



The Methodist Messenger
NOVEMBER 2018
Whiteville United Methodist Church



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

You are invited to...

An Evening of Learning about, and Giving Thanks for,
BILLY GRAHAM'S LIFE AND MINISTRY

Led by
Dr. Grant Wacker
Author of America's Pastor:
Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation
Duke Divinity School
Durham, NC

November 4, 2018/Sunday
4:30 p.m. Presentation I (15 Minutes for Q & A)
5:30 p.m. Light Dinner
6:00 p.m. Presentation II (15 Minutes for Q & A)

Fellowship Hall
Whiteville United Methodist Church
902 Pinckney Street
Whiteville, NC 28472

Please do attend with family and friends.

DYING AND RISING AT
DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

On September 25, Marsha and I drove to Durham, to Duke Divinity School on the campus of Duke University. That evening we attended the retirement lecture by The Reverend Dr. Richard B. Hays. Dr. Hays is a world-class Biblical theologian, a professor of New Testament, and a former Dean of Duke Divinity School. The evening of September 25, I am thankful to note, brought back some very good memories.

Years ago, when Dr. Hays first became the George Washington Ivey Professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School, he delivered an inaugural lecture that was open to the public. At that time, our daughter Paige was a student at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Paige and I met for dinner in Durham and attended Dr. Hays' lecture, which took place in the Divinity School's Alumni Commons Room. The evening was extraordinary. We enjoyed the meal and learned from the lecture. But most importantly, as Paige's father, I had the distinct pleasure of introducing our daughter to many friends from Duke Divinity School and from the North Carolina Conference. As an extremely social young woman, Paige was in her element; she seemed to enjoy every moment of the evening.

Many years have passed. During those years, Dr. Hays taught, published, and administered in ways that were faithful to the Gospel. His book The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation (HarperCollins) influenced the Church and the academy. Then, recently, came his struggle with cancer, and his survival. As 2018 entered the home stretch, it was time for his retirement and his retirement lecture. Marsha and I had no choice. We had to attend -- Hurricane Florence or not! -- to honor Dr. Hays and to remember our daughter, who had lost her struggle with cancer and had crossed the Jordan in 2004.

Dr. Hays' retirement lecture was held in the Divinity School's Goodson Chapel. It was attended mostly by his

fellow professors and students. (A video of the hour-long event is located at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9W=31BxEgMs&feature=youtu.be; it is well worth the hour.) The title of his lecture was "A Dark Fruition: Waiting in Hope." (Here, "fruition" might best mean the state of producing fruit.)

Early in the lecture, Dr. Hays recalled, while serving as the Dean of Duke Divinity School in 2015, he had received a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. Then came a medical leave of absence, when he endured surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. Said he, "I left [the Divinity School] in tears with my hair falling out. I took up the tasks of reviewing my will and writing directions for my funeral service. As I stand here tonight, I'm unexpectedly able to look back on that... year of now-done darkness. I couldn't have anticipated still being here tonight three years later, apparently healed, chastened, and hopeful at age 70 to continue the conversation that I've shared with this community for more than a quarter of a century, and I certainly could not have anticipated the altered perception and other changes in me that were wrought by staring death in the face." Obviously, he spoke while in a state of gratitude.

Dr. Hays's near-death probably helped lead him to these words from our Lord that he read and proclaimed: "Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor." (John 12:24-26, NRSV) These three verses are often read, by United Methodist pastors, at Services of Committal at graveside. But as Dr. Hays made quite clear, in these verses, Jesus spoke first about Himself dying and bearing fruit, and only then about His followers reflecting the truth of dying and fruit bearing.

Early in his lecture, Dr. Hays recounted: "The Cost of Discipleship [by Dietrich Bonhoeffer] is a book that influenced me powerfully when [my wife] Judy and I first read it together nearly fifty years ago. Bonhoeffer wrote, 'When Jesus calls a man, He bids him come and die.' Judy wrote a song based on that text." Strumming his guitar, Dr. Hays proceeded to sing the song. He also corrected the original English translator of Bonhoeffer's book: "What Bonhoeffer actually wrote, in German...is 'the call of Christ leads into death.'"

In one of the most thoughtful parts of the lecture, Dr. Hays offered words of caution to those in theological education, himself included: sin can result in the "good gifts of scriptural and theological learning" becoming "instruments of self-aggrandizement." Such self-aggrandizement is

found in winning arguments and rising through professional ranks. In a comment that applies equally to progressive and orthodox, liberal and evangelical, Christians, Dr. Hays specified: "Those of us in places of privilege, such as Duke Divinity School, must constantly be aware of that danger [sin] and seek to be conformed to the life of the 'one good grain,' the one who fell into the earth and died in order to bear good fruit. For those of us who are scholars and teachers and pastors, the practice of falling into the dirt, into the earthly humus, corresponds of course to the cultivation of humility. Only if we fall into the dark earth can our labors of learning and teaching undergo a dark fruition and bear fruit in their turn." Clearly, that is Gospel truth for our time and place.

Dr. Richard Hays concluded his lecture: "The whole purpose...of Jesus' teaching, healing, death and resurrection...is summed up here: Love one another. Sacrificially. And persistently. As Jesus has loved us.

"So, in the end, that is what I want to say to all of you here in Duke Divinity School. I have loved you.... Well, most of you.... Most of the time.... [laughter] I am not Jesus. And as I keep saying, I do not reckon myself to have gotten hold of it yet. But I have loved you. And I am grateful for the love you have shown me and one another. In our life together as community, even in the midst of our groaning, we have tasted the first fruits of the Spirit. That is why, even in a time of dark fruition, we wait in hope. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace and harmony with one another, so that you may overflow in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

In Christ,
Pastor Paul

Please be a part of the...

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

302 N. Lee Street

Whiteville, NC

November 18, 2018/Sunday

6:00 p.m.

Light refreshments will follow the
worship service.

Invite family and friends,
and please attend!

NURTURE COMMITTEE

The Homecoming meal was a great success! The food was bountiful and delicious, and no one went away hungry! Thanks to all who brought food, helped in the kitchen, and helped with decorations and door prizes. We are blessed in so many ways, and we give thanks to God for our families and our church family. It was so good to see old friends and extended families in attendance. It was good to have Rev. Bill Boykin back also! – Debbie Conway, Chair

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Calling all women of the church! If you enjoy crafts, then this is the UMW meeting for you! Come join us on November 5, Monday, at 6:30 p.m. in the Parlor. Our program for the evening will be making Christmas Remembrances. Our talented Debbie Conway will be providing instructions. Hostess for the evening is Ann Pait. Hope to see you there! If you have questions, please call Debbie Sellars, (840-5941).

THIS MONTH DURING WORSHIP SERVICE

November 4

Acolytes: Maggie and Grace High
Greeters: Alan and Elizabeth High
Soundboard: Darryl Diefes

November 11

Acolytes: Andrew and Emily Sauls
Greeters: Ben and Sharon Sauls
Soundboard: Suzanne Hall

November 18

Acolyte: Emily McLam
Greeter: Katie McLam
Soundboard: Lynne Inman

November 25

Acolytes: Sophie and Anna Bivens
Greeter: Amber Archie
Soundboard: Terry and Kathy Simmons

KARIOS WEEKEND

Broken, lost, searching, distrustful, and hungry. Just a few of the many words the residents of Pender used to describe themselves on Thursday evening going into the Kairos weekend. By Sunday, that had all changed. We had the joy of sharing God with 41 men (one got sick on Saturday and did not return). But the changes in these guys was noticeable. At the closing on Sunday, the tears flowed and many pledges were made. Hopefully, the glue will hold it together.

Till next March,
Marty Sellers
Kairos 35

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee will meet on November 12 in the Parlor. All members on the Finance Committee are encouraged to attend. The topic will be discussion on the current Church Budget. Remember this: *“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

II Corinthians 9:6-7
– Anne Pait, Chair



Whiteville United
Methodist Church
902 Pinckney Street
Whiteville, NC 28472

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Mrs. Kathy Graham, Administrative Assistant
Monday-Thursday/9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
12 noon-1:00 p.m. Lunch

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)

Office (910) 642-3376
email: wumc@whitevilleumc.org
website: www.whitevilleumc.org
Rev. Paul T. Stallsworth, Pastor

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: click on "Click to Listen Live" under "United Methodist Church of Whiteville" at 10:00 a.m. to hear the complete audio of the service.

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.