

Faith in Action

Our scripture reading this morning from Deuteronomy is all about our attitudes and heart, our decision making and our desire to live a life for Christ. What does the Lord ask of us? He asks each one of us to have reverence for Him. He asks for our awe and respect. He desires that we walk in His ways, we love Him, that we serve Him with all our heart and with all our soul, and that we observe His commands – all for our own good. Note, not for His good, but for our good!

In Romans we are directed, among other things, to be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. We are to share with those in need and practice hospitality.

I feel like I'm preaching to the choir this morning. We are such an active church. We are devoted to mission and service. Think about it: Larry, Pat, Becca, Mike B., the Zimbabwe team, have served are serving countries far away, making an impact on so many lives.

I don't know about you, but I find that wonderful and a bit intimidating all at the same time! I Larry, Pat and Becca have traveled the world in mission – I don't even have a passport!

Thankfully, lack of a passport is not a problem when it comes to serving God. My mother, in her 90's, sitting in her wheelchair, impaired by MS and several other health conditions, said, "Everyone can do something – even if its just opening your door to provide a place for a Bible study, letting the members make their own coffee and grab a store-bought cookie."

So, where are we? I'd like to share some of my own journey by reading an article I wrote for our church newsletter in July, 2007. I believe Phil Wood was the editor in chief of the newsletter, and Marianne wrote a few articles for it too.

The purpose of the article was to encourage people in our church to get more involved. We currently have a congregation in which most of us are active – but there may be opportunities to expand! We passed out the 2025 Organizational Chart along with the bulletins today. Virtually every activity, committee, and group is listed, along with the person in charge of each thing. We encourage you to

spend some time going over it. See if there is something listed you would like to get involved in! Its also a good resource to keep around if you have a question or idea and aren't sure who to contact.

Marilyn's Thoughts

(Written for the church newsletter in July, 2007)

I would like to encourage everyone to get more involved in our church. Join a ministry team or a group, teach someone something or bring a cookie to church.

Don't stop reading now! I have done these things, and they have been a blessing to me. Now, this may come as a shock – I have a confession to make. I am far from perfect! Now you know. What's amazing is that in spite of my imperfection, the people on these teams actually seem to enjoy having me there. Let me tell you why that is so surprising.

Seventeen years ago (now 36 years ago!) I decided to join the choir. Notice that in all of those years I have never sung a solo. There is a very good reason for that! However, every week when I walk into choir practice five minutes late, everyone waves, smiles, and welcomes me! They have become my second family.

When I was asked to serve as an elder several years back, I'm quite sure no one realized I had not actually balanced my personal checkbook in years (now decades!) or that I didn't know what the structure of the Presbyterian Church government was – I had barely figured out how to spell Presbyterian! Yet, at every meeting when I walked in five minutes late, all of the other elders waved, smiled and welcomed me! I learned that the Lord equipped me for every meeting, and it was an experience that enriched my life.

"Someone at church asked you to be a Deacon?" my family asked incredulously. Obviously, the Nominating Committee did not realize that one of the running jokes in my family is my complete lack of "bedside manner." I usually tell people to stop whining, suck it up, and get back to business! I think I get this from my mother.

My husband and children were also worried that I might try to prepare a meal for another family in my role as a Deacon. My idea of home cooked is to go to Safeway and look for pre-packaged or prepared foods with the label "Home-Cooked" on them. Never the less, every month when I walked into the Deacon's

meeting five minutes late, everyone waved, smiled and welcomed me. They also became like family, and I learned a little bedside manner-a little.

Over the years I have served in many capacities in the church. Here's the thing. I am not specifically qualified for any of these jobs. Most often I didn't feel a "call to serve." Please don't use the excuse, "That is not one of my gifts." While that may be true, I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone once in a while. You may be surprised. You may find a new passion! Remember, God will come through for you. Hebrews 13: 20-21 says, "May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen"

So don't worry. God will give you the mind and skills you need. After all, if He can bring Jesus back from the dead and give us eternal life, He certainly is able to teach each of us how to serve. Step out, say yes – hold your breath- and wait to see what God will do to you (and through you). You'll just love the makeover!

Most recently, Phil Wood asked me to join the EPC Marketing Team. He actually knew what he was getting into, but he asked me anyway. He patiently reminds me to read my e-mail every couple of weeks so I can get back with information he needed a week ago. When I walked into the meeting ON TIME last month, he gasped in surprise. Everyone else, those who don't know me as well, just waved, smiled and welcomed me.

Get out there and join in. You'll meet new people, or really get to know old ones, and they'll welcome you!

Missions and Ministries of EPC

1. Journeymen men's bible study group- The group has been meeting since around 2003. We first met at Gary Sullivan's office at 5:30am on Fridays. Over the years our name has changed and some of them were "League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Tough Guys, EPC Men's Bible Study and now the Journeymen. We meet each Saturday morning at 7am in the Manse. We are out for the summer but will resume October 4th. Please let Phil or I know if you would like to attend. You can attend in person or by Zoom. We still have Kevin Wood and Dan McGrath attending via Zoom.
2. EPM- Elizabeth Presbyterian Men's group. We meet the first Saturday of the month at 9am in the church basement for breakfast and fellowship. All men of the church are invited to attend. You are welcome to bring a friend as well. EPM discusses the needs of the church and sets projects to repair or enhance our facilities often through our donations. We also assist other groups with event setup, assisting church members with small projects, perform snow removal at the church and so on. The group has really come together, and the men of the church have become much closer.
3. EPC Car Show- This is my favorite event that we do. It has really become a major event in the community and one EPC is known for. The Chariots of Fire Car Show is the third Sunday of Sept and goes from 11-1:30. We expect to have 100 cars this year.
4. AA is a mission we have sponsored since 1976. They have been meeting in our church basement every Tuesday and Friday nights since then. It is the oldest standing room in the State. They often have 30 people on Tuesdays and more than 45 on Fridays. They say they can feel the power of God when they come down the stairs. These meetings have changed hundreds of lives over the year. We should be very proud to be able to sponsor them.
5. Boy Scouts. The Boy Scouts used to meet at our church for many years. While they no longer meet here, we do have a storage shed and allow them to park their trailer by the Shed.
6. American Legion. We support the Legion, and they support us. We have a parking agreement with them to park their trailer by our shed. They also use our north parking lot for their events. They in return allow us to use their building for events when needed.