

Thoughts From Doug

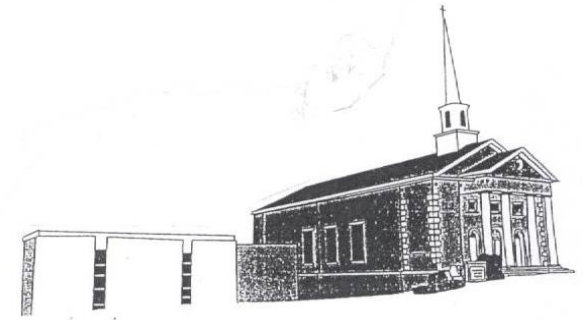
I imagine that most of the Hardwick Baptist family is like me. By that, I mean you likely did not anticipate the longevity of the drastic implications of COVID-19. While most other countries in the developed world (specifically European countries) observed a longer, more rigid quarantine at the beginning, in America we opted to “get things going” sooner. As a result, we are facing much more severe consequences, with the severity of the virus lingering. When historians and sociologists write about this part of American history, no doubt they will critique how we displayed an undeny- ing level of selfishness, oftentimes masked as “personal freedom.” Indeed, we all need to read the history of the generation of our grandfathers and grandmothers, great grandfathers and great grandmothers, who made all kinds of sacrifices, both on behalf of our country and our European allies, in order to secure victory in World War II. I can only hope that the genera- tion to which my daughters belong will, as they mature and have opportu- nities for influence, make the qualities of altruism and selflessness preva- lent once again. I hope they will be more like the Greatest Generation and less like the generation that is raising them.

Throughout the history of Christ’s Church, the most profound spiritual writers and thinkers have repeatedly taught about the *dark night of the soul*. That is, they have discussed that, if we are serious about growing in our relationship with Christ, it is essential that we face periods of darkness. That darkness may be precipitated by personal tragedy or loss; by physical, mental, or emotional suffering; by disillusionment with people we trusted and depended on; or by a crisis of faith that may lead us to doubt all we ever believed about God. Whatever the source, these are life circum- stances which cause us to feel as if we are in an extended period of dark- ness. Much like the reality of emotional depression that is beyond one’s control, the dark night of the soul could be explained as a time of spiritual depression. In the Bible, we see examples of the dark night in essentially all of the lives of the great saints. For Jesus, that dark night could be con- sidered his literal dark night in Gethsemane. For Paul, his thorn in the flesh, his beatings and persecutions, and his three days blinded prior to Ananias’ visit. If we try to avoid or ignore such periods in our life, we will stagnate in our spiritual growth. But if we honestly traverse them, paying attention to the darkness and what God has to teach us, we will emerge on the other side into new light with an increased dependence on God and more love for others, less concern for ourselves.

So maybe for this generation of Americans—at least for those who seek to follow Christ—this time will function as a *dark night of our soul*. We can remain stagnant, trying to experience as much comfort and familiarity with the past as possible. Or we can pay attention to what God is trying to do, and we will experience this time as a chrysalis in a cocoon, waiting to see the transformation God performs in our lives when we trust God to truly make all thing new—beginning with us.

Love and Blessings from a distance, Doug

Hardwick Herald



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May God continue to
bless us; let all the
ends of the earth
revere him.

Psalms 67:7, NRSV

Prayer List

Henry/Vivian Andrews	Marguerite Folendore
James Armstrong	Lamar Guy
Mack Atchison	Rider Hill
Kenneth Babb	Kenny Huff
Katie Bainbridge	Martha Huff
Anne Bayne	Jim Jennings
Joyce Blizzard	Michael/Sharon Lord
Scott Blizzard	Nell Maddox
Harriett & Henry Braddy	Jeff McMullen
John Cooper	Marcus McMullen
Josephine Davis	Marlene Peavy
Eugenia English	Danny Roberts
Sandra English	Bonnie Safford
Sharon Ezell	Ben/Jackie Watson

In Military Service: Rudy Webb
All Healthcare Workers

Wednesday Night Program For Children & Youth

We continue to monitor all updates on the COVID-19 pandemic and pray for the safety and well-being of all the children and youth we minister to. We look forward to the time we can resume this important ministry.

*Joy is love exalted;
 peace is love in repose;
 long-suffering is love enduring;
 gentleness is love in society;
 goodness is love in action;
 faith is love on the battlefield;
 meekness is love in school;
 and temperance is love in training."*
 -Dwight L. Moody-

*"Youth is the gift of nature,
 but age is a work of art."* -Coped-



Prayer Meeting/ Bible Study

Doug will continue to conduct a Zoom meeting Bible Discussion each Wednesday at 7:00 P.M. Bible passage for August 19 will be Exodus 1:8-10;2:1-10—"Moses On the Nile".

**Scripture Reading for
August 16
Psalm 67
Isaiah 56:1-8
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matthew 14:22-33**

School Supplies for Children



Cindy English and her "summer elves" have shopped for school supplies for the children who attend HBC. You may still contribute to this ministry effort during this time of physical distancing by mailing your contribution to the church office, contributing online, by placing your check or cash in the offering plate on Sunday morning, or you may bring it by the church office (call first). If writing a check, please write "school supplies" on the memo line.

**Check out the HBC Website
www.hardwickbaptist.org**

Annual Budget 2020.....	\$ 287,729.67
Needed Per Week to Meet Budget.....	\$ 5,533.27
Contributions August 9, 2020.....	\$ 3,829.50
Total Budget Contributions through August 9, 2020.....	\$117,745.42
Total Budget Expenses through August 9, 2020.....	\$118,383.22
Payroll Protection Program Loan May 1, 2020.....	\$ 18,685.00

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Aug 18: Kelly Riner, Norma Veal
 Aug 20: Randy Beasley, John Kitchens
 Aug 21: Jason Brooks, Frank Rogers
 Aug 22: Miles Whipple

Deacon of the Week

8/16/2020: Sharon Lord, 452-7742

Back to School?

The uncertainty of these words is unlike previous years when the excitement of parents, teachers and students has been "over the top". Following the abrupt ending of in-person learning early this year, completing the term with virtual learning and the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, "Back to School" means more changes. Parents have had to make the choice of in-person school with restrictions necessary to protect teachers and students from the continuing threat of contracting this virus, or virtual school at home. Wearing masks, changes in mobility during the school day, not changing classes or lingering in the hallways, restricted lunches and recess will make everything different this school year. Some schools have already started; some have already encountered the threat of COVID spreading. Those who choose virtual school will have to make sacrifices to assure their children get what they need.

All this being said ... it is Back to School time now and we all need to covenant to pray, pray, pray for our schools — teachers, students, support staff, bus drivers, administrators as they attempt to navigate this special time of uncertainty. May we all grow not only in knowledge, but in faith toward God and love for others. "Teach me, O Lord give me understanding" (Psalm 119:33-34).

Calendar

Sunday, August 16th:

9:00 A.M. Virtual Sunday School
 11:00 A.M. Morning Worship
 In-person worship in Sanctuary
 (Live streamed for those who don't feel comfortable in a crowd setting yet.)

Wednesday, August 19th:

7:00 P.M. Bible Study via Zoom



Thank you for your faithfulness during these uncertain times as you continue to support HBC by giving online, by mail and by placing your offerings in the offering plates as you enter or depart in-person worship

CDC precautions must continue as we come to worship together. Please remember to wear your mask and enter by the front doors, bring your personal hand sanitizer, and continue *physical distancing*. The building is cleaned thoroughly following each service and all touch points disinfected.

Stay safe and continue to pray for those who are sick, for the healthcare workers who are working so hard to save lives, for teachers and students as the schools open again.

The **HBC Food Pantry** served 9 households, 38 individuals, and 3 new applicants in the church parking lot, Tuesday, August 11th. Thank you volunteers for braving the heat and taking the risk during these uncertain times.

*"Keep hold of instruction do not let it go, guard it well, for it is your life."
 (Proverbs 4:13)*

*"If we have no peace,
 it is because we have forgotten
 that we belong to each other."
 -Mother Teresa-*