



The Lamplighter

Trinity United Church of Christ

June – July 2018

"Finding Life," Baccalaureate Message to the Graduating Class of Penns Valley Area High School, on May 20, 2018

by Pastor David A. Downer

Before I begin, I'd like to thank the Penns Valley Ministerium, the Penns Valley School District Administration, and the graduating class of 2018 for this opportunity to speak with you this evening. It's a great honor for me and comes precisely 40 years from the time when I sat where all of you graduates sit now. I remember that time as a whirlwind of activities and events, with little time to reflect and ponder the implications of everything that was taking place. It was also a time of excitement and promise, of endings and new beginnings and the mystery of what the future might hold. And just to be completely honest, I can't remember who spoke at my Baccalaureate or even a single word that was said. So perhaps one word of advice tonight is to hang onto the programs and bulletins of all the events and keep them with your yearbook and other graduation paraphernalia.

As I thought about what to share with you tonight, I was drawn to a verse in the Old Testament, written by the minor prophet Micah, some 2,700 years ago. It's a simple verse, easily remembered, and I'd like to share it with you tonight as well as one of the reasons it is special for me. I'm going to do this by telling you a story. Stories are always far more interesting to hear than preaching, and my hope is that after hearing this story, you will have some things to think about and some decisions to make about the type of person you'd like to become. Micah 6:8, in the New Revised Standard Version, says: *"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"* To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly – I'll hazard a guess that this is not the message you will often hear as you go through life. Our culture is more about individual success, of getting ahead, despite what it might cost, of manipulating others to get what you want, of brazenly proclaiming your identity and being noticed, through your words and actions. But this verse from Micah suggests an alternative to a life of ceaseless striving and accumulating. Don't misunderstand me, I am a big fan of hard work and becoming self-sufficient – my youngest child just graduated with her Master's Degree in teaching and already has a job offer...hallelujah!!

But what I'd like to talk with you about is that there is far more to life than chasing after things that we think will bring us happiness, and that we just might consider looking for joy in life some other way. It took me many years to come to the realization that for me, true God-given joy was best found in giving rather than receiving. Not so much in giving gift-wrapped presents, but rather in giving of myself, in kindness and compassion for others. And I think that is the central message from these verses in Micah. Caring for and putting the needs of others ahead of our own.

The story I'd like to share with you is a very personal one, and it's about a person that personifies this approach to life, and I learned a great deal from him as a result.

I met Matt shortly after moving to the Washington D.C. area in the spring of 1995. I was an Air Force Major at the time working in the Pentagon, and Matt was both a neighbor and colleague. Matt was an officer in the Coast Guard, and he too was working in Washington D.C. but at the Justice Department. At the time he was serving as a lawyer defending the Coast Guard against lawsuits and claims brought against it, sometimes by people whose lives had been saved by the brave men and women of the Coast Guard. Matt was from Massachusetts and like me, graduated High School in 1978. Following

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that, he attended the Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT., which I've learned is one of the most competitive and challenging institutions in the country. After graduating, Matt went on to serve tours in Hawaii and New York, where he commanded the ice breaker *Penobscot Bay* in New York Harbor and on the Hudson River. While in Hawaii, he met and married Lucy Padokis, and they became partners in the great adventure of life. Together they had two children, Alex and Emily. It turned out that Matt and Lucy's children and our children were roughly the same age when we met in 1995, so we often found ourselves at the same school and sports activities. It was through these connections and our local church where our friendship formed and grew. I can still remember Matt telling us stories that would often leave me struggling to breathe because I laughed so hard. So it was a natural fit and as our friendship developed I discovered how Matt came to know Christ in his life, and how that had changed him.

He and Lucy were living in New York at the time on Governors Island before it closed in 1998. It was here that Matt met a person that would change his life – a fellow Coast Guard officer named David S. They would run and work out together every day, and over the course of several months, Matt came to sense something in his friend that was unexpected and different. It was a sense of joy and contentment that Matt couldn't put his finger on, but knew he wanted. David S. was a Christian. Not just a Christian in name, but in lifestyle and action. His faith was real, and it confounded Matt to no end. It was this friend that led Matt to accept Christ in his own life. When I came to know Matt, he was a strong and faithful servant of Jesus Christ. He had many gifts, but the ones he taught me most about were gratitude and encouragement. If you somehow came to know Matt in some capacity, it wouldn't be long before you received a note or a phone call of encouragement. It was Matt that introduced me to Micah 6:8. I had probably read it before, but this time I stopped and thought about it, and studied on it. I mean, all of us are interested in what God expects of us – do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly. I think up until this time I was just going through the motions; attending church with my family, volunteering when it was convenient, and putting up a good front for my neighbors, but Matt helped me realize that being a Christian was a lot more than that. He lived out his faith and Micah 6:8 was one of the verses that guided him. I guess you could say we encouraged one another, through some good times and bad times. For instance, it was Matt that organized eight of my closest friends to travel 1,200 miles in one day so they could attend my Mother's funeral in Northern Vermont. Not an easy place to get to, but they put aside everything else in their lives and came, and I'll never forget them for it.

Matt retired from the Coast Guard in 2002, and he and Lucy bought a vacation home in the Outer Banks. It was wonderful, and they loved going to the beach on weekends, hanging out with friends, and enjoying the ocean. Our family vacationed in the Outer Banks as well so we would meet up with them sometimes and enjoy time together. I am deeply saddened to share with you that Matt's life was cut short. On July 26th, 2009, he went for a quick jog on the beach before fixing dinner and a thunderstorm rolled in quickly. Matt was struck by lightning as he raced to get off the beach and died instantly. It was a tremendous shock, one that I'll never get over.

I've not spoken about Matt in front of a large group like this before. He was one of my very best friends, and although it's been almost nine years now, I still grieve his loss. As an adult, you're going to find it's a bit more difficult to connect with someone and have close friendships that endure. I'm grateful I had that with Matt for the years I did, but there are still regrets; times Matt would call and say, "Let's go for a walk." and I'd be too busy. He looked for ways to reach out to people, and to give of his time and energy. I believe this is what God asks of us and following Micah 6:8 doesn't have to be difficult. It can be as simple as a smile or taking the time to show someone you care about them. Small gestures of kindness, of righting a wrong, offering forgiveness, and expecting nothing in return.

Our lives are a gift from God, precious, and sometimes, far too brief. Each of us have choices to make in life – we can decide what kind of person we want to be, or let the world decide for us. Because I promise you, if you don't make up your mind who and what sort of person you are, the circumstances of life and how you respond to them will decide for you. Each of us have the opportunity to decide if we're going to give our time and energy to something greater than our own desires.

About ten years ago now, I made a decision to serve God through full-time ministry, and thank the Lord, I was blessed with a wife and family that supported me. It wasn't easy. I had to go back to school and write a lot of papers, read a lot of books, and fulfill several criteria before I was qualified for ordination. I can honestly say, however, I have never been happier. Is every day wonderful? No. I am often faced with difficult and discouraging situations, but I find strength in my faith, and the love I've experienced through others; God's love, the kind of love that can save us from despair when we encounter the trials of life. Each of us has the potential to be instruments of God's love through our words and actions – to do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly. If only we can do this, the world will be a far better place because of it.

Grace and Peace to You. ~Pastor Dave

CHURCH RECORD

New Members

Kurt and Lynnette Breon, on April 22, 2018. Their mailing address is: 113 Wynwood Drive, Centre Hall, PA, 16828.

Larry and Lisa Campbell, on April 22, 2018. Their mailing address is: 121 Huckleberry Lane, Spring Mills, PA, 16875.

Celebration of Life Service

A Celebration of the Life of Susan Malone Perry was held on April 29, at Kaywood Park in Boalsburg, PA. In attendance were twelve immediate family members. The service was led by Pastor Dave Downer who was accompanied by his wife, Terri.

Death

Rev. John S. Hench, on May 30, 2018; he is survived by his wife, Jennie, and sons, Kevin and Keith.

Committee Membership

Pastor David Downer, Penn Central Conference, Board of Directors

Graduation Recognition

A graduation recognition service was held during worship service for 2018 graduates. In addition, **Vickie Fultz**, who retired from teaching at Centre Hall Elementary School was warmly recognized. The following graduates were honored.

Alyssa Boob graduated from Penns Valley Area High School. She is the daughter of Laurie Boob and Nathan Boob, the granddaughter of Dixie and Scott Vogt, and great-granddaughter of Nancy Vogt.

Cade Brindle graduated from Chambersburg Area Senior High School. He is the son of Heather and Buck Brindle, and grandson of Carole and Lynn Smith.

Marissa Carrigan graduated from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Art History. She is the daughter of Susan and Joe Carrigan, and granddaughter of Sylvia and Ben Malone.

Emily Downer graduated from Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA, with a Master of Arts Degree in Teaching. She is the daughter of Dave and Terri Downer.

Chad Erb graduated from The Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Material Science and Engineering. He is the son of Shelley Corman Frisby and Kim Erb, and the grandson of Joan Pecht.

Anya Fox graduated from Susquehanna Township High School in Harrisburg, PA. She is the daughter of Jeanette Krebs, and granddaughter of Donna Krebs.

Lydia Hankinson graduated from Penns Valley Area High School. She is the daughter of Janda and Ray Hankinson, and granddaughter of Donna Krebs.

Nicholas Jimenez graduated from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. He is the son of Jessica Krebs, and grandson of Donna Krebs.

Sydney Riegel graduated from Penns Valley Area High School. She is the daughter of Deborah and Steve Riegel.

Charles Romig graduated from Penns Valley Area High School. He is the son of Laura and Chuck Romig.

Nathan Sickler graduated from Canyon High School in Anaheim, CA. He is the son of Christine and John Sickler, and grandson of Marian Smith.

Corby Smith graduated from The Pennsylvania State University. He is the son of Kim and Jim Smith, and grandson of Ruth and Ben Floray.

Jessye Smith graduated from Penns Valley Area High School. She is the daughter of Amy Smith and Jason Smith.

Alexis Witherite graduated from Penns Valley Area High School. She is the daughter of Toni and Tom Witherite, and granddaughter of Beverly and Henry Garbrick.

RESOLUTIONS APPROVED AT ANNUAL PCC CONFERENCE

Two resolutions and the 2019 budget were presented and approved at the Penn Central Conference Annual Meeting held on June 8 and 9, at Susquehanna University.

RESOLUTION: "Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ encourages all congregations to avoid the use of plastic foam in food packaging and other activities within their church facilities. Be it further resolved that congregations educate their members about plastic foam and that they encourage them to use alternatives such as paper products or better yet, ceramic or other dishwasher safe products."

RESOLUTION: "Preparing for General Synod 3: A Guide to Proposed Changes to UCC Constitution and Bylaws." Delegates to General Synod will be presented with amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. This is intended to be a written guide to those proposed amendments. Additional forms of communication will be presented to help gain greater insights to the amendments as leaders of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors share their thoughts on this subject.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Calling all kids to cast away with the Centre Hall Council of Churches at "Shipwrecked VBS: Rescued by Jesus," hosted at Grace UMC from July 29th to August 2nd. "Shipwrecked" is for kids from age 3 to 5th grade and will run from 6 pm to 8:15 pm each day with a free dinner served at 5:30 pm for kids and volunteers attending VBS. At "Shipwrecked," kids discover that Jesus rescues them! Kids will enjoy Bible activities, music, missions, games, and crafts. Please call 814-364-1701 for more info or visit the registration website at: <http://vbspro.events/p/centrehall>

ATTENDANCE FOR APRIL and MAY 2018

Date	Worship Service	Sunday School	Date	Worship Service	Sunday School
April 1 (Easter)	122	No Sunday School	May 6	70	23
April 8	63	19	May 13	83	26
April 15	77	22	May 20	76	22
April 22	82	23	May 27	65	17
April 29	78	21			

PLEASE REMEMBER THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Glenda Bressler Abrams	Lance Arney	Cim Besecker	Jane Boldin	Steve Brown
Jody Covalt	T. J. Coursen	*Phyllis Crater	Rose Crozier	Erin, Austin, Conner Derr
*Sally Dreibelbis	*Jean Dunklebarger	Josh Dunklebarger	Kellie Eichler	Gracie Eisenhower
Jim & Tanya Evans	*Trudy Furner	*Mary Hardy	Russell & Myrtle Harpster	*John & Carol Hayes
Megan Henry	*John Krebs	Gina Lucas	Connie Masullo	Diane Matter
Judy Moellenbrock	Tanya Musser	Paige Musser-Gray	Larry Myers	*Miriam Myers
Malcolm Obiri	Jesse Orellana	Kent Smith	Marilyn Sproule	JR Stoner
Laurie Stover	Lori Stover	Shannon Stover	Jeanie Struble	Ronald Sweitzer
Jenn & Abbey Tice	Colin & Jaci Tucker	Rebecca Wagner	Jared & Vanessa Wiand	*Faye Winkelblech
Duane and Wilma Yarger	Sandy Young			

[*In personal care residence]

THANKS AND APPRECIATION

...to the congregation for your offering of \$110 to the "Strengthen the Church" mission offering
...to Ruth Floray, Vickie Fultz, and Teri Statham for presenting the "Children's Message" on Sundays
...to Kurt Breon, Terri and Dave Downer, Beverly Guyer, Ardranna and Robert Henry, Marnie, Sterling, Sadie, and Penelope Kocher, Don Matter, and Brooks Meyers for cleaning up the church lawn on April 28
...to Sally Arnold, Carol Clark-Baney, Joan Pecht and Nevin Dutrow, and Terri and Dave Downer for attending the Spring Banquet at Hartman Center on May 17
...to Terri Downer, Robert Henry, Don Matter, and Ennis Wagner for mowing the lawn in April and May
...to Tammy Besecker for sharing and arranging her stunning fresh flowers on the altar
...to Ardranna Henry for cleaning the church oven
...to Ann Moellenbrock for organizing the meal following the funeral service on April 5 and to all who helped serve and donated food items
...to Carol Clark-Baney for organizing the reception following the funeral service on June 10 and to all who helped serve and donated food items
...to the Chancel Choir for their anthems during worship service

EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS

The family of Gerald Krebs extends sincere appreciation for the expressions of sympathy they received during their time of sorrow in the loss of their remarkable husband, father, and grandfather. The cards, food, visits, phone calls, flowers, and prayers were truly comforting.

Cleo Matter would like to thank everyone for the cards, food, telephone calls, and prayers she has received after her recent surgery. She is very grateful for your kindness and support during this time.

"I would like to express my thanks to everyone who sent cards, visited, phoned, or sent food when I was at home with issues with my back. I also want to thank those who expressed sympathy upon the death of my sister, Helen Hunter, who passed away during that time. The generosity of the church family is truly remarkable." ~Eleanor Tyson

Vickie Fultz would like to thank everyone for their kind words and well-wishes concerning her retirement, and for the gift basket, too!

"My family and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Trinity UCC's congregation and our community for the prayers, calls and positive thoughts over the last several years during my illness. Your kindness and support has helped us get through the low times and celebrate the positives. I continue to be monitored closely with three-month MRI's and CT scans. Prayers do matter! It's nice to know that whatever our daily problems and battles are, NO one fights alone! The power of prayer is a blessing because prayers are answered!" ~Lance Arney

TEXAS ROADHOUSE ONGOING PROGRAM

The Texas Roadhouse in State College can help raise money for our church every Sunday. Just present your church bulletin on any Sunday and you will receive 10% off your check AND the church will receive \$1 for every bulletin received. This is an ongoing program. Every Sunday is an opportunity to support your church!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- June 1: 7:00 p.m. Penns Valley High School Commencement
- June 3: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Sacrament of Holy Communion and Graduate Recognition
- June 5: 1:30 p.m. Communion and message at Salem Hill, Spring Mills
- June 6: 11:00 a.m. Council of Churches Meeting
5:00 p.m. Strawberry Social at Trinity UCC
7:00 p.m. Church and Ministry Committee Meeting
- June 8 through June 9: Penn Central Conference Annual Meeting at Susquehanna University
- June 10: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday school
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
- June 12: 1:30 p.m. Communion and message at Wynwood House, Centre Hall
- June 17: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
- June 19: 7:00 p.m. Consistory Committee Meeting
- June 22 – 23: Trinity UCC Food Stand during Centre Hall Town-Wide Yard Sales
- June 24: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
- July 1: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Sacrament of Holy Communion; Church World Service Tools/Blankets special mission offering
- July 3: 1:30 p.m. Communion and message at Salem Hill, Spring Mills
- July 4: Independence Day!
- July 8: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
- July 10: 1:30 p.m. Communion and message at Wynwood House, Centre Hall
- July 15: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
- July 17: 7:00 p.m. Consistory Committee Meeting
- July 22: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service with music by Chase Rider
- July 29: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
- July 29 – Aug 2: 6 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. Vacation Bible School at Grace United Methodist Church; hosted by Council of Churches [free meal for attendees served at 5:30 p.m.]
- August 5: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Sacrament of Holy Communion
- August 12: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (Note: no Sunday School)
- August 19: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (Note: no Sunday School)
- August 26: 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (Note: no Sunday School)

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Responsibility	June 2018	July 2018
Head Usher	Steve Riegel	Kirk Wolfgang
Alternate Usher	Carol Clark-Baney	
Altar Flowers	Tammy Besecker	Tammy Besecker
Altar Guild	Joyce Barner	Lois Martz
Caregiver	Sally Arnold	Joan Pecht
Fellowship Coordinator	Carol Clark-Baney	Volunteer Needed
SALT	Carol Readinger	Leena Wolfgang
Marquee Manager	Richard Delaney	Richard Delaney
Oil in Candles	Carol Clark-Baney	Jessica Miller
Organist	Alyssa Limbaugh / Carole Smith	Alyssa Limbaugh / Carole Smith

Date	Greeters	Greeters	Acolyte	Call to Worship	Scripture Reader
June 3	Richard Delaney	Nevin Dutrow & Joan Pecht	Harrison Reish	Pastor Dave	Rick Arnold
June 10	Ben and Ruth Floray	Scott, Ruth Ann Floray & Family	Jackson Romig	Rick Arnold	Carole Smith
June 17	Charles & Beverly Guyer	Joyce Barner	Paige Auman	Steve Riegel	Rick Arnold
June 24	Sara Frazier	Mike & Carol Frazier	Owen Miller	Steve Riegel	Jean Brooks
July 1	Glenn & Vickie Fultz	Jeff & Jennifer Gooch & Family	Maddie Gooch	Pastor Dave	Rick Arnold
July 8	Mike & Sara Hanson & Family	Robert & Ardranna Henry	Katie Martell	Sally Arnold	Ann Moellenbrock
July 15	Karen Keller	Patrick, Megan, & Delaney Kelly	Ellie Romig		Rick Arnold
July 22	David & Cassandra King & Family	Donna Krebs	Sara Floray	Dave King	Carole Smith
July 29	Yolanda Lawrence	Ben & Sylvia Malone	Ella Smith	Rick Arnold	
August 5	John & Lois Martz	Don & Cleo Matter	Rylee Arney	Pastor Dave	Rick Arnold
August 12	Jo McNitt & Barb McNitt	George & Ann Moellenbrock	Kylie Auman		

Trinity United Church of Christ
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

It's hard to stumble
when you are on your knees.



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR JUNE – JULY 2018

June 3:	1 Samuel 3:1-20	Mark 2:23-28
June 10:	1 Samuel 8:4-11, 16-20	Mark 3:20-35
June 17:	1 Samuel 15:34 - 16:13	Mark 4:26-34
June 24:	1 Samuel 17:32-49	Mark 4:35-41
July 1:	2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27	Mark 5:21-43
July 8:	2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10	Mark 6:1-13
July 15:	2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19	Mark 6:14-29
July 22:	2 Samuel 7:1-14a	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56
July 29:	2 Samuel 11:1-15	John 6:1-21

