

Good Tidings

Northminster Presbyterian Church † Sarasota, FL

September 2020

SEPTEMBER SERVICES

Sundays at
10:30 AM

Rev. Wally Johnson

In our sanctuary
starting **September 6**
& continuing online at
[Facebook.com/
NPCSarasota](https://www.facebook.com/NPCSarasota)

September 6

The Power of Love
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-2

September 13

The Power of Forgiveness
Matthew 18:21-35

September 20

The Time is Now!
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

September 27

We Belong to God
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32

PASTOR'S CORNER

Greetings friends!

It is September, and I think we are all battling COVID fatigue. We are realizing that things will not return to normal anytime soon. We are probably going to miss college football (I will have to find something new to share in our announcements) and the rest of sports will return in some sort of altered format. I pray the Lord grants that and enables us to find a vaccine in short order.

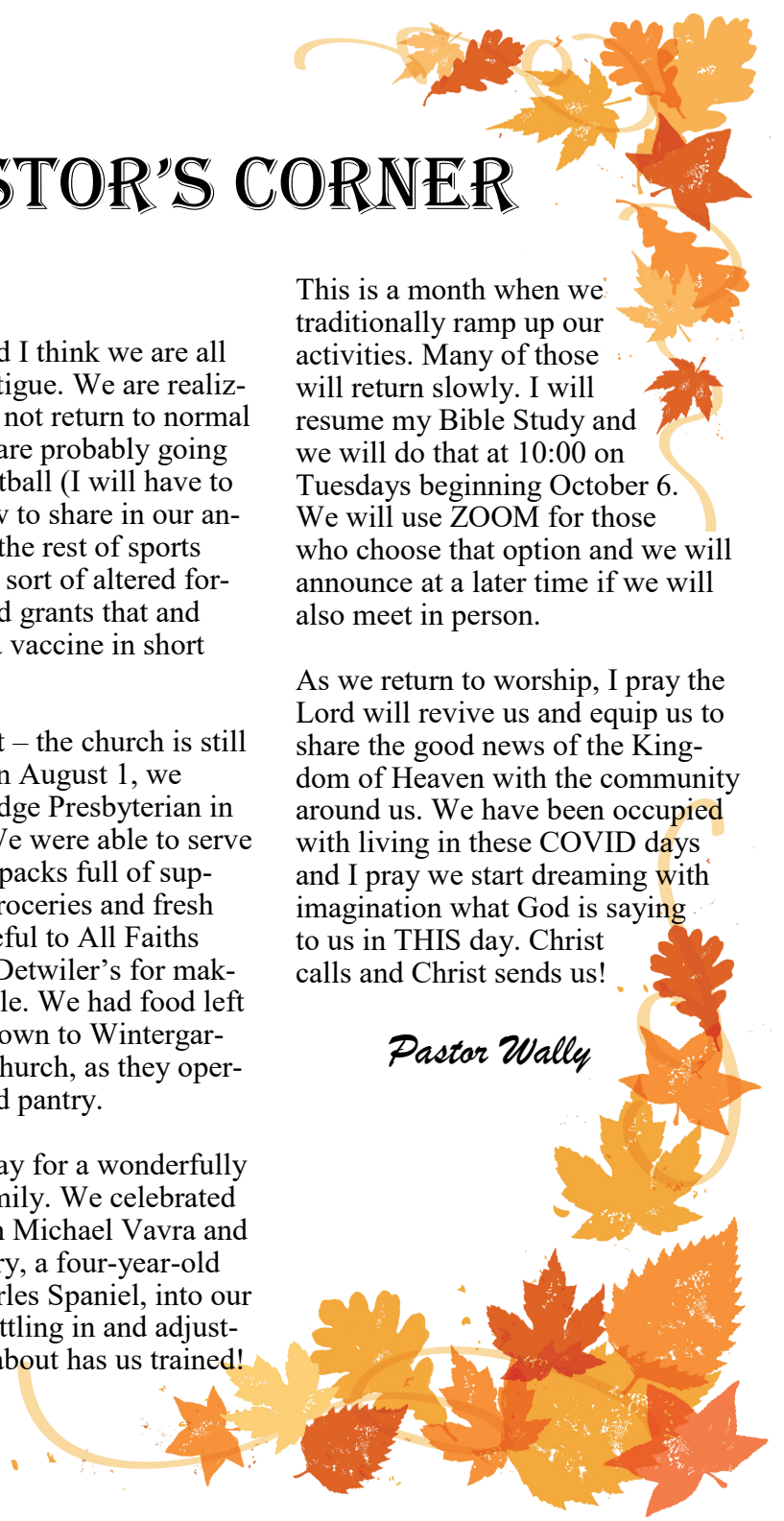
Having said all that – the church is still open and active. On August 1, we joined with Bee Ridge Presbyterian in the Day-4-Hope. We were able to serve 111 kids with backpacks full of supplies and bags of groceries and fresh produce. I am grateful to All Faiths Food Bank and to Detwiler's for making that part possible. We had food left over that we sent down to Wintergarden Presbyterian Church, as they operate an ongoing food pantry.

Joyce and I got away for a wonderfully tiring time with family. We celebrated the birth of Lincoln Michael Vavra and we welcomed Henry, a four-year-old Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, into our family. Henry is settling in and adjusting to FL. He just about has us trained!

This is a month when we traditionally ramp up our activities. Many of those will return slowly. I will resume my Bible Study and we will do that at 10:00 on Tuesdays beginning October 6. We will use ZOOM for those who choose that option and we will announce at a later time if we will also meet in person.

As we return to worship, I pray the Lord will revive us and equip us to share the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven with the community around us. We have been occupied with living in these COVID days and I pray we start dreaming with imagination what God is saying to us in THIS day. Christ calls and Christ sends us!

Pastor Wally



Adapting Our Worship

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! This letter is long, but I hope you read it all the way through.

Your Session has decided to return to in-person Worship on Sunday, September 6th. This decision has not been an easy one, but it has been an important one. Many factors weigh in this decision, and we have tried to keep our mission and your safety in mind. We were committed to seeing 14 days of decline in testing numbers, particularly the rate of tests that come back positive. We have seen that rate hover around 4% in recent days. That gives us hope.



Look for blue tape, marking off pews for safe social distancing.

We want to acknowledge that many of you are anxious to return to in-person Worship, while many others are not in a hurry, as there are uncertainties about health and safety. We have all missed the joy of worshipping together and catching up with each other before and after Worship. We have missed the time together and the smiles!

When we return, things will not be “normal,” but procedures are in place so that we can return to Worship as safely as we can. All these procedures will not be effective if we are not careful through the week. If you are not diligent about physical distancing and wearing a mask through the week, you put everyone else at risk. So, act in love and with great caution.

1. Prior to September 6th, our building will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized by a professional sanitizing company. This process will provide a clean starting point and will be repeated once a month for the first few months. In between, our regular cleaning crew will clean and sanitize after each use of the building.
2. Every other pew will be closed for seating to ensure appropriate physical distancing.
3. Greeters will wear masks, and the doors will be propped open before the service. We want to avoid the need to use door handles.

Paperless Sundays

Due to the emphasis on safety, as NPC returns to in-person worship, there will be no bulletins or hymnals in the Sanctuary. After the service there will be no sign-up sheets or handouts in the Narthex.

Upper Room:

The September-October Upper Room Daily Worship Guide is now available in the office.

Sign Up for Flowers:

Our beautiful arrangements are purchased by members and friends

of the church and can commemorate a special date or honor a loved one. There are still many dates available for the rest of the year. Each arrangement costs \$35.

Picture Directories:

The new picture directories were delivered after the Covid Lockdown went into effect. They are available in the office.

Call Isabel about the following to let her know when you are coming by, 941-355-4729.



Setting for Safety

4. Offering plates will not be passed, but will be positioned at the doors and in the front of the sanctuary.
5. Our coffee fellowship after the service is suspended until it is safe to resume.
6. The buildings will ONLY be open for Worship. All outside groups and all activities continue to be suspended to minimize any infectious contact. Fellowship hall will not host any events until further notice.
7. Individually packaged, sealed, and sanitized communion kits will be used. We want to continue to observe communion, but we need to do so safely.
8. Masks will be required in Worship so that we can be safe and, hopefully, sing. We will have masks available for those who do not have them. We know the masks are uncomfortable, but they are not dangerous, and they demonstrate our love and concern for each other.
9. Greet each other with a nod, a bow, or some other symbol of your love. No handshakes, hugs, or physical contact, please.
10. Collections for Beth-El have been suspended until they are receiving items again, and we can collect them safely.



Masks will be required in the church building. One will be provided for you, if you do not have your own.

I encourage you to worship with us online at Facebook.com/NPC until you are comfortable returning to in-person Worship. I encourage all who are in an at-risk category to weigh carefully the decision to return. Please err on the side of caution.

We will continue to live-stream our services. We are one in Worship, whether at home or in person and are blessed to have you worship with us, however you choose. All these things are not prompted by fear but based in love for each of you.

Thank you for your patience and your prayers. I look forward to seeing you!

Pastor Wally

Financial Update

Operating Fund

	June 2020	Yr-to-date
Income	\$ 18,445.67	\$ 218,000.28
Expenses	<u>\$ 26,261.29</u>	<u>\$ 203,350.98</u>
Net Income	-\$ 7,815.62	\$ 14,649.30

*Note: the reimbursement of \$57,700 for the roof is not reflected in this report, due to timing.

Operating Fund Balance

Iberia Bank	\$ 40,569.03
PILP Money Market	<u>\$ 23,008.52</u>
	\$ 63,577.55

Capital Campaign Fund Balance

Ameritrade	\$ 100.20
PILP Money Market	<u>\$ 587.15</u>
	\$ 687.35

Cornerstone Fund

Charles Schwab	\$ 60,831.35
----------------	--------------

Bob Silver, Treasurer

What is That Red Box?

Recently Northminster's Blessing Box was the subject of a string of comments on the Nextdoor Website. It started with someone wondering what was the purpose of that "Red Box" on Lockwood Ridge, near University.

Five individuals commented that it was a mini-library or book exchange. After all, books have been spotted in the box.

Three people claimed it is for food, with one person volunteering that they had dropped off water and snacks at the church office, for the box.

One person suggested that the box was also used for toiletries, clothing, and socks. Yes, hygiene items, clothing, and even shoes, are sometimes found there.

At this point in the conversation, Gail Offerdinger-Ledgister jumped in with the definitive Northminster answer. "The one at Lockwood Ridge below University is in front of Northminster Presbyterian Church. It is an outreach ministry of the church. Church members make donations of bottled drinks and food items. Recently, we were told that other things are appearing in the Blessing Box. It is right at a bus stop and is for anyone in need."

The original inquirer was thankful for the information, because they wanted to leave items in the box.

There you have it folks. Although the original idea was to distribute food and water, the Blessing Box has been adapted for so much more.

Oh, there's one other thing that we find there sometimes. It's thank you notes.



MID-YEAR MISSION DONATIONS

In July, all funds received that were designated for specific Missions were disbursed, as follows:

\$790 to Beth-El
 \$199 to Kirkuk Pres. Church
 \$170 to SPARCC

Joining Together in Prayer

Jeanne Peters ,
Prayer Chain Coordinator
jeannep123@yahoo.com
941-752-6036

The old-fashioned name “Prayer Chain” came from a time long ago when the only way of communicating emergency prayers for someone in dire need, was by telephone! One person would call another with the urgent news and that second person would call a third and each would call two or three others until a real “chain” was formed.

That method seems antiquated now, doesn't it! With Tweet, Twitter, Zoom, and God knows what else, telephoning has been made almost archaic. Actually, email is becoming old now too, but it will reach a large group with one call, and we will carry on until a better way comes along. What isn't “out of date” however is the need for urgent prayers when someone is ill. Prayer is never out of date, and the more the merrier!

One of our church members recently asked me what the Prayer Chain was all about, and why she hadn't ever received any requests to pray. The explanation is very simple: no one is **automatic-ly** placed on the Chain as a member of the praying Prayer Team! However we always welcome a call or email indicating a willingness to be a “pray-er.” So, if you would like to be on the “team” please let me know, and just like that, you will be on the team.

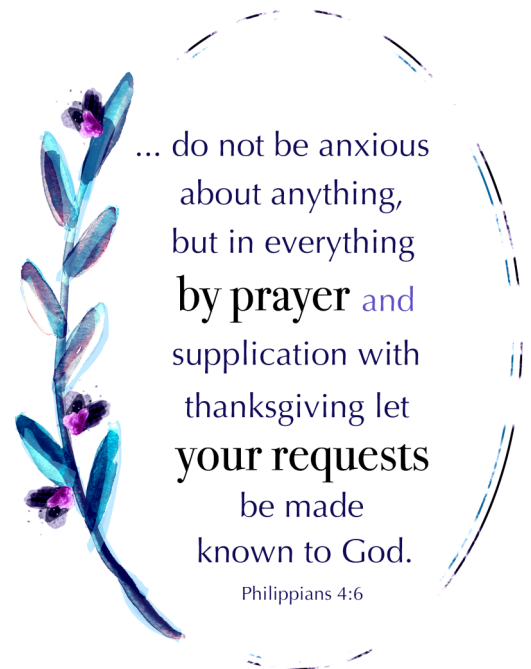
What are the “requirements” to be on the Team? Well, there are no meetings to attend, no forms to fill out, no calls to make, no

rules or requirements other than a willing heart to pray for someone, or something, when our Father God's help is needed. You do not call the person, you need not respond to the prayer request sent out, you simply call out to God to watch over the person or situation.

Currently the Prayer Team consists of 87 households that receive the requests we send out. When an urgent need for prayers for one of our members or friends is called in (or emailed in) to me, all those 87 households will swiftly receive that information via email. Then they simply spend a few minutes in concentrated prayer right there in their own home, asking our Heavenly Father God to help that person in need. Just think of the power of 87 households praying for one person! And what joy it brings to our God to hear from us!

One last note, the Prayer Chain is not the same as the prayer requests you learn about when you watch the daily broadcasts. Those requests go in to Pastor Wally not to me, but frequently I see them and will send them out on the “Chain.”

Just think of the vast power of prayer! God is listening and waiting for us to speak to Him on behalf of others. “The King will reply, *‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for Me!’*” (Matthew 25: 40)



In the Church Library



It probably comes as no surprise that, according to BibleGateway.com, Psalms is the most read book in the bible or that the 23rd Psalm is listed as the most read of all the Psalms, on the Bible Summary website. Our church library offers several choices for anyone wanting to delve deeper into the Psalms, including [A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23](#), a slim little volume of only 142 pages that is a personal favorite of mine. The author, Phillip Keller, takes the Psalm, line by line, and explains it from an entirely different point of view.

There are several study guides in the nonfiction section, such as [Studies of the Psalms](#) by H.A. Ironside and a study bible series

by George A. F. Knight. Timothy Keller's [The Songs of Jesus](#), is a year of daily devotions in the Psalms. On the reference shelves at R223.2, there's a three-volume Shepherd's Notes set on Psalms designed for "when you need a guide thru the scriptures."

Remember, Isabel has offered to open the library for anyone wishing to get books. Give her a call, and arrange a convenient time for her to let you in. Anyone having a book they wish to return can leave it in the church office, and I'll see that it gets checked in and reshelfed.

Happy Fall Y'all!

Bonnie Kiger, Librarian



Consider yourselves
dead to sin

and

ALIVE
to **GOD** in
CHRIST
JESUS.

ROMANS 6:11

Joining the Church Triumphant

No one needs to be reminded about all the challenges of 2020. Everyone has been touched, to some degree, by the hardships and trials that have followed the Corona virus across the country and the world.

One of the most difficult and heart-breaking situations, right now, is not being able to celebrate, in community, the lives of those who have passed on during our months of isolation. We'd like to take this space to honor the names of those members of our congregation who have joined the Church Triumphant this year.

*Helen Crozier
Eileen McKenzie
Tom Sheehan
Bud Glidden
Ken Broden
Charlie Mae Gocio*

*Ken Broden
Allen Williamson
Jan Post
Colette Stevenson
Harry Wilde
Aleta Blachly*

OFFICE HOURS:

Mon—Thurs: 9:00 - 3:30
 Fri: 9:00 - 2:00

*Social distancing
 is practiced;
 wearing a mask
 is appreciated.*

GOOD TIDINGS DEADLINES

Please submit all articles, reports, and announcements for the October newsletter by **Tuesday, September 15.**

But you, O Lord,
are a God
 merciful and gracious,
 slow to anger and
 abounding in steadfast love
 and *faithfulness.*

Psalm 86:15




*September
 Birthdays*

- 2 Audrey Hill
- 4 Joan Gale
Ann Lassig
Diane Ray
- 6 Barbara Clark
Bill Hendry
- 9 Jean Wadsworth
- 11 Donna Bagnall
- 13 Dick Konen
- 15 Jackie Conner
- 18 Jim Shirey
- 23 Donna Lindenau
- 26 Bill Post
Barbara Sewell
- 27 Jerry Roth
- 28 Allene Swanson
- 30 Connie Buell

Thank You



The entire family of Harry Wilde would like to thank everyone for their kindness. The food, calls, flowers and cards have meant more than we can put into words. The comfort and caring is so typical of the love our Northminster family has always shown. Bless each and every one of you. Thank you.

Northminster Presbyterian Church
"Called by Christ. Sent by Christ."

STAFF:

Rev. Wally Johnson, Pastor
pastorwally@npcsarasota.org
Isabel Oake, Office Administrator
office@npcsarasota.org
Sally Kirby, Clerk of Session
clerkofsession@npcsarasota.org
Edward L. Stiles, Jr., Music Director
music@npcsarasota.org
Gail Ofterdinger-Ledgister, Organist

SUNDAY WORSHIP: 10:30 a.m.
 Also online on Facebook

OFFICE HOURS:

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM Monday -Thursday
 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Friday

PHONE: 941-355-4729

WEBSITE: www.npcsarasota.com

E-MAIL: office@npcsarasota.org



The Church with the Red Roof

Northminster Presbyterian Church
3131 61st Street
Sarasota, FL 34243-2542

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #526
Manasota, FL

CURRENT RESIDENT

PLACE LABEL HERE

