

Carl continued:

prejudice, bigotry, idolatry, hatred, or anything else that interferes with us bearing much fruit in our life.

We must get rid of things in our life that produce quick worldly gratification, with the hope and knowledge that it is the eternal things that really matter. It is hard to do this in a world that values these “things” more than God, but picking them out of our lives we must.

We must establish strong Christian roots in our lives through prayer, Bible study, and worship, so that when the heat in life comes, and it will, we have a solid foundation (root system) to overcome these spiritual attacks and continue to bear fruit in abundance.



Jesus said, ¹“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”

May our life be a wonderful garden, full of the fruit of God’s love and grace. God bless you all. *Carl*

Common Lectionary Readings (Carl will change topics at times due to quests or other circumstances)

	5th Sunday of Easter - May 2	6th Sunday of Easter - May 9	Ascension of the Lord - May 13	7th Sunday of Easter - May 16	Day of Pentecost - May 23	First Sunday after Pentecost - May 30
1st Reading	Acts 8:26-40	Acts 10:44-48	Acts 1:1-11	Acts 1:15-17,21-26	Acts 2:1-21	Isaiah 6:1-8
Psalm	Psalm 22:25-31	Psalm 98	Psalm 47	Psalm 1	Psalm 104:24-34,35b	Psalm 29
2nd Reading	1 John 4:7-21	1 John 5:1-6	Eph. 1:15-23	1 John 5:9-13	Romans 8:22-27	Romans 8:12-17
Gospel	John 15:1-8	John 15:9-17	Luke 24:44-53	John 17:6-19	John 15:26-27 16:4-b15	John 3:1-17

May Birthdays



- Teresa Tolbert 13
- Brady Carlson 22
- Lilree Jackson 23
- Denice Kemp 28
- Knox Tyson 30

About our Members (and Prayer Requests)

Joe Carroll is much more alert. The delirium continues to improve but has not lifted completely. He is talking - a lot. Please pray that the Lord will choose to end his delirium so that he will be able to participate in therapy. Thank you all for your prayers!

June Lubowinski's health care team has found a new spot on her brain in a recent MRI. She will be starting a new round of radiation and infusions of Keytruda. Pray that this round of treatments will be as successful as the first.

Bobbie Dickerson's family is going through a difficult time. Bobbie's grandson and wife, Steven and Kellie Dickerson, had their first children on April 5th. The twin boys, Wade and Roland, were taken early (26 weeks) at just 2 lb. 1 oz. and 1 lb. 2oz. at a hospital in Salt Lake City. After two weeks, Wade developed an infection and died. Please pray for Roland! Steven and Kellie can only see the infant briefly every four hours. They were able to hold him for the first time yesterday. They live 280 miles away in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Please pray for the Dickerson family.

Carl Thompson had his jaw surgery nine days ago. The good news is that he can now open his jaw. He is doing quite well! He goes back on April 28 for post op and suture removal. Pray for continued healing and no complications.

Jack Goggans' surgery went well. They found that “the leak” had sealed itself. They took pictures and sent him home. Continue prayers for recovery.

Shay VanWinkle had the virus and is still dealing with respiratory issues. After taking her first Covid shot she is doing some better. Pray that the second shot helps even more.

Carol Booher has A-fib and the doctors want to shock her heart to re-synchronize the rhythm on May 5. **Bill Prather** still needs to gain strength and weight. Keep Carol and Bill in your prayers.

Bob Todd is continuing the every three week immunotherapy injection and doing well. He just completed a CT scan and will do follow-up testing. He had cataract surgery on eye #1 and is looking forward to getting eye #2 completed. No golf until two weeks after #2.

Adult Bible Study Returns - May 2

Last Spring, we began a study of Simon Peter, the Flawed But Faithful Disciple by Adam Hamilton, but COVID-19 stopped our lessons after the third chapter. On May 2, we will resume our classes with a review of Chapters 1-3.

When studying Simon Peter's life, one might wonder how Jesus could have designated him as the "rock" upon which His church would be built. After all, when Jesus made it possible through Simon's faith to walk on water, he doubted and began to sink; many times, he spoke up or acted without thinking; and he even denied Jesus, not once, but 3 times. What did Jesus see in Peter that made him trust Peter to lead the church?



Join us on May 2 at 9:00 a.m. as we consider the implications for us in the life of Peter. Bring your Bibles, wear your mask, and bring yourself a cup of coffee. We look forward to being together again to study God's word.

We will try to redistribute books from those that don't need them to those that want to attend this class. Contact Shirley Pinkston at 947-3372 for questions.

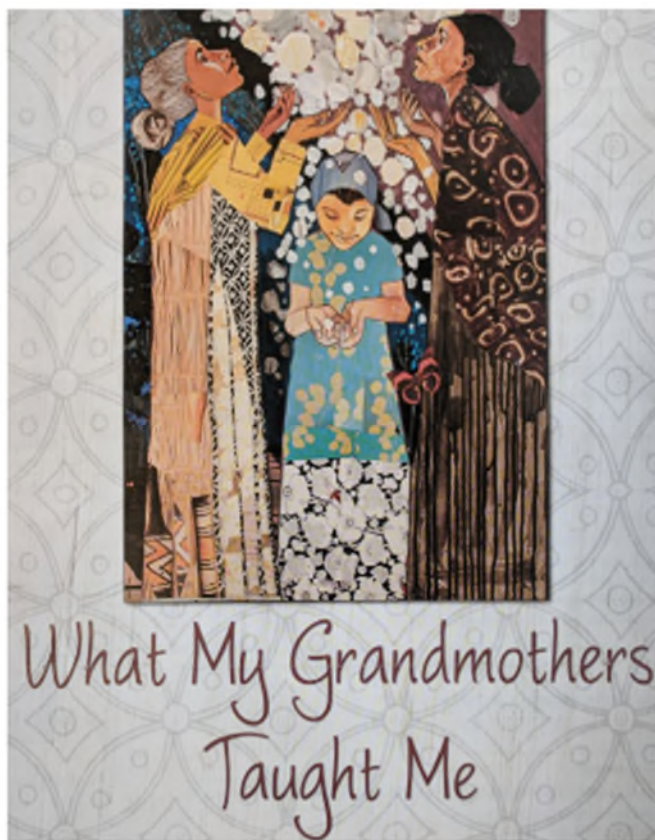
A New Bible Study Planned for Summer

The newly announced 2021 Horizon Bible study is called "What My Grandmothers Taught Me." It will have nine weekly lessons about special women from both the Old and New Testaments who are important as Jesus' ancestors. They are mentioned along with the traditional list of men in Matthew's New Testament genealogy of Jesus; they include *Tamar* (wife of Jacob's son Judah, mother of Booz, and grandmother of Ruth's husband Obed) as well as *Rahab*, *Ruth*, and *Bathsheba* (only called "wife of Uriah"). Their Old Testament stories will lead us to *Mary*, the Mother of Jesus, and how those ancestral women played a role in her commitment to Jesus. Family "ties" were extremely important in Jesus' lifetime.

The author is Meryll Blair, formerly a senior lecturer in Old Testament at Stirling Theological College, which is part of the University of Divinity in Melbourne Australia. In retirement, she continues to present Bible studies at women's conferences.

This study is open to all adults in our congregation, both men and women. For the past two summers we have met during July and August on Thursdays from Noon till 1 PM, first at church and last year on Zoom. Those who did not want to join the class were given a study book to use at home. Past participants have enjoyed getting better acquainted, as well as gaining insight into how Scripture can relate to the modern world.

Please contact Pat Rehm at 512-876-4211 or pacrehm2017@gmail.com if you would be interested in participating. The Education Committee will provide our books, and class members will choose the start date, the class schedule, and whether to meet at the church or on Zoom. The location will depend on COVID circumstances this summer. We will be glad to order a study book for anyone who would like to have it to read at home.



Our Benevolence Gifts Keep on Giving

During the first four months of 2021, our benevolence gifts have continued to help others in various parts of this country and the world, giving generously to mission projects, even during a pandemic. At the beginning of the new year, our congregation sent its **annual pledge of \$3,000 to Grace Presbytery.**

Our usual quarterly gifts of **\$1,000 each to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) and to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS)** were also distributed recently.

Locally, a request from the **Holland Community Food Pantry** received ap-



proval from our Pastor, Session, and Benevolence Committee for a donation of **\$1,000.** Other local donations made recently included **\$340 to Heart & Hands Ministries** for three months of bread purchases, and **\$36 to the Salado Flag Program.**

Other denominational gifts included the **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering received during Lent and Easter, which reached **\$2,495** and has approached the high year of 2019 prior to the COVID-19 epidemic. Thank you for supporting this program.

Pat Rehm - Benevolence Committee

The Shepherd and the Hummingbird

I am out in the country this afternoon. We came out to my daughter's ranch in Goldthwaite after church. She needs Ralph's help with something. So, while they're down at the barn, I'm trying to gather my thoughts and put something together for the newsletter. I told Pete this morning at church, I was waiting for "inspiration," and I believe I've found it in God's quiet nature.

We come out here on average about once a week or so. It is always refreshing. I spend quality time with my daughter, either playing cards or just talking. Kris doesn't have a television. Her phone service and internet are sketchy at best. And, if we spend the night, we are usually in our bedroom by 8:00 p.m., so I get to do a lot of reading. Time just seems to slow down in the country.



My daughter has a hummingbird sanctuary. And just before sunset, you can see dozens of them drinking from the numerous feeders and flitting back and forth between the two trees where most of the feeders hang. They are amazing birds. They are so tiny and yet they hover in place both on and off the feeders, their little wings beating the air many times in a minute. I think hummingbirds are one of God's most glorious creatures.

Carl talked today about "the good Shepherd and the peace that only God can give," and how sometimes we just do not listen for the Shepherd's voice. But it is often so hard to shut out the noise of daily life, and the voices of all those who clamor to be heard, in this "alternate universe" that it seems we are living in right now.



I feel so close to God when I'm out here in the country. It's so quiet and peaceful. It's nice to be away from the sirens and motorcycles and train noises in the city. So, I am truly grateful for my daughter and for the times that I come out to the peace and quiet of the ranch. For me it is a time of renewal and refreshment. And I feel more connected to God.

As the minister said earlier, "Jesus is our Shepherd. He calls us by name and leads us in the paths that we should follow. And as we are his sheep, we should be able to recognize His voice."

I think that Mother Theresa said it best. Here is a small portion of her observation. "We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature - trees, flowers, grass - grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and sun, how they move in silence...The essential thing is not what we say, but what God says to us and through us."

May God richly bless each one of you.

From a Merry Heart *Linda Lloyd*