

Mitchells Presbyterian Church Monthly Newsletter February 2023

Pastor's Corner

1 John 1:8 & Psalm 139:1-6

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us... O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

[English Standard Version]

In the first John passage, one that is often used in calls to confession as well as an assurance of pardon scripture, we can see that one must become comfortable with acknowledging that we are not perfect beings. We must acknowledge that we are human, and that means that we are sinful in nature, despite knowing the truth that we are divinely created in the image of God. God knows who we are, inside and out, and we can accept that nothing can separate us. Therefore, we are called in scriptures to look in the mirror and stand before the fellowship, and speak in an authentic way. It is in this way of speaking that you can enter into the hard thought process of being authentic.

Authenticity, something that brings to mind the ideas of being honest, trustworthy, or the act of being “real” or “genuine” with those around us. Simply, it is the act of NOT faking it, till you make it. Yet, we know that showing authenticity is something that is easier said than done, because in much of our lives we may choose to avoid being FULLY authentic, and by definition, that means that one is being inauthentic. It is like we are deceiving those around us, and deceiving ourselves, as our true self is not being shown to world. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.” This accomplishment, to acknowledge who we are (sinful, or talkative, or outgoing, or knowledgeable, or over-caring, or etc.) is to push back against what is sometimes natural in our brain and natural in our society.

It is known that the brain is chemically wired to stay safe, and part of that safety is working to be accepted by others who surround us. During my time in middle school, I was bullied for not being a football player. I had instead chosen to be a swimmer, a decision that later paid off, but was not wholly accepted by some of my peers. Due to my choice to be who I wanted to be, to go a path different than others, and to go against the norm of southern high school football, I was often the target of homophobic slurs and remarks questioning my manliness. For others who have chosen to be their authentic self, a self that is may be different to others, they have faced bullying, persecution, and at times, death. “Many people have early memories of being called out as different, and that may have laid foundational patterns that it’s “easier to go along with the crowd” rather than stand out. It’s important to know that staying safe is the job of the limbic system, the primitive part of the brain responsible for the fight, flight, or freeze response. It takes conscious effort to override what might be an easier or known path and to choose authenticity over fitting in”.

This is one of the ways we are called to live as the scriptures highlight, in a way that does NOT deny what makes us, us. To accept that we can not do it alone. That we need Christ to show us, teach us, and lead us in righteousness. Not by changing who we are, but by living an authentic life, the way that God made us, for we are known wholly by God. Authenticity is easier said than done, and we all have the chances to pick and choose when we push back against nature and society to be truly authentic with each other, and as followers of Christ. It is a choice to be peacemakers, to live as children of God, to serve those in need and to live as Christ instructs, with love. Authentic Christianity, and authentic self, go hand and hand. We just have to choose to do the hard thing, even if it means being different, because no matter what God knows who we are, inside and out, and no matter who we are, we are loved.

Blessings!
Pastor Patrick

Session News

- Elected Ron Evans, Treasurer and Thomas Cuccherini, Assistant Treasurer for 2023.
- Elected Steve Hicks, Clerk for 2023.
- Appointed Kaye Inskeep, Mary Lou Phillips, and Thomas Cuccherini to the audit committee.
- Elected Jimmy Walker, Chair, and Carol Inskeep as Nominating Committee members for 2023. The congregation will elect 3 members to the committee at the annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 26, 2023.
- Trustees and Session held their joint annual meeting. The following trustees were elected officers of Mitchells Presbyterian Church, Inc.: Debbie Long Smith, President; Ann Walker, Vice President; and Bill Miller, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer. The Treasurer and Clerk also serve as corporate officers.
- Session changed its meetings to third Sundays at 12:30 p.m. beginning Sunday, February 19, 2023
- The Treasurer reported that the church had received a bequest from the Miriam Lloyd Halsey Foundation to be used for the pavilion costs.
- Approved use of the kitchen and fellowship hall for a meeting on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 for the 3 presbyters of the presbytery to meet ministers and clerks in the area.

Presbyterian Women

The Mitchells Presbyterian Women met January 10, 2023 at Luigi's Restaurant for great night of fellowship.

We had a brief planning meeting with a suggestion for a 2023 Women's Retreat. It has been years since we have done this. So, ladies of the church get ready for more information on this event!!

Please remember the donations to our "SOUPER_BOWL" mission of canned soup for the Culpeper Food Closet.

Our next meeting will be February 14, 2023 at 5:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall.

Kaye Inskeep
Moderator

Men of the Church

The Men of the Church will meet on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. with dinner.

The MOC will hold a Pancake and Sausage Supper on Saturday, March 18, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Orders for sausage will begin to be taken during the latter part of February.

Safety and Security Committee (SSC)

The Safety & Security Committee continues its work to provide a safe and secure environment at MPC. The most recent effort has been to install the wiring necessary for CCTV cameras at the new pavilion. This work has been completed except for the installation of the actual cameras and associated equipment by our security provider. This will be completed in early February.

Church Events/Information

Pavilion – Buildings & Grounds

Nothing new to report

Mission and Outreach Committee Report

Nothing new to report

Congregational Life and Ministry Committee

JUST A REMINDER

SUNDAY BRUNCH ON THE 29TH FOLLOWING CHURCH SERVICE!!!

K

Hello all

The Congregational Life Committee is planning our 5th Sunday Fellowship.

Sunday January 29th we will be having a "Sunday Brunch" after church service. Please bring a brunch item Fruit, Bread, pastries, breakfast foods etc...

It will be a New Year take off with the creation of a "Resolution Board" ...everyone can add a note to the board. A resolution of of encouragement, support and love for each other will stay posted throughout the year.

Thank you all,

Kaye

MPC Spotlight

Spotlighting Posey and Betty Ann Howell

A Valentine Love Story

By Debbie Long-Smith

Even though Betty Ann was born in Lakeland, FL and moved around quite a bit as a child, and Posey was born in Washington DC and also moved around, fate brought them together in the ninth grade. Posey always tried to sit close to the window in all of his classes. He said that he didn't like school much, so he could entertain himself by looking out the window. When Betty Ann arrived in the spring of that year at Fairfax High School, the teacher placed her in a seat on the opposite side of the room. They had most of their classes together, and at the first sight of Betty Ann, Posey lost interest in what was going on outside the window. Posey was smitten from the very beginning. Betty Ann was mostly just enjoying his friendship. They continued to be good friends through high school. Posey took her to both the Junior and Senior Proms. Most dates were in groups. They both commented, "that is the way it was back then." When they would attend dances, they would also dance with other people. Posey insisted, "I was the pursuer. Betty Ann's mother was my biggest supporter. She really liked me. Mrs. Marks, Betty Ann's mom, was my second mom; and I could always make myself at home in their house." Posey remembers lots of details about his want-a-be girlfriend. He recalls the tassels on her saddle oxford shoes and remembers her football pocketbook.

Posey went on to attend UVA and Betty Ann to VPI, so they went their separate ways. Posey left college after his second year to enlist in the Army. Betty Ann went to work at Garfinckel's where she worked in advertising and did some modeling. Posey was stationed in Germany; and he said that when Betty Ann took a trip to Europe while he was stationed there, she did not even try to contact him. However, he always kept her picture in his locker. Fellow soldiers would comment that he would marry that girl one day. Posey kept insisting that he was "not a good catch and did not deserve her." When asked why, he said, "I had a big mouth. I was a Thespian. It comes with the trade." It all changed when he came home on leave and the first place he went was to Betty Ann's house. Unfortunately, she was not at home; so, he waited for her return while visiting with his biggest fan, Betty Ann's mother.

Absence evidently did make the heart grow fonder for Betty Ann. Six months later they became a couple and she accepted his fraternity pin. He couldn't afford a ring at the time. They were officially engaged that December and married in June.

Posey did finish his degree and went on to get a Masters Degree. He has had a variety of careers including working at NIH and eventually following in the footsteps of his favorite teacher by teaching English and coaching baseball at Osbourn Park High School. He also helped establish and lead the Navy ROTC program there. He proudly mentioned that his most treasured possession is the American Flag that group presented to him when he retired. Betty Ann also had careers other than her first job at Garfinckel's. She mentioned one rewarding job she had teaching mentally and physically handicapped children in a preschool. She also enjoyed being a Round Table Commissioner and Den Leader of the Cub Scouts. Posey bragged that Betty Ann was presented with the Silver Beaver Award for distinguished service to youth. We also all know Betty Ann as a trainer for Therapy Dogs International. These two dog lovers have never been without a dog. Betty Ann visits senior centers and hospitals with her golden retriever, Emrys.



The Howells have been blessed with three children (two sons and a daughter), three grandchildren, and one great grandchild. They helped raise their granddaughter, Rachael. Their oldest son and daughter live in Haymarket and Manassas and youngest son, Jimmy, lives locally in Brandy Station with his son, Jack, and runs his own business. Grandson, Jack, spends lots of time with his grandparents.

Posey and Betty Ann raised their children in Manassas and attended a Presbyterian church there. Betty Ann's mother moved from Manassas to Culpeper County with them in 1996. She was a Methodist, and they all attended the Methodist Church in Culpeper where Mrs. Marks enjoyed the music. They lost her mom in 2004 when she went to be with her Lord and Savior. The Methodist Church was growing in numbers, so Posey and Betty Ann began looking for a smaller church. That is when they found Mitchells Presbyterian and loved how friendly it was. They have been active in many activities at Mitchells including both the men's and women's groups and have held leadership roles including Session. Emrys has been an active member of Mitchells Congregation making all the children smile during children's sermons.

Sixty-five years (sixty-six this coming June) have passed since these two love birds became husband and wife. However, they have known each other much longer. I am sure that their faith and dedication to the Lord has guided them. They both admit that they are very blessed to still have each other at the age of almost 89 and 90.

Their story reminds me of a Hallmark movie. Couple meets; they become friends; one has stronger romantic feelings than the other; they part ways and meet again; kiss, and live happily ever after. They are an inspiration to all Christians—especially those of us at Mitchells.

**The picture of Posey and Betty Ann includes their two dogs, Emrys and Artie. Above them in the photo is Posey's treasured flag and pictures of their past therapy dogs.*

Worship Committee

Nothing new to report

Donations to MPC

Any donations to the church can be mailed to:
Mitchells Presbyterian Church
P. O. Box 98
Mitchells, VA 22729

All mail is being picked up twice a week and deposits are being made by Ron Evans, the church treasurer.

Mitchells Presbyterian Email Prayer Chain

Patti Weaver has agreed to monitor and maintain the prayer chain email account. Thank you Patti for your service to MPC.

If you would like to receive notifications of prayer requests via email, please send an email to:

prayersofmitchells@gmail.com

Your email address will be added. This is open to members, regular attendees, friends, etc.

Just have all requesters send an email and they will be added.

Prayer requests mentioned at church will try to be added, but it is best if you could just send them to the prayersofmitchells@gmail.com email address.

February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ron Evans	2	3 John Preihs	4 Rachael Hulvey
5 Jeremy Tidman	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Beth McCall Carol Inskeep Kas Settle Jett Anderson	15 Bill Chase	16 Mary Scott Gyory	17 Greg Griffith	18 Marissa Ray
19	20 Pam Zwigart	21 Becky Payette	22	23	24 Adam Hicks	25
26	27 Wanda Hulvey Toni & Dan Upton	28 Michael Tidman				

Ushers: Patricia Hawkins & Kathy Massey

Acolyte: Tommy Cuccherini