

# Light From The Hill



## September, 2023

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Pastor John Bright...

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. As I sit to write this, it is with a sense of expectation. I desire to see the Lord move among His people at Laurel Hill Church. I am praying you have the same expectation.

We are living and serving in unfamiliar times. Both a global pandemic and disaffiliation are in the rearview mirror. It has been noted, by folks way smarter than me, that it is helpful to compare the size of the car's windshield with the size of the rearview mirror. Which one is larger? The windshield is MUCH BIGGER. So, conventional wisdom tells us to look forward at where we are going and spend very little time looking backwards. That makes sense, but there is more for Believers in Jesus Christ. We need to spend more time **LOOKING UP!**

Let me share a few verses from Romans 8 (my favorite chapter of the Bible) - **"35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

You have probably heard these verses many times. I have often read these verses at the funeral of a beloved saint - focusing on the "neither death nor life" promise. I want to step back and get the "30,000 foot view" from above because it will be essential for us as we seek to open our arms to embrace the lonely and the lost, the hurting and hopeless. These verses show us an absolute truth that can't be denied:

There is nothing you can do to make God love you more  
and

There is nothing you can do to make God love you less.

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It's my prayer you can read that and shout, "AMEN!" It can be tempting to say, "Yeah, but..." We might be tempted to think it's more true for folks like us and less true for the folks that are different than you and me.

This was the kind of love that drove John and Charles Wesley to share the love of God with the most common of folks in their day. In our day, I can't imagine withholding the love from anybody... no matter their hurts, hang-up, or habits. That great love of God was precious to Charles Wesley and it moved him to pen these words: "Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of Heav'n to earth come down; Fix in us thy humble dwelling; All thy faithful mercies crown!" I want to proclaim this GREAT LOVE with all of you and will be praying for you to share this GREAT LOVE with everyone around you!

Serving the Great Shepherd -  
Pastor John



## **SERMON TITLE AND SCRIPTURE FOR AUGUST**

9/3/2023      Luke 15:11-32 – "What a Long Strange Trip"

9/10              Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 – "A Place to Belong"  
Bring a Friend Sunday – Followed by Luncheon

### **Sermon Series: "The Apostles' Creed-Faith & Belief Coming Together" – 7 Weeks**

9/17              Revelation 2:12-17 – "Beliefs as Boundaries"

9/24              Genesis 1:1-5 – "I Believe in God"



## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY-SEPTEMBER, 2023**

Ann Hechler	September 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Bob Steele	September 15 <sup>th</sup>
John Turner	September 4 <sup>th</sup>	Barbara Austin	September 16 <sup>th</sup>
Mary Hicks	September 8 <sup>th</sup>	Nancy Henry	September 30 <sup>th</sup>
Linda Turner	September 13 <sup>th</sup>	Phyllis Nelson	September 30 <sup>th</sup>
Eugene Hicks	September 15 <sup>th</sup>		

## **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY-SEPTEMBER, 2023**

Billy and Judy Walker	September 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Bob and Evelyn Steele	September 11 <sup>th</sup>
Clyde and Mary Ann Howard	September 27 <sup>th</sup>

### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION:**

**MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN OR DONATION...**We are starting a Medical Equipment List in case you need a piece of equipment. Some church members have gently used equipment they are willing to give away or loan to other members in need.

If you have a walker, bedside commode, wheelchair, shower chair, tub grab bar, extension grabber, etc. and would like to find a new home for it, please let us know. We are not able to store these at church but may be able to put you in contact with another church member to share. We do already have two wheelchairs at church in case of emergency.

Contact Brenda Jennette with the equipment you have or need. She will compile a list and let you know when it is finished. Contact Brenda at 804-839-1034 or bajennette206@gmail.com

**OUR WEEKDAY SCHOOL** is off to a great start. Thank God for our students and parents. We have 25 students and are still getting calls. We have a waiting list for some age levels. Thank you to the Laurel Hill family for all your prayers, love and support for our Weekday School!

**THE LADIES OF LAUREL HILL...** On Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, we will meet at the home of Nancy Henry for a covered dish luncheon. If you know what you will bring, please call Joanne Corley so that we will not replicate our dishes. We will begin at 11:30 A.M. Come and enjoy!

**THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE IS PLANNING :**

**Homeless Feeding, August 29<sup>th</sup>** . Meet at Laurel Hill at 10 A.M. to prepare the bag lunches that will be delivered immediately upon completion. Thanks for all your help with this ministry.

**Breakfast and Silent Auction,** on September 16<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8 A.M. at the Varina Ruritan Building off Recreation Road. We will serve a Pancake Breakfast and have the opportunity to bid on our silent auction. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 5-12 years. Younger children will eat for free. We hope everyone will help in some way. We hope to involve the community in this breakfast since it will be on a Football Saturday at the ballpark. Spread the word. Tickets will be sold at the door.

**Yard Sale, October 7<sup>th</sup>,** you may begin bringing items now. Please put them in the back section of the Fellowship Hall. **Please, no clothes or electronics.** Contact Barbara Austin if you can help in any way.

**Baby Shower, October 29<sup>th</sup> for East End Pregnancy Center**

**INVITE A FRIEND SUNDAY – SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>...**Do you have an unchurched friend? Our “Invite a Friend Sunday” is coming up in two weeks on September 10. It’s a special day when members of our church invite folks who are not connected to another church for worship and fellowship. There will be a reception that day for Pastor John. He thinks it is a good time to bring visitors into the life of Laurel Hill Church. Who can you invite? Have you talked with that person recently? Plan to get together with that person this week – maybe share a cup of coffee. Pray for God to speak to the heart of your friend. That you care enough to invite that person might be just what he or she needs at this time. “A friend loves at all times...” Proverbs 17:17

**ASKING FOR VOLUNTEERS** to share their love of reading to our Daycare Children. Please Contact Connie Madison for information. This is an outreach for our Sunday School Program. Your heart will be filled with love! 804-507-0862.

## **FISH NEWS:**

Thank you for your overwhelming support with a great variety of school supplies. Your donations are helping provide some school children with all the supplies they need to have a successful year. We also thank you for supporting the FISH BBQ luncheon. We were completely sold out and had a profit of \$2,218.86. We cherish your support especially since we were unable to have the annual bowling tournament this year. Thank you very much.

During July, FISH gave direct assistance to 6 households (10 adults and 13 children) and we gave out 54 bags of food, 171 clothing and household items, and school supplies for 5 students. We are now getting a lot more calls asking for assistance so we appreciate your donations.

Laurel Hill will collect breakfast bars for the month of September. And, of course, you can give any other food items you wish to donate with a good "use by" date. The next opportunity to support FISH is our "Spirit Day" at the Texas Roadhouse on Jeb Stuart Parkway in Glen Allen. It will be held on Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, from 3-10pm. Bring a copy of the flyer that is included in this newsletter or present a picture of it on your phone and Texas Roadhouse will donate 10% of your total food purchases to FISH. FISH will also be selling bags of peanuts at the restaurant for \$5 and with each purchase you will get a coupon for an appetizer.

The fall FISH yard sale will be held on Thursday, October 5 (9 – 6pm), and on Friday, October 6 (9am – 5pm). Hope you will stop by, hunt for treasures, and have lunch at our concession while there.

A special "thank you" to Rachel Hawk for stepping in to help Pam price items for the yard sale. We have been swamped with donations. This is a wonderful gift for FISH but pushes us to get everything priced. We cannot put any item out for the sale until it is priced. If you have a few hours you can give to get this chore completed please tell Pam. People come looking for items they cannot otherwise afford so we would like to get everything out.

Thank you again for your wonderful outpouring of love and charity. You are blessing our East End neighbors and helping get them back on their feet.

**ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>** we will take up an offering for the emergency in Maui. If you wish to write a check, please remember to indicate on the memo line that it is for this purpose. Thank you for your generosity for these people who are in such a difficult time in their lives. Please remember to keep them in your prayers.