



May 2020

“Yucca Breeze”

T H E U N I T E D C H U R C H E S O F H O T S P R I N G S

P A S T O R ’ S P U L P I T :

Staying Con-tent in Con-tentious Circumstances

The one thing that we as people of faith count on in all of our lives is the simple but comforting fact that we are loved by God. How do we know that? The answer: our salvation, our being touched by the Master’s hand, our being born again from above, our having our hearts slowly but assuredly changed ... for the better. For some reason at some time God proved Himself and showed His intentions towards us when we came to personally know and then experience the life-altering change when one truly accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as Savoir and Lord. Lots of folks simply do not understand us. They tend to believe, and often times pity those of us who claim to be Christians, that we must have been the recipients of childhood brainwashing, or better yet, adulthood delusions. We have that “crutch” in our lives and that’s Ok with them.

I don’t know about you, but I can say that the Love of God for us and in us has become the solid foundation for life and in life, especially when times are in flux, when the world is experiencing the malady of the unknown, and when darkness fills the lives of so many who find themselves living in the shadowlands of uncertainty. With that said, I want to assure you of 3 absolute truths; 3 facts you can confidently know and take to heart. Together, these are the key to staying content in contentious circumstances.

Fact #1

God loves you. He always has and always will. God loves you not because you are super special or just so dog gone good, well how could he not? No God loves you simply because you are you. He loves you warts and all. He loves you through all of your failures and successes. He loves you and loved you before you were ever born. And to be quite frank, real life doesn’t really begin until a person comes to the realization that there really is a God, and more that this God is personally interested in them. Let me repeat; God loves you and always will. Why? Simply because you are you and He is well, He or Him. You can count on it!

Fact #2

I love you. Now I know may seem trite. But it is not. And here’s the reason why: I love you, not because you are necessarily you, not because you have been there all my life and I know you and have come to truly love you, not because you are necessarily always loveable ... but, I can say that I love you because you are undoubtedly — His. And to love Christ is to love the things and the ways and the people whom He loves. Believe me, to love God’s people is not a chore. (It may be a challenge at times!). I am sure that you as well have considered that being loved by God, and

(continued on next page)

loving and being loved by others, is the essence of what Christianity is all about. And if there is at least one good lesson that our quarantine time hopefully has revealed to us to the state of Christlikeness that many of us have struggled with in our lives. Consider the world in which we live. Especially when it comes to the political realm. Lots of People have stopped sharing opinions concerning policy. Social media can be so discouraging and disappointing. So much so I myself have had to read, and reread: ***“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.” (1 John 4:20 (NIV))***

Here’s an interesting little tidbit. Have you considered the words to the song, *They Will Know We Are Christians by Our Love*? They are pretty simple, yet they speak great truths that came out of a very divisive time.

Here’s the history of the song. “They’ll Know We Are Christians” (also known as “They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love” or “We Are One in the Spirit”) is a Christian hymn, written in the 1960s by then Catholic priest, the late Fr. Peter Scholtes. It is inspired by John 13:35.

The title of the hymn *They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* originates in a phrase that non-believers used to describe Christians believers of the early Church: *“Behold, how they love one another.”*

Let me repeat: I love you, not because you are necessarily you, not because you have been there all my life and I know you and have come to truly love you, not because you are necessarily always loveable . . . but, I can say that I love you because you are undoubtedly—His. And you are! But keep in mind—you are. And because we are we have to be ever conscious of love for our Christian brothers and sisters—plus, and this is a big plus, it’s our “witness” for Christ that remains the most important aspect of our collective Christianity in any situation, in any given era, during any particular period. Part of staying content in contentious circumstances is the ability push one’s personal preferences aside, if we deem that the cause of Christ could be hurt.

And finally . . .

Fact #3

This too, came to pass . . . Look, God loves you. I love you. Our lives are typified by the fact that we are people who love each other. Hard times, such as the ones that we are experiencing now... come and go, and each one does eventually and inevitably wane. When all this present mess has passed, hopefully we learned something from going through this experience together.

**We are one in the Spirit,
we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit,
we are one in the Lord
And we pray that our unity
will one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love
Yeah they'll know we are Christians
by our love.**

**We will work with each other,
we will work side by side
We will work with each other,
we will work side by side
And we'll guard each man's dignity
and save each man's pride
And they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love
Yeah, they'll know we are Christians
by our love.**

(continued on next page)

I know one thing I've learned; it is the reminder, the ever present and holy reminder that there is a surety in our lives. The surety is: Fact #1; and when we combine it with Fact #2; and accept the reality of Fact #3; together, these are not only a great foundation for our lives but also are the key to staying **con-tent** in **con-tentious** circumstances.

Blessings and Grace,

Pastor David

From the Board of Trustees

Instead of our quarterly financial report for the church congregation, we thought we would make monthly reports during this COVID-19 situation. This will be an overview of the financial position of the church, and we question how giving to the church may be affected by our not having normal Sunday worship services.

We are fortunate to have cash reserves as we enter this virus crisis. At the end of March, we had a little over \$93,000 in our Capital Reserve funds. However, our checking account balance has been reducing as we continue to pay our church bills. By the end of March, we only had about \$2250 of cash not obligated by our Accounts Payable. There is no immediate crisis because we are fortunate we have the cash reserves for times just like this, and we may have to transfer some reserve funds shortly. The windows project will cost almost \$28,000, and we have received about \$11,470 in gifts so far, and had expected the project to be paid for by these extra donations. We are considerably short in the donations we had wanted.

Our regular giving to the church has been great through March, about \$40,500, and our budget was \$39,000. Also in our financial statement, we have several categories of expenses. We have: 1. Staff Ministry (paid staff), 2. Staff Support (Payroll tax, Retirement expenses, and misc.), 3. Programs and Ministry Support (Expenses for various committees and teams), and 4. Church Operations (expenses that support our church programs, to include repairs, office expenses, utilities, etc.). At the end of the first three months, everything was very close to budget, except Church Operations, which was roughly \$8000 over budget. This was mainly because of new equipment of about \$4500, snow removal of about \$1000, and utilities of about \$2000. Our fellowship hall is used considerably by our church and the community, and we just completed installing electric door openers to assist our disabled and needy friends and family. This door project cost almost \$3200, and is a valuable improvement for church access. Our security issues have also been seriously addressed, and we have installed more security cameras in the church. The camera views are recorded, and can be monitored in the office, which helps protect our staff during the week.

Overall, we have a loss of about \$11,000 this year through March, when we had budgeted a loss of \$3700. This is something the trustees monitor closely, and we need to remind the church family how important your gifts and tithes are, to support our regular church activities and the mission of serving our community.

As we continue with the COVID-19 uncertainty, it should go without saying to keep faithful in your giving, not only to our church, but to others in need. We don't know how church gifts and offerings may be reduced because of not having the traditional worship services in our church sanctuary. We have options for continued church support, to include online giving, and of course the good old US post office delivery. Blessings to everyone, and stay safe. Support your friends and neighbors with your thoughts and prayers, and maybe a friendly phone call. Many of us are feeling lonely right now, and your phone call could be the highlight of someone's day.

Isolation Island

by Lynn Mason (Music Ministry Leader)

My grandparents always had new and different books to read when we arrived to visit and one time I bumped into the book “Dangerous Island”. As a young child, the adventures of three children whose boat was tossed onto an island (a sinking island, no less) was captivating. I admired how they survived until at last they were rescued and returned to the mainland.

Their survival strategy was: * make a plan *find out what resources were available and take care of them only using them sparingly * follow a routine *do something for fun (like “fish” which also helps with survival) *pray and *take care of each other and *don’t think about the danger too much! There might have been more tips but I don’t remember. Anyway, these ideas seem to lend themselves to our times.

Pastor David asked me to write something for the newsletter when I last talked with him about the corona virus. I said that my emotions seemed to be on a rollercoaster moving up and down dramatically at the sounds or sights of different cues. Being deeply sad or depressed is, oh so normal, when we as humans are programmed to want to be with others.

What’s to say that hasn’t been said about all this? We all know the wonderful, positive ideas we can use for our mental, physical and spiritual health: that exercise helps with panic, routine is stabilizing and immersing oneself in positive hobbies, study or practice are beneficial. Playing by the rules (social-distancing) may be a sacrifice but it helps others. One source says to help you remember how to be careful, you should “act as if you are already sick and it will help you to be vigilant about not being around others”.

One site online gave these uplifting, positive thoughts: *Air pollution is less now. *You can see the stars more clearly. *People are more and more creative (Example: making their own soap etc.) *Science and corporations are driven and innovative

Giving thanks for our faith, our friends and family, our community, our church (and the list goes on) keeps our minds occupied and is probably a good direction to follow. So many have displayed actions of kindness and support throughout our country. There is always a new twist on giving cheer to someone else. My nuclear family has started a trivia tag game using our cell phones. It’s fun to see if we can stump my Dad. (he loves every category) 1. Name three books by John Steinbeck 2. Who wrote the music for Star Wars? 3. Who was the first governor of South Dakota? 4. Who won the last World Series?

Great appreciation goes out to the many people who are so very positive and continue doing the work that is needed even when they have to find a new way to accomplish it. Speaking of new ways: Who ever heard of “Quarantine Work-Outs” before now? There have probably never, ever been so many parades to celebrate birthdays, weddings and other events! Letters are making a great comeback and people are learning how to use Zoom and other social media even though they’d rather not! Pastor David, initiated the successful radio/parking lot service and Pat DeSmet operating technology have kept our church services going and musicians and others have all contributed. Lisa and Mark gave the Choir some Easter fun.

In conclusion, please stay safe, stay sane and try making your isolation island a place of hope, comfort and shelter. If you need to talk with someone, please reach out. We all need each other. We can be better together even though we are apart. It would be inspirational to hear how you all are dealing with this isolation time. gc ”We must have faith in ourselves and those around us as well as in God.”

Lynn mm Please enjoy if you would like: Hallelujah! A new way of presenting Handel’s work.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ag6CYY0cbFc&feature=youtu.be>

May Birthdays:

3 Dean Cape	19 Ellen Heafner
6 Katelin Wynia	Jeanne Wyatt
8 Pat Strauser	20 Sherry Mower
9 Barb Wilson	Taylor Sun Bear
10 Nancy Nilsen	21 Jean Donnell
14 Sally Hageman	22 Jill Evngelista
Calla Hanson	Peg Sperlich
Julianna White Face	23 Carolyn Pulley
18 Reta Bristol	30 Alicia Evangelista-Anderson
Ginny Coates	

**May Anniversaries:****14 Mark & Carol Posthumus**

If your name is not included on the Birthdays and Anniversaries list and you would like it to be added, please contact the church office by email: uc@gwtc.net or call 745-5640.



The Rev. Robert Tarleton was assigned to Hot Springs in October, 1920. One important thing he instilled in the hearts of the members was the consideration and thoughtfulness of each member to respect the beliefs of others and want each denomination to have equal representation in all matters and on all committees—no matter which denomination was the largest or the smallest.

A constitution containing 8 short articles, as prepared by a special committee of ten, was adopted and published in the Sunday bulletin on December 5, 1920, and thereafter this was considered the “official date” of the organization of The United Churches. The first article read: “The name of this organization shall be The United Churches of Hot Springs, South Dakota.” The second article read: “The purpose of this united effort is to bring members of several churches into closer cooperative organization; to attempt to answer the prayer of the Master when He prayed ‘That they

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER ~ THURSDAY ~ MAY 7, 2020

Pray God's Glory Across the Earth

For the Earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2:14)

Update on the Windows Project

As of April 19, 2020, we have received a total of \$11,910 on the Windows Project, which is 43% of the total needed. (A representative of the company doing this project was here on April 21 to do some final measurements. We expect the work to begin in the factory now, and install will happen sometime this Summer)

CONGRATULATIONS to...

*Arika Brink
Class of 2020
Hot Springs High*



Arika will be attending Minnesota State University-Mankato. She will be studying Biomedical Science. She is thankful and blessed with all of the support she has received from this Church family over the years.



Class of 2020
Hot Springs High School

HYMN HISTORY

HOW GREAT THOU ART

English Words by Stuart K. Hine (1899 – 1989)
*Every day I will praise You and extol Your name for
 ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of
 praise; His greatness no one can fathom.*
 (Psalm 145:2, 3)

Today's inspiring hymn of praise and adoration reminds us of God's unlimited power and love in creation and redemption. Although written in the past century, the hymn has become familiar to congregations just since the close of World War II. It especially became an international favorite after the Billy Graham Evangelistic Team used it in their crusades during the late 1940's and early 1950's.

The original text was written by a Swedish pastor, Carl Boberg, in 1906. While visiting a beautiful country estate, Boberg was caught in a sudden thunderstorm. The awesome and violent lightning and thunder quickly ended, leaving clear brilliant sunshine and the calm, sweet singing of the birds in the trees. Falling on his knees in awe and adoration of Almighty God, the pastor wrote nine stanzas of praise. Swedish congregations began to sing his lines to one of their old, folk tunes. The text was later translated into German and Russian and ultimately into English by the Rev. S. K. Hine and his wife, English missionaries to the people of the Ukraine. When war broke out in 1939, it was necessary for the Hines to return to Britain, where Mr. Hines added the fourth stanza to this hymn.

These four stanzas by Stuart Hine have since ministered and inspired God's people worldwide:

*O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider
 all the worlds Thy hands have made, I see the stars, I
 hear the rolling thunder,*

Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed!

*When thru the woods and forest glades I
 wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
 when I look down from loft mountain grandeur and hear
 the brook and feel the gentle breeze.*

*And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, sent
 Him to die, I scarce can take it in – That on the cross,
 my burden gladly bearing,*

He bled and died to take away my sin!

*When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and
 take me home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall
 bow in humble adoration and there proclaim, my God,
 how great Thou art!*

Chorus:

*Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;
 how great Thou art, how great Thor art!*

*Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;
 how great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

Bible References: Deuteronomy 3:24; Psalm 48:1; Isaiah 40:26, 28; Romans 1:20. Take time to think once again about the unfathomable greatness of God and His wonderful redeeming love for each of us.

Creds and Confession Corner

The Westminster Confession of Faith



In 1643, the English House of Commons adopted an ordinance calling for the “settling of the government and liturgy of the Church of England (in a manner) most agreeable to God’s Holy Word and most apt to procure the peace of the church at home and nearer abroad.” After the ordinance passed the House of

Lords, an assembly to accomplish this work convened in Westminster Abbey. The Parliament nominated one hundred fifty-one persons to the assembly. Thirty were members of Parliament; the others were “learned, godly, and judicious divines.” Five Scottish clergymen were in attendance and had the right of discussion but not vote. Churches in Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and the American colonies were invited to send delegates, though none came. The assembly held 1,163 sessions, finally concluding in 1649.

The Westminster Assembly conducted its work in a crisis atmosphere. Internal conflicts had nearly torn apart both England and the English church. Political and religious problems were inseparable. Who should rule the church? Who should rule the state? What power should the king have? What power Parliament, local councils, and assemblies? The Anglican party stood for royal rule in England with the sovereign also head of the church's government. The Presbyterian party sought to vest authority in elected representatives of the people, both in Parliament and in church presbyteries.

In 1647, the Scottish General Assembly adopted the Westminster Standards for use in the kirk, replacing the Scots Confession of 1560 and the Heidelberg Catechism. The standards came to New England with the Puritans (Independents) and to the Middle Atlantic states with the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. In 1729, the standards were adopted as the confessional position of the newly organized Presbyterian synod in the colonies and have played a formative role in American Presbyterianism ever since. The Westminster Standards represent the fruits of a Protestant scholasticism that refined and systematized the teachings of the Reformation.

Sermon Series Spring/Summer 2020

Date	Title	Text
<u>Moments with the Master Series</u>		
May 3	"A Terrifying Moment"	John 8:1-11
May 10	"A Touching Moment"	Mark 5:22-34
May 17	"A Tearful Moment"	Mark 5:21-24
May 24	"A Teaching Moment"	John 3:1-15
May 31	5 th Sunday: Praise & Potluck (?)	
June 7	"A Thrilling Moment"	Luke 23:32-43
June 14	"A Tender Moment"	John 21: 1-19
June 21	"A Trusting Moment"	John 4: 1-30
<u>Bible Book Series: Philippians</u>		
June 28	"Carry On my Wayward..."	Philippians 1:1-6
July 5	4 th of July	
July 12	"In This Together..."	Philippians 1:7-11
July 19	" Good Vibrations..."	Philippians 1:12-18
July 26	"Dying to Live"	Philippians 1:19-30
August 2	"Mind-Full of Christ:	Philippians 2:1-11
August 9	"Light Weight Kids..."	Philippians 2:12-18
August 16	"Son-ny Side Up..."	Philippians 2:19-30
August 23	"Best the Flesh..."	Philippians 3:1-16

THIS AND THAT . . .

MARCH — MISSIONS & MINISTRY

Food Pantry — 302 Served

THANK YOU FROM: *Yvonne Wilcox* for sending her the Yucca Breeze; *Julie & the Kids* for all the wonderful things given to them after their fire.

CONGRATULATIONS TO: *Carla Richmond; Nancy Nilsen; Cora Reid; Marce Largent; Garry Strauser;* and *Jerry Wyatt* for completing Class 1 of 3 of the D2D Course on April 14, 2020.

NEW OFFICE MAIL BOXES: Please note that the Centennial Committee now has a mail box located above Jeanne Wyatt's box; and Bernice Cook has a box located right below Peg's box (right outside the church office).

CHURCH OFFICE EMAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:

Peg Sperlich: uc@gwtc.net
 Pastor David: pastor@gwtc.net
 Bernice Cook: ucassist@gwtc.net

The United Churches
342 N. Garden St.
Hot Springs, SD 57747
605-745-5640
Email: uc@gwtc.net
www.unitedchurcheshotsprings.org

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #84
(Return service requested)

UNITED CHURCHES



HOT SPRINGS, SD