

Light From The Hill



June, 2023

(Thought you might like to have a copy of the “Farewell Message from our Pastor” as a keepsake.)

God’s Grace, Your Love

Ephesians 3:14-21

1.

Generally speaking, the more you do anything, the more you get used to it. I have served several churches in Korea and the United States over 33 years and have also had to leave them. So now, I might have become accustomed to saying goodbye to my church members, but saying goodbye is still difficult. Yet, the time has finally come, and I have to say goodbye again.

It has been a wonderful journey for me and Miyeon to serve and worship with you for the past three years. It has been our pleasure and privilege to get to know you, serve our church alongside you, and grow together in Christ. It has truly been a blessed journey filled with grace, gratitude, joy, and excitement. All of you have been the precious conduits of God’s blessings for me and my family. Your love and support, kindness and generosity, willingness and cooperation, dedication and commitment, and genuine faith in God – all the things you have done for us and shown us mean a lot to us, obviously. We don’t know how to thank you enough.

Since I was assigned to Laurel Hill and started my ministry in July 2020, I have faced a triple challenge. First, I had to minister in the midst of a global pandemic situation that we had never experienced before. Our memories are already fading, but we had to deal with many restrictions to continue our journey as a faith community.

Second, due to our family situations, Miyeon had to travel to Madison, WI many times over the past three years, and I have had countless sleepless nights. Sometimes we felt helpless, and other times we were greatly frustrated by the situations we faced that didn't seem to be getting any better. Honestly, there were times when it was very stressful for me to juggle with the two balls – church and family – and not drop either of them.

Third, our church went through the process of disaffiliating from the United Methodist Church, and as the spiritual leader, I had to put extra effort into leading and guiding us in the right direction while remaining impartial or neutral and maintaining peace and stability in our church.

Although these threefold challenges were quite demanding, I can say that everything has been in God’s gracious hands. Don’t you think? I am so grateful for that. It is only by God's grace and with your help that I have been able to overcome all these challenges and serve this church with grace and peace for the past three years. Again, thanks be to God, and thank all of you!

2.

I recall my first meeting with the SPRC members on the 4th of March 2020. On the way back to the Eastern Shore after the meeting, I told Miyeon, “Honey, usually I get nervous when I have a ‘Meet Your Pastor’ meeting with the new SPRC members. But today, I felt very comfortable. I felt at home, and I don’t know why. I think in the new church, all will be well, and God will give more grace and blessings than we have prayed for.” My hunch was right, wasn’t it?

I recall my first day in the office. My dear colleagues, Barbara and Margo, welcomed me with warm hearts and words, and they truly helped me feel at home. Special thanks to them in particular, among many others. They have been a blessing to me not only in their ability and accountability but also in their kindness and friendship. Every time I came to my office, they were there smiling, welcoming, helping, supporting, cooperating, and of course, chatting. If my English has improved, it is entirely thanks to them.

I recall our first in-person Sunday worship service on August 2nd, 2020. Back then, we were not able to have in-person worship, not to mention other activities or meetings. So, we worshiped online only in July. What a challenge it was for all of us! Soon, I realized that many of our church members were really longing for in-person worship. After many meetings with the members of an ad-hoc committee named HCT (Health Care Team) and the Worship Committee, we were finally able to resume our in-person worship service on the first Sunday of August and other church activities, although we had to wear masks and practice social distancing. Laurel Hill was one of the earliest churches in the Virginia Conference that boldly and wisely returned to the “new normal,” if you will. This couldn’t have been possible without your patience and cooperation.

I also recall all the teamwork I have done with my wonderful and respectable pastor friends, Rev. Ed Johnson and Rev. Tom Austin, and their precious life partners (and bosses), Pam and Barbara. I can tell you that it is a blessing to a church to have such seasoned, mature, able, willing, and humble retired pastors as part of the congregation. I can also tell you that it has been an exceptional blessing for me to serve our church with them. They were always there for me, praying for me, supporting me, and working with me. Every Sunday we stood together at the altar and took each other’s part in the service was an exceptionally precious and joyous experience to me. Thank you, my truest buddies!

Friends, these are just small parts of my wonderful memories with you. I could spend a whole week sharing all the good memories of each of you – our time together at Sunday worships, fellowships, various meetings, Chancel Choir and Bell Choir practices, Christmas cantatas, Wednesday prayer meetings, House Church meetings and Shepherds’ gatherings, Bible studies, Lenten group devotionals, as well as my pastoral visits to your homes, hospitals, and rehab centers, you name it. Miyeon always accompanied me in doing those things unless she had to be out of town. I thank God for all those good memories that are filled with the love and kindness you showed me, the joys and laughter we shared together, and the blessings with which God provided us through our time together.

3.

As I address my last message to you, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you, instead of giving you spiritual admonitions and directions.

Again, thank you very much. Indeed, Miyeon and I thank you for your love and prayers. You welcomed us, strangers, with open arms. You accepted us as part of your family. You showed your love and touched our hearts in many ways. From the first day we met up until today, you have always shown your love for us. You have also been praying for us, for our children, and even for our families in Korea. You have always checked on us and asked us how our families are doing. And even after Miyeon and I decided to go in a separate direction, you blessed us with extravagantly generous donations for our trip to Korea and my mission trip to China.

We also thank you for your spiritual companionship. All of you have been wonderful spiritual companions in Christ. I know how faithfully you love God with all your hearts, minds, and strengths. I know how sincerely you love and serve your neighbors as yourselves. You have been very generous to those in need. You are wonderful missional people, and I am proud of you and thank you for all the missions you have done for our community and beyond.

Last, but not least, I thank you for the peace we have enjoyed together during my tenure. I am very glad that there have been no conflicts between us and no strife among church members. Well, there might have been some trivial conflicts going on, but there was no serious discord among us, even when we had to make critical decisions regarding the future of our church.

Also, you have never made any complaints against me, not because I have done perfectly well, but because you are very kind and supportive. It has truly been a peaceful journey. I know it was possible not because I was a good leader, but because you are mature enough to embrace the weaknesses and shortcomings of others, including your pastor. You are peacemakers and bridge builders as Jesus commanded you to be. Thank you for your patience and your gentle spirit.

4.

There are many other things for which I would appreciate you, but I know I should let you go downstairs now. So, as I conclude my farewell message to you, I want to bless you. I bless each and every one of you and your families, and your continued faith journey as Laurel Hill GMC, with the prayers Apostle Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians. He prayed:

"I ask that the Father will strengthen you in your inner selves from the riches of his glory through the Spirit. I ask that Christ will live in your hearts through faith. As a result of having strong roots in love, I ask that you'll have the power to grasp love's width and length, height and depth, together with all believers. I ask that you'll know the love of Christ that is beyond knowledge so that you will be filled entirely with the fullness of God. Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us; glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus for all generations, forever and always. Amen" (Ephesians 3:16-21).

So be it! Amen, and amen!



Tuesday, May 9, 2023

Laurel Hill Church
1919 New Market Road
Henrico, VA 23231

To the Pastor and Laity of Laurel Hill Church:

Welcome to the Global Methodist Church! We received your request to join the GM Church as a member congregation accompanied by the required minutes of your congregational meeting endorsing the doctrinal standards and social witness in our Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline and expressing your desire to be connected and accountable to the Global Methodist Church. On Monday, May 8, 2023, the Transitional Leadership Council approved your request, and your church is now a member congregation of the Global Methodist Church effective Friday, May 5, 2023. Praise God! Those individuals who are professing members of your congregation are now members of the Global Methodist Church.

In the coming days, we will send you a charter designating you as a member congregation of the Global Methodist Church which you may display should you choose to do so.

When you share this news with your congregation, I encourage you to use the Wesley Covenant Service as a means of both celebrating your new relationship as a member congregation of the GM Church and renewing your covenant with God.

We will be sending additional information to you in the coming days to address other aspects of your being a member congregation of the Global Methodist Church. I am praying for you as you make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly. Please be in touch with me if you have questions.

In Christ,

Keith Boyette
Transitional Connectional Offi



Sermon Plans for June, 2023

June 4 th	Sermon: Phil Deane	Liturgist: Rachel Hawk
June 11 th	Sermon: Bud Funk	Liturgist: Ann Ragland
June 18 th	Sermon: Peggy Singlemann	Liturgist: Doug Singlemann
June 25 th	Sermon: Ann Via	Liturgist: Ann Hechler



HAPPY BIRTHDAY-JUNE 2023

Paul Miller	June 3 rd
William Miller	June 22 nd
Judy Walker	June 22 nd

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY-JUNE, 2023

Ann and Durward Hechler	June 6 th
Bronson and Janet Stoneman	June 7 th
Connie and Guy Madison	June 9 th
Patrice and Carl Moore	June 23 ^r

OUR SYMPATHY to Kathleen McKinsey at the passing of her sister this past week. Please keep Kathleen in your prayers and remember her with cards, calls and other expressions of your love and concern.

WE ARE SO PLEASED TO REPORT that our former pastor, Rev Dr. Yunho Eo will serve as our interim pastor for the months of July and August. He is now a member of the Global Methodist Church and we are so blessed to have him accept this position.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

THE LADIES OF LAUREL HILL... We plan to have lunch together in June, July, and August on our regular meeting day (second Tuesday of the month). On June 13th we will eat at the Surry Seafood (1hour drive). Meet at church at 10:30 A.M. On July 11th we will eat at the Brickhouse on the Boulevard or Hondos. On August 8th we will see a movie and have lunch if anything good is playing, or eat at Indian Fields. Watch the bulletin for more information as the summer progresses.

THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE IS PLANNING :

Mission Sunday, July 30th will feature Guest Speaker from FISH, Inc.

Baby Shower, October 29th for East End Pregnancy Center

FISH: The FISH Spring yard sale was quite a success. We made a profit of \$6,273.07.

During April, FISH gave inkind assistance to 16 households (21 adults and 22 children), giving out 108 bags of food, 382 clothing and household items. We also gave direct financial assistance to 5 households (6 adults and 4 children). The need is picking up so "thank you" for continuing your support of food and clothing.

Here are our upcoming events:

The FISH golf Tournament will be held on June 10th at Brookwoods Golf Club. We extend our gratitude and thanks to Marsha Williams and Buddy and Kathie Whitlow for being "hole" sponsors for this event.

FISH will have a "Spirit Day" at Roberto's on Tuesday July 11th. We hope you will mark this date and plan to enjoy either lunch or dinner at Roberto's that day. We will give out coupons for you to show the waitress to support FISH and 10% of the cost of your meal will be donated to FISH.

The FISH BBQ luncheon will be held on Sunday, August 13th at Ft. Lee Baptist Church from 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. We will start selling tickets next month.

We will collect beets for the month of June and will accept any food item with a good "use by" date. Blessings.

WEEKDAY SCHOOL NEWS: We are officially in countdown mode, the end of the school year and the start of summer. We have exactly two weeks left in this current school year, and we feel blessed for this accomplishment.

I want to remind you that we will be starting our summer program on Monday, June 12th and we would love to have volunteers throughout each week for various activities. If you have a specific interest in any of the following hobbies or crafts (music, gardening, sewing, baking, outdoors play, etc.), please get in touch with me. If you only have one hour or one day to spare, we'd love to have your assistance. If you don't have time or are unable to assist, we ask that you just keep praying for our program. That works also.

Thank you for all you do for this church and our Weekday School.

Fondly, Margo Keeles, Director

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT - May 16, 2023

Final payment for disaffiliation to the UMC was made on April 25, 2023, in the amount of \$251,065.00.

The sources of funds for this payment were:

Weekday school checking account in the amount of \$63,479.00, leaving a checking account balance of \$86,942.12 (58% of the account balance before payment).

Church checking account in the amount of \$77,586.00, leaving a checking account balance \$84,956.64 (52% of the account balance before payment). Loan from the Laurel Hill Cemetery Trust in the amount of \$110,000.00. The loan repayment is \$1,087.74 per month, beginning June 1, 2023, for 120 months. The loan can be repaid, in advance, in whole or in part, as finances permit.

We are asking all members to consider increasing contributions to the church budget, in whatever amount that is comfortable. Even a small amount weekly, or monthly, will add up over time.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VOLUNTEERS are needed for Vacation Bible School. The date is July 17th – 21st from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The ages are 3 to 12 years old. Our Theme this year is,

HERO HOTLINE: Called Together to Serve God!

The materials have been ordered and most have arrived.

We just need volunteers in the following areas:

Planning

Decorating

Music

Crafts

Story Telling

Floater/Assistants

Recreation

Kitchen: Daily Snacks

If you think you might be able to assist, please contact

Dale Dixon at (804) 837-4562 or (804) 737-6846.

This is a wonderful way to serve God and the children.

Thank you,

Dale



