

From Pastor Tripp Brogdon:



Another month has come and gone where we have been kept apart. These monthly newsletters will begin to sound like a broken record if it keeps up too much longer! It makes it even harder, though, when we look around the country, the state, and even here in Decatur and we see some places of worship welcome their congregations back in their sanctuaries, even as we know we are making the right decision for us and our own church family.

There can be a lot of emotions that we feel during this time. We can feel confused, jealous of other churches, sad, or even happy. I'm talking to you happy folks who love going to church in their pajamas! (I do too, though. Don't tell anyone.)

What I want us to think about right now is that it is common to grieve the loss of being with each other in person and together in worship. As I talk to folks throughout the church, that's the one constant that is always mentioned. We miss the fellowship more than anything. While we can try to replicate it through technology, it'll never replace the original! And so we grieve.

This reminds me of a quote from one of my all-time favorite shows, *The Office*, which was a comedy that used to air on NBC. Loveable office manager Michael Scott says the following, "Society teaches us that having feelings and crying is bad and wrong. Well, that's baloney, because grief isn't wrong. There is such a thing as good grief. Just ask Charlie Brown."

While this is delivered as a joke, I've never forgotten it. There is such a thing as good grief. So if you are someone who is grieving in this time of being apart, my prayer and my hope is that this will be a time of good grief, one that highlights the positives behind why you're grieving. It's because you miss St. Andrew, and you miss the fellowship. If that isn't good grief, I don't know what is!

In closing, I want to share something Dr. Ed McLeod, one of my home church pastors, wrote this past week concerning churches "opening" back up.

"Our church is already open. We are open to the Spirit's leading.

We are open to new opportunities for mission.

We are open to the stirring challenge of the call to discipleship.

We are open to anyone who wants to join us on the journey of faith.

We are open to learning new ways to tell our old story.

We are open to ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.

We are open to criticism when we fall short. We are already open.

We just happen to be worshiping in our homes, for now, as a way of promoting safety and mitigating risk, as an expression of the love we have for our neighbors, and as an acknowledgment that any reckless behavior on our part could have a devastating effect on others. And we are grateful for the technology that makes this possible, aware that we are richly blessed.

But we are already open."

St. Andrew, while our building is closed and worship is online, we are already open! Thanks be to God.

Grace and peace, Pastor Tripp

From Our Worship Committee:

Well, this has been a changing time from our comfort zone for all of us. Worship has had to change with the times and thankfully we have the technology to keep us connected. Thank you to Pastor Tripp for his sermons and Wednesday Bible devotionals. Thanks to Dr. Jeff for his music that has been uplifting. We give a special thanks to Amelia Adams for the Palm Sunday music and Shelia Koza for the Easter music. We are blessed with musically talented friends. Hopefully we will be able to resume worship in the near future, until then we will continue to worship virtually. The worship team will meet again in June to review the situation and a process for reopening our worship service. It will be a while before we are able to resume worship as we knew it. Thank you to each of you for your support and concern for friends/family at St. Andrew.

Nellie Gates, Elder Worship Chair



Bill Heim	June 1
Jamie Heim	June 5
Nelda Gilbert	June 7
Linda Grissom	June 15
Linda Livingston	June 19
Rita Abbott	June 20
Jeff Gilbreath	June 20

Ed & Barb Wyle	June 8
Harold & Teresa Culbert	June 20



*Congratulations to
Jason and Piya Ellerbe
on their marriage
Sunday, May 3
Jason is the son of
Dave & Cheryl Ellerbe*



Jordan Gilbreath, son of Laurie Nave of Muscle Shoals and Dr. Jeff Gilbreath of Decatur, attended the University of Alabama in Huntsville on an academic scholarship and graduated magna cum laude with a 3.7 GPA in computer science. Jordan will be a graduate research assistant to one of his professors in the field of virtual reality while working toward his Master's degree at UAH.



Taressa Matthews, daughter of Leslie Matthews, graduated from Decatur High School.

Taressa's honors and achievements include the Academic Excellence Award for a 4.0 GPA, National Honor Society, member of the Superintendent's Advisory Council, recipient of the DMDA Scholarship Award, voted Funniest Band Member of the Year, and four-year veteran of the color guard/flag girl team. She will attend Alabama State University in the fall and will major in the medical

field of Health Administration.



Parker Vandine, son of Jon and Jodi Vandine, graduated from Austin High School as Salutatorian.

Parker's activities at Austin include varsity soccer, varsity cross country, varsity tennis, Austin Ambassador, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Austin High School Chamber Choir, Science Club, tutor at Decatur Youth Services, and St. Andrew Presbyterian Church choir.

Parker's honors and achievements include the National Merit Scholarship finalist, All-State Show Choir, All-State Mixed Choir, Boys State delegate, National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, and Bryant-Jordan Scholar-Athlete regional winner. Parker was offered a full scholarship to both UAH and the University of Alabama. Parker will attend UAH and major in computer engineering with a possible minor in music.



The Chronicle is published monthly by St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. To submit articles by email send to: churchoffice@standrewdecatur.org by the 22nd of each month. You may also submit articles in print to the church office Monday through Thursday. 8:45 am–1:00 pm.

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St. Andrew Elders & Ministry Teams 2020 Chairperson/Co-Chair

Clerk of Session	Philip Gilbert
Building/Grounds	Bob Naumann
Communications & Outreach	Sue Mitchell
Education & Spiritual Formation	Cheryl Ellerbe
Finance & Stewardship	Greg Vogel & Tommy Gates
Member Care	B. J. Breeding
Nominating	Dan Watt
Mission	Barb Mouton
Worship	Nellie Gates & Linda Grissom

Special Offerings

Due to our not gathering as a congregation, we have missed the opportunity to give to two of our special offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing and the Pentecost Offering.

One Great Hour of Sharing: This offering is the single, largest way that Presbyterians join together to share God’s love with our neighbors-in-need around the world. Each gift provides relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

Pentecost Offering: This offering helps our youth begin life with a solid foundation of faith; 40% stays with St. Andrew to develop programs in our church; 25% supports PC-USA Young Adult Volunteers; 25% supports ministries with youth; and 10% is devoted to children-at-risk.

Please mail in your contributions to the church. When donating by check, please put name and amount of each offering in the memo section. **Deadline is Friday, June 26.**