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PASTOR'S DESK

Even the Wind and the Waves...

By Pastor Jonathan Cornell

As a nation, our eyes and hearts are drawn to the flooding in South Texas. Hurricane Harvey brought us face to face with the unpredictability and ferocity of God's creation. And as a country, our hearts once again sank with thoughts of Katrina lingering in our not-so-distant memories.

The Psalmist echoes our pleas for mercy in chapter 69, when he writes, "Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me" (Psalm 69:1, 3).

As humans, and particularly as Jesus followers, we have always had a complicated relationship with water. On the one hand, the Psalmist uses it as a metaphor when life becomes a little more than we can bear. On the other hand, it was Jesus who invited Peter to place his trust in him by stepping onto the water and walking to him (Matthew 14), it was in a boat that was rocked by the wind and waves on the Sea of Galilee where Jesus



A Texas National Guardsman carries a resident from her flooded home following Hurricane Harvey in Houston, Aug. 27, 2017. Army National Guard photo by Lt. Zachary West. Picture from PDA PCUSA.

offered miraculous peace (Matthew 8:23-27), and it was from the chaotic and primordial waters that God brought creation in Genesis 1.

So, what are we to do with this tension? Well, to borrow a phrase from the Yankee Great Yogi Berra, when you come to a fork in the road, take it.

Our first instinct is the right one. As our hearts sink with despair, and we struggle for words when the waves literally take our breath away, when what stands before us looks like primordial chaos, when the rains don't seem to be letting up, we pray.

The Scriptures teach us that the world is God's, and all therein bow to his command (Mark 4:41)—even hurricanes and floods. And so, in moments when the physical waters are rising, and in moments when the figurative waters are rising, we look to the God who created the waters. He is the one, Jesus said, who sends the rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45).

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Community & Missions

Loving people
with the heart of Christ
in the heart of Wabash

Feed Our Community

You are always encouraged to bring canned/dry goods for the F.I.S.H. food pantry and drop them off in any of the boxes throughout the church. This month, we are collecting tuna, crackers, and cereal.

PRESCHOOL PALS

With the new school year right around the corner, and the first for The Presbyterian School, you are invited to participate in a new outreach to families of preschoolers. Preschool Pals are members/families from the WPC Family who are paired with a family in our preschool. As pals, we look for ways to encourage, support, and share God's love with children and their families. Together, we will cross over with the love of Christ to the people we serve throughout the week. Contact Mary Kramer or Sandy Mitting if you are interested in being a Preschool Pal!

Classes & Bible Studies

Luther—Law, Gospel, and Reformation

Sunday Mornings, 9am, Fellowship Hall, starting Sept. 17th
Contact: Jonathan Cornell

You are invited to delve deeply into an event that changed the religious and social landscape of the world. This October, we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. We will study the life of Martin Luther, the Pastor and Teacher, and unlikely reformer. No books or cost involved; just show up for this fascinating DVD Lecture Series.



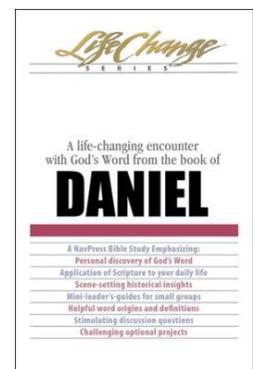
WPC MISSION PARTNERS

- Peabody Retirement Community
- Kemmerer Village
- Meals on Wheels
- City of Refuge (Ghana)
- Thammavongsa Family Mission
- Wabash Ministerial Association's Assistance Program
- Wabash County Habitat for Humanity
- White's Residential & Family Services
- Winchester Community Center
- 85 Hope
- Arc of Wabash County
- The Access
- Campus Life
- F.I.S.H.
- Character Building of Wabash County

Daniel (LifeChange Series)

Monday Mornings, 9am, Christian Education Building, resuming Sept. 11th
Contact: Janet Halderman or Judy Waggoner

The Monday Morning Bible Study Group will be resuming their study of the book of Daniel. The Book of Daniel is revered for its vivid prophecies, but also for a life-transforming truth: that God's will is sovereign over every human being. Focusing on the here and now instead of what may be, this study offers historical insights, daily applications, and stimulating discussion questions to help you see God's hand in your life.



September Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Please be praying for our <i>Preschool Teachers</i> and <i>Children's Ministries Volunteers</i> as the school year gets underway!</p>					1 Friday Book Study (11am)	2 [Outside Event at Church]
3 Worship (10am) & Fellowship Hour (11am) <i>Loose Offering: Gas Vouchers</i>	4 LABOR DAY Office Closed	5	6	7 The Presbyterian School Starts!	8 Friday Book Study (11am)	9
10 Choir Practice (9am) CELEBRATION SUNDAY Worship (10am) & Carry-in BBQ (11am) <i>Special Offering: Hurricane Harvey Relief</i>	11 Monday Bible Study (9am) Helping Hands Ministry	12 ROMEO Men's Lunch (12:30pm @ Michael's Diner)	13 Kari Out of Office Choir Practice (6pm)	14 Missions Team (6:30pm) Buildings & Grounds Team (7pm) Worship Team (7pm)	15 Friday Book Study (11am)	16
17 Sunday School & Choir Practice (9am) Worship (10am) & Fellowship Hour (11am) Cuba Trip Informational Meeting (following service)	18 Monday Bible Study (9am) [Outside Event at Church]	19	20 Choir Practice (6pm)	21 Session (7pm)	22 Friday Book Study (11am)	23
24 Sunday School & Choir Practice (9am) Worship (10am) & Fellowship Hour (11am)	25 Monday Bible Study (9am)	26 JULIET Women's Breakfast (8am @ Fried Egg)	27 Choir Practice (6pm)	28	29 Friday Book Study (11am)	30

Business Notes

August Session Minutes

- Hired new Office Manager, Jessica Broyles, to start within a couple of months.
- Friend-Raising Training offered on September 23rd for Session Members.
- Will be putting in men’s bathroom on the lower level of the church building.

Loose Offering | WPC’s Gas Voucher Program

The loose cash that is collected on September 3rd will help provide gas vouchers to those in our community who come to the church for aid.

Financial Report

	<u>July</u>	<u>Total 2017</u>
Income:	\$20,257	\$149,339
Expenses:	<u>20,142</u>	<u>151,579</u>
Balance:	\$115	-\$2,240

**We used \$7,000 from the Endowment Account to cover our expenses in July.*

[Give online.](#) Use our secure site to set up recurring gifts (like pledges) or for one-time gifts (like paying for a Bible study book or supporting our Mission Partners).

Worship & Connect

Fall Sermon Series—Semper Reformanda: And Always Being Reformed... By Jesus

This fall, as we celebrate a milestone anniversary in the life of the Christian Church, we will step back and look at Scripture’s Core Message of faith, hope, and love through the things that make us distinctively Reformed.

A Fresh Take on Community Meals

Community Meals are taking a bit of a twist this year. We’ll meet only the first Wednesday of each month, beginning in October, for a time of friends, food, and fun. We encourage you to use the time during the other weeks of the month to get to know others in the church through meals, coffee, and outings!

Remaining Softball Schedule

Thanks so much to everyone who has come out to support the WPC Softball Team. Here is the schedule for the rest of our season:

Sept 4 th	Labor Day – No Game
Sept 11 th	6pm vs. Friends
Sept 18 th	6pm vs. Bachelor Creek 2
Sept 25 th	7:30pm vs Bachelor Creek 1

Connect & Serve

Cuba Trip Informational Meeting

On Sunday, September 17th, you are invited to an informational meeting for the upcoming Partnership Trip to Cuba with The Outreach Foundation. This year’s trip will be February 2nd-12th. At this informational meeting, you will learn about our work there, itinerary, cost, and travel details. For more information, contact Pastor Jonathan.

Quilts for Veterans

The Quilt of Honors Quilters is seeking names of Wabash County Veterans to honor at our November Luncheon. Please send names and addresses by September 30th to Lois VanMeter, 107 Bonbrook, Wabash, IN 46992.

Collecting Jugs

We are collecting gallon and half-gallon jug containers to use for our seasonal decorating this winter. You can drop off any jugs in the kitchen or Fellowship Hall. Thanks for helping!

Hurricane Harvey Relief

Hurricane Harvey may have been downgraded, but the torrential rains are still pounding parts of Texas and Louisiana. We are relying on the generosity of Presbyterians to provide financial and hands-on support to help the whole church stand with these communities and the Presbyterian family as it responds to its neighbors.

The needs for the response are great. God’s people are once again called on to stand in the “GAP” — Give. Act. Pray.

GIVE:

On Sunday, September 10th, we will receive a special offering that will be directed to Hurricane Harvey relief.

ACT:

Put together Gift of the Heart kits for survivors in the affected areas—hygiene kits and cleanup buckets are especially needed. For more information, go to pda.pcusa.org/page/kits/.

PRAY:

God, our Shelter, be a strong presence in the lives of neighbors who, having survived the winds and rains of Harvey, now face grief, uncertainty, and weary days. May our generosity in prayer and in tangible signs of support over ow more than floodwaters, to sustain your work of healing and rebuilding and to bring comfort and strength to those who suffer. Amen.

Scripture Verse

Isaiah 43:1 NLT

But now, O Jacob, listen to the Lord who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says, “Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.”

Reflection:

Prayer List

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Susan Wise | Brenton Yarger | Kevin Gerhart |
| Tayla | Christine Murphy | Jack Francis |
| Katie Baer | Mike Philip | Mary Jane Garrison |
| Linda Miller | Stan Williams | Bill Skeans |
| John Schultheiss | Carl Willmert | Lois Smith |
| John Hughes | Hope Unger | Nancy Chowning |
| Myron | Carolyn Biltz | Lois Dickinson |
| Joe & Eileen Strickland | Judy Waggoner | Mildred Paullus |
| Butch Randol | Kay Caudill | Elmer Myers |
| Jim Greiner | Tina Easterday | Ron & Faith Rider |
| Cindy | Jennifer Maxwell | Mary Leland |
| Susan Keffeber | Teresa Bowman | Dessie Sturgeon |
| Mary P. | Judy Lovellette | Connie Squires |
| Jane Barlow | Danika Landis | Helen Shanks |
| Ari Halderman | Heather Houlihan | Martha Helm |

Have a prayer request?

If you have a prayer request, please email Kari Bartkus at office@wabashpresbyterian.com. Please respect the privacy of others and share their concerns only with their permission. You can also email Kari if you’d like to receive the weekly prayer list via email.

DIG DEEPER

Closer to Jesus

By Kari Bartkus

What draws you closer to Jesus? And what draws you farther away?

These were the key questions raised at our latest Bible study. And they are questions I'm still pondering today.

Some things—many things, I suspect—are neither good nor bad. They are neutral. And yet, the way that we approach them or receive them can cause us to grow in our faith or stumble.

The Bible teacher on the DVD identified several specific things that draw him closer to God: the smell of coffee, being up early in the morning, reading books by “dead guys” (i.e., Luther, Spurgeon). He also acknowledged things that caused him to grow careless in his faith: watching too much TV, or becoming too invested in sports. Again, things that aren't necessarily bad in and of themselves; just the way in which they were used became a distraction.

And so I am left to ask myself, what is it in my life that draws me closer to God? What stirs up my faith? What points me back to Him?

My answers will be different from the Bible teacher's above, and I bet they'll be different from yours, too. But perhaps, my friends, this is something we need to ponder together. Because the more we each grow in our relationship with Christ, the more our church community grows in its faith and in its fruit.

So what draws me closer to Jesus? Rain. Hearing someone belly laugh. Praying with a dear friend. Reading a well-written story or article. Walking outside. Quiet and stillness. These are things I need to incorporate into my life as much as I can.

But I've got to do more than that. I need to be aware of the things that might cause me to drift away from Him.

I agree with the Bible teacher that I cannot watch much TV. Not much at all, in fact. And while I am an avid reader and want to be well-read, I have to be careful in the books that I choose because it's so very easy for me to “take on” the mind of the characters. Their thoughts become my thoughts, their perspective my perspective. It's hard for me to NOT finish a book, yet I've had to learn to set a book aside after a few chapters if I find it clouding my judgment.

What is it in my life that draws me closer to God? What stirs up my faith? What points me back to Him?

What about you? Will you ask these questions with me? Will you be intentional about including more things in your life that draw you closer to Jesus and being cautious in the areas that might lead you astray?

And if you're a parent, might I even challenge you to keep an eye out for the things that draw your kids closer to Jesus. How do they best connect with Him? Where do they meet with Him most naturally? Encourage those times. And perhaps learn from them, too.



Kari

Kari Bartkus
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Mondays-Fridays
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Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/
wabashpresbyterian](http://www.facebook.com/wabashpresbyterian)

**Loving people with the
heart of Christ in the
heart of Wabash**



Our Celebration Sunday service will be held on September 10th, 10am. This will be a family- and child-friendly service, with baptisms and special musical guests! You are encouraged to invite friends and family to join us for worship, as well as a barbeque chicken carry-in lunch after church.

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