



Salem United Methodist Church — Wolfsville

**Food Pantry**  
 OPEN  
**TUESDAYS**  
 6:30-7:30 pm

**Sunday Worship**  
 9:30 a.m.  
 in Salem's sanctuary  
 or at home using ZOOM.

If worshipping in the sanctuary, wear a mask and observe 6' social distancing. The service is broadcast "live" from the sanctuary for those worshipping at home.

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## Salem announces cancellation of two community events: Lord's Acre Festival and CROP Walk

By Bill Burrier

Salem is disheartened to announce the cancellation of two major community events, the annual Lord's Acre Festival and the Wolfsville-Myersville CROP Walk for Hunger.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues, with government-mandated safety protocols in place, forcing organizations everywhere to review and determine if their event is feasible.

This year's Lord's Acre Festival, which was scheduled for the second Saturday in September, would have been Salem's 61st annual event. It is the first cancellation in 61 years.

Over the years, the event has withstood tropical storm downpours, extreme heat, and many other minor calamities, but the health risk from the coronavirus has forced the cancellation.

Likewise, the Wolfsville-Myersville CROP Walk for Hunger, scheduled for late September has also been cancelled due to COVID-19. This event has been held in Wolfsville for more than 32 years.

Both, Lord's Acre and the CROP Walk are events where the community comes together, once a year, to help raise money for the church's ministry and for local and worldwide outreach needs.

### Salem Church Council Decision

Salem's pastor, Bob Snyder, made the cancellation announcement on July 17, 2020, saying, "These were difficult decisions [for church council] and it saddened us to have to make them, but we felt it was the responsible thing to do.

"Many things factored into the decision, including social distancing and masks as we prepare for and do the events, availability of the Ruritan Park, ability to obtain a permit from the health department, and willingness of enough people to help.

Photo by Bill Burrier



**The 2020 Lord's Acre Festival will not be held this year due to COVID-19. It's the first cancellation in 61 years. We look forward to welcoming you back in September 2021.**

"The decision is in line with numerous cancellations of similar events in our area."

### Outdoor Music Event

In addition to the cancellations, Pastor Bob also announced the following:

"Our hope is to hold an event on or about the date we would have held Lord's Acre, when we can bring our own lawn chairs, gather on the grass behind the church, enjoy the music of the "Works in Progress" praise band playing from the pavilion, and perhaps enjoy an ice cream treat." [A date and time will be announced soon.]





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Chair, Board of Trustees: Sue Ellen Stottlemeyer  
Church Treasurer: William Burrier  
Sunday School Treasurer: Mary Fogle  
Chair, Staff-Parish Relations: Robin Haupt  
Food Pantry: Jennifer Gormer, Patrick Boyton  
and Dennis Draper

**Salem Membership Statistics:**  
Current Membership: 244  
2020 New Members: 0

**Salem Physical Facilities:**  
Church built 1847  
Educational Building built 1967  
Parsonage built 1974–75

**Salem Website:**  
www.SalemChurchWolfsville.org

**Colophon:**  
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**Purpose of Newsletter:**  
The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a means of communicating with our members, their families, and our many friends of the Wolfsville community and surrounding areas. We pray that this newsletter will inspire you, our readers, to regularly attend worship services, Sunday School, and all other activities of the church. For those who are unable to attend, this newsletter is a means of bringing part of the church to you.

**Salem Mission Statement:**  
At Salem, with God’s help, we pledge to INVITE others to Christ, HELP each other grow in faith, and SERVE those in need in our congregation, the community, and the world.

**Salem Vision Statement:**  
We will direct our efforts out into the community to serve people’s needs and bring them to Christ.

**Go**  **2020 MISSION PROJECTS** **2020 Goal**

1. Frank & Nancy Stottlemeyer, Retired, New Tribes Mission .....	\$2,460
2. Operation Christmas Child (shipping for shoe boxes) .....	45
3. Salem Mission & Outreach (local needs) .....	1,180
4. Wolfsville Elementary School PTA - “All Pro Families Breakfast” .....	900
5. Wolfsville Community Food Pantry at Salem .....	1,180
6. Mary E. (AIM - France) .....	1,320
7. United Methodist Board of Child Care Christmas Offering .....	750
8. Potato Project (Society of St. Andrew) .....	300
9. Middletown High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes .....	300
10. The Least of These Ministries (Dominican Republic) .....	780
11. Care Net Pregnancy Center of Frederick .....	600
12. Compassion International (Sponsored Child in Tanzania) .....	456
13. Hero’s Club after school ministry .....	4,500
14. World Vision (Sponsored Child in Colombia) .....	420
<b>TOTAL GOAL for 2020 .....</b>	<b>\$15,191</b>

**Here’s how you can give . . .**

1. Make checks payable to Salem United Methodist Church, or place cash in an envelope marked “Missions.”
2. Tell us which mission project(s) you wish to support by making a note on your check or envelope.
3. Place your contributions in the offering plate at Sunday worship or mail to Salem.  
If you do not designate a project, your contribution will be distributed to the project or projects needing funds to meet the monthly minimum payout goals.


**MISSION PROJECTS - NEWS & UPDATES**

*Salem Mission Project No. 13*  
**Hero’s Club After School Ministry**

July 18, 2020 —

I would like to say thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help at Hero’s Club. It was a very successful year because of all of you. As you know, Hero’s Club had to stop meeting abruptly when schools closed in March. We have continued to try to reach out to our Hero’s Club families through e-mails, handwritten letters, and delivering goodie bags. It was so nice to see some of the kids when delivering the goodie bags to their houses.

Please continue to pray for all our Hero’s Club families as well as all families in the community as lives have been so different with COVID. As the new school year approaches with many uncertainties, I pray we can continue to reach out to all our Hero’s Club families. Again, thank you to everyone who has volunteered, reached out of our families, and prayed for them. —Holly Irons, Hero’s Club Director



**OFFICE HOURS for PASTOR BOB SNYDER**

<b>Sunday</b>	7am - 1 pm    Prep, worship, Sunday School (at church)	<b>Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday</b>	6-7 am        Devotions (at home)
	6 - 7 pm        Bible Study (at church)		9 am - Noon    Parsonage Office
			Noon - 1 pm    Lunch
			1-5 pm        Visitation, meetings, or parsonage office
<b>Monday (day off)</b>	6-7 am        Devotions (at home)	<b>Saturday</b>	
	9-11 am        Planning Time (at home)		7-9 am        Final touches on Sunday’s sermon (at home)
	5-6 pm        Hero’s Club (at church)		

Also, Pastor Bob will be at church or in homes to attend meetings or check-in on evening activities at the church. He will make hospital visits and other visits as situations arrive. He will be working at home in Myersville, at the parsonage office, or elsewhere, as needed.

# Who's Doing What, When?

August 2020

## 9:30 A.M. SANCTUARY & ONLINE ZOOM WORSHIP

### Lay Readers

- 2 - Wanda Barkdoll
- 9 - Sue Ellen Stottlemeyer
- 16 - Dennis Draper
- 23 - Melissa Thornton
- 30 - Gary Barkdoll

### Acolyte

- 2 - Valentina Barkdoll
- 9 - Loralli Snyder
- 16 - Valentina Barkdoll
- 23 - Loralli Snyder
- 30 - Valentina Barkdoll

### Organist/Pianist

- 2 - Sara Weitzel
- 9 - Sara Weitzel
- 16 - Sara Weitzel
- 23 - Sara Weitzel
- 30 - Sara Weitzel

## News & Notes

### Retirement of Pastors

#### Tim & Donna Ritchey-Martin

Congratulations to Tim & Donna Ritchey-Martin on their retirement from the Grossnickle Church of the Brethren after 21 years of service.

To honor and celebrate Pastors Tim and Donna, there will be a "Drive-By Goodbye" on Saturday, August 1, anytime between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m.

Please come to the Grossnickle Church parking lot and remain in your car. Guides will be there to direct you. Pastors Tim and Donna will be there to greet you as you drive by. No gifts please.

The Salem congregation expresses blessings and best wishes as Tim and Donna begin their retirement. It has been a pleasure working with them in this community.



Photo from "The Dunker"

Donna & Tim Ritchey-Martin

### ROCK 2021 Youth Retreat Postponed

ROCK, the Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC) retreat which brings thousands of United Methodist youth and their leaders to Ocean City each year, has been postponed. In response to the coronavirus pandemic and out of an abundance of caution to safeguard the health and well-being of the youth, BWC leaders have made the difficult decision to postpone ROCK from its scheduled dates of Feb 5-7, 2021. Arrangements are already underway for ROCK 2022 to be back in Ocean City.

As more information becomes available, it will be announced at [www.bwcumc.org/rock](http://www.bwcumc.org/rock). —Submitted by Wanda Barkdoll

## Three ways to give tithes and offerings

### By Bill Burrier, Church Treasurer

After a 3-month closure, worship in Salem's sanctuary began again on Sunday, June 28, adhering to safety protocols.

During the slow transition back to sanctuary worship, the pastor continues to work, writing sermons, pastoral care, etc. The usual utilities and other expenses continue.

### Offering Plate in Sanctuary

For those at sanctuary worship, an offering plate will be available for those not already giving online or by mail.

Those not yet feeling comfortable to attend sanctuary worship may continue to worship at home, and may use the following two offering methods during this transition:

### By Mail

You may mail your tithes and offerings to:

Church Treasurer  
Salem United Methodist Church  
P. O. Box 94  
Myersville, MD 21773

Make checks payable to Salem United Methodist Church.

### Electronically Online (Safe & Secure)

You may give electronically by viewing our website ([SalemChurchWolfsville.org](http://SalemChurchWolfsville.org)) and select GIVE. Create an account on the secure server at Vanco Payment Solutions, a United Methodist endorsed service.

You may set up recurring giving, e.g., weekly, monthly, or give one time. Funds will be automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account.

Giving tithes and offerings is a part of our spiritual worship. We don't give in order to get. We give to make an impact; we give to make a difference in people's lives; we give to further the ministry of Christ.

## It's Your Day!

### August Anniversaries

- 6 - Adam & Rachel Stottlemeyer
- 7 - Corey & Colleen Carter
- 22 - Lee & Lora McGraw
- 29 - Kent & Polly Miller
- 29 - Andrew & Sarah Haddock
- 29 - Richard & Anita Harshman

### August Birthdays

- 3 - Susan Koons
- 6 - Jeff Harshman
- 9 - Sara Burwell
- 11 - Cathie Elsbach
- 12 - Matt Tolland
- 13 - Joey Lynch Jr.
- 15 - Danny Zimmerman
- 16 - Bill Weaver
- 17 - Timothy Doyle
- 17 - Colleen Carter
- 18 - Amy Burwell
- 18 - Jerry Draper
- 19 - Meagan Wagaman
- 21 - Valentina Barkdoll
- 24 - Rhea Poling
- 26 - Kenslie Buhrman
- 28 - Curtis Nelson
- 29 - Sandy Miller
- 30 - Camilo Barkdoll







## Message from the Pastor and Worship in August

■ By **PASTOR ROBERT E. SNYDER**

**F**or this month's introductory remarks, I'd like to send along to you the encouragement recently received from our District Superintendent, Rev. John Wunderlich III. I believe it captures well both our feelings about the present and hopes for the future:

"Sisters and Brothers, We have begun another appointment year and we find ourselves in a very different place than one year ago. So much has changed. At the same time, much is the same. We still carry a message of grace, hope, and redemption that our world needs to hear. We still carry a message of transformation, reconciliation, and justice. We still carry a message of forgiveness, restoration, and peace.

"Let us not become weary in doing good" Paul tells us in Galatians. There are struggles and challenges, but know that God is with you and that you are just where God wants you to be. Do not grow weary or lose heart. God is still good! Praying for you all this week (and month) as you continue to serve the Lord in such a time as this. Grace and Peace, —John"

Have a great August. God Bless.

—Pastor Bob

### August 2

**"Jesus is the Great Multiplier"**

**Matthew 14:13-21**

Matthew 14:17 - "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish, they answered."

There were well over five thousand people gathered to hear Jesus preach, perhaps more like ten to twenty thousand. The exact number isn't important, only that it was a huge crowd of people all assembled in one place. The disciples appealed to Jesus, "Send them away to get food." Jesus

responded, "You feed them." All the food they could come up with was a mere five loaves and two fish, a ridiculous portion to feed so many. But Jesus took what they offered and fed everyone, even having food left over. Jesus calls us to be disciples. He takes our efforts and multiplies them into something more than we could ever have imagined.

### August 9

**"Take Courage!"**

**Matthew 14:22-27**

Matthew 14:27 - "But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'"

A person is afraid to change careers because of security. A person is afraid to leave an abusive relationship because they fear the unknown more. A person is afraid to surrender a sin to God because they feel they can't live without it.

In today's reading from Matthew 14, Jesus tells the disciples to cross the lake and they cried out in fear. They had been in a storm and now they mistook Jesus for a ghost. Jesus immediately said to them, "Take courage." Jesus sends us out to be his disciples and most of us easily become afraid of what he's asking us to do. But Jesus always comes to calm our storms and see us safely through. Fear is real. But the courage God gives overcomes it.

### August 16

**"Faith Finds a Way"**

**Matthew 15:21-28**

Matthew 15:25 - "The woman came and knelt before him. 'Lord, help me!' she said."

Our own faith is being tested: our faith in God, our faith in our government, and our faith in each other. We're presently in the midst of a desert, wilderness journey, and we're not sure how long this journey's going to be.

In Matthew 15, Jesus had been focusing his attention on bringing his own

people to believe in him and live righteous lives. But amidst his ministry, he encountered a foreigner, a Canaanite woman, who cried out for Jesus' help. She was on a wilderness journey of her own. Her daughter was suffering terribly and she needed help. At first, Jesus did not want to be distracted from the focus of his work. But the woman persisted. "Help me!" she said, and Jesus saw her faith was sincere and helped her. We also will journey safely out of these wilderness times to a better future because our faith, sincerely displayed, will find a way forward.

### August 23

**"No One Can Do It for Us"**

**Matthew 16:13-20**

Matthew 16:15 - "But what about you?" he asked. 'Who do you say that I am?'"

If we have difficulty doing our taxes, we can get a Certified Public Accountant to do them for us. If we need a new roof on our house we can get a roofing company to install one. If our car needs work, we can take it to our mechanic. If we have a tooth ache, a dentist will take care of it. If we break a leg, a doctor can set it. Other people can do all these things for us. But there's one thing no one can do for us, that's state our belief in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and mean it. No one can do that for us. We must do it ourselves.

In Matthew 16, Peter confesses to Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." But then Peter put his own interests in front of Jesus. And later, Peter denied even knowing Jesus. In his initial attempt, Peter didn't really surrender his life to Jesus. Fortunately, God continued to invite him to do so, and finally Peter did. What about you? Who do you claim Jesus to be? Have you surrendered your life to him? God continues to invite you.

### August 30

**"Take Up Your Cross"**

**Matthew 16:21-28**

Matthew 16:24 - "Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.'"

Jesus obeyed God, all the way to death on the cross. In Matthew 16, Jesus calls for us to obey God's commandments to love God and love others and to follow Jesus - to make his ways our ways, to live as he lived. This is the Christian life. Some refuse to choose this life. But for those who do, it is a life that leads to peace, joy, meaning, and fulfillment.



**INSPIRATIONAL**  
*Reading*

**Tell Them Today**

*By M. Elaine Fowser*

Is there someone needing a word of cheer  
Who is living with a heavy heart?  
Perhaps only you have the words he needs...  
Words of comfort only you can impart.

We know there are those who want to hear  
Their burdens need not be endured alone,  
That we will be there through thick and thin,  
For this is the way that love is sewn.

But if family member, friend or neighbor  
Or stranger met along the way,  
They all could use an encouraging word;  
Don't wait 'til later. Tell them today.

*Submitted by Marilyn Leatherman*

**August**

*By Gertrude Rudberg*

I love the fields and countryside,  
The hills and mountains, too;  
I love the meadows, flowered wide,  
The skies of azure blue.

I love the brooks and quiet streams,  
The rivers flowing on;  
I love the lakes where sunshine gleams . . .  
The ponds reflecting song.

I love the land with upturned face,  
The harrowed rows of grain;  
I love the leaves with turning grace,  
The footsteps of the rain.

I love the sound of birds on wing,  
The rustling of the trees;  
I love the song that branches sing . . .  
The soft and gentle breeze.

I love the peace and quietness,  
The stars, the moon, the night;  
I love the hope of wakefulness . . .  
The mist of August light.

**Peace**

Love makes our friends a little dearer,  
Joy makes the heart a little lighter,  
Faith makes our paths a little clearer,  
Hope makes our lives a little brighter,  
Peace brings us all a little nearer.



**RECIPE**



**Spanish Corn**

**INGREDIENTS:**

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 2 bags (12 ounces each)<br>frozen corn      | 1 cup milk                         |
| 1/2 pound process American<br>cheese, cubed | 1 tablespoon sugar                 |
| 2 eggs                                      | 1 to 2 tablespoons diced pimientos |
| 6 tablespoons butter, melted                | 1/2 teaspoon salt                  |
|   | 1/4 teaspoon pepper                |

**DIRECTIONS:**

In a large bowl, stir together all ingredients. Pour into a greased baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until bubbly.

*Selected from "Our Iowa" magazine (April/May 2020 issue)*



**Reflections**

*By Garnett Ann Schultz*

Reflections on the water  
And shadows on the sand,  
Cattle on the hillside  
Grazing pasture land,  
Huge white clouds of wonder  
Drift across the sky,  
Busy little streamlet  
Rushing, rushing by.

Wondrous, glowing woodlands  
Hushed at break of day,  
Blessed, quiet evening,  
Sunbeams tucked away,  
Little dancing moonbeams,  
Stars that dare to shine,  
With naught but love to cherish  
'Tis God's rich summertime.

**Listen**

*By Norman Vincent Peale*

Practice lifting your mind above the confusion around you. One way is to form mental pictures of great hills or mountain ranges, the wide sweep of ocean, some green valley spreading out below you. You can even hear skylarks if you listen carefully.

Character is what you are  
in the dark.

**Sticky Buns & Pies For Sale**

As a fundraiser for Salem's United Methodist Women "Bee-lievers," Anita Harshman is making sticky buns and pies.

- Pecan Cinnamon Sticky Buns: \$12
- Apple Pie: \$10
- Cherry or Peach: \$11
- Raspberry, Blueberry or Blackberry: \$13

You may purchase these items directly from Anita. To place an order, call Anita at 240-818-0126.

August 2020

*It's a Boy*

Congratulations to Brett and Kendra Haupt, Thurmont, on the birth of their third child, a son, Liam Michael Haupt, born June 28, 2020.

Paternal grandparents are Robin and Theresa Haupt, Wolfsville. Paternal great grandparent is Bill Shankle, Myersville.

Being positive won't guarantee you'll succeed, but being negative will guarantee you won't.

If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there.

*Fall 2020 Class Description & Schedule*

## Cumberland-Hagerstown District “Lay Servant Academy”



### BASIC CLASS

This training is for anyone who wants to learn about the Lay Servant Ministry. A Lay Servant is a person who has been called by God to serve the local church. The person must be a member in good standing of a United Methodist church, has been recommended by their pastor, and approved at Charge Conference to be part of the Local Church Lay Servant Ministry.

**Required Text:** Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course Participant Book, by Sandy Jackson; ISBN-13: 9780881776263

**Reading Assignments:** Be sure to download the Reading Assignment under the teacher's name for THIS class from the website. Class will be completed within the 2-day time-frame, so make sure reading is completed prior to attending class. Bring any questions you have along to class.

**Zoom Meeting:** Class will be held via Zoom Meeting. Information for joining the class will be provided prior to the class start date.

**Instructor:** Pastor Rob Pierson

**Class Schedule:** September 18 – 19, 2020; Fri. 6:30– 9 pm and Sat. 8 am – 5:00 pm

**Registration Deadline:** September 4, 2020

### ADVANCED CLASSES

Note: ALL Advanced Lay Servant Classes serve as Re-certification Class for Certified Lay Ministers.

#### 1. Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition

Structured around Wesley's "means of grace," this study covers, among other topics, prayer, Scripture, the Lord's Supper, and fasting – major features in John Wesley's devotional life. Participants will learn how they can apply Wesley's ministry to their own life.

**Required Text:** "Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition" by Steve Harper; ISBN: 978-0-8358-0740-1 or Upper Room #740

**Reading Assignments:** Be sure to download the Reading Assignment under the teacher's name for THIS class from the website. Bring any questions you have along to class.

**Books may be purchased from:** wipfandstock.com/meditate-like-jesus.html . ISBN-13: 978-1532648496

**Zoom Meeting:** Class will be held via Zoom Meeting. Information for joining the class will be provided prior to the class start date.

**Instructor:** Rev. Dion T. Hall

**Class Schedule:** September 18 – 19, 2020; Friday 6:30 – 9 pm and Saturday 8 am – 5 pm

**Registration Deadline:** September 4, 2020

#### 2. Public Prayer

Praying in public can be daunting, but prayer is something one learns. This course on praying in public will help the participant grow in confidence and skill in public prayer and enrich their personal prayer life.

**Required Text:** Shaping the Prayers of the People: The Art of Intercession by Samuel Wells and Abigail Kocher;

ISBN: 978-0-80287-097-1 Also available at Amazon.com

**Reading Assignments:** Be sure to download the Reading Assignment under the teacher's name for THIS class from the website. Bring any questions you have along to class.

**Zoom Meeting:** Class will be held via Zoom Meeting. Information for joining the class will be provided prior to the class start date.

**Instructor:** Pastor Kyle Durbin

**Class Schedule:** September 14, 2020 through September 18, 2020; Five days for two hours, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 pm each day

**Registration Deadline:** September 4, 2020

#### 3. Discover your Spiritual Gifts

This advanced leader's course in Lay Servant Ministries helps participants understand spiritual gifts and how the church can use them to fulfill its mission and ministry. Participants will also learn what it means to be a spiritual leader and will be equipped to lead others in exploring and using their spiritual gifts.

**Required Text:** "Each One a Minister" by William J. Carter; ISBN: 978-0-88177-375-0 or Upper Room #DR375

**Reading Assignments:** Be sure to download the Reading Assignment under the teacher's name for THIS class from the website. Bring any questions you have along to class.

**Zoom Meeting:** Class will be held via Zoom Meeting. Information for joining the class will be provided prior to the class start date.

**Instructor:** Pastor Randy Reid

**Class Schedule:** September 25 – 26, 2020; Friday 6:30 – 9 pm and Saturday 8 am – 5 pm

**Registration deadline:** September 11, 2020

**CLASS COST:** Does not include the required text.

**Paper registration:** Complete paper Registration Form making sure to mark the class you are registering for and send it with a \$40 check made payable to BWC Treasurer and mailed to: BWC Western Region Office, Attention: Lay Servant Academy, 703 West Patrick Street, Frederick, MD 21701.

**Online registration with credit card:** \$35 Go to Baltimore-Washington Conference website: [bwcumc.org/events](http://bwcumc.org/events) > lay- servant- ministry > Select Cumberland-Hagerstown District > click on class > takes you into Arena.

—For more information contact Wanda Barkdoll

*Salem Mission Project No. 6***Mary E. in France — Ministering to immigrants***A Personal Update*

July 4, 2020—

**D**ear friends, so much has happened since confinement began in March. This is a long, personal update.

In brief: I got COVID right after Easter, had a relapse in May, and am feeling better but still have sore lungs. And God has met me in wonderful ways in the midst of it.

I got painful blisters on my toes right before Easter, so after almost a week I went to my doctor and she said they had just discovered this is sometimes a symptom of COVID-19. I wasn't tested then for the virus, but I had the classic symptoms. It was the strangest feeling to have the intense fatigue and deep aches throughout my body that I had only ever experienced when I had malaria in Tanzania. I also had a cough, and tightness in my lungs, as well as the feeling of something heavy pressing on the middle of my chest.

About a month after my first respiratory symptoms I felt like I was better, and had a great week of feeling well, only to have a relapse that was significantly worse than the first time around – not that I re-caught the virus, but that it probably hadn't actually left my body. I also developed (and caught early) a small respiratory infection, which was easily treated with antibiotics. I thank God that I didn't have to be hospitalized, and that even with the tightness and pressure in my lungs, I never had difficulty breathing.

In early June, I was tested for COVID — not to find out if I had had it, but to find out if it was still in my body (and thus if I was contagious). Praise God, it was negative! Now, July 4th, I have lots more strength and energy, but my lungs are still often sore, especially if I don't get enough rest or push myself too hard.

But let me tell you how God met me here. Back in March I mentioned how I was already missing being with people in person, and the comfort of a hug or even a handshake.

A couple weeks into confinement I was crying to God about this, and Isaiah 40:11 came to mind — that God is like a shepherd who gathers his lambs in his arms and holds them against his chest. I



Mary, ministering in France

felt God “say” (not audibly, but unmistakably) that He was there with me, holding me in His arms, close against His chest. And while I was still physically isolated, something changed, and my soul was satisfied. I still had moments where I felt lonely, but the sting of the lack was lifted.

The morning after my tentative COVID-19 diagnosis by my doctor, I was talking with God about the virus. I have often had respiratory infections and each time I have a respiratory issue, it scares me a bit, especially when I'm alone. I'm rather fond of breathing, as you can imagine. So the thought of having COVID-19 while in complete isolation was a scary thought. So I expressed this to God and just asked Him to join me in this. And Isaiah 40:10 came to mind – the image of God as the warrior king returning victorious from battle to his people. And I felt God “say” something along the lines of “I'm here, and I'm going to fight this battle for you. Don't be afraid.” And friends, He did.

There were some scary moments, some tears (which didn't help the tightness in my lungs!), and days where I struggled with my attitude. Other days I had energy and could even sing again. But each day God was faithful. He was with me, and He fought that battle for me.

I don't generally like songs that “speak” for God, but “Take Heart” by Matthew West was my go-to song when the tightness would get worse.

I didn't always have much energy

or concentration to read the Bible, but I listened to worship songs in French, English, and Turkish — songs that expressed my heart to God, and that helped me to fix my eyes on God.

Near the end of May, when I was feeling well again, I decided to memorize Psalm 91. And while there are many beautiful and powerful facets to this psalm, I was captivated by the last two verses. Here God promises to deliver, protect, answer, rescue, honor, and save this believer in distress, but in the middle of those promises God says “I will be with him in trouble.” And it struck me that God's deliverance, protection, etc. are not always in the way or timing we want (which I know and have experienced), but God is promising His presence in the meantime, in the waiting.

The very next day I started having noticeable respiratory symptoms again and had a relapse that was significantly worse than the first time around. I knew God would bring me through it, but I was deeply comforted by His presence.

Through all of this, I was also encouraged by family and friends, both in France and abroad, who prayed for me, brought me groceries and meals, talked with me, checked in on me (from a distance/by technology), and otherwise cared for me. I am so thankful for the many people who were expressions of the love of Christ to me, even those who don't yet know Him.

It's been almost three months that I've been sick/recovering. I'm not always very patient, and I've had days where I complained or had a bad attitude – so I don't want to give the impression that I lived this season perfectly. But God has been perfectly faithful – and I rest on His perfection, and not my own.

I don't know what situations lay ahead of me, or what you're facing right now, but I want to encourage you (and myself!) to seek Jesus and trust His promise to be with you in your distress, even as He is working out his salvation and deliverance, in His way and timing, for our good and (which is) His glory.

Much love in Jesus, —*Mary*





**Heavenly Humor**

**A Thought from Our Daily Bread**



Selected from Salem's Facebook page

**Names on a Wall** \_\_\_\_\_

A small boy was looking at the names on the church wall and asked the Pastor who those people were. The pastor told him that those were the people who had died in the service. The boy asked "The first service or the second service." —Submitted by Dennis Draper

**Short Jokes Anyone Can Remember** \_\_\_\_\_

- Q. Why didn't they play cards on the ark?  
A. Because Noah was always standing on the deck.
- Q. Who was the greatest investor in the Bible?  
A. Noah. He was floating his stock while everyone else was in liquidation.
- Q. What do we have that Adam never had?  
A. Ancestors
- Q. What time of day was Adam created?  
A. Just a little before eve.

*Some thoughts to ponder . . .*

Knowing something doesn't change your life. Doing something about it does.

If you want your ship to come in, you must build a dock.

When we feed our faith, we starve our doubts.

Submitted by Marilyn Leatherman

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