



Sycamore PRESBYTERIAN

weekly newsletter

— May 8 2020 —

Please join us [online](#) for worship
at 11:00 AM Sunday mornings.

New this week:

- Summer Update
- Message from Pastor Long
- Devotion from Pastor Cates
- Serve Opportunity with Liberation Veteran Services
- Help our local food banks

to sickness, your abundance into poverty, your honour into scorn and contempt: with what attitude do you now make your condition known to God? Is your spirit embittered into discontent and murmuring complaints? Or are you well satisfied with God's dealings so as to acquiesce cheerfully in your present portion, not because you don't feel the affliction, but because you assent to divine appointment? This shows that God has a throne in your heart and that you reverence his authority and own his sovereignty.

(from Voices from the Past, V.2, May 5 devotional)

Ouch! What a perfect devotional Mary and I read this week for our present coronavirus circumstance, written about 360 years ago by William Gurnall in The Christian in Complete Armour.

Perfect devotionals usually step on our toes, don't they! Do we show that God has a throne in our heart? Do we reverence his authority and own his sovereignty? Are we well satisfied with God's dealings... so as to acquiesce cheerfully?! Hmmm...

I have been realizing that when we can begin to get back together as a church, it will be in stages. Numbers will probably be limited. Masks may be required (if so, we will provide them for those who have none). Things will not be the same. We will not likely have the grand, postponed Easter celebration with choirs and crowds, like we hoped for when we had to Livestream the service on Easter Sunday.

But remember, as the prophet, Haggai, declared to the Israelites when they returned from Babylon, and things were not the same:

"Who of you is left who saw this house [the temple] in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing?"



Sycamore
Summer Update

Watch for details on
fun family events
coming soon!

SYCAMORE SUMMER UPDATE

Summer at Sycamore has always been an exciting and busy time! As we look forward to a time when we can gather again, we are working on plans for some fun, family-style get-togethers this summer! Instead of our usual summer camps, we want to focus on being able to gather safely as families and enjoy fellowship. Stay tuned for news about the fun summer activities being planned, including an outdoor summer concert series, outdoor movie nights, and more!

Contact Becky Boone if you have any questions.

NEW MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LONG

The more composed and contented your heart is under the changes which providence brings, the stronger your faith is. When God turns your health

'But now be strong... Be strong, all you people of the land,' declares the Lord, 'and work. For I am with you,' declares the Lord Almighty.
Amen!

And remember: BUDDY CHECK! Call one another. Let us know if you discover someone in trouble. If you find yourself sinking, reach out. And remember, *God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)*

***NEW* DEVOTION FROM PASTOR CATES**

Pastor Cates' devotion will be available on our [website](#). Scroll down until you see Marty's picture and click on the link to read this week's devotion on the Heidelberg Catechism or to catch up on the previous weeks' devotions.

NEWS

SPC PRAY IN MAY

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Join us to "Pray in May." Download this calendar to use as a helpful guide for your quiet time, daily devotional, and prayer life. As Scripture says in James 5: "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." God is listening to our prayers, every single one of them! What a comfort it is that the one true and living God hears our prayers!

Print out this calendar and keep it handy--tape it in your journal, place it on your refrigerator, keep it in your Bible. Maybe you want to pull it out after dinner time with your family. Maybe you want to tape it to your bathroom mirror. Wherever and whenever you pray, have this calendar at-the-ready.

Please contact Christine Bates if you have any questions. It's time to pray, pray, pray in May!

UPDATE FROM THE SESSION

The COVID-19 Pandemic has disrupted thousands of lives and scores of planned activities. Many events have been canceled or postponed in light of health concerns and government restrictions on assembly. Our Sycamore church family is certainly no exception.

The good news is that we worship a God who is sovereign! We can rest in His promises and be at peace. Romans 8:28 tells us: *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."*

Missions' month, originally set for June, must be postponed until July (tentatively) in response to our current environment.

In addition, the Sycamore session met this week and asked our senior pastor, Harry Long, to delay his retirement plans for one month. Harry graciously agreed to this request.

This action means that Harry's last sermon as senior pastor will be delivered on Sunday, **June 28**. Please pray with us that we will be able to resume worshipping together well before June 28, and that after faithfully serving for 38 years Harry will be able to preach to a jam-packed sanctuary on June 28! During its meeting this week the session also examined candidates who were nominated by members for the office of Deacon and Elder. These men will be put before you for confirmation during an upcoming Congregational meeting as soon as one can be scheduled, probably in June. In the meantime, these officer candidates will be asked to participate in Deacon/Session meetings, but without voting privileges until they can be officially confirmed by members in a Congregational meeting. Blessings in Christ!

The Sycamore Session

ONLINE ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Feeling discouraged about the current world crisis? Glenn Kurtz will be leading an online adult Sunday School class beginning on Sunday, April 19, that addresses how we as Christians can face times like this with hope and faith.

- Dates: April 19th – June 7th
- Time: Sunday 9:45 AM – 10:45 AM
- Topic: "Don't Lose Heart" – Study of 2 Corinthians 4:16 – Chapter 5
- Paul's instructions on how to not lose heart in a world filled with uncertainty, conflict, tragedy and disappointment.

Login Information:

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global.gotomeeting.com/install/642858349

"LIFE TOGETHER" VIDEO PROJECT

One of the key phrases in our Vision statement is, "Build Community." That's been hard in many ways these last few weeks. We all miss being able to see one another, to fellowship together, and to just catch up on a weeks worth of living over a cup of coffee in the foyer.

With that in mind we have a special project we are working on called, "Life Together." We would like you to take a short video of yourself doing your everyday things or just saying "Hello" so we can piece together a short video to share and be reminded that we are called to live life together and show God's love faithfully even in the midst of what seems like endless social distancing.

Please send your short, no more 30 seconds, video to Marty at mcates@sycamorepres.com. If your file is too large to send please email Marty for instructions on how to get him your video.

Videos will be shown prior to the start of the worship service on Sunday mornings!

WORSHIP ONLINE

Not sure how to watch the livestream? Now it's even easier to connect!

Step 1: On Sunday morning when it is getting close to 11:00 AM, go online to the Sycamore website at sycamorepres.com

Step 2: Scroll down a little and you will see some choices. Click on the one that says "Sycamore Live". This will take you to a page with the Livestream along with options to view the bulletin, make a prayer request, give online, and view past livestream messages.

Step 3: Click on the large image on the page to join the worship service.

RESCHEDULED DATE FOR RETIREMENT PARTY

Due to the uncertainty in how the coronavirus pandemic will progress, the church has decided to postpone Pastor Long's retirement party. Our new date is **Sunday, September 20 at 5 PM**. Mark your calendars!

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

While we wait for the current health concerns to pass, the church office staff will be available for you via phone (804-794-0238) or [email](#), however, the church office will be closed during this time. We encourage everyone to stay at home unless it is necessary to go out.

For tithing options, you can continue to give [online](#), mail your check to the church, or drop your offering in our locked secure mailbox located on the right as you pull in to the church parking lot.

SERVE

IN OUR CHURCH:

Youth Care Letter Project

Looking for a way to serve others? SPC Youth are writing notes to send to community members who are living alone during this time of social distancing. If you'd like to also write an encouraging note, draw a picture, write a poem, send some

verses, please send letters to "Youth Staff" at 510 Coalfield Rd. Use tape or a sponge to close the envelope. We will compile and disperse them. Contact [Christine Bates](#) if you have any questions.

Serve on a Care Team

We are currently looking for those willing to serve on a care team. This might involve picking up groceries, running errands, providing transportation, checking on those who are quarantined or sick, or caring for pets. If you are willing to help please click [HERE](#) to let us know in what ways you are able to help.

Sycamore Summer Project

Do you know of a college student who is looking for a rewarding and challenging summer experience? We are now looking for energetic, outgoing, Christian young adults to work with our Kid's, Youth, Hispanic, and Music ministries this summer! Contact [Marty Cates](#) for an application. We also are looking for adults in our congregation to be a mentor and friend to our incoming Summer Interns. You have an opportunity to meet with, pray with, encourage and support these young adults as they consider their future path and how the Lord is leading them. Please contact [Marty Cates](#) if you are interested.

IN OUR COMMUNITY:

Make Face Masks for Area Nursing/Retirement Homes

Are you able to sew a simple seam? Don't sew but have materials you could donate? We have an opportunity to help supply face masks to local nursing and retirement homes. We will let you know when we have supplies available. If you have supplies at home, please make what you can and drop them at the church to be delivered. [Click here](#) for easy instructions. Contact [Marty Cates](#).

***NEW* LVS SERVICE OPPORTUNITY**

This month, Friday, May 15 is our date to serve Liberation Family Services by providing a meal and we'd like to invite folks to participate again by providing some extra food for them to have on hand during this difficult time.

If you would like to participate, please bring a casserole, container of soup/chili, or frozen breakfast sandwiches to the church on **Friday, May 15**, before 5 PM. It can be something purchased (like a 'heat and eat' casserole/soup from Sam's or Costco) or a frozen casserole. Or it can be a homemade casserole/soup that can be refrigerated/frozen for later use.

To maintain social distancing, we are asking you to drop off donations on the metal bench outside the church's main doors and to please ring the doorbell or call the church office (804-794-0238) if it is *before 3 PM* or call/text Judy Righter (804-402-1810) *after 3 PM* to let us know so we can bring it inside! Contact [Judy Righter](#) with questions.

[AREA FOOD BANK NEEDS](#)

Bon Secours Curbside Food Drive: *(note from Bon Secours)* "To bring good help to our neighbors in need we are holding a curbside food drive to support local food pantries. From **April 27th- July 24th** we will be collecting food donations from community members, faith-based organizations and grocers at curbsides and in parking lots. Then we will be delivering these food donations to food pantries here in the greater Richmond area."

If you'd like to donate canned goods for the Bon Secours Food Drive, please bring them to Sycamore and place them in the crate outside the main doors. Our food drive will run through July and we'll arrange for pick up as goods come in!

Chesterfield Food Bank: *(from their website)* "In order to continue to meet the needs of our neighbors, we are asking you to make a monetary contribution to the Chesterfield Food Bank. Our buying power is considerably strong: we are able to obtain \$5 worth of food for every \$1 that you donate to us. A monetary gift enables us to order exactly what we need based on our current inventory. [THIS LINK](#) will take you to our donations page."

Feed More: *(from their website)* "We remain committed to distributing food to our Central Virginia communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Your financial donation](#) can help so many across Central Virginia, especially now! As this global health crisis

continues, our resources will be stretched and your gift will provide us with the ability to respond to the growing and changing needs of the communities we serve."

IN THE MISSION FIELD:

MMK "Helping Hands" Mission Trip Rescheduled – April 29–May 9, 2021

Due to the coronavirus affecting travel, our MMK mission trip to Ukraine has been rescheduled to next spring. This is a great opportunity for you to consider going! Contact [Frank or Barbara Co win](#) (804-347-6856 or 804-320-5913) for information on joining our team going to Kyiv, Ukraine In 2021!

St. Louis Youth Mission Trip 2020 Update – We are cancelling our trip to St. Louis this summer due to concerns about the virus. Be praying about your plans for next summer! Please talk with [Marty](#), [Christine](#), or [Evan](#) if you have any questions.

***NEW* Malaga, Spain Mission Trip 2020** – The Malaga trip has been cancelled for this summer. We ask for prayers for the Serge missionaries who live and work there, that their outreach would be effective and that hearts and lives will be changed by the Holy Spirit. Contact [Trevor Roberts](#) if you have any questions.

Pray for our mission and outreach efforts and the missionaries we support during this time of uncertainty. Pray that many people will turn to the Lord and that His Word will be proclaimed throughout the world.

PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

[Pastor Search Committee Update](#) Read the latest update from the Pastor Search Committee
[Prayer Effort](#): See what we are currently praying for.
[Scripture and Discussion](#): A few thoughts from our weekly devotional time.