

# The Scroll

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Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church  
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## From Pastor Rob

I learned something going through the death of my mother. I saw a piece of scripture in a way I had never seen before—Psalms 22 and 23 are a set of prayers linked by loss.

All of us face losses of one type or another. Some are the profound griefs of losing a beloved, while others are the more mundane griefs of losing an opportunity. We deal with loss all through our lives. We leave home, losing the experience of being a child. We leave a job, losing the experience of coworkers and a particular work. Sometimes we leave a relationship, losing that bond and engagement. And we will all go through the loss of someone—friend or family, parent or child—someone dear will be gone. All of them effect us and affect us.

The end of the pandemic is also an ending of some of the mundane losses.

As we re-emerge after more than a year of restricted activities, interactions, and engagements, we are beginning to recover from the loss of all of those things. As we reconnect, go out for an unmasked concert or game, dine INSIDE a restaurant, and enjoy release from fear of contagion, we feel ourselves heal inside.

But the end of a life is on a whole other plane.

The loss of a loved one does not offer such a simple recovery. There is a real hole in our lives. There is an empty place at the table. There is a silence where a familiar voice once rang. We have our memories, but cannot re-fire those moments of deep connection.

That hurts.

God knows this truth of our lives. God entered this experience--that is the power of Holy Saturday of Holy Week. God's presence assures us that God listens, God's compassion flows, and that God seeks to heal us.

But it takes time.

God assures us that God will remain with us each step of that long journey.

It is no mistake that Psalms 22 and 23 are coupled together. Read them as a set, and you will see what this meditation is about. Psalm 22 is a cry of abject grief—of feeling abandoned, lost, afraid, and crushed. But Psalm 23 is the answer—God is good and grace abounds; there is hope, even in the darkest moment; and God is with us, always and constantly. In grief, we move continuously between them—despair followed by comfort; emptiness followed by fullness; hopelessness followed by hope.

And so does God.

God moves with us, sharing each step, each regression, each progression. God meets us as we are, where we are, and for what we are.

And that is our hope that nothing can take from us.



## Pastor Alison's Care Corner

What a full season it has been as our family celebrated a new marriage and grieved a death, and all within a three-week span of time. Whewwwwwww. It's been a lot to take in, a lot of inner adjustments to make, and a lot of external changes to process. It's no surprise that I've felt foggy and unusually tired.

Other members of our family have expressed feeling a bit "off" since our son's May 22 wedding and their grandmother's June 7th death. Emotional overload does that to us. Prolonged stress of any sort can literally leave us feeling fuzzy-headed. We find it hard to concentrate. We feel extra tired.

Which, perhaps, is why many of us want to fast forward our way through grief. We say to the person who is grieving, "Well, I imagine that you're getting back to normal now," or "I know that you're celebrating that your mother is in a better place." When we make these kinds of comments, what we are really saying is, "*I'm* uncomfortable with your grief and *I* don't have any idea what to say to you."

When we attempt to fast forward our way through grief, we do ourselves a huge disfavor. There is so much to be learned through loss, so much spiritual growth and deepening to experience. Why, then, are we so uncomfortable with our *own grief* and with the *grief of others*?

My thought is this: we fear that if we allow ourselves to feel our grief (or any uncomfortable emotion) too deeply, we will sink down into the depths of that emotion and not be able to pull ourselves out.

But my experience is that the opposite is actually true. The more I avoid an emotion, the bigger the emotion becomes. The more I avoid an emotion, the less able I am to deal with that emotion at all. And the more unable I am to deal with any one emotion, the less equipped I am to deal with other emotions, and the more restricted I become as an individual.

God created us as emotional beings. God gave us hearts, if you will. God, being God, could have created us otherwise, but God chose to create us with the capacity to experience a wide spectrum of emotions. And when we allow ourselves access to these emotions, especially when the emotions are uncomfortable, we deepen spiritually.

So perhaps the next time you or I want to run from an uncomfortable feeling, we might instead ask God to sit with us as we sit with that emotion. While initially we might not be the most comfortable doing so, what will begin to grow out of this practice is that we will be able to be more present with ourselves and more present to others. In the words of religious philosopher Simone Weil, "Attention is the rarest and gentlest form of generosity." May we learn to be generous, both to ourselves and to others.



All Presbyterian women! Be on the lookout for the announcement about our kick-off meeting where we will also be presenting our Lifetime award to the recipient! More to come.....

Elizabeth King  
Mike Maddux  
Kenneth Helms  
Zander Robertson

Warner Marshall  
Faith Toc  
Joann Reid  
Michael Rhodes

Ann Brown  
Leland Kelly  
Dale McLaughlin  
Susie Oehler

Jack Pirrello  
David McElveen  
Ronald Stephens

Eve Cooper  
Bernice Martin  
David Stephens

We pray for national and world leaders, the men and women who are serving in the Armed Forces, their families, and those who are deployed: Col. Cristina Moore - LTC Rob Byars - Austin Powers (Nat. Guard) - Major Trevor Sutherland (Air Nat. Guard) - STG2 Hunter Holland - Master SGT Rick Treadway - SGT Malcolm Allen - LTJG Morgan Whitmore, Lt. Alex Busch and PV2 Stephen Lisi



**WE SURVIVED** the school year and three weeks of summer camp! Whew! It has been a lot of fun but also a lot of work so now we rest, regroup, prepare for the next school year, and celebrate all that we accomplished in the 2020-2021 school year! Thank you again for your prayers and support of our program! It means a lot to all of us!

**GREAT NEWS...we are FULL in each age group for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year and have started waiting lists for each of these age groups.** If you are interested in enrolling your child for the next school year, call Ms. Paula at 704.549.9741 to place your child on the waiting list. Make sure to tell her that you are a member of Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church, as your child will have priority over the general public. (*Our summer Office Hours are Tuesday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.*)

The successes that we have had this year would not have been possible without the support and guidance by our Preschool Board Members! **A huge THANK YOU to: Kim Tucker, Andrea Thomas, James Killian, Bob Oehler, Barbara Oehler, Leigh Johnson, Christina deKam, Jackie Tiece, and Priscilla Stephens!!!**

**We are hiring assistant teachers!** If you LOVE children, have experience working with preschool age children, and would like to work in a Christian, friendly environment, we would love to hear from you! If you or someone you know is interested, please email Kristy Maddux at [kristym@mallardcreekchurch.org](mailto:kristym@mallardcreekchurch.org).

“When spirits grow faint within me, it is you who knows my way.” Psalm 142:3

***Kristy Maddux, Preschool Director and Paula Brasel, Administrative Assistant***

The Nominating Committee is beginning the important process of Nominating 5 Elders and 7 Deacons for consideration by the Congregation, for election to 3 years of service on the Session and Diaconate, respectively. If you have a name in mind that you would like to submit for consideration, please contact one of the members of the Committee or the Church Office with your suggestion. Additionally, if you are contacted about being nominated, please prayerfully consider this form of service and gift to the Lord. The 2021 Nominating Committee is:

- Carey Armistead, Congregational Rep.
- Perry Deaton, Diaconate Rep.
- Lynette Gulledge, Congregational Rep.
- Lori Joye, Congregational Rep.
- Dee Dee Larkin, Congregational Rep.
- Tommy Mitchell, Session Rep.
- Bill Wood, Session Rep., and Chair
- Rev. Rob Watkins, Ex-Officio



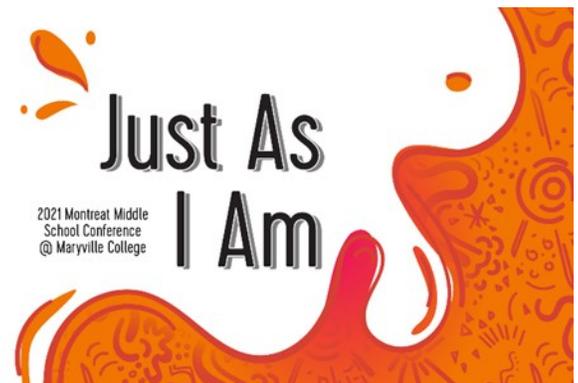
## Youth Club and Teen Fellowship

July 2021

Summer is finally here! After a long year of virtual and hybrid learning, our students are finally free of school for a few months. Spend this time in rest and rejuvenation before things ramp back up in the fall.

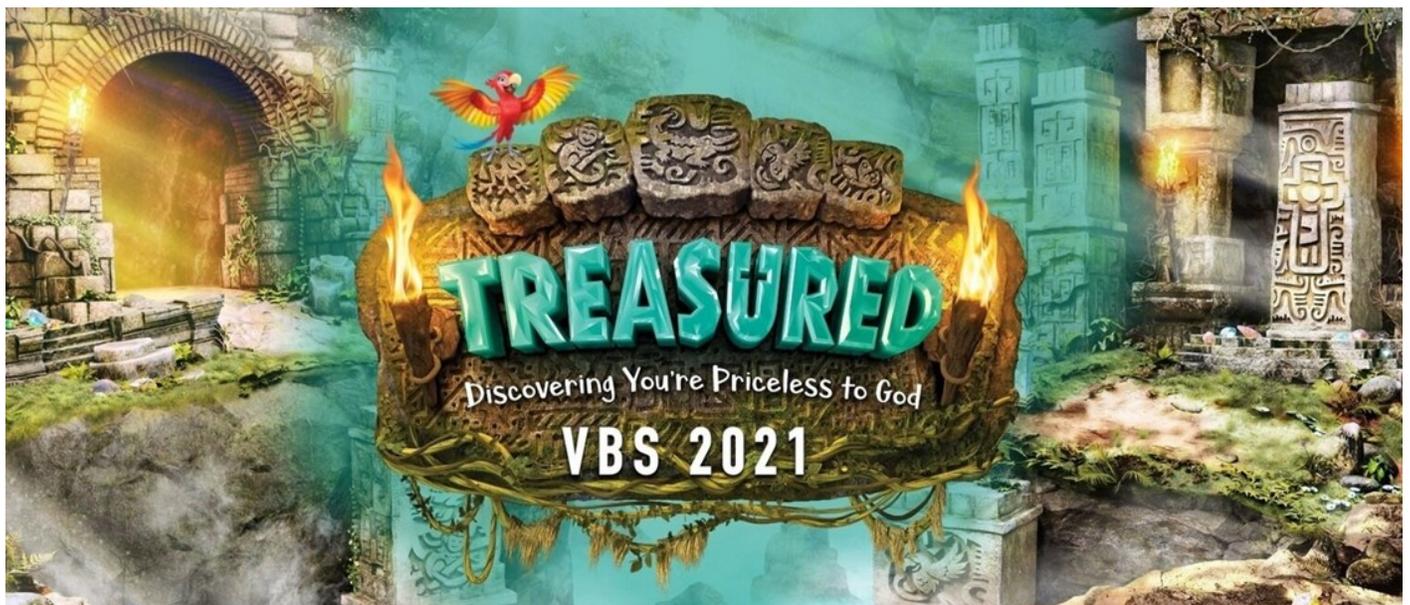
Thank you to everyone who helped and participated in our June Family and Friends Night Out events! We had such a great time fellowshiping together.

I am absolutely thrilled that our teens will be heading to Montreat this month, and we will be having VBS next month, then a full schedule in the fall! God is doing great things! Please pray for our teens to deepen their faith and come to know God more fully at Montreat this summer.



**High School Montreat: July 25-31**

**Middle School Montreat: July 13-17**



**Save the date for this year's VBS: August 8-12! We will need volunteers to make this happen for our kids, so please contact Andrea if you'd like to help!**

# Session Highlights

- 1) Planning for adult and children Sunday school to restart in August, more details to come.
- 2) VBS August 8-12 more details to come
- 3) Collections for May 2021 about 10k more than May 2020
- 4) Session will meet in July to continue to discuss reopening plans

Elder duty for July: Bill Wood, Kenneth McCraw, Becky Wood, Ed Gullede and Nancy Busch  
Deacon duty for July: Jackie Brand, Jennifer Lazarus, Jack Miles, Sheila Letica, Joe Crapster and Allston Oehler

MAY STEWARDSHIP UPDATE	
Sunday School	
Worship Offering	\$30,398.00
Online Giving	\$8,858.00
<b>TOTAL Offering</b>	<b>\$39,256.00</b>
Total Offering YTD	\$213,169.00
Total Expenses YTD	\$226,661.21
Under for Year	(\$13,492.21)



*Congratulations to Jimmy and Polly Walker on 65 years of marriage!!*

Yoga with Andrea is on summer break until further notice.



**SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2021**

Dear Church Family,  
 Thank you so much for the cards and prayers that i received after the recent death of my Mother and Brother. It means so much to have such a caring and loving church family.  
 Much love to all of you,  
 Donna Seaford



Thank you! Because of your donations, both monetary and requested items, we have collected toiletries, clothing, food and restaurant gift cards. Unlike prior years, children will be attending school this summer due to COVID so Backpack Blessings will continue. Many of these children also have clothing needs, so as your child outgrows clothes please consider a donation, dropping them off in the tub located in the gathering space (undergarments must be new). The school's Parent Advocate keeps a clothes closet and hands out items as she or a child's teacher sees someone in need, or when a parent asks for assistance. Sizes needed are 5 through 16.



Congratulations to Frances Scholand for being awarded the Neil Scholarship!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1 style="margin: 0;">August Birthdays</h1>						
				1 Harry Kirk, Sr. Gary Rose Sophia Lemon	2	3 Ken Christenbury Carl Spradley
4	5 Trevor Barrett	6 Bobby Bost Janet Hunter Tracy Tucker Johnathan Kiser	7 Dave Good Tammy Sheehan Sharon Kimrey Katelyn Brandon	8 Lois Treadway Mark Johnson Bradley Gulley	9 Jean Thomas Perry Quattlebaum	10 Clyde Benfield Monie Alexander Bingham Dixon
11 Tom Fassett Kim Beall Riley Ashley	12 Bobby Benton	13 Zoey Garrison Grey Hansen	14 Bob Oehler Brandon Jones Stephen Lisi Katelyn Kiser Clara Messina	15 Lynette Gullede	16 David Stephens	17 Michelle Lemon
18 Ben Buchanan	19	20 Dale McLaughlin Tonia English Kolton Kiser Lucas Orlovsky Camryn Powell	21 Carolyn Sheehan Steve Johnston	22 Sylvia Snyder Leigh Love Cristina Moore Saxon McElveen	23 Polly Walker Frank Cartner Virginia Halter	24 Tom Fuller Joey Brown Owen Stiffel
25 Beverly McLaughlin	26 Susie Oehler	27 Joe Oehler Perry Deaton Tobias Wescott	28 Mary McCraw	29 Tommy Oehler Barbara Oehler Joey Crapster	30 Haiden Gullede	31 James Crenshaw

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The Rev. Rob Watkins

The Rev. Alison Messick-Watkins

Mrs. Andrea Thomas

Mr. David Barnaba

Mrs. Kristy Maddux

Mrs. Cathy Marlor

Mrs. Shawn Watkins

Senior Pastor

Temp. Associate Pastor

Director of Children & Youth Ministry

Director of Music

Preschool Director

Financial Secretary

Administrative Assistant