

# Sharing the Good News from Newton Presbyterian Church PC(USA)

Pentecost Edition - June 2019

## ~ Building Community ~ In Celebration of Pentecost Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Acts 2** “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ... <sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what should we do?’ <sup>38</sup>Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ “

These verses are read every Pentecost – they are the memorial to the day when the Spirit moved among the believers, and the Church of Jesus Christ was born. That’s why we still celebrate it today as the church’s birthday.

The church must always remember that we are seeking to do exactly what the Spirit helped the apostles do on that electric day so long ago. It gave them the ability to reach out to all the different kinds of people on



Rev. Dr. R. Ward Holder

Pentecost – whether from near or far, speaking a common or exotic language, Jewish or not, from every place and with every kind of difference.

That’s why we’re seeking to reach out this Pentecost – to show that Christ is inviting everyone into the church, because Christ’s love breaks down every barrier. So on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, invite two friends to church! We’ll have a picnic, and a great time, and share the Spirit among us. What could be a better way to celebrate the day?

See you in Church,  
RW

## Committee engagement in the church community

**OUTREACH** NPC is hosting a picnic and cookout for the community on June 9<sup>th</sup>... This is just the first of many activities that were inspired by the March “outreach brainstorming” event moderated by Richard Jefferson.

Outreach is important to us for sharing the Gospel, bringing people into the church, letting our neighbors know that all are welcome, and to grow and strengthen the NPC community.

**MISSIONS** “Through spare change donated at collection time, the *Change for Change* program will provide helpful assistance to the Newton Food Pantry this quarter. We are also conducting a special drive for Pentecost, which concludes this coming Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup>. And in the fall, we will be organizing a blood drive and hope you will consider donating.”

**BUILDING COMMITTEE** continues its many projects to make our church a better place to serve the community, including:

- ✓ Upper class room: the room has been emptied, cleaned, and set up for rental.
- ✓ Front foyer will be painted by fall.
- ✓ Front exterior protective Plexiglas was installed and completed.
- ✓ Building exterior is being pressure treated to remove mold
- ✓ Front side walk into church has been repaired
- ✓ Window screens have been located, cleaned, repaired and placed back in windows.

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## Faith, praise, and love ... and rising to a better world

Reverend Cindy Kohlmann, Presbytery of Boston and Co-Moderator of 223<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly, PC(USA)

The story of Paul and Silas in jail from the book of Acts is a striking one. Not only are they imprisoned; we know from the preceding story that they were in a strange city in a different country, they had been stripped and beaten, they were in the innermost (aka darkest and dankest) cell, and they were strapped down, their feet locked in place. That sounds pretty awful, and I'm sure if I was in that situation, all I would do is cry and tremble in fear.

But Paul and Silas sang hymns and prayed. They sang Hymns. Can you imagine singing "Fairest Lord Jesus" or "How Great Thou Art" while locked in a dark cell and bleeding from a beating? I can't.

In such a dire situation, Paul and Silas chose to live in faith and not in fear. They chose to praise God instead of shake their fists. And when the earthquake opened the doors, granting them freedom, they even chose love for the jailer, saving his life by staying in the cell and calling out to him to prevent him from harm.

They chose faith, praise, and love in the face of injury, imprisonment, and the possibility of death.

What do we choose when the world tells us to choose fear? What do we choose when the loudest voice cries out to choose suspicion? What do we choose when we are being urged to put ourselves and our desires first?

American culture, more and more, is a culture that chooses fear, selfishness, suspicion, anger, and entitlement. More and more, our choices are driving deeper wedges into the fabric of our society, and the chasms are getting harder to bridge. What is especially heartbreaking to me is that Christians who claim to follow Jesus are some of the quickest to close doors, build walls, and choose hate. I truly don't understand how believing in the Prince of Peace who told us to love one another as God loves us can lead to such vitriol. If God chooses to follow our lead, to love us as we love one another, we are doomed.

If we believe that nothing can separate us from the love of God and to die in Christ is to gain the world, then we have nothing to fear. I think Paul and Silas believed that to the depths of their souls; ultimately, they had nothing to fear because their lives were in God's hands. Most of us live as if we have everything to fear because our lives are in our own hands. That's a pretty flimsy foundation.

I want to be someone who chooses faith in the face of fear, praise in the face of distress, and love in the face of hate. And I want to be part of a church that does the same. I know I can't do this alone; I need companions, I need the body of Christ to teach me, encourage me, pick me back up when I fall, and walk with me along the way. If we can do that for each other, if we can choose faith, praise, and love, then we could be the yeast in the flour of society, helping us all rise through the power of Christ to a better world.

### A Deacon's Message ... by Hope Mugerwa

Going to church becomes something to look forward to when you know you can meet new people, build strong and long-lasting relationships that support your wellbeing, a stronger perspective of life and determination to seek more out of it. It is an opening to a new and deeper meaning of life and things that we take for granted – a reminder to look closely for anything different that gives a much more deeper meaning in life for what it is worth and not what it is taken for.

Participating in church responsibilities and taking charge of any mission as needed is a good feeling that can make you look forward to another day, knowing that someone out there will benefit from your help. It is like a guide, a plan, a motivation that determines life's fulfillment of accomplishments -- it is like steps and stopovers on this wandering journey of life.

### BIBLE READINGS for JUNE

June 16 – Trinity Sunday

[First Reading Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31](#)  
[Psalm 8:1-9](#)  
[Second Reading Romans 5:1-5](#)  
[Gospel John 16:12-15](#)



June 23 - 12th in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 1 Kings 19:1-4 \(5-7\) 8-15a](#)  
[Psalm 42](#)  
[Second Reading Galatians 3:23-29](#)  
[Gospel Luke 8:26-39](#)

June 30 - 12th in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14](#)  
[Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20](#)  
[Second Reading Galatians 5:1, 13-25](#)  
[Gospel Luke 9:51-62](#)

**Returning Home**  
by David Wenstrom,  
deacon and long-time member

Newton Presbyterians have returned to this noble church structure;

now having a renewed opportunity to worship God in His sanctuary;

to be among Christians, all while receiving the message of the Bible:

the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

### BIBLE READINGS for JULY

July 7 - 14th in Ordinary Time

[First Reading 2 Kings 5:1-14](#)  
[Psalm 30:1-12](#)  
[Second Reading Galatians 6:\(1-6\) 7-16](#)  
[Gospel Luke 10:1-11, 16-20](#)

July 14 - 15th in Ordinary Time

[First Reading Amos 7:7-17](#)  
[Psalm 82:1-8](#)  
[Second Reading Colossians 1:1-14](#)  
[Gospel Luke 10:25-37](#)

July 21 - 16th in Ordinary Time

[First Reading Amos 8:1-12](#)  
[Psalm 52](#)  
[Second Reading Colossians 1:15-28](#)  
[Gospel Luke 10:38-42](#)

July 28 - 17th in Ordinary Time

[First Reading Hosea 1:2-10](#)  
[Psalm 85:1-13](#)  
[Second Reading Colossians 2:6-15 \(16-19\)](#)  
[Gospel Luke 11:1-13](#)