

ADVOCATE

First Presbyterian Church
41 West College Avenue
Westerville, Ohio 43081-2103
614-882-3155 Phone
www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org

September 2023

Rally Day 2023!

This glorious day began with the morning service and the presentation of age-appropriate Bibles to Jesse Moses, three years old, and Emmett Reichley, fourth grader.



During the service, Pastor Mark continued his current focus on great hymns, this time explaining the origin and different versions of “How Great Thou Art.” Afterward, we moved to Fellowship Hall, where we enjoyed a new event, Connection Choices, organized by the Step Forward Task Force under the direction of Sherri Monteith. Each committee or group at our church had created a display and handouts to help members and visitors learn more about the group’s activities and responsibilities at our church. The displays were very professional, interesting, and quite informative. These committees and groups help our church fulfill the needs of the congregation and our community in so many ways!



At 5:00 p.m. on Rally Day, we all headed to the Hensons' farm for a delicious picnic of grilled hamburgers and hot dogs and every kind of salad you could name, plus luscious desserts, of course. The Hensons' goats and chickens seemed glad to see us, and the kids had fun with a bouncy house and a dunk tank. Kudos to Pastor Mark and Rev. Hicks for braving the cold water! Even our refugee family joined us! (Again, if any photos are upside down, just click on them!)

It was, indeed, a glorious Rally Day and a memorable start to our church programs this year!



Chancel Choir News

Rehearsals Starting September 6

It's September, which means the Chancel Choir will soon be starting once again, an event the congregation looks forward to every year. The first rehearsal will be on Wednesday, September 6, at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary. Anyone interested in participating is welcome to join us, with the only prerequisite that somewhere along the way, you have had experience singing in a school, community, or church choir.

Please make Earl Linhart, Pastor Mark, or any choir member aware that you would like to join us, so that we can have a music folder prepared for you. And welcome!

Our Presbytery is Sponsoring a Trip to Israel and Palestine

Come and See! Go and Tell! Pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine."
New date: November 30-December 12, 2023

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley and the Presbytery of Miami Valley are co-sponsoring a study pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine with an optional extension to Jordan in November 2023. Registration will be limited to 20. See the brochure and registration form. Here is the link: <https://psvonline.org/event/pilgrimage-to-israel-palestine-come-and-see-go-and-tell>

For additional information, contact Rev. Boteler at mgboteler@gmail.com.

Thanks for Donating Backpacks

On Sunday, August 13, we celebrated the beginning of a new school year with our "Blessing of the Backpacks." In addition to blessing our children's backpacks, we blessed 16 backpacks that were donated for children who do not have backpacks of their own. The donated backpacks were taken to Huber Ridge Elementary School in Westerville, where they were handed out during the first week of school. Thanks to everyone who donated a backpack. Sixteen kids now have a place to put their books and supplies each day!



Interested in Learning Something New?

“OWLS” Announces its 2023 Season of Courses

OWLS (Older, Wiser, Lifelong Scholars) is accepting enrollment for its 28th season of diverse and unique 2-day and 1-day courses for seniors who want to learn new things and make new friends. Supported by Ohio Living Westminster-Thurber, these eight courses will take place during the month of October in the new Heritage Pointe building at 655 Neil Ave. Tuition for a 2-Day course is \$30.00 per course, and for a 1-day is \$15.00. Optional lunch (\$16.00) and snacks are also offered.

This year's courses, taught by regional and national experts in their fields, involve sessions on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Climate Change, Poetry, Appalachian Folk Traditions, Cybersecurity, “What Makes a Hero,” and Names, Image, and Likeness in Sports. The season will kick off on September 27 with a concert of Appalachian folk music by the Paul Brown Appalachian Folk Group.

The courses are engaging and fun, so consider taking one or more this October and becoming one of our OWLS! For more information on the courses, dates, faculty, and registration forms, go to: www.owls.coursestorm.com or call (614) 579-2557.

VISITOR & NEW MEMBER LUNCHEON

Sunday, September 24 - 11:30-1:00

Downstairs in the Fellowship Room

If you would like to learn more about First Presbyterian...

...Join us for a Luncheon on Sunday, September 24 after worship.

If you would like to become a member of First Presbyterian...

...Join us for a Luncheon on Sunday, September 24 after worship.

If you want to meet people and share your stories...

...Join us for a Luncheon on Sunday, September 24 after worship.

Please sign up by calling the church office: 614-882-3155

Questions: Contact Pastor Gauen at 614-288-4389 or pastormark@fpcw.us

News from the Deacon Board

Membership Directory

A new directory is coming soon, and it will be online for easy access. Stay tuned for directions on how to access your account, update your information, and include a picture. The Deacons will be available after church to help anyone log in and upload a picture. Printed copies of the directory will be available as well.

Virtual Greeter

On Sunday, September 24, the Deacons will be piloting a virtual greeter for our members who are viewing the service online. A Zoomlink will be made available for anyone who would like to engage in some fellowship prior to the service. We hope if you are logging in to watch the service, you will join the Zoom group and catch up with some of our members! More information will be in the weekly news and announcements.

Home Communion

The Deacons are continuing to serve home communion on the first Sunday of the month. If you would like to have home communion, please contact Karen Gaines or call the church office (614) 882-3155

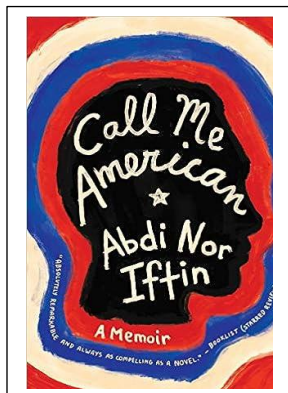
Communion Preparation

If you are a current or former Deacon or Session member, please consider signing up to prepare communion for our congregation. The sign-up sheet, along with explicit directions, is in the white binder in the Knox Hallway. If you have not prepared communion previously, we will pair you with someone who has.

Cookies

It is always nice to have something sweet after a great sermon and fellowship. Sign up to bring your favorite recipe(s) or store-bought sweets. The sign-up sheet is in the white binder in the Knox Hallway.

Anne Bates, Deacon Moderator



Call Me American by Abdi Nor Iftin

Otterbein University's common book for 2023-2024 is *Call Me American* by Abdi Nor Iftin. (Otterbein incoming freshman all read the common book each fall and discuss it in their classes.) In his dramatic and deeply stirring memoir, the author shares his story of being born to nomadic parents in Somalia, learning English by listening to pop music and watching action films starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, escaping war-torn Somalia to Kenya, and eventually realizing his dream of coming to America. This book is especially relevant to us because

Columbus is home to the second largest Somali population in the United States. The author lives in Maine and is studying political science at the University of Southern Maine, where he is on a path to gain citizenship. He will speak at Otterbein on October 24, 3:30 p.m.

Plans to Change the Entry Door Locks

The Administrative Services Committee plans to switch back to the pre-pandemic entry door locks. As you may recall, at the beginning of the pandemic, we closed the church and drastically limited access to the building by changing the locks on the entry doors and giving out only a limited number of the new keys. Because we didn't change the interior locks and the new entry door key doesn't open any of the interior doors, if you need access to any of the locked interior doors, you must have more than one key. We plan to switch the entry doors back to the old locks so that the old keys can again be used, and you will need only one key to open the entry doors and locked interior doors. In our key system, the new entry-door-only keys are the "A6" keys, but this ID may or may not be stamped on the key. Most of the old keys were either A1, which worked on all doors except for the pastor's office and the treasurer's office, or an A5 key, which worked on all exterior doors and most interior doors except for the pastor's and treasurer's offices, the boiler room, electrical rooms, and sprinkler control rooms.

What the switch will mean:

1. If you have one of the old keys, once the locks are switched back, this will be the only key you need for both the interior doors and the entry doors.
2. If you have only an entry door A6 key, and you need access to the building, you will need a different key to access the building.
3. If you have one of the old keys or one of the A6 keys and you no longer need it, we would appreciate it if you returned it. Please don't throw away the A6 keys.

We plan to switch the locks at the beginning of September. Please contact Brad Gamble if you need to get a different key or to return keys. Please do not ask our Administrative Assistant Olivia Hodorowski for new keys, as she is not responsible for controlling access to the building. For the first month after we switch back to the old locks, we will not switch the lock on the south stairwell entry door, so the A6 key will still open this door. After we are confident that everyone who needs access to the building has a working key, we will switch the lock on the south stairwell door also.

The lock on this door will not be changed until October.



The Church's July Financial Report

First Presbyterian Church of Westerville Statement of Income and Expense July, Fiscal Year 2023

	July Actual	Year-to-date Actual	Year-to-date Budget	Annual Budget
Income				
01, Contributions	22,196.00	176,690.39	173,456.57	297,354.00
02, Administrative Services	500.00	1,140.00	583.31	1,000.00
03, Christian Education	20.00	20.00	1,175.00	1,300.00
05, Membership and Evangelism	0.00	300.00	991.69	1,075.00
08, Worship	175.00	1,233.00	1,516.69	2,600.00
Total Income	\$ 22,891.00	\$ 179,383.39	\$ 177,723.26	\$ 303,329.00
Expense				
01, Personnel	17,603.29	129,560.79	132,229.56	227,408.00
02, Administrative Services	11,000.93	42,443.33	36,125.12	60,100.00
03, Christian Education	1,098.68	3,677.35	3,500.00	6,000.00
05, Membership, Evangelism, Events	541.90	900.35	2,656.18	3,800.00
06, Stewardship	5,852.00	8,552.00	15,779.19	21,250.00
07, Outreach	1,500.00	3,062.07	4,483.38	8,800.00
08, Worship	152.00	3,133.47	3,616.69	6,100.00
09, Deacons	0.00	0.00	145.81	250.00
10, Step Forward	220.15	287.73	583.31	1,000.00
Total Expense	\$ 37,968.95	\$ 191,617.09	\$ 199,119.24	\$ 334,708.00
Income Less Expense	\$ (15,077.95)	\$ (12,233.70)	\$ (21,395.98)	\$ (31,379.00)

Dedicated Funds Committed to 2023*	\$ 12,233.70	\$ 31,379.00
Income Over Expense plus Dedicated used	0.00	0.00

* Property Maintenance \$2929
Scholarships \$3000
Youth Camps \$1065
2019 Blessings \$5239.70

August Session Actions

The following actions were voted upon by Session at its August 14 meeting:

- June minutes were approved as is. (There was no meeting in July.)
- The resignation of Rob Rankin from Session (pending a family move to North Carolina) was reluctantly accepted.
- The Christian Education Committee will continue through the fall to monitor the success of the children's worship area in the sanctuary.
- In a vote of 10-1, the church will continue to offer use of our building to the Westerville Lions Club at a cost of \$35 per meeting.
- We will welcome a visit from Partners in Conservation (a fair trade organization working with the Columbus Zoo) to set up an international craft fair in Fellowship Hall on either Nov. 5 or 12.
- The 2023 elder class has been appointed to chair the following standing committees:
 - Ken Bonvallet: Stewardship and Finance

- Naomi Wriston: Administrative Services
- Bill Hitt: Outreach
- Additionally, Chris Henson is leaving Stewardship and Finance to continue heading the technology improvement efforts, which now will be a function of the Communications Committee chaired by Sherri Monteith.
- Barb Reppart is joining First Presbyterian by letter of transfer.
- John Robbins' desire to engage in another Heifer International Fill the Ark fundraising event was approved to take place in the spring under the auspices of the Outreach Committee.

Committee Realignments Will Address Communication Issues



One of several key themes identified by the Step Forward Task Force has been a nest of communication issues that has at times complicated smooth operations in the church. A realignment of some committees and the Technology Task Force should help address that situation.

The Technology Task Force, headed by Chris Henson, has equipped the Knox Meeting Room for hybrid in-person/streaming meetings, facilitated creation of an online membership directory to go live in the very near future, and combined multiple conflicting wifi systems in the building. The Task Force has been operating under the umbrella of the Administrative Services Standing Committee.

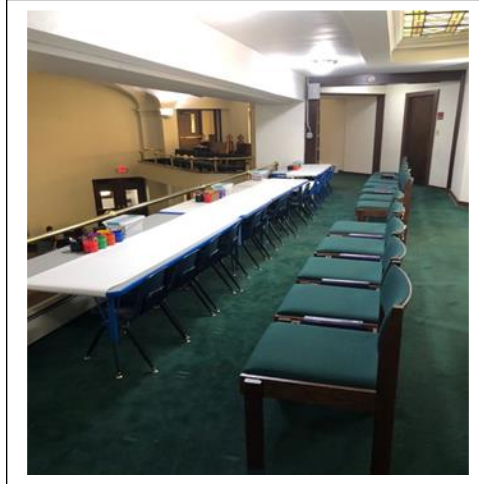
Because many of the technology needs revolve around improving both internal and external communications, the new Technology Standing Committee will work in conjunction with the Communications Standing Committee chaired by Sherri Monteith. The two groups will work together to improve communication content by improving communication technologies.

Automatic Door Openers!

Thanks to a generous donation from Resource Opportunities (the group formerly known as Residential Options), we were able to install automatic door openers on the two restrooms in the Gathering Area and the one in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Mike Krotz and the whole Resource Opportunities team for their work on this!

Youth Services

New Worship Space for Kids



We are so excited to share with you that we have opened our new worship space for KIDS! There is so much to look forward to in this new space. Kids will now take part in our worship service in a whole new way. We will meet before the service upstairs in the central balcony area. Tables with quiet art supplies, sensory bins, puzzles, toys, etc., will be available for all children who come into our sanctuary. What!? Your kids don't want to leave mom and dad? That's ok because we have seats up there for parents, too. We also continue to have our worship bags with fun activities for kids who want to stay downstairs with their families. We invite you and your children to explore and enjoy this space so we can make it even better this fall. We look forward to seeing you there.

Also, we will be changing things around once a month to keep this fresh throughout the year, so we welcome any donations that be used quietly during our worship service, such as crafts, puzzles, fidgets, etc. If you would like to donate any supplies to this ministry, please see Rev. Heather A. Hicks.



Discovery Zone

Discovery Zone is gearing up to start again on September 10. We will meet from 4:30pm to 6pm (this is a correction from last month). Children from kindergarten through high school are welcome to attend. We are also inviting parents to stay this first day so we can catch up with you and your families' schedules. We will provide pizza, salad, and drinks for all attendees!



Saturday Morning Farmers' Market

Last summer, we engaged more than 600 children and their families at our local farmers' market. We played with bubbles, created sidewalk chalk drawings, and offered a beautiful lawn full of shade for families to relax and enjoy the summer days. We are continuing this successful event this year. If you would like to volunteer for this significant and fun ministry to our community, please contact Rev. Heather A. Hicks.

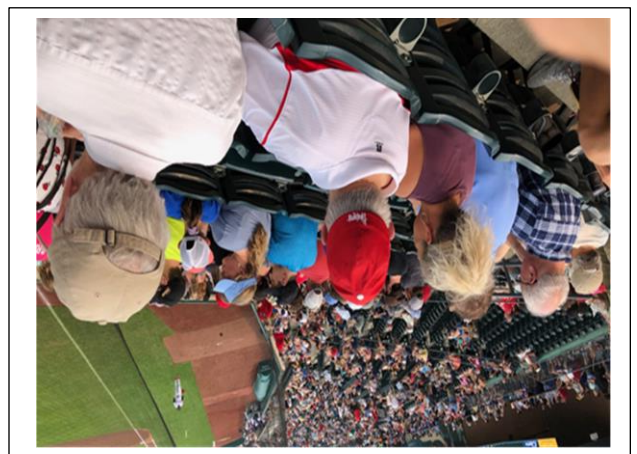


Nursery Attendant

We have welcomed back Lisa Tennant as our nursery attendant. We are so excited to have her back and to welcome the youngest among us. Lisa will be available in our new worship space and can take little ones to the nursery or Heart Room as needed.

Fun Times at the Clippers' Game!

On July 16, many of our members enjoyed watching the Clippers play at Huntington Stadium. In the photo on the left, they are (front) Todd and Kim Wise, Gigi Elliott; (back) Lane Hough, Glen and Sharon Carlton, Linda and Tim Backus. Also attending, but not pictured were Bob and Mary Place, Jack Anderson, Joe and Marsha Duffy, Lane's daughter, and Jeff Walland. (If the photo on the right is upside down, just click on it.)



Event Update



Genealogy Club: Thursday, September 21, 7:00 pm

At our August meeting, Linda Springer presented her research on three unrelated families who moved from the East Coast to northeastern Ohio. The September speaker has not yet been determined, but Ken's French cousin will be in town and may make an appearance.

We participated in Connections Choices on August 27, with handouts on "How to Get Started in Genealogy" and "How to Find Your Family in the 1950 Census." Contact Ken if you want a copy. If you are interested or just curious about our club and have not contacted us before, contact Bill Hitt or Ken Bonvallet.

Dine Out: Friday, September 8, 6:00 pm

In September, the Dine-Out Group will be going to Don Tequila's, 6211 Cleveland Avenue (just south of I-270 on the right side of Cleveland Ave.) Don Tequila's offers a wide variety of Mexican fare, along with a few more "Americanized" dishes. Traditionally, this has been one of our favorite restaurants. As usual, we will have a private room at the restaurant. We have NO LIMIT on the number who can attend this month. **Please note the earlier time—6:00.**

Please contact Jim Hines or Bob Place to make reservations or ask questions.

Ladies' Night Out: Tuesday, September 19, 6:30 pm

We hope you'll join us on the 19th. Restaurant TBD. Suggestions? Contact Diana Westfall.

Fabrics of Faith: Monday, September 25, 1-3:00 pm

September is a great time to begin a new activity. Come to Fabrics of Faith!

Everyone is welcome to our next Fabrics of Faith gathering on September 25 at 1:00 in Fellowship Hall. When we meet, people do needlework, share completed projects, or watch others work. We chat and laugh and enjoy fellowship, whether working or not. It's fun!

You don't have to have a project in hand; you don't have to know how to do one. We have materials; bring yourself and a smile. Mark your calendar and plan to join us: September 25 at 1:00 PM. Please contact Beckey Stamm for information.

Join Us for Tea and Lunch!

Tuesday, September 19, 1:00 pm

Fabrics of Faith will join the Presbyterian 9 Patchers on Tuesday, September 19, to share information about both groups with anyone who might be interested. The tea will be held at Anne McElhaney's home, 665 Cherrington Road, Westerville. All you need to do is bring your favorite teacup or mug and a sandwich that will be cut and shared.

Please RSVP by calling Ann. Be sure to let her know what kind of sandwich you will be bringing. One word of caution: it will be trash day, so if possible, please park on the same side of the street as the house. Thanks! We are looking forward to an afternoon of interesting conversation and tasty food!

Canoe Trip

Saturday, September 23, 9:45 am

Little Miami Canoe Rental

219 Mill Street, Morrow, Ohio (513-899-3616)

www.littlemiamicanoe.com

This is a 6-mile trip (same as last year). Please be at the canoe livery by 9:45, as the bus pickup leaves at 10:15 a.m. Cost for rental this year is: \$21 per person canoe; \$35 kayak. If you bring your own canoe or kayak, the cost for transport is \$20 for canoe; \$25 kayak.

Pack your own lunches this year, so we can gather after the trip to enjoy lunch and fellowship. For questions, call or text Carol O'Kane, coordinator of the event. Sign up in the white binder in the Gathering Area. We need to give a count to Little Miami in the early part of the canoe trip week.

Getting to Know You: Bonnie Moses



Bonnie is always busy helping someone at our church, but many do not know that her talents and empathy are based on her career in nursing. She graduated from the Washington Hospital School of Nursing in Pennsylvania and earned her master's degree from Case Western University in Cleveland. Bonnie is currently an instructor at the Mt. Carmel College of Nursing with students at St. Ann's. You can tell from this photo how her students feel about her. Here are just a few excerpts from their thank you notes:

“Thank you so much for being such a wonderful clinical instructor and role model. I feel truly blessed to have spent two clinical rotations with you. You have taught me so much on what it means to be a nurse.”
Courtney

“Thank you so much for all you have taught me this term! I can tell I am a better student nurse and will be a better nurse because of you. Never stop the way you teach. It builds better quality leaders and patient advocates. Thanks for all you’ve done. I’ll never forget pulses!” (We’ll have to ask Bonnie about that!)
Layne

“Thank you for everything. You’re absolutely amazing! Can you be my grandma?” Mauka

“I am so thankful for you and your guidance. You have been an integral part of my growth in becoming a nurse. I will forever remember our fun times on 2S. You’re the best. I actually love you.”
Jordan

“Bonnie, Bonnie, Bonnie, Hmmm, I don’t think this card has enough space for me to express how much I appreciate you. I learned so much from you these past few weeks, it still amazes me. I love and appreciate you. Keep doing what you do”
Synyche

“... Your passion is contagious.”
Daniel

“...You are the nurse I strive to be one day. Thank you again!”
Lucy

“...Thank you, Bonnie, for pushing me to my limit (almost).”
Evan

When Bonnie isn’t pushing her student nurses to their limit, she loves to read and listen to music. She really enjoys being with her three grandchildren from Lancaster, Ohio. Bonnie plays golf, not well, she says, but she does enjoy it. She also volunteers at a health clinic one day a week and used to volunteer with our Manna Cafe.

Bonnie says she truly loves the kindness and friendly atmosphere at First Presbyterian Church. She certainly is a vital part of that atmosphere!

Adult Growth and Development

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			
Activity	When	Where	What
Monday Seminar	Mondays 4:00-5:00 p.m.	Zoom Meetings -If interested, contact Tom Jonard.	The Monday Seminar has begun again, reading <i>Do I Stay Christian?: A Guide for the Doubters, the Disappointed, and the Disillusioned</i> , by Brian D McLaren. The author is a former college English teacher and was a pastor for twenty-four years. Now he's an author, activist, public theologian, and lecturer.
Weekly Bible Studies	Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 am Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00 p.m.	Tuesday: Hybrid Wednesday: Zoom -If interested email pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us	<i>So You May Have Life: The Gospel of John</i> The Weekly Bible Studies will begin the fall with a look at the Gospel of John. Join us in person on Tuesday mornings or via zoom on either Tuesday mornings or Wednesday evenings.
4th Monday Discussion Group	4th Mondays, 7:30 pm	Zoom Meetings -If interested, email Pastor Gauen at pastormark@fpcw.us	The 4 th Monday group has been looking at the issue of homelessness from a Christian perspective. We will next meet on September 25. Be sure to join us then.
Circle 4 Women	3rd Thursdays, 11:00 am	Zoom Meetings -If interested, call Elaine Foley.	Our Presbyterian women's group will meet on Thursday, September 21, on Zoom. Led by Elaine Foley.



Pastor's Page

Dear Friends:

I was at a meeting the other day, and we were talking about two towns in southern Ohio. When I asked how far apart the two towns were, the person answered: "It takes a while to get there. The two towns are close, but the road between them is crooked." I thought that statement could apply to a lot of places in southern Ohio. I know because I've tried to drive down there.

Could that statement apply to our spiritual life as well? We know we are not where we want to be in our relationship with God, and we have an idea of what it ought to be. But the road between those two places is often very crooked, and it takes a long time to get there.

Take, for example, the neighbor who told me that she wanted to read the Bible more. I suggested a translation that I thought would be good for her, and she was excited enough to go ahead and buy it. I even suggested a reading plan that might make it easier to get started reading the Bible. A few months later, I asked her how the Bible reading was going, and she said that it wasn't. She said that she had started, but she soon discovered that it was all so confusing, and she gave up. I suggested that she might use a particular study guide that would help her understand what she was reading. She told me that was a good idea, and she would try it. A few months later, I ran into her and asked how the Bible reading was going, and she said that she tried reading a little bit of the Bible each day, along with the corresponding pages in the study guide. It worked for a while, but she soon got distracted by other things going on in her life. She would reach the end of the day and just be too tired to try to read the Bible. I suggested that she find a Bible study group at her church that might help her stay with it. She said that might be a good idea. Again, a month or so later, I asked her if she had joined a Bible Study group, and she said she had. I asked how it was going, and she said, not so well. She always felt so "dumb" in that study because everyone seemed to know more than she did, so she quit. I felt sad for her.

While this tale is made up, it does accurately reflect the challenges we all face when we try to improve our spiritual life. It's a crooked path—one that takes time and commitment. There are plenty of sidetracks, dead ends, and reasons to quit. But it is a path that is worth traveling. If it helps at all, we are all traveling on that "crooked path." We are all seeking ways to come to know God better. For some, that path includes more Bible study. For others, it is a more disciplined prayer life. For yet others, it is using one's gifts to better the world. What I hope for all of us is that we can support each other as we walk that path and that together we can find ways for all of us to grow in faith.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark L. Lauer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Mark