



Church Chat

A Publication of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church
Fall 2020

From Your Pastors

Dear GBPC Church Family and Friends,

We pray you are well! We miss you all. There are about 5 months left in the year 2020, and like many of you, we often think, “let’s just make it through 2020 and next year will be better.” We have been praying about God’s call for the GBPC church family during this time, and we keep hearing the word “thrive.”

We are excited to announce **we will begin in-person worship on Sunday, September 13th!** We will offer two in-person services, Traditional @ 9 am, Contemporary @ 10:30 am. We will continue to offer an online service option, including a live stream of both worship services. Keep an eye out for more details and instructions to come!

For the Fall (September- December 2020), we will open the sanctuary for Sunday services. The church office is currently open during the week, Mon-Fri, 9 am - 2 pm. The rest of the building will remain closed. The Safety and Security Team has compiled a document giving details and a phased re-opening plan. We have included the document in this month’s Church Chat, take a look!

As God’s people in this unique time and space, God calls us to thrive and see where He is leading. Since March, our digital presence has greatly increased. We have people viewing our services and our content across the United States and even across the world.

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What a blessing that technology allows us to proclaim the word to such a wide audience, and we are so thankful for the talented staff and supportive leadership that has led to such a powerful online presence. We enjoy being able to connect with you daily with the “Word @ One”!

We know that the digital world is important, but it is also so important to stay connected one-on-one. We are so thankful for the many volunteers who are giving of their time and energy to create the outdoor worship space and preparing the sanctuary for when we can gather again. We are so thankful for LIFE group leaders, deacons, elders, ministry directors, and so many more who are making sure the church family feels loved and cared for. Prayer requests can be submitted on our website or called into the church office. As pastors, we are updated when acute situations arise, and we are always available by phone (757)547-4706, by email (kelly.nieto@gbpres.org, mike.nieto@gbpres.org), or stop by when we are in the office (Mon-Thurs, 9-2 pm). The church phones and office are open Mon-Fri, 9-2 pm! The reduced office hours are in place to allow for social distancing and cleaning so we can serve you all safely.

Beyond the walls of the church, the congregation and staff are busy being the hands and feet of Jesus. Every month, DVDs of the service are going out to our folks who do not have internet access. The Second Mile Fund is filled with your generous donations and many are being blessed with some help during this time. This year’s VBS “Amazing gRace” was a creative, fun way to fellowship as a church family and for our children to have such an exciting morning! On Sundays, the congregation (and visitors) fellowship online, in person at the drive-in service, and in the evening the youth and their families have been gathering on Sunday nights for worship and connection. Our music and audio/visual ministry has continued to provide excellence in worship, even finding a way to create a safe communion experience! So many of our members and friends have been serving in the community, providing needed food supplies, meals, and prayer support. We praise God for all He is up to!

Over the next few months, we will continue to serve God in worship, fellowship events, service opportunities, and connection. Please join us in praying for the GBPC church family to continue to thrive in 2020, and may God bless and keep you all.

Blessings,

Pastors Mike and Kelly Nieto

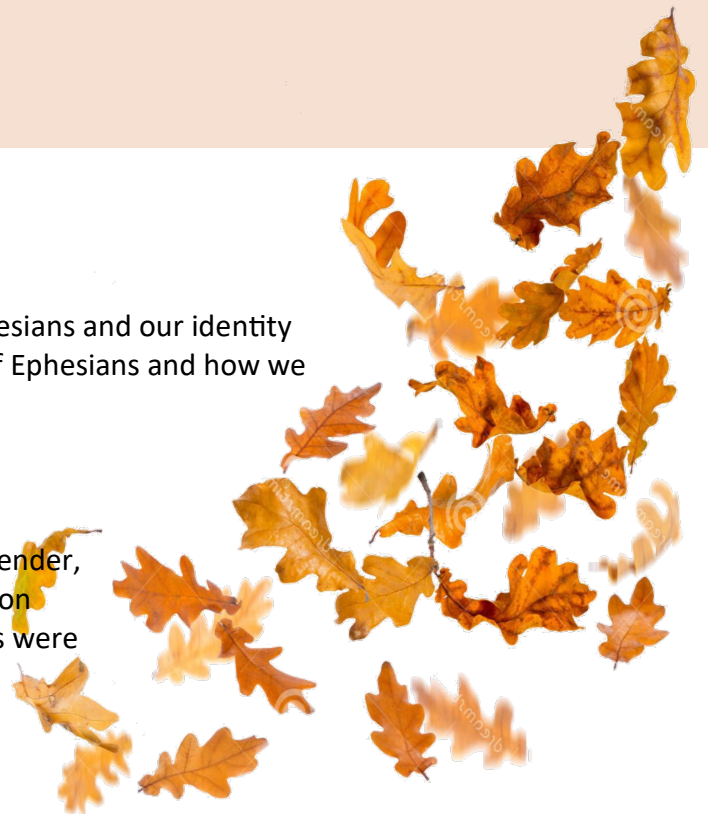
Fall Sermon Series

“Ephesians” begins September 13

Our all church study “Defined” is a look at the book of Ephesians and our identity in Christ. The sermon series will go through each chapter of Ephesians and how we find our identity in Christ alone!

“Building Altars” begins October 25

Throughout Scripture, the picture of the altar is one of surrender, thanksgiving, remembering. God calls us to place our lives on His “altar”, we will take a look at these different ways altars were used in Scripture and how these altars apply to our lives.



GBPC's Phased Reopening Plan

As we now consider opening the building doors once again, we believe that we must do so in a gradual, responsible and safety-conscious manner. We have considered the guidelines of the CDC and PCUSA, as well as consulted medical professionals from our congregation. Many preparations will need to be completed prior to opening our doors safely, and we appreciate your prayers as we discern when and how to do so. Our plan is not one that is set in stone, but is based on our current knowledge and insights into how to reopen safely. As the recommendations and knowledge about the spread of the virus change, we will adapt this plan accordingly. The dates given are flexible targets, based on the impact COVID-19 is having in our area. It is even possible that we may have to revert to a previous phase if there is an uptick of COVID-19 cases. This plan prioritizes love for our neighbors by keeping people safe (Mt 22:39), showing proper biblical respect for government authority (Rom 13:1), and demonstrating that we trust our Church family to make wise decisions. This situation will undoubtedly give us many opportunities to practice grace, forgiveness and understanding. Through this time, we believe that our faith will be strengthened, as will our community.

We love you and we are praying for you. Please continue to pray for us.

The Safety and Security Team and the Session of GBPC

General Guidance:

Each person has a responsibility to look out for the welfare of others. If you suspect that you or a member of your family have symptoms, stay home until the period has expired and/or testing has occurred. From the CDC - symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

If you or a family member have been confirmed to have COVID-19, please let us know so that we can take appropriate steps to ensure the health of our congregation. All personal information will be kept confidential during this process.

Church Worship Services Will Look Different During Phase 3

- Seating will be limited to approximately 110 persons per service. Those persons must sign up online and reserve their seating.
- Masks will be required of all attending the service.
- Parking will be limited to the large parking lot in order to restrict the flow of people entering the church, check people in, and maintain safe practices.
- Ushers and medical team volunteers will check in attendees, help them to maintain social distancing, and offer masks and hand sanitizer.
- Congregants will be asked not to sing. The Music Ministry will offer music from the front.
- Congregants will be directed to fill the sanctuary from front to back. Congregants must sit 6 feet apart from each other if not in the same family group.
- No children's ministry or nursery will be offered.
- If more than one service is offered, there will be ample time between services to spray the sanctuary with disinfectant and clean the necessary areas of the church.
- Only the family bathroom will be open for use in case of emergencies. Congregants are asked not to use the bathroom if possible.
- Offering plates will not be passed between congregants. Online giving is recommended as best practice. Offering plates will be located at the doors at the conclusion of each service.
- Communion: Ushers will distribute individual bags of elements to family groups for them to partake at home.
- Fellowship areas will be blocked off. Congregants will be asked not to gather for fellowship before or after the service and to maintain social distancing at all times.

Summary of Phased Opening

	Phase One (March 15 th)	Phase Two (July 5 th)	Phase Three (September 13 th)	Phase Four (TBD)
Vulnerable Populations	Stay Home	Stay Safe in your cars	Recommended to Stay Home	Individual Discretion
Those with Symptoms of COVID-19	Stay Home	Stay Home	Stay Home	Stay Home
Worship Services	Online: Church staff focused on bringing high quality content through many platforms.	Drive-in service with many safety precautions in place, social distancing and masks required, safety precautions taken. Online services still offered.	Reduced seating, one or more services depending on demand with many safety precautions in place, social distancing and masks required. Online services still offered.	Normal capacity with safety precautions taken to limit the spread of germs (extra cleaning, hand sanitizer, etc.) Online services still offered.
Life Groups	Online meetings. Meetings in homes based on individual discretion.	Online meetings. Meetings in homes based on individual discretion.	Online meetings. Meetings in homes based on individual discretion.	Normal opportunities, with guidance on how to reduce the spread of germs.
Youth and Children's Ministry	Online format including weekly Bible verses, home study opportunities, zoom meetings, Amazing gRace VBS, and more	Online format, especially for younger children who cannot be expected to remain socially distant. Limited, safe opportunities for older children and youth	Limited, safe opportunities for children and youth.	Normal opportunities, with extra care taken to reduce the spread of germs.
Music Ministry	Continue to offer online opportunities to worship and sing.	Choir and praise team will explore ways to rehearse and participate in Sunday service safely and with social distancing.	Choir and praise team will explore ways to rehearse and participate in Sunday service safely and with social distancing.	Normal opportunities with extra care taken to reduce the spread of germs
Service and Mission	Group events cancelled. Food drives, mask ministry and other opportunities to serve while socially distanced encouraged. Focus on Second Mile Fund	Group events cancelled. Food drives, mask ministry and other opportunities to serve while socially distanced encouraged. Focus on Second Mile Fund	Group events cancelled. Food drives, mask ministry and other opportunities to serve while socially distanced encouraged. Focus on Second Mile Fund	Normal opportunities with extra care taken to reduce the spread of germs
Office Staff	Closed to the public. Staff encouraged to work from home when possible	Normal access, with extra care taken to reduce the spread of germs.	Normal access, with extra care taken to reduce the spread of germs	Normal access, with extra care taken to reduce the spread of germs
Restrooms	Closed	Closed	Limited	Normal
Metrics for Moving Between Phases	Pandemic reaches the US and Virginia	Guidelines based on Governor's and PCUSA recommendations and restrictions	Guidelines based on Governor's and PCUSA recommendations and restrictions	Implemented when effective therapeutics are widely known or an effective vaccine is widely distributed

*Vulnerable Populations as Defined by the CDC : • Individuals 65 years old and older • Individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised

Adult Music Ministry Rehearsals Return!

Safety protocols will be emailed separately to all groups.
Schedules are subject to change.

CHANCEL CHOIR Sectional Rehearsals: September 16

7:00—7:30 pm Soprano
7:45—8:15 pm Alto
8:30—9:00 pm Tenor/Bass

ALLELUIA RINGERS: September 22

7:30—8:15 pm

HARMONIOUS FLUTES: September 29

6:30—7:00 pm



Choirs for Children & Youth

Tentative start date: Sunday, September 27, 5:45 pm
(depends on COVID rates in Chesapeake)

Children's & Youth Choirs will meet at GBPC outside around the property. LOOK for the signs for each choir. Choirs will meet monthly. Tentatively the 4th Sunday:

September 27, October 25, November 22, December 13
Live Nativity (date/time TBA)

Choristers will bring their own chair and mask – we do not want to use chairs from the church for sanitizing purposes. Our goal is to teach Christmas Carols for use in the Live Nativity along with music skills.

Angel Choir—Carla Sauers, Tonya Pittman
Cherub Choir—Hannah Passmore
Junior Choir—Jessica Meier

Register online, gbpres.org Schedules are subject to change.

Many Hands Makes Worship Possible



What a joy to gather on Sunday mornings in worship outside in God's sanctuary. He has smiled on us with excellent weather every Sunday since July 5!

A big thank you to our support team that moves equipment and cares for participants. It is a beautiful team effort! Each week since March 15, we have recorded one traditional hymn and one contemporary song. Bridge to Worship has two cover songs on Spotify and is continually adding content to their YouTube channel.

A big thank you to Ethan Crews for his expertise in recording and instrument track creation. He has faithfully recorded service and content and music each week since the church closed due to COVID.

DEFINED

BIBLE STUDY

Very excited to announce that GBPC is hosting a church wide Bible Study to go along with the Fall Sermon Series. The study is **Defined: Who God Says You Are** by Stephen and Alex Kendrick. LIFE Groups are encouraged to do this study. There will be a WNL online option for folks that are not currently in a LIFE Group or are in a group using a different study. There will be a DVD/digital option for groups meeting in homes or in zoom-type settings.

Defined: Who God Says You Are is the Kendrick brothers' new 8-session video Bible study based on their new movie, *OVERCOMER*. This new study is about finding your identity in God. Before asking, 'who am I', you need to be able to answer, 'who is God?'. The problem with our search for identity is that we are looking in all the wrong places. Scripture teaches that we are all made in the image of God. We do not define ourselves - the Creator does. We were all created to be known and loved by God. Once those answers are clear, we can move forward and discover all God has called us to be.

Order books:

Defined: Who God Says You Are @ amazon.com

Defined: Bible Study Book: How God Has Identified You @ amazon.com

Directions for viewing the video clips for the *Defined* study will be available on our website, gbpres.org.

In Search of...

Children's Ministry is looking for pets to read scripture!
Make sure it's a good picture of their face
with closed mouth.

Simply submit your photo to
staceym@gbpres.org.



Fellowship Events

September

Fall Kick Off Event! Join us on Friday, September 11th. We will be watching the movie **Overcomer** drive in style with FREE popcorn. Our fall church wide study is based on this movie. The Vida Joven Leadership Team will be serving dinner for purchase before the movie as a way to continue to serve our Nicaraguan families with food baskets. Dinner starts at 6:30 pm, previews and prayer at 7:45pm and the movie starts at 8 pm.

October

Game Night! Our FREE family fellowship event is a game night using Kahoot.com. The event starts at 7 pm in the big parking lot. Details TBA.

November

Chrismons! Our FREE family fellowship event is *Cider, Cookies and Chrismons*. Join us on Saturday, November 14th at 2 pm to learn history about the Chrismon. There will be a make and take Chrismon for your tree. More information on location and reservations to come.

Food for All/Pack the Bus

Food drive to benefit the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia in September

We are filling our church bus with food for the Southeastern Virginia Foodbank! Our kick off is Friday, September 11, at the outdoor movie night, "Overcomer". Sponsored by GBPC Music Ministry.

Drop off days:

Friday, September 11 before/during/after movie

Sunday, September 13 before/after worship

Wednesday, September 16 time TBA

Sunday, September 20 before/after worship

Shopping List

Low Fat - Low Sodium - Low Sugar Products Preferred



Scan the QR code to donate!



Lean Canned Protein

- Peanut Butter
- Tuna
- Chicken
- Turkey
- Beans



Fruits & Vegetables

- Canned Fruits
- Canned Vegetables
- Pasta Sauce
- 100% Fruit Juice



Whole Grains

- Cereal
- Pasta
- Oatmeal
- Rice
- Crackers



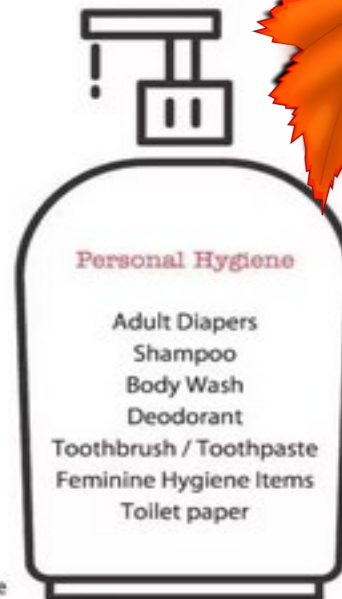
Boxed Meals

- Soups
- Stews
- Boxed Meals
- Canned Pasta



Baby Products

- Formula
- Baby Food
- Diapers
- Wipes



Personal Hygiene

- Adult Diapers
- Shampoo
- Body Wash
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Feminine Hygiene Items
- Toilet paper

Please remember:

Non-perishable food

Non-breakable containers

Nutritional labels intact

Check dates - product is good for 6 months past the Best By, Sell By or Use By Date

Service & Mission

Chesapeake Area Shelter Team



Beginning August 31, we will host our very special guests from our community for the CAST shelter. These wonderful people have been blessed by the City of Chesapeake to stay at the Wingate Hotel in Greenbrier for the remainder of the year. GBPC has offered to provide evening meals for the first two weeks of each month of September, October and November.

We will need volunteers to assist during the week to prepare, pack and deliver these meals. Please contact Sam Howard, howard_irrigation@yahoo.com or Judy Steinmetz, judys@gbpres.org.

Give Blood

The American Red Cross has a constant and ongoing need for blood and platelet donations. There is no known end date in this fight against coronavirus, and the Red Cross needs the help of blood and platelet donors to meet the needs of patient care.

Due to specific guidelines and constraints caused by Covid 19, GBPC will not be hosting a drive this fall. However, The Red Cross has a list of donation sites listed on their website. Please schedule your next donation appointment now to help prevent another blood shortage. It's the easy way to give a gift that only you can give to someone in need. **BONUS:** When you donate in September or October, credit your donation to GBPC and we will give you a free GBPC T-shirt as a thank you! Visit the GBPC website for more information or contact Karl Suter at kesuter@aol.com.

Operation Christmas Child

Begins Oct 11th – Nov 1st

We continue to support this great project which brings joy and hope to children all around the world by providing Christmas boxes filled with surprises and the gospel message. Pick up a box or two, fill it with gifts, and return to church by Nov 1 to help us reach our goal of 500 boxes!

Contact Andrea Vanderwarker, rooprincess1@gmail.com to help!



Thanksgiving Food Bags & Turkeys

The Covid19 pandemic has exacerbated the food insecurity many families in our community face. Please help with the Thanksgiving Food Baskets that GBPC will be donating to families of many students in our area schools. Beginning Sunday November 8, grocery bags with an attached list of needed food items will be distributed and available for pick up. Please bring the bag containing your purchased food items back to the church no later than November 22nd.

In addition, donations of frozen turkeys are needed. Drop off by November 18th. Your turkey and food items will be presented in a basket to a family in need. Please contact Judy Steinmetz at judys@gbpres.org for more information.



Stewardship

<u>Summary:</u>	<u>JUL 2020</u>	<u>JUL 2020</u>	
AS OF JULY 31, 2020	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>VARIANCE</u>
GENERAL OPERATING FUND INCOME:	<u>\$ 642,982</u>	<u>\$ 756,450</u>	<u>\$ (113,468)</u>
Admin Expenses	\$ 506,973	\$ 607,100	\$ (100,127)
Ministry Expenses	\$ 39,878	\$ 88,438	\$ (48,560)
Service & Mission	\$ 65,806	\$ 122,589	\$ (56,783)
TOTAL EXPENSES:	<u>\$ 612,657</u>	<u>\$ 818,127</u>	<u>\$ (205,470)</u>
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	<u>\$ 30,325</u>	<u>\$ (61,677)</u>	<u>\$ 92,002</u>



*The financial figures presented above do not include the non-budgeted special offerings, like Second Mile donations, Building Fund, etc.

Second Mile Fund: GBPC has a Second Mile Fund, which the pastors use at their discretion, mainly for those who have run in to hard times and can't quite make ends meet. We ask you to prayerfully consider making a donation to this fund. To donate, please make your check payable to Great Bridge Presbyterian Church and put "Second Mile Fund" in the memo section of your check. This donation is 100% tax deductible as long as you don't put a specific person's name in the memo section.

Pledges: Though there are many opportunities to share in your blessings through donations to various other areas (building fund, second mile, etc.), we ask that you ensure that your pledge is met. These pledges were counted on when we budgeted the Church's expenses for the year. We are happy to report that the majority of our pledgers have continued to give to the church according to their pledges for 2020, however, due to the Church's closing, the non-pledged and loose funds that we used to supplement the budget are down drastically. A direct result of this is not being able to open up the spending budget, so each ministry of the church is being impacted by this. If you did not pledge in 2020, please consider making your donations to the church so that the church's mission can continue.

A Big Thank You

Thank you to everyone that donated to the Vida Joven Food Basket Fundraiser in August.

- Raised over \$3600
- Funded 120 family food baskets.

Do you want to learn more about the Vida Joven Ministry? An interest meeting is being planned for Sunday, October 18th at 2pm. Contact Laura Bowser at laurab@gbpres.org for the Zoom link.

