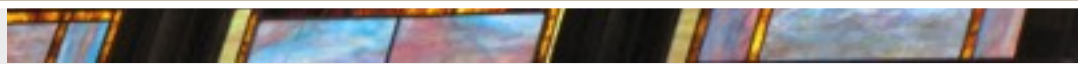


JJ White Memorial Presbyterian Church

June/July 2020



A Word from Our Pastor - The Reverend Bob Phelps

Welcome Home

“Welcome home!” are two of the best words most of us ever hear. I haven’t lived in Kentucky since 1994, but it will always be home. A wave of contentment comes over me when I cross the line from Tennessee into Kentucky. When I’m there, I know there will usually be barbeque (mutton, if I’m lucky), familiar places and faces, and lots of memories to cherish. We don’t have a real home there anymore, but we make a home with others. We spent the night with old friends on the way to Indianapolis to get Blake earlier this spring and felt at home. We usually spend a night or two with my sister at Christmas, and we always feel at home.

American poet Robert Frost said that home is that place that when you have to go there, they have to take you in.

I hope that the best parts of all that are what we experienced when we returned to worship this week. We had spent thirteen long weeks apart, so I hope it was a joyful homecoming for those who returned. We might not have gotten to experience all the things that endear this place to us, but I hope it was good to be home.

We have learned new ways to open our home to others. I’m not a Facebook user, but Beth Wild stepped up to the plate in March and helped us learn how to share our worship time with people in places we never dreamed of. Every week, more than a hundred folks find us online and worship with us. Some of those are friends and family of ours and of our folks. Some of them we don’t know, but this technology has enabled us to extend our reach in ways we might not have considered had the circumstances been different. We have invested in some new equipment that will make it even easier to continue to share our worship and our home with others. A few other folks have agreed to join Beth on that team so we can continue even when she’s away.

Our home, which is so dear to us, is now open to people we might never have welcomed if we hadn't taken these steps. Some of our friends who began to worship online with us early shared that experience with friends of theirs, and now our worshipping community includes them, too.

Welcome home, brothers and sisters, however you join us. We're glad to have you among us. Whether you can ever join us in person or not, we are happy to count you among our family!

Grace and Peace,
Bob



Music Notes

from Deanna Phelps, Music Director



Well, I Never!

Some of you may be familiar with an old party game called *Well, I Never!* If you've played it you know both how much fun and how revealing it can be. The idea is simple. Someone states something he's never done, and everyone who has done it has to do something you've all agreed on (leave the group, eat or drink something, confess details—whatever you agree to). As you might imagine you can sometimes learn all kinds of things about people you thought you knew.

The next time I play that game, I'll have to change my list. Before yesterday, I had never been to worship when we didn't sing! I've been in church all my life, and I've never been to a Sunday service when we didn't sing hymns, sometimes sing the Psalms, someone sang something special—music has always been a part of worship. Even at funerals and weddings, we sometimes sing.

Now we're told it's not safe to sing in crowds. We all wondered how that might go. Now that we've gotten that first service behind us, we know that it can happen, whether it feels right or not.

I hope we can sing together again soon, but this change reminds us of our responsibility to one another. When we come together to worship, we are here to praise God and to give thanks for God's presence in our lives. Until now, singing has been a way we could do that together. But we will forego that for a while in order to keep each other safe.

When we can sing again, we will. Until then, we'll have to come up with something else we've never done when we play that game.

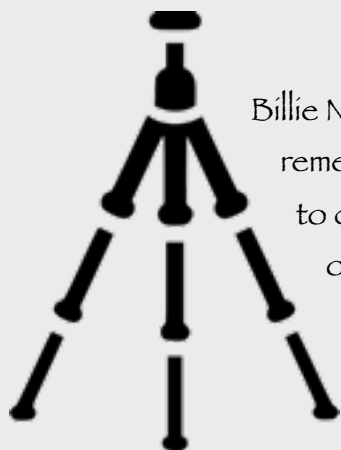
A New Call; a New Home; a New Baby: It's a Gift Card Shower!

Rev. Will Ratcliff, who grew up on our congregation, will soon move with his wife, Bonnie, to North Platte, Nebraska to assume the pastorate of First Presbyterian Church there. Will and Bonnie are also expecting their first child soon.* Since we can't be with them to celebrate any of these new things in their lives, we invite you to bring gift cards from any place you might consider appropriate for a new home and a new baby. We will gather your gift cards until Sunday, July 5. Then we'll surround them with our prayers and best wishes and send them to them. You may bring gift cards to worship on Sunday or drop them by the Church Office through the week. We look forward to celebrating with Will and Bonnie and the new little one!



*Update! Thomas Bryan Ratcliff was born on Thursday, June 25! He weighed 7 pounds, 2.6 ounces. Mom and baby are doing well. Thomas Bryan is welcomed by his proud parents, Will and Bonnie, and by his grandparents - JJ White MPC members Tommy and Mary Ann Ratcliff. We congratulate the new parents as they celebrate this birth.

A Special Gift to Remember Dad



Billie Nance and her sisters, Scottie Kennedy, Lorna McElroy, and Jan Wardlaw, remembered their late father, Dr. Whip Kennedy, on Father's Day with a commitment to cover the cost of the new streaming equipment that will help us upgrade our online broadcast capabilities. Their gifts will be joined by those of Flip Weinberg, whose late father, Frank, shared a birthday with Whip. Thanks to these families for remembering their dads in a way that helps us broaden our outreach.

F.Y.I.



Session Notes

Your Session has returned to face to face meetings after meeting online several times during the time we were not coming to the Church. The Session met on May 3 in a Zoom Conference Call, on May 31, face to face, and on June 14 face to face.

Actions taken in those meetings include:

May 3:

- Financial review
- Discussion of reopening issues
- Postponed the Church Picnic until fall
- Heard updates on summer programming from the Presbytery and Denomination
- Appointed a Reopening Committee: Robbie DeCoux, Deanna Phelps, Tommy Ratcliff, Ray Salter, Beth Wild, Bob as Pastor

May 31:

- Gathered to hear and respond to a report of the Reopening Committee
- Approved the Reopening Committee's report, but changed the date for reopening to June 21
- Made plans to communicate Reopening Plans to the congregation and the community.

June 14:

- Approved minutes and financial statements.
- Reviewed reopening plans Thanked Suzi Drummond and Beth Wild for their help with communication.
- Heard updates on the Summer meeting of Presbytery.
- Heard updates on the meeting of General Assembly.
- Approved plans for a gift card shower for Will and Bonnie Ratcliff
- Noted Bob and Deanna's plans to be away in August.

The Session will meet again on July 12 after worship. Please keep the members of the Session in your prayers as they guide the ministry of our congregation.

Thank You for Faithful Giving

Thanks to all of you who have faithfully continued to give to the Church during our closure. Because of your faithfulness, we have been able to keep our staff paid and meet our other obligations. Thanks to Wayne Hutchison, Church Treasurer, for monitoring our financial situation and keeping us informed about that part of our ministry during these unprecedented times. When we all work, serve, and give together, we will continue to accomplish great things for God's Kingdom.

Updated Church Directories

Updated copies of the Church Directory are available at all the sanctuary exits.
Please pick one up when you are here. And let us know about corrections.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ...



JUNE

- 1 Deb Richardson
- 6 Sharon White
- 7 June Moak
Florence Sigman
- 10 Steven Allred
- 13 Beth Wild
- 14 Debbi Brock
- 16 Alison Allred
Jackie Russell
- 17 Rusty Whittington
- 23 Van Simmons
- 28 Andrea DeCoux

JULY

- 2 John Drummond
- 6 Laris Mitchell
- 6 Stacy White
- 7 Suzi Drummond
- 12 Carolyn Ray
- 13 Lydia Williams
- 17 Dottie Heiss
- 20 June Hart
- 25 Rachel Catchings
- 25 Kylee McGehee
- 26 Thaddeus Russell
- 28 Linda Miller
- 29 Conner Simmons
- 30 Nicole Faucett