

## Times of Change

How many of you would have ever dreamed that this past year would have been happened the way it has? I know that I have been very surprised at the changes this year has brought, and I'm wondering what the coming year will be like.

In February of 2020, I spent 12 days traveling to, through, and back from Israel. It was an experience of a lifetime that gave me a new perspective on the life of Christ, and on my life with Christ! And since my return there has been a whole new perspective on everyday life, because our lives have been in constant transition or change.

By the middle of March, 2020 we were basically spending most of our time in our homes. Church services changed to online or mailed to homes only. Schools and workplaces were closed. Essential businesses were the only thing open. All of our meetings and extra activities stopped. We were hoping for a short time of closure, but as we well know, the changes just kept continuing. It began to feel like we would never be able to resume activities in person. We have been able to hold meetings and Women's Bible Study by ZOOM internet connection. It's definitely not the same as being in person, but it sure was good to see the faces of others!

Thankfully we have been able to still take care of the needs of our community through the Food Pantry and Christmas Baskets, but they have been totally different than they used to be. Worship services began again in person, but attendance is still low in the sanctuary. However, because of the need to reach out in some way, our livestreaming of worship online and the mailed worship services have actually increased involvement quite a bit. It is impossible to know the exact number, because we don't have counts of how many are watching together online, but the single connection numbers are good.

One of the saddest parts of this year has been the number of our church family who have passed away, and we have been unable to show our support of you who have lost those loved ones. Hopefully we can find ways to celebrate their lives together soon.

This new year has brought, and will be bringing, even more changes for me, as well. The year started out with my husband's announcement that he will be retiring at the end of the church year from Seville UMC. This has then brought a whirlwind of downsizing and packing. This brings another change. We will no longer be living in a parsonage for the first time in our married life, even though I still plan to be the pastor at Rittman UMC. We will be moving to Doylestown to live in our new home, which is an in-law addition that is being built on our daughter and son-in-law's house. More change for us is that we will be with our grandchildren whenever we want!

Thankfully our daughters are helping a lot with the sorting and packing, since I began symptoms of Covid on the evening of Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>. Unfortunately, the results of this virus didn't go away quickly. I've been struggling with fevers that would come and go, memory issues, and loss of energy. I'm finally gaining strength and getting better every day. Thank you for all of your prayers!

Blessings, Pastor Ruthie



Jesus knows me; this I love, that's the message from above.  
Loves me though I still do wrong, so I sing this silly song.

Refrain: Yes Jesus knows me, and He accepts me,  
Yes, Jesus knows me. He died to prove His love.

All of us belong to Him. He has come to make us whole.  
Jesus suffered just for us, Came to save each sinning soul.

Jesus loves it when we laugh, and he smiles at every gaff.  
Satan tries to steal our fun, but he knows that Jesus won.

God must love to laugh, you know.  
Check the zoo out and you'll see giraffe, elephant and skunk,  
hippo, snake, bat and monkey.

Jesus knows me; this I love. That's the message from above.  
Jesus died upon the, died to save us, you and me.

*~Laura Roome*



**We are collecting funds to send to Midwest Mission Distribution Center to provide Flood Buckets to be sent by UMCOR to areas in need. Read the Fireside Chat by the Finance Chair for more detail!**



### Joys

Mary W cousin's son-in-law Mike - recovering from Covid

Pastor Ruthie - health improving

Marvin Frase - celebrated 95<sup>th</sup> birthday

Pastor Don Trigg - celebrated 66<sup>th</sup> birthday

Joanna S. - improving      Nancy B. - found right doctor

Mark T's friend's friend, Joshua J. - out of coma      Lynn T. - returning to work

Chasing Hope - new horse therapy for special needs children -

begun by Brianne & David Savage - Hopton's granddaughter

### Concerns

Niles B. - cancer has returned, remember Rita, too

Pam H. - dialysis

Pastor Ruthie - health

Nancy B. - health

Nancy M. - health

Judy B's mom, Faye - health

Judy B. & family

Pauline R. - health (house bound)

Joanne S. - cataract surgery recovery

Bruce & Ruthanne L's neighbor's son Dan - Covid

Pam H's friend, Pat - health

Bob & Irene H's great-grandson Chase - surgery recovery

Pastor Ruthie's neighbors, Mel & Sue - health

Joshua J. - recovery from serious accident

### Our symathy to the families of:

Alex Hay

Alexandra Waters (Lisa Ayers' daughter)



### May

1<sup>st</sup> - Todd Lunter

14<sup>th</sup> - Don Vohar

19<sup>th</sup> - Andria Booth

23<sup>rd</sup> - Robin Kirkhart

8<sup>th</sup> - Amy Hutton

17<sup>th</sup> - Duane Hopton

20<sup>th</sup> - Spencer Stoll

27<sup>th</sup> - Melissa Hennie



### May

20<sup>th</sup> - Brett & Heather Richards

27<sup>th</sup> - Mark & Lynn Turnbow

30<sup>th</sup> - Andy & Connie Baillis

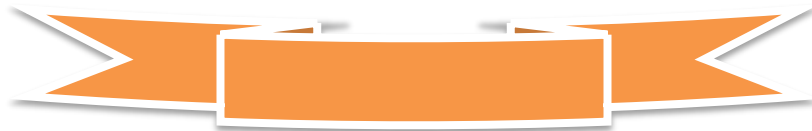
## **Mary's Meanderings - May 2021**

For the second month in a row I am postponing thoughts on the idea I have to write about what's happening now. Retirement plus Covid allows the opportunity to focus on history making events. For over three months I have been fixated on the State of Minnesota vs. Derek Chauvin trial involving the death of George Floyd. It would take an extensive amount of time and effort to research the history of racial tensions in the United States. Most of us have lived through some of it or learned about it in school.

As the news of guilty of all three counts was being announced I was moved emotionally as I was at the beginning of the trial listening to the witnesses give their accounts of what happened. I went into it without anticipating how I thought or wanted it to come out. Having seen the initial video as probably everyone else had I was hoping that the truth would come out and justice would prevail.

As Christians we know that God is not a respecter of persons. He created everyone and loves each one as a father would. He extends His grace and mercy upon all. As an American we hold that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Watching the methodical unfolding of the trial restored my faith in our justice system as I'm sure it did for many others. I feel that this verdict may be a turning point for our country. I am hopeful that it will bring much needed peace and calm, honest review of prejudices, stresses and strains that are happening in our police departments and efforts to relieve them.



### **CHOOSING JOY**

A joyful countenance has nothing to do with one's age or one's occupation (or lack of it) or one's geography or education or marital status or good looks or circumstances. Joy is a choice!

Joy is a matter of attitude that stems from one's confidence in God-that He is at work that he is in full control that He is in the midst of whatever has happened, is happening, and will happen. Either we fix our minds on that and determine to laugh again, or we wail and whine our way through life, complaining that we never got a fair shake. We are the ones who consciously determine which way we shall go.

To paraphrase the poet:

One ship sails east  
One ship sails west  
Regardless of how the winds blow  
It is the set of the sail  
And not the gale  
That determines the way we go.

*Regardless of how severely the winds of adversity may blow,  
we set our sails toward joy.*

## ***Fireside Chat***



### ***From the Finance Chair***

Again I am announcing the **greatness and goodness** of our God in supplying our needs at our church. Income has been enough to keep up monthly local expenses and some money has been sent in for apportionments. We are not at 100% of what is owed on apportionments to date but some has been paid each month.

This is why I approached the Admin. Council last month suggesting we participate in the annual "flood bucket" collection during Annual Conference. When Ken was pastoring here we asked for your help furnishing a bucket for each representative we had to Annual Conference. That was Ken (your pastor), the lay delegate at that time to Annual Conference, and at that time Dean Donaldson who was a military chaplain was affiliated with our church to Annual Conference. Every ministerial member of Annual Conference whether active or retired is associated with a local church. When we retired, Ken asked that he be assigned to Rittman UMC because this is where we would be living. Since his membership added another voting member to Conference from our church, he was happy to head up the campaign to fill another bucket. This year Annual Conference will be held virtually as it was last year. The truck from the Midwest Distribution Center in IL will be making the trip to Ohio to collect filled buckets in early June and we would have to collect items, pack buckets and take them to one of the churches providing a place for the buckets to be picked up. OR we can collect money and have the church send that for us. The Admin. Council voted to collect money since many of our members cannot or do not want to go out shopping for items to fill the buckets. We will let the Distribution Center do the shopping for us, and they can get just the right size of each item to fill the buckets.

This year we have Pastor Ruthie and Joanna Shankland as our local delegates. That would be 2 buckets needed. However we have two members (Irene Hopton and Betty Winchell) who will serve as delegates-at-large for the district and we would like to send something toward buckets for them as well. Our goal is 2 to 4 buckets but we will be happy with whatever we can do. **Cost to fill a bucket is estimated at around \$75. We would like your monetary donations in by the 23rd of May so that the collection can be forwarded to the Midwest Distribution Center by the first of June.** You may put your donation in an envelope and mark it "Flood Buckets," and bring it to the church or send it to Joanna Shankland our financial secretary.

Blessings,

*Martha Baillis, Financial Chair.*



### **He is Able**

He is able, more than able  
To accomplish what concerns me today.

He is able, more than able  
To handle anything that comes my way.

He is able, more than able  
To do much more than I could ever dream,

He is able, more than able  
To make me what He wants me to be.

~Rory Noland & Greg Ferguson



# Women's Bible Study

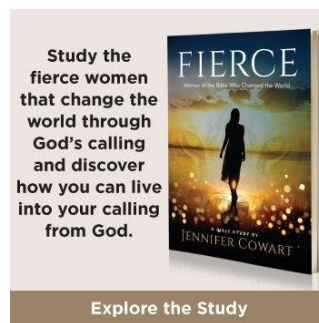


Join us for a great chance to learn more about God's Word  
and a wonderful time of fellowship!

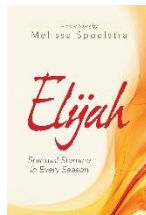
We meet on Thursdays with a choice of:  
10:00am in person led by Pastor Ruthie,  
or 6:30pm led by Sara Ullman and Betty Winchell.  
Contact Pastor Ruthie or Betty, if you need books.

We are just beginning a new study.

Beginning April 29<sup>th</sup> & ending June 10<sup>th</sup> (6 sessions)  
**Fierce: Women of the Bible Who Changed the World** by Jennifer Cowart



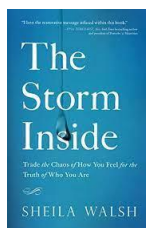
Here are the studies that are coming through 2021 and the beginning of 2022.  
Yes, the schedule is already set!



**Elijah: Spiritual Stamina in Every Season** by Melissa Spoelstra  
July 8<sup>th</sup> - Aug. 19<sup>th</sup> (6 sessions)



**Chasing Vines: Finding Your Way to an Immensely Fruitful Life** by Beth Moore  
Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> - Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> (6 sessions)



**The Storm Inside:**  
**Trade the Chaos of How You Feel for the Truth of Who You Are**  
By Sheila Walsh  
Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> - Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> (8 sessions)

## A Memorial Day Prayer

They served and fought and died so that we might be safe and free, grant them, O Lord, eternal peace and give them "the victory!"

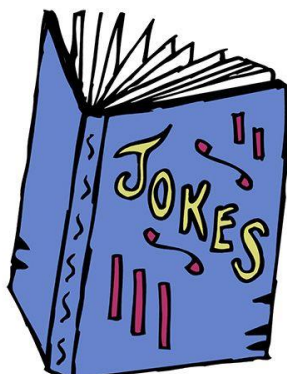
And in these days of unrest filled with grave uncertainty, let's not forget the price they paid to keep our country free...

And so on this Memorial Day, we offer up a prayer - may the people of all nations be united in thy care.

*~Helen Steiner Rice*



A businessman dragged himself home and barely made it to his chair before he dropped exhausted. His sympathetic wife was right there with a tall cool drink and a comforting word. "My, you look tired," she said. "You must have had a hard day today. What happened to make you so exhausted?" "It was terrible," her husband said. "The computer broke down and all of us had to do our own thinking."





Thank you to everyone who continues to support the funding & volunteering for the food pantry. Our April Food Pantry, we had 11 families (0 new), 35 people and 15 sets of bags given out. If you hear of anyone needing food, please have them call the church office to come pick up a food supply during office hours, or they can contact Pastor Ruthie to set up a different time to pick up. Our next Food Pantry will be Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 4 - 5:30pm.



### **Congratulations to our 2021 Graduates!**

AJ Baillis  
Isaiah Browne  
Spence Stoll  
Scott Turnbow

Rittman HS/Wings of Change  
Rittman High School  
Norwayne Career Center  
North Central State

Andy & Connie Baillis' son  
Sheila Stoll's grandson  
Sheila Stoll's grandson  
Mark & Lynn Turnbow's son

### **Graduation Thoughts**

Dear Lord: Please bless these graduates as they go out into the world to make it a better place, while they pursue their dreams. Gently guide them, lead them, show them Your way to success & happiness through service to others, as they maximize their own potential. Fill them with joy when they reach their goals. Strengthen them, as they deal with life's obstacles and show them that every challenge is a path to character development. Give them the intelligence to make a plan for their futures. Give them patience and persistence to pursue their ambitions. Most of all, give them caring hearts to look for ways to help the people they meet on their life's journey. Encourage them and lift them up now, as they spread their wings into a clear sky of limitless opportunity. Let each and every graduate here be wrapped in the warmth of Your infinite love, and let Your wisdom show them the way to make the most of their lives. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.