



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Greetings in the name of the Risen Christ!

My only doctor of ministry class this semester is a class taken completely on line. There are no face-to-face class meetings. This is a new learning environment and process for me. Like most of you, being in school means sitting with classmates in a classroom with a teacher in front of the room doing the instruction, live and in person. We are a dispersed class with students from South Carolina to Nebraska to Oklahoma. One of our on-line discussions was centered around this question: **How would you describe your own view of the role of scripture in the Christian spiritual life?**

I loved reading the responses from the other six students in the DMin program. This is how I answered the question.

The word that comes to mind first when I think of scripture is "Companion." But "Companion" in this case has a simultaneous external/internal nature. Scripture is external in that it originated outside of me. I did not create it. Scripture came to me as gift. Unearned.

I've always been captivated by a phrase that I was introduced to very early in my seminary experience, though I do not remember the specific context, a phrase that applies both to Jesus Christ and scripture in its own way. The phrase is Latin: *norma normans sed non normata*. This loosely translates as "the norm that norms that cannot be itself normed." Scripture is the normative by which all other normatives are compared and scripture itself cannot be made more normative by any other normative. In other words, scripture, as the Word of God, is the standard upon which all standards are compared and there is no other, higher standard. In and of itself, scripture is a standard (normative) that cannot be altered (or "altared") by the influence of any other standard.

In this way, scripture is Companion as dogma, or teachings.

That is my typical long-winded way of saying that scripture is that external normative, the Companion who is external and alongside me, upon which my life is compared, and is the standard by which my own life is to become more like through the transforming presence of the Holy Spirit through the power of God's sanctifying grace.

But scripture as Companion is also internal through the indwelling presence of the Spirit of Truth. Scripture is the Companion that not only stands pure, firm, and apart from me, but as a voice that speaks from within me, as an intimate part of my being.

In this way, scripture is Companion as relationship. Scripture, in its own way, has a binary quality that is not dissimilar to the way that we sometimes consider the imputed/imparted qualities of God's grace. During the fall of 1996, as I made the final transition from 20 years as atheist/agnostic to the posture of inquisitive/surrender, I realized with some stark clarity one day that fall that a "presence" was with me/in me that had not previously been there, at least not in any way I had any awareness of. I don't have a specific memory of when it got there, or how, just the irrefutable awareness that it was now there. It didn't used to be there. And now it was. I didn't specifically invite it in, at least not in any cognitive way, but it was there just the same.

That presence became more articulate, and often sort of almost annoying, as the Bible came to be part of my life. I got my very first Bible that Christmas. I was 39 and had never owned a Bible. But that Bible introduced me to the Spirit of Truth and the "rightness" of the Bible.

The companionship is not constant due to my own inconsistency in reading, my own faithlessness to the Companion. But the Companion is faithful to me. Always.

So...that's how I answered the question. How would **YOU** answer the question about how you view the role of scripture in Christian spirituality? What words would YOU use to describe the importance of scripture?

Be blessed!

*Pastor Mark*

Pastor Mark

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

DAVID WARREN	8TH	LESLIE HESKETT	9TH
CHRIS KURTZ	11TH	PAM MITCHELL	14TH
LEASLIE DEALY	15TH	ADDISON GOODMAN	15TH
DYAN BRAMWELL	16TH		
NATHANIEL TEMPLER	17TH	ROY SAGEL	28TH
KEENAN HESKETT	29TH		

## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

DON & SUSAN BECK	OCTOBER 1ST
JERRY & JOANNE WILLM	OCTOBER 15TH
MARTIN & KATHY HOWARD	OCTOBER 17TH
SPENCER & MELISSA YODER	OCTOBER 18TH

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER

5:30 p.m.—6:30 p.m.

\$6.00 per person / \$15.00 per family

### OCTOBER MENU

- 5TH** CHICKEN AND BEEF ENCHILADAS, NACHOS, REFRIED BEANS, COOKIES AND ICE CREAM
- 12TH** CHICKEN AND DRESSING CASSEROLE, GREEN BEANS, SALAD, HOT ROLLS, BROWNIES
- 19TH** FALL BREAK-**NO** WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER
- 27TH** ROAST, MASHED POTATOES/GRAVY, CORN, SALAD, HOT ROLLS, COBBLERS

**\*ALL MEALS INCLUDE: Dessert, Coffee, Iced Tea, and Water**

## Verdigris UMC Youth Events:

October 16th~ Bonfire at Johnson's house 6pm-7:30pm

October 29th ~Fall Lock-In 7:30pm-Service the next day. The highly requested youth event is finally here! Youth are invited to dress up in a costume: Church Appropriate costume and enjoy a night of pumpkin carving, video games, silliness, and as requested every single Starwars movie playing on the our smart TV with surround sound! Bring \$5 for pizza and PJs to change into so we can all wear them to service the next day. Please let Sara know if you will be attending by Sunday the 23rd.

October 30th~Family Sunday: The youth and children will be working together to provide the leadership in service on Sunday.

Wednesday Night Bible Study for October~We will be reading "The Zombie Apocalypse Survival Guide for Teenagers" by Jonathan McKee. Our main lesson of this book is about using God's word in everyday situations or as it says on the bottom of the book: "27 principles of wisdom when you're running for your life"

Servants needed: For the lock-in there will be a rotation schedule so those who can't make it the full night can still come and help out with us. If you would like to volunteer and help with the lock-in contact Sara.

For His Glory,  
Sara Davis



## What's Cooking?

### MAID SERVICE PANCAKES

6 Eggs	4 Cups Flour
4 Cups	2 Tbsp. Baking Powder
¼ Salad Oil	2 Tbsp. Soda
1 Pkg. Dry Yeast	2 Tbsp. Sugar
1 Cup Cream or can milk	1 Tsp. Salt

**Beat eggs. Add Buttermilk, oil, cream and yeast. Stir**

**Add flour, baking powder, soda, sugar, salt.**

**Mix thoroughly**

**Set in refrigerator overnight. Batter will rise, mix in container large enough to allow for this.**

**Bake on hot griddle. Will keep 1 week or more in refrigerator. Good to make ahead for company or for camping.**

**Lorraine Garrison  
Cooking with Love  
VUMC Cookbook**



## **Church Work Day** **Saturday, October 15, 2016** **8:00am -3:00pm**

Work tasks will be teams led by a member of the Trustee's Committee.

We invite, and really need church-wide participation.

There will be tasks that youth and older children can help with. Sign up with your favorite trustee or choose your favorite task.

Most tasks will be focused on painting/up-dating the foyer, painting the restrooms, waxing floors, cleaning and painting the columns of the portico and drive through, and cleaning the outside front entrances, and any other cleaning issues in the sanctuary including oiling the pews. The Education Building entrance needs to be power washed.

The Trustees are asking for 5-6 people to coordinate a very simple lunch (crockpot-sloppy joes, hot dogs, water etc).





The children's programming for VUMC has made an important shift in the last couple of weeks and I believe wholeheartedly that the shift will prove fruitful. I have already seen changes in the kids during service that I am so excited about. This worship thing we do isn't solely about bible study or personal, quiet contemplation but rather coming together to worship as a community where *all* are welcome; where we share in the Word and Sacrament together – children included. I have quite a few ideas that I will be implementing into service to incorporate our children more; to include them into worship in a way that gives them a sense of purpose and belonging. These things are far greater lessons to learn than any popsicle-stick Bible story character could teach our children. Watching four of our own kids walk up front, without hesitation or worry about what anyone would say, is something we could all take a cue from. I ask for your help in a couple ways:

1. If you see a parent struggling - step in. I promise they will be much more thankful for the help (or the offer to help) than feeling like a distraction.
2. Accept the challenges and changes this dynamic will bring to Sunday service. Yes, it will be louder; yes, some kiddos may need to walk around the back of the sanctuary to get energy out; and yes, you will hear the squeak of that door to the Children's Worship Center in the back of the sanctuary many times. Children have no schedule or filter... so just go with it. If a little one tugs at your shirt to help with offertory, grab their hand and allow it. If a kiddo wants to sit up front with the choir for a while, give her the microphone and let her sing along. These types of behavior changes can make all the difference in a child's life.

I ask these things humbly, as it takes a village to raise a child. I would much rather the family of VUMC be that village than the many other options that are available to our children today.

October 30<sup>th</sup> will be our first *Family Sunday* and Sara Davis and I have already started working on some things to coordinate with a youth event she has the night before. A "*Boo Breakfast*" will begin at 9:30am with no Sunday school for the youth or children. Sunday school for the Challengers and Seekers will be at the discretion of those teachers; please be sure to speak with those leaders to see what they want to do. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy the time of fellowship with each other before service. Service will include the youth group leading service and giving the sermon like always, and the children will be added to that dynamic. Children will be paired with a youth member to help with offertory and some will sing during that time as well. Keep an eye out for kiddos standing at the front doors as greeters and at the sanctuary doors handing out the bulletins.

**CAPE** is busy as always! We are only two children shy of reaching our maximum capacity, and we are gaining a sixth grader that will join us in October. We have made a great shift from the summer enrollment. Over the summer, over half of our enrollments were drop-in/part-time and now we only have three students that are part-time, the remaining thirty-one are full-time (paying consistently every week despite attendance). We have started our before-school program with a total of eight children enrolled for that (capacity is fourteen). CAPE also participated in a fundraiser for Circle of Care in August. They raised \$106.74 and won the "privilege" or getting to pie Amy and myself the last day of summer.

**Embrace** is working on their fourth session of the bible study series *Jesus Calling: Experiencing God's Presence*. We are meeting every other Wednesday night in the Challengers Sunday school room at 6:30pm, with childcare provided. I encourage everyone to join us if they can. It has been a tremendous blessing to see these women's hearts pour out. It has given me the great privilege to see these ladies as more than just a face at church. We have had some amazing moments together and I can't wait to see where we can go from here.

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We also host a fitness night in the CAPE building at 7:00pm on the opposite Wednesday nights from bible study, with childcare provided. We rotate through Zumba, kickboxing, line dancing, and more! It's always a fun evening with encouraging women.

Dates for the next six weeks are as follows:

- September 21<sup>st</sup>: Fitness Night
- September 28<sup>th</sup>: Bible Study
- October 5<sup>th</sup>: Fitness Night
- October 12<sup>th</sup>: Bible Study
- October 19<sup>th</sup>: FALL BREAK - *No Fitness Night*
- October 26<sup>th</sup>: Bible Study

As many of you know, the church has been trying to get a playground installed on church grounds for many years. I think it's time to refocus on that project and get some things out there. Be on the lookout for fundraisers and other opportunities to give!

We are so very blessed! We are a church family with dedicated, loving children who are passionate for Christ. I would be amiss if I didn't try to make adjustments that would allow their talents and hearts to shine through in a way that will serve the Lord, the church, and the community. Please stand together with me as I stay in prayer to see what that looks like. The moment when four of our own kids walked up to the alter to pray proved to me that we are on the right path. Thank you for always being supportive and encouraging; I am still learning.

Tiffany Hilgemann  
Director of Children's and Family Ministries

### **'2016' VUMC Directories:**

**Are free and available on wall in the foyer.**

- Please let me know if you are still a visitor, however attend regularly and feel a part of our VUMC Family, and would like your information added to the directory.

You can contact me at either at  
PH: #918-266-4161  
or e-mail me at:

[Lonette.gordon@verdigrisumc.org](mailto:Lonette.gordon@verdigrisumc.org).

**\*The VUMC Calendar can be viewed by going to the events tab and then clicking on calendar.**

### **BOO-BREAKFAST!**

Join us on Family Sunday-  
**October 30th at 9:30 am-**

For a spook-less breakfast before service!  
There will be NO Sunday school, but come for the food, games, treats, and photo opportunities, and stay for service at 10:45am!

Children and youth will lead the church service and we encourage everyone to wear their Fall/Halloween pajamas!



**No scary costumes Please!**

