

# Highlights *From the Heights*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | NORTHMINSTER EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
FEBRUARY 2025 – VOLUME 2

## PASTOR'S CORNER — YOUR HAPPY PLACE?

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. — Phil. 4:4-7*

We all have somewhere we call our “happy place.” It might be at the beach, perhaps on a mountain, or maybe beside a lake or river. It might be in an easy chair in front of the fireplace with a good book, or perhaps with a game or movie on the TV. Your happy place might be standing (or sitting) at a workbench working on your favorite hobby or craft. I’ve been told that there are some strange people who say the gym or dance studio is their happy place. For some, their happy place is wherever and whenever the family is gathered together. Exactly what our happy place is can vary, but what they all have in common is that our happy place is, well, the place that makes us happy. It’s a place where we are at peace, content, relaxed, and feel safe and secure.

There’s something else all of these “happy places” have in common: they are externally defined. We “go” to our happy place, and if we are not there, then we must not be happy. Not only that, but how often do we find the peace and comfort of our happy places shattered? Yes, our happy places do indeed make us happy, but that happiness is fragile, and it is fleeting. There’s certainly nothing wrong with wanting to have a happy place, but what’s important is to recognize what that desire is pointing us toward.

In *The Weight of Glory* CS Lewis writes,  
Our commonest expedient is to call it beauty and



behave as if that had settled the matter....The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself, they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshippers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited.

The Apostle Paul in Colossians 2:17 and the writer of Hebrews in 8:5 and 10:1 talk about the things of earth being shadows of the true substance of Christ and of Heaven. The feelings of peace and contentment we get in our happy places are gifts from God, in order to point us to what will truly satisfy the longings of our soul — Jesus Christ. That's why Paul is able to talk about the "peace that surpasses understanding" in Philippians 4. The church in Philippi was dealing with internal strife and conflict and external persecution. Paul wrote this letter while sitting in prison. And yet, he tells us to, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice." There is a peace and a joy that is available to us no matter where we are or what we are going through. It's a peace that comes from the Holy Spirit and a joy that springs from a soul that is at rest in Christ. The happy places of this world are meant to remind us of the happy place for which our soul yearns: being in the presence of God.

When it all comes down to it, that is what Heaven is. Whether Heaven is some ethereal place in the clouds,

or the remade earth at the end of history, or the glorious City of God, what those places all have in common is the presence of God. The longings of this life are meant to remind us that in Christ the deepest desires of our souls are met, and that one day, we will long no more for we will see God face to face and exult in the joy and delight of being His children with Him forever.

When we set our eyes on Jesus Christ and allow Him to be our peace and joy, then we discover our "happy place" is wherever He is, doing whatever He has called us to do. Then, even the most unlikely situations or circumstances become our "happy place." Our true happy place is Jesus. Instead of trying to satisfy your longing for a happy place by going to somewhere particular, go to Jesus, and rest in the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.

Blessings,  
Rev. David Garrison

### *Philippians 4:11-12*

*Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

## GET IN S.H.A.P.E. CLASS COMING SOON!

No, not physical shape – spiritual S.H.A.P.E.! God has given every believer gifts and shaped us for ministry and service. If you're asking questions like, What are my spiritual gifts? How has God shaped me for service and ministry? Where do I "plug in?" What is God calling me to do in this phase of my life? Then this class is for you! We encourage every member of Northminster to join us for this, coming this spring.



# LIFE TOGETHER

*Keeping in touch with one another*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

*I sought the Lord, and He answered me;  
He delivered me from all my fears.*

— Psalm 34:4

**Several members** have asked for prayers for needs that they'd prefer not to share publicly. Please lift up these prayers, knowing that God knows for whom you pray and what they need.

**John Lange** continues healing from surgery to repair his broken elbow.

**Jackie Hodges** is healing after having the rods and pins from her arm removed.

**Beverly O'Brien** is progressing well, she has now graduated to walking with a cane.

**Dot Stinnett** entered the Kingdom Triumphant on Friday, January 10, 2025. Please keep her family and loved ones in your prayers.

Remember others who cannot be with us in church: **Pat Callahan, Arlene Horton, Mary Murray, Mary Wilhelm and Dolores Wright.**

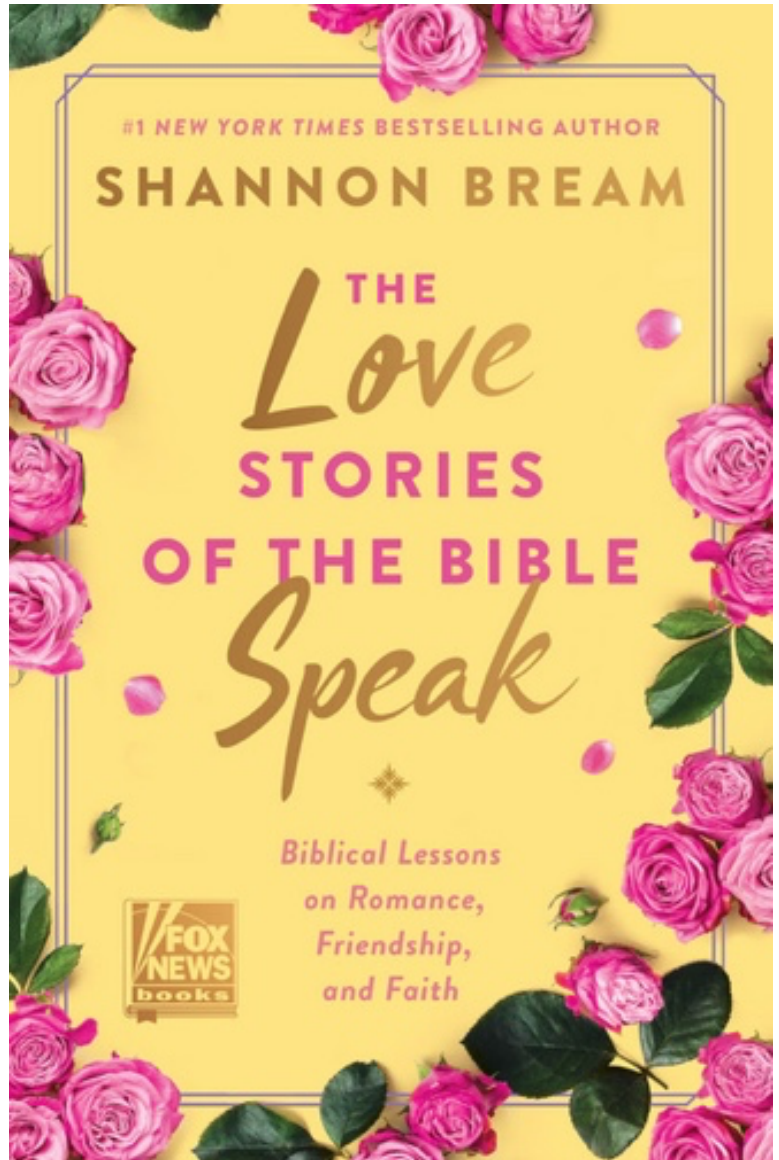
**All active servicemen and women, law enforcement personnel, first responders.**

### **FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

2024 GENERAL FUND

	December	Year To Date
Income	\$11,594	\$123,515
Expenses	\$10,941	\$131,338
Balance	\$653	\$-7,824

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY MEETS MONDAY, FEB 3



The Women's Bible Study will meet on Monday, February 3 at the Church at 7:00 p.m. We will be picking up where we left off at our last meeting. We are working on "The Friendships of Paul" (The Love Stories of the Bible Speak by Shannon Bream) and we will begin on page 203, halfway down the page. For right now, we are all working together on the lesson, so read the rest of the chapter and come prepared to share what you got out of the reading. And bring any questions you might have.

Regarding refreshments, we are asking everyone to bring a little something to share at the meeting. Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday, February 3rd at the church. Please enter through the library or back doors. And, as always, bring a friend!!

# MH UNION

## 2025 Lenten Services

Date	Host Church	Preacher	Topic/Scripture
Mar 5	Amelon UMC	George Harris (MHCC)	Grounded <b>John 15:1-11</b>
Mar 12	Randolph Memorial	Josh Beeler (MHBC)	Beloved <b>Ephesians 3:14-21</b>
Mar 19	MH Christian Church	Dave Edinger (AUMC)	Imagine <b>Luke 17:20-21</b>
Mar 26	Northminster	Rose Chapel BC	Humbled <b>Matthew 5:1-12</b>
April 2	Rose Chapel BC	David Garrison (NPC)	Wrestle <b>Gen 32:24-28/Rom 7:15-24</b>
April 9	MH Baptist Church	Derik Hamby (RMBC)	Dance! <b>Matthew 21:1-17</b>

## Notes

- A meal will follow the **April 9 service** at Madison Heights Baptist Church--all churches will be contacted as to what they can provide for the meal.
- **On all other weeks, participants are encouraged to go out to lunch with one another!**
- All services will begin at 12pm each Wednesday and will last approximately 30 minutes.
- An offering will be collected weekly for the **Helping Hands community ministry**.
- *In the case of snow, the host church for the week will decide if the service will continue.*

# CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND POTLUCK LUNCH

*Sunday, February 16, following Worship*

Come on Sunday, February 16 for the tastiest Annual Meeting you've ever attended! Following the worship service, we'll enjoy a potluck lunch together and hear reports from each ministry area. We'll learn what God has done over the past year and what we're anticipating joining Him in doing in the year to come. This is an event you won't want to miss!

**Please bring a main dish or a side to share!**  
Beverages will be provided.



## WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB MEETS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 10 AM @ NORTHMINSTER

The Women's Book Club will meet on Thursday, February 27 at 10:00 a.m. at the church. The book that we are reading this month is "America's First Daughter" by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie. This book is historical fiction and the setting is mostly in Virginia and Washington D.C. during the 18th century.

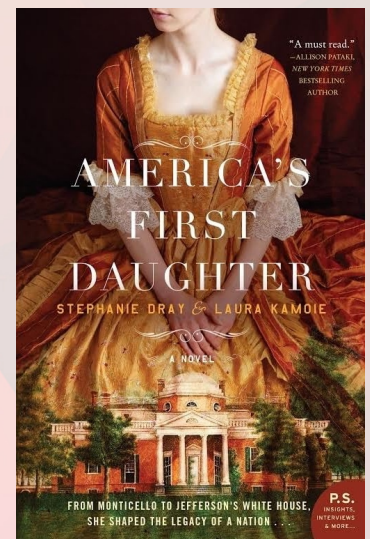
Regarding refreshments, we are asking everyone to bring a little something to share. We decided that because of the tough weather we have been having, that it would be easier to get in and out of the church rather than our homes. We plan to go back to meeting in our homes, once the weather is better.

A synopsis of the book:

*From her earliest days, Patsy Jefferson knows that though her father loves his family dearly, his devotion to his country runs deeper still. As Thomas Jefferson's oldest daughter, she becomes his helpmate, protector, and constant companion in the wake of her mother's death, traveling with him when he becomes America's minister to France.*

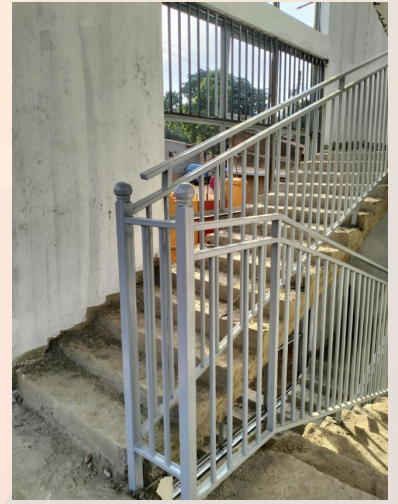
*It is in Paris, at the glittering court and among the first tumultuous days of the French Revolution, that fifteen-year-old Patsy learns about her father's troubling liaison with Sally Hemings, a slave girl her own age. Meanwhile, Patsy has fallen in love - with her father's protege, William Short, a staunch abolitionist and ambitious diplomat. Torn between love, principles, and the bonds of family, Patsy questions if she can choose a life as William's wife and still be a devoted daughter.*

*Her choice will follow her in the years to come - to Virginia farmland, to Monticello and even to the White House. And as scandal, tragedy, and poverty threaten her family, Patsy must decide how she will sacrifice to protect her father's reputation, in the process defining not just Jefferson's legacy but that of the nation he founded.*



Join us for a lively discussion on Thursday, February 27th at 10:00 a.m. at the church. And as always, bring a friend!!!

# CHECK OUT THE PROGRESS AT DAYSTAR JUNIOR SCHOOL!



# MILLS' MUSINGS — HAPPY BIRTHDAY, NICENE CREED!

If someone does make a cake for the occasion, I'd like to be there when the candles are lit. The occasion is the 1700<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Nicene Creed. While I doubt anyone will make a cake, at least not one with 1,700 candles, I believe the event is certainly worth celebrating. Here is a short look at why.

## Early Creeds

Our English word “creed” comes from the Latin *credo*, which means, “I believe.” A creed, broadly defined, is a statement of what it is that I believe. More technically, in the Christian tradition a creed is a concise, formal, and authorized statement of essential Christian doctrine.

The earliest Christian creed was spoken by Peter and recorded in Mark 8:29. At Caesarea Philippi, in response to Jesus' question, “But who do you say that I am,” Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, replied, “You are the Christ.” Writing to the Philippians some three decades later, Paul concluded his marvelous Hymn to Christ with what remains the foundational creed of Christianity, “Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil. 2:11).

But after the last apostle had died, after the canon of Scripture had been closed, Christians began to sense a need for clear and succinct summaries of the basic doctrines of their faith. So they drew on the language of Scripture to formulate brief statements of their core beliefs. The most prominent of these – the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, are still accepted (with some variations) by the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and most Protestant denominations.

## Creeds Today

Today, many congregations still make use of these creeds along with their longer, younger cousins, confessions. For example, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, to which Northminster belongs, uses the Westminster Confession of Faith and its catechisms as our doctrinal standards. In Sunday morning worship, we often recite in unison sections of this Confession. Other Sundays we say the Nicene or Apostles' Creed. These public affirmations of our faith remind us of what we believe about the nature and work of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, and the Church.

Creeds also have uses outside Christian worship. In his book *This You Can Believe*, John Brokhoff describes three purposes these historic creeds and confessions continue to serve in the Church today. The three purposes are: definition, defense and declaration.

**Definition**, The first purpose of creeds, Brokhoff writes, “is to define the Christian faith. What does a Christian believe? Are your beliefs in harmony with the Scriptures and the Church's teachings?” Once we have learned Nicene Creed, we will always have an answer to fundamental questions about our faith.

**Defense** is the second purpose of creeds. Even before the last apostle had died, some in the Church were attempting to redefine the Christian faith. By 325, a young pastor named Arius was causing divisions in the Church by denying the Church's historic teaching that Jesus was both fully God and fully human. Crafting language we still use today, the authors of the Nicene Creed decisively refuted that false teaching.

The third purpose of creeds is **Declaration**. Knowing the Nicene Creed helps us fulfill Jesus' command to be his witnesses. The Creed is a positive, fearless declaration of the essentials of our faith. It is not just for church on Sunday mornings. We can use it to declare our faith in our everyday lives.

Happy Birthday, Nicene Creed. And someone please let me know about the cake. It would give a lot of light.





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First-  
Class  
Postage  
Here