

November 15, 2017

From a pastor's Heart & Soul

COMING UP



Wednesday, Nov. 15
 AMP Discussion 6:30p

Thursday, Nov. 16
 Deacons & Ministry Council,
 Discussion of Wed. Night Program

Friday—Sunday, Nov. 17-19
 Youth Fall Retreat
 Camp Rockmont

Sunday, Nov. 19
 Hope Chapel 7:45a

Tuesday, Nov. 21
 Coffes & Kibbitz, 10:00a

42nd Annual Citywide Interfaith
 Thanksgiving Service
 Friendship Missionary Baptist 7:00p

Remembering in Prayer
 Mark Stegall—CMC Pineville

Extending our Sympathy
 The Families of
 Sara Eggleston
 Hilda Moulton
 Irma Lonon

**Remembering
 Our Friends at Home**
 Jean Thomas
 151 East Dallas Road #604
 Stanley, NC 28164
 (704) 540-9269

Lament.

The word has been on my mind, in my heart, since I first heard the name Southerland Springs, Texas. It wasn't shock. Sadly, I'm no longer surprised. It wasn't just anger – though there is plenty of that. It wasn't pity or sympathy or even anxiety (Could that happen here?). The emotion was much deeper than any of those feelings. After the details emerged, reported almost simultaneously with all the ridiculous political naming and blaming, a new, deep sorrow came over me. The emotion was deeper, more soul-searing than had accompanied my response to Virginia Tech or Columbine or Aurora or Sandy Hook or Las Vegas...

Lament. "A passionate expression of grief or sorrow... To mourn..."

All people, in all places and times have lamented. Some animals lament, too. (Have you witnessed a dog, broken spirit, moping around a house after the death of a companion – either another canine or a human one?) Intrinsic to our spirits, born out of our essential need to love, is the capacity to lament.

The wisdom of our biblical tradition is that it holds together the horizon of human experience, the mountain tops and the valleys and all the long and windy road between, the sometimes desolate stretches of wilderness, exuberant encounters with a physical or spiritual oasis. None of the experiences of human life, neither joy nor pain, neither affirmations nor deep doubt, is withheld from the pages of our scripture. What a gift!

One ancient writer, perhaps grieving over the destruction of his beloved Jerusalem, penned five poems of deep grief, and these "Laments of Jeremiah," stand as a testimony to the importance of facing God with the honesty of our pain. *Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow... My eyes flow with tears; for a comforter is far from me... my stomach churns, my heart is wrung within me...* (from Lamentations 1). Scholars disagree over when to date these texts, but they agree that their message is timeless. Lament is necessary. And it is powerful.

I believe we need a national movement of lament. No angry political sniping. No posturing, left and right. Just a soul-deep acknowledgement that our society is broken. While powerful guns are at the heart of these tragedies, the tragedy is far deeper than any weapon. There is soul-deep sin in the heart of our nation. We are increasingly angry – but don't talk to us about going to church, about the need for God, some time for silence, an hour in worship. That's silly. We are increasingly over-medicated – but don't talk to us about increasing funding for mental illness. That's a liberal agenda item. We are increasingly militarized – but don't talk to us about us about gun control. This isn't a gun problem. We are increasingly polarized – but don't talk to us about turning off our favorite media sources. We want to be fed by the propaganda machines that tell us what we already believe. We are increasingly violent – but don't talk to us about peace. That's too wimpy. We are increasingly divided – but don't talk to us about racism. We're tired of political

correctness. We are increasingly abusive – but don't talk to us about men and sexual abuse. We don't believe those woman, anyway.

It's not just about Southerland Springs. It's much deeper than that.

The wisdom of biblical lament is that it is soul-deep and honest and reflective – and it points us to God, who alone can heal our sin.

We need a national movement of lament. May it be so.

Campus Security

Deacons have recently reviewed our Emergency Plan and agree with law enforcement experts that our best security comes in being aware, especially taking notice of guests. Looking someone in the eye, introducing oneself, making sure everyone knows they have been seen and recognized are our best protections – it's also our best, welcoming outreach!



Our newest member is **Jeff Monroe**, pictured here with Karen Burgess, during Sunday's Meet and Greet. Jeff has served as an airline flight attendant for many years, and has found his place at Park Road when he's not in the air.

Welcome, Jeff!



Park Road Baptist Church
3900 Park Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28209

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Return Service Requested

Charlotte Family Housing, November 26-30

Park Road will host meals at Elizabeth House on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Can you help by preparing a meal for 8-10 people? You can sign up through the church website or by contacting Dan.

Note: Hawthorne Lane is closed heading north from Presbyterian Hospital. You can access Elizabeth House by approaching Hawthorne Lane from Central Avenue.



Mikah Meyer in the Narthex

With an amazing countertenor voice, Mikah shared his talent in the sanctuary and in the Meet and Greet. What a thrill!

Chrismon-Making

Each year a huge Chrismon tree is placed in the sanctuary. Every ornament that hangs on that tree is a symbol of Christ. Many of our Chrismons are looking tattered, so we need some new ones. I am co-hosting a Chrismon-making party with Karen Burgess and Allyson Neeriemer on Sunday, November 26 at 6:00p at my house. Bring an appetizer, and we will make that our dinner. All the patterns and supplies will be set up in stations. We are inviting women of all ages to help us make our Chrismon tree the most beautiful one ever. This will be a perfect way to end your Thanksgiving weekend!

Room in the Inn

It's almost that time again! On Saturday, December 9, we will host Room in the Inn on the second and fourth Saturdays of every month through the end of March. For Room in the Inn, Park Road provides an evening meal, a warm place to sleep, hot showers, access to a washer and dryer, and a light breakfast and bag lunch for our homeless neighbors. Many volunteers are needed to make this program a success! This year, we are planning to prepare and freeze meals on December 10 at the Festival of Simple Gifts, but we will still need volunteers to host and serve the meals. Also, we are looking for additional help with driving the bus to pick up our neighbors at The Urban Ministry Center (Commercial Driver's License not required) and with overnight hosting. A Sign-Up Genius is available through the church website.



CDC Staff Trip to Biltmore House

The CDC Staff enjoyed a weekend retreat to Asheville, NC. It was a cold weekend and a wonderful time. We enjoyed a visit to the Biltmore house to see all the holiday decorations. Heather Pegram



Youth Day at Habitat

Holding all the necessary tools and grinning from ear to ear, the youth and their chaperones worked tirelessly to help build a new home

