



# STAYING STRONG

September 2019

“Be strong and courageous ... it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”  
Deuteronomy 31:6

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

Here it is: the end of August and the cicadas are still making their presence known. While the heat and humidity are still with us, we have experienced a tantalizing taste of coming Fall with delightfully cool temps. Those cooler temps are the harbinger of some serious yard work to come – ugh! We’ve experienced some odd weather patterns that have resulted in overcast day with storms rolling in late afternoon to early evening bringing swift downpours. The grass (and those even faster growing weeds) has been growing like those proverbial weeds.

Pastor Clocker was going to be on a bit of vacation again with the whole family at the beach and Elder Rich Essbach stepped in and led the assembled group of approximately. Rich invited to group to sing “The Light of Christ,” while he accompanied us on his guitar. This dovetailed into Psalm 27 that he had the group focus on.

It begins:

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of who shall I be afraid?”

We read the first six verses with the sixth verse says “I will sing praises to the Lord.” However, the first verse is the most important. It sets it up that Christ is our salvation. Light is an important “thing” with us humans. Darkness without “light” to illuminate the dark corners of our home, or mind, can be horribly scary. Just a little light like a singed candle flame can be a reassurance. This is what Christ does for us – He illuminates the way for us.

Our relationship with God is of the number one importance. We need to fear nothing in this life – God is our comfort no matter what turmoil is thrown our way.

We are instructed to name our fears one by one and turn them over to God.

On that we adjourned to the Social Hall to hear from our guest speaker: Katie Duckworth, PhD and an assistant professor at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. She is a member of the psychosocial oncology program and performs clinical work and research with individuals adjusting to new diagnosis, chronic illness, and end of life concerns. Katie believes that counselors are suited to working with individuals and families who are forced to adapt to changes in the health, daily life and structure, and expectations surrounding their longevity. Her group educates medical providers regarding emotional issues that often involve unspoken Spiritual aspects. They have seen a need and is expanding into survivorship issues. The counselors work with one individual consistently to keep the relationship growing and deepening. And she talked about the ability to pay; if insurance is available, it is billed. But if there is no insurance, her group has a fund from generous benefactors to help those without. Katie

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advised that Survivors Day will be held at the Cancer Center on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 2 pm. There is more on this under “Mark Your Calendars”.



Our Small Group with ten participants met on the third Monday and Alice and Clarice were the facilitators. Their starting devotion was from 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. What a wonderful God we have – He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needed our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.

Today’s topic for discussion was Spiritual Matters from “Cancer, Now What?” As we were about to discover, spiritual communities can be found in one-to-one relationships, small group, or larger gatherings. Sometimes one can find spiritual community with just one other person, such as a family member, a friend, a prayer partner, or a spiritual leader. Then there are small-group spiritual communities, such as this one, and large-group spiritual communities, like congregations. People who care along with kindred spirits (those who have shared your experience).

That old adage: *You don’t have to go it alone*, says it all. And it is just as true when it comes to spiritual matters. A survivor summarized it well by saying, “I would greatly encourage anyone facing cancer to seek out spiritual community. It can make all the difference in the world – it certainly did for me.”

Then the Ministry Team shared with the small group a wide group of subject matters that would be of interest to all:

October 29<sup>th</sup> at Baptist – “Just for You Day, on the 1<sup>st</sup> & second floors, Cancer Center.

Mary Hudspeth, a former member of St. John’s: her cancer has returned.

New flyers are in the works that put the emphasis on St. John’s instead of Cancer Companions

Plans are for more frequent “articles” in “Forsyth Woman” and “Forsyth Family”.

Talked about putting together a list of the Bible verses we have used. Ann has it all!

We talked about the high cost of drugs and the various options “out there” that can help, and possibly offering it for a monthly Social time discussion and reprint in the STAYING STRONG.

Expand a bit of Cancer Services offering – see MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

A new addition is the Pancreatic Cancer Support Group that Clarice attends: On Sept 19, they will have a guest speaker to talk about nutrition.

We talked about possible Hospice referrals from St. John’s.

Sheryl will contact St. Leo’s Catholic Church to inquire about their cancer ministry.

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Sheryl is also researching Survivor's Guilt for future discussion.

And finally, Katie Duckworth from Baptist really liked what we are doing in our Cancer and Chronic Illness Ministry and sees the possibility of greater connection to St. John's.



***THIS IS IMPORTANT:*** Now that the heat and humidity will be with us for a while, we all need to be aware to consume plenty of water in order to stay properly hydrated. Drinking enough water daily helps our bodies fight against sickness, disease and ailments. In contrast dehydration can lead to headaches and migraines, inflammation and joint pain. Arthritis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and gout can all benefit from drinking plenty of water to help reduce painful joint friction. Also, drinking plenty of water will help one's body cope with the harshness of chemotherapy by keeping the body in balance and properly flushed. Of course, water is the go-to liquid of choice: it has zero calories and does the best job of keeping the largest organ of our bodies properly hydrated: our skin!

### ***ARE YOU BREATHING PROPERLY?***

#### ***REMEMBER TO BELLY BREATHE!***

Diaphragmatic breathing, or "belly breathing," engages the diaphragm, which is supposed to do most of the heavy lifting when it comes to breathing. This technique is particularly helpful in people with COPD as the diaphragm isn't as effective in these individuals and could be strengthened. The technique is best used when feeling rested. If you have COPD, ask your doctor or respiratory therapist to show you how to use this exercise for best results. According to the COPD Foundation, you should do the following to practice diaphragmatic breathing:

1. Relax your shoulders and sit back or lie down.
2. Place one hand on your belly and one on your chest.
3. Inhale through your nose for two seconds, feeling the air move into your abdomen and feeling your stomach move out. Your stomach should move more than your chest does.
4. Breathe out for two seconds through pursed lips while pressing on your abdomen.
5. Repeat.

### ***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" at 5:00 am on Spectrum channel 4 (WUNL - base PBS) or on Spectrum 1221 (UNCHD PBS).

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

- Fri, Sept 6, 10:00-1:00 pm**      **Feel Good Friday**      Novant's Derrick Davis  
Cancer Center, in the back behind the main hospital (parking is free)
- Thurs, Sept 5, 12, 19, 26**      5:30 to 8:00 pm with dinner provided. **Starts a new four week  
CANCER TRANSITIONS WELLNESS program** for survivors &  
caregivers. Topics include: nutrition, emotional recovery,  
exercise, & follow-up care. Call 336-760-9983 to sign up!
- Sun, Sept 8, 2:00 pm**      This is the second Sunday  
  
**Prayer and Praise Service**, guest speaker is Jimmy Johnson,  
Wellness Director at Livestrong at the YMCA
- Sun, Sept 15, 3:00 pm**      **"BECAUSE I CAN, SIR!"** A metastatic musical comedy. One  
woman-warrior battling a rare cancer with her arsenal of music,  
comedy, chemo, and God. Written and performed by Susan  
Braden. In the **Sanctuary at Ardmore Baptist Church**, 501 Miller  
Street, Winston Salem, NC. Free and open to the public – a love  
offering will be received.
- Mon, Sept 16, 10:30 am**      This is the third Monday, **Small Group Session**
- Thurs. Sept 19, 11:00**      Pancreatic Patient & Caregiver Support Group      Guest  
speaker: Wendy Watson, Clinical Nutritionist
- Wed, Oct 29, 10:00-2:00**      **JUST FOR YOU DAY**, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors Comprehensive Cancer  
Center, Baptist Hospital. To give cancer patients and caregivers  
an **opportunity to discover** all the **supportive help** that is  
**available at the Comprehensive Cancer Center and out in the  
community**. There will be many activities, games to play, special  
music, and display table for patients/caregivers to gather free  
educational information. A free lunch and all kinds of fun snacks  
to eat too!

Please check [www.cancerservicesonline.org/events-calendar/](http://www.cancerservicesonline.org/events-calendar/) for additional activities that might interest you. They have all kinds of activities going on each month. Look and see for yourself!

**Trusted websites:**

[www.cancer-companions.org](http://www.cancer-companions.org)

[www.cancerdietician.com](http://www.cancerdietician.com)

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

[www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org)

[www.mdanderson.org](http://www.mdanderson.org)

[www.mskcc.org](http://www.mskcc.org)

[www.shepherdscenter.org](http://www.shepherdscenter.org)

Julie Lanford, Cancer Services

American Cancer Society

Mayo Clinic

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

The Shepherd's Center

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