



### A note from the Pastor...

***2 Thessalonians 3:5 "May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ." (ESV)***

Dear Friends,  
 We have forgotten how to love one another and instead, we have allowed fear to overtake our lives. At a time when we are facing a formidable disease, instead of working together to defeat this global pandemic, we are permitting prejudice and bias, as well as ignorance and paranoia, to divide us. At a moment in history when we should be focused on uniting our efforts to overcome this coronavirus, we are still settling old scores and throwing stones at one another. It makes me wonder if God in Heaven is shaking His head as we relentlessly attack each other, scoring trivial points over our opponents and ruining our chances of winning this important battle. Sometimes, we are our own worst enemies; sometimes humanity is subject to delusion and insanity. Dealing with this kind of turbulence is nothing new. When the Apostle Paul was writing to the congregation in Thessalonica, they were enduring all sorts of trouble, too. Paul was also going through some hardships of his own, but instead of dwelling on them, he urged the young church to refocus itself on God's love. He didn't encourage them to do this in order to escape from their issues, but he wanted them to realize that God's love contained all of the strength, hope, and power that they would need to overcome their difficulties. In other words, he was asking them to divert their attention away from their woes and toward

the blessing of God's love.

It's the same for us today. If we were to direct our hearts to the love of God, we would rediscover the ability to love one another. We would concentrate on building up our global community and ridding our world of injustice and hatred, racism and fear. As Christians, we would be more focused on bridging the gaps between us instead of drifting apart. We would see things through God's love and not be blinded by our own conceit and misconceptions. Rather than allow pride to pamper our prejudices, we would be open to understanding and accepting one another. Everyone would have the right to belong in God's world; we would become better followers of Christ; and we would be willing to go beyond our comfort zone in order to make peace, share faith, and show love.

We may live in uncertain and unsettling times, but we don't have to become the victims of them. Rather, with God's love and the steadfastness of Christ, we can become the victors of this moment, but only if we are willing to turn away from ourselves and look to God for grace and love. As always, the choice is ours – so what will we choose to do today?

May God guide your lives and bless you with His love.

Pastor John

# Connecting with God and One Another

## CONNECTIONS CLASS

Pastor Stuart will continue to teach his Connections Sunday School class during the summer by using the Zoom online platform. This is a great way of keeping our folks connected and everyone is invited to participate in the class which starts at 9:30 AM on Sunday mornings. The class usually lasts about 45 minutes and is a great way of building up faith and Bible knowledge.

For the next couple of Sundays, Pastor Stuart is teaching on *The Lord's Prayer*. During July, he will begin a new 4-week course on the *Book of Jonah*. If you would like to join the class or receive the study lessons by email, just contact the office (admin@erinpresbyterian.org or 588-5350) and we'll add you to the list. We can also mail paper copies of the study to you if you prefer to do this on your own at home.

## REOPENING UPDATE

Our elders are still working on safely reopening the church building for worship. We have many things to consider to keep everyone safe. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Please know that as soon as we have a safe solution, everyone will be contacted directly. Thank you for your prayers and commitment. God bless.

## CONTACTING PASTOR STUART

If you have a special need or require help, or if you would like a prayer said or just someone to talk to, you can contact Pastor John at the church office during the day (865-588-5350), or on his cellphone (865-454-3942) at any time. You may also text him on his cellphone, too. Please feel free to send him emails at: [pastor@erinpresbyterian.org](mailto:pastor@erinpresbyterian.org) or you can message him via Facebook.



## CHURCH RETREAT AT JOHN KNOX CENTER

Mark your calendars now for our annual church retreat! Started eight years ago in memory of Claude and Pat Houbler, long-time Erin members and parents of Jenny Boyd, the retreat is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with your Erin family at beautiful John Knox Center on Watts Bar Lake near Kingston. As in past years, cabins are available if you want to spend Friday night and enjoy a campfire (with s'mores, of course). On Saturday, beginning at 10am, children will engage in supervised activities while adults and youth gather for a time of learning and discussion.

This year's theme is **Bridging the Gap**. It's one thing to profess our belief that God loves and welcomes everyone, but it's much harder to actually try to bridge the divide that separates us from others in our community and beyond. Some differences are apparent; others may not be obvious until we get to know someone. In either case, how do we develop relationships with people who are different from us in their outward appearance, background, or beliefs? How does God enable us to show love to people we don't know and don't understand? Join us at the retreat as we begin to explore these questions and learn what it means to see others through God's eyes. Later, in the afternoon session, everyone will have free time to fish, swim, canoe, try archery or the ropes course, walk along the trails, or just hang out with friends at the waterfront. We'll enjoy a delicious cookout dinner in the outdoor pavilion, then share a short vesper service before we head back to Knoxville. **Sign up on our website, [www.erinpres.org](http://www.erinpres.org).** Registrations will be open until August 9. Questions? Contact Anna McKay or Kim Jaynes.

# Bridging The Gap



## BRIDGING THE GAP

*And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many  
generations; you shall be called the  
repairer of the breach, the restorer of  
streets to dwell in. (Isaiah 58:12)*

Echoing the psalmist, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed that God's children would become "repairers of the breach" - that God would enable them to repair what was broken and mend the gap between and among the people and God.

This very old prophecy still speaks to God's people, and reminds us that belonging to God means we must become his agents and extend God's love and wisdom beyond ourselves. **Belong, Become, Beyond.** The first step is to **belong** to a community of faith that encourages involvement and connection - as Erin has been purposefully working toward this past year. But what, then, is God calling us to **become**?

The ministry teams and Session believe that God is calling us to become repairers of the breach, menders of fences, bridgebuilders. To that end, the Session has endorsed **Bridging the Gap** as our church-wide theme for the coming year and, perhaps, beyond. The ministry teams are collaboratively planning an exciting series of offerings that will teach us to become more compassionate listeners, thoughtful conversation partners, and intentional bridgebuilders in a diverse, multi-cultural world. There has, perhaps, never been a time in our nation's history when such skills were more needed.

Your first opportunity to participate in **BridgeBuilders training** will be at Erin's August 21-22 retreat at Camp John Knox (or alternate venue/platform if necessary). We will be led in facilitated sessions

entitled **BridgeBuilding 101: Why Build Bridges?** (For those who cannot attend, the sessions will be repeated and/or offered online.)

Over the course of the year, you will have many Opportunities - via small discussion groups, Sunday School classes, webinars, print materials, guest presentations, outreach and more - to gain a better understanding of people whose backgrounds are different from our own, to learn and practice discussion skills, and to acquire the confidence to extend God's love **beyond** the walls of our church.

Please join us in praying for this venture, that God's wisdom will guide our planning and infuse our gatherings! **Please join us as we Bridge the Gap together!**

Blessings,  
Ministry Integration Team



## RALLY DAY

### Join us for Rally Day 2020!

It's been a strange summer, to be sure, but we're still planning to kick off the new Sunday School year with Rally Day on August 16!

We'll start with a light breakfast at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall, then children and youth will go to their new classes and adult Sunday School leaders will preview what their classes will study in the fall.

We invite everyone to join us for Sunday school this year. You'll find a group of people who ask lots of questions and are seeking to understand what it means to follow Christ every day. Most of all, you'll find a place where you can learn, share, and grow.

On Rally Day we'll also present discipleship opportunities that will take place at other times during the week. We offer opportunities from toddler to seniors and everyone in between. No matter who you are or how busy you are, there is a place for you to **Belong**.

# New Mission Statement

## ***Erin Has a New Mission Statement!***

If you participate in Erin's online worship service, you may have noticed a new Mission Statement appearing on screen at the conclusion of the service. Session developed this statement during a February planning retreat and approved it at the next Session meeting. However, because of Covid-19 and our not having in-person services or meetings, we haven't had a chance to adequately communicate this new mission statement and our rationale for developing it with the congregation.

You may be thinking, "Why did we need a new Mission Statement?" Good question. When Session began strategic planning two years ago, we first revisited our Vision Statement and determined that the vision still reflected the direction Erin was headed and the identity we hoped to achieve. We then worked to develop the strategies necessary to help us realize this vision. These strategies are the foundation for *The Vision Project* - to **belong** to Erin's fellowship of believers and engage in the life and work of the church; to **become** mature Christians, dedicated to spiritual growth and becoming more Christ-like; and to go **beyond** our walls into the community to share God's love through our lives, actions, and words.

Implementing these strategies through the Vision Project required that we first make some changes to Erin's organization structure, ministry and support team leadership, and Session size and responsibilities. Once we made these changes and began doing things differently, it became apparent that our Mission Statement no longer reflects our day-to-day work that Erin was doing as we moved forward with the Vision Project. A new mission statement was needed.

To this end, members of Session spent time independently thinking about and writing down what each perceived the new mission to be. Then, in our planning retreat in February, we each shared our mission statements and worked to articulate a final mission statement that reflected the thoughts and feelings of all members of Session.

The result of this work was Erin's new Mission Statement:

The mission of Erin Church is to:

***Belong to the diverse family in Christ,  
Love and accept all as God's children,  
Become disciples who embody and share the gospel,  
and serve our church and Beyond.***

We are excited about this New Mission Statement! We feel it clearly reflects the work we are doing as a congregation as we journey toward our Vision:

*Unified in Christ, we seek to create harmony in a diverse community through compassion, mutual respect, and love.*

Erin Session

## JULY EVENTS

### SUNDAYS

9am Online Worship Service

9:30am Connections Class

9:30am Living the Faith

10am Hard Sayings Zoom

12pm Weekly Stewardship Zoom

### WEDNESDAYS

7:30pm Coffee Club + Zoom

### THURSDAYS

7pm Weekly Session Mtg

### FRIDAYS

12pm Staff Zoom Mtg

### INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEETINGS

5TH 12:30pm Creative Expressions Zoom

7TH 7pm Discipleship Zoom

7th 12pm Creative Expressions

12TH 12pm Outreach Zoom

13TH-16TH 10-11am VBS Zoom

13TH 6:30pm Property Zoom

19TH 12:30pm OH&C Zoom  
and 2pm Visitor Follow-up

20TH MIT Meeting

**HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!**

# A Letter From Kerry Stoltzfus

Dear Erin Friends,

Fifty years ago on July 1, 1970 you welcomed me as your new Assistant Pastor. Frank Nauman, the Senior Pastor, had already left for San Francisco Theological Seminary for six weeks of Doctor of Ministry study. I would be your Pastor for those weeks and Frank had said to me, "You'll be fine, Erin is a good congregation." Your warm welcome and the trust you afforded me in those first few weeks proved him right. The Erin hospitality was truly gracious and helped make Ruthanne and me feel at home as we awaited the birth of our first child in early September. When Emily was born you rejoiced with us as a baby was welcomed to the manse.

That summer was one of many firsts. You seemed pleased with the worship on my first Sunday perhaps in part to the fact that the service ended ten minutes early. One of my first pastoral visits was with Mrs. Lizzie Swanner, our oldest member. She called me the "little preacher" which I took as a term of endearment..

There was a first wedding and funeral. Josh was born in 1973 and by the age of seven or eight he joined me as a fan of the Tennessee Volunteers. One season he sold programs at the games and though he was not a top salesman he did enjoy watching the games.

In the providence of God and again in the trust you placed in me I was called as Associate Pastor. In 1974 when Frank Nauman left to accept a call in Akron, Ohio. I served as your Interim Pastor and the Pastor Nominating Committee was working to find a candidate to be the next Pastor of Erin. During that time I also pursued a new call and interviewed at a few churches. Then one day the Erin Committee asked me to submit my resume. Within a few months the Committee extended a call and the congregation concurred and I was installed as Pastor in 1975.

Over the years we strengthened our ministry. Youth ministry flourished under the leadership of Ron and Sally Gleason. One summer we needed a school bus to travel to Long Beach, NC for a mission trip. Ron went on to Gordon Conwell, my seminary, and became a Presbyterian minister.

I continue to be grateful for how you welcomed my ministry in Baptisms, Confirmations, Weddings and

Funerals. Our trips to Booneville, KY and Rev. Joe Powlas with the Junior Highs were memorable. We often delivered the "sock monkeys" made by the women of the church.

1987 brought a special celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the founding of Erin Presbyterian Church. Five of the former pastors were able to join us as we remembered God's grace and blessing given over the years. We also looked to the future with hope and indeed the ministry of Erin has remained strong and always adapting to new challenges.

In the early 80's you enthusiastically supported me in my studies for the Doctor of Ministry at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. We ventured together in ministry projects that comprised the course of study. You rejoiced with me when I was awarded the degree D.Min. in 1984.

In March of 1985 I accepted a call as Senior Minister of the Potomac Presbyterian Church and we made our new home in Maryland. In 2000 Potomac established the Kerry L. Stoltzfus endowed scholarship at Gordon Conwell and many Erin members contributed. It was one more gracious act of my first congregation. It is impossible to thank you enough for your gracious welcome and trust, good humor, and willingness to enable a young inexperienced minister to begin a life of ministry in the Presbyterian Church. This month I celebrate with deep gratitude, 50 years of ordained ministry.

May God continue to bless the people of God called Erin Presbyterian Church.

Grace and Peace,  
Kerry Stoltzfus

17113 Friends House Road,  
Sandy Spring, MD 20860  
rkstoltzfus@gmail.com

# Needs In Our Community

## FELLOWSHIP

Erin Members...Special July and August Effort

**The Community Action Committee (CAC)** provides meals and crisis assistance to seniors in Knoxville-Knox County. Currently, they need donated staple items for seniors who can't get to the grocery store or cannot afford to purchase basic foods. As you shop for your own groceries, please purchase some (or all) of these needed items:

Pop-top Canned Tuna Fish

Pop-top Canned Soups

Pop-top Canned Fruit and Vegetables

Breakfast Bars

Crackers

Instant Oatmeal

Peanut Butter

Carnation Instant Breakfast

Dried Milk

A box marked for your donations will be placed under the portico at Erin each day from 9am – noon during July and August. A member of the Fellowship team will bag the items and insure they are delivered.

Thank You for responding to a community need!

The Erin Fellowship Team

## OUTREACH

Outreach would like to ask the congregation for the KARM collection and Serenity Shelter Collection to be dropped off at Church Sunday July 12 and July 19 (both Sunday's) from noon – 2pm. We will offer a coronavirus -safe drop off outside.

We will also pick up from folks' homes if they contact me at [kellicanan@hotmail.com](mailto:kellicanan@hotmail.com) or 865-556-2477 to schedule a time.

## IMMEDIATE NEEDS AT KARM

- MEN'S AND WOMEN'S UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS (ALL SIZES – NEW, PLEASE)
- LARGE ADULT PULL UP DIAPERS
- HOTEL-SIZE / TRAVEL-SIZE TOILETRIES\* (SHAMPOO, CONDITIONER, LOTION AND SOAP)  
\*NO TOOTHPASTE, PLEASE. PREVIOUS DONORS HAVE BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY GENEROUS.
- DEODORANT
- DISPOSABLE RAZORS
- BANDAIDS
- AFRICAN-AMERICAN HAIR CARE PRODUCTS
- TWIN SHEETS (INDIVIDUAL OR SETS)
- COMBS AND BRUSHES
- LARGE-PRINT BIBLES (KJV AND NIV ARE MOST REQUESTED TRANSLATIONS)
- PILLOWCASES (TWIN – NEW, PLEASE)
- SHAVING CREAM
- KAT BUS PASSES
- WORK BOOTS (ALL SIZES)



## SERENITY SHELTER NEEDS

- LAUNDRY SOAP PODS
- DRYER SHEETS
- CONDITIONER
- RAZORS
- DEODORANT
- BODY WASH
- EYE LINER / MASCARA
- HAIR SPRAY
- MOUSSE / HAIR GEL
- SHAVING CREAM
- PANTIES – ALL SIZES
- DRY ERASE MARKERS
- HIGHLIGHTERS
- NOTEBOOKS
- FOLDERS
- POSTAGE STAMPS
- COLD MEDICINES – NON DROWSY
- COUGH DROPS
- READING GLASSES



# A Few Things

## NEW NURSERY WORKER

My name is Michelle Waters, and I graduated from Maryville College with a degree in Child Development and Learning with a Teacher Licensure (K-5). While attending college, I also work in the Clayton Center box office and tutor my peers in Maryville



College's Writing Center. Additionally, I participate in the Maryville College Community Orchestra and have been playing the viola for eleven years. I was a preschool intern at New Providence Presbyterian Church for two years.

One of my favorite experiences was joining the 2017 Maryville College Switzerland trip, which helped me to develop new outlooks about culture and international child welfare. My lifelong goal is to become an elementary school teacher, inspiring every student to achieve their goals while stretching to reach what they may perceive as "the impossible."

**Michelle, we welcome you to the Staff and we're so happy to have you with us!**

## MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM IN NEED OF HELP!

Did you know that Erin's ministry and support teams are still meeting monthly and continuing to work during this time of pandemic? You may have thought because the building is closed, the work of our ministry and support teams is on hold, as well. But we're moving ahead with projects that were already underway, supporting the church's efforts to communicate and stay connected, and planning for the next church year that starts in July.

Each team is meeting and collaborating virtually. The meeting dates and times for each team are shown on screen at the beginning of the online worship service each Sunday and can be found on Erin's website at <https://www.erinpresbyterian.org/calendar/>.

If you haven't joined a team - or are a member of a team and just haven't participated in a while - this is a great time to plug in and get engaged! Your talents, skills, and gifts are a perfect match for one of our teams and are very much needed. Our teams are working hard to keep Erin strong and vibrant during this time of

Crisis and physical separation. **Please consider getting involved!**

Ministry Teams	Min. Support Teams	Finances & Staff
Worship	Property	Stewardship
Discipleship	Organization Health & Culture	Personnel
Fellowship and Member Care	Administration	
Creative Expressions	Marketing and Communication	
Outreach	Visitor Follow-up	
	Audio-Visual	
	Information Technology (IT)	

## MARKETING

The Marketing Team needs help managing Erin's social media accounts! If you're familiar with using Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter, and would like to join the Marketing Team, please contact Kelsey Sarles [kelsey.sarles@gmail.com](mailto:kelsey.sarles@gmail.com). If you're a student, ask about internship opportunities on the Marketing Team for class credit.



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|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Patty Britton     | 13 Noah Foster      |
| 1 Kim Pennington    | 15 Ben Sarles       |
| 5 Kathy Erskine     | 17 Mike Jones       |
| 5 Shawn Bailes      | 20 Liam Quinn       |
| 5 Harrison Boyd     | 22 Lynsey Stuart    |
| 6 Carolyn Gahan     | 26 Amanda Murphy    |
| 7 David Draper      | 29 Bob McLean       |
| 9 Jean Johnson      | 30 Mary Scarborough |
| 10 Ron Dubois       | 30 David Leckie     |
| 10 Chloe Levering   | 30 David Stinnett   |
| 11 Pat Sexton       | 30 Ali Sarles       |
| 11 Howard Claiborne | 31 Katie Bailes     |
| 14 Lisa Parker      |                     |