

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church
601 Madison Avenue
Kinston, NC 28501

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Kinston, NC
Permit #221

THE TIE

*Connecting you with the body of Christ at
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church*

MAY 2020

CHURCH STAFF

Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr., Interim Pastor
Clay Whittington, Director of Music and Organist
Michael and Vance Aldridge, Custodians
Michelle Sutton, Finance Assistant
Jerry Crisp, Security



Hope Preparatory Update April 2020— from Diane Spear

Hope Preparatory has been navigating the global pandemic with many challenges and unexpected blessings along the way. We have shifted to daily online Zoom classes. We begin with a chapel each morning and then the students go to class with their teachers for review of their daily work. We distribute homework packets to students every two weeks and pick up the past two weeks' work for grading. We have regular visits by our enrichment teachers such as Dr. Joan Perry's live science lesson and garden update this past week, which you can see posted on our Facebook page. The garden is growing beautifully, and we can't wait for harvest time with the children. The children always enjoy seeing the familiar faces of our wonderful enrichment teachers.

In addition to Zoom classes, our staff is keeping in close phone contact with parents for academic support and personal encouragement during this uncertain time. We have 3 nurses among our parents, so please keep them in prayer if you think of them. The staff is also taking this opportunity for some added professional development through an online classical education class which is now being offered free through Classical U. Our plan is to travel to Louisville, Kentucky for teacher training in July as we did last summer.

We are so thankful for God's provision in the launch and operation of our school and are continually thankful to Spilman Church, as you are a huge part of His provision. This past week God demonstrated His faithfulness to us yet again even in a time when we feel all we can do is rely on Him. During this spring we have educated applicants in the process of applying for the NC Opportunity Scholarship vouchers which are selected in March by lottery. Every applicant that qualified, applied, and we found out last week that every one of our applicants that applied for the OS was granted the scholarship! Praise God for His provision as we look towards another fruitful year of Christian education and family ministry. We are expecting 25-35 students in grades K-3 next year.

We so appreciate and covet your prayers and support as we continue to step forward in faith into God's good plan for Hope in Kinston.

Our Fragile Religious Freedom

In a 1948 speech to the House of Commons, Winston Churchill said, *"Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it."* This was slightly reworded from what George Santayana said in 1905, *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."*

The same can be said for "church" history as well. For centuries the church has struggled to exist in a world that often despises and abhors the church. The church has at times been the recipient as well as the dispenser of persecution. In England the tide shifted often between Kings that embraced the Catholic Church or the Protestant Church. With every change in leadership there often followed bitter persecution of the opposing theological perspective. In Spain it wasn't any better. During the Spanish Inquisition, the Catholic Church used their influence over the government to persecute and kill thousands whose faith traditions were outside the teachings of the Holy Catholic Church.

When settlers came to America, they were fleeing religious persecution from England and Europe. America's experiment of Religious Freedom is not perfect. Over the years, there has been discrimination and persecution among "different" religions. What has emerged over the past 244 years is an understanding (albeit somewhat fragile) of how the church and the state are to coexist.

Today, churches in America do not pay property taxes on the buildings they own. Churches do not pay income taxes on money that is donated to them. Donations to churches can be tax deductible. Churches do not pay sales tax on items purchased by the church (yes, they pay when items are purchased, but it is reimbursed.) Ministers' housing allowance is not taxed for federal or state income tax purposes. Some ministers can even elect out of Social Security if they have a religious objection. So much care has been taken to make sure the church remains free from being entangled in governmental regulation and oversight.

Yes, the church needs to build its buildings to current building and fire codes. We need to follow sanitation and safety guidelines for health and safety. These rules are established for everyone's common good. But the church quickly draws the line in areas of faith and practice. Churches and denominations establish their own doctrine, covenants, bylaws, and constitutions. Churches select their own ministers and staff according to their own faith traditions and convictions. Churches set their own schedule for times of worship, prayer, and Bible Study. Each person and group follows their own conscience in matters of faith. As a Baptist, I may not agree with my neighbor down the road about their theology, faith or practice, but I will defend their right to practice it because I want my neighbor to defend my right to exercise my faith.

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DR. H. POWELL DEW, JR.

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In recent weeks, there has been a lot of turmoil in our world. Over the past six weeks, a new virus has spread around the world infecting over 3 million people which includes 1 million people here in the United States. Over 55,000 people in the United States have died from the coronavirus. In attempts to stop or slow the spread, drastic measures were implemented by the President and our Governor for everyone – airline travel was restricted, businesses were closed, schools and colleges were closed and classes went to an online format, sporting and entertainment events were canceled and even churches were closed.

In an attempt to lessen the financial impact, the government began a program called the “Payroll Protection Plan (PPP).” Businesses and nonprofits (including churches) were encouraged to apply for a grant to cover payroll, utilities, and rent for 10 weeks.

I have read the literature related to the PPP. I have listened to seminars about PPP. I have spoken with friends who lead various size churches that have applied for the PPP grant. For some churches, their response is, “We really need this money now to get us through this uncertain time.” People are fearful of this virus, the loss of income due to their business closing, the family stress of closed schools. Churches can also fear the future and all the changes that have and will continue to come. Fear often causes us to make decisions, that otherwise, we would not have made.

As the PPP unfolded, I thought about the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25:29-34. Esau had been out in the field and was weary and hungry. Jacob saw this as an opportunity to get Esau to trade something that was very valuable but unable to fill his hungry stomach TODAY. So, in exchange for bread, a stew of lentils, and drink, Esau gave away his birthright (inheritance) to Jacob.

Now I will be the first to say there are not any stated “strings attached” to this offer of Payroll Protection. But you and I know, one day, some forces inside and outside the government will insist on changing the current arrangement between the church and the state by removing some of the protections the churches experience today because the church was willing to accept financial support from the US tax payers. Has the church traded our fragile religious freedom for a bowl of soup?

I am so glad the Trustees of Spilman Memorial Baptist Church understand this offering of payroll support may soon come with strings attached. They remember the past, and are not tempted to trade our freedom for a few months of financial support. I pray that the actions of *some churches* that have capitulated in a moment of weakness, have not set *all churches* on a path which may cause us to forfeit the fragile religious freedom we experience here in the United States of America. May that be the prayer of us all.

Update from the Finance Committee....

The church still needs your financial support even while it is temporarily closed. The church still has bills to be paid such as salaries, utilities, telephone, and others. The finance committee is requesting you mail your offerings to the church to the attention of Sylvia Williams.

Thank you for your generous support during this time!



2020 BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 2 LAVERNE BURKS | 12 PEGGY HASKINS |
| 4 JODY HASKINS | 15 DONNIE HARPER |
| 4 MACKENZIE HERRING | 17 BIFF BENNETT |
| 7 CHARLES BROOKS | 23 DELIA GRADY |
| 8 JEAN MOORE | 25 BOBBY SHAVER |
| 9 MARILYN OWENS | 28 LOUISE HILL |
| 10 JAYSON DOMINEY | 29 PAT MOORE |

Update from Gabriela Trejo ...

Hello, my brothers and sisters of Spilman Baptist Church! I just wanted to let you know that we are doing good, that we strongly believe God is still in charge of everything that we see and what we don't see, He is ALWAYS faithful.



Also, our church completed the renovations at the New Church building (Glenn Raven). We as a church are very excited to start worshipping at this new location, it had turned out very BEAUTIFUL. God has been GOOD to us and we praise him for all he has done. We are also very thankful to Spilman and to all the churches that at one point or another have contributed to our church and have helped us get where we are now. We find ourselves having mixed emotions, we are excited to start this new chapter at the new location, but we feel like part of us will always remain here at Spilman. We love you and we will continue to pray, so that with God's help all of us can fulfill God's purpose here on earth. At this moment as you all know we are not able to have regular services, never the less we are still conducting our Sunday and Thursday services via Facebook Live, allowing everyone to stay connected from home.

We pray that soon we can all join together in praise and continue to do our part in God's Kingdom, to Him be THE GLORY FOREVER!

Update from the Danny Rice

Dear Spilman family,

On behalf of the Diaconate, I hope you are doing well and know that there is a light at the end of this quarantine tunnel. It is our goal to start getting back to our new “normal” as soon as possible but our continued efforts will be to ensure the health and safety of our members. The Governor's mandates are our guide and it appears that we are closer than we have been to getting back to our worship and activity schedule. The Church Leadership Team, comprised of our pastor, choir director, and committee chairs, will develop a plan once the Governor removes the restrictions that impact our church family. It will not be the schedule to which we are accustomed, but will allow for social distancing in our sanctuary and throughout our facility. We will probably begin with Sunday morning worship only and then transition in to other programs including Sunday School and Wednesday night activities.

Many thanks to Pastor Dew and Clay for keeping us connected with their contacts, worship materials, and special music online on Sunday mornings. Thanks to our Deacons for staying in touch with our families and please let them or Pastor Dew know of any ministry needs.

These challenging times have brought to light vividly how crucial our church family is to us. Let's continue to pray for our church and look forward to when we can again be together.

God be with you until we meet again.

Danny Rice, Diaconate Chair

Update from Kay Blizzard ...

A great big THANKS to Spilman employees who have worked diligently during the past six weeks to keep our church operating at a whole new level! The Personnel Committee has continued to offer support and encouragement to each of our employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are truly grateful to those who are willing to go the extra mile whenever asked.

We ask that you continue to pray for our church, its leadership and employees during the weeks ahead as we all adjust to “Our New Normal,” whatever that might be.

Kay Blizzard, Personnel Chairperson

Update from Clay Whittington

I am a big proponent of technology. Just ask Dr. Dew. He is usually surprised to see me using ancient and near-obsolete objects such as pencils. I'm sure many of you have noticed that I usually play entire services and conduct full rehearsals from my iPad. It's bad enough that my watch will vibrate to tell me when I need to leave my house to make it to the church in time for a meeting or service (it even includes current traffic patterns).

As easy as these devices make my life, I have realized something during this stay-at-home order: 90% of my screen time focuses on communicating with family, friends, coworkers, choristers, parishioners, professors, etc. I would venture to guess that at least half of those interactions have usually been in an effort to plan a face-to-face meeting whether it be a meeting over coffee or Sunday morning worship.

That said, I have come to the conclusion that I am certainly not an introvert. I have thoroughly enjoyed the Sunday morning worship music sessions on Facebook because of the comments and check-ins from my Spilman family. If you have not yet, please join us at 10:30 on Sunday mornings at www.spilmanbaptist.org/privateworship OR www.facebook.com/spilmanbaptist/live. While we currently cannot meet in the same room for worship, I hope that it offers a little comfort during such strange times. It has certainly helped me.

Deacon of the Month — Tom Shaver



Tom was born in Mt. Olive, NC and was a graduate of East Carolina University with a degree in business. He and his wife Betsy, along with their son Bobby, moved to Kinston in the early 1990s and became members of Spilman Memorial soon after. We chose Spilman because the interim pastor at the time was Tony Gurganus. He was Tom's pastor growing up in Mt Olive. Music has always been a passion of his and he has been very active in the choir. Tom

has served as a member of the pastor search committee and also president of the choir.