

THE POWER OF A PROMISE

Beloved, if you attended the January 26th Annual Budget Meeting, what follows will not surprise you. If you were unable to be with us, please know I share these thoughts so all members and friends of CCB will have the same information and the same request for prayer.

After much prayer and contemplation, I have decided to conclude my tenure with Community Church **toward the end of 2021**. By the time the end of 2021 rolls around (23 months from now), I will have been the pastor of this marvelous Church for almost 15 years, and I will be 65 years of age.

When I arrived at Community Church in February, 2007, I came with confidence because I felt God calling me to **this** Church, and I felt God's promise of provision, peace, and permission to pastor with joy and with you as my partners in all things. The power of God's promise has been made real during my years with CCB.

But that is not the only promise made real. Each time a new member joins our faith community, we share in their arrival by making a promise. We promise to hold each other in prayer, and we promise that each new member's welfare and concerns are now our own. That promise of connection, communion, and cooperation binds us together and makes us more than a church. It makes us an authentic faith community or as Jayne Majzan would say, *a family of friends, living out our faith*.

And, there are two more promises. The first I made during my early years in jest. When I arrived, I joked that if I stayed 15 years, CCB would be 175, and I would be 65. This seemed to me to be a perfect time to celebrate our lives together and to ride off into the sunset (cue, Happy Trails). Though I was proposing this timeline, somewhat tongue in cheek, it seems that life is stranger than fiction, and now this timing seems appropriate.

Finally, and this is maybe the most important promise of all; God loves CCB, God loves me, and God loves the next pastor whom the Divine One has already chosen. And, because of God's love, His promises to us are sure. The promise that God will never leave us, or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6), and he will supply all of our needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ, Jesus (Philippians 4:19) is powerful and true.

I am confident in CCB's future, confident because the good work Christ has begun in you will continue (Philippians 1:6). Additionally, the Strategic Planning Committee is hard at work, gathering the data necessary to build a clear and compelling profile to share with interested candidates. The Committee will take the balance of the year to hear from you and to build that profile, beginning a search process in late 2020, or early 2021.

Between now and the time of my anticipated departure, we have approximately two years to pray, plan, play, and share in one another's lives fully and joyfully. I welcome any questions, but even more, I welcome your prayers. I am excited about all God has in store for Community Church, Andre, and me. Blessings friends. Now, let us go forward into the future God has laid before us.



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FEBRUARY
NEWSLETTER 2020

Letting Go

Jayne Majzan, Moderator



As I was considering the concept of not only a new year, but a new decade, I began thinking about “letting go”. Now I know for some that may conjure up an image of a very blonde & cold (maybe even frozen?) animated character singing, I was thinking about the larger idea of letting go and moving forward.

Though age and experience may make it easier to let go and start some sort of forward movement, allowing yourself to look to the future with optimism and excitement may be difficult to achieve.

In an edition of “The Huffington Post,” contributor Jennifer Twardowski explains some simple ways to master the art of letting go. She says our tendency to focus on “what used to be” and idealistically hold on to the past can make us believe we had everything we ever wanted. This belief can ultimately cause us more problems, as it does not encourage growth or help us move forward.

In order to find the balance between grieving what we may have lost and focusing on where we want to go, we may want to consider the following ideas:

Pay tribute. You can do this in a number of different ways. Write down your thoughts about this person or situation in a journal. Share what you valued about the relationship and then either send it or keep it for yourself. If the person has passed, leave the note in a place that will remind you of that person. You could also create a photo album or scrapbook to help you cherish those memories.

Focus on what you need – not what others think you need. Don't push yourself to do anything because someone told you to. Don't listen to what other people "think you need" but rather listen to what you KNOW you need.

Focus on what you are gaining. We've all heard the adage: when one door closes another door opens. Whether it be the end of a relationship, job, or the unfortunate passing of someone close to you, there *is* always another door that opens. Focus on the opportunities that you have.

Ultimately, remember that tomorrow is another day. Life is a journey and *even though one day may be very difficult for you, know that with each new day brings the opportunity for a completely new experience.* Start each new day – and this new decade – fresh by looking forward to all the new opportunities.

“The only thing a person can ever really do is keep moving forward. Take that big leap forward without hesitation, without once looking back. Simply forget the past and forge toward the future.” Alyson Noel



A heartfelt THANK YOU to my faith family and to my God.

As many of you know I love to go ‘Up North’. One of the things I love most about vacationing in a rural community is the vast openness of the fields, and the many animals and plant life that can be found.

On the property I go to, as often as I am able, there is a gazebo that I love to sit in.

The reasons are many—I love to watch the animal life- deer, fox, not the chipmunks, saunter, run and freely live in the landscape. And to see the owls, the eagles, and the hawks soar. The other reason is that I love the breezes in my face which encourage me to close my eyes and smell the sweet pine.

On January 1st my devotion was based upon Acts 2:2. The NIV version reads like this, “Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.”

My personal understanding of this passage is that it is describing how the Holy Spirit is a wind. Thus when I see the eagles, the hawks, even some of the animals soar, I wonder if this is how God works. And I ask myself as I begin this new year, am I allowing God to work in my life? Am I spreading my wings and catching the wind currents, allowing God to work in and through me intentionally each and every day, regardless of the circumstances?

As 2020 begins I want to let you now that I am thankful for a new year, another opportunity to do God’s will. To know I am covered by His love and grace. This year I am going to be intentional in my service to Him. Each day to pay a kindness forward, each day to share His love through word or deed. And so, I want to begin by thanking each of you for your support, your prayers, your wisdom, your involvement, and your gift to me this year. Your kindness and generosity touch my spirit. Thank you for allowing me to spend another year seeing how God can move mountains and create spaces for our youth and children, to see God in action in such a place as ours. I can hardly wait to see what God has planned.

My prayer is that I continue to ask God to take me and us to new and exciting places. I pray that this year as we do ministry intentionally each and every day together, that we are not sitting on the fencepost or worse yet, sitting on an electric fence LOL, and that we will not be afraid to spread our wings. Thank you again for the opportunity, the generous gift, and the blessing of working and praying with amazing people.

In Christ and fellowship with you. Dr. Samira El-Yasir



LEARNING FROM OTHERS AS WE TRAVEL TOGETHER ALONG THE WAY

Alaine F. McNulty

John Harrod was my freshman High school English teacher and mentor, encouraging me in my study of Art Therapy and so much more. He grew up in very rural Owen County, Kentucky, and, after being a Rhodes Scholar and traveling broadly, he returned to live and work in the community of his birth. Recently, just prior to the Kentucky Gubernatorial election, he posted the following comments. He invited his students to think and to act based on their thoughts. His words remind me of the power of our minds to grapple with complex and sometimes competing ideas. I read his letter to Pastor Zina, and she asked if I might share it. I asked Mr. Harrod's permission, and he granted us access to his words. May they remind us how precious is our capacity to think and choose.

As we approach another election, I always like to stir up some discussion with my former students wherever they may be. I would like to deconstruct a couple of blatant lies that have become so commonplace that the mere repetition of the catchphrases dulls our senses and we come to accept them without thinking.

Socialism - The mention of the word is supposed to evoke images of Stalin and make us terribly afraid. But nothing proposed by any Democrat except for maybe Bernie Sanders is socialism. The government helping people who need help is not socialism. Making sure that everyone has affordable health care is not socialism. Making sure that all children, rich or poor, have good schools with dedicated and well-paid teachers, enough counselors to address the many social and familial problems that walk through the door every day, and small enough class sizes that every kid gets the individual attention they need - that's not socialism. So, however, you decide to vote, don't base it on that. Every time you hear the word socialism, know that you are being scammed and your intelligence is being questioned.

Abortion - This is another buzz word that is designed to appeal to emotion and eclipse all other issues and get your vote before you think about anything else. This is certainly one of the most painful of the controversial issues that face us (race being the other). Whatever you may think about it, the Supreme Court will not overturn Roe v. Wade any time soon. States may whittle away at it by making it less available but in spite of the rhetoric, the woman's right to choose will remain in place for the foreseeable future. And however, we may feel about it, this does not mean we are an evil people who are bound to incur God's wrath. No matter how passionately one may feel, there are two weaknesses in the anti-choice argument. One, it is open to debate just when to declare an embryo that remains a part of the mother's body a viable human being with all the rights that implies. Reasonable people can disagree about this. Two, we should recognize that sex is not always consensual. Rape is underreported for a variety of reasons that should be obvious to anyone who thinks about it. Even in marriage sex may not be consensual. Witness the alarming rise in the number of cases of spousal abuse, which is probably just the tip of the iceberg. So, who really knows what happened? The government cannot know. Only the woman knows, the one who has to bear the child. You may believe it's wrong, but this could be a private space where the mother has to bear the burden of her choice.

My intent is not to take a side on this issue that troubles me too. It is rather to remove it from the top of the list of things that can and should be solved by one election.

I love and respect all my former students and know you will not all vote one way. You well know my tendencies, but I especially value the principled conservatives among you who made me a better person. Vote with your heart and your brain, and whoever wins; let's make sure the turnout is large enough to provide a mandate. And afterward we can go back to work doing all the things that need to be done that the government won't do.

Pastor Zina here. May we seek out various opinions as we form ours. Thank you, Mr. Harrod for sharing yours.

LEARNING FROM OTHERS AS WE TRAVEL TOGETEHR ALONG THE WAY

Thoughts from George Wills



George Frederick Will is an American conservative political commentator. He writes regular columns for *The Washington Post* and provides commentary for NBC News and MSNBC. In 1986, *The Wall Street Journal* called him "perhaps the most powerful journalist in America,"

In 2005 George Wills, authored an article for *Newsweek*. In it he said, "*The more we appreciate the complexity and improbability of everyday things; the more we can understand the role that accidents, contingencies, and luck have played in bringing the human story to its current chapter. And the more we understand the vast and mysterious indeterminacy of things, the more suited we will be to participate in writing the next chapter. . . .*

This is so because the greatest threat to civility — and ultimately to civilization — is an excess of certitude. The world is much menaced just now by people who think that the world and their duties in it are clear and simple... It has been well said that the spirit of liberty is the spirit of not being too sure that you are right. One way to immunize ourselves against misplaced certitude is to contemplate — even to savor — the unfathomable strangeness of everything, including ourselves."

As we enter the season when politics will take over our televisions and take up too much space in our national and personal discourse, how can we benefit from Will’s words. Where might we be skeptical? Where might we question? Of what will we be certain? What will we hold as the unfathomable strangeness; what will we hold as unquestionable truth?

As men and women of faith, we are called to hold to the truth, as best we understand it, drawn from the words and life of Jesus. What do you understand as his truth? On what do you stand as certain, based on what you have learned from the Savior. And please be sure to indicate not only personal truths but, truths as they apply to society and the world in which we live I invite you to make a list of the things you believe are the essential truths of the Gospel.

These truths become the strands of the sieve through which we strain all we believe. They become our test for veracity. As Alayne’s teacher reminds us, let us think, parse, and contemplate before we decide, before we move forward, before we become too certain. Thank you Mr. Harrod. Thank you Mr. Will. Now, may we take what will guide us well and leave what will not as we enter the election season. May God guide us.

Pastor Zina

ENGAGING IN THE 40 DAYS OF LENT



During the Season of Lent we have many activities planned. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us as often as you can.

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

In 2008, I developed a Lenten Journal for daily reflection. Twelve years later, the devotion still speaks to the journey through Lent. So, after a bit of tweaking to bring it in line with our current Lenten Theme, *In the Shadow of the Cross*, we will again share this devotional as we move through the days of Lent. It will be available the Sunday before Ash Wednesday

LENTEN REFLECTION DAYS

During the season of Lent, we will offer three opportunities to reflect on the *Weight of the Cross and the Strength that it Yields*. Each of these experiences is designed to invite the participants into a deeper understanding of suffering and the strength that can result from an experience of suffering.

The Weight of Evil and the Strength That It Yields - Saturday, March 14

A visit to the Illinois Holocaust Museum. We will be joined by our friends from St. Michael's Episcopal Church. Time TBD

The Weight of Racism and the Strength That It Yields- Thursday, March 26

A Showing of the movie, *Just Mercy* and a time of discussion. Location to be determined.

The Weight of Our Lives and the Strength That is Being Yielded – Saturday, April 4

We will gather at Pastor Zina's Home (if fewer than 15 people) or CCB and we will consider what it is to be strengthened by the challenges in our own lives.

ASH WEDNESDAY – February 26, 2020

Salem United Methodist Church

Come with us into the season of Lent as we receive ashes and hear the words of Scripture on a night that reminds us of our mortality and Christ's hope for us. Along with our friends from St. Paul, we will gather at Salem United Methodist, 115 West Lincoln. There will be a community choir gathering for rehearsal at 6 pm. All who wish to sing as part of the service are welcome. Dinner will be served from 5:30 – 6:45. The cost for supper is a \$5 donation per person, with no more than \$15 per family. All are invited and welcomed.

MAUNDY THURSDAY – April 9, 2020

Community Church – 7:00 – 8:15 PM

Join your brothers and sisters from St. Paul UCC and Salem United Methodist for an evening, retracing Jesus' steps on the fateful night when he instituted the Supper, trusted his disciples to receive his teaching, was betrayed, and arrested. This night will invite you to place yourself in the moment, as if you were there. Before the service, dinner will be served 5:30 – 6:45. The cost for the soup supper is a \$5 donation per person, with no more than \$15 per family. All are invited and welcomed.

GOOD FRIDAY – In the Shadow of the Cross

Friday, April 10, 2020 – 8:00 PM

Community Church – Fellowship Hall

Join us for a one-hour observance of Good Friday. Through word, music, silence, and prayer we will consider what it feels like when hope seems far away and when night falls hard upon our souls. All are welcome to this observance of a night we call good.

Pastor Zina



*Take Up
Your Cross, Daily,
And
Come
With
Me*

It seems to me, when something is repeated in all three Synoptic Gospels; it takes on an added sense of importance. Each Gospel writer speaks to a particular community with specific needs. However, when all the early followers of this man named Jesus receive the same message, I want to understand it as fully as I can.

In Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34 and Luke 9:23 (along with Matthew 10:38 and Luke 14:27) Jesus says to those who would follow him, some version of, *take up your cross and come with me*. What was Jesus asking of those 1st-century followers? What is he asking of us? What cross/crosses might we bear, and how might we do so?

Though I first published these thoughts in October 2019, I want to remind you of a request. During Lent, I want to adorn the Narthex board with a wide array of crosses. I have been purchasing them as I travel, and as I see them in thrift stores, Tuesday Morning and other such places. If you will join me I would welcome you to loan CCB crosses that we might hang on the bulletin board. They can be any size from a few inches in length to whatever you can carry. If you want to donate a cross or two to the Church, lovely. However, we promise, if you allow us to borrow crosses, we will care for them and return them to you after Easter (please no heirlooms or family treasures). Be sure to affix your name to the back of the cross if you would like it to be returned. We would need them to be in our possession by February 21st. And, thank you, Vikki Merchant, for being the first to loan me a cross.

I hope to collect a wide array of colors, shapes, sizes, and designs. The crosses we hang will represent the different crosses we carry, individually, as a community of faith, and as a member of the worldwide body of Christ. And then, when Lent begins (Ash Wednesday is February 26th, 2020) we will, together, consider what it means for 21st century Christians to do as Jesus commanded in each of the Synoptic Gospels, take up the cross and follow.

Together, with You, Pastor Zina

An Update Movement in the United Methodist Church

Pastor Zina

Most of you know, my theological degrees are from a Methodist Seminary (Boston University). My years at BU allowed me to form lasting and deep relationships with many Methodist colleagues. Also, I share in ministry in Barrington with two esteemed United Methodist colleagues Rev. Chris Winkler (Barrington United Methodist) and Rev Laura Barkley (Salem United Methodist). I respect and appreciate both of these leaders.

Baptists, unlike Methodists, are organized under a “congregational” structure (i.e., polity). This means we are free, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of Holy Scriptures, to govern each Baptist Church, independently. However, Methodists are organized under an “episcopal” structure, meaning they have a Bishop and operate under a set of guidelines and rules that govern the *worldwide* Methodist Church. The Book of Discipline is the document that governs our Methodist brothers and sisters.



The decisions our Methodist friends are seeking to make regarding who may pastor, and who may not, have caused deep division and pain. But on January 3rd, 2020, a new way, not a perfect way, became possible. The following paragraphs are adapted from the *United Methodist News Service*. They are copied from the UMC website to offer a glimpse into the deliberations of our sister church. I offer it in this newsletter because many of you have asked what I know of the recent developments in the United Methodist Church. I offer the following excerpts as

a request for prayer. Please pray for our Methodist brothers and sisters as they seek to make the best decision for the Methodist Church, local and universal.

FROM THE UNITED METHODIST NEWS SERVICE

On January 3rd, a 16-member group of United Methodist bishops and other leaders offered the "Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation" proposal to preserve The United Methodist Church while allowing for a new traditionalist-minded denomination. Sixteen United Methodists gathered around a table and began the hard task of pushing a 48-year-old elephant out of the room. Led by an expert mediator and two other accomplished lawyers, the group came in representing members from distinct viewpoints over the decades-long feud over homosexuality.

The final meeting took place in the Washington law offices of Kirkland & Ellis. When things got tough, Bishop John K. Yambasu, Sierra Leone, stopped and called for prayer. Walking into the mediation, most did not think it was possible for all to agree on a way forward. “Peacemaking is hard work,” said the Rev. Tom Berlin, who represented centrist groups in the talks. “The real story is the mediation process allowed

Working with Kenneth Feinberg, a famous lawyer-mediator, the negotiating team — consisting of bishops and advocacy group leaders from markedly different perspectives on LGBTQ inclusion — arrived at a plan that would let traditionalist-minded United Methodist churches separate to form a new denomination, keeping their properties and getting \$25 million in United Methodist funds.

The plan is still being drafted as legislation for the 2020 General Conference, set for May 5-15 in Minneapolis. Delegates there would have to give their approval. However, the plan holds the possibility of ending decades of denominational infighting and avoiding the kind of litigation other dividing mainline Protestant churches have experienced.

Many have questioned why the traditionalists are leaving. Patricia Miller, representing traditionalists and director of the Confessing Movement, said the results of the protocol reflect many concessions, but “when you love something you make sacrifices.” Miller said she uses the analogy of the Judgment of Solomon in which he is asked to rule between two women claiming to be the mother of a child. “We are not surrendering the position of The United Methodist Church. We are making a sacrifice to preserve what the Church has believed and practiced for all these years,” she said. She said the conflict within the Church over LGBTQ inclusion is a “heartbreak.” “I see traditionalists as loving the church and tired of seeing the destruction,” she said. “Some think changing the church is more important than unity of the church and the traditionalists believe that we need to stop the battle.”

The Rev. David Meredith, a gay pastor representing progressives, said he is still “awestruck” that the group’s members representing distinct viewpoints — who have not been able to reach an agreement up to this point — walked away with just that. “With the help of an outside negotiator and the movement of the spirit, we found unanimous agreement on shared sacrifice and shared benefit,” he said. Participants in the meetings have said the separation of the Church is a painful decision.

“Separation is not something I wanted, it pains me. I have worked very hard in the last year to keep us together,” said Bishop Cynthia Harvey in a video produced by the Louisiana Conference. Harvey was one of the U.S. bishops in the mediation team. “It is not perfect, I don’t think anyone would say 100 percent ‘I won,’ but it is give and take,” she said. “It brought tears to my eyes when we reached that moment when 16 of us could agree.”

The collaborative process will only work when each person is as concerned about helping others as they are concerned about their own viewpoints, Berlin said. “You can’t just make the sacrifice, you have to celebrate that others are getting the things they need,” he said. Berlin said the prior Special General Conference established everyone’s viewpoints. It was an experience no one wanted to repeat, he said. A mediator was something that had never been tried. “But we knew doing this as a political process was going to lead to something similar to the prior conference outcome and that would be wounding for so many.” He said Feinberg offering his services was “God’s provision.”

Meredith believes this protocol is a watershed moment. He doesn’t see the plan as ending discrimination for LGTBQ Christians, but feels it “significantly reduces the harm.” “I believe that all persons advocating for the wellbeing of LGBTQ persons should vote for this because this is a very clear and potent harm-reduction strategy,” he said “I never thought I would see that day . . . it is not here yet, but it seems more possible than it ever has seemed before. . . . What really matters now is that we continue to be a light to a hurting world.”

Birthdays***February 2020******Anniversaries***

2-10-20 Leslie Lirgameris
 2-14-20 Marge Boynton
 2-14-20 Daniel Jahnke
 2-23-20 Phil Lageschule

2-02-20 Chris & Marjorie Newman

**Our New Office Hours are:
 Tuesday thru Thursday
 8:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.**

G.R.O.W. The ladies of GROW will meet on **Thursday, February 20th at the church.** All women of the church are invited. Please RSVP to the church office by **Tuesday, February 18th.**

WOMEN WHO BREAKFAST - Join us, Wednesday, February 5th for breakfast and coffee, or just drop in for a chat at the Bread Basket 7:30 a.m. All ladies are welcome.

A NEW FOCUS FOR VISITOR CARDS. For the past several years, each Sunday we welcomed members and visitors to complete an attendance card. Beginning two weeks ago, we created a shift in focus. Going forward we hope our visitors will complete the cards. Regular attendees can now relax and enjoy the service. Thank you, everyone.

HOSPITALITY IDEA. Many of our members and friends would like to support the Hospitality hour but cannot physically shop or set up the refreshments. If there are those who would like to share in the hospitality hour, please take a look at those who have signed up and offer to contribute to their fare. And friends, if someone offers to help, please accept their kind offer. Thanks, everyone.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP meets on the second and fourth Saturday of each month at the church. This month they will meet on February 8th and 22nd.

YOUTH VALENTINE FUNDRAISER—SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9TH

Are you a reader? Do you love to sit down with a great book?

We're meeting at Community Church for lively discussion of a new book every month! Please join us at 1:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month where we'll discuss our latest selection, have a light dessert and learn more about each other. Our next meeting is Tuesday, February 10th - we hope to see you there!

POTLUCK— Join us for Potluck on Wednesday, February 5th. Bring a dish to pass and prepare to share fellowship and great conversation with all who attend. It starts at 6:00 pm.

February 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Worship 10:30	3	4	5 Women Who Breakfast Potluck	6 Al-Anon	7	8 Men's Fellowship
9 Worship 10:30 Youth Group Youth Fundraiser	10 Leslie Lirgameris B'Day	11 Book Club Deacon's Meeting	12	13 Al-Anon	14 Happy Valentines Day Marge Boynton B'Day Daniel Jahnke B'Day	15
16 Worship 10:30 Youth Group	17	18	19	20 Al-Anon G.R.O.W.	21	22 Men's Fellowship
23 Worship 10:30 Youth Group Phil Lageschulte B' day	24	25 Council Meeting	26 Ash Wednesday	27 Al-Anon Youth Group	28	29

Community Church of Barrington
407 S. Grove Avenue
Barrington IL 60010



Valentines Recipe

4 small kisses
6 giant hugs
1 cup of kindness
3 cups of love
5 tsp of happiness
2+ caring hearts

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Mix together and
spread the love