



STAYING STRONG

May 2019

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” Deut. 31:8

JESUS CHRIST IS THE BIG “C” IN OUR LIFE – relegate cancer to be the “Little “c”

Spring has finally sprung! We’ve seen flowering trees everywhere sporting various shades of pink and white, the glorious yellow of hedges of forsythia and massed banks of yellow daffodils and the paler narcissus, and the soft shades of purple crocus nestled in nooks and crannies, colorful tulips and azaleas, and trees sprouting red (what are these?) (and no, these are not Japanese Maples) and the myriad shades of green on other trees, are hints that speak of new and continuing life in the Piedmont.

HOPE was the theme of the Prayer Service on Palm Sunday afternoon with twenty-four in attendance. Pastor had the group take out our hymnals and turn to #576 “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”. The first verse is on HOPE. His Blood is our righteousness – Christ took all our sins. Then we turned to Romans 5:1-5: and more hope:

- 1 “Therefore, being justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;
- 2 Through Him we have been brought by faith into this grace wherein we stand and are proud in the HOPE of the glory of God.
- 3 And not only so, but also glory in our tribulations; knowing that tribulation perfects patience in us;
- 4 And patience, experience; and experience, HOPE;
- 5 And HOPE causes no one to be ashamed; because the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.”

HOPE. Because of that we have peace with God. This HOPE doesn’t take away the angst of everyday life. God’s love for us resulted in His sending Jesus to atone for our sins. Nothing can separate us from God.

In closing, we adjourned to the Social Hall for a bit of refreshments and our guest speaker, a delightful young lady, Emily Ortiz Badamente, who is the brand-new Art + Wellness Program Director at the Sawtooth School for Visual Art. The center believes the benefits of using art in healing is of great benefit. The arts have been shown to aid in resolving grief and lost unresolved issues, promote increased self-awareness through imaginative expression, and create an over all sense of better mental health. Art stimulates dialogue and enables the mind to rest from our daily activities. They offer a class every fourth Thursday of the month from 2 to 4 pm for Cancer patients. The Wellness Program has a lengthy list of partners in the Triad. You are encouraged to go to Sawtooth.org for more information.

The Small Group met on Tax Day and Dot and Alice talked about recognizing Negative Thoughts and then replacing them with Positive ones. We talked about all the different kinds of negative thoughts that can drag us down into the abyss. And then, once recognized, exchange them for positive reflections. It takes work to keep our thoughts on the “sunny” side of life. But with God’s help, we can do it.

Again, we need HOPE – HOPE in Christ. We need to “get out” of ourselves and get involved in other activities.

POTATO, EGG or COFFEE BEAN?

Sometimes terrible things happen. Marriages fail. Family members get sick. Friends and family are no longer there. We have all had our share of tough times, but it is truly important how we respond to adversity.

A father explained it to his daughter this way. He was a chef and took her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Once the three pots began to boil, he placed potatoes in one pot, eggs in the second pot, and ground coffee beans in the third pot.

He then let them sit and boil. The daughter moaned and impatiently waited wondering what he was doing. After twenty minutes he turned off the burners. He took the potatoes out of the pot and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the boiled eggs out and placed them in a bowl. He then ladled the coffee out and placed it in a cup.

Daughter, what do you see?

Potatoes, eggs, and coffee, she replied

Look closer, he replied and touch the potatoes. She did and noted that they were soft. Then she took an egg and broke it open pulling off the shell and observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally she was asked to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face.

Father, what does this mean? She asked.

He explained that the potatoes, the eggs and coffee beans had each faced the same adversity – the boiling water. However, each one reacted differently.

The potato went in strong, hard and unrelenting but in boiling water, it became soft and weak.

The egg was fragile with the thin outer shell protecting the liquid interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then she inside of the egg became hard.

However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

Below are five points that might help to keep things in perspective:

1. This too shall pass. Think back to what you have gone through so far and realize that you are strong and you will get through this as well.
2. You are not alone. Realize that other people are experiencing the same or similar thing. There are people that you can talk to that can share their journey and help you through yours.
3. Check your thoughts. It is easy to become full of negative thoughts. Don't allow them to consume you. Pick something good to focus on instead.

4. Move your body. When things are tough we tend to introvert and are no longer motivated to go about our day. This is the time to make sure you get outside, get fresh air, move your body, dance in your room or do anything that gets you moving, it helps to get rid of the extra cortisol that causes stress and anxiety.
5. Finally, take one day at a time. It can be overwhelming to think about the future. Just get through today.

There will always be tough times. What you need to ask yourself is when adversity knocks on your door, how will you respond? Are you a potato, an egg, or a coffee bean?

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ARE YOU BREATHING PROPERLY?

REMEMBER TO BELLY BREATHE!

ARE YOU EXERCISING EVERY DAY?

We need to keep our physicians, and, sometimes, our caregivers happy. When we keep "moving", our blood flows a bit better, and keeps our little Gray Cells happy, along with our joints and muscles.

If you are not steady on your feet, you might want to consider "chair" exercises. We received one several months ago for "chair yoga" that offers stretching and strengthening. If you wish to follow along watching TV, "Sit and Be Fit" can be viewed and exercised with on Tuesday mornings at 8:30 am on PBS channel UNCNC (#1276 if you have Spectrum cable programming). This program is also available at 5:00 am on Spectrum channel 4 (WUNL - base PBS) or on Spectrum 1221 (UNCHD PBS).

Mark Your Calendars:

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| Fri, April 5, 10:00-2:00 pm | Feel Good Friday, Novant Cancer Center |
| Sun, April 14, 2:00 pm | Prayer and Praise Service, Guest speaker: Catherine Howard, Art and Wellness Director for Sawtooth Center |
| Mon, April 15, 10:30 am | Group Session (yes you are seeing right! – check your calendar) |

Please check www.cancerservicesonline.org for additional activities that might interest you. They have all kinds of activities going on each month. Look and see for yourself!

Trusted websites:

<https://www.cancer-companions.org>

www.cancer.org

American Cancer Society

www.mayoclinic.org

Mayo Clinic

www.mdanderson.org

MD Anderson Cancer Center

www.mskcc.org

Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

www.shepherdscenter.org

The Shepherd's Center

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" James 4:8