SEPTEMBER 2023

HBC ALIVE!

Harrisonburg Baptist Church's Newsletter

In The Stillness, You Are There

REV. MATT WINTERS

Around the turn of the millennium, Sonicflood put out a song called "In the Secret," which reflected on God's capacity to be found in the quiet of times. The singers' desire is to know God more and to have a richness in relationship that transcends the fleeting life we own. There are people in our lives that have such an impact on who we are and what we become. My grandmother was one of those people for me. When life settles and the noise quietens, I can easily hear her life-giving words of nurture and recall the roots of connection that bound us. It's there, in the stillness, a plumb line of godly living is held to direct my pathways and orient my vision—I owe a lot of it to her and how she latently taught me to live.

My grandmother, Mama to me and Veronica to the world, wasn't success filled with the things in life that are measurable. Beyond a small sewing job during World War 2, she didn't work outside the home. She raised a family, grew flowers, worked the polls, and invested in students at church. She was a good neighbor and a quiet ambassador for the kingdom of God. She made such an impact on some of the teenage girls that for 65 years, four women made an annual pilgrimage to her home or bedside to say thank you for

This issue:

Prayer & Story Circles
Blessing Box Monitors Needed
Ladies' Lunch
PAGE 02

Youth Update
PAGE 03

Missions Committee Update
PAGE 05

Music Ministry Opportunities
The Journey Within
PAGE 08

Office Hours
Staff Recognition
PAGE 09

Prayer Concerns
Financial News
PAGE 10

Calendar & Birthdays
PAGE 11

the blessing she was to them. Just imagine that—a homemaker whose words and lifestyle allowed God to change hearts and lives made such a difference that some ladies were drawn to her for the rest of her life. She offered connection, depth, richness, life, love, mercy and meaning, and not just to her family but to the world around her.

What a beautiful testament to being a faithful witness to what God has given. I'm thankful for the quiet times I have to reflect on her, to the quiet life she lived, and to the quiet, faithful witness of the one thing that truly matters—the love of Jesus Christ for us. May we all live more quietly.

Blessing Box Monitors Needed

Monitors for the blessing box are always needed and appreciated. Monitors' responsibilities are typically to buy food and toiletries and fill the box daily on a weekly rotation. Food items need to be easy to open and preferably need no preparation and can be eaten cold. Most people who use the blessing box do not have access to kitchens. People in our community benefit from the generous donations they find in the blessing box.

If you think this would interest you, please contact Cindy Skelley at (540)421-3273 or by email at scvaconn@aol.com.

Prayer & Story Circles

Our prayer prompt for the month of September is... to pray especially for God's Holy Spirit to move throughout Harrisonburg Baptist Church—through every Sunday School class, every small group, every worshiper, every guest... EVERYONE. Pray that we both as individuals and a church congregation will be open to listening to and following God's spirit so that we will be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Remember, this is a prayer the whole church can pray whether or not you are in a Prayer & Story Circle.

For those of you who will be meeting with your Circles, please share with one another about a time when you were open to the Holy Spirit (and what that means to you) as well as what God did in and/or through your life so that your relationship with God was strengthened.

Ladies' Lunch

SATURDAY, SEPT 16 @ NOON

All ladies in the Broadway area and general vicinity are invited to a potluck lunch gathering at the home of Betty Ecklund. Please come and bring a dish to share and enjoy the company of other HBC ladies who live near you!

September Youth Events

SEPT 3
- 9:15am Sunday School
- 4:30-8:30pm LAST Summer Bible Study @ the Belcher's

SEPT 10
- 9:15am Sunday School
- 5:30pm Dinner
- 6:30-7:30pm Backyard Bible Club

SEPT 13
- 5:45-8:15pm Clothes Closet

SEPT 16
- 9:30am-12pm Saturday Bag Lunch

SEPT 17
- 9:15am Sunday School
- 5:30pm Dinner
- 6:30-7:30pm Backyard Bible Club

SEPT 24
- 9:15am Sunday School
- 4:00pm Youth Committee Meeting
- 5:30pm Dinner
- 6:30-7:30pm Backyard Bible Club

Youth Update: Grow & Serve 2023

REV. KATELYN BELCHER

The youth group finished out the summer strong with three days of mission work called Grow and Serve on July 26, 27, and 28. We started Grow and Serve during the summer of 2020 as an alternative to summer camp because all other camps were canceled that summer. Since then, we have enjoyed continuing Grow and Serve because it allows our youth group to have the opportunity to give back to local non-profits and serve the Harrisonburg-Rockingham community. We also strive to offer the students new ways of serving people that they normally wouldn't serve.

On July 26, we traveled to Broadway and helped Chris Belcher's aunt and uncle prepare his recently deceased grandmother's house for sale. There was a lot of work to be done and it was so humbling and encouraging to watch the youth work so hard and be so willing to help with anything. One group worked on necessary yard work in the backyard, while another group cleaned out the cottage. After the work was completed, Aunt Noel

treated us to ice cream, shared about her mother's life, thanked our group, and prayed over us before we left.

On July 27, we volunteered at Camp Still Meadows. There is always plenty of work to be done there, and we focused on pulling weeds and beautifying the main garden area. After that was done, we were able to take a short walk down to their wheelchair accessible treehouse. We explored the tree house area, swept it out, cleared cobwebs, and watered the flowers surrounding it.

And then on July 28, we focused on projects that needed to be done around HBC. We spent most of our morning pulling weeds around both playground areas. Once that was done, we walked across the street to one of the former college houses and dug up old bricks in the front yard. It was a very hot week that week and we were able to come back to the Belcher's house for some pool time. Thank you to Jayden, Ashlynn, Kaylee, Olivia, Ethan, Erin, and Trace for all your hard work during Grow and Serve!

Missions Committee Updates

DOUG & CINDY SKELLEY

On August 4 and 5, 2023, we had the opportunity to join some amazing young people to help prepare and distribute school supplies and other items at Manna from Heaven food pantry in Myra, KY. Myra is in a rural part of KY that was devastated by floods in July 2022. Many of the people there lost everything they had which included houses, personal belongings, gardens, canned food, and livestock. A little less than a year later many still are without their homes and are unable to meet their basic needs. Manna from Heaven steps in to try to meet many of these needs. It was divine happenstance that led Keith Turner to Manna from Heaven and its director, Lois Tackett.

At our last college lunch of the spring 2023 semester we went around the table and asked who may want to go to Kentucky on a mission trip. An overwhelming number of college students said, "Yes, I will go to Kentucky!" It was amazing and what's more amazing is that 6 gave up time from their summer vacation to go to Kentucky! College students were Bradley, Emily, Christian, Nick, Gabrielle, and Jackson. Also Professor Joe, Pastor Matt, Heidi, Doug, and I went too. We all arrived between 2 and 3 pm on August 4 to set up at Manna from Heaven. When Doug and I arrived, the canopies and tables were in place. There were puddles of water all over the area from a recent rain. We had to walk around big pools of standing water. We put down cardboard which absorbed lots of water so we could more easily navigate the area. Pallets of all the items we from HBC had packed at Equipping the Saints – household items, clothes, books, and more – all of a sudden appeared. It took no time for us to feel overwhelmed! One of the college students said not to be overwhelmed – just focus on the task at hand which was to unpack the clothes and organize them by size on the correct table – men's, women's, and children's! Lois wanted people to get clothes, school supplies, household items, which included chairs and tables, shelf stable food, and hygiene items. They also would get frozen beef, hot dogs, sausage and egg biscuits. Mind you, Keith had all of these things shipped on trucks from Harrisonburg to Myra! Two volunteers drove to and from Myra on Aug 5 to bring the refrigerated truck of frozen food! We expected Saturday's distribution would be total chaos, but it was so well organized and folks were orderly and queued as Lois asked. We had heard that folks line up the night/early morning before the event just so they can be early in the line. It was like that – cars lined up on the road. Where would we park? Lois told us where to park. We dreaded going – there was the parking issue on a two lane rural road, the heat, the humidity, the crush of people, using port-a-potties (yes, Keith had those brought in too), and we thought maybe this old couple should stay home! We are overjoyed we went.

On the day of the event, Cindy stood by the school supplies and Doug oversaw men's clothing distribution. Cindy tried to monitor one pack of this and one pack of that per child, hearing "I have 8 grandkids" a lot. So okay this person should take 8 packages. There were pencils, pens, crayons, coloring books, notebook paper, and spiral bound notebooks. We went through those quickly, but no one needing school supplies left empty-handed. A group had made at least 400 book bags and packed them with notebook paper, spiral notebooks, pens, pencils, and other small items. We even had a few of those left for Lois to distribute to a local church group.

Doug said we could have used more men's clothes. We had LOTS of women's clothes. Many women were alone or with small children so they were helped to find the sizes they wanted. We tried to help people who could not pick up all their items – divided items into cardboard boxes and carried out these boxes to cars. There were a lot of items for people to get! Bradley even backed a truck out of a congested area for one older woman. He said the truck was not in good shape. Then there were others who said they lived in their cars. We saw a lot of people with different needs that day.

Friday evening Pastor Matt gave us all a dime-sized mirror and asked us to reflect Jesus' light to all we encountered on Saturday. At some point in the day, Nick pulled out his mirror and held it up. We liked that reminder to us all. Late in the day the group packed and tied down 28 chairs on the back of a pickup truck. They were going to a church in the area. It was fun watching as the young people made that happen.

Lois almost cried when the event was nearly over. She said she got her home and her Manna back from the devastating floods. She said she had never had so much help to clean up after an event. Our group stayed until all undistributed items were in the freezer or on pallets in the two buildings. Lois rents these buildings on a plot of land. She wants to stay in good standing with the landlord who lives next door so it is important to her to leave things picked up and clean. After 200-300 people come through a space about as big as our church's property, you can imagine all the trash that remains. Mainly it was the packaging from all the items distributed that day.

These two old retirees were buoyed by the energy of these much younger volunteers. No one shied away from what was needed during this weekend event. We came away from this mission trip being so inspired by the young people on this trip. You hear so many negative things about today's young people, but we can confirm that these young people are hard-working, strong in their faith, and want to make a real contribution to humankind.

Music Ministry Opportunities

As we approach the beginning of the school year, we invite you to participate in the Music Ministry of the church. Ways you can serve include the **Adult Choir**; the **Praise Team**; the **Handbell Choir, Jubellation**; the **Young Adult Ensemble**; the **Orchestra**; and by providing a **Special Music** selection. We are tentatively planning an evening of music for First Friday, October 6. Have another idea or another artistic gift you would like to share? Please let us know. Music and the other arts are an integral part of worship and bring special blessings to those who are involved. Here is a list of meeting times and contacts:

Adult Choir
(Gary Ritcher – gary@hbcalive.org)
Meets Wednesdays 6:00-7:15pm
As an alternative, consider being a part of the Cantata Choir which practices the first 30 minutes of regular choir time beginning September 13. (Cantata date: Dec. 10)

Praise Team
(Erin Waddell – Virginiaerin1995@gmail.com)
Meets every other Friday 6:00-7:30

Handbell Choir – Jubellation
(Anne Wright – wrightaz@comcast.net)
Meets Tuesdays 6:00-7:00pm beginning September 5

Young Adult Ensemble
(Gary Ritcher – gary@hbcalive.org)
Sings twice a semester. Usually practices at 9:45 Sunday morning.

Orchestra
(Gary Ritcher – gary@hbcalive.org)
Meets Sunday 9:00am-9:15am

The Journey Within

JEFF OBENSCHAIN, DEACON

On our recent family vacation to Italy, Greece, and Turkey, we had the opportunity to visit many marvelous and historic places. Among them were several noteworthy sites from a Christian perspective: the Vatican, the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, Basilica of Saint Paul Outside The Walls (said to be built over his grave), the Shrine of the Virgin Mary (purportedly the place where she lived her final years), and Ephesus where Paul preached. Walking these places brings to mind the idea of a pilgrimage.

A pilgrimage can be defined as a journey to a place where God seems especially present. The Bible and many other writings, both religious and secular, are replete with stories of such journeys. Though our motivation to go on the trip was not to take a pilgrimage, you could, I suppose, consider it to have been one. No doubt, God's presence was strongly felt in the Sistine Chapel and on the streets of Ephesus.

But, let us consider "pilgrimage" in another context. Pilgrimage can also be used to describe an individual's journey through life, either as a general description of personal growth and exploration or by outlining a particular spiritual pathway that will lead to a closer relationship with God. It is an ongoing dependence on God, a journey of thanksgiving for His abundant love and steadfast presence, a path out of the sorrow,

despair, and fear we all feel from time to time. For these journeys we do not need a passport, to get on a boat or plane, or to even put on shoes. We can travel to a place where God is especially present merely by looking inward to our hearts for Paul writes in Ephesians 3: 16-17, “I pray that out of his glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.” Our relationship with God is not about a physical journey or a specific location, but a state of mind, body, and soul.

Wow, Ephesians. Paul’s letter to the people of Ephesus. A place that I and many others visited so many years later. Don’t get me wrong, it was marvelous. But really, it’s just geography.

Office Hours

The church office hours are 9am to 4pm Monday through Thursday, and **Friday by appointment only**. If you need access to the church building on a Friday, please contact the office at 540-433-2456 ahead of time to make an appointment.

Planning Ahead

Ladies' Night IN!

THURSDAY, OCT 12 @ 6:30PM

The ladies of Harrisonburg Baptist Church are invited for a night of conversation, fun, and desserts in the fellowship hall! If you would like to volunteer to bring a dessert, please contact Pastor Eli. It will be a great evening of laughter and sisterhood. Please plan on joining us!

Staff Recognition

REV. KATELYN BELCHER

Katelyn has served our youth and their families faithfully for 13 years as of September 27. When you see Katelyn, please make sure to bless her with your gratitude for her service.

KIM BRUBAKER

Kim has been HBC's administrative ministry assistant for 4 years as of September 3.

PRAYER CONCERNS

HBC FAMILY

Bryan Acker
Becky Armentrout
Sandy Cude
Diane Gray
Dennis Greene
Wayne Hannah
Sue Jones
Lola McBride
Judy Miller
Sherry Miller
Sarah Northen
Bill Pond
Karen & Kerry Potter
Jimmy & Nancy Russell
Constance Via
Jim Wampler

EXTENDED FAMILY

Annie Wilhelm
(Lee & Sherri Chapman's niece)
Brida, Melissa & John Becker
(Sam & Susan Huffman's friends)
Kati Honeycutt
(Don & Julie Aittama's daughter)
Steve Loveless (Julie Aittama's cousin)
Maurice Copeland
(Rosemary Lonberger's friend)

July Stewardship Snapshot

Budget needs as of 7/31/23	$355,043.00
Budget receipts as of 7/31/23	$ 368,553.64

Non-Budget/Designated Funds

• Love Fund	$600.00
• Saturday Bag Lunch	$190.00
• Operation Inasmuch	$100.00

Last Call for Budget Requests

Please return your 2024 budget requests to the church office, susan@hbcalive.org or kim@hbcalive.org as soon as possible.

Thank You!

The church has received a letter from the Baptist General Association of VA (BGAV) expressing thanks for HBC's generous support of Cooperative Missions giving for the first six months of 2023. Total giving to BGAV for Cooperative Missions and special missions offerings through June 30 was $17,533.01. Thanks, HBC, for your heart for missions!

Did You Know?

Kim has been receiving training to serve as backup for our Financial Secretary, Susan Kiser. Susan is in partial retirement and only works two days a week (Monday and Thursday). Kim is prepared to fulfill your financial needs on the days that Susan is not in the office. Please do not hesitate to call on her. Also, if you send an email to Susan regarding a financial question, expense, clarification, donation, etc., please copy Kim on the email so that she remains in the loop.

September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Staff Out of Office Susan: Sept 8-15 Eli: Sept 25-28					1	2
3 4:30pm Youth Summer Bible Study	4 Office Closed LABOR DAY	5 6:00pm Finance Committee Mtg (B4)	6	7 4-7pm Adams wedding rehearsal	8	9 12-4pm Adams wedding
10 5:30pm Youth Dinner & Backyard Bible Club	11 6:30pm Leadership Team Mtg (B4) 6:30pm Scouts (FH)	12	13 5:45-8:15pm Youth Clothes Closet	14	15	16 5:45-8:15pm Youth Clothes Closet
17 2-6pm Kachin Church 5:30pm Youth Dinner & Backyard Bible Club	18	19	20 October Newsletter Articles Due	21	22	23
24 4:00pm Youth Committee Mtg 5:30pm Youth Dinner & Backyard Bible Club	25	26	27	28 11:30am Brookdale	29	30

WEEKLY REOCCURING EVENTS

SUNDAY
- 9:15am Sunday School
- 10:30am Community Worship
- 12pm College Lunch

MONDAY
- 7am Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10am & 2pm Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)
- 1pm Staff Meeting (Parlor)
- 6:30pm Scouts

TUESDAY
- 10am Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)
- 11am Tuesdays Together (B4)
- 6pm Jubellation

WEDNESDAY
- 10am Ladies' Prayer Group (B4)
- 10am & 2pm Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)
- 6pm Choir Practice

THURSDAY
- 10am Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)

FRIDAY
- Office Closed

SATURDAY
- 10:30am Community Lunch

DEACON OF THE WEEK

Sept 3 — Phil Douglas
Sept 10 — Lyn Weaver
Sept 17 — Dustyn Miller
Sept 24 — Jeff Obenschain

COMMUNITY LUNCH

Sept 2 — Mandigo
Sept 9 — Methodist Youth
Sept 16 — HBC Youth
Sept 23 — Ritchie
Sept 30 — Emmanuel Episc

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Kathy Ritcher
2 Isaac Araya
4 Ron Garber
5 Jeff Obenschain
8 Carson Lohr
10 Gary Ritcher
10 Tracie Ward
11 Christian Hayes
12 Noelle Carroll
13 Faye Obenschain
15 Tuka Nguimbi
16 Rosemary Lonberger
20 Jim Pederson
23 Mark Griffin
23 Connor Kopcinski
24 Lola McBride
26 Luciani Paul
27 Ron Smith
28 Jane Shifflett
29 Sengko Phaga
30 Regina Ingram
30 Judy Miller
30 Jessica Winters

HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH
501 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

HBC ALIVE!
A publication of

HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH
501 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
(540) 433-2456 www.hbcalive.org

STAFF
Rev. Dr. Matthew Winters, Senior Pastor
Rev. Eli Withers, Associate Pastor
Rev. Katelyn Belcher, Youth Pastor
Dr. Gary Ritcher, Director of Music & Worship
Erin Waddell, Praise Team Leader
Rosemary Lonberger, Organist
Harold Bailey, Pianist
Susan Kiser, Financial Ministry Assistant
Kim Brubaker, Administrative Ministry Assistant

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

Please submit articles to
Kim Brubaker at kim@hbcalive.org