

Dear Friends,

Last night, Amy, Cate, and I watched the NFC Championship football game. If you missed it, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers beat the Green Bay Packers 31-26. Even though Amy grew up in Tampa Bay, the Packers have been the Merrill family's favorite team for several generations. The reason is that the amazing Merrill family matriarch, Miriam, had grown up on a dairy farm in Wisconsin back in the glory days of Bart Starr, Paul Hornung, and Vince Lombardi. Oh well, we lost. That's how it goes. Even though "our team" lost, it is a comfort to see something that we are used to seeing in an unusual time-football. The Super Bowl is next. I will enjoy watching it not because I have a favorite between the Bucs and the Chiefs, but because we are used to watching a Super Bowl in February. Somehow during a pandemic, that is a comfort.



So bear with me while I reflect on professional football and how it might relate to something seemingly unrelated-Christian discipleship. Consider the NFL combine, the elaborate process by which football teams draft or pick players to be on their team. The combine is one of the most intricate physical exams in existence: 40 yard dash, bench press, vertical jump, broad jump, 20 yard shuttle, three cone drill, 60 yard shuttle, position drills, personal interviews, injury evaluations, drug screen, the Cybex Test, and the Wonderlic test. All this is to say that by the time one of the starters this Sunday straps on a helmet, he has been through one of the most complex and competitive ways that human beings have developed for picking teams.

Do you remember picking teams when you were a kid? Whether you loved it or hated it, it's one of those things that everyone remembers. Do you remember waiting around hoping that someone would finally pick you? Teams get picked for a wide range of human activities not just sports. There are tryouts as well for theatre or coveted marching band positions, cheerleading, and choirs. Think back and remember those teams or groups and picking or being picked and all the feelings that came with it.

I point out these experiences and feelings to you because we hear the lectionary Gospel readings many of which are call stories this time of year. These call stories of Jesus gathering the disciples are ***the stories of Jesus picking his team***. Jesus called disciples to follow him and be a part of his ministry. ***But notice that Jesus picked his team in a very different way.***

Notice the difference in the picking process in the Gospel story from the picking processes that we have usually experienced in life. The disciples did not come seeking Jesus like disciples ordinarily did with rabbis. They weren't out looking to be a part of his team. Jesus came to them. He went to the much less likely place of fishing and boats and nets where no one was having a discussion about religious things. He searched for ordinary people to follow him.

This team of disciples would be gathered to follow Jesus and to love God and neighbor. And it took the disciples quite some time to get the hang of it. They kept thinking of it as a contest like we are all prone to do.

(Willis continued on page three column two)

Hebron Marks Its 275th Year

As Hebron Church enters into its 275th year, we take a peek back to its very beginnings by looking at three men named John-John Craig, John Blair, and John Brown. Who were these three who played a role in Hebron's founding? We start with a brief history of John Craig.

Thirty years before the birth of America in 1776, the North Mountain Meeting House was organized in 1746. In the early 1700's, many Scots-Irish left their homes in Europe and set sail for the New World. Many settled in Massachusetts with the Puritans, but the two groups of settlers did not mesh well. Gradually, the Scots-Irish migrated southward into New York, the southeastern part of Pennsylvania, and Maryland before reaching the Shenandoah Valley by the 1730's. John Lewis was generally thought as the first settler in Augusta County in 1732 although some believe he was not the only Scots-Irish settler in the area at the time.

John Craig's journey to Augusta County was typical for an immigrant Scots-Irishman. Craig earned a Master of Arts degree from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1733. He did some study to become a physician, but that did not materialize. He reasoned that where the need was greatest, his service would be most pleasing to the Lord. With very few possessions, he left his family and began a journey across the ocean in June, 1734, arriving in Delaware by August the same year. He brought his Bible published in 1682 with him. This Bible can be found in Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church. Craig gravitated to the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area where he taught school for a year and studied for the ministry for the next two. He received his license to preach in 1737. In November, 1739, the Presbytery of Donegal dispatched Craig to western Virginia to serve as an itinerant preacher to frontier families there.

(Craig continued in column two)

(Craig continued from column one)

Meanwhile by 1738, the Scots-Irish Presbyterians in Augusta County were numerous enough for them to begin searching for a minister, and made such a request to the Presbytery of Donegal in Lancaster. John Craig, a minister of the "Old Side" * accepted this call to Triple Forks of the Shenandoah, later called Beverley Manor. By October 19, 1740, he arrived in Augusta County after traveling 300 miles on horseback to begin work at Beverley Manor. He was also required by Donegal Presbytery to serve the people of the North Mountain community and other young congregations in this Virginia frontier one Sunday every two months and as many weekdays as possible. His territory was about thirty miles in length and twenty miles in breadth. Later these points became known as Augusta Stone to the northern edge and Tinkling Springs to the southern tip. He traveled from the foothills of the Blue Ridge to the foot of North Mountain, preaching to small gatherings in homes, in tree groves, and under temporary pole structures, and baptizing children. He once said that he could do all the preaching that was needed "between the mountains." He tried to keep an eye on these scattered congregations while working with Col. John Lewis of Augusta Stone and Col. James Patton of Tinkling Springs. These men were rivals who wanted a minister that each could control.



In December, 1740, Craig baptized two children of John Brown in the North Mountain area. In February, 1741, he also baptized the daughter of Robert Young at North Mountain. With an established minister in the area, these settlers began building a log meeting house called the North Mountain Meeting House. Today, the site is located about six miles southwest of Staunton on the Middlebrook Road. A year after his arrival, he baptized eight more children in the new meeting house.

(Craig continued on page three column one)

(Craig continued from page two)

In total, Craig baptized forty-nine children at North Mountain in nine years.

Craig married and raised a family on 335 acres that he purchased next to John Lewis's homestead and later purchased another 265 acres adjoining his first piece of land. Since he was an educator as well as minister, wherever he started a church, he also started a school. He was not timid as a minister and urged the buildings of forts that could hold 20-30 families during the period of the French and Indian War (1756-63) to protect settlers from Indian raids that were prevalent during the early days of his ministry. One of these forts was built around Augusta Stone Church.

Craig nurtured the congregation at North Mountain as well as congregations at New Monmouth, Timber Ridge, New Providence, Cooks Creek, and Rocky Springs until these congregations were strong enough to call their own pastors. He traveled as far south as Big Lick (Roanoke), the New River Valley (Blacksburg), west into the Allegheny Mountains,

and north to Winchester. All told, he baptized 883 during the 1740's. Although he was discharged from his duties at Tinkling Springs due to clashes with some members in 1764, he continued his ministry at Augusta Stone until his death in 1774 and was buried in the church cemetery. A Virginia highway marker was erected to commemorate John Craig's ministry on Route 11 near the Augusta Stone Church.

By 1745, John Blair, a minister on the "New Side" followed John Craig into the valley of Virginia to make his mark on Hebron Church.

* "Old Side" and "New Side" ministers will be addressed in the March edition of the Hebron Herald.

Next month: The Rev. John Blair

(Willis continued from page one)

"Which one of us will be greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" one of them asked one time. But they had been picked not to thump their chests. They had been picked simply to be a part of Jesus' work. They were called to be part of Jesus' ministry-to give glory to God and not to themselves. Being on the team was not for the purpose of gaining advantage over others, but for serving the kingdom of God.



Friends, here's the Good News. You've been picked. Christ's work in you has made you a part of the kingdom work that God is doing in the world. And each of us can make a difference to others who are awaiting their chance to be a part, too. A pandemic has reminded many of us of the most important priorities in life. Jesus taught us that the kingdom of God is the most important priority for Christian disciples. "Seek it first," he taught. It is more than a comfort to know that the loss and pain of a pandemic cannot threaten the reality of God's kingdom. The faithfulness and steadfast love of God give us hope that perseveres through any challenge we may face.

Peace,

Steve

Rev. Steve Willis



Giving Statements

Hannah Bush, Hebron treasurer, has completed giving statements for the 2020 fiscal year. If you have not received yours, please contact Hannah at the church office Tuesday-Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at 540-885-1648. She will be happy to assist you.

PW Word of the Month: Faith

As a member of the Hebron Presbyterian Women, I support the program to create a monthly scripture card to be placed in each Sunday's bulletin. My word for the month of February is **FAITH**.



FAITH is the complete trust or confidence in something or someone. It is a strong belief in God or a firmly held belief or theory.

I have a small prayer poem that I have kept in mind over the years. I wrote it down years ago so I don't know who wrote it.

After the Rain

Whatever your cross, whatever your pain,
There will be sunshine after the rain.
Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall,
Keep faith, God will help you through it all.

FAITH has gotten me through many trials and tribulations as I am sure it has helped you through yours. No matter how bad a situation looks, and the events of the world in today's time has shown us how bad it can be, keep having **FAITH** that God will see us through. **FAITH** is a gift from God, and we strengthen our **FAITH** by reading the Bible and hearing the gospel.

My dearest wish is that when my time comes, I can say like I Timothy 4:7 says, *"I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith."*

Please put your scripture cards where they can be a word of encouragement.

Holding to the **FAITH**,
Shirley Fallin

Wanted: Celebration of Life Booklets

A member of the church is looking for the PW **Celebration of Life** booklets from the years 2008-2009. If you have booklets that you are willing to donate, please call the office. Thank you.

When Bad Things Happen to Good People-PW Book Study

The Presbyterian Women (PW) are reading the book *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* by Harold S. Kushner. They will discuss chapters 1-4 at their March meeting and chapters 5-8 at the meeting in May. If you have read this book or are presently reading it, perhaps you would like to join the women at their March and May meetings to discuss this work with them. Sandy Showalter distributed questions to consider while reading the text for the first four chapters, and she will hand out another guide for the last four chapters to ponder shortly. Rev. Steve Willis will be moderating the book study at the next two meetings.



Harold Kushner, a rabbi, and his wife were given devastating news when their young son was diagnosed with a degenerative disease at the age of three and would not live past his teens. Rabbi Kushner wrote the book as he searched for answers as to why God as the loving creator of the world would allow such pain and suffering to happen to His people.

Sandy has one more copy of the book if you are interested in reading it. Please feel free to join us in March for our study of this book.

A Note From the Presbyterian Women

The PW will **not** prepare the student "goodie" boxes due to high infection rates of COVID and the uncertainty as to which colleges are open and which are 100% on-line. Instead, the PW will purchase prepaid Visa cards for our four students for them to use in purchasing items they might need for school projects and/or snacks while completing work. Women surveyed noted they hoped to be able to continue the "goodie box" tradition next year.



Cleaning House for Lent

As Lent begins, we often ask ourselves, “What am I going to give up for Lent?” We think about forgoing sweets such as chocolate or desserts and shopping excursions. We start diets and new exercise regimes. We accept challenges such as



cleaning out closets and drawers to rid our houses of all sorts of clutter. For a period of time, we feel good about all the things of which

we have rid our spaces. Some of us develop good habits while many of us return to our old ways.

But Lent is more than cleaning our messy houses. Lent is a time for self-examination and repentance by praying, fasting, self-denial, giving, reading, and meditating on God's holy word. We begin with repentance and fasting on Ash Wednesday. We accept God's offer to help us clean our messy “houses.” It is a time to deep clean our souls.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10

What are some ways to develop a new and right spirit within ourselves this Lent? What are some meaningful ways to fast? A few years ago, Pope Francis wrote the following words:

Do You Want to Fast This Lent?

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.

Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.

Fast from anger and be filled with patience.

Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.

Fast from worries and have trust in God.

Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.

Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.

Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.

Fast from grudges and be reconciled.

Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

May we accept the challenge of these words as we welcome God's presence in our hearts and minds this Lenten season.

A Note from Joel

Since the last newsletter, we have received an email message from our organist Joel VanderZee updating Hebron on his activities. He writes:



Thanks for reaching out, and I hope you and the rest of the Hebron folks are doing well in spite of a very disrupted life right now for many folks.

Sheila and I are in Ontario right now. She actually FINALLY has her green card interview next week, so we are one step closer to actually being able to permanently move to Staunton. I plan to be in Virginia to work again for the month of February, and then we plan to sell our house here in the spring. That should coincide with Sheila having all her final paperwork to legally be in the US.

Last I spoke with Emerson, he said you're still meeting in cars outside. Hopefully as vaccinations start going around, Hebron will be able to resume services inside, and the choir and congregation can sing together again with the organ!

Looking forward to being back with you and the choir.

Joel

Bible Readings for Lent



Feb. 17 Luke 18:9-14

Feb. 18 John 1:29-34

Feb. 19 John 1:35-42

Feb. 20 John 1:43-51

Feb. 21 Mark 2:18-22

Feb. 22 John 2:1-12

Feb. 23 John 2:13-22

Feb. 24 John 2:23-3:15

Feb. 25 John 3:16-21

Feb. 26 John 3:22-36

Feb. 27 John 4:1-26

Feb. 28 Mark 3:31-4:9

SACRA

Please remember to bring canned and boxed food for SACRA. You may drop it off at the point of entry with the church greeters each Sunday morning .



February, 2021

Hebron Presbyterian Church

Worship 11 A.M.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Groundhog Day 	3	4	5 National Wear Red Day 	6
7 Drive-In Worship	8	9	10	11	12	13 Valentine's Day –Feb. 14 
14 Drive-In Worship Communion Transfiguration of the Lord	15  Presidents Day	16	17 First Day of Lent 	18	19	20
21 Drive-In Worship	22	23	24	25 Worship Com. Mtg. 6:00 P.M. Session Mtg. 7:00 P.M.	26 	27
28 Drive-In Worship						

HEBRON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
STATED SESSION MEETING
December 17, 2020
Moderator, Rev. Steve Willis

A quorum was declared present.

The Moderator opened the meeting with prayer and an Advent reading by C.S. Lewis.

Clerk's Report:

Session approved the minutes of the November 19 Stated Session Meeting.

Session approved the agenda for this meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Acting Treasurer Hannah Bush presented a balance sheet as of November 30, 2020 showing total assets and liabilities of \$615,751.16. Our General Fund has a balance of \$53,992.55

Old Business: None

Presbytery Report: None

Committee Reports:

- CAT Committee – 95 CAT surveys have been distributed to date. There will be notification when on-line entry of surveys can begin.
- Cemetery - One burial conducted for Bonnie Smiley. Someone ran through the board fence at the cemetery. Repairs will be made.
- Christian Ed - no report
- Commitment/Witness - Salvation Army bell ringing went well. Thanks were expressed to all who helped. Mille Fallin sent session information concerning mission support for Mark Hare and Jenny Bent.
- Congregational Ministries – Christmas cards have been mailed out.
- Fellowship/Service – 22 boxes of goodies have been delivered to our shut-in folks.
- Personnel - no report
- Property - Lights in the office have been replaced. The north end of the manse was power washed, Thanks to Gibby Crummett, Tom Cook, and Duane Dean for their help in getting this end of the manse cleaned up. The clothes line poles behind the manse were removed. The small shed behind the church was relocated to the end of the parking lot. Manse cleaning is about finished. Painting to begin soon. Fairfield-Echols would like to rent portions of the Scout Hut if they get the contract to do bridge work on the railroad overpass. They would pay us \$500/month plus pay for electricity. They estimate using the Scout Hut from March to November. Session approved accepting this offer.
- Stewardship/Finance – Session approved allowing Hannah Bush to acquire a church credit card from DuPont Community Credit Union.
- Worship - Theresa Moore reported that glow sticks will be used Christmas Eve rather than candles.
- Website - no report
- Women of the Church – Sandy reported 15 reverse advent food boxes were packed and delivered to needy families in the community. The value of the food in each box was approximately \$75.
- Moderator's Report: After discussion, Session decided to not have an in-person January Stated Session Meeting. Any business that needs to be decided can be done via telephone. Elder training was moved to March.
- New Business: Hannah Bush was elected Treasurer for 2021. Larry Mayer was elected Clerk of Session for 2021.

Next Stated Session Meeting – Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 7PM in the fellowship hall.

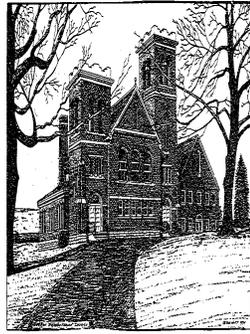
Joys and Concerns:

The blessings and prayer concerns of the congregation, friends, and relatives were shared by the moderator and Session for corporate and individual prayer.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by the moderator at 8:10 PM.

HEBRON HERALD

Hebron Presbyterian Church
 423 Hebron Road
 Staunton, VA 24401
 Church Office: (540) 885-1648
 E-mail: myhebronpc@gmail.com
 Website: www.hebronpc.com
 Ministries available to all ages
 Sunday School, 9:55 A.M.
 Morning Worship, 11:00 A.M.
 Interim Pastor - Rev. Steve Willis



February Birthdays

Jeff Simmons	1	Ruth Rathburn	12
Jessica Rathburn	2	Ellen Desper	14
Tom Cook	2	Bill Drumheller	15
Martha Sieck	5	David Obenschain	24
Jon Arneson	5	Philip Sieck	25
Jennifer Sieck	8	Tracy Mayer	26
Donna Kirtley	11	Richie Moyer	27
		Glenn Mader	28



February Anniversaries

Robert and Dana Christian 9

Greeters for February

February 7 - David and Theresa Moore
 February 14 - Tom and Jan Kitts-Cook
 February 21 - Larry and Gail Mayer
 February 28 - Charles Buchanan and Ellen Desper

Current Session

Class of 2021	Class of 2022	Class of 2023
Mike Fallin	Tom Cook	Theresa Moore
Gail Mayer	Bob Christian	Doug Trimble
Joyce Obenschain	Anita Tuttle	Joan Wright
	Sandy Showalter	

Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday

On February 14, Hebron will celebrate Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday by observing Holy Communion at our drive-in worship. Communion elements will be distributed by the greeters at the point of entry, and participants will hold them until Rev. Willis indicates the time to partake.



Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday is the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday which marks the first day of Lent.

Address Updates



Hilda Dundas MC 114 501 Oak Avenue Waynesboro, VA 2980	Jennifer Sieck 3203 Ninth Street South Arlington, VA 22404
Wilda Shover 403 Buchanan Street Staunton, VA 24401	