

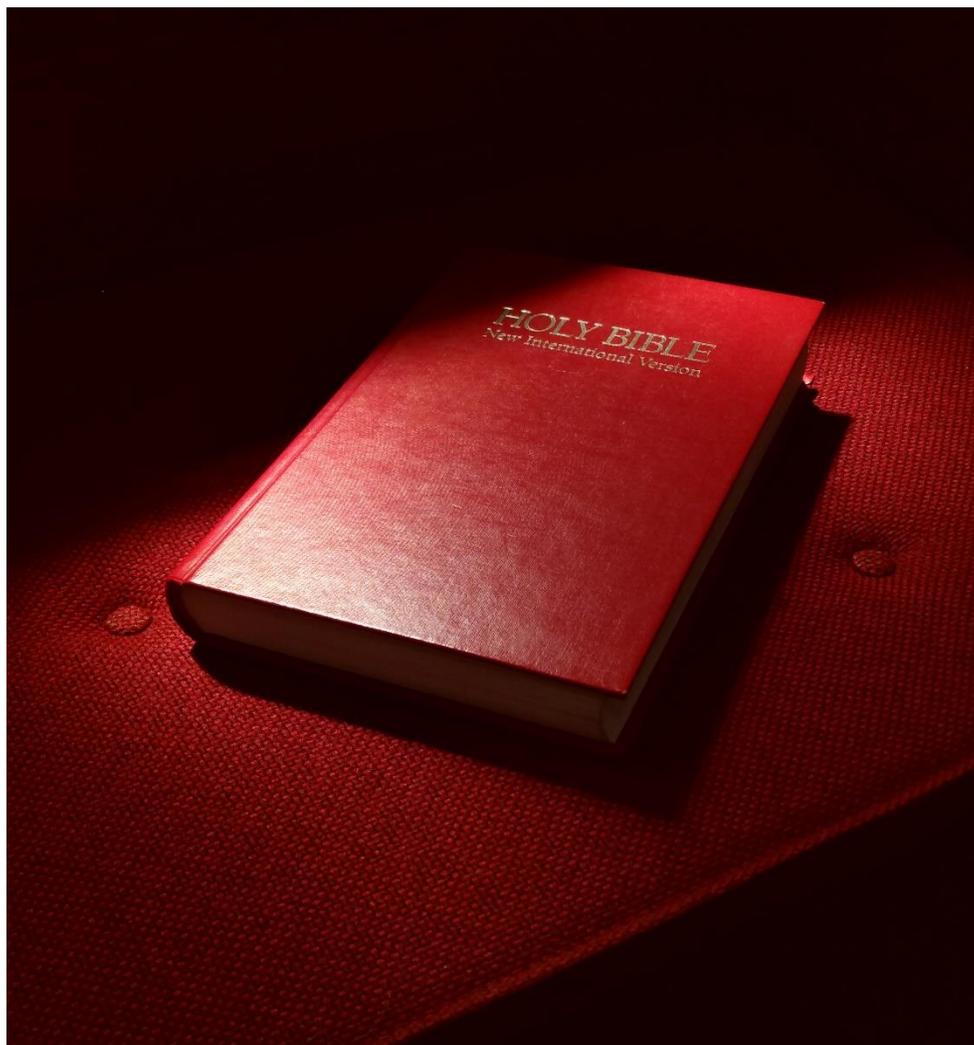
June 2022

Monthly Park Branches

Dear Members and Friends,

As I write this article, two weeks has elapsed since my return from a most fruitful vacation.

Vacations always provide blessings. Surely one of them rested with focused time for home improvements. Chief among these was the installation of all new windows at 201 Pin Oak Drive. Already the I am feeling the much better insulation they are providing! Time away also allowed me the chance to pull down more wallpaper (from ceilings, no less!), and a chance to start to bring the grounds around my home under some degree of control (I will not be competing for a House Beautiful award, at least this year...).



Another treasured opportunity rested with time to dig into and to also finally finish some books! I tend to have 3-4 books going at any given time, some further along than others. Given my interest in scale modeling, it was very enjoyable to re-read *Ship Models from Kits* by David Griffith, a British writer who specializes in building 1/700 scale ship models. This means a model ship hull is typically no longer than 8-10" and about 1 ½ -2" in width. Yikes! To my mind, David's skills are superhuman, and yet I've decided to follow a step-by-step guide in the book to modelling the ill-fated World War Two U.S. Navy cruiser U.S.S. Indianapolis. I am building the same kit he uses. Pray for my hands to be steady—and my eyes not to get crossed!

On a more serious level, I found a book by Russ Douthat, a *New York Times* columnist, both unsettling and ultimately stimulating. *In Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics*, Douthat offers his take on the fortunes of institutionalized Christianity in the U.S from the 1950's to the present time (in Douthat's case, to

the year 2007). His analysis is hard hitting--and yet hopeful. In brief, while Douthat concludes that what passes for Christianity in the U.S. today is often not rooted in Christian Orthodoxy, he nevertheless feels that a robust re-engagement with Christian Orthodoxy will give us a chance to be reclaimed by the Good News of the Gospel. I personally found his thoughts on the ministries of Reinhold Niebuhr, Billy Graham, and Martin Luther King Junior--to be particularly inspiring, since my library contains works by all three of them! But it was Douthat's focus upon what is called "Neo-Orthodox Theology" that is bringing me back to the challenging thoughts of Karl Barth.

Karl Barth was a 19th century Swiss Reformed theologian. Once a powerful voice in church thought (especially through his multi-volume "Church Dogmatics"), he is less well known today. What strikes me—in returning to reading him—is his uncompromising stance regarding the Gospel, as well as his scathing attacks upon any attempts to "co-opt" the Gospel by those in politics, business, the media, entertainment, and science. Attempts to do so, he felt, will only result in what human beings think Scripture should say about God, when, to his mind, the gospel is about what God thinks of us. Consider what he says on this subject (taken from a lecture he gave in the year 1917):

"If we come to the Bible with our own questions—"How are we to think about God and the world?", or "How do we reach the divine?", or "Does the Salvation Army have true Christianity—or does Christian Science?"—if we take up these questions, we will find all kinds of arguments and counter-arguments regarding this or that position. But we will never get to the heart of things this way. The only possible result will be a high degree of human correctness that is very far from what is really true—and what ought to be true—in our lives.

Human thoughts about God do not constitute the content of the Bible; rather, it is the true Divine thought about humanity. The Bible does not tell us how we should speak about God, but what God says to us, not how we may find the way to God, but how God has sought and found the way to us, not what is the proper relation in which we must stand to God, but what is the covenant that God has made with all who in faith are the children of Abraham, and that God has sealed once and for all in Jesus Christ. This is what stands in the Bible."

Barth is often criticized for being wordy—and too "deep." But what depth—and what words! As I see it, Barth points us back to the essentials about who we are, in the sight of God (and not in our sight). He points us, for instance, back to the fact that God sees a spark of the Divine in all of us. That our world, while fallen, is still good in the eyes of God. That in Jesus Christ, God not only comes to us as God truly is—but that God also keeps the covenant God made with Abraham to always love and to never leave us. In an age (and, indeed, in a time) when so much seems up in the air and so chaotic and uncertain, Barth points back to the ground on which we stand, in the sight of God NO MATTER WHAT. As one Barth scholar puts it: *"Barth wanted the Bible to speak normatively in our thinking. For Barth, this strictly meant beginning afresh with God, with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and with the free mercy revealed and at work in Jesus Christ."*

June is now upon us, and, with it, the end of school among other things. Several activities here at Park have also come to an end.

May this summer provide each of us with rest and also refreshment. These last many months—have asked so much of us, physically and spiritually. I invite all of us to take a fresh look Scripture. To take time to open, say, the Gospel of Matthew and simply let what God thinks of us, what God says to us, and what God does for us, in Jesus Christ to wash over us, once more, like warm sunshine. I personally find it refreshing to turn to a different English translation of a gospel, or to make use of a competent paraphrase of the book of the Bible, like *The Message* by Eugene Peterson. As always, let us pray—and, in doing so—invite the Holy Spirit to open our ears to hear God speaking to us.

“My grace is sufficient for Thee” 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Karl Barth felt that these six words of Scripture were all that his many volumes of works were re-stating.

Let us cherish—and lean on—these words of Jesus. And let us also give God thanks for a tremendous apologist of our faith, as we move into Summer 2022,

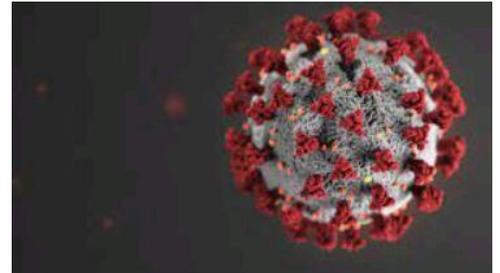
Faithfully,

Todd

News and Notes

Mask Policy

The Session of Park Presbyterian has decided, for the time being, to make the wearing of masks in worship and other church activities optional. The Session will continue to follow developments concerning variants of the COVID virus. Should you forget your mask, disposable masks are available in the sanctuary. Thank you for your cooperation in this new policy as we strive to serve one another well.



Sunday Worship as Park Apart

Worship this summer will begin weekly at 10:00am. Sunday school and adult classes will cease, as well. The worship video will be available on Sunday at 10:00 am and you can continue to find us anytime thereafter at <https://www.parkpres.org/swl-sunday-worship-live>. The bulletin for the service can also be found on the [Sunday Worship page](#) of our site. If you have announcements or prayer requests, please send them to Todd Allen on Sunday morning via text/call at 612-554 6527.

The Library

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

These newest Adopt-A-Book titles can be found in the Gathering Area for your summer reading pleasure!

ADULT NONFICTION

The Herods – Bruce Chilton, Wholehearted Faith – Rachel Held Evans, Shifting Shorelines – Terry Helwig, You Were Made for This Moment – Max Lucado, Always a Guest – Barbara Brown Taylor, Call the Midwife - Jennifer Worth, Farewell to the East End –Jennifer Worth, Shadows of the Workhouse – Jennifer Worth, Letters to the Midwife – Jennifer Worth, Where the Light Fell – Philip Yancey, The Scandal of Forgiveness – Philip Yancey

ADULT FICTION

The Kitchen Front – Jennifer Ryan, Mr. Dickens and His Carol – Samantha Silva

JUVENILE NONFICTION

Walking Toward Peace – Kathleen Kruhl

JUVENILE FICTION

I Love You, Blue – Barroux, God’s Big Plan – Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Theodore Hiebert, Apple and Magnolia – Laura Gehl and Patricia Metola, God’s Coming to Visit –Franz Hubner, Simon and the Big, Bad, Angry Beasts – Ian DeHaes, Josephine and the Quarantine – Candace Echols, The Marvelous Mustard Seed – Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Who Is My Neighbor? – Amy Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever – Barbara Robinson, Nugget and the Refiner – Kerry Tittle

Preschool

The Park Presbyterian Church Pre-School Board is excitedly looking forward to the upcoming arrival of our new teachers, Mrs. Elizabeth Huwe and Mrs. Brittany McCall, and to the re-opening of our pre-school in September. As we prepare to welcome our new teachers and students, there are many ways YOU can help with this ministry!

- **NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** The Preschool Board is looking for some new members to lend new ideas and perspectives for the growth and development of our pre-school experience. Currently, board members include Park church members Donette Budicak, Deb McCowin, Katie Saylor, Roxanne Walker, and Becky O'Neill, who is a kindergarten teacher at College Square Elementary School in Beaver.
- **PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR:** Additionally, we are seeking a director of the board. Please consider this opportunity to be involved in the Preschool in an important way ... a fresh perspective on this important ministry of Park Church.
- **VOLUNTEER SUBSTITUTES:** We would like to create a team of volunteers to assist in the preschool classes when there is a need, such as when a staff member is ill, has commitments during the morning hours, etc. Our goal is to schedule volunteers to be available for a one-week period; each week, the volunteer will be called if a need arises for a substitute.

If you would like more information about the board or are interested in joining this fun and enthusiastic group, please get in touch with one of the Board members or the Church Office.

Please also spread the word that we are still accepting new students!

Fellowship Sundays

Volunteers are needed to provide light snacks for both Sunday, July 3rd and Sunday, August 7th. If you are willing and able or have any questions, please reach out to Sandra Parker.

Fun Days

Kids and Helpers needed for this year's version of Vacation Bible School (VBS)! We've picked the 10th of each month to get together and learn about Jesus (VBS style) with fun, food, a Bible story and activities!

Our theme will be "Jesus Loves Us S'more!"

- Friday, June 10th - 6-8pm
 - o Hot Dogs & Burgers on the Grill, Campfire Songs, & Scavenger Hunt
- Saturday, July 10th - 2-4pm
 - o Summer Camp Crafts, Water Games, & Snacks
- Wednesday, August 10th - 5:30-7:30pm
 - o Pizza & Pool Party at Duncan Circle Pool

Families:

- Please email andrea.yothers@gmail.com with your child(ren)'s name, age, and current grade to register your 3–10-year-olds to attend as participants.
- Kids who have completed 3rd grade and older are welcome to participate with the other kids, or to be junior counselors to help at stations or to help the younger ones participate in the groups.

Volunteers:

- ALL are welcome!!!! We would love to have some volunteers who do not identify as parents of participants, so that all church members get a rewarding opportunity to connect with our kids!
- We are looking for folks to help with: buyer(s) of supplies, griller(s), food station prepper(s), food hander-outer(s), storyteller(s), game leader(s) and helper(s) for set-up and running the games, campfire song singer(s)/instrument player(s), craft station leader(s) and helper(s), other duties as needed

Many hands make for light work and all abilities/interests are welcome!!!

- Please email andrea.yothers@gmail.com with your name, which date(s) you are available to help, and any volunteer roles that you would like to do.

Nesbitt Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to Emma Schaller and Wyatt Ringer who have been awarded Park's E.M. Nesbitt Memorial Scholarship for 2022. The scholarship, named for the former Park pastor, is given by his family to honor graduating seniors who have exemplified leadership, academic excellence, character and service. Gail Rackley, chairperson of Park's Nesbitt Scholarship committee, cites the unique fact that both Emma and Wyatt are third generation members of Park Church. Beyond their parents, Eric and Leahrae Ringer and Tom and Sharon Schaller, both sets of Wyatt's grandparents (Ron and Sandra Ringer and Dick and Sue Riggs) and Emma's grandmother (Carol Connelly) attend the church.

Emma will graduate with honors from Beaver High School where she lettered four years with the swimming and diving team and served as team captain for her junior and senior years. She was named MVP of the team for two consecutive years and volunteered as a swim coach for the middle school swim program. She qualified the past three years for WPIAL competition in both team and individual swim relays and individual diving, and she qualified all four years for both individual and relay events at the MAC Swimming and Diving competition. She was also top scorer for the girls this school year.

Emma is a two-year member of the National Honor Society and served as its parliamentarian. She also tutored honors chemistry and math to students in the STEM program. At Park Church, Emma volunteered in the nursery, assisted in shopping and stocking the food pantry, served five years as crew leader for Vacation Bible School, and worked the soundboard for Sunday services. She also works at Big Sno and as a barista and server at Café Kolache. Emma will attend the main campus of Penn State University in the fall, majoring in dietetics and nutritional sciences. She hopes to become a licensed registered dietitian.

Wyatt will attend Duquesne University in the fall with a major in finance. He plans to attain a law degree and become a business lawyer. Wyatt is the ultimate sportsman, having excelled at Beaver High School in football, baseball, and skiing. In 10th grade he started at both offense and defense for the varsity football team and he lettered all four years. As a senior, he was team captain and was named the Football Conference offensive MVP with 1031 rushing yards, 21 touchdowns and 3 interceptions. He was also on the starting varsity for the school's baseball team and was an active member of the Ski Club. He was department head for the student Technology Assistance Program. A high honor student all four years at BHS, Wyatt was accepted into the National Honor Society his senior year.

Wyatt volunteers with the Special Olympics, helping the players in bowling, bocce, and track and field. He has been a Salvation Army bell ringer for Park Church and works as a manager at Witch Flavor in Beaver. Wyatt is also the recipient of the Beaver Quarterback Club's Pat Tarquinio scholarship and the Jim and Ruth Cutri Memorial Award.

"Backyard Bible Studies" To Return--Save the Date(s)

It is always a blessing to gather around God's word for learning, sharing and fellowship. At Park, we have called these gatherings "Backyard Bible Studies" in the past, and we are delighted to be able to offer them again!

So, save the following date(s):

Wednesday, June 22nd

Wednesday, July 27th

Wednesday, August 24th

We will meet at Park beginning at 7:00 p.m. making use of the pavilion tables and surrounding area. Bring a lawn chair, if you prefer. Of course, please feel free to bring refreshment of your choice, and some snacks to share.

No advance preparation for discussion is needed—only your willingness to let the Spirit guide you and draw you closer to God and to one another! Pastor Todd will facilitate these events.

2022 Elders and Commission Assignments

Administration	Clif Dietz *
Christian Nurture	Roxanne Walker * and Susan Ivey
Facilities	Bob Gourley *
Finance	Ginny Flick * and Rich Reed
Membership Involvement	Sandra Parker * and Mary Gaydos
Mission	Bruce McCowin *
Outreach and Evangelism	Karen Capper *
Worship	Jan Pasuit * and Sally Heimbrook
Clerk of Session	Susan Ivey

Session commissions are always looking for at-large members to join them. Where can you offer your gifts and talents? Please contact the commission chair to talk about serving!

2022 Deacons and Committee Assignments

Local Mission	Kathy Bittner *
	Dave Ivey, Jerry Madden, Lyndsay Owens
Congregational Care	Carol Fedeles *
	June Phillips, Emily Dugan, Gail Rackley, Betty Brosch, Hermann Brosch
Secretary	Emily Dugan
Deacon Moderator	Gail Rackley



Gary Hess	06/02	Mallory Lane	06/09	Jan Reed	06/19
Sharon Schaller	06/03	Olivia Davis	06/11	Jessie Harden	06/20
Chloe Kraus	06/04	Debby Jurich	06/13	George Hardy	06/20
Tom Schaller	06/04	Sydney Johnston	06/16	David Shallcross	06/21
June Phillips	06/06	Joan Treleaven	06/18	Katie Saylor	06/22
John Rackley	06/08	Jane Elliot	06/19	Doris Thompson	06/22
Brenden Bernard	06/22	Amy Bernard	06/25	Bob Garvin	06/27
Debra McCowin	06/29	Ruthie Geist	06/30	Jackie Stewart	06/30