

## UPDATE FROM PASTOR ANDY

I have had the opportunity over the last 3 months to have multiple interactions with the phone company in Maryland. You might be thinking, "I don't think that's what he really meant to say – he probably meant he's been really frustrated in dealing with the phone company." Well, you're right! I've been trying since July to get the landline service disconnected at what was my mother's house. They got the internet service cancelled on the first phone call in July – but bills continue to come in for the landline. Three times I've called in the request, and three times they've failed to discontinue it. I had to make the fourth call this morning, which led to an opportunity. I had to choose between letting all of my frustration out, or to have God use this as an opportunity to cause me to grow in grace.

While we live in this fallen world companies and governments will fail us and/or make bad decisions. And those things can really frustrate us, especially when we simply can't ignore it because it negatively affects us. (If you don't understand that, try volunteering to have your tax return audited and then talk with me afterwards!) The important question from an eternal perspective is not necessarily whether the wrong is corrected. Now, I'm not saying that it may not need to be fixed. Sometimes it does. But given that this world will one day be completely re-created, the eternal significance is how we react and what the person we're dealing with sees in us. At the end of the day, it's a person that is made in God's image that we are going to be talking with.

Talking about this in our staff meeting today, one person said it's helpful to remember who we are in Christ. I think that is true. We are (2 Cor 5:17) a new creation, being restored each day in his image. Therefore, we have been entrusted with his message of reconciliation (v.19), we are his ambassadors (v.20), we understand that this is still the favorable day of salvation (6:2) and seek to not put obstacles in people's way as his servants (6:3-8). I wish I did this perfectly, but it's helpful to me to remember that everyone I talk to, no matter what the situation, is a person made in God's image and a person that I am representing Jesus to. That doesn't mean that we roll over on everything. But the way we express ourselves carries eternal significance. You and I have the privilege of displaying Jesus – not only do we have the privilege, but God has also sent the Holy Spirit so that the same power that raised us in Christ also is working in us so that we would display him! Might that poor customer service person that has had countless angry calls from frustrated people see something different in us, or the weary government worker hear kindness in the midst of a complaint, and perhaps ask why?

The other thing that helped me think about this was a short article I read this week by a man named Jim Elliff. He was writing about the outer darkness and utter misery of hell. His thoughts were sobering. It would be impossible to gain any kind of relief by thinking of a pleasure in this current life, because there would be no hope of ever enjoying that again. Elliff writes, "Every joy is an eternal pain – a reminder of what will never be." Could we imagine such a place? A place with no hope, where there will never be any glimmer of mercy or kindness for all eternity. You and I don't know whom God will save – what if the person we want to unload on will never repent? Again, quoting Elliff, "I will be kind to those who will never repent, for these few years on earth bring to them the last mercies they will ever know".

That's why I came to look at that call today with the phone company as an opportunity of eternal significance. In fact, every meeting with anyone is just that. An opportunity ordained by our God who has written our days. An opportunity given by our Savior who has loved us so much that he delivered us from darkness and made us ambassadors. An opportunity to reflect Jesus Christ to others, that he might open their eyes now, and to show mercy in the same way he showed mercy to us. May all of our words with others show His mercy and grace.

Grace and peace,

Andy

### TWO NEEDS IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Deacons are aware of two needs for help in our church body:

- The Genovese family is looking for someone who could provide a temporary home for Christine's father's dog. Her father is in the hospital with a serious illness for an unknown length of time, and his house is too far away for the family to make multiple trips a day to feed and walk the dog.
- An older couple could use help once a week with cleaning – an injury has laid up one spouse, and the other is handling all of the care and household chores. If we could add one or two more people, each person would only need to help once a month.

A couple of you have already offered – thank you! If you can help with either, please talk with someone on our Diaconal Mercy Team (Bob Rineer, Chris Sharp, Ray Shade) or see Andy.

### WOMEN'S STUDIES RESUMING IN OCTOBER

The women of Faith Church are excited to start Bible studies again this fall! There will be two studies, one on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at 6:30 PM; the second on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday mornings at 9:00 AM starting October 14<sup>th</sup>. It isn't too late to join one! Our women have found that these studies provide time to study, pray, and develop deeper relationships especially discussing how to grow as women in Christ. If you have questions, please ask Frankie Bennett, Kathy Pickens, Donna Shirk, or Joann Rineer.

### NEEDLEWORKERS RESUME OCTOBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

Do you enjoy knitting, crocheting, or needleworking? Are you looking for a time to be an encouragement and be encouraged yourself with others in Christ? Would you like to help serve local ministries like Pregnancy Resources at Cornerstone, New Hope Counseling Center, or LGH's New Beginnings by making items to donate to them? Then we have a group for you! The Needleworkers will resume on Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm (note the new time) at the Raber's home at 221 Slate Lane in Quarryville. If you don't have patterns or yarn, not to worry – we can provide that. Contact Carolyn at 717.786.6840 for more information.

### NEW HOPE COUNSELING CENTER EVENT

Save the evening of October 28th to attend the "New Hope Chest" – an evening to support the ministry of the New Hope Counseling Center. This is a local ministry that we support and encourage you to participate in. New Hope provides a mental health ministry that complements the work done in churches to bring health and point clients ultimately to Jesus Christ. You can learn more about how God is using this ministry, enjoy food provided by several local businesses, and participate in a silent auction. The event is at Providence Church (269 Cinder Road) – drop in anytime between 5 and 8 PM. Tickets are \$20 (\$10 for children 5-10 years old). You can order tickets in advance at [www.newhopeministry.info](http://www.newhopeministry.info) or calling 717.786.2802.