



The Taftsville Chapel Current

God calls us as followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as a community of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to our world.

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Haves and Have Nots

Revelations 22:10-11 and 14-15 (NRSV)

And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of this book, for the time is near. Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

When I was younger, I admit, that to me, Revelation was a scary book. I would tremble with the wrath of God passages, marvel at the arguments of "End Times" prophecy equations, and try to interpret the signs of the book with local weather patterns and bird habits. I even went so far as to look through the Bible for any mention of seagulls flying in odd formations, since I once saw that in Virginia, sure it was a sign from God. I was swept up in the emotion of waiting for Christ to return, wanting all the bad and pain in the world to also be swept away. Trying to make sure that I would be one of those chosen.

The funny thing about all my waiting and watching, I only read the book of Revelation in bits and pieces, trying to find things in the world and finding scripture to match it. I wasn't mature enough yet to understand the backwards nature of such reasoning. I wanted to be "right" and jerry-rigged certain passages to match my observations. I didn't allow the Bible to speak on its own, with the raw power of words, long written and meditated upon by countless women and men throughout history. When I decided during Ted's series to read the book of Revelation, it occurred to me, that I had missed and misread a few things. I was so sure of myself, in my way of viewing the world and the Bible, that I had forgotten one of Christ's key teachings, humility.

At the end of the book, John chronicles the final messages the angel has regarding the book of Revelation. The angel says, "Do not seal up the words of this book, for the time is near. Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy." What an odd thing to say. I always thought it said: "Let the evildoer stop doing evil, and the filthy stop being filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy." My initial view made it a neat little package: Stop

doing wrong, do right. But, perhaps, there is a deeper, more humbling message to the Bible's phrasing of verse 11. Perhaps we do evil and righteous things without our even knowing it. Perhaps, since we don't know when the end will come, the angel is pointing out that we aren't to stop living our lives, or hide from the truths of the book. We cannot, this side of glory, hope to be fully righteous or holy, but as much as we are able we are to continue striving, even if we have good and bad days.

A few verses after, John interjects a thought, blessing those who have washed their robes, and admonishing those who are outside the city walls. It's important to note that this isn't said by the angel, almost as if John is taking a moment to remind us, the readers, that while those who wash their robes are blessed, there will be those who do fall away. There are those who don't make it to the wedding feast. But why interject this? We were already told of the lake of fire. Could it be a gentle warning? Could it be that we are just as susceptible to pridefully thinking that we are those who are blessed? Or do we pause? Are we continuing to practice evil? Are we striving toward righteousness? Are we trying to save and justify ourselves? Or, are we instead, through humility and grace pointing others to the city of God, more concerned for our brothers and sisters than in our own robe of white?

As the hymn reminds us, 'in Christ alone' our faith is found. It is easy to forget the grace we have when reading scary prophecies and apocalyptic literature. Easy to fall into either a paranoid legalism or a complacent smugness with our own response to the text. John and the angel remind us to take things one day at a time. Mindful of the words given, and humble as we move toward the day when heaven and earth will be one.

Blessings, Sam Carbaugh

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Good Samaritan Fund

History - Established October 1978 when Jim Millen was pastor

Purpose - A fund set up and maintained to provide support and caring during difficult times for our Taftsville family and others in our communities. Sometimes the fund fulfills the need completely and at other times it is a token of caring when a need is greater than the resources available.

Examples of needs for which the fund has been used in the past:

Fires - house and church

Housing - Refuges, house repairs, appliances, furnace, coal, heating oil, well drilling, rent

Sickness - medical expenses, dental work, medications, deductible on insurance, Davids House

Deaths - funeral expenses, travel

Food - MCC food shipment

Auto - accidents, need car, gasoline, car repairs or purchase

Financial Hardships - Debts, taxes

Administration - Richard Glick (treasurer) \$375.00 is placed in the fund each quarter from the general church offerings. Funds are also given by individuals from time to time. Also matching grants from Everence are allocated for specific needs. The fund is activated for dispersal when Richard is made aware of a specific need.

Candlelighter's Project



Twenty-seven hygiene kits were transported to Mennonite Central Committee headquarters in PA, to be distributed around the world to displaced people who don't have access to hygiene supplies. Candlelighters sewed the cloth bags and many contributed toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, nail clippers and a small towel to fill each bag. Refugees, people

in poverty, victims of natural disasters are all some of those who receive these cloth kits. Some are given through schools or orphanages to encourage children in healthy habits. Recently MCC has sent hygiene kits to the Ukraine, Nicaragua, Haiti and North Korea. We are blessed to be a small part of this ongoing ministry. THANK YOU to everyone who participated!

Who We Once Were, and Are Now...

by: Carie Good

In reviewing church files for the Trivia section, I came upon notes for a congregational meeting held on April 9, 1978.

Here's what I have written:

TAFTSVILLE: Who are We?

Churches in transition often do a self-assessment -- a chance to think about the identity and personality of the congregation. As we're preparing for a leadership change in 2013, it might be interesting to reflect on what we observed about ourselves 35 years ago, on April 9, 1978. This is from the congregational meeting notes on that date:

"We began by each of us listing two or three things we appreciated about our fellowship here at Taftsville. The following is a compiled list of these things:

The people - described as loving, caring, sharing, young, friendly, concerned, energetic, fairly open, warm.

Congregational singing

Small enough to know each other well

Bible-believing

Honest and informal sharing

People like to work together

Fellowship meals and Bible Study

Knowing that others have the same problems as I do

Hunger in souls

Skiing trips

Visits with people

Diversity of talents

Openness to the Spirit

Lack of pretense

Little argument over Mennonite tradition

Willingness to consider new ideas

Wow. Other than ski trips (!) doesn't that sound a lot like us today?

Resurrection Sunday Photos



TAFTSVILLE TIDBIT TRIVIA

Do you remember when...

40 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

April 2, 1973

Murray reported the purchase of 8 small folding chairs for the kindergarten class. The subject of church membership was discussed and it was reported that our present membership is 30.

35 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

April 4, 1978

Henry Paul Yoder joined us to discuss church goals. The discussion ran the gamut from church leadership to tribal rituals. We identified some main goals to be: revival, verbal witnessing, and each one having a testimony for Christ.

30 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

April 15, 1983

A Passover Seder will replace the usual worship hour.

15 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

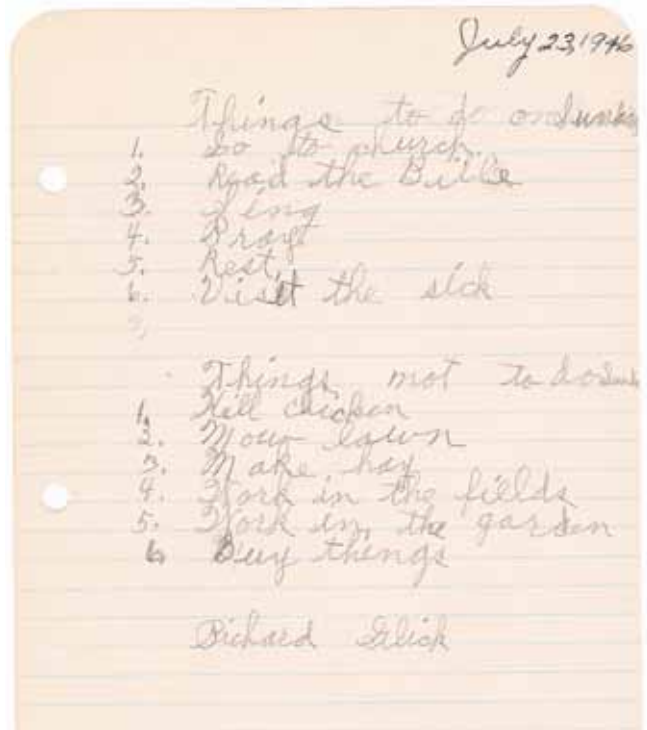
April 25, 1998

Outdoor clean-up event starts at 9 am. (Moved earlier from May 2 due to nice weather!)

10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

April 2, 2003

In discussing possible ways to raise money for Bethany Birches Camp, the idea of hosing an annual Community Supper was suggested. Many communities find this to be very successful. Of course our menu would be Pennsylvania Dutch fare! It was considered that we might need to renovate the downstairs kitchen entrance if this sort of function were to be held indoors.



Richards Glick's study of the Sabbath, from 1946

Taftsville Chapel Mennonite Fellowship

Located in the village of Taftsville, VT, one block south of Rt. 4 on Happy Valley Road.



Ted Shattuck, Interim Pastor

www.taftsvillechapel.org

Send your contributions for the Current to: samuel.carbaugh@gmail.com or contact a Newsletter Staff member: Carie Good & Virginia Schlabach