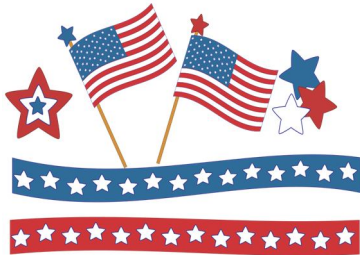


July 2017

## Pressing On



SAFE HARBOR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# BEACON

to encourage...to inspire...to inform...

I asked this question in last month's Pastor Page: Are you living a life worth sharing?

Are your priorities, actions, time and treasure spent, well? If you invited another person, or another family into your home – to share life with you, would your life be worth sharing? As I considered this question in my own life, and looked hard through the lens of these passages, I have often been discouraged by what I see. As I also examine the life of our church and prayerfully pondered the questions of our programs, our discipleship, our life groups, even our worship and wondered about our priorities and values and if they are being lived out, I had to pause some more. As I look at that gravity of comfort, of familiarity of ease and how it affects our church, I can get overwhelmed. Why do we do what we do? What's driving us?

Often times what is driving us is the desire to find the path of least resistance, or at least the path that is most comfortable for us. But comfort is not our aim, the high calling in Christ, is.

It would be very uncomfortable to make the financial sacrifices necessary to expand our ministries and facilities. It's a big sacrifice of time and energy to get involved in a life group or even regularly attend a Sunday school class. It's uncomfortable to open our lives to someone else in mentoring and discipleship. It's time consuming to develop relationships that encourage one another on to faith and good deeds. It's even uncomfortable to make room for new visitors by sitting in a different seat on a Sunday morning; and it's certainly uncomfortable to offer multiple worship services and not see everyone we like to see on Sundays.

Paul also reminded the Corinthians in his first letter to them (the ninth chapter):

*Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law, so as to win those under the law. To the weak I became weak, to win*

*the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.*

If you remember the opening line from Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, we were confronted in our commitment to comfort with the phrase "It's not about you." While we all nod our heads, think for a moment of how we are naturally wired to assume it **is** about us! Think of the most recent frustrations or complaints you may have had about something or someone at church – Who is it about? Those frustrations – do they flow out of a passion for Christ's glory, or a commitment to perceived personal rights and demands? What would it look like if our church family really approached ministry and meetings with the mantra "It's not about me" constantly running through our minds?

How would church be different if we really understood what it means to "make ourselves slaves to everyone to win as many as possible"? What does it mean to "press on toward the goal", to "run in such a way as to win", to "become all things, for all people, so that by all possible means we could save some", "doing all for the sake of the Gospel"?

The challenge before us is to constantly fight our natural proclivities, to fight against that gravity of self centeredness and a desire to be comfortable and to blast free from all of that and do everything for Jesus, for his glory, for the expansion of his kingdom and his great renown. I want to confess, first and foremost, that I struggle with this as much as anyone, that I want to be comfortable, I want my own way, that I gravitate toward the belief that it is about me, but I want you to join with me in dying to that natural tendency and pray that I will lead by example in putting others ahead of myself, being a servant of Christ to win as many for Him as possible.

The mandate we have from Christ is to

not to keep on doing the same old things for no known reason. We need to understand why we do what we do and place a priority on those things that are central to our call as a church and those things that are bearing the most fruit. Some things we have done have to be stopped, and some things we've never attempted have to be started ASAP.

There is a brand of religion that makes its bread and butter on manipulating its membership with guilt and shame. I certainly don't want to sound, smell, or feel anything like that. Galatians 5:1 reminds us that for freedom's sake, in Christ Jesus, that we have been set free. Christ has purchased for us a freedom that is sweet and empowering, and that looses us from anyone else's expectations - from the demands of those around us who want to make us more "active" and more "committed". Paul tells us that God loves a cheerful giver, and each person should decide in their own hearts what they should give to God (and that goes for time and talents, and any other sacrifice, as well as our treasures), and do so freely, not reluctantly or under external compulsion (2 Corinthians 9).

While we are free from guilt manipulation and the demands of others, Paul also reminds us in the same chapter not to use our freedom to indulge our sinful nature. That, brothers and sisters, is the desire of my heart for you and for me - that by the grace of God, and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and the powerful love of Christ, we will see

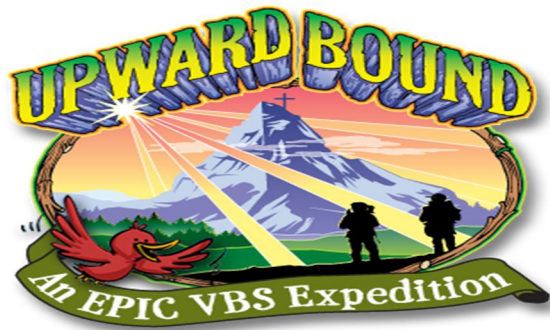
how our sinful hearts wish to be indulged in the pursuit of ease and comfort and we would blast out of that ensnaring pull by the power of Christ's love and press on toward the high calling set before us by Christ Jesus himself.

There is a tendency in every church to want to keep on doing what we've always done, but if we have our heads down grinding out the same old things, we might miss the fields all around us that are white for harvest. What does Jesus say to his disciples? "Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest."

Let's press on and keep our eyes opened, and look for those fields. Let's press on and lay aside every encumbrance and run the race marked out for us. Let's be aware of the gravitational pull of the flesh and press on toward the high calling. Let's live lives worth sharing and be part of church driven by biblical values and heavenly priorities, with strategies and initiatives in place to glean in the fields white for harvest.

Pressing on with you,

Pastor Todd



Attention all VBS helpers.

Training days are: Sunday, July 23rd at 11am or  
Tuesday, July 25th at 5:30pm.

Please plan on attending one of these meetings!

VBS will be August 7th-11th and will be an amazing week of sharing the gospel with our children in the church and the community.

This year's theme is **Upward Bound**, along the lines of hiking and mountain climbing, and striving and reaching for God!

We have had many of volunteers sign up, but still need helpers with adult classroom guides and responsible teen assistants. We also need a sound/power point person.

Please contact Kelli Dutton (443-540-5346) or Jen Boehm (443-496-5459) if you are interested in being part of this great community outreach!

**SAFE HARBOR WEBSITE:** If you would like to have a church related ministry, activity, or announcement placed on the church website ([www.safeharborpca.org](http://www.safeharborpca.org)), please sent the text and documents to: [jackperdue@gmail.com](mailto:jackperdue@gmail.com). Begin the email subject line with "Safe Harbor" so that it will be directed properly. Questions and constructive suggestions regarding the website are always welcomed.

# Church News ☐ ..

## New Officer Nominations

**We are accepting officer nominations for the 2018-20 term.** If you know of a someone, who has been a member at least a year, and would make a good deacon or elder, please pick up a form on the Welcome Center, fill it out and return it to the office. Training starts in September.



*Safe Harbor Church:*

*Choice for Life Pregnancy Center would like to thank you for participating in the baby bottle campaign 2017. Your church raised the amount of **\$505.45!***

*Your "spare change" helps to change the lives of a mother and child.*

*We thank you for your faithful support.*

*Sharon Finecey*

# GOLF

**REMEMBER WHAT A GREAT TIME YOU HAD LAST YEAR AT SAFE HARBOR'S "HAM WALKER MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING?" WE ARE DOING IT AGAIN THIS YEAR ON**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, AT BLUE HERON GOLF COURSE.**

**DETAILS AND REGISTRATION BEGIN IN AUGUST. GET YOUR FOURSOME TOGETHER, AND PUT THE DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR.**

**QUESTIONS? SEE GEORGE GRAFF OR RAY WEEMS.**



**Sunday, July 30th at 11am**

Come and enjoy fellowship time and enjoy and icy treat! Hosted by the Life group

This gathering is to welcome our newest attenders and visitors!

Let's meet and eat!

## **MEN'S BREAKFAST**

Saturday, July 22nd at 8am at Rams Head, KI.

Calling all men to join us for the monthly men's gathering, for a time of fellowship, food and words of wisdom from our speaker.

This month our speaker is Dana Robinson.



**Food of the Month:  
Pasta Sauce & Tuna**

~We all look forward to the picnics we have with our friends at the **Chesapeake and the Chesterwye Centers** each year. Royal Oak Community United Methodist Church joined us at the Chesapeake Center picnic on June 20<sup>th</sup>, and Christian Graham and members of his youth group provided the music and entertainment for the day!

To anyone new to Safe Harbor, our friends at the Chesapeake and Chesterwye Centers have various degrees of developmental disabilities. We hold picnics at each location each summer, and GOD has been reaching out to them through us, letting them know they are loved and not forgotten.

The next picnic for the Chesterwye Center will be held on Tuesday July 18<sup>th</sup>, and if anyone would like to help by providing a pasta salad for this event, or help serve on the day, please visit our table in the narthex to sign up after church.

The events are a blessing to us! When we leave, it is a joy to hear them saying "see you soon..!"

~Another of our outreaches is the **Christian Community Center** in Baltimore City. We have started collecting school supplies for the children that come to the center, so if you can participate, pick up a list of needed items at the Faith with Feet table.

~Haven Ministries next event is the **Run4Shelter**, the largest fundraiser for Haven Ministries. Proceeds from this event help support all our programs which cover: shelter, food, clothing and resources for our community. This year, the run is a "Moonlight Edition", with the event taking place in the evening. There will only be a 5K and 10K, and an after race party. The 5K starts at 6pm and the 10K is at 5:30pm. More information can be found on the church bulletin board, and via e-letters in the upcoming months.

How can you help? By participating in the 5K or 10K, or sponsoring someone to participate. Our goal is to have at least several hundred registrants signed up for the race by July 20<sup>th</sup>. Flyers with all the information, will be our table in the narthex, as well as a mail-in registration form. If you sign up a group, we can offer a \$5 per race discount per runner/walker on the registration form. All forms and checks/cash can be to be dropped off at the church office, or call Sandi Wiscott 410-739-7859. **Deadline is: July 20<sup>th</sup>**. Please spread the word to family, friends, and small groups.

Thank you. Sandi Wiscott

*....to act justly and to love mercy and humbly with our LORD.*



Run4Shelter: Moonlight Edition is a 5K and 10K after-race party that benefits Haven Ministries, Inc.

*The date is Saturday, September 9th  
10K starts at 5:30pm; 5K starts at 6pm.*

The 5K course will cover the scenic grounds of Terrapin Park on paved and gravel paths, as well as off-road section of grass and sand. The 10K course will travel along the cross Island Trail. Pets, roller skates, skateboards and strollers and other wheeled devices are not allowed on the course.

PLEASE NOTE: due to permit restrictions, all runners must complete the course by 7:30pm (2hr time limit for 10K & 1hr 30 min for 5K)

Registration is open now, and registration will also be accepted on the day of the race from 3pm to 10mins prior to each race.

Go to the link below for more info and to register. All proceeds benefit the homeless shelter:

[haven-ministries.org/run4shelter/](http://haven-ministries.org/run4shelter/)

## “Sunday School as Counter-Cultural Practice”

*“More about Jesus in his Word,  
Holding communion with my Lord;  
Hearing his voice in ev’ry line,  
Making each faithful saying mine.”*

Hymn: “More About Jesus,” Eliza Hewitt [1887]

The summer gives me a little time to breathe, reflect, and evaluate our Sunday School program. And, while I am busy at work making some changes to our children and youth Sunday School curriculum and putting together a plan for adult Sunday School for the Fall, I’m reminded recently of how profoundly counter-cultural Sunday School has become in our time and place.

This morning at our men’s study, we had (as usual) a wide-ranging, thought-provoking, and edifying discussion about many topics as we work our way through Colossians together.

One of our men made an analogy between the decline of the printing business and the decline of word-based culture in general. Just as we’ve witnessed the near extinction of the newspaper in our world, we’ve also witnessed the decline of reading books, especially the Book of all books, the Holy Scriptures.

What happened? Why is it nearly impossible for most to meaningfully invest time and energy into deep reading, especially of the Bible?

About nine years ago, the journalist Nicholas Carr wrote an article in the magazine *The Atlantic* called, “Is Google Making Us Stupid? What the Internet is Doing to our Brains.”

Carr argues that our mass exposure to the internet is tinkering with our brains.

The deep reading that we used to do naturally has become a struggle.

In the 1960s, the media critic Marshall McLuhan famously said, “The medium is the message,” meaning that the form through which content is received influences the message itself.

Today is no different. The internet has not only supplied much of the content of our thought – what we think – but,

more significantly, it has re-wired how we think.

Carr writes: “My mind now expects to take in information the way the Net distributes it: in a swiftly moving stream of particles. Once I was a scuba diver in the sea of words. Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski.”

The values of the internet are clear: efficiency and immediacy.

And, yet, these contemporary, internet-driven values undermine the kind of reading of scripture that the Holy Spirit has long used to promote holiness – life transformation – in our lives.

Here’s the thing about culture: it isn’t a value-free, neutral “husk” through which the Gospel message is communicated. The great truths of our faith can’t be reduced to the trivial soundbites of an internet medium like Twitter, for example.

God Himself has chosen the medium of the Word through which to reveal Himself and His will for our lives.

And yet, the truth of it is that many of us don’t spend much time communing with Christ in His Word, allowing the Word of the Lord to get into us, shaping us to the point that we discover we aren’t reading the Word, but it is reading us!

Which brings me to my point: Sunday School is a deeply counter-cultural practice in which we set aside time for the Holy Spirit to teach us through the Word about God, ourselves, and what it means to know and love the Lord Jesus.

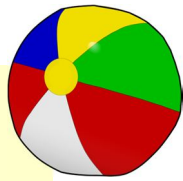
Beloved, we desperately need (myself included) more of the Word of God in our heads, hearts, and lives! Yet, we are faced with a profound cultural challenge that has shaped and will continue to shape our minds – the humiliation of the word through the medium that provides nearly infinite distractions: the internet.

Frankly, we barely have time to read a 3-4 paragraph blog entry, much less spend meaningful time fellowshiping with the Lord through the personal reading of the Bible.

As we make our way through the dog days of summer, begin by asking the Lord to give you a new hunger for His Word. Ask Him to help you discover quiet spaces in your life, while at the same time asking Him to help keep you from filling those precious few quiet spaces with more distracting noise. Then ask the Holy Spirit to meet personally with you, teaching you from His Word.

(continued on next page...)

# Big Beach Weekend



# Youth Corner

# Youth Corner

**BIG FUN, BIG FRIENDSHIPS**

**BIG GOD**

**BIG BEACH, BIGGEST WEEKEND OF THE SUMMER!**

**August 4th-7th**

Harvey Cedars Bible Camp ~ Harvey Cedars, NJ

**Cost: \$320 - deadline to sign up is July 13th**

**Speaker will be Chris Garriott, RUF Campus Minister at UMD**

For students completing grades 9-12

Beach, swimming pool, beach volleyball, dodgeball tournament, kayaking, paddle boarding, bon fire, coffee house, AND SO MUCH MORE!!!

Don't miss out!

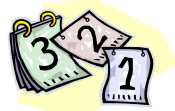
Register at [www.safeharborpca.org](http://www.safeharborpca.org)

Call Laura at 410-604-1700 for more info or email: [laura@safeharborpca.org](mailto:laura@safeharborpca.org)

Summer Youth calendars are out!

Pick up a middle school or high school calendar

in the narthex this week,  
so you don't miss out on all the fun!



**JUST FOR SUMMER  
LAUGHS.....**

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02-03-2006

PASTOR HAD TROUBLE LETTING GO



**American  
Red Cross**

**The need is constant.  
The gratification is instant.**

Safe Harbor will be hosting a summer blood drive on Friday, August 25th, from 10:30am-4pm in the church gym.

If you have given in the past, or would like to be a first-time donor, please call Karen in the church office, or go directly to the website and follow the prompts: [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org).

More info to follow on a special promotion for all those who donate!



Fellowship Chair: We all love the events and meals put on by our fellowship committee! We have a team in place but need a leader with fresh ideas, enthusiasm and good planning skills to put together repeat and new events. Call the church office for more info on this.

Officer Volunteers: A once a month or less commitment to fold and stuff bulletins. This can be done in the church office or at your home. Call Dottie Gilman if you would like to get on the list.

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### **“Sunday School as Counter-Cultural Practice” continued.....**

And as the Fall rolls around, I invite you to check out our Sunday School ministry for adults, children, and youth – give it a try with an open heart and mind. My prayer is that you would find Sunday School to be a refreshingly counter-cultural time of seeking the Lord in community in His Holy Word, and a life-giving break from the internet’s constant, tireless beckoning that distracts us from what matters most and, more often than not, depletes our souls.

Pastor Tony Lombardo