

Good Tidings

Northminster Presbyterian Church ☩ Sarasota, FL

September 2019

SEPTEMBER SERVICES

Sundays at
10:30 AM

Rev. Wally Johnson

September 1

Lead us not...
Matthew 6:9-13

September 8

Doxology
Matthew 6:9-13

September 15

Found
Luke 15:1-110

September 22

*The Humiliation and
Exaltation of Christ*
Philippians 2:5-11

Guest Speaker: Dick Murphy

September 29

Is It Too Late?
Luke 16:19-31

Pastor's Corner

I recently read an article that I want to share with you. It's about making our church a comfortable place for our guests and the author shares these three rules of engagement.

1. An Alone Person in Our Gathering is an Emergency

In times of crisis, we do strange things. We interrupt conversations. We set aside social conventions. If someone collapsed in your church building, everyone would mobilize. But every week, people walk into our gatherings for the first time and are effectively ignored. They may not know Jesus, or they may have spent years wandering from him. Their spiritual health is on the line, and a simple conversation could be the IV fluid God uses to prepare them for life-saving surgery. Eternal lives are at stake.

What if it's a regular church member who is alone? An isolated believer is an emergency too. "By this all people will know that you are my disciples," said Jesus, "if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). Of course, we all enjoy solitude at times, but loneliness in church is as much an indictment on our gatherings as prayerlessness or lack of generosity. How can we claim to be "one body" (1 Corinthians 12:12) when we can't even sit together and engage one another in church?

I come to church with a family of five. But the primary family unit in



the New Testament is *not* the nuclear family: it's the church. In fact, Jesus promised that anyone who *left* family to follow him would receive far *more* family among his people (Mark 10:29-30). There are tangible ways we can express this in church. Those of us who come with nuclear families can invite others to sit with us, or even separate to sit with others.

Last Sunday, for instance, I chose to sit between two sisters in Christ — one from Nigeria, one from Ghana — and to enjoy worshiping Jesus with them. Being one body with our spiritual siblings means more than sitting with others in church, but it certainly doesn't mean less.

This call is not just for married people. If you come to church by yourself, don't underestimate what God could do *through* you to bless others. A while ago, a single friend shared her sadness about sitting by herself at church. She is a delightful, socially agile extrovert, and I told her she had no right to sit alone when she could be blessing others with her

PASTOR'S CORNER

Continued from page 1

company! My guess is that we have all, at one time or another, walked into a gathering and wondered, “Who will love me?” What if we asked ourselves instead, “Whom can I love?”

2. Friends Can Wait

Did I miss out on intimacy with the friend I interrupted to greet the woman sitting alone? Yes and no. The Bible calls us fellow soldiers (Philippians 2:25; Philemon 2), and few bonds are stronger than those forged in battle. Soldiers seldom turn to face each other. Rather, they look outward, standing shoulder to shoulder, or in extreme situations, back to back. Combat increases their closeness.

“Do you recognize that woman?” I asked another friend a few Sundays ago, as we started to talk. “No. I should go and talk to her, shouldn’t I?” she replied. As I saw my friend walk off to greet a newcomer, I felt a closeness I would not have known without our shared endeavor.



Friends can wait for our attention on a Sunday. Better still, they can mobilize in mission too. Spurring each other on to welcome strangers in Christ’s name won’t weaken our friendships; it will deepen them.

3. Introduce Newcomers to Someone Else

A few years ago, I met a woman in the check-out line at Target. She had recently arrived from China and was a visiting scholar at Harvard. We got talking and I took the risk to invite her to church. She said yes. Her English was far better than my nonexistent Mandarin, but we were nonetheless relating across a language barrier, so after the service I introduced her to a Chinese-speaking friend. Minutes later, my sister in Christ was exchanging numbers

with this newcomer. I hadn’t been able to explain the situation, but my friend immediately recognized the gospel opportunity before her. Even without a language barrier, newcomers benefit from multiple connections. When possible, I seek someone with an overlap: same country of origin, home state, school, profession, or stage of life. But our gatherings should cut across all demographic lines, and we must commit to connecting with those unlike us.

In fact, if some of our Sunday conversations aren’t difficult — pushing us beyond our usual conversational topics to reach across differences — we’re likely not conducting fellowship right. Calling out the racial, cultural, and social divides of his time, Paul reminded the Colossians that in Christ, “there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3:11).



Take the Risk

So, this Sunday, let’s take a risk. Let’s reach across the small divides to others as we imitate the one who spanned the great divide for us. And let’s urge our friends to do the same, because the harvest in our gatherings is plentiful.

We may never know what difference a small act of welcome made. But sometimes God lets us see how he has weaved our little acts into his much greater plan. Last month, I asked our Bible study group to share a time when God had brought blessing to them through hardship. The most moving response for me was from the woman for whom I had left my friend that Sunday: “I’m so grateful my fiancé broke up with me. If that hadn’t happened, I would not have found God.”

The three minutes after the service ends are critical. Use that time to connect with someone new to you

In His Service,
Pastor Wally

New Members this Summer!

GAVIN AND SHARYN LITWILLER

The Litwillers began worshipping at Northminster after having attended Band concerts here. They became members on June 30.

Married in Peoria, IL in 1955, Gavin and Sharyn have lived in Georgia, Colorado, Massachusetts, Arizona, and California. They also spent over three years in Schweinfurt, Germany, where two of their children were born. They moved to Florida in 1992 after retirement.

Gavin was a lawyer, a county judge, a district judge, and served in the USCG Auxiliary for 25 years. After their children were adults, Sharyn worked in banking. They have four children and four grandchildren, scattered across four states.



H. KENNETH MYHRE

Ken Myhre joined Northminster by transfer of membership on August 4. Ken has been attending Northminster for several years and enjoys our Bible Studies.

Ken lives in University Park, with his wife, Margaret. He's originally from Pennsylvania and, prior to retirement, was a masonry contractor and real estate investor. Ken is enjoying semi-retirement in Florida and has become a tennis "junkie." He appreciates the nice, nice people of Northminster.

How to Join Northminster

Whether or not your church background is Presbyterian, we welcome you to our congregation!

God calls us to worship him, to be in regular fellowship with one another, and to serve. You do not need to be a member of our church in order to do any of these, but many have found that formally uniting with a local church body is a commitment that brings to them a sense of belonging, the challenge to grow in their faith, and an opportunity to use their talents and experience in the service of God.

If you're interested in becoming a member of Northminster, **simply contact Pastor Wally, Val Wilde, or the church office.** It's exciting to be a part of something so much bigger than we are!



Mission Ministry

A YEAR OF BLESSINGS



Last summer we placed the red Blessing Box in front of our church, by the bus stop. It has been stocked continually with food and water donated by the Northminster congregation. Donations are also sometimes received by business, churches and individuals.

Some of the best items for the Blessing Box are:

- canned meals (spaghetti, ravioli) or tuna in pop-top cans
- single serving fruit cups
- nutrition bars
- single serving snacks
- bottled water

The homeless and hungry appreciate this ministry, expressing their thanks to staff in person and with notes. Recently we found a note, decorated with hearts, that said:

I just want to thank you for the kindness and gifts you give me and my child. We have a lot of respect and we will continue too keep your area clean and neat. We all appreciate you and yours.

KIRKUK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

For several years the Presbyterian Church in Kirkuk, Iran, has ministered to women in the local prison/jail. A recent visit to the jail found 48 women and four children being housed there. Most of these women are widows of ISIS fighters and are accused of terrorism.

Our Mission Fund contributes to this church, as it ministers to these women, to refugees from Syria, and their local congregation.

BIBLE MISSION, USA

Bible Mission, USA lives by the vision that God's Word changes lives. Dr. Paul Eckel has translated the *Gospels of John and Mark* into fresh "conversational English." Bible Mission USA provides free biblical materials to those who live on the ragged edge of today's society — the struggling poor, neglected children, and lonely seniors. Your gifts help to fulfill Jesus' word, "Nobody lives by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." More information is available on their website, BibleMissionUSA.com.

RESURRECTION HOUSE

Resurrection House is a Day Center for the homeless; where a continental breakfast is served; where bathroom, shower, and laundry facilities are available. There are services to help them find a job or secure government benefits; and a retired minister who volunteers on a regular basis to help meet spiritual needs.

Resurrection House does not receive any government funding. Your mission gifts help Northminster support their work. We also collect donations of hotel-size or sample-size toiletries for their use. These can be left at the Welcome Desk in the Narthex or brought to the church office.



Getting Together is Good for You!

Holey Moley, it's September. Where did the summer go? Yes, technically summer is not over, but yeah, the kids are back in school. So let's step on out and have some fun. This Fall will be full of surprises and excitement. To keep you all in suspense, the Fellowship Committee has been sworn to secrecy for October, November, and December. But - now for SEPTEMBER!

LAUGHTER FOR YOUR BRAIN

If you want to stay young, active, and be smarter, then laughter is the best medicine. An article in the September issue of *Reader's Digest* tells us, "Thanks to a new scanning technology, scientists are discovering that humor may be the healthiest thing our brains can experience." So, now that humor is the fountain of youth, let's all sign up for a trip to see *Comedy LOTTERY*, on **September 14**, at the Florida Studio Theatre, located on the corner of Cocoanut Ave. and 1st St. in Sarasota.

Since we are a smart group (Praise be to God) the tickets are \$10 per person for 20 or more people. Or \$15 pp for under 20 people. Sign-up for this event has been extended to **September 1**. You may also arrive early for a pay-as-you-go dinner in the Green Room at 6:30. If you would like to carpool, please meet at the front of the church; we will leave at 6:00 sharp. Please contact **Robin Sutcliffe**, if you have any questions.

PRESBYTERIANS EATING OUT

We've fed our brain with laughter, now, we need to feed our body. And what better way than by breaking breadsticks with your Northminster friends at the **Olive Garden**! We'll see you at 4420 14th St., Bradenton on **September 18**, at 5:00.

Their menu covers hearty Italian fare, the lighter Mediterranean diet, and a great selection of desserts. Also, don't forget their popular option of endless soup, salad, and breadsticks!

Please sign up in the Narthex so we can reserve seats.

Note from Matt Stevenson: "The last time we ate at this restaurant, I was so excited to get there, I ran a red light and got a picture of me sent in the mail. Let it be known, I learned a valuable lesson: Never run a red light with your wife sitting beside you."

PLAYING BRIDGE IS HEALTHY

The AARP quotes a study in 2000 at the University of California, Berkeley, that found "strong evidence that an area in the brain used in playing bridge stimulates the immune system. Researchers suggest that is because players must use memory, visualization and sequencing." It is a real workout!

Northminster's Annual Bridge Marathon will begin Wednesday, **October 2**, at 1:00, in the Fellowship Hall. Players are encouraged to sign up for the full Marathon or as substitutes. Games are played in the Fellowship Hall, monthly, ending in the spring.

There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex on Sundays or the office during the week. Please contact **Jan Gubrud**, if you have any questions or special requests.



Attention Music Lovers

Fall is an exciting time of the year: people returning from vacation, our seasonal friends returning, and choir returning from summer break. Those of you who enjoy singing hymns, and enjoy the excitement of holiday music, this is a wonderful time for you to come and try out the **NPC Choir**. Our church choir practices on Thursday night from 6:45 p.m. to 8:15 p.m., then sings most Sunday mornings throughout the year. Again this year, the choir will be ministering a Christmas Cantata with a live orchestra accompanying them, which brings the meaning of the Christmas Season to life. Choir members would LOVE to have you come and experience the fun of making music in ministry to our Lord and Savior! **All are welcome**, you'll have a Blast!

New Bible Study Classes for Fall!

EXODUS

taught by Dick Murphy

On **Sunday, September 15 at 9 a.m.**, Dick Murphy will begin teaching a weekly Bible study in the Fellowship Hall on the Book of Exodus. The study will be repeated on **Thursday's at 10 a.m. beginning September 19.**

The Book of Exodus contains the two greatest periods in the history of the Jewish people. The first was when God rescued his chosen people out of the land of Egypt where they had been held in slavery for over 400 years. The second was when God gave them the Ten Commandments on how they were to live their lives. It is also the expansion and renewal of God's covenant promises he gave to Abraham that he would be their God and they would be his people. In Exodus, God will mold them and shape them to become a nation of priestly people so that the world will know that a personal God exists.

God chose one man to lead them; a man called Moses. His job would not be easy. God would have to show the people endless miracles and wonders to convince the people of who God is and why he is. No one can fully understand the Christian faith without understanding what happened in Exodus and why it happened. What God did for sinful Israel foreshadows what Jesus Christ did for the world.

This study will be presented not only from a Christian perspective but also from a Jewish perspective. We will be following the Torah, written by Moses himself, in order to understand the culture, traditions, and midrash of the ancient Jewish people, as interpreted by two Jewish authors:

Exodus: God, Slavery, and Freedom, the Rational Bible, by Dennis Prager.

Exodus, The Book of Redemption, Covenant & Conversation, by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

Please come and be a part of our study and spirited discussions. Free coffee is always available!



PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY

The Pastor's Bible Study will begin **Tuesday, October 1. at 10:00 a.m.** Due to low attendance in the afternoon session, we will only have the morning class this year. The topic of the Study will be "Fresh From the News." Each week we will take an item that has been in the news and look at it from a Biblical Perspective.

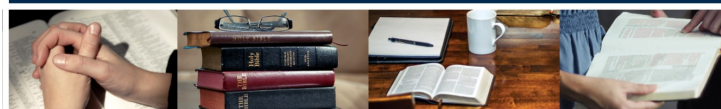
The goal is to relate current events to Scripture passages and encourage us to apply God's Word to everyday life. Each week I will email some questions for you to consider prior to the class. I will use material from "The Wired Word" as the starting place for our discussions.

Karl Barth wrote, "Take your Bible and take your newspaper and read both. But interpret newspapers from your Bible."



As for God, his way is perfect:
The Lord's word is flawless;
he shields all who take refuge in him.

Psalms 18:30



News from the

Church Library



Library Hours:
Monday afternoons, 1-3
Friday mornings, 10-12

It's hard to believe a year has passed since I began volunteering in the church library. Guess it's true that "time flies when you're having fun!"

Thanks to your generous donations, hundreds of new titles have been added to the collection. So, when you're at a committee or circle meeting in the library, why not take time to check out a book?

Also, church members will soon be able to donate a new book in memory of, or in honor of, a person or special occasion. Donor Forms will be available as soon as a few details are finalized.

If you have questions or need help, I'm usually in the library on Monday afternoons and would be happy to assist you.

Bonnie Kiger
Church Librarian

Financial Update

Operating Fund

| | July 2019 | Year to date |
|------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Income | \$ 20,350.75 | \$ 193,810.76 |
| Expenses | <u>\$ 26,100.84</u> | <u>\$ 191,547.72</u> |
| Net Income | \$ < 5,750.09 > | \$ 2,263.04 |

Operating Fund Balance

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Iberia Bank | \$ 136,428.00 |
| PILP Money Market | <u>\$ 22,979.18</u> |
| | \$ 159,407.18 |

Capital Campaign Fund Balance

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Ameritrade | \$ 100.20 |
| PILP Money Market | <u>\$ 19,830.10</u> |
| | \$ 19,930.30 |

Cornerstone

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Charles Schwab | \$ 38,801.15 |
|----------------|--------------|

Mortgage Balance as of July 2019

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| | \$199,649.36 |
| Required Monthly Payment | \$ 2,184.74 |
| Breakdown: Principal | \$ 1,525.47 |
| Interest | \$ 659.27 |
| Interest Rate: 3.9720 | |



Office Notes

OFFICE HOURS:

Mon-Thurs: 9:00 - 3:30
and Fri: 9:00 - 2:00

The office will be **closed on Monday, September 2**, in observance of Labor Day.

DEADLINES:

- **Announcements for the Sunday bulletin** are due in the office by noon on the Wednesday before.
- **Session Reports** are due in the office by Wednesday, **September 18** for the meeting on **September 25**.
- **Good Tidings:** Articles and announcements for the October issue of the Good Tidings will be due on **Sunday, September 15**. Please e-mail your articles and announcements for the Good Tidings to office@npcsarasota.org.



OFFICE ANGELS

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers who staffed the office while I was on vacation last month. Most of them worked two shifts, too. **Jan Gubrud, Bonnie Kiger, Sally Kirby, Pat Patterson, Bonnie Reeves, Shirley Samson, Robin Sutcliffe, and Valerie Wilde**, I appreciate you all so much! Thanks for your help!

Please call or email me if you'd like to help out. A brief training session can be arranged at your convenience.

Isabel Oake,
Office Administrator

A THANK YOU NOTE

Thank you, thank you, for the cards, flowers, visits, prayers, calls, and genuine caring for the last two years. All were appreciated. Don was determined to live, but at the end, it was a blessing that the angels came to get him. He is now at peace.

Donna Bagnall



| | | | |
|----|----------------|----|----------------|
| 2 | Audrey Hill | 14 | Wally Johnson |
| 4 | Joan Gale | 15 | Jackie Conner |
| | Ann Lassig | 18 | Jim Shirey |
| | Diane Ray | 23 | Donna Lindenau |
| 6 | Barbara Clark | 26 | Bill Post |
| 7 | Bill Hendry | 27 | Barbara Sewell |
| 9 | Jean Wadsworth | | Jerry Roth |
| 11 | Donna Bagnall | 28 | Allene Swanson |
| 13 | Dick Konen | 30 | Connie Buell |

SEPTEMBER



Northminster Presbyterian Church ☩ 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| 1 0 Iglesia-EB 10:30 Worship/ Communion | 2 LABOR DAY <i>Office Closed</i> 4:30 Bells-S 6 AlAnon-EB | 3 10 Staff-L 12 Worship-L 6 AlAnon (EB) 7 Rose Group Women's AA-FH | 4 10 Tai Chi 10:30 Member- ship Committee-L | 5 1:30 Finance-L 6 Al-Anon(Sp)-EB 6:45 Choir-S | 6 8:30 ROMEO & JULIET 2 Line Dance-FH | 7 |
| 8 10 Iglesia-EB 10:30 Worship | 9 4:30 Bells-S 5:30 Fellowship Com.-L 6 AlAnon-EB 7 Scouts-FH/EB | 10 10 Staff-L 2 Deacons 6 AlAnon (EB) 7 Rose Group Women's AA-FH | 11 10 Tai Chi | 12 9 Outreach & Marketing-L 6 Al-Anon(Sp)-EB 6:45 Choir-S | 13 2 Line Dance-FH Good Tidings Deadline | 14 7:30 Improv @ FL Studio Theatre |
| 15 9 Bible Study w/ Dick Murphy-FH 10 Iglesia-EB 10:30 Worship | 16 10 Ruth Circle-L 4:30 Bells-S 6 AlAnon-EB 7 Scouts-FH/EB | 17 10 Staff-L 6 AlAnon (EB) 7 Rose Group Women's AA-FH | 18 10 Tai Chi 5 Presbyterians Eating Out Session Reports Due | 19 10 Bible Study w/ Dick Murphy-FH 6 Al-Anon(Sp)-EB 6:45 Choir | 20 8:30 ROMEO & JULIET 2 Line Dance-FH | 21 |
| 22 9 Bible Study w/ Dick Murphy-FH 10 Iglesia-EB 10:30 Worship | 23 4:30 Bells-S 6 AlAnon-EB 7 Scouts-FH/EB | 24 6 AlAnon (EB) 7 Rose Group Women's AA-FH | 25 10 Tai Chi 10 Mary Circle-L 7 Session -L | 26 10 Bible Study w/ Dick Murphy-FH 6 Al-Anon(Sp)-EB 6:45 Choir | 27 2 Line Dance-FH | 28 |
| 29 9 Bible Study w/ Dick Murphy-FH 10 Iglesia-EB 10:30 Worship | 30 4:30 Bells-S 6 AlAnon-EB 7 Scouts-FH/EB | | | <div> Locations EB=Education Bldg. FH= Fellowship Hall L= Library S= Sanctuary </div> | <div> The Spanish-speaking congregation of Iglesia del Redentor, meets Sunday mornings in the Education Building. </div> | |



The Church with the Red Roof

Northminster Presbyterian Church
3131 61st Street
Sarasota, FL 34243-2542

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"In God we trust"

CURRENT RESIDENT

PLACE LABEL HERE

Northminster Presbyterian Church
"Called by Christ. Sent by Christ."

STAFF:

Rev. Wally Johnson, Pastor
pastorwally@npcsarasota.org
Isabel Oake, Office Administrator
office@npcsarasota.org
Sally Kirby, Clerk of Session
clerkofsession@npcsarasota.org
Edward L. Stiles, Jr., Music Director
music@npcsarasota.org
Gail Ofterdinger-Ledgister, Organist

SUNDAY WORSHIP: 10:30 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS:

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM Monday—Thursday
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Friday
PHONE: 941-355-4729
FAX: 941-351-2162
E-MAIL: *office@npcsarasota.org*
WEBSITE: *www.npcsarasota.com*

Northminster Presbyterian Church ***Good Tidings*** is published for members and friends of the church to promote its programs and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Please notify the office of any address, phone, or e-mail changes.