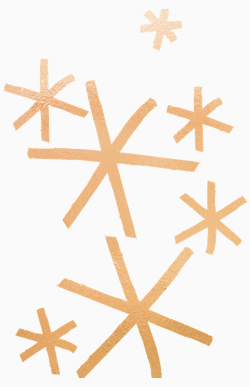
In the early fifties, polio was a national scourge. The epidemic peaked in 1952; there were nearly 58,000 cases, with more than 3,000 deaths and some 21,000 people left paralyzed, most of them children. The next year, Jonas Salk announced his polio vaccine. The first volunteer to test it had been Bill Kirkpatrick, a teenage polio patient. (Someone who'd already contracted polio wouldn't get the disease again if something went wrong.) In 1954, his father wrote an open letter to his son in gratitude for his role in creating the lifesaving vaccine.

Bill not only recovered from polio but thrived. He graduated from Franklin & Marshall College, went to seminary and became a minister in the Episcopal Church. He served in several dioceses, scaling back his work in the 1980s, when he developed post-polio syndrome. He died in 2003. Here are his father's poignant words, as published in the October 1954 issue of Guideposts.

Dear Son:

Every father has a special feeling about his son that's hard to put into words. From the day you were born, back in 1935, and all during your next 19 years of achievement, I saw a little of myself in you—just as I did in Joe, your older brother, during his school days—my hopes, my dreams, my own ambitions unfulfilled. I was proud of your boyish ability to cast for trout, your skill in other sports. I'll not forget the football game at Shady Side when you, a 130-pound tackle, kept breaking through the opposing team's line to down their 175-pound fullback. When you were rushed to the hospital that Labor Day weekend in 1951 and put on the critical list with polio, I couldn't believe it. In the ambulance, I was too numb to say anything, while your mother kept whispering, "Keep your faith in God, Son; remember the Psalm: 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want....'"

continued on page 5



*"Greater love
hath no man
than this..."
(John 15:13).*

HIS SON'S BRAVE BATTLE...

CONTINUED



As you fought for life, I tried to put the pieces of my own confused faith back together. How much faith did I have? Once before I had seen it demonstrated—back in 1928, when your mother was seriously ill. The doctors had given her up. I prayed then that she might live, and my prayers were answered. Had I forgotten in so short a time? Now, 23 years later, I had to admit to myself that in this crisis with polio, your mother's prayers and faith were stronger than mine. While the doctors were fighting for your life during the next weeks, you were more concerned about another polio-stricken boy in the same ward. Remember how he kept saying, "I wish I could die, I wish I could die...."

The Reverend Mr. Penrose was the only person permitted to visit you while in isolation, and he told me how you repeated the Twenty-Third Psalm to this boy and prayed for him. Also how you led prayers with others who were suffering. And I heard that the nurses looked forward to going into your ward. They knew that, regardless of your pain, they could always count on a smile lighting up your face and their day. These reports made me feel more proud of you than any of your football or scholastic achievements. Then a series of God's miracles started to happen. Although the doctors thought you would die, you lived. They felt you would never walk again, but in three months you began to sit up with the aid of a steel back brace. Remember your visit home that Christmas holiday? At midnight that New Year's Eve, Mother and I held you upright while we all sang "Auld Lang Syne." She believed that if you stood on your feet at the beginning of the year you would continue your progress. Three months later, with some help, all 90 pounds of you stood on your feet. Dr. Jesse Wright was amazed but stated that you would probably always have to wear leg braces. "I'll walk without braces," you said. Within a year, you did.

continued on page 6...



HIS SON'S BRAVE BATTLE...

CONTINUED

*Something happened to me during this period. Before you were stricken, I had always considered myself a good Christian, attending church, contributing money, serving on committees. But I honestly wonder now how much I really believed. At home we were always too busy to have blessings at meals. When you were so helpless, I even questioned God's existence. Then you began to recover and credited it to faith and prayer. I felt ashamed. It was in June 1952, while still badly paralyzed, that you and 40 other polio patients volunteered to help Dr. Jonas Salk in his experiments with a new and untried anti-polio vaccine. We had no idea, until told by reporters in the spring of 1953, that you were listed as the world's Case History No. 1 to receive the vaccine. When you persuaded us to sign the consent for the test, we hesitated at first because of the possible danger. Then you talked about your brother. "Joe has two young sons, my nephews," you remarked. "I'll do anything possible to help protect them and others from polio." When you said that, I thought of Christ's words **"Greater love hath no man than this..."**(John 15:13).*

We don't have all the results yet, Bill, but I feel sure Dr. Salk's work may save thousands of lives. Today I can understand clearly how God works through people and how he can use a paralyzing illness such as yours for good. I also learned about the concern and love of friends. During your illness, our telephone never seemed to stop ringing. Mattie [the Kirkpatricks' maid] gathered together a group of people in her church and held prayer meetings for your recovery. And your mother never let our spirits lag. How I remember her in those dark days, by the piano, playing and singing her favorite Welsh hymn, "God That Madest Earth and Heaven."

continued on page 7

HIS SON'S BRAVE BATTLE...

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A father is fortunate when he can learn as much from his son as I have learned from you. You helped me see that the test of a Christian is how he meets difficulties, tragedies and sorrows. You also helped me see the message of triumph in Christ's experience on the Cross. Whether you become a doctor or a minister, I know your one concern will be to relieve suffering, to bring help and cheer to those in need. Your mother and I are very proud of you. Love, Dad



CLM CORNER

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Greetings
and welcome to CLM Corner,
this is the first one of 2021 and I bet a lot
of you are ready to see if we can change
things and get rid of the Covid-19 virus.
The Covid vaccine has been delivered and
they healthcare workers are starting to
dispense it to people now.
January has a lot of great things
to celebrate. Beginning with New Years
Day and then going to Martin Luther Kings
Birthday.



I attended the Zoom meeting for the Laity. The meeting was hosted by of WVUMC Conference Laity Delegate Kristy Wilkinson. She open it with prayer and also a song tilted Truth Be told by Mathew West.

continued on page 8

The song shows how when you ask someone how they are? The natural response is "I'm Fine". Sometimes when they say this there are other problems going on and there may be underlying issues. And most of us do not ask again when hearing them say I'm Fine. Be sure to check on others in the church and make they are OK especially if they live alone. During these trying times. Call them on the phone to check on them. Others attending the meeting was Bishop Steiner Ball, DS Okey Harless, Ken Willard, Eva Faulkner, Kim Mathews, and the Western District Lay Leader Sam Colvin. Bishop Ball gave a wonderful sermon on things we can do in the conference to help the community and ourselves too. She reminded us that no one is so broken that God cannot heal them. And spoke of how churches are going together to help the community as well to bring God's message to them. She spoke of Resource Centers to help those in need as well. Of helping former prisoners to re-enter society after they are released to help stop them from going back. And help them to be able to find a job. She also pointed out that there are 3 times more Foster children in the system in WV living in foster homes. She spoke about how we can help them to find forever families. And grow up in normal family relationships. She spoke of how that we can help Veterans in WV to be productive citizens. We have an excellent chance here in Huntington to help Homeless Veterans at the Homeless Veterans Resource Center. And also at the WV Veterans Home in Barboursville. Along with the Woody Williams VA Medical Center. We can do things like a food donation to get food for the veterans and also things like donate gloves, warm hats, and Food take it to the Homeless Veterans Resource Center between 6th and 7th Avenue in Huntington to drop it off.

Also Ken Willard spoke on how he started a site with online classes for anyone that wants to take them. It is called Portico. If interested contact him at his website on the WVUMC.ORG website. The classes are free to anyone wanting to take them. He plans to launch the site June 2021. But there are currently classes available there now. The classes are based on where Solomon taught in Portico in the Bible. Kim Mathews Spoke on how we need more Laity to take classes to become Certified Lay leaders, Certified Lay Speakers and Certified Lay Ministers. We need for more of the Laity to step up and become leaders in the church. She spoke of 3 ways to explore leadership in the church... They are Listen, Prepare, and Take the Basic Course. Without the basic course you cannot be certified at any level.

continued on page 10

CLM CORNER

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The classes can be found on beadisciple.com Portico and the Western District will be offering classes soon in person or in a Zoom meeting if anyone is interested. As I find out about classes I will announce them and keep everyone up to date that is interested. Our you can contact me as well. Okey Harless spoke on how he wants more of the Laity to step up and become leaders too. He is excited about the prospect of what can happen in the Western District. He also mentioned how he along with others plan to offer more classes to help the Laity get certified and also if you are just interested in learning more about the courses as well. He mentioned how Jason Moore will be speaking again on how to help churches increase their membership. Myself or Pastor Teresa will notify of the date and time this will occur.

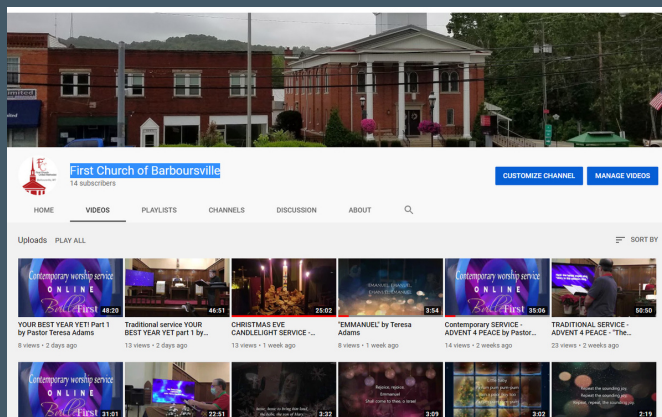
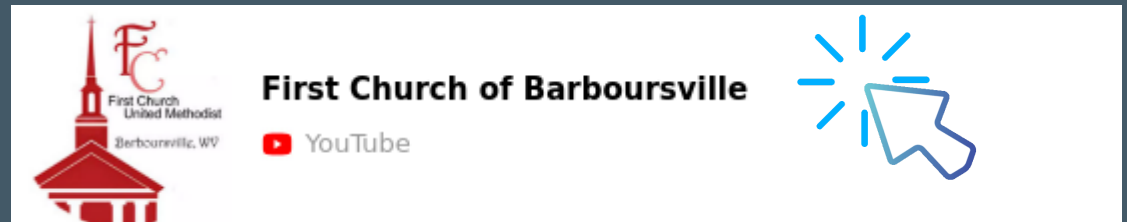
Our Assistant Lay Leader for the WVUMC Eva Faulkner has asked that anyone in the Laity wanted to write for the Season of Lent to contact her. She can assign a reading from the lectionary or if you have a favorite reading you can read it too.

Happy New Year and Glory Be to God,
ALLEN





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ABOVE TO GO TO
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OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL



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