



*The Methodist Messenger*  
SEPTEMBER 2018  
Whiteville United Methodist Church



Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.  
Sunday Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.  
Wednesday Communion Service - 6:30 p.m.



"Christ at Gethsemane"  
In the Parlor of Whiteville United Methodist Church  
Painted by Mr. Todd Carignan of Wilmington, NC

PASTOR'S PAGE

REMEMBERING CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER (1950-2018)

Charles Krauthammer died earlier this summer -- on June 21, to be exact. Krauthammer was a public intellectual, a political essayist. That is another way of saying that he taught the American people on many subjects. However, let's be clear about this: Charles Krauthammer wrote, and spoke, as an authority on many topics related to American public life. But he did not visit Mt. Sinai, as did Moses, to receive messages on tablets from the Almighty. That is to say, he was a brilliant man; but he was just a man and therefore capable of error.

Back in the late 1980s, The Center on Religion and Society sponsored a conference in Washington, DC on the various schools of American foreign policy (e.g., idealism, realism, and so on). It took place at The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, which is located in the Smithsonian Institution (in the red, castle-like structure on the National Mall). Four of the roughly thirty participants were charged to write papers that would be discussed during the two-day conference. Charles Krauthammer was one of the four.

Rev. Richard John Neuhaus and this pastor had made the trip from New York City to Washington, DC the day before the conference was to begin. That evening, in a memorable conversation, Rev. Neuhaus candidly reminisced about his humble Canadian origins in a Lutheran parsonage (with seven brothers and sisters) and his amazement at preparing to lead a scholars conference on American foreign policy in an elite setting in Washington, DC. This was Rev. Neuhaus' attempt to say that he was just a simple country pastor, as Sen. Sam Ervin had years ago self-identified as "just an old country lawyer." (Like heck they were....)

The morning of the conference arrived. We gathered in a handsome conference room in The Wilson Center. Over coffee, the participants chatted it up. Then the young, thin Charles Krauthammer arrived. He was confined to a wheelchair, which was pushed by his wife Robyn. As the one who covered conference logistics, I had not received any

special requests to accommodate a conferee in a wheelchair. I was surprised that Krauthammer was unable to walk.

The conference began and wore on. Krauthammer, in presenting his paper and in critiquing the papers of the other three, proved to be one of the all-stars of the conference. His comments were always relevant, thoughtful, purposeful, strong, and even good-humored. During the entire conference, he worked hard -- so hard that his face beaded with perspiration. Simply sitting up in the wheelchair was evidently strenuous for him. But that sweat-inducing effort did not, in any way, undermine the quality of his thinking and speaking.

During this conference or soon after it, Charles Krauthammer's story, in outline form, became known to this pastor. While a student at Harvard Medical School, he had dived into a swimming pool that was shallower than it looked, and he had broken his neck. He lost much of the control of his arms and legs, and he landed in a hospital for months of rehabilitation. Remaining in medical school, he (while flat on his back) read books opened and laid on clear plastic directly above his eyes, and received the extraordinary help of many doctors and nurses, professors and students. He specialized in psychiatry, though over time he became openly skeptical about the effectiveness of that particular branch of medicine.

Studying psychiatry, Krauthammer had to enroll in group therapy with his classmates. He was an unwilling participant, an unhappy camper. He just sat there in "group." Silently. The professor leading the group that included Krauthammer expressed concern to his silent student, and asked why he was not talking. Krauthammer paused, pondered, and then replied, "Denial." The man, even the young man, had a sense of humor.

Krauthammer recovered, to a degree once thought impossible, from his diving accident. He graduated from medical school and then headed to Washington, DC. Politics sounded interesting to him. Providence led him to a speech-writing job in the presidential campaign of Sen. Walter Mondale. Then it was on to The New Republic, one of the nation's oldest, and most outstanding, political journals. While at TNR, he wrote a column that caused the greatest number of canceled subscriptions in the long history of the publication. In time, he began writing a syndicated column for The Washington Post, that many of us in southeastern North Carolina once read each week in the Wilmington Star News. Also, he was a regular guest on news and opinion television programs.

Charles Krauthammer was a truly independent thinker. Independent, in that he did not just follow various herds off various cliffs. And thinker, in that he was interested in using his mind, not in expansively expressing his emotions. He

simply always tried to tell the truth, as he saw it. It is no wonder that he once said on air, "You're betraying your whole life if you don't say what you think -- and you don't say it honestly and bluntly." (The Weekly Standard, July 2/July 9, 2018, p. 28)

Why should Whiteville United Methodist Church, in southeastern North Carolina, during these nearly Cambodian-like "dog days" of August, care one iota about Charles Krauthammer? Well, because Krauthammer was created and sustained by God. Because Krauthammer was a member of the Jewish community, God's chosen people -- which the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel, Jesus Christ, opened even to us Gentiles. Because Krauthammer overcame tremendous obstacles in his life. Because Krauthammer used his talents of thinking, writing, and speaking in the service of the common good. Because Krauthammer was a virtuous man.

Thanks be to God for Charles Krauthammer. May he rest in God's peace, and may his legacy inform, and form, many for service in American public life in the years to come. In Christ,  
Pastor Paul

#### THE BIBLE FROM THE CHURCH, THE CHURCH FROM THE BIBLE

Dr. Carl E. Braaten, a Lutheran theologian and author of many books, has much to teach the Church and all Christians. Here is an example: "The Bible is acknowledged as authority only where the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed within a worshiping community of believers. The Bible provides the point of reference by which the church understands its identity and mission in the world. Without the Bible the church is blind, and without the church the Bible is dumb. (emphasis added) The church finds its identity in the Bible as the missionary people on the way to the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible is the norm for its ongoing faith and life. The church binds itself to the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures and does not look for a new revelation above and beyond this one." (Mother Church: Ecclesiology and Ecumenism [Fortress, 1998], p. 129)

#### SPEAKING OF HIS BLOOD AT DUKE

Mr. Rusty Wright was an undergraduate student at Duke University during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Even before arriving in Durham, he was committed to racial equality. Courses he took in Duke's new black-studies program informed his commitment.

In 1971, Wright, a second-semester senior, took a class on pre-Civil War African-American U.S. history taught by Dr. Raymond Gavins. A

## MARTY GOES TO PRISON

It's once again September and that means football starts back, school is going again, fall is that much closer, and I am going back to prison. Kairos Weekend 35 has started training in Burgaw for our weekend that occurs October 18-21. We have a group of men ready to go in and share God's love with 42 inmates. It has been the most rewarding thing I have done in my spiritual life. I will be fortunate enough to head up the weekend that will happen in 2020. I am not sure if it will be the spring or fall, but either one will be a great experience.

So at this point I would appreciate all prayers that you could give us. Pender CI has never had a gang problem, but due to some restructuring in the prisons, gangs are now active there. A lot of the attitudes have changed in the yards as far as religion goes. We just look at it as a more fertile field to cultivate. The cookies will need to be baked, and the prayer sheets signed. All of that will happen in due time, but for now I just ask for prayers and thoughts as we move forward into this ministry.

Thanks, Marty Sellers

## THREE PLANS FOR "A WAY FORWARD"

As the special General Conference moves closer in February of 2019, I would urge those of you who have not done so to read carefully the three (3) ways forward that will be considered by the delegates. There are major changes in two of those plans to the way the United Methodist Church would look and act after either of those two plans would be adopted. There are provisions that could have two churches in the same town not following the Gospel in the same fashion. It is truly a taxing and stressful time that will be coming in the next few months. I will not push one plan over the others but would ask that you carefully consider all three plans, and then please contact the NC Conference delegates to the special GC, and express your opinions and desires. That is the only way they know how we may feel. The plan details are listed at [umc.org/topics/general-conference-2019-special-session](http://umc.org/topics/general-conference-2019-special-session). The delegates list and email contacts are listed at <http://nccumc.org/gc2016/delegation>.

In Christ,  
Marty and Lynn Sellers  
Alternate Members to the  
NC Annual Conference

## THANK YOU FOR USE OF FACILITIES

Aug 23, 2018

Dear Whiteville UMC:

Thanks so very much for the use of your beautiful facilities in which we hosted our Living Hope Volunteers Luncheon. Everyone was so gracious, kind, and accommodating, especially Mr. Layton Dowless, the custodian. The use of the space was such a blessing and worked perfectly for our event! Thanks again!

Love in Christ, Ronda Grice

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE

A few of the Outreach Team, myself, Carolyn Hankins and Debbie Sellars, were truly blessed by our visit to the Open Arms Community of the United Methodist Church. About 10 children were present and several other volunteers were helping at the center, including graduate students from Wake Forest. We assisted in feeding the children lunch and were able to speak to them about their experience at the center. All of them were well mannered and open to talking to us. We were also able to meet Astrid, the child who was recently diagnosed with Leukemia for whom I requested prayer for a few weeks ago. Vickie and her husband live in the primarily Hispanic populated community. Members of this community suffer extreme poverty and are frequently victims of racism, classism and oppression. The center, open for 12 years and the program operating for 18 years, is instrumental in making sure that the members of that community have a resource and friends who truly love them. Our eyes were opened to the huge problem of immigration in our country, and we are requesting prayers for that program and all the people it serves.

Do not forget that we are assisting Hallsboro United Methodist Church in their Rise Against Hunger event that will be held on Saturday, September 29th, at our Fellowship Hall right here at WUMC. Please prayerfully consider a monetary contribution and volunteering for that event. All of you who have participated in the past have enjoyed the event and know how much fun it can be. We must raise around \$7,000 to package the planned 25,000 meals, so please give to this worthwhile project and work to feed the hungry around the world spread the love of God! Make checks payable to Whiteville United Methodist Church with Rise Against Hunger in the memo line. Contributions can be placed in the offering plate on Sundays or given to Kathy in the Church Office.

Love and Peace to you all,  
Vickie Pait



Whiteville United  
Methodist Church  
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Whiteville, NC 28472

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Mrs. Kathy Graham, Administrative Assistant  
Monday-Thursday/9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Layton Dowless, Custodian  
Monday-Friday/7:30-12:30 a.m.

Ms. Tammie Anderson, Treasurer  
Friday/4:00-6:00 p.m. (or later)

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Rev. Paul T. Stallsworth, Pastor

Mission Statement of Whiteville United Methodist Church

As people of the body of Christ, we will gather for and be strengthened by Word and Sacraments, participate in loving fellowship, grow in discipleship, and serve our community and the world in Christ's name.

The Whiteville United Methodist Church Service of Worship is broadcast on WTXY 1540 AM from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Also it is available online at [www.wtxy1540.com](http://www.wtxy1540.com); click on "Church Services" in the upper heading, and then click on "Click to Listen Live" next to "United Methodist Church of Whiteville" at 10:00 a.m. to hear the complete audio of the service.