

# The Pipe Line

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July 28, 2021

## FROM THE PASTOR

There is the concept of tension, how two things can both be true, even if they seem in contradiction to each other. For instance, it may be considered a good thing to save money, but one is also encouraged to spend money to make money. Be humble, but proud. Be open-minded, but firm in your convictions.

Two scriptures that can be borne in tension are:

“Man does not live by bread alone.”

And

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

During the testing in the wilderness, Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights when Satan challenges him, saying, “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’” (Matthew 4: 3-4, KJV)

The story of Jesus being tested in the wilderness is meant to remind us of the people of God who wandered 40 years in the wilderness and were tested, and the scripture Jesus was alluding to comes from what Moses tells the people of God as they are getting ready to cross the Jordan River and go into the Promised Land. “And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you *and* test you, to know what *was* in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.” (Deuteronomy 8: 2-3)

Jesus passed the test of his 40 days in the wilderness. During their 40 years in the wilderness, the people of God complained and rebelled.

When Jesus taught the disciples what we know as the Lord’s Prayer, he included the petition you are familiar with, “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11, KJV)

Bread becomes a word that means not just bread, but all our daily sustenance.

We always keep in mind who gives us all we have, even as we are grateful for our blessings.

Jane Webster, a professor at Barton College in Wilson, NC, reminds us that thinking that God blesses us with food can have negative consequences. “First, when we believe that God has provided our food, we think of ourselves as worthy of it. We might be ‘more worthy’ than the birds of the air,’ but are we more worthy than other people? Second, when we believe that we are ‘blessed’ by God with the food before us, we might want to keep more of it for ourselves. Third, when we concentrate on thanking God, we might forget that others have had a role in feeding us. Should we not thank them also?” I took her words to heart, but I also believe there is a nuance and a sense of proportion there that is lacking. Yes, thinking that God blesses us with food can have negative consequences, just as eating too much can. Being grateful and believing that God blesses us with food does not neces-

sarily mean we think we are better than anyone, so much as we are grateful. It does not necessarily mean we don’t share. Being grateful to God does not necessarily mean we are not grateful to others. But even having said that, I still like the tension she presents in maintaining a proper attitude.

Our Church Growth and Service Committee is starting a ministry of providing homemade bread to people who would appreciate it – perhaps a neighbor or church member who can’t leave home easily. A number of folks on the committee knew how to bake bread, and we quickly had a list of a dozen or so folks to visit. I wanted to join the fun, but knew there was a tension there: I am unpracticed in the kitchen. Jennifer is a master cook. I am good at eating.

But I found a celebrated New York Times recipe for no-knead bread (one of the most popular recipes in the history of the newspaper), and watched a video demonstration (<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/11376-no-knead-bread>). It’s a simple recipe of flour, salt, yeast, and water. I got the ingredients, bought a Dutch oven, and tried it. I prepared the dough, and let it proof overnight. The bread smelled delicious the next day when it was baking. I was pleased with the crunchy, golden crust, and amazed I’d baked a loaf of bread. But I was a little disappointed. The bread was a round loaf, relatively flat, with not much of a crumb. While it was good with peanut butter or some other spread, the bread was pretty non-descript. I thought I could do better and researched ways to improve. I realized I’d used regular yeast, instead of self-rising yeast, which made things marginally more difficult, but more importantly, I wasn’t sure if that affected the final result. I’d also used regular flour, rather than bread flour, which has a higher percentage of protein to give the bread more gluten, meaning more body and structure. I found many YouTube instructional videos for no-knead bread, and one that stood out for the host’s clear and straightforward instruction was on a channel called “Artisan Bread with Steve” (Steve Gamelin). I thought his recipe for Honey Oatmeal bread would add flavor, moisture, and texture my first loaf had lacked. I purchased bread flour, self-rising yeast, and oatmeal. I already had a jar of honey. I watched Steve’s YouTube video and paused it as I worked on each step.

The bread turned out just as I’d hoped, moist and flavorful, with a beautiful crust and great texture. It was delicious. It’s hard for me to explain how meaningful it has been to learn to bake bread. I know people do it every day, and it’s a simple recipe and technique, but there is something about baking bread that I found immensely satisfying and pleasing. It’s something I can keep doing and sharing.

When we come to the Communion Table this coming Sunday, Aug. 1, we’ll share in communion as we usually do. At the close of the service, you’re invited to come up and take bread that has been baked by members of the Church Growth and Service Committee. Take it home or take it to someone. You can eat it yourself or you can share it with a neighbor or someone who needs it. We are reminded that we don’t live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God. The Word of God is what blesses us, and we are reminded that as God shows us compassion and care, we thank God and practice compassion and care to our neighbor. We come together at the table in relationship. We nourish ourselves in community, blessed by God and grateful, and we share with others.

God bless you!  
Monte



## MEMORIAL GIFT FUND

We are grateful for the following Memorial Gifts

**--In Memory of Pamella Keyser:** by Mr. & Mrs. Al Combs, Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mollohan, Ms. Nancy Keatley

**--In Memory of William Hartling:** by Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mollohan, Ms. Barbara Daniel, Ms. Nancy Keatley

**--In Memory of Johnny Walker:** by Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mollohan

**--In Memory of Leslie Cox:** by Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mollohan

**--In Memory of Albert "Mac" Tieche:** by Mr. & Mrs. Howard Mollohan

### MUSIC FUND

**--In Memory of William Hartling:** by Mr. & Mrs. Al Combs, Mr. & Mrs. David Sotak

**--In Memory of Ted Anderson:** by Ms. Lilly Anderson & Family

**--In Memory Jennie Anderson:** by Ms. Lilly Anderson & Family



The ladies of the church are having another luncheon at The Black Knight on **Thursday, August 19th at 11:30 a.m.** We are looking forward to being together again. Please call the church by August 17th, as the restaurant needs a count of ladies. We hope to see you there.



### PER CAPITA

In 2021, our Presbytery of WV Per Capita rate is \$30.00 per active, confirmed member. This is a set amount of money per member that Presbyterians pay to share the costs associated with operating, coordinating and ecclesiastical functions of our General Assembly, Presbyteries, and Synods.

While the cost for each of us individually is minimal, the total impact on the church budget is substantial. If you feel you can assist with the expenses for the current year, please make your checks payable to Beckley Presbyterian Church, with the notation, "Per Capita," on the memo line. Contributions can be received at any time during the year.

**Your Contributions are greatly appreciated**

Beckley Presbyterian Church  
203 South Kanawha Street  
Beckley, WV 25801



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## AUGUST

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 01 Ryan Kissinger       | 20 Don Goodson         |
| 02 Jack Williams        | 21 Brian McGee         |
| 04 Nancy Kissinger      | 21 Elizabeth Hughes    |
| 05 Sandra Stewart       | 22 Ellen Combs         |
| 08 Julia Mollohan       | 24 Tyke Wilson         |
| 10 Jennifer Blankenship | 25 Dan Calvert         |
| 10 Maddie DiGiulian     | 25 Bob Mestrovic       |
| 12 Robert Debnam        | 26 Kelsey Wilson       |
| 14 Karen Reed           | 27 Gary Sutphin        |
| 14 Carol Mestrovic      | 28 Gerald Johnson      |
| 16 Jonathan DiGiulian   | 28 Nancy Sotak         |
| 19 Jane Beaver          | 29 John A. Lester, Jr. |
| 19 Andrew McCoy         |                        |

### LECTIONARY READINGS

#### August 1

2 Sam. 11:26-12:13a and Ps. 51:1-12;  
Exod. 16:2-4, 9-15 and Ps. 78:23-29;  
Eph. 4:1-16; John 6:24-35

#### August 8

2 Sam. 18:5-9, 15, 31-33 and Ps. 130;  
1 Kgs. 19:4-8 and Ps. 34:1-8; Eph. 4:25-5:2;  
John 6:35, 41-51

#### August 15

1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14 and Ps. 111; Prov. 9:1-6 and Ps. 34:9-14;  
Eph. 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

#### August 22

1 Kings 8:1,6,10-11; 22-30, 41-43 and Ps. 84  
Josh. 24:1-2a, 14-18 and Ps. 34:15-22;  
Eph. 6:10-20; John 6:56-69

#### August 29

S. of Sol. 2:8-13 and Ps. 45:1-2, 6-9;  
Deut. 4:1-2, 6-9 and Ps. 15;  
James 1:17-27;  
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

## NURTURING FAITH IDEAS

**August 1** – Tenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 13: Read John 6:24-35 Jesus said, "Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the bread of life. I am the bread of life." How do you and your family work for the spiritual food available to all of us?

**August 8** – Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 14: Read John 6:35, 41-51 The Jews complained about Jesus, not believing he could come from heaven. He assures them he comes from God and has seen God. Who do you turn to when things are not what you want, God or one another?

**August 15** – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 15: Read Ephesians 5:15-20 Paul warns the Ephesians to have wise lives and understand the will of God. He reminds all of us to give thanks to God at all times for everything. Make a list of what you are thankful for and how you give God thanks always.



**August 22** – Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 16: Read Ephesians 6: 10-20 Paul reminds us to be strong in the Lord and put on the whole armor of God, to withstand the wiles of the devil. As you read this passage, ask yourself how you live out Paul's instructions.

**August 29** – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 17: Read Psalm 15 This Psalm of David asks the question, who shall be admitted to the temple, the worshipping community? The answer given is: those who do what is right and speak the truth, who honor and fear (meaning respect and worship) the Lord, and who are trustworthy. As you read the Psalm, ask yourself if you do these things, and, if not, what might you do differently in your life?