** Baptist Tabernacle **

**Tabernacle Tidings**

**Baptist Tabernacle**

**63 Division Street**

**Wilkes-Barre, PA 18706**

**570 823-3083**

Website: www.wbtabernacle.com

**September/ October 2020**

**Greetings to friends and members of Baptist Tabernacle:**

**This is the 3nd issue of Tabernacle Tidings as we welcome the Fall season.**

**We continue to hold Sunday services with COVID precautions. Those of us who have ventured to meet for in-person worship have appreciated the opportunity to be together to pray and listen to the weekly pastoral messages. Unfortunately, there is continued concern and we maintain hope that a vaccine will be available soon.**

**Currently there are no plans for Rally Day, Sunday School or other fellowship activities.**

**If you decide not to attend in person, here are the web addresses for church services you can live stream.**

**First Baptist Church of Lansdale (Lansdale, PA) - with former youth pastor Chris Hamilton**

**https://www.fbcl.com/live-streaming/**

**National United Methodist Church (Washington, DC)**

**http://nationalchurch.org/live-stream**

**Shavertown United Methodist Church (Shavertown, PA)**

**https://www.shavertownumc.com/online-worship/**

**Changing Seasons…. Seasons of Change**

Autumn to winter, winter to spring,

Spring into summer, summer into fall…

So roll the changing year, and so we change;

Motion so swift, we know not that we move.

 Dinah Mulock Craik

As we progress though the seasons of our life, and deal with the changes that affect our world on a personal and global basis, we should remember that God’s love is steadfast and he is always there to support us even and especially during difficult times.

Hebrews 13:8 (ESV) “Jesus Christ is the same today and yesterday and forever.”

Ecclesiates 3:11 (ESV) “He has made everything beautiful in its time.”

Isaiah 54:10 (ESV) “ ‘For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,’ says the Lord, who has compassion on you.”

**Season of Change – Reflections on Retirement** Ron Shandorf

Life consists of many ‘seasons’ as well as constant changes and Linda and I have just entered a new season known as Retirement. We’ve made it through the seasons of “Learning”, “Yearning”, “Earning” and “Burning” (Cash). This season, for those of you still working, is usually a season that we all look forward to after working hard for decades. Retirement has changed in the modern era and that is what we are dealing with.

Defining retirement: Retirement used to be defined as either time employed by 1 company (e.g. 25 years) OR reaching the age of 65. But that definition has changed and now seems to rely more heavily on when a person reaches ‘full retirement age’ as defined by the Social Security administration. It is also increasingly rare to work for 1 company for a long enough time to qualify for ‘retirement’ and perhaps a pension. So, what do these changes mean to individuals? I believe that retirement in the modern era is now much more of a lifestyle and economic than an age-based decision.

Lifestyle retirement: My perspective is that some of us make the decision to retire based on external changes as much as our desires regarding how we live our lives.

In our case, our retirement decisions included aspects surrounding COVID-19 and personal medical concerns. COVID-19 affected all of us – even if we were not personally affected by the virus. Science dictated that we consider the risk of the pandemic to ourselves, our family, our friends and neighbors and our co-workers. Linda and I decided that the risk to our grandchildren was significant enough that we should retire to allow our children and their spouses to return to work full-time and be fully functional by starting Grammy and PaPa schools! Grammy is teaching the three youngest grandchildren 4 days a week for 4 hours per day to provide relief to their parents. Papa is starting school for the two older grandchildren since their school district had moved to full virtual learning. Their mom is a teacher and must be in-school full-time.

However, a significant part of our decision to retire from our jobs was based on the fact that our bodies are entering a new season and encountering more issues and concerns that were making going to work, especially for Ron with his commute to Newark, tougher and tougher. We find ourselves having more and more bottles of medicine and more and more appointments with various medical professionals.

Economic retirement: Some folks are fortunate enough to be able to decide when to retire without worrying about money. That is, they have saved, inherited or are eligible for a pension that provides enough to cover their expenses and provide a lifestyle that they desire. In our case, we debated whether to work longer versus ‘retiring’ when we reached full retirement age after determining that we could not afford to retire ‘early’.

So, when to retire is a difficult decision for each person and I doubt that any two people have the same situation, concerns and facts. Perhaps the phrase – “Do what you gotta do” describes the decision process best.

But, on the bright side, Retirement also has HUGE benefits! We hope that the COVID-19 vaccine comes soon. We love to travel, enjoy cruises, hope to take our grandchildren to awesome events and destinations and enjoy family vacations together. Ron plans on building his HO model trains. Linda wants to read more. We dream of actually being able to RELAX, to NOT set an alarm clock, to enjoy life and family every day! We feel that we are now more able to step up and take more active roles with organizations, including Baptist Tabernacle.

Change is a reality – how it affects us is a decision! Accept change as inevitable and look for ways to accept the changes as normal. When confronted by change, try to re-define it as an opportunity – perhaps a challenge to learn something new.

Google simplistically defines retirement as a noun

1. the action or fact of leaving one's job and ceasing to work.

 "a man nearing retirement"

But I suggest it’s a Decision and a Process to redefine your life, not ‘retire’ and withdraw after work has ended. It’s just another ‘Season’ in our lives!

**Missions: Women on a Mission:** Barbara Nanstiel

**WOM Send Money to Brazil**

Each year American Baptist Women’s Ministries of Pennsylvania and Delaware decide on a project that will be a focus of their summer conference. For 2020, the decision was to raise $15,000 to help renovate, decorate and open a thrift shop in Vitoria, Brazil.

Our AB missionaries in Vitoria are Corenne and Philip Smith. They minister to children who are part of a residential program that rescues homeless street children and youth ranging in age from 8 to 18. They rescue them from poverty, abuse and violence and provide guidance, education, and training for future employment. The planned Hope Unlimited Thrift Shop will both make the Smiths’ program more self-sustainable and will provide job training and jobs for those under their care.

Typically, Women on a Mission sends $150 to each year’s region project. This year the summer conference was canceled due to the pandemic, and WOM have not been able to hold some of their planned fund raisers. However, money toward the project will still be collected and dispersed in 2020 for Brazil, and our church group felt that it was important to make a donation. Thanks to support for our previous projects and donations from our church family, we were able to send a check for $150 for this cause.

**The Current Special Mission Offering:** ***World Mission Offering***

## WHAT IS WORLD MISSION OFFERING?

Every September and October, individuals and congregations come together for a time of awareness, advocacy, and action for global mission. Thousands across the country celebrate and support the ministries that God is using to transform the world. This is the World Mission Offering and gifts can be received every month.

For the 2020 World Mission Offering, we are highlighting the Ministry Priorities of Discipleship, Theological Education, Peace and Justice, Education, Health and Wellness, and Economic Development. While these represent only a fraction of IM’s ministries, they provide a window into what God is doing worldwide through our 125 global servants, 900+ volunteers, home staff, and 250+ international partners.

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**I once was blind, but now I see…**

This year’s World Mission Offering theme is **“I once was blind, but now I see.”** We are seeing God at work in so many hopeful and encouraging ways through our global servants and global partners.

“I once was blind, but now I see…” Mark 8:22 – 25, NIV

They came to Bethesaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man’s eye and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, “Do you see anything?”

He looked up and said, “I see people; they look like trees walking around.” Once more Jesus put his hands on the man’s eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

This story begs the question – why was the healing in two stages?

Perhaps Jesus wants at times to take us on slow journeys of healing, so that we can experience the full journey with him. Like the blind man, we could never see Jesus apart from his touch on our lives, from an encounter that begins a lifelong journey of opening our eyes to know him better.

But our God doesn’t stop there. Jesus rescues us out of darkness so we can see him and so he can use us to help open the eyes of others.

“I can see clearly now…” The buoyant melody and infectious lyrics of Johnny Nash’s 1972 chart-topping song echo through the back of my mind as I reflect on Jesus’ healing of a blind man at Bethsaida.

Like many of those Jesus encountered, this man met Jesus not through his own initiative, but through friends who cared and saw in the itinerate rabbi a spark of hope for their friend. If only they could lead him to the place of encounter, if only they could get him close enough that Jesus could reach out and touch him, then perhaps there was hope. Just maybe their friend could, and would, see.

Jesus, though, was not a public showman. He took the man by the hand and led him out of the village, to a quiet and private place where he could attend more intimately to the man’s need. He first split in the man’s eyes and applied his touch, then asked if he saw anything. Indeed, the man could now see people, but his vision was not clear – the people appeared “like trees.” In this case, the miracle happened in two stages – it took a second touch from Jesus to transform the man’s eyes.

We live in a fast-paced culture that prefers the immediate over the prolonged, the event over the process, the destination to the exclusion of the journey. We visit “fast food” restaurants and prepare “instant” meals at home, expect not only next day but same day delivery, and access libraries of information with the click of a mouse or touch of a link in our smartphones.

This story of Jesus healing the man at Bethsaida reminds us that genuine transformation often – probably most often – happens over time rather than in an instant. Just as it took both an initial and then a second touch from Jesus to restore the blind man’s sight fully, making disciples of Jesus involves both leading person’s to an initial commitment to Christ (“baptizing them”) and ongoing formation in the way of following Jesus (“teaching them to observe,” Matthew 28:18 -20).

Your support of International Ministries in prayer, encouragement, and giving makes possible amazing transformative work around the globe, from ministries of evangelism and discipleship to work in health and wellness, abolition of global slavery, peace and justice, and more. In all of this, we work toward the vision of a time when God’s will is done fully “on earth as it is in heaven.” That will most assuredly be a “bright, bright sunshiny day!”

 Rev. Jim Bell Associate Executive Director for Global Mission

**Church Business:**

**Individual Board Meetings: Board of Deacons; Board of Education; and Board of Trustees will meet immediately following the service on the first Sunday of the month (September 6th and October 4th).**

**Official Board Meetings: The Official Board will meet on Wednesday, September 9th and October 7th at 6 PM at the church.**

**Communication:**

**Newsletter:**

If you have email, please let me know so we can curtail our postage cost. (Linda@shandorf.com ; phone: 484 767-2566)

**FaceBook:**

Don’t forget to check out the Baptist Tabernacle Facebook page for social media posts? Thanks to Donna Ostrander for updating posts! Search for Baptist Tabernacle Wilkes-Barre and join the group!

**Baptist Tabernacle Website:** **www.wbtabernacle.com**

Ron Shandorf is the website administrator…if you haven’t checked it out you might be surprised! There is a lot of good information here. If anyone has anything they would like to add to the website, please let Ron know – email: IT.WBTabernacle@Gmail.com

**Stewardship:**

Church Maintenance requires continued financial support to pay the ongoing bills. Thank you to all the members who have faithfully mailed their tithes and offerings to the church during our time apart. We encourage anyone who wishes to continue their financial support to mail a check to Baptist Tabernacle at the address noted above if you are unable to attend.

**Food Bank** 

September: Crackers and Granola Bars

October: Boxed stuffing mix; canned cranberry sauce; canned pumpkin; and canned sweet potatoes

Monetary donations are always appreciated.

Donations can be dropped off at the church or taken directly to St. Vincent de Paul Kitchen 39 E. Jackson St. in Wilkes-Barre.
Thank you.

**Special Remembrances:**

Arline Ebert

United Methodist Homes Wesley Village

Partridge – Tippett Nursing Facility

209 Roberts Road

Pittston, PA 18640

**September: (Birthdays and Anniversaries) October: (Birthdays and Anniversaries)**

10 Mary Hauer 3 Fritz Cannavale

13 Don and Donna Ostrander (anniv.) 4 Larry and Sara Miscavage (anniv.)

21 Ron Shandorf 7 Margaret Bullock

23 Cloe Gudaitis 8 Matthew and Amy Cannavale (anniv.)

 10 Anthony Cannavale

 12 Beatrice Murray

 22 Vivian Wickiser

 29 Paul Durko

 30 William Finnegan