



A MINISTRY OF LOUISA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
A VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

The Disciple

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The Uniqueness of Christian Service

By David Wells

Serving is not, of course, uniquely Christian. Indeed, the language of service has popped up everywhere in our society. To access the Internet, for example, we must have a network service provider. In business, there is a service sector. We get bills for professional services rendered. In our stores, there is customer service. When the gas gets low in our cars, we head for a service station. In our nation, we have the armed services. Wealthy households pay for domestic service. The rest of us wonder if we can afford lawn service.

So, does any of this help us to understand Christian service? The short answer is “no.” Christian service is unique for three reasons. First, it is unique in its source. That source is our redemption in Christ.

Second, it is unique in its objective, which is to model, as far as is possible, Christ’s kind of servanthood. Third, it is unique in its character, for it is motivated by God’s holy-love. Although these are each important, it is on the third that I must focus here.

First, then, I need to explain what I have in mind by the term holy-love. Second, I will explore its connection to our service.

God’s Holy-love

Light breaks down into its rainbow colors when it passes through a prism. In a similar way, God’s love and His holiness are also broken out into different aspects in Scripture. Within His love, for example, we can distinguish mercy, forbearance, kindness, and compassion. And within His holiness, we can see righteousness, faithfulness, justice, judgment, and wrath. God’s holy-love is short hand for His entire character.

What this hyphenated language does is remind us that God’s character is whole. The God who “is love” (1 John 4:8) is always, everywhere, and at the same time, the God who is a “consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29) and the One who is “light” (1 John 1:5). When we meet God, we meet Him in the wholeness of His character. His judgment, for example, is always preceded by His patience. It is always shadowed by His mercy. His love, in its bond with what is true and right, always accompanies, is always a part of, His holiness.



Behold, how
good and
pleasant it
is when
brothers dwell
in unity!

Psalms 133:1

How This Works Out

Christian service is about how our redemption in Christ comes into flower in this world. It is what puts hands and feet and lips to God's holy-love. Once we had as our life's goal only ourselves. Our self-interest defined our worldview. Now this has changed. Now we are living a new kind of existence (2 Cor. 5:17). It is not one that is self-focused but one that is God-centered, not one that is self-pleasing but one that is open to others. And it is God's holy-love that motivates this new direction even as it is Christ's death that makes it possible.

We take the gospel to others because, Paul says, "the love of Christ controls us" (2 Cor. 5:14). But that is not our sole motivation. A little earlier he had said, "knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others" (2 Cor. 5:11). In other words, it is God's holy-love that motivates us. It is love that feels the painful breakdown in life that sin has brought. It is holiness that understands how wrong this is. It is love that draws us to the side of another. It is holiness that yearns for the day when the world will be cleansed of all that is dark. And the gospel connects with both of these things. It is a message about deliverance from God's coming judgment, and it is a message about His redemptive love in human life now. This love touches our sin as grace. Love and holiness thus walk hand-in-hand.

There are a thousand ways in which we can serve Christ. Some serve in places of high visibility and others in places of obscurity. It matters not. What matters is that in our service to Christ, another world is seen to be breaking into our everyday life. From this other world come shafts of light, of love in its union with what is holy, love as an expression of what is holy. In this sense, everyone who belongs to Christ is an outpost of eternity in this world. God calls His people so to live, so to serve, that they are themselves the evidence that the age to come is already dawning. That evidence is the presence of holy-love.

Dr. David F. Wells is distinguished research professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He is author of *God In the Whirlwind: How the Holy-Love of God Reorients the World*. This article was originally published in *Tabletalk Magazine*, December 1, 2014.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Zoom Bible Studies

Wednesday
10:30am

Thursday
7:00pm

Contact Pastor Vincent to get the Zoom information.

Men's Fellowship Group

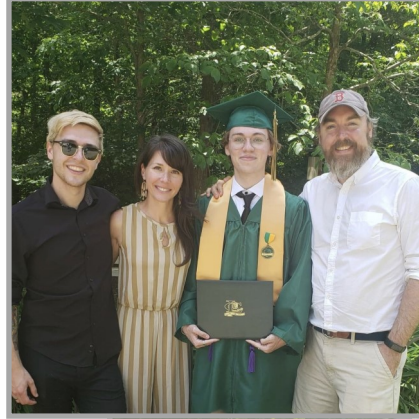
Men of the community are invited to join this group for outings, work days, and fellowship. A first work day is being planned now, the date TBA.

Contact Pastor Vincent to get added to the email list.

Good Luck and Well Wishes

2021 Graduates

KATELYN PURCELL AND BEN PERKINSON



Upon your Graduation we pray that God blesses you with good luck, that your journey is filled with happiness, and that your accomplishments be plenty in the years to come.

You have worked hard and have learned well, now go forth and learn the world, go and achieve the greatness that you deserve.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Harvey F.	June 4
Pat P.	June 4
Jocelyn M.	June 5
Mary E.	June 6
Debra H.	June 6
Harold V.	June 7
Vinnie V.	June 8
Wynne F.	June 9
Manning W.	June 12
Eryn C.	June 13
Riley C.	June 13
Faye W.	June 14
Megan M.	June 15
Romulus S.	June 22
Denny B.	June 23
David P.	June 24
Ruby B.	June 25
Karen S.	June 30

Nursery Volunteers Needed



If you have completed your background check, please take some time to sign up to volunteer in the nursery. The sign up sheet can be found in the church sanctuary.

Child care is available at the 11AM Sunday Service.


A Special
THANK YOU
Note


Dear Pastor Klug and the Angels at Louisa Community Church:

Your beautiful spring flowers arrangement, sympathy, and prayers were a welcomed balm to our family's recent loss of my 100 year old father, Angel Luis Morales.

This generosity of remembrance has been a blessing not

only to our daughter Katherine but to my husband Dirk (of 46 years) and me as well.

On behalf of my family, GRACIAS, GRACIAS MIL, for loving us even though you do not know us. You have been a church family from a distance in these trying times. What a courageous message last week on the subject of submission to the LORD and to each other.

We look forward to worshipping with your church family this summer.

Warm regards,

Carmen Morales Nies

Sunday Flowers Needed

Remember an occasion or honor an individual by providing flowers for the alter on Sunday. Contact Sharon Duke (louisalandlady@gmail.com) or sign up on the sign up sheet in the church foyer.



**Outdoor
Worship
Service**

**Continuing
Sundays in June*
9AM**

Outside of Louisa Christian Church

*Bad weather will cancel the service

Let Evening Come

By Jane Kenyon

Let the light of late afternoon
shine through chinks in the barn,
Moving up the bales as the sun moves
down.

Let the cricket take up chafing
as a woman takes up her needles
and her yarn. Let evening come.

Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned
in long grass. Let the stars appear
and the moon disclose her silver horn.

Let the fox go back to its sandy den.
Let the wind die down. Let the shed
go black inside. Let evening come.

To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop
in the oats, to air in the lung
let evening come.

Let it come, as it will, and don't
be afraid. God does not leave us
comfortless, so let evening come.

Jane Kenyon was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1947, the granddaughter of a fiery Methodist preacher, whose severity frightened her as a child, eventually leading her to turn away from religion for a time. But as an adult, she rediscovered Christianity, and many of her poems reflect her theological imagination. She once was asked how her faith shaped her writing, and she said, "My spiritual life is so much a part of my intellectual life and my feeling life that it's really become impossible for me to keep it out of my work."

The Pickle Jar

The pickle jar as far back as I can remember sat on the floor beside the dresser in my parents' bedroom. When he got ready for bed, Dad would empty his pockets and toss his coins into the jar. As they were dropped into the jar, they landed with a merry jingle when the jar was almost empty. Then the tones gradually muted to a dull thud as the jar was filled. I used to squat on the floor in front of the jar and admire the copper and silver circles that glinted like a pirate's treasure when the sun poured through the bedroom window. When the jar was filled, Dad would sit at the kitchen table and roll the coins before taking them to the bank. Taking the coins to the bank was always a big production. Stacked neatly in a small cardboard box, the coins were placed between Dad and me on the seat of his old truck.

Each and every time, as we drove to the bank, Dad would look at me hopefully. "Those coins are going to keep you out of the textile mill, son. You're going to do better than me. This old mill town's not going to hold you back." Also, each and every time, as he slid the box of rolled coins across the counter at the bank toward the cashier, he would grin proudly. "These are for my son's college fund. He'll never work at the mill all his life like me." We would always celebrate each deposit by stopping for an ice cream cone. I always got chocolate. Dad always got vanilla. When the clerk at the ice cream parlor handed Dad his change, he would show me the few coins nestled in his palm. "When we get home, we'll start filling the jar again." He always let me drop the first coins into the empty jar. As they rattled around with a brief, happy jingle, we grinned at each other. "You'll get to college on pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters," he said. "But you'll get there. I'll see to that."

The years passed, and I finished college and took a job in another town. Once, while visiting my parents, I used the phone in their bedroom, and noticed that the pickle jar was gone. It had served its purpose and had been removed. A lump rose in my throat as I stared at the spot beside the dresser where the jar had always stood. My dad was a man of few words, and never lectured me on the values of determination, perseverance, and faith. The pickle jar had taught me all these virtues far more eloquently than the most flowery of words could have done.

When I married, I told my wife Susan about the significant part the lowly pickle jar had played in my life as a boy. In my mind, it defined, more than anything else, how much my dad had loved me. No matter how rough things got at home, Dad continued to doggedly drop his coins into the jar. Even the summer when

Dad got laid off from the mill, and Mama had to serve dried beans several times a week, not a single dime was taken from the jar. To the contrary, as Dad looked across the table at me, pouring catsup over my beans to make them more palatable, he became more determined than ever to make a way out for me. "When you finish college, Son," he told me, his eyes glistening, "You'll never have to eat beans again . . . unless you want to."

The first Christmas after our daughter Jessica was born, we spent the holiday with my parents. After dinner, Mom and Dad sat next to each other on the sofa, taking turns cuddling their first grandchild. Jessica began to whimper softly, and Susan took her from Dad's arms. "She probably needs to be changed," she said, carrying the baby into my parents' bedroom to diaper her. When Susan came back into the living room, there was a strange mist in her eyes. She handed Jessica back to Dad before taking my hand and leading me into the room. "Look," she said softly, her eyes directing me to a spot on the floor beside the dresser. To my amazement, there, as if it had never been removed, stood the old pickle jar, the bottom already covered with coins. I walked over to the pickle jar, dug down into my pocket, and pulled out a fistful of coins. With a gamut of emotions choking me, I dropped the coins into the jar. I looked up and saw that Dad, carrying Jessica, had slipped quietly into the room. Our eyes locked, and I knew he was feeling the same emotions I felt. Neither one of us could speak.

This truly touched my heart... I know it has yours as well. Sometimes we are so busy adding up our troubles that we forget to count our blessings. Sorrow looks back. Worry looks around. Faith looks UP!



Exciting News About Changes **to our Church Services**

The past month has brought some big changes to our little church, starting with the introduction of our 9am outdoor service.

Beginning on Easter, Louisa Christian Church introduced a secondary service offering for people that would like to worship out of doors. The service is from 9 to 9:45am on Sunday and features a more contemporary music selection than the 11am service. As an example, the outdoor service on Sunday, May 16, featured Eric Purcell and Butch Duke performing several of Elvis' gospel favorites. Besides the varied musical offering, the order of service for the outdoor ceremony is identical to that which is conducted indoors.

One distinct difference between the indoor and outdoor services is that pursuant to updated guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control, vaccinated persons can worship outdoors without a mask during the service. We do ask that people wear their mask when arriving or departing, but seating is sufficiently spaced out that masks can be removed once you are seated for service.

The outdoor worship option will continue to be available, weather permitting, through the summer. If you are interested in trying something new or if the earlier time is better for your schedule, please plan on joining us.

Another key change to our service offering will be the resumption of mid-service communion at our indoor service, beginning with our services on May 30th.

The office of the Governor has recently revised guidelines for indoor gatherings pursuant to the gradual easing of restrictions recommended by the CDC. While masks are still required for indoor "congregant" activities regardless of vaccination status, the removal of masks for participation in religious ceremonies, like communion, will be permissible when the new executive order goes into effect on May 28th.

In light of this revised guidance, deacons will place prepackaged communion elements among the seats at both the indoor and outdoor services. Instead of coming at the end of the service, an elder will offer a meditation and guide the congregation through the sacrament following the welcome, announcements, and opening prayer and before the sermon. Congregants can deposit their communion packaging in the trash cans provided as they depart.

One often-heard lament about our COVID-required changes to our service was the loss of our traditional communion celebration. As such, we are excited to offer this incremental step towards normalcy.

Our little church has done an exceptional job in navigating these turbulent times. Where others have had to close their doors, we have grown, leveraged new technologies, developed new service offerings, and created new opportunities for outreach. If you are reading this newsletter then you have played some part in this success. Thank you for your continued support and your continued patience as we navigate the gradual changes that we will have to make as a congregation as we navigate what are hopefully the waning days of the pandemic.

