



Looking Over the Pulpit—Duayne Meyer

JANUARY
2021

*Celebrating
175 years*

As I write this the FDA is considering the approval of a second Covid-19 vaccine. The first vaccinations began yesterday here in Chicago. Grimaces and smiles tell the story as pictures of the first recipients are all over social media. On the morning news one head of a local hospital said, “we can see light at the end of the tunnel.” My mind got stuck on that old saw and, particularly the word “light”.

After all, it feels as though there has been a shortage of light lately, both literally and metaphorically. So much about these recent days have felt dark; the shadows linger long. One of our dear and long-time NCC members, Viva Black, succumbed to the effects of the virus yesterday despite the heroic efforts of the medical staff at Glenbrook Hospital. The nurses read Viva letters that several friends had written to her. My own ended with words from the liturgy for the dying, “well done though good and faithful servant. Now enter into the rest promised to us as God’s people.” Viva’s nurse was by her side until the very end. The nurse’s presence was a little glimmer of light in an otherwise dark and terrible time.

December 21st is the shortest day of the year, the day after we light the fourth candle in the Advent wreath, the candle of love. I don’t think it is a coincidence that this candle is saved until the last, until just before Christmas. After all, what brightens our lives, our world, more than tangible expressions of love and care? So-called “random acts of kindness” have never been random for us as people of faith. This is our call, a way of life, the standard by which our lives are measured and our affirmations of faith are given legs. That’s part of the reason why this time of year we shine a bright light on the church’s support of missions and organizations that combat poverty, injustice and violence. Of course the church takes up this mantle all year long, but we put a spotlight on outreach during this season of shadows as a reminder that we are to reflect and share the light in a dark and dreary world. As I said, a glimmer of light in an otherwise dark and terrible time.

During the past week we have been recording various parts of what will become the Christmas Eve Service of Candlelight Service. Because of physical distancing, this had to be done over a several day period with one, two or a few people in the sanctuary at any given time. Before each session I lighted the candles on the table and chancel wall. I found myself feeling more than a little melancholy about this being the way we will experience Christmas this year: in bits and pieces, by fits and starts and over the inter-webs. I suspect this is a feeling shared by a great many of us at NCC.

But maybe – not that this is the Christmas we wanted, hardly – all is not lost, it is not an unending tunnel. Maybe, if we will keep our eyes open and our chins up, we might see a glimmer of light. One gift we may be given this Christmas is a renewed clarity (continued) →

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Looking Over the Pulpit (continued) - Duayne Meyer

about the truth that love came into the world in a barn set behind a two-bit inn, in a backwater town, located in a third rate part of the world. While our church traditions and pageantry are lovely and enlightening (and grand!), perhaps we might see Christmas through fresh eyes, so that when we do come out on the other side of this 2020 tunnel, not only will we have discovered about ourselves a greater resiliency, but also an increased resolve and appreciation for our much beloved and deeply yearned for faith practices and family traditions.

After recording “*Silent Night*” we discovered that there was a problem with the sound, meaning it had to be recorded again. The small band of socially distanced singers had to have their candles relighted, the strings had to return to the organ loft, the recording equipment reset and turned back on. At first I was disappointed, it had already been a long evening. The first time through felt perfect and, frankly, made me a little emotional. Who doesn’t get a little emotional as *Silent Night* is sung in church on Christmas Eve, even a pre-recorded version of Christmas Eve? I can never get through the whole carol without a lump in my throat. Everything got relighted, reset. The strings began to play, the soloist began to sing, the candles flickered in the sanctuary. And though it was only a handful of lights compared to the hundreds there would normally be, there was light, enough light to see and to believe that the darkness has not – and cannot - overcome it.

After all, light isn’t just found at the end of the tunnel, there is light in the tunnel. Isn’t that the place light is needed most?

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and yours,

Pastor Duayne

Mission Connections “Let us not grow weary of doing good”



Family Promise is an organization NCC has worked with and donated to for years. But it has never been as important as it is this year. If you aren’t familiar with Family Promise, it connects our congregation with families in need of shelter while they find work and permanent homes. This year, because of the pandemic many former Family Promise families are again found in a difficult position and struggling to keep food on the tables for their families. Families are feeling a strain on their food budgets as school children are home more and having more meals at home.

NCC has the opportunity to help Family Promise families by providing snack bags for e-learners on an ongoing basis: Please put 2-3 items like granola bars, small bags of trail mix, chips, pretzels, or crackers, fruit cups, etc. in a lunch bag with a small bottle of water or a drink box. You could add a note or have children draw a picture to let the children know someone is thinking of them. Drop your snack bags off at NCC starting January 5, 2021, Tuesday – Friday, 10am – 3pm and Sunday from 9-11am. Leeann Starr will collect and deliver to Family Promise. We will continue this donation through the new year.

Family Promise also welcomes the donation of \$25 or \$50 Jewel gift cards. Jewel is the grocery store closest to the Family Promise Day Center. Gift cards can be dropped off or mailed to NCC. Please designate for Family Promise.



Ronda's Remarks - Ronda Bower

"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16 The Message)

I stumbled upon this quote by Neal A. Maxwell, "Small lights have a way of being seen in a dark world." It started me thinking that months back, at the start of the time of not gathering together, I spent a lot of time writing notes, sending texts and emails, making calls, dropping off little things on door steps, hoping to shine some of God's light and love to others. I have realized that as months have worn on that part of me is feeling overwhelmed like what someone said in a Bible study when looking at all the things going on in the world around us, "How can I help in the magnitude of all that is going on in the world?" Maxwell's quote above helped break into through my overwhelmed feeling. My light, your light, might be small, but we can shine that hope, peace, joy, and love of the advent candles into the world and they will be seen. They do make a difference. Let your light shine! -Ronda

JANUARY'S MESSY CHURCH – LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 4:30 P.M. ON ZOOM

Everyone, all ages invited!



Games, crafts, and science exploring and using light as we celebrate Jesus as the light of the world and how we shine that light to others. Join in for an afternoon of fun and friends. Contact Ronda Bower in the church office by Friday, January 9, so Messy Church items can be delivered to your door and to receive the zoom link.

JANUARY'S POTLUCK STUDY, WITHOUT THE POTLUCK!

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 4:00 P.M. ON ZOOM.

"Birds of Greece and the Island of Lesbos"

Take another virtual trip with Mary Lou to visit mainland Greece with the Acropolis, the Parthenon, and the Plaka (old city) and then explore the Mediterranean's best kept bird-watching secret: the remote, lovely and quaint island of Lesbos, only two miles from Turkey's coast. Zoom link will be in an eBlast from NCC or contact Ronda Bower for the link.

JOIN IN AN ADULT STUDY OR SUNDAY SCHOOL ON ZOOM:

Adults: Sunday Seminar Sundays at 9:00 a.m., Women's Bible Study Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m., Relevant Bible Study Saturdays at 9:00 a.m.

Children: Preschool and Parent Sunday School Sunday at 10:15 a.m., Sunday School Sundays at 10:45 a.m.

175/75 Anniversary Celebration –Gary Eberlein

What is it that allows a congregation of faithful people to remain together for generations? Why are we able to trace family names today to ancestors at the 1845 beginning in spite of church identity name changes, moving from independence to affiliation with denominations, and relocating the worship center itself three times to where we are now? It's a fascinating story.

As I have been able, through this project, to stand back and view a sweeping picture of a congregation of people across generations noticing that clergy in the early years changed often, some having more impact on the church than others. Notably however, one stands out, the Rev. Armin Bizer who, for thirty-nine consecutive years, saw the church through the Great Depression, WWII and the Korean War and into Vietnam. He possessed a vision and the ability to bring out the good in people through Christian faith, teaching and action, demonstrating leadership, flexibility and support, to meet ever-changing needs. When he retired in the fall of 1961 after the fire, the church experienced five ministerial changes until the remaining members were welcomed here as members of NCC.

But really the church is the people, the Lay Leaders who, with belief and faith in God and the Church, were key throughout the years, women and men each offering the necessary skill sets to meet those ever-changing needs. These folks also possessed the good people skills, communication skills, vision for future needs and how to meet them that made the church a focal point in the surrounding communities. Here, in no special order, are the youth leaders, the pianists, organists, choir directors, the building and grounds leaders, the financial officers, the children and adult education leaders, the activity and group organizers and leaders, the cemetery boards, the church councils and the list goes on.

And then there is the majority of us, the Followers, all the thankful people, the faithful volunteers who over and over supported the ideas and demonstrated their appreciation by carrying out the visions through personal involvement and financial support through good times and hard. These are the thousands of people over the one-hundred, seventy-five years, who sought and found help in so many ways through membership and contact with the Church and all it has to offer.

And so, we carry with us fond memories of good times: laughing, having fun, being challenged with opportunities for participation at all skill levels, learning from succeeding, learning from failing. Children were given a solid Christian education, building self-esteem, developing life and leadership skills and the importance of helping others by helping those in need and caring for the aged here at home and through the Bensenville Home and World Services.

So, as brief as this summary is, it brings us to 2020 - '21, one-hundred, seventy-five years for the St. Peter congregation and 2021 will mark seventy-five years for Northfield Community Church. The legacy of St. Peter Community will live on for a while through the *Legacy in Missions Fund*, gently fading and eventually becoming part of the written history of NCC.

Phrases from Phyllis –Phyllis Scott

I don't know about you but we sing Christmas music around the house. I hear Christmas music in the car. The quartet sings Christmas music every week. I hear Christmas music on YouTube. I just miss hearing NCC choir singing Christmas songs. John's luscious low tones, the soprano descants, all those familiar things that bind us together. So, we're continuing to sing Christmas music right up through Epiphany. And I hope you are singing along.

As we look ahead at 2021, we have faith there are blessings waiting for all of us to explore and moments of joy to cherish. Stay well, be safe and find a little laughter in every day. Happy New Year!

God bless,

-Phyllis

The Church Family

Congratulations to **Beth (Miller) Lee** and her husband **Mike** who welcomed to life their son **Garrett Gregory** this on Friday, December 4th. Congratulations to mom and dad and to big sister Hannah.

We mourn the passing of **Viva Black**. Viva died on December 16th at Glenbrook Hospital, succumbing to the effects of Covid-19. There was a nurse at Viva's bed side, so she was not alone. Please keep her family in your prayers. As you might imagine, there are no plans for a memorial service in the near future. Very likely we will have a memorial service for her husband Mike, who passed away late last winter, and Viva at the same time; perhaps in May.

Our prayers are offered for those who are hospitalized or recovering from illness: Kristie Bobart (sister of Glen), Hallie Burhoe; David Cyr, Jan Deetjen, Flory Dy, Steven Evenstad, John Henry Heath, Bill Jesse, Julie Jewell, Lucy Landon and Betty Oswald. We lift up in prayer those staying close to home: Lois Katariski, Judi & Ray Kennedy, and Carolyn Stockwell, as well as those in assisted living: Marge Fairhead, Jay Lorenz, Mike Parker and Pegeen Soare.

Office Notes

2021 Financial Enlistment campaign update: Thank you to those who have returned an Estimate of Giving Card. At the time of this printing, we have received 93 Estimate of Giving cards totaling \$314,225. If you have not submitted your card, please prayerfully consider your support for NCC in 2021 and return your card or complete an online estimate of giving form via the church's website. NCC provides weekly donation envelopes for those who wish to have them. Please indicate this on your estimate of giving card. **All 2020 donations** should be dated and postmarked or delivered to the church by **December 31st**.

If you have **appreciated stock** in an IRA and are 70 1/2 or older, there may be tax advantages to donating that stock to NCC in place of cash. Check with a financial advisor to learn more.

Please note: We are having a Congregational Budget Meeting on Monday, January 18th at 7pm via Zoom.

Special Thanks Christmas Decorating Team! Many hands made for light work, and lively fellowship: Tracey Buchman, Lynne Curtis, Loretta Kaplan, Kris Moran, Nancy Robinson, Suzanne Schneiter, and Joanne Trimpe. It's a true joy to see these reminders of God's Love.

Would you like to **borrow a Hymnal?** We send out the bulletins via email so that folks can join in the livestreamed worship services, why not have a hymnal, too? If you'd like a hymnal so that you can sing along at home please let us know and we can set them out at the west entrance for you to pick up during office hours.

Thank you to Judy Hertelendy for posting the offerings.

Thank you to Susan Edgar for assembling this Window newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who continues to send in their donations or donate on line! We really appreciate it!

Please note that the church office will be **closed December 24th through January 3rd**. We **will** be checking the mail, however.

The submission deadline for the **February Window** is **Thursday, January 21st**.

NORTHFIELD COMMUNITY CHURCH
400 WAGNER ROAD
NORTHFIELD, IL 60093
Address Correction Requested

First Class

NORTHFIELD COMMUNITY CHURCH

January Events

Jan 6th	Epiphany
Jan 10th	Messy Church
Jan 14th	Mission Board
Jan 18th	Congregational Budget Meeting
Jan 19th	Board of Trustees
Jan 25th	Church Council
Jan 31st	Potluck Study, "Birds of Greece and the Island of Lesbos"

The Church Staff

All of the members of NCC	Ministers
Steve Ash	Business Manager
Eileen Baumgarten	Interim Organist
Ronda Bower	Family & Educational Ministry
Thom Bower	Associate Pastor
Lea Jones	Office Administrator
Duayne R. Meyer	Senior Pastor
Don Minnick	Pastor Emeritus
Phyllis Scott	Interim Choir Director
Warren Wiggins	Minister of Visitation



Northfield Community Church

January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Please check the NCC website for the most current Calendar information: www.NorthfieldUCC.org					1	2 9:00 am Virtual Relevant Bible Study Z
Virtual Event Key F – Facebook live W – Link on the website: www.northfielducc.org Z – Zoom event, ask staff for an invitation						
3 9:00 am Sunday Seminar Z 9:30 am Worship and Praise FW 10:15 am Pre-school Sunday School Z 10:30 am Traditional Worship FW 10:45 am Virtual Sunday School Z	4 7:00 pm Women's Small Group Z	5 10:00 am Women's Bible Study Z	6 8:00 pm Men's Small Group Z 	7 1:00 pm A Just Harvest Delivery	8	9 9:00 am Virtual Relevant Bible Study Z
10 9:00 am Sunday Seminar Z 9:30 am Worship and Praise FW 10:15 am Pre-school Sunday School Z 10:30 am Traditional Worship FW 10:45 am Virtual Sunday School Z 4:30 pm Messy Church Z	11 7:00 pm Women's Small Group Z	12 10:00 am Women's Bible Study Z	13 8:00 pm Men's Small Group Z	14 7:00 PM Mission Board	15	16 9:00 am Virtual Relevant Bible Study Z
17 9:00 am Sunday Seminar Z 9:30 am Worship and Praise FW 10:15 am Pre-school Sunday School Z 10:30 am Traditional Worship FW 10:45 am Virtual Sunday School Z	18 7:00 pm Congregational Budget Meeting Z <i>Martin Luther King, Jr Day</i>	19 10:00 am Women's Bible Study Z 7:00 PM Board of Trustees	20 8:00 pm Men's Small Group Z	21 10:00 AM Partners In Christ Z	22	23 9:00 am Virtual Relevant Bible Study Z
24 9:00 am Sunday Seminar Z 9:30 am Worship and Praise FW 10:15 am Pre-school Sunday School Z 10:30 am Traditional Worship FW 10:45 am Virtual Sunday School Z	25 7:00 pm Council Z	26 10:00 am Women's Bible Study Z	27 8:00 pm Men's Small Group Z	28	29	30 9:00 am Virtual Relevant Bible Study Z
31 9:00 am Sunday Seminar Z 9:30 am Worship and Praise FW 10:15 am Pre-school Sunday School Z 10:30 am Traditional Worship FW 10:45 am Virtual Sunday School Z 4:00 pm Virtual Potluck Study Z						