

CLARKTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

Volume 20, No. 4

June 2015

From the Pastor

*...after [Jesus] had dismissed the crowds,
he went up the mountain by himself to pray.
When evening came, he was there alone...*

Matthew 14:23

Grace to you all, and peace, in the name of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ--

I got home last night (this morning?) at 2:30 am from the Presbyterian CREDO conference for recently ordained pastors. I use the term "conference" loosely here, because CREDO was one part conference, one part retreat, and one part summer camp for pastors. CREDO is designed to help pastors at different points in their careers find balance and wholeness in five areas of life: physical, mental/emotional, spiritual, vocational, and financial.

The word "credo" is Latin for "I believe." But in a deeper sense, it means, "I give my heart." The "goal" of this conference, if there is such a thing, was the creation of a personal Rule of Life that will help keep us centered in and connected to God as we seek to give not just our hearts, but our whole lives to him, in service to the Church. Throughout the week, but especially on the last night of worship, as we shared our Rules of Life in part or whole, certain themes emerged in this group of twenty-nine pastors who are men and women doing all sorts of ministry, from north, south, east, and west, and even from other countries.

What stood out the most to me-- and it certainly informed my own Rule of Life-- is that we are people who seek to share, in word, deed, and sacrament, God's grace that is unearned and undeserved, and God's love that is unconditional. And yet almost every one of us struggles to show that same grace and unconditional love to ourselves. This may come as a shock (although it also may not), but we pastors are a neurotic, compulsive bunch of people! At CREDO, I met young pastor-types who, even though they've only been doing ordained ministry for 5 or fewer years, have been chewed up and spit out, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually broken by the churches they've served, but who are still seeking to give their hearts and their lives in service to God and the

church, willing to have their hearts broken again and again.

And let me be completely honest here, this is heart-breaking work. Pastors are called to walk with people (in many congregations, hundreds of people) through all the seasons of their lives, bearing their pain, anger, fear, anxiety, as well as bearing for them the promise that they are beloved children of God, and that nothing in life or in death can ever separate them from the love of God. This is hard, demanding, exhausting work, but it's also holy work, and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

But it does take its toll on the minds, hearts, and souls of the people called to it. Which is why CREDO was so wonderfully rejuvenating. We pastor-types spend so much time and energy caring for other people, but so often neglect our own self-care. Because most of the 29 of us at CREDO flew to Louisiana, the faculty kept using the image of that mask that will drop from the ceiling of the aircraft if the cabin de-pressurizes. Confession time: I'm usually immersed in a book or listening to music while the flight attendants give the safety instructions. But what they say there is that you should get your own mask on before helping your neighbor with theirs.

That's what CREDO was about, and that's what our Rules of Life are about: making sure that we stay connected to the source of life so that we can better serve God and the communities to which we've been called. Throughout the Gospels, we frequently see Jesus retreat to a solitary place to pray; to care for his own spirit after ministering to large groups of people. This is what I've tried to build into my Rule of Life: a decrease in "busy-ness," and a healthy balance between meaningful work and self-care. Over these summer months, I pray that you, too, will find ways to care for your own soul; to put on your own mask and make sure that you are connected to the source of life.

Shalom, y'all!

Andy

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(h) 910-519-9009

(c) 908-235-2619

Session Members

George Barber - 645-6695 Greg Brown – 647-0367
Johnny Cox – 647-2251 Julie Cox - 647-2751
Chuck Heustess – 645-6631 Dan Ward – 647-7357
Linda Clark – 645-4509 Lynn Clark – 647-3951

Roxane is in the Office:

Monday and Thursday – 8:30 am to 2:30 pm
Wednesday – 8:30 am to 11:30 am

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women food item for the Bladen Crisis Center is **canned vegetables**.



JUNE CALENDAR

21– Father’s Day
15 -18 VBS
15-18 Bladen Youth Mission Project

June Service

Flowers: 7 – Cheryl Russ (Communion)
14 – Allison Priest
21 – Kathy Wilkes
28 – Candice Ward

Nursery: 7 – Allison and Karli Priest
14 – Wendy, Lauren, and Addie Bowen
21 – Candice Ward and Emma Turbeville
28 – Regan McAulay and Kate Watts

Acolyte: Emma Turbeville

Greeters: Pat Meshaw, Jane Minard

Ushers: Bud McAulay, Greg Brown
Morris Rivenbark, Terry McEwen

Children’s Sermons: 7 – Denette Jackson
14 – JoAnn Cox
21 – Linda Rivenbark
28 – Linda Clark

Take Note

On Father's Day, Sunday June 21st, immediately following worship, we will be dedicating the dogwood tree that was planted outside Fellowship Hall in honor of Ian Smith.

****Barium Springs and Grandfather Home for Children** have merged, forming one of the largest child service providers in NC. The organization's new name is Children's Hope Alliance. Find more at www.ChildrensHopeAlliance.org.

Take the time to check out the church website www.clarktonpres.org

****You can sign-Up for Presbytery Email at** presbycc.org/latest-news/enews/

For the summer months, you are invited to come to worship in whatever way is most comfortable to you. For some this may be a suit and tie or dress and heels; for others it may be shorts and flip-flops. No matter how you are dressed, you are a beloved child of God and are welcome here.

In our Prayers

Kerry Priest, Emily Owen, Billy Whitehead, Jimmy Whitehead, Linda Howell, Ronald Tuton, Rebecca and Happy Lashlee, Marvin Burney, John and Mary Ward, Marion Hardee, Shirley McDonald, Eunice Singletary, Giles McAulay, Gerry Carey, Cody Clark, Bonnie Britt, Cheryl Brisson, Ken Boykin, Arsula Williamson, Brad Zimmerman, Donald Grainger, Glenda Nobles, Kelly Smith, Bill Jackson

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU

Our choirs will be taking a well-deserved break for the summer, so we're looking for musically-inclined folks to help us glorify God through song for these months. If you can sing or play an instrument, and would be willing to lend your talent to our worship one (or a few) Sunday(s), please contact JoAnn Cox.

Vacation Bible School

**Join us for Vacation Bible School
June 15-18 from 9 a.m. until 12
noon
as we make our:**



Pre-school through rising 6th graders are welcome. VBS will be staffed primarily by youth participating in Mission 2015. We do still need a few adults to help supervise.

Please call

Allison Priest at 645-4669 or Linda Clark at 645-4509 if you can help. If your children will be participating, please call the church office at 647-2341 or Allison or Linda.

Clarkton Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 663
Clarkton, North Carolina 28433

Active Life Sunday

Sunday, June 28, has been designated by the PC(USA) as the first "**Active Life Sunday!**" This is an initiative that grew out of the mission of Team Sweaty Sheep (a non-traditional community ministry I worked with in Louisville), that seeks to encourage, inspire, and resource congregations and communities to get healthy. In a press release, my friend and colleague, Rev. Alex Becker, said of Active Life Sunday, "we hope to see churches that really care about how physically healthy their neighbors are; churches that love to play together and go out into the community to play; churches that are radically inclusive of people with all kinds of bodies; churches that can't sit still in their community and have to get the whole Body of Christ moving; churches where fellow Christians aren't treated like brains on a stick, but as people whose lives, souls, and even bodies are gifts from God." I hope that we can dream together of how we might use our whole lives-- hearts, minds, spirits, and bodies-- to serve and worship our Creator.
--Andy

