

## A Little Bit of Holy Ground

The first mention of the rear view mirror is found in a book by Dorothy Levitt written in 1906. She suggested that women might want to "carry a little hand-mirror in a convenient place when driving" so they may "hold the mirror aloft from time to time in order to see behind while driving in traffic." They were first used in racing, then made available in regular cars in 1914. It's nice to be able to see what's sneaking up on you, but if all you're doing is looking backward, you're likely to miss out on what's coming toward you. Same thing with the spiritual life.

Our text is found in 2 Kings 5:1-19, Naaman was the commanding general of what is now Syria. He was a great soldier, highly esteemed by his king because he was somebody who could bring home a victory, and who did. Think McArthur, Patton, and Norman Schwarzkopf all rolled into one. The Bible says, "*it was by him that God had given victory to Aram.*" Now, you would think someone like that, a national hero, would have pretty good health insurance plan, wouldn't you? Well, whatever the health care system was in Aram, all Naaman's honor, all his authority and all his prestige were for naught, because Naaman had a problem. He was a leper.

With his status and power, I imagine Naaman had tried all the options available in Aram. Nothing had worked and he was open, even desperate, for alternatives. Enter his wife's little slave girl – herself part of the spoils from a raiding foray into Israel, with a suggestion: Go to Samaria, the Northern Kingdom, and ask the prophet to heal you. So he went to the king of Syria and got the king's blessing and a cart full of gifts, worth millions in today's economy, and set out to see the prophet Elisha.

Except he didn't get to see the prophet Elisha, at least not at first. What happened next is actually the definitive example of the "Abana and Pharpar syndrome." The British Journal of Medicine describes the encounter in these terms:

Elisha, clearly recognizing the value of establishing confidence in patients by a show of remoteness, kept his distinguished patient in his waiting room and then, after a brief consultation, prescribed hydro-therapy in the form of bathing seven times in the local river, the river Jordan. This simple, convenient, and inexpensive remedy, whose efficacy was subsequently demonstrated, was found unacceptable by Naaman.

Naaman went ballistic. It was left to his servants to speak a word of common sense. The general finally gave in, and when he dunked himself seven times in the muddy Jordan, he came up healed. So he returned to the prophet, offered gifts (which were refused), and made a wonderful profession of faith: "*I now know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that there is no God anywhere on earth other than the God of Israel.*" And he asked for a favor: a cart load of dirt, a little bit of holy ground, to take back home.

Think of it as a souvenir, but more. There was the idea that all gods were local, or at best, national gods. People thought that gods were geographically confined. Thus, Aram had its god: Rimmon, and Israel had its God: YHWH. And the province of the deity was defined by the national boundary. Naaman thought, hoped, if he could only take a little bit of dirt home with him, perhaps he could take a little bit of God, too. And if he could take a little bit of dirt, he could capture a little of the ground of encounter; God will still be accessible to him. Even in Aram.

Souvenirs are mementos that anchor us to experiences and people in the past. They are snapshots of the heart, rearview mirrors that look backward on our lives. Have you ever gone into a home where every item has a story behind it? My mother in law's house is like that: "Mom, where did this come from?" I ask. And she says, "Oh, Mrs. Jones gave me that one time when we..." And she tells me a story that provides a window into her life. It's important to remember.

For Naaman, a cartload of dirt becomes the foundation for an altar dedicated to the living God. A little bit of holy ground becomes a spiritual outpost in a foreign land. It

ties him to the experience of God and his healing. It helps him remember. Remembering is a good thing.

Of course, the problem with rearview mirrors, is that if we spend all our time looking backwards, we'll never see what's coming at us. If we're not careful, a memento can turn into a museum and a museum into a mausoleum. The life that memory once fostered and enriched becomes a cemetery that chokes our imagination and blinds us to new options and opportunities. Even, *especially*, when it comes to God.

The problem with altars and shrines to yesterday's mountain top experience is that if we're always looking at how God worked in the past, we miss what God is doing in the present.

Naaman didn't know it at the time, but Jesus spelled it out later: "*...there were many lepers in Israel at the time of the prophet Elisha but the only one cleansed was Naaman the Syrian.*" While Naaman was busy shoveling dirt into his oxcart, he missed the fact that God had captured the heart of a foreigner and overstepped a national boundary. If God would heal the general who attacked Israel, then anyone and everyone might be fair game when it came to the application of a little grace. We would be talking about a Deity who didn't know the Divine place because that God had claimed *every* place.

Oh! And one more thing, Naaman asked: "*I need God's pardon [in advance for when I go into the temple of Rimmon to worship with the boss.]*" To which we can only bluster: "Are you out of your ever loving mind?! What kind of a weenie response is that? Stop straddling the fence!"

And in spite of all the good advice and wise counsel we would offer the prophet about this, Elisha responds, "*Everything will be all right. Go in peace.*" Naaman gets both a pass and a blessing!

Midrash: a midrash is a story about a story. This account begs for a midrash that might help us understand what Elisha was thinking. We need, we cry out for, "the rest of the story." Don't you wonder what happened when Naaman got back home?

"Hey, Naaman, how'd it go in Israel," the king would ask.

"You're not going to believe it!" the general would answer back. And he would tell the story of YHWH, and his healing and say, "Here, I brought you back a shovel full of holy ground so you can have a part of it, too."

Then what? They go into the temple of Rimmon to worship the Syrian deity. There sits Naaman, wearing the body art of a perfect complexion, skin that bears silent witness to the touch of the living God, and in the middle of the service the people, the king and the general look at each other and wonder, "What on earth are we doing here?"

Or maybe when the story got out, everyone wanted a little dirt and before long, it was scattered throughout the land until like the leaven of Jesus' parable, all the ground was holy ground.

Midrash: you can't help but wonder.

We can fault Naaman for a lot of things: for his simplistic theology, for his inadequate notion of God's presence, for an allegiance to God that was not without its distractions. Come to think about it..., that sounds a lot like us, doesn't it?

God breaks into our world, and we want to grab a bit of dirt and put it in a vial and attach it to our key chains. Like Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration, our first impulse is to build a shrine.

We can keep our rear view mirrors in sight, enjoy the epiphanies of our past, and try to constrain God to acting in and through our preferred ways. We can fall victim to the

Abana and Pharpar syndrome and throw a temper tantrum when God refuses to play by our rules. Or, we can open ourselves up to the possibility that God might just speak to us through our own muddy, mucky, mundane rivers rather than through the nice, neat means we might prefer.

Our worship emphasis this summer is on heirophany: the idea that the sacred breaks through into our world.

When we live with the awareness that any ground is potentially a place of divine encounter, we don't need a cart full of dirt because all ground is holy ground. If we are mindful, we realize that we live in a sacramental universe where every meal is a meal of remembrance of God's providence and grace, where all water is sacred, and where we recognize that every face portrays the image of God.

Apprehending the Holy is a matter of being alert to the possibilities. Simone Weil said, "Prayer is simply coming to attention." Simply seeing, truly seeing, what's in front of us. Or, as Jesus said, it is a matter "*...for those with eyes to see and ears to hear...*"  
Vicki Lumpkin

## Looking Ahead

### July

21 Ladies Night Out , 6:30 pm, Kiosco Mexican Grill  
23 Amy Stocks & Tyler Gallaher are getting married at Atlantic Beach

24 Indoor Drive-In, Fellowship Hall, 6:30 pm  
17 Bible Study, 6:00 pm

29 - Youth Mission Trip, San Francisco, CA  
August 6

### August

18 Ladies Night Out , 6:30 pm, Kiosco Mexican Grill  
21 Promotion Sunday  
28 Children's Back to School Picnic

### October

9 Brian & Deanna Miller's baby is due.  
26 Children's Halloween Party

### November

5 Brunswick Stew at Barry & Cheryl Pillow's Home.

### December

4 Children's Christmas Party



## Please, Fence Me In

Over the last year or so, I've had the chance to experience a lot of things for the first time. Through big things like moving out to live on my own and giving my first sermon a few months ago on Youth Sunday and smaller things like learning to play Ultimate Frisbee and discovering that I actually *do* like fried okra, I've learned and grown. Another new experience I've had this year has been fence-building. Last summer in West Virginia one of the ways we worked to serve the local community was repairing damage caused by flooding. Supervised by Adam Team, I and other members of the youth group spent the better part of several days rebuilding a chain link fence that had been ripped out of the ground by the flood waters. I enjoyed working on that fence so much that when Lin mentioned a few weeks ago that some other people from church were going to help fence in her backyard, she didn't have to twist my arm to get me to offer my help as well. It was actually one of the most enjoyable things I've done so far this summer. I got to use a nail gun. Many coolers of Gatorade, more than twelve hundred wooden pickets, and one smashed finger later, last Monday we finished up the gates on a fence solid enough to withstand even the most adventurous dog's attempts to chase a bird into the street. The only real downside was having to spend all that time with Bill Ingold and Ed Smithey.

As we were building, I started thinking about why I like building fences, and remembered the story of Nehemiah. During a time when he and his fellow Jews were in exile, Nehemiah was the cup bearer for the Persian king. At the beginning of the story he receives word that the walls protecting Jerusalem are in ruins, and Nehemiah is *heartbroken*. Eventually Nehemiah becomes so upset by the state Jerusalem is in that he asks the king to allow him to go and rebuild. He gets the permission he's after, and when he gets to Jerusalem, he finds that things are as bad as he'd heard. The gates have been burned, the city is in shambles, and the wall itself isn't much more than a pile of rubble. Nehemiah tells the people about his mission, then asks them to help him fix up the city, especially its walls. He tells them he has the support of God and the king, and he gets an overwhelmingly positive response from the people of Jerusalem. Project Rebuild appears to be a go.

It isn't all smooth sailing for Nehemiah and his construction team, though. Right away, plenty of Jerusalem's neighbors absolutely *hate* this plan. They see the rebuilding of the walls as a threat, and they want it stopped at all costs. This isn't a surprise, I don't think. Walls, like their younger cousins, fences, get a lot of bad press. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that “as long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions.” Fences have often been seen as the opposite of freedom, the result of territorial thinking, and incompatible with the openness and sharing that we strive for as Christians. The construction of the Berlin Wall and the risks that thousands of people took to cross it show both how fences can be used to oppress and how the humans often strive to overcome such unjust obstacles. Building a fence or setting up a wall can be seen as an example of exclusion, division, mistrust, or unfriendliness. A few years ago a contemporary Christian music group wrote a song asking its listeners to “let love tear down the walls.” And when walls are used like weapons, they *should* come down. Whether it be a literal fence designed to keep the “wrong” people out while letting the “right” people in or a metaphorical fence built around a heart, keeping love from flowing freely in or out of someone's life, walls that damage us and keep us from the whole and healthy lives God created us to enjoy *should* be rejected.

With that said, I don't think fences always deserve the reputation that they often get. The two fences that I've had the opportunity to help build have been to keep dogs safe. I love dogs, but sometimes they don't make what we might consider the wisest decisions. With a fence, the dogs can safely spend time outdoors without the risk of their running into danger. For these dogs, the fences actually represented more freedom, not less, since they could be let outdoors in a way that wouldn't have been possible in an open yard. The fence doesn't only keep them in, away from the dangers of roads and cars, it keeps dangerous things out. There have been six confirmed cases of rabies in Guilford County this year alone. On the other hand, some fences are short or have wide pickets, and aren't very good for keeping much in or out. These fences also serve a purpose, though: they mark boundaries for us.

In our story, the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall serves another purpose. Nehemiah motivates the people to rebuild by suggesting that a restored wall can relieve the disgrace of the city. The wall's function is partly practical, to make the city secure against those who would seek to show it violence. As a city that had been conquered and had its people sent into exile, the wall also did something more for Jerusalem. It provided a sense of dignity and respectability that had long been lacking. But Nehemiah believed that the rebuilding of the wall was more than a military objective or a status symbol. The building of the wall represented the fulfillment of God's plan for Jerusalem and its people. It was their conviction that God wanted the wall to be built that allowed Nehemiah and his construction teams to continue working even in the face of extreme opposition, hatred that got so bad they were working with a hammer in one hand and a spear or shield in the other. Strong walls were crucial to the survival of the city and its people, and nothing was going to stop them from completing their work.

Can we build fences in our own lives that don't demean or exclude others while still providing the safety and freedom that God wants for our lives? I think we not only can, but should. The development of healthy, reasonable boundaries is critical in many areas of life. Without knocking social media, which as a college student, I greatly enjoy, I admit that the increasing level of technology we use on a daily basis has created a culture where it's easy to lose sight of proper boundaries. A man in the United Kingdom started a Facebook page pledging that he would name his first son Batman if the page reached 500,000 fans. As of last week, the page had 970,654 fans. Bad boundaries. While I hope most of us here wouldn't do something that over-the-top, Deanna and Brian, I'm looking at you, I think it's worth considering what details of our lives we're willing to share with people, especially online. A proper fence around personal information helps protect us in many ways, not the least of which being emotionally.

Another area of life where healthy boundaries are necessary is time management. This isn't a rant against procrastination or taking a day off for personal care; quite the opposite, actually. It can be very difficult to keep up the boundaries that protect our down-time. Whether it's school or a job, I don't know anyone who does all their work from nine to five on weekdays without any spillover. That flexibility can be a very good thing. Homework, emergency calls, changing schedules, and project deadlines certainly deserve our attention. However, it's also a good idea to keep what is known as Parkinson's Law in mind. The amount of work there is to be done will expand to fill the time allotted to do it in. I say this as someone who's always had a very hard time letting myself take a break. I by no means have all this down, and need to be reminded of the need for this boundary as much as anyone. When I'm tempted to overwork myself, I appreciate the examples the Bible gives of healthy relaxation. In Genesis, God rested after creating the world, and Jesus often took time alone to rest and spiritually recharge. In the same way, we ought to examine the ways in which we use our time and dedicate a portion of that time to our friends and family. Remember, God thought a boundary around down-time was so central to good living that it deserved a place in the Ten Commandments. Unexpected things will always continue to come up, and we should be flexible enough to respond to them. The critical thing is to realize that our time is valuable, and to be intentional about how we use that time.

Some of the fences that I believe are the most valuable aren't designed to keep good things in or bad things out, but to keep things in the places they belong. With Independence Day so close, the example that most immediately comes to mind is the fence between religion and government. As Baptists, we come from a long tradition of Christians who believe that faith and the government are both vital, but that society functions best when they are kept distinct. At times in our nation's history, this fence of religious liberty has fallen down a bit, lost a board here or there, and shown the signs of wear and tear. Because we believe that like the walls of Jerusalem in Nehemiah, the wall of religious freedom should be defended and kept in good repair, this congregation has chosen to support the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty. I hope that we will continue to remember that our freedom to worship can't be secure unless all people have the freedom to worship.

These examples of fences illustrate human actions, but we aren't the only ones who build fences. God has set up boundaries, limits, *fences*, around quite a lot of things.

Throughout the Bible, God makes promises. God chooses to set up fences and say “this is the line I won't cross.” Fences can take freedom, but God has used them to give us freedom. Wouldn't it be easier for God if our free will was taken out of the picture every once in a while? Probably. And how horrible would it be if God decided who was “good enough” to be loved, or who *deserved* forgiveness for their mistakes? A look at how our sacred texts were written reveals how God's fences have given us the ability to choose throughout history. God could have chosen to spell out every detail for us in a nice, neat list with bullet points. But instead we were given Jesus, who spoke in parables, answered questions with questions, and refused all attempts to trap him with his own words. Through our faith tradition, which is filled with ambiguity, God has given us both the freedom and the responsibility to interpret the meaning of divine action in our world. Some people don't like the idea that there are boundaries on what God can do, but as I see it, without the boundaries of love and mercy around judgment, God stops being much of a God at all.

As for us, we don't always give ourselves permission to set up healthy boundaries. Maybe we think that having boundaries means you can't still be flexible, or that we'll lose our freedom. Maybe somewhere along the line we got the idea that if we ever say “no” to the things other people ask of us, it's the same thing as being a bad Christian. (As a disclaimer, the finance committee would like me to make it clear that all this “saying no” business certainly does not apply to our upcoming capital campaign.) I do think there's a crucial lesson to be learned from Nehemiah, and it's not just “walls can be good.” Nehemiah stood up for the work that God had called him to do, even in the face of strong and even violent opposition. It's not that he wasn't flexible, only that he wasn't flexible when it came to whether or not he would do what God had asked of him. It's my hope that as a community, we will work to tear down walls that hurt rather than heal, stand firm in our commitment to showing God's love in the world, and be wise in setting up our boundaries. Let us start building.

Kelli Joyce

### Jesus' to do List: Wednesdays, 6:00—7:15 PM, Parlor

#### A discussion led Bible study on Christ's commands.

July 6	Ephphatha! Be Opened
13	Sell & Give
19	Consider the Lilies
27	Ask, Seek, Knock
Aug. 3	Repent & Believe
10	Be Silent
17	Take Up Your Cross

## Why U. S. is Not a Christian Nation

As America celebrates its birthday on July 4, the timeless words of Thomas Jefferson will surely be invoked to remind us of our founding ideals -- that "All men are created equal" and are "endowed by their Creator" with the right to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." These phrases, a cherished part of our history, have rightly been called "American Scripture."

But Jefferson penned another phrase, arguably his most famous after those from the Declaration of Independence. These far more contentious words -- "a wall of separation between church and state" -- lie at the heart of the ongoing debate between those who see America as a "Christian Nation" and those who see it as a secular republic, a debate that is hotter than a Washington Fourth of July.

It is true these words do not appear in any early national document. What may be Jefferson's second most-quoted phrase is found instead in a letter he sent to a Baptist association in Danbury, Connecticut.

While president in 1802, Jefferson wrote: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church and State ... "

The idea was not Jefferson's. Other 17th- and 18th-century Enlightenment writers had used a variant of it. Earlier still, religious dissident Roger Williams had written in a 1644 letter of a "hedge or wall of separation between the garden of the church and the wilderness of the world."

Williams, who founded Rhode Island with a colonial charter that included religious freedom, knew intolerance firsthand. He and other religious dissenters, including Anne Hutchinson, had been banished from neighboring Massachusetts, the "shining city on a hill" where Catholics, Quakers and Baptists were banned under penalty of death.

As president, Jefferson was voicing an idea that was fundamental to his view of religion and government, expressed most significantly in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which he drafted in 1777.

Revised by James Madison and passed by Virginia's legislature in January 1786, the bill stated: "No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened (sic) in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief ..."

It was this simple -- government could not dictate how to pray, or that you cannot pray, or that you must pray.

Jefferson regarded this law so highly that he had his authorship of the statute made part of his epitaph, along with writing the Declaration and founding the University of Virginia. (Being president wasn't worth a mention.)

Why do Jefferson's "other words" matter today?

First, because knowing history matters -- it can safeguard us from repeating our mistakes and help us value our rights, won at great cost. Yet we are sorely lacking in knowledge about our past, as shown by a recent [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#).

But more to the point, we are witnessing an aggressively promoted version of our history and heritage in which America is called a "Christian Nation."

This "Sunday School" version of our past has gained currency among conservative television commentators, school boards that have rewritten state textbooks and several GOP presidential candidates, some of whom trekked to Ralph Reed's Faith and Freedom Coalition conference in early June 2011.

No one can argue, as "Christian Nation" proponents correctly state, that the Founding Fathers were not Christian, although some notably doubted Christ's divinity.

More precisely, the founders were, with very few exceptions, mainstream Protestants. Many of them were Episcopalians, the American offshoot of the official Church of England. The status of America's Catholics, both legally and socially, in the colonies and early Republic, was clearly second-class. Other Christian sects, including Baptists, Quakers and Mormons, faced official resistance, discrimination and worse for decades.

But the founders, and more specifically the framers of the Constitution, included men who had fought a war for independence -- the very war celebrated on the "Glorious Fourth" -- against a country in which church and state were essentially one.

They understood the long history of sectarian bloodshed in Europe that brought many pilgrims to America. They knew the dangers of merging government, which was designed to protect individual rights, with religion, which as Jefferson argued, was a matter of individual conscience.

And that is why the U.S. Constitution reads as it does.

The supreme law of the land, written in the summer of 1787, includes no references to religion -- including in the presidential oath of office -- until the conclusion of Article VI, after all that dull stuff about debts and treaties: "No religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States." (There is a pro forma "Year of the Lord" reference in the date at the Constitution's conclusion.)

Original intent? "No religious Test" seems pretty clear cut.

The primacy of a secular state was solidified when the First Amendment was included in the Bill of Rights. According to Purdue history professor Frank Lambert, that "introduced the radical notion that the state had no voice concerning matters of conscience."

Beyond that, the first House of Representatives, while debating the First Amendment, specifically rejected a Senate proposal calling for the establishment of Christianity as an official religion. As Lambert concludes, "There would be no Church of the United States. Nor would America represent itself as a Christian Republic."

The actions of the first presidents, founders of the first rank, confirmed this "original intent:"

- In 1790, President George Washington wrote to America's first synagogue, in Rhode Island, that "all possess alike liberty of conscience" and that "toleration" was an "inherent national gift," not the government's to dole out or take away
- In 1797, with President John Adams in office, the Senate unanimously approved one of America's earliest foreign treaties, which emphatically stated (Article 11): "As the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion, -- as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion or tranquility of Musselmen (Muslims) ..."
- In 1802, Jefferson added his famous "wall of separation," implicit in the Constitution until he so described it (and cited in several Supreme Court decisions since).

These are, to borrow an admittedly loaded phrase, "inconvenient truths" to those who proclaim that America is a "Christian Nation."

The Constitution and the views of these Founding Fathers trump all arguments about references to God in presidential speeches (permitted under the First Amendment), on money (not introduced until the Civil War), the Pledge of Allegiance ("under God" added in 1954) and in the national motto "In God We Trust" (adopted by law in 1956).

And those contentious monuments to the Ten Commandments found around the country and occasionally challenged in court? Many of them were installed as a publicity stunt for Cecile B. DeMille's 1956 Hollywood spectacle, "The Ten Commandments."

So who are you going to believe? Thomas Jefferson or Hollywood? On second thought: Don't answer.

Kenneth C. Davis, CNN

## Men's Occasional Book Club

Our next book read for the Men's Occasional Book Club is *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins and discussion date will be scheduled in August. Copies are available outside the church office.

## CP's Indoor Drive-In, July 24, 6:30 PM

Join us on Sunday night, July 24, 6:30 pm, in the Fellowship Hall as our indoor drive-in presents *Despicable Me!* Bring your own lawn chair, picnic dinner and join us for a night of movie fun. Admission is free. Popcorn and a limited selection of beverages will be provided. If you would like infant or toddler care while you enjoy the movie, please let us know no later than July 10th so we will have time to hire someone for the event. Hope to see you there!

## School Supply Drive!

The Missions Committee will start collecting school supplies for College Park's educators. All educators are encouraged to email their 2011-2012 school supply wish list to committee chair, Deanna Miller before Sunday, July 24 at [deannahmiller@hotmail.com](mailto:deannahmiller@hotmail.com).

## College Park's Summer Options

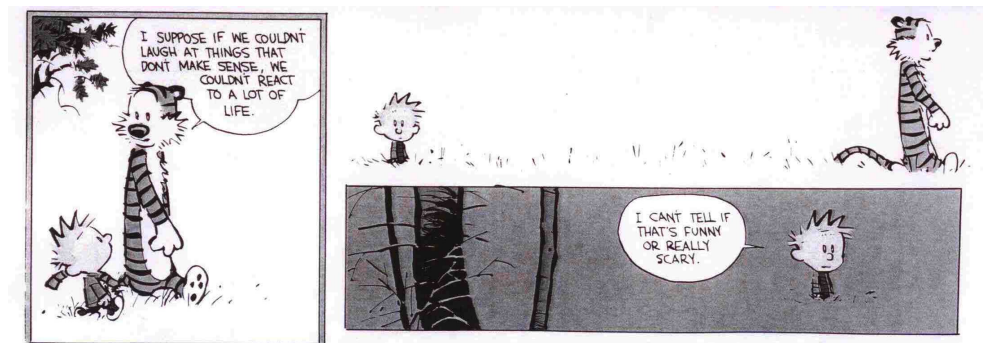
**Adult Sunday School** - Book Study - "Love Wins" by Rob Bell

**Youth Sunday School** - Movie Discussion

**Kids Sunday School** - What's Cooking? (Rotation based activities)

**Wednesday Night Bible Study** - Jesus' To Do List @ 6 pm in the parlor

**Monday Night Fellowship** - Ultimate Frisbee @ 6pm - Lake Daniel Park





## Postcard from Whoville: What I Did on My Fermata

In case you're new to College Park, for the past six months I've been on sabbatical—or fermata as I called it (the term given to a musical symbol that means to pause)—from my responsibilities as minister to small groups. The time away allowed me to rest, recharge, and do some long overdue house cleaning and redecorating as I get my townhome ready to sell.

I'll be sharing more about my sabbatical over the next couple of months, but here's a quick summary:

- I started going through 40+ years of possessions to pare down what I own. This process is ongoing and quite tedious, but it's also been very freeing to get rid of belongings I no longer need, want, or use.
- On most Sundays I worshipped with another local congregation, rotating among Methodist, Presbyterian, UCC, Catholic, Lutheran, Quaker, and Episcopal churches. It was helpful to again be the stranger, the outsider, and I hope it will give me fresh eyes to see how College Park can be more hospitable to newcomers.
- I read several books (although not nearly as many as I had hoped), including *Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver, *Let Your Life Speak* by Parker Palmer, and *The Sunset Limited* (a play) by Cormac McCarthy. Palmer's little book has been on my to-read list for years, and it was so good I'll probably re-read it.
- I went to movies, plays, concerts, exhibits, and sporting events (including the Monster Truck Jam!)—all things I enjoy but often haven't had the time or energy to do the past few years. The change of pace was a tonic for my mind and spirit and made me realize what many of you already know: that recreation can foster recreation. In other words, even big kids need play time because it helps restore one's enthusiasm, passion, and creativity.

Again, I am deeply grateful to Michael, Lin, and Rydell, who added to their already busy schedules by covering my responsibilities while I was away. To the Pathfinders Sunday School Class, thank you so much for teaching yourselves; I knew you could do it! And thanks to all of you who kept in touch—sending me emails and notes, giving me hugs when our paths crossed around town—which let me know how much you care about me.

Cindy Dillon



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Lin Bunce, Associate Minister  
Phyllis Calvert, Treasurer  
Cindy Dillon, Minister of Small Groups  
Susan Finley, Handbell Director  
Rydell Harrison, Minister of Music & Worship  
Darlene Johnson, Sexton  
Kelli Joyce, Summer Intern  
Matt Lojko, Deacon Chair  
Georgia Murray, Office & Media Manager  
David Soyars, Relaxing on Sabbatical  
Ralph & Tammy Stocks, Missionaries  
Michael S. Usey, Pastor

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June Peanut Butter Donations = 35 Pounds  
Total Peanut Butter Donations = 214 Pounds  
Total Other Food Donations = 268 Pounds  
Grand Total for Year = 482 Pounds



# Hierophany

Our 2011 summer sermon series.

The term "**hierophany**" [from the Greek roots "ἱερός" (hieros), meaning "sacred" or "holy," and "φαίνειν" (phainein) meaning "to reveal" or "to bring to light"] means seeing the divine in everyday and common things. In our summer series, we are looking at ways in which every day things, events, and feelings can lead us to God. The procession at the beginning of worship contains several of the everyday things we've considered in past Sundays.

### Reminder

Please email the church office at [cpbcbgo@bellsouth.net](mailto:cpbcbgo@bellsouth.net) if you would rather receive the monthly newsletter via email.