

THE CORNERSTONE

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. (Luke 17: 5-6 – Common English Bible).

Faith – *pistis* – *feminine noun (Koine Greek)* –

I - conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's (sic) ["human being's] relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it.

A. Relating to God.

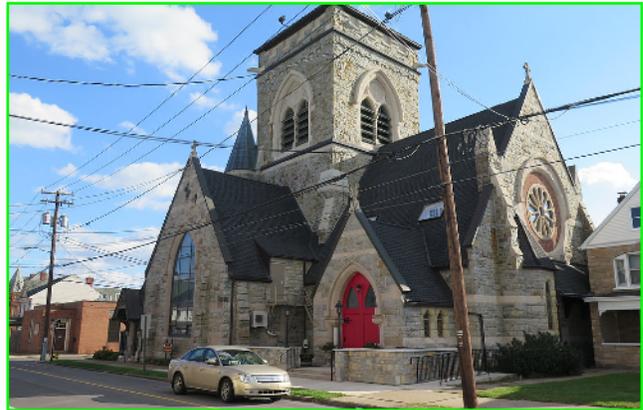
II - fidelity, faithfulness

A. the character of one who can be relied on. (Blue Letter Bible Institute, 2019)

Sunflowers don't need much help in taking root and growing. My experience is that all a person has to do is put some seeds into a bird feeder and the birds, sun, rain, and soil will take care of the rest. I've had more luck with this approach than with planting a sunflower into the garden. Go figure.

I have learned over the course of my life that sometimes I need to rely on God's encouragement, nudging, and providence in the times when I seek out and require more faith. Sometimes such a "handoff" is easy. I trust in God's creative energies to bring sunflowers into the world without much work on my part. I return to more arrogant, less faithful habits when the problems I confront are tougher. Egotistically, I believe that I can resolve a problem, learn something new, and/or create a project on my own. That's usually not the case especially when turning faithfully to God should be my "go to" solution. Why? Because I know that such faithfulness requires me to relinquish my control and shame. I have competing priorities or existing relationships that I deem more influential than my relationship with God. Moreover, I know that there is a high likelihood God is going to uproot me and replant me in life's ocean in ways that very well will be uncomfortable.

Jesus' disciples are brave enough to ask Jesus to increase their faith. Granted, they make this

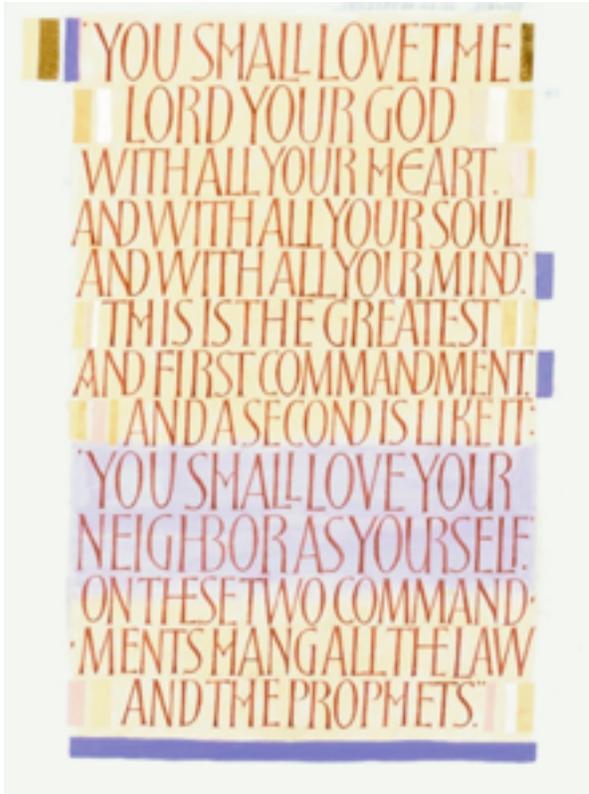


**"The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."
Psalm 118:22**



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request after he teaches them to warn their brothers and sisters when they sin. The disciples realize that they will need more faith offering forgiveness when their friends require repentance. Faithfulness requires letting go of lots of stuff like expectations, previous experiences, “tit for tat” human tendencies, and our unwillingness to believe in God’s graceful providence.



You Shall Love the Lord, Hazel Dolby, Copyright 2002, *The Saint John’s Bible*, Saint John’s University, Collegeville, Minnesota USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

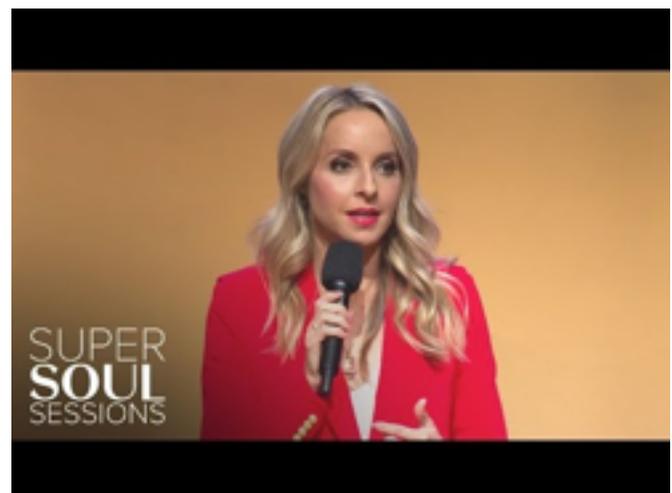
Have you recently requested for God to increase your faith? What was the purpose for your request? Were you asking God to remedy a situation that you can’t resolve? Did you ask without considering that God might seek something in return – such as you letting go of the solution that you already have in mind. Do you trust that God, in Jesus Christ, may require you to sacrifice something very near and dear to you – egotistically and experientially. This is hard, soulful, mindful, wholehearted work. Do you believe that such a divine intervention is assured even if it isn’t the one you have in mind when you prayed for God’s intervention?

One solution is to stick with sunflowers. Gardening is gratifying. It provides immediate and enduring results and future opportunities. Surprises are plentiful and miraculous. Increasing our personal and parochial faithfulness isn’t as easy.

Let me give you an example. We are receiving our Heritage Edition of The Gospel/Acts Volume later this month. We will begin our Year with The Saint John’s Bible late in October. I have been fretting over whether or not Christ Memorial should have undertaken the initiative. I perceive that my passion for this beautiful, costly, educational undertaking far exceeds the interest of most of Christ Memorial’s members. And, our nearby neighbors probably don’t have any sense of what we are striving to do. That said, I am convicted that a Year with The Saint John’s Bible will produce seeds that hold great capacity for transforming Christ Memorial and people, communities and organizations around Danville. Christ came into the world as God’s Word and the primary means that Christians have for continuing the proclamation of God’s Love and Jesus’ Gospel is The Word. So, I’m asking God and you for more faith.

Gabrielle Bernstein offers all of us 5 Steps to Spiritual Surrender. She believes that The Universe has our Back – when we surrender our priorities over to God using these steps:

1. Pray for the highest good for all. Stop praying for personal or communal outcomes. Instead ask the Divine for insight and actions for what is best for our common wellness.
2. Focus on what is thriving. Focus on beauty, appreciative inquiry.
3. Obstacles are detours in the correct



direction. Detours lead to Spiritual Connections. Wounds lead to light and development. What is opportune and true because of a barrier?

4. Ask for a sign....seek an Epiphany. Then listen, observe, and act accordingly with wisdom.

5. When you think that you've surrendered, surrender more. Await without anxiety.

- a. Where would you have me go?
- b. What would you have me do?
- c. Who would you have me talk to today?
- d. What would you have me say?
- e. Thank you!

We are mustard (sunflower) seeds in God's universe. We're really that small in the greater scheme of things. The plans that we treasure, if indeed they are divinely inspired, will come to fruition – as God intends when we let God throw us out of our egos' grasps and into the Eternal Ground of God's Being. Blessings along The Way, Jim

Save the Date



YOU ARE INVITED TO THE

All Saints Day

Festival Worship
&

Open House

• Sunday, Nov. 3 •

• 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Christ Memorial
Episcopal Church –
Corner of Market
and Pine

Announcements and Upcoming

Vestry Meeting Sunday October 13th at 11:45pm. All who are interested are invited to attend.

Telling our Bible Stories. Using the St. John’s Bible as a resource, we will be engaging each other in conversation at 9:00 AM each Sunday, talking about how the Bible has shaped our lives. Please contact Jim if you have any questions.

The Sunday School is looking for assistance. There are too many children! While this is a wonderful problem, help is needed. If you can help out with this important ministry, either with the little ones in the Nursery or with the Elementary aged children in the classroom, please talk to **Susan Nunan** or **Father Jim**.

Birthdays in October	Anniversaries in October
5- Debbie Strayer	2- Ken and Mary Altenbach
5- Michelle Walczak	6- Ronald and Pamela Kanaskie
9- Sharon Shutovich	11- Shawn and Jenn Patterson
13- David Richards	24- Raymond and Helen Swartz
16- Ken Altenbach	
16- George Smith	
23- Amanda Chapin	
24 Jiju Koshy Thomas	
25- Mark Shipe	

Shaped by Faith

Earlier this year we talked about cooperating with other congregations to establish some common goals. CMEC along with ST. Paul's, Bloomsburg and Christ Church, Berwick has had several meetings. Since we started this effort the Diocese has begun to roll out a program called "Shaped by Faith". This new program and our cooperative efforts are nearly one and the same, therefore we will be using this new terminology.

Sharing and cooperating with other parishes is not an attempt to close any church or for any parish to take over another. This effort is finding ways that we can share resources and or programs in order to help one another. The biggest of which is sharing Priests. The day of one Church one Priest are long gone. Why, you may ask, well in a nutshell there is a major shortage of Priests, and there very few entering the Priesthood. It is projected that 15 Priests will retire in Central Pennsylvania in the next 5 years, which is 35% of active clergy.

Clergy shortage outlook over the next 5 years across the Episcopal Church is bleak:

There are 18,500 priests in good standing, over 11,00 of which are retired. Only 7,500 are under the age of 66. 1,200 are expected to retire in the next 3-5 years, and if the current trend continues only 400 priests will be ordained, leaving 4,700 active clergy for 6,473 churches.

Finding part time priests are next to impossible due to this shortage. Now while we at CMEC can afford a full-time priest we must ask the question; do we need a full-time priest? The answer is no. Since most of our neighboring parishes cannot afford a full-time priest, it would be wise to cooperate or share with another parish(s).

There are many details to be worked out and there will be many more meetings. Rest assured that the Vestry will not make any commitments without first securing our congregation's input and approval.

The diocese has developed a survey and are requesting everyone to complete. Completing this survey, either online or on paper, will require some considerable thought (and time). But, for the sake our future, we ask you to make a commitment to complete this very important and necessary task.

Here is the link to complete the survey online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C3HQW58>.

Paper copies of the survey will be available at the church.

Our members working on this effort are Father Jim, Dave Peterson, Michelle Walczak, Erin Ryan, Jenn Patterson is an alternate. Please feel free to ask anyone of us questions

CMEC Vestry Meeting Minutes July 14, 2019

Present: Father Jim, Debra Noll, Dave Peterson (via Skype), Erin Ryan, Kathy Sidler, Michelle Walczak.

Opening: Father Jim opened with what is a Good Samaritan.

Approval of Minutes: One minor change was noted, Dave Peterson should be shown as attending via Skype. Motion made to accept the minutes as corrected made by Dave and Seconded by Kathy, Motion carried 5/0/0.

REPORTS: Priest in Charge:

First, Bishop Scanlan and members of her diocesan staff will be at St. Andrew's in Lewisburg on July 31st @ 6pm. They will be introducing the Shaped By Faith initiative to the Susquehanna Convocation churches. Shaped by Faith is a 2 year initiative to accomplish three goals:

- 1.- **Intensive Work** – clusters of parishes will examine their future together focusing on an optimal configuration for congregational health and vitality. I assume that these conversations will be similar yet more extensive to the conversations that St. Paul's and CMEC vestry sub-committees have shared.
2. – **Individual Parish work of Supportive Discernment.** The Stevenson School for Ministry will offer no- cost vouchers for Parish Life courses that will be taught by the diocesan staff.
3. – **Celebrating our Common Story** – A diocesan effort to understand and enjoy the diocese's shared heritage – "Rooted in God."

David Peterson and a couple of other members of the vestry will be going. You can join them. Please email @David Peterson to express your interest.

Second, We will be hosting our introductory [Year with The Saint John's Bible](#) Heritage Program training on August 3rd. Training will begin at 10 am. We will provide lunch. The session should be over no later than 3 pm. This is the session for our team led by Debbie Stayer to begin brainstorming and planning for an exciting year with this beautiful bible. Please RSVP to [@Debbie Stayer](#) if you plan on being there.

Third. The Rev [Becca Stevens](#) is coming to visit Danville and The Diocese of Central PA. Becca has been featured in The New York Times, on ABC World News and NPR, and was recently named a 2016 CNN Hero and a White House "Champion of Change." She was featured in the PBS

documentary A Path Appears, named Humanitarian of the Year by the Small Business Council of America, and inducted into the Tennessee Women's Hall of Fame.

Becca is one of the finest preachers and motivational speakers I have ever heard. She is the founder and executive director of [Thistle Farms](#) – Thistle Farms is a 2-year residential program, based in Nashville, Tennessee, that provides free housing, food, healthcare, therapy and education to physically and sexually abused women who have survived prostitution, trafficking, and addiction provides Residents and graduates of our residential program are employed in one of our social enterprises and learn new job skills and make a living wage to support themselves.

These women then collaborate to create a supportive sisterhood where they still have access to counseling, education opportunities and emergency financial assistance.

Becca is the Keynote Speaker at The Stevenson School for Ministry's [Called to Heal a Broken World](#) program on Aug.9 and 10. Here is the schedule"

We are planning a picnic/Service September 1st at the Peterson's Father Jim will contact St. Paul's to see if they are interested again. More details to follow.

Senior Warden Report:

Dave thanked everyone for helping while he was non-mobile.

Junior Warden Report:

The toilet near the Pine Street entrance has been repaired.

The front doors (red doors) are scheduled to be repaired in the next week. The windows in the attic of the Rectory will be replaced shortly.

Still awaiting the updated sound system.

Cemetery Committee:

Routine lawn care continues to be provided by Don Dworchak.

Removal of stained glass window from the Edwards Mausoleum done by Angela, Cardinal glass. Angela is doing repair work to window once completed and installed a protective glass will also be installed on the outside of window. First payment has been made to Angela, payment is from the Edwards Trust.

+. A committee meeting is needed to be organized, once I return, to investigate files regarding old sales of lots.

Becky Sutherland Cemetery chairperson

Missions and Outreach:

DONATION

* The agenda items included Ken's request regarding a donation for Trina Eia, who is battling a rare type of cancer and is receiving treatment in Arizona. It was approved to donate \$500 for her out of pocket health insurance costs. The check was distributed to her husband Shane, due to Trina's health condition. I received a thank note from the family prior to them receiving the check, they are very grateful and since then the check has been distributed.

DIAPER BANK SURVEY

* We went over the Diaper Bank survey results. The overwhelming number one need is for the diapers. The second greatest need is for clothing for newborns to 2T. We discussed having an announcement placed in the Cornerstone for donations for clothing between NB to 2T. I will reach out to Doug to add this for the next cornerstone.

FOOD DRIVE

* Summer food drive event - we discussed having an End of Summer Food Drive event, where we could have items bagged and ready for distribution. Susan said it was very helpful to have the bags of food from the previous drive that were leftover available to distribute when someone attending the Diaper Bank presented a need.

CASSIE'S CABINET

* Cassie's Cabinet - I reached out to Sharon Shutovich who graciously accepted to champion the Cassie's cabinet program. I am planning to meet with her to discuss how we can assist in this venture, so details to come.

CLOTH DIAPER PROGRAM

* Cloth Diaper Program - This is a great idea but it was felt that the appropriate avenue for this venture would be through the Vestry.

JUBILIEE MINISTRIES - NONPROFIT MINISTERS TO MEN AND WOMEN INSIDE PRISONS *

Jubilee Ministries (nonprofit organization that ministers to men and women inside prisons) - See attached for more information. This definitely has us intrigued on how we could partner in some way with this

ministry. I am going to reach out to see if I can gather more information to see how best we may be able to assist this ministry, more details to follow.

DREAM BIG

At the last meeting, Doug Cummings, challenged Outreach to Dream Big and to think of how we might be able to pull all the services in the

surrounding area that provide clothing, food, diapers, etc. under one location. A starting point would be to connect with the following organizations/agencies:

* Ministerium - I inquired from Susan about the ministerium she indicated that pastors in the area, meet once a month, she said Sandy O'Rourke could be a possible contact.

* Human Services Coalition - Susan also recommended the Human Services Coalition where representatives from different Geisinger programs, Children and Youth, Diaper Bank meet to discuss what their organizations have been up to that month and learn what services are available and who would be eligible for these services. I am told they meet at 9:00 am the first Thursday of each month in the Montour Room at the Pine Barn.

* Good Samaritan - It was also mentioned to reach out to Ken Ackerman who is on the board of Good Samaritan and Bob Davies who is the Chair.

I would be willing to start these conversations but would like to have someone else attend with me, let me know if you are interested.

MAKE A MEAL

* I spoke with Jen Patterson and we would like to get together and provide a meal for possibly the House of Care. There was a need brought to our attention regarding this. I will be connecting with Jen and share more information regarding this endeavor.

JAIL GARENS

* Susan has been getting the jail gardens established with the raised beds (they look amazing). She will be providing a schedule for dates and times to work on the gardens. You can also see her directly if you are interested.

WORK RELEASE TRANSPORTATION

* There is a small but faithful group that continue to provide transportation for the prisoners that qualify for work release. There is always a need for volunteers so please see Susan if the spirit moves you to be involved in this ministry.

DIAPER BANK TEA

* We would like to host a Tea to benefit the Diaper Bank, in either

July or August. Susan is checking to see what date will work best since these are prime vacation months.

Prison Ministry:

Currently, there are no prisoners on work release. From March through June, Becky, Deb Noll, Tom

and Susan Nunan and Mary Blankenship provided transportation to and from work for 3 prisoners, 5 to 7 days per week.

The jail garden is in full bloom. So far, we have 9 raised beds and 4 inmates to date have helped with the project this summer. We harvested lettuce and broccoli that was much appreciated by those inside. We usually end our garden sessions with prayer, and the inmate's express appreciation for that.

Inmates also come to be "the muscles" at the Diaper Bank. They carry the boxes up from the basement and also assist diaper recipients with getting diapers to their cars.

Diaper Bank Ministry:

The Diaper Bank continues to serve approximately 70 families per week.

We are in summer hours presently: the second Saturday only in June, July and August. We give 4 weeks worth of diapers during the summer. We've shared our diapers with St Mathews in Sunbury and with Women United of the United Way. Because of this, we will most likely need another truckload before the end of the year. A full truckload costs about \$30,000. Currently, the Diaper Bank account has about \$8000 in it. We have applied for grants from the Geisinger and Danville Area Community Foundations and hope they will support us as they have done in the past. We also did not yet use all the money set aside for the Diaper Bank by the Missions and Outreach Committee which if I recall correctly is another \$6000. The other diaper programs plan to order with us and pay for the diapers at our same cost, so we should have enough funding to order 3/4 truckload this Fall.

We had Head Start and Geisinger Nurse Family Partnership man a table at the Diaper Bank and sign up people for their programs.

Regularly, our customers will tell us of people who need prayers or other help, and we fill these needs as best we can.

As always, by God's grace, our true mission is to give Jesus to all involved in these programs.

Treasurers Report:

-The computer dying was a bit of a disaster for financial tracking. We lost a lot of data, and restoring it is going to take a lot of time. All the donation records for the year through mid-June on the computer were lost. I will need to go back to the paper records and input them to get back on track. I will do this as time allows, which so far this summer has been severely lacking. Once school kicks off, I will be able to spend several hours a week getting that information loaded. I did not include a printed report about the budget because the Quickbooks data is missing so many transactions that

it would be worthless. This is another area of reconstituting the data from the paper copies that will take time to get back on track. The good news is that the computer now has an external hard drive that will allow for regular backups that will allow us to recover from another computer death without much fuss.

-I have enquired about getting a Credit Card for the church, but Santander is not accepting any new Credit Card applications until September 7, due to the imminent transfer of the local branch to a new bank, First Commonwealth Bank. If you feel we can wait until then, I think that keeping our accounts at the same financial institution would simplify tracking and paying the card monthly. I know that I have discussed moving us to a new financial institution, but am going to give the new bank the benefit of the doubt and see if their systems are better suited to our needs than Santander's have been.

-We are waiting for Dave Peterson to get well enough to be out and about before changing the signature card at the back and adding Tom to the card. Everyone needs to be present before we can change it, and it is a lengthy process, but we should be able to get it done before Tom has to go back to school.

Old Business:

St. Paul's/CMEC/Christ Church, Berwick/ Mission Mt. Carmel Circle:

Dave and Scott (St. Paul's) have been in contact and are planning our next meeting.

Youth Formation:

Planning for a trip to Washington National Cathedral (Acolyte Day), Saturday October 12th. Will see if Jen is willing to be the contact.

A Year with St. John's Bible:

The team is comprised of members from CMEC (Father Jim Strader-Sasser, Debbie and Glenn Stayer, Greg Harvey, Michelle Walczak, and Erin Ryan) and St. Paul's Bloomsburg (Bryne Lewis).

Saturday August 3, 2019 10:00 am - 3:00 pm - Workshop 1 - lead by Brad Neary

October 1, 2019 - Deep Dive in Collegeville, MN - team members traveling to Minnesota include: Father Jim, Bryne, Debbie and Glenn.

October 18 & 19 - Ministry table at the Diocesan Convention Harrisburg.

Team members to brainstorm month of September.

All members of the congregation are invited to become involved at any level!

Respectfully, Debbie Stayer

Summer Worship Schedule:

We will continue the current schedule with the later service @ 10:30 Am. Flash Mobs/Susquehanna Convocation:

Will be at CMEC August 4th and St. Paul's 8/11th.

New Business:

Convocational Shaped by Faith:

Meeting at St. Andrews Lewisburg July 31th @ 6:00 Pm.

Vestry Nominations for 2020:

It's time to start looking for new Vestry Members for 2020.

Priest in Charge's Letter of Agreement Update:

Father Jim presented a copy of a letter that he had submitted to the Bishop, he intends to leave CMEC by or around the end of 2019.

Closing:

Circle Way Check out and Lord's Prayer

Time and Date of next meeting: September 8th @ 12:00 Noon.

Motion to Adjourn made by Michelle, seconded by Dave, Carried 5/0/0, Adjourned 1:35 Pm.

Submitted by:

David N. Peterson III, SW

October 2019						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
6 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Telling our Bible Stories 9:30 AM Choir 10:00 AM St. John's Bible Team 10:30 AM Eucharist 1:00 PM Blessing of the Animals 2:00 PM Yoking Conversation 2:00 PM Tea and Testament	7 7:00-9:00 PM Frosty Friends (Community Room)	8	9 7:00 PM Penn Writers	10	11	12 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
13 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Telling our Bible Stories 10:30 AM Eucharist 11:45 AM Vestry	14	15	16	17	18 Diocesan Convention	19 Diocesan Convention 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
20 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Telling our Bible Stories 10:30 AM Eucharist	21	22 6:00 PM Way of the Rosary (Altenbach's)	23	24	25	26 10:00-12:00 Trains and Diaper Bank
27 8:00 AM Eucharist 9:00 AM Telling our Bible Stories 10:30 AM Eucharist	28	29	30	31		

