



HILLSIDE MONTHLY DISPATCH

Hillside Baptist Church, Pembroke, NH

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Modeling the Truth of God's Word

January 2021

Trust In God's Perfect Love

From the Pastor's Desk

Fear Not For God Is With You

1 John 4:18

Well the New Year is upon us and for the most part 2020 is in the rear view mirror getting further and further away by the second. I don't know about you, was it just me or did it seem like the world was mentally, physically, and emotionally sprinting to January 1, 2021? It just seemed like we couldn't be done quick enough with the ups and downs of a truly tumultuous year.

As a nation we faced many disasters in 2020; some were natural, one was enormously medically viral, tons were personal, and the others were political. I'll let you determine which was the worst for you.

It is funny though, that just a flipping of the calendar into a new year psychologically seems to bring with it a whole new mindset. It's as if people really believe that a new year means a fresh new start in the world. So I am compelled to ask, what makes the flipping of the calendar into a new year any different than flipping the calendar into any given new month?

It's not as if the earth itself recognizes that January 1st is different to the prior day of December 31st. The elements of our planet don't know the real difference from going from one year into another. Time itself only knows that the start of new day, not the start of a whole new year, for there is not chronology beyond the 24 hour cycle. It's not as if the new year means the creditors will stop calling, the bills will cease to be your responsibility, and you won't have to rush out to the grocery store to stock up on another week's worth of food. Just because the calendar year is new doesn't mean the Patriots will somehow be allowed into the playoffs.

Really, what tangibly transpires in our lives when we pass from one year into the next, especially this past year of 2020 into 2021? The answer is, nothing really changes. The air smells the same. There was no perceptible change in the time of year. The sun rose slightly earlier on January 1, 2021 than on December 31, 2020 and went down slightly later in the first day of the new year. The temperature was a bit colder than the day before.

The price of gas remained about the same amount at the local gas station. The measurable output of a kilowatt didn't

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Jan. 2, 8:00 a.m. – No Men's Breakfast

This event will not be held this month.

Jan. 3, 10:45 a.m. – Lord's Supper

Jan. 9, 11:00 a.m. – March for Life Prayer Service; 12:00 p.m., March down Main St.

Weekly:

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Discussion

Sundays at 10:45 a.m. – Worship Service

Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. – Weekly Bible Study

On hiatus until February.

fundamentally change but remained constant. The taste of French bread for my submarine sandwich tasted the same as it did a week ago, really good! Queen Elizabeth 2nd is still alive and the ruling monarch of England as she has been for the last six plus decades.

Really what has changed? What did we think would change when we entered into 2021? What were people hoping would happen when the calendar flipped into this new year?

As I ponder upon the difficulties of the last year I find that it was a year of great stress, but I believe it is more greatly defined by a year of unprecedented fear. Fear of getting COVID-19 and dying, fear of losing one's job, fear of not being able to pay the rent, fear of a regime change in the presidency or fear of it staying the same, fear of going out of the house or fear of never ever leaving the house again, fear hugging, fear of loving, and fear of trusting that the crisis would eventually pass.

Why so much fear? Well the short answer is that we are human and this past year truly made humanity stop and consider for the first time in a long time their mortality.

See Pastor's Desk on p. 2

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On the web at <http://www.hillside-sbc.org>

Pastor's Desk (from p. 1)

But the larger and more complete answer is that there was no faith, hope, and trust in God our creator.

What did mankind immediately do when the pandemic hit? They turned to mankind. Turned to the pharmaceutical industry. Turned to science as the means to answer the crisis. Very few if any public leaders pointed people to the Lord as the hope for getting us as a nation through this time.

One thing that I know bothered a lot of Christians was how many professing "Christians" seemingly gave into the fear of it all and displayed what appeared to be little hope in the Lord. It is true that we are only human, meaning that we are frail, feeble, and short-sighted; but the raw emotional display of hopelessness by many Christians was a little disconcerting to say the least.

If there is one thing the Bible teaches us about the Christian faith is that the fear we ought to demonstrate is the awe-inspiring worshipful mindset we have towards God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Fear of the Lord is one that is motivated not by being scared or frightened, but by being struck with the knowledge that God is in our presence and He is due our complete love and devotion for being God.

But fear of the world around us, fear of things we cannot control, and of others who may oppose us in our expression of faith in Christ is not something the Christian should be displaying. Why? For at the heart of fear is the idea that God is looking to punish us, bring pain upon us, or even end us in death. But what does Scripture teach us about such things? It teaches us in his first epistle of John, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love." (1 John 4:18)

What is John teaching us in this passage? That when we have a right loving relationship with the Father through the blood-atonement work of Jesus Christ we no longer have fear. Why? Because we have received the perfect love of the Father lavished upon us and that love drives out fear for the punishment our sins rightly deserve.

Thus for the Christian, death is no longer seen as punishment. Financial ruin is no longer interpreted that God is mad at us. Disobedient children are not a curse from God. Difficulties at work with your boss or co-workers is not God hurting you. Too many individuals who proclaim themselves Christians still walk this earth thinking God is going to zap them at any moment and if anything goes off kilter then God must be upset with them, thus fear sets in because the love of Christ has not found it's prominence in their lives. For when fear takes hold of someone then it ultimately controls their emotions, thinking, and perspectives in life.

That is why so many individuals who say they are Christians still have fear, but that should not be. If we die today or tomorrow we must not think that somehow God is mad at us. If we get COVID-19 and end up with a long-time ailment or disorder we mustn't think that God is punishing us. If we experience financial hardship or even ruin during this epidemic we must not give into the thinking that God does

not love us. Fear should not drive us to despair, but instead the God who loves us will drive out all fear from us.

Have you been caught up in all the hoopla this past year of COVID-19 pandemic? Do you live in constant fear that you will get the virus and fall drastically ill or become so sick that it will be fatal? Do you worry about how you will pay the bills, feed the family, or keep your job? All of these and more are truly valid concerns that everyone should have every day of every year, not just this past year 2020?

What has changed the most when we consider this pandemic? The delusional veneer that many people had up before this all happened. That veneer that said everything is alright, everything will keep moving forward, I'm fine, I'm good, I'm all set in life, and then all of a sudden that delusion came crashing down and humanity has learned how fragile the balance of life truly is. And unfortunately many Christians came crashing down as well and have not known how to properly respond with Biblical faithfulness to the problem at hand.

Let me encourage you today to trust in God's perfect love for you, for in that love He will never leave you nor forsake you; for He is the God who is always near you and that should drive away any fear not matter what the object of that fear is.

God Bless,
✠ Pastor Jim

Men's Breakfast

The breakfast originally to be held on Saturday January 2nd has been canceled for this month.

March for Life



On Saturday January 9, New Hampshire Right to Life is holding its annual rally on the grounds of the State Capitol on North Main St., Concord, NH. The following events are planned.

10:00 a.m. Memorial Service, Concord Landfill

11:00 a.m. Prayer service & rally in front of State House

12:00 p.m. March for Life along Main St.

Due to safety concerns about the Wuhan Virus, they have canceled the luncheon and featured speaker at the Christ the King Parish Hall on South Main St. where the march ends.

For more information, go to <https://nhrtl.org/mfl2021/>.

Property and Space Patrol

On December 17, we were hit with a snow storm that almost exceeded the limits of my plow truck. It was over two feet deep. The truck slid into the ditch twice and Pastor Jim and son Connor helped dig the truck out.

Praise the Lord for our neighbor, Dick, who came over with his tractor-mounted snow blower and cleared enough of the driveway up to the parsonage so it could be cleared with the

plow truck. Maybe the Highway Dept. can lend us a bigger truck!

Also thank the Lord that we had a good amount of rain on Christmas Day which cleared the remaining ice and snow from the driveway and parking lots.

That's enough snow for this winter. 2020 is going out with a bang!

✠ Pastor Al

Obstacles to Engaging My Community

The Baptist Convention of New England (BCNE) recently absorbed the NH Baptist Convention. They are engaged across Northern New England with projects for church planting, church growth, evangelism, outreach, and other initiatives.

On the BCNE web site, <https://www.bcne.net>, a recently set of articles about obstacles that may be preventing us from engaging our community about the gospel of Jesus Christ. The author, Stanley Smith, begins with this observation:

"Are there obstacles I may inadvertently be erecting that hinder the effectiveness of my Christian witness as I seek to engage my community? Upon closer reflection, I discovered five obstacles in myself."

He then elaborates on the five obstacles.

OBSTACLE ONE: Waiting and longing for things to return to "normal."

OBSTACLE TWO: Only listening to those voices that reinforce what I already think.

OBSTACLE THREE: Avoiding difficult conversations and issues.

OBSTACLE FOUR: Ignoring shifts in how we now communicate.

OBSTACLE FIVE: Assuming that culture will carry or reinforce the message of the church.

For the complete articles, go to

<https://www.bcne.net/news/2020/12/18/obstacles-to-engaging-my-community-part-one>

When Peace Broke Out

The following article was written by James Banks and comes from the *Our Daily Bread Devotional* booklet for December 24, 2020. First read Luke 2:8-20 and then read the following article that harkens back to World War I.

"On a cold Christmas Eve in Belgium in 1914, the sound of singing floated from the trenches where soldiers were dug in. Strains of the carol "Silent Night" rang out in German and then in English. Soldiers who earlier in the day had been shooting at each other laid down their weapons and emerged from their trenches to shake hands in the "no man's land" between them, exchanging Christmas greetings and spontaneous gifts from their rations. The ceasefire continued through the next day as the soldiers talked and laughed and even organized soccer matches together.



"The Christmas Truce of 1914 that occurred along World War I's Western Front offered a brief glimpse of the peace the angels proclaimed on the first Christmas long ago. An angel spoke to terrified shepherds with these reassuring words: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you" (Luke 2:10-11). Then a multitude of angels appeared, "praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests'" (vv. 13-14).

"Jesus is the "Prince of Peace" who saves us from our sins (Isaiah 9:6). Through His sacrifice on the cross He offers forgiveness and peace with God to all who trust in Him."

Tune in to Gospel Radio

In the Concord area, get more of God's Word by tuning into New Hampshire Gospel Radio at 99.1 FM or 104.3 FM. For example, on Saturday nights at 6 p.m. the locally produced "Saturday Night Gospel Hour" offers a wide variety of southern and country gospel music. During the week, tune into well known speakers such as Alistair Begg, Chuck Swindoll, Dr. David Jeremiah, and Dr. Jim Daly.

Learn more at <http://www.nhgr.org/>.

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Hillside wishes a happy, happy, happy birthday to the following people who are celebrating another orbit around the Sun:

- 1/10 Peter Jenkins
- 1/11 Pastor Jim Robertson
- 1/21 Cynthia Ward
- 1/29 Jaxson (son of Kanoba & Stephanie)



Hillside also wishes God's blessing on the anyone who celebrates a wedding anniversary this month.

If that is you, please let the editor know about it.

Prayer Requests

If you need us to pray for a physical, spiritual, financial, marital, or other need, contact Pastor Jim, Pastor Al, or Michael Frascinella and they will get the word out to the membership. It is our duty and privilege to lift you up in prayer to Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hillside on the Web

Go to the Hillside web site <http://www.hillside-sbc.org/> for more information about our fellowship, including this newsletter in PDF format.

Submissions for Next Issue

Deadline is Jan. 25. Send news items to News Wrangler and Editor, Michael Frascinella, mfrascinella at comcast dot net.



Hillside Baptist Church is a member of the New Hampshire Baptist Association, part of the Southern Baptist Convention.



Hillside Baptist Church
547 Pembroke St.
Pembroke, NH 03275

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