

OUT OF MY MIND

In a recent poll, only 21% of non-Christians in the United States reported having a positive perception of the local church. I hope that you find that statistic as disturbing as I do. As Cary Nieuwhof commented in his blog: “When you’re connecting with an un-churched person, it’s easy to think, on a scale of 1-10, you’re starting at a three or a zero. But the research shows that perhaps you’re starting from minus five or minus eight.”

Why do local churches receive such low marks from so many non-Christians? Lots of reasons. They see the church as being more interested in gaining new members than they are in helping people in their communities. They perceive Christians as being hypocritical and judgmental. They believe Christians tend to major on minor things. They feel that Christians tend to be exclusive rather than inclusive. They have witnessed the church aligning itself with certain political parties or issues. And they have heard, and sometimes tragically experienced themselves, the abuse of women and children by those in the church. As a result, they have a decidedly negative opinion of the church.

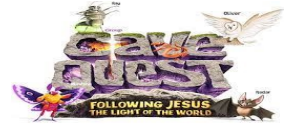
Now, we all know that this isn’t an accurate picture of every church. Many churches, including Manly, does much good, both for individuals and for the community. Still, the reality is that the church has often been its own worst enemy. As Nieuwhof added: “The truth is that the church has been harsh, judgmental, exclusionary and too often, abusive. These aren’t qualities people should expect from Christians, but too often, that’s exactly what Christians have shown them.”

So what can we do? Rather than become defensive, we can be the church that Jesus Christ intended for us to be. We can go out of our way to be loving, kind, compassionate, gracious, forgiving, helpful, and genuine. We can let people know that everyone is welcome, even that person who doesn’t look like us, think like us, dress like us, or act like us. We can treat others as Jesus has treated us.

Nieuwhof added: “The mystery of why people are walking away from the church is less of a mystery all the time. If Christians become more like the authentic church, the more people will want to be part of it. The less we do, the more they don’t.”

May Manly always be a church that freely shares the grace, love and joy of Jesus with others and warmly welcomes them in his name.

Your Pastor,
Mike



Vacation Bible School
Sunday, August 1st -
Thursday, August 5th
5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Children will learn that Jesus is the one who lights their way and gives them hope for each new day. His love illuminates when the path is dark. Cave Quest VBS encourages kids to follow Jesus where ever he leads them! Contact Thomas Smals (540-525-7399) for more information!



Join us on **Sunday, August 8** from **4:30 - 7:30 pm** for our annual church picnic. This year we will gather at the Rockbridge County High School shelter (located near the football stadium). The church will supply the meat and drinks, but everyone is asked to bring a side dish and dessert to share. **Please contact the church office (463-4181) by noon on Wednesday, August 4th if you plan to attend.**



On **Sunday, August 15th** we will celebrate the beginning of a new school year! Students of all ages and education staff are invited to bring their backpacks, briefcases or tote bags to the **11:00 am worship service** for a special prayer of blessing, guidance, wisdom & protection.



Manly Memorial Baptist Church
202 South Main Street
Lexington, VA 24450
www.manlybaptist.com
(540) 463-4181

Daily BIBLE READING

August 2 – Acts 19:1-7
August 3 – Acts 19:8-12
August 4 – Acts 19:13-22
August 5 – Acts 19:23-31
August 6 – Acts 19:32-41

August 9 – Acts 20:1-6
August 10 – Acts 20:7-12
August 11 – Acts 20:13-24
August 12 – Acts 20:25-38
August 13 – Acts 21:1-9

August 16 – Acts 21:10-15
August 17 – Acts 21:16-26
August 18 – Acts 21:27-36
August 19 – Acts 21:37-22:11
August 20 – Acts 22:12-21

August 23 – Acts 22:22-30
August 24 – Acts 23:1-11
August 25 – Acts 23:12-22
August 26 – Acts 23:23-35
August 27 – Acts 24:1-9

August 30 – Acts 24:10-21
August 31 – Acts 24:22-27



12 Scott & Nora Berger
19 Sean & Laura Huffman
21 Andrew & Brenda Grose
31 Roger & Patsy Williamson

If you have a birthday or anniversary coming up, please share it with us!



1 Will Higgins
2 Laura Jones
4 Bucky Joyce
6 Camden Glass
11 Carole Judy
14 Payton Miller
16 Brandee Hartbarger
18 Evan Wranek
22 Haley Cruze
26 Danielle Pruett
28 Robbie Moore
30 Bonnie Slater



Thanks to everyone who provided cookies for the Nickelsville mission trip! They were greatly appreciated. Not only did the team members enjoy these homemade treats but they also shared with some first responders and staff at a nursing home facility. Again, thanks for your generosity.

Our August project will be continuing to donate school supplies, **Please bring in your donations by Sunday, August 8th**, so they can be divided and delivered that week before the students arrive back at school. Also, in August please look for ways you can help with Vacation Bible School. They will be serving a light meal before each session and monetary donations will help purchase those items.

In September we will be covering boxes for the Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Ministry. If you have empty shoe boxes please bring them to church so we can cover them.

Thanks for supporting our missions projects!

Patsy Paxton



"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens..." Ecclesiastes 3:1

At the end of the second quarter, we are pleased to report that our budget remains strong, and, by God's grace, we continue to meet our monetary needs.

The Finance and Stewardship committee will meet in September to begin to prepare the church budget for 2022. In this period of change, please be in prayer as the committees start their planning process and as we begin the search for a new pastor and music director.

Thanks again to everyone for your steadfast financial support. Your gifts have allowed us to continue to meet our financial needs throughout a difficult year. We're very grateful to be meeting together again as a congregation and ask that you continue to financially support Manly's efforts to show and share God's love.



We live in a world full of unknowns. We generally do not particularly like unknowns. And, now we are faced with worshipping with an unknown concerning the future pastor that we shall have with us for the years ahead. This brings to mind a scriptural quote, *'Be still and know that I am God'*. We do not particularly like to be still either.

The journey ahead will have some twists and turns that we are not able to anticipate. However, we do know that God is there and that we reach out to him through prayer. We ask that you pray along with us for discernment, wisdom, and patience. We shall likely experience a few weeks of guest speakers followed by an interim pastor while the search proceeds for who God has out there for us.

This process takes some time and starts with our wishing Pastor Mike and Lucy a fond farewell as they begin their new journey of retirement. Your Deacon Body has already met with the BGAV field strategist, Skip Wallace, who will be a resource to us as we navigate the waters ahead. Rest assured that we shall keep the church family informed as we proceed. During this time, it will serve us well to remember the quote. *'Be still and know that I am God'*.

Dale Raymond



If you are a former (pre-Covid) member of the Adult Choir or would like to join, **we will begin rehearsals on Wednesday, August 11 at 6:15 pm** in the choir room. Rehearsals will run approximately 1 hour. Requirements for membership in the choir are: a love for God, a love of music, willingness to take direction and being fully vaccinated. If you enjoy using your love of music to lead others in worship, now is the time to come and be a part of the choir.

The Children's Choir will meet the first 15 minutes of Children's Worship on Sunday mornings. Please encourage your children to participate! Children's Worship Choir will begin **Sunday, September 5 at 11:00 am**.

The Praise Band will continue to meet this Fall. If you have talents as an instrumentalist or singer, please contact John Wranek (jwranek@marshallfoundation.org) if you would like to join the group.

The Meador-Steele Handbell Choir will not be active this year. Once a new music director is chosen, we hope to resume this ministry.



After 19 years as our pastor, Mike has announced his plans to retire. His last Sunday in the pulpit will be Sunday, September 5th. He and Lucy will be putting their house on the market. When it sells they plan to move to Maryville, Tennessee to be closer to their daughter Beth and her family.



Dear Church Family,

As Mike and I prepare to leave our church family, I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for allowing me to be the Adult Choir Director these last five years. I had decided that my calling as a minister of music was over. What a wonderful surprise from the Lord and from you to have the opportunity to conduct music for worship and work with Mike one more time. It has been a challenge and a blessing to me to use my initial training once again. I am sad to leave the choir and all of you, but also excited to see what the Lord has in store for this next chapter of our lives. May God bless all of you in the days to come.

We will not be taking our cat Cleo to Tennessee with us. She will need a new home. Cleo is the tuxedo cat we rescued from the church parking lot. She is now 9 years old, spayed and up to date on her shots and in excellent health. She is an outdoor cat, so she would make a good barn cat. She is a superb mouser. If you know of someone who would enjoy having a low maintenance cat, please contact me (460-1521). Food and a little love is all she needs.

Lucy Wilkins



Item of the month for August is school supplies. Please leave your donations in the box outside of the choir room. Thank you!



As of September 5th, Don and Barbara Heckman are stepping away from their ministries in our church. As you know, Don has been the lead person for everything related to the church's phones, wiring, computers, internet, website connections, recordings, as well as the audio-visual efforts on Sunday mornings for many years.

It was thanks to Don that during the Covid year we were able to post the Encouraging Word on Wednesdays and the sermons (including inserting videos, graphics, quotes, music) to Facebook and YouTube on Sundays. He is also the one who has launched our current live streaming efforts. Don has attended countless rehearsal, and many long hours, including many nights, working with the musical groups in our church to ensure that they sound their very best and to make/edit recordings that could be used later.

Barbara has been instrumental in maintaining the information on our church's website for many years. She has kept the material current and updated it when needed. As part of her ministry she has also taken the pictures of people, and provided the information for the church directory. Since the website is often a person's first contact with our church, her efforts have been crucial in making that initial first impression a positive one.

Please join me in expressing your personal gratitude to Don and Barbara for all the ways their contributions have enriched our life together as Manly Memorial Baptist Church.

Your Pastor, Mike



To continue our cave exploration from Vacation Bible School, all children are invited to the Natural Bridge Caverns on **Saturday, August 7 at 11:00 am**. Children who attend VBS will be given a crystal ticket to this event! **Please RSVP to Katlyn Smals at (children@manlybaptist.com) by Thursday, August 5!**