



More Than Ever

By Rev. Bart A. Fletcher

For more than two millennia those who follow Jesus Christ have formed what we call "the church." In its beginning stages the church was gathered people who shared their experience of God with one another and who fostered community together. "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). In the centuries to follow, the church has taken on its different forms, structures, and traditions, but at the heart has been a passionate spiritual awareness that what Christians do together and beyond themselves really matters in the world.

Culturally we have come through a period of time where the church has been devalued. No longer at the center of our culture's awareness, the church (in whatever denominational stripe or form) has lost much of its voice. There was a time when educators, business leaders, politicians, and other leaders looked to the church as a primary place for ethical or moral guidance. For whatever reason (and there are plenty of them, to be sure) this is no longer the case. So what is the church, at the sidelines of American cultural life, to do?

Some might say, "We need to take America back." Others opine, "It will take a Third Great Awakening, a religious revival of significant proportions." Still others have suggested that the church is quietly dying, and the most dignified thing we can do is to place it into institutional hospice care and let the end come.

My humble suggestion is that the church look to its beginnings and claim the Spirit-infused power that

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*Sunday, September 10
4 - 7 p.m.*

Annual Church Picnic

*At the Atkinson Barn
(See page 3 for directions.)*

*Dinner served at 5:30.
All members, please bring
a dessert to share.*

*Bouncy house for children
Games & more*



Danville CROP Hunger Walk

Sunday, October 1
Walk begins at 3 p.m.

Come at 2:30 to get a t-shirt
and hear the Children's Choir!



The walk begins and ends at Ballou Park.

The 1-mile walk will turn at West Main Baptist Church to return to the Park. The 5-K walk will turn at Church of the Epiphany.

Come and walk with Mount Vernon friends and neighbors from other faith communities and community organizations to support the efforts of Church World Service and God's Storehouse.

Since 2008, The Danville CROP Walk has donated over \$40,000 to God's Storehouse. We have raised almost \$130,000 for hunger-fighting efforts in Danville and around the world!

How can I get involved?

- Register to participate in the 1-mile or 5-K walk! You can register on Sunday mornings after church, or Monday–Thursday in the hallway outside the office. And begin raising funds! Walkers are encouraged to register online at danvillecropwalk.org and set up an individual donation page.
- Make a donation if you can't walk in the CROP Walk. Make your check payable to "CWS/CROP Walk."
- Please pray for our CROP Walk.

Hunger is a reality for too many people in our world. Working together, we are building a world where there is enough for all!

More Than Ever - *Continued from page 1*

grows through simple acts of faith and good will ... learning (for the first time or once again) the truths of holy scripture ... gathering together regularly with other like-hearted people ... breaking the bread of holy communion ... praying together expectantly, remembering that God is our Source ... stepping out in faith to connect with others.

After all, the earliest Christians were also marginalized in the society of their day. They were dismissed, scoffed at, ignored, but they recognized the Source of their strength, and forged forward to grow prolifically because their experiences together with Christ were life-transforming.

Today, more than ever, our local communities and larger culture need what authentic Christian faith has always provided. Let us continue to deepen our spiritual lives individually and together, trusting that God continues to transform lives in simple, humble actions empowered by Christ's living presence.

Blessings to you in Christ,
Pastor Bart

September Worship Services

Sunday, September 3: 8:30 & 11 A.M.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Matthew 16: 21–28

Sermon: "To Become"

The Rev. Bart A. Fletcher

Sunday, September 10: 8:30 & 11 A.M.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Matthew 18: 15–20

Sermon: "The Power of Agreement"

The Rev. Bart A. Fletcher

Sunday, September 17: 8:30 & 11 A.M.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Matthew 18: 21–35

Sermon: "From the Heart"

The Rev. Bart A. Fletcher

Sunday, September 24: 8:30 & 11 A.M.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Scripture: Matthew 20: 1–16

Sermon: "Better Late Than..."

The Rev. Bart A. Fletcher

A New Project for the Mount Vernon Habitat Team

In April 2016, twenty volunteers from Mount Vernon installed sheetrock in the Habitat for Humanity home on Hughes Street. A great time was had by all, and the Habitat staff was very complimentary of our work. It is time for our next Habitat project! We will be installing sheetrock at the home of Mia Tate, 407 Edmunds Street. (Professionals are hired to mud and tape).



Friday, September 22, and Saturday, September 23
Most of the day, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Monday, September 25, and Tuesday, September 26
Finish project as needed.

All are welcome! Skilled and unskilled volunteers are needed. If you are interested in providing snacks or lunch, please contact Beth Bauman.



College Eve

Tonight is College Eve – the night before Dan and I take Kate to William and Mary and drop her off for what seems like an eternity! OMG! (That's "Oh My God" in the texting world.)

God has been preparing me for tomorrow, and although I may shed a few tears, I am very excited for Kate to take her next step in life's journey. At the same time, however, God has shown me an area of evangelism that our church needs to work on. So now I have a mission to keep me distracted until I can recover from my broken heart.

I receive the newsletter from the United Methodist Church, and one of the articles, "Get Your Spirit in Shape: College, Church, and Faith," caught my attention. It focuses on things that the UMC has to offer college students and how home churches can support their students while they are away at school. It also discusses ways churches can assist college students who are new to town. Obviously, I had not given this topic any thought since I had not yet reached this milestone, and I would expect that many in our church have not thought of it either, or at least not for some time.

As I read, I wondered if there is more we can do as a church family to let our students know that we are here supporting them in their new adventure. We have helped all of them find and grow their faith throughout their young lives, and they need us to continue that support at a time when they need it most. They need to know on a continual basis that their home church is still here thinking of them and praying for them and that they are welcome to come home at any time.

So the Evangelism Committee has enthusiastically agreed to create a process for Mount Vernon to support all of our college students. We hope that all of Mount Vernon will help with this endeavor as it comes together in the coming weeks. Look out for cards to sign, items to donate, care packages to create, emails and posts to send, and prayers to offer. We will need all of these, and we hope that you agree that reaching out to our youngest adults is another way to keep Mount Vernon moving forward.

And if that's not enough be thinking about, how about how Mount Vernon can help students who are new to Danville...more on that later.

– Sam Newell, Chair, Evangelism Committee

Youth Group



Each Sunday night, our 7th–12th graders meet from 6 till 7:30 p.m. to explore their Christian faith through engaging programs, meaningful service, and fellowship opportunities.

All Mount Vernon youth and guests are welcome! Leaders are Leslie Barksdale, John Ranson, and Beth Bauman.

Sunday Mornings for Youth and Children

Each Sunday our children and youth gather upstairs in the education building at 9:45 a.m. for Sunday school and music time:

Sunday School (ages 2–4) – Joyce Underwood, teacher

Godly Play 1 (K–2nd grades) – Beth deAristizabal and Leslie Navis, teachers

Godly Play 2 (3rd–5th grades) – Ann Hurt, teacher

Confirmation (6th grade) – Bart Fletcher (in parlor)

Youth Sunday School – Ralph Hawkins

Wednesday Night Activities for Children

On September 13 (after dinner), our children ages 4 through 8th grade will begin preparing for our children's Christmas pageant.

Leaders are Tim Navis and Beth Bauman

Directions to the Church Picnic

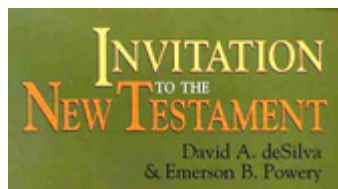
The Atkinson Barn is located at 777 Atkinson Road, between Danville and Chatham.

From US Highway 29, turn onto R&L Smith Road (Rt. 863). Travel approximately 0.7 of a mile and turn left onto Crane Road. Go approximately 1.2 miles and turn right into Atkinson Farms.

From 41: Turn right on Mountain View Road and left on Crane Road at bottom of hill just past bridge. Atkinson Farms on left.



Atkinson Barn



Two Bible Study Classes Forming

Explore the writings of the New Testament using the story of Jesus as the starting point in the

Tuesday Morning Bible Study: "Invitation to the New Testament." This survey of the testament looks at how the early church took ownership of and was shaped by the story of Jesus and how the church learned to create communities of faith.

Participants find a deeper conversation with the writers of the New Testament and a renewal of our commitment to be shaped — personally and communally — by the story of Jesus. The study is accessible for adults with little prior Bible experience.

In weekly video segments, scholars offer fascinating facts and information that opens new understanding. Pastor Bart invites you to participate in this nine-week study, which begins on **Tuesday, September 12**, from 10:30 till noon. To pre-register, contact him at bartfletcher@vaumc.org or in the church office at 434-793-6824.

Do you ever feel like the Bible is a bunch of jigsaw puzzle pieces, but you don't know how they fit together?



Then please join the **Sunday Night Adult Bible Study** beginning **September 17** at 6 p.m. We will work through "Telling God's Story: The Biblical Narrative from Beginning to End."

This is a fun, welcoming group for all knowledge levels. Please call the office or Cathy Hawkins (441-1236) with questions or to register.

Wednesday Night Fellowship Resumes

Our goal this year is to put an extra dose of fellowship into our Wednesday suppers and programs. Come on **September 13** as we get the new season started with a covered-dish meal and fun!



CHURCH COUNCIL

meets on **Monday, September 11**
at **7:00 P.M.**
in the **Winn Chapel.**

SCAN FOR
ONLINE
GIVING



Leslie Barksdale Recognized with Prestigious Award

The Danville - Pittsylvania Chamber of Commerce recently recognized Leslie Barksdale with the 2017 Professional and Community Engagement Award. This award is presented annually to five exceptional young professionals who have made significant contributions to their region through professional achievements, as well as community and volunteer service.



At Mount Vernon, we know Leslie as the co-leader of our youth group, a handbell ringer, and chair of the 2017 Danville Crop Walk. She grew up in Ingomar United Methodist Church in Pittsburgh.

Leslie earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Virginia Tech in 2014 and came to Danville to work for Dewberry. She is a water and wastewater graduate engineer, with expertise in designing such things as water transmission and sewer collection pipelines and sewer pump stations. She currently administers the Martinsville Smith River sewer interceptor rehabilitation project, designs the Sutphin Road Interceptor upgrade in Halifax, and acquires funding and prepares design documents for the Berry Hill Industrial Park water and sewer utilities. In 2016, she graduated from the Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Southside XXI program, and she recently accepted a position as an advisory member to the Danville Regional Foundation Board of Directors.



Sunday, August 13: Kate Newell tells about her experiences on a mission trip to South Africa earlier this summer.

Godly Play

Sundays, 10 – 10:45 A.M.

Class 1: Age 5 – Grade 2

Class 2: Grades 3 – 6

Sept. 3	The Part That Hasn't Been Written Yet	Parable of the Sower
Sept. 10	Second Creation: The Falling Apart	Parable of the Leaven
Sept. 17	The Story of Abraham	Response to Parables
Sept. 24	The Story of Sarah	Parable of Parables



September Schedule: Bishop's Bible Reading Challenge

September 1	Ezekiel 9-12	September 13	Ezekiel 43-45
September 2	Ezekiel 13-15	September 14	Ezekiel 46-48
September 3	Ezekiel 16-17	September 15	Daniel 1-3
September 4	Ezekiel 18-20	September 16	Daniel 4-6
September 5	Ezekiel 21-22	September 17	Daniel 7-9
September 6	Ezekiel 23-24	September 18	Daniel 10-12
September 7	Ezekiel 25-27	September 19	Hosea 1-7
September 8	Ezekiel 28-30	September 20	Hosea 8-14
September 9	Ezekiel 31-33	September 21	Joel 1-3
September 10	Ezekiel 34-36	September 22	Amos 1-5
September 11	Ezekiel 37-39	September 23	Amos 6-9
September 12	Ezekiel 40-42	September 24	Obadiah-Jonah 4
		September 25	Micah 1-7
		September 26	Nahum 1-3
		September 27	Habakkuk-Zephaniah 3
		September 28	Haggai 1-2
		September 29	Zechariah 1-7
		September 30	Zechariah 8-14



"Join me in reading the Bible together this year!"



In response to the August events in Charlottesville, concerned friends and members of Mount Vernon UMC gathered to reflect, on Sunday evening, August 20. The primary goal of the gathering was to share individual responses, with a secondary goal to identify possible next steps in responding to racism. Suggestions were shared, some of which require further, careful planning to make a reality.

One of the ideas is more immediate, signing the "Birmingham Pledge," included below. It is a plainly worded affirmation of the values of care for all of our neighbors. We encourage you to prayerfully consider its content and join a growing movement of others who stand in solidarity with all God's people.



Danville Braves sponsor the
2017 Danville CROP Walk

Some of our CROP Walk organizers at a game in August



BIRMINGHAM PLEDGE

SIGN IT - LIVE IT - SHARE IT

I believe that every person has worth as an individual.

I believe that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color.

**I believe that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful;
if it is my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as others.**

**Therefore, from this day forward I will strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice
from my thoughts and actions.**

I will discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity.

**I will treat all people with dignity and respect; and I will strive daily to honor this pledge,
knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.**

Signature _____ Date _____




Please print name _____ E-mail _____

Street Address City/State Zip _____

Organization, School/Grade, College or University? _____

***If you choose to sign this pledge, please bring or mail it to the church office (or pick up a copy),
and we will send it to The Birmingham Pledge Foundation.***

September Birthdays

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1 Jesse Mayhew, III
Stephen Wyatt
Charles Sampson |  | 21 Jennifer Caldwell
Lyn Joyce
Lindsay Payne
Jesse Wall |
| 2 Phyllis Acker
Leslie Navis
Tomas Underwood, Jr. | | 22 Rebecca Daniels |
| 3 Chris Griffith
DeDe Moyer | | 23 Joanna Caldwell
Nancy Ingram |
| 4 Jeff Clifton | | 24 Suzanne Thompson
Steve Southward |
| 5 Cathy Grogan
Thomas O'Neill, III | | 25 Eddie Mitchell
Richard Turner
Carol Williamson |
| 6 Betty Atkins
Glenn Milam
Lauren Slayton |  | 26 Madi Barker |
| 8 Matkins Milligan
Kelly Grogan Jordan | | 27 Pat Farley
Jim Sutherland |
| 9 Cathy Darkis
Joan Marley | | 28 Mary Alice Anglea
Dawn Davis
Jean Vernon |
| 10 Saunders Milligan
Gene Saunders | | 29 Linda Burton |
| 11 Berkley Keck, Sr.
Jeff Rudder
Bill Stephens, Jr.
Dorothy Stephens
Betty Yates |  | 30 Dorothy Adkins
David Caldwell
Sue Myers
Tammy Waters |
| 13 Adam Caldwell | | |
| 14 Claudia Fletcher | | |
| 15 Katie Brooks
Lester Payne | | |
| 16 Taylor Daniels
Briggs Bauman |  | |
| 17 Sidney Harris
Jean Read | | |
| 18 Brendan deAristizabal
Jerry Franks
Wayne Wall | | |

October Birthdays

- | |
|--|
| 1 Patrick Clifton
Rob Coleman
Nell Fredericksen
Jason Payne |
| 2 Fred Duncan |
| 3 Jimmy Anglea
Scott Pearce |
| 5 Eric Keck
Katherine Milam |
| 6 Lois Love
Alana Mitchell |

Gifts in memory of **William C. Stephens**

have been received from Audrey H. Grinstead
and James M. & Patricia Foster.

Gifts in memory of **Gordon Brooks Powell, Jr.**

have been received from Laura & Brad
Marshburn & Family, Arthur & Patricia
Whitehurst, Diane & Richard Mesaris,
Harte & Debi Whittle & Family,
Landon & Kathryn Wyatt, Wright & Carolyn
Garrett, and Drew, Ann, & Steve Cook.

Gifts in memory of

Frances McMillan's sister, **Janie Steorts**,
have been received from Virginia & Bob Wiles,
Harry & Margaret Milam, and Lois Love.

Dear Friends,

*I am so blessed to be a member of the Mount
Vernon family. Your beautiful cards, visits, delicious
food, calls, and most of all prayers have helped me
through a difficult journey. I am getting better each
day and hope to be back in church soon.*

*Love in Christ,
Catherine Bendall*

Our September Worship Assistants

USHERS

- September 3:** 8:30 – Bill Booker, Tom Booker
11:00 – Bill Smith, head. J. G. Hurt, Frank Davis, David
Fuquay. Gene Saunders, alt.
- September 10:** 8:30 – Darrell Williamson, Howard Lester
11:00 – Tommy Hodges, head. Bill Smith, Tom Underwood,
Sam Newell. Dan Newell, alt.
- September 17:** 8:30 – Bill Booker, Tom Booker
11:00 – Sam Newell, head. Coleman Hylton, Melissa Herke,
Chuck Sampson. J. G. Hurt, alt.
- September 24:** 8:30 – Howard Lester, Darrell Williamson
11:00 – Frank Davis, head. Summer Milligan, Tommy
Hodges, Alana Mitchell. Alice Broadus, alt.

ALTAR GUILD

September: Joanne Bucklew,* Joyce Fuquay, Emily Potts

Our deepest sympathy ...

To Frances McMillan in the death of her
sister, Janie Steorts, on August 20.



At home: **Bill Hardy, Chuck Irby,
Catherine Bendall**

At Stratford House: **Lois Love**

Attendance

	8:30	11:00	Total
August 6	25	104	129
August 13	21	107	128
August 20	48	112	160
August 27	30	91	121

Gluten-free communion bread

is available at Mount
Vernon. Please contact
the pastor at 793-6824
before Communion
Sunday if you would
like gluten-free
wafers.

