

May 10, 2021

## Cloister thoughts...

Abram and Sarai were concerned about their future. Actually, they were wondering if there even was a future for them. At one time they had lived in the city of Ur. One of Abram's brothers died there. Abram's father decided to take his son Abram and his wife, and also his grandson Lot, and head for Canaan. For some reason, though, Abram's other brother was left in Ur.

And, for unknown reasons, their journey was never completed. They got to the city of Haran, and just sort of stopped there. Then Abram's father died. And if all this wasn't enough, it was learned that Sarai was unable to bear children. So, there was Abram, in a foreign land, with only a barren wife and a nephew with him, and old age rapidly upon him. It would be redundant to say that this was a rather hopeless situation.

Into this circumstance of barrenness and seeming despair, the Lord said, "Go." With that command came an amazing promise. The promises, "I will make of you a great nation; I will bless you, I will make your name great; I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you." (Genesis 12:2-3)

The Lord is promising a striking alternative to the circumstances in which Abram and Sarai presently find themselves. God offers the blessings which all of us longingly hope for: well-being, security, prosperity, and prominence. Into this hopeless situation which not only suggests, but outright points to no future, God's word promises abundant life. God speaks a powerful word directly into a situation of barrenness...the power of this summoning word is without analogy. It is a word about the future spoken to this family without any hope of a future.

The juxtaposition of the barrenness of Abram and Sarai and the speech of God is definitional...."barrenness" marks the deep futility of humanity. "Speech of God" asserts the freedom and power of God to work God's will among the hopeless...the speech of God overcomes and overpowers the barrenness of human reality. Not only does the Lord speak directly in the midst of reality, the Lord also expects abandonment. In this command to go and the promise that there will be blessing, the Lord is asking Abram to leave everything behind. Abram is being asked to break every conceivable tie with the past and to shred every semblance of security and stability. God's command and promise is a call to abandon and relinquish country, family and home.

There are a number of reasonable responses which Abram could have made. For starters, he could have pointed out that Sarai was barren and both of them were card-holding members of the Middle-Eastern Association for Retired Persons. It seems a bit of a challenge to make a "great nation" out of this elderly couple. Or, like Moses does years later, Abram could have made a bunch of excuses for staying right where he was in Haran. Or, out of his sadness at the death of his brother and father, Abram might have suggested to God that there hadn't been much blessing lately, why would there be any in the future. All of these would be very reasonable and understandable responses to the Lord's command to go. But, he does not do any of this. Abram does not argue or debate the command/promise. Instead, as scripture reports so calmly, "So Abram went, as the Lord had told him..." Abram responded faithfully. By his actions, Abram proclaimed that he believed the promise.

*Into this hopeless situation,  
God's word promises  
abundant life.*

Abram demonstrated faith in God's resolve to form a new community. The faith of Abram is the capacity to embrace that announced future with such passion that the present can be relinquished for the sake of that future. Abram was willing to give up whatever security and position he had in Haran, to embrace the blessings of the future, which God promised. In light of Abram's circumstances, his faithful responding is either pure foolishness or amazingly awesome. As readers of the Hebrew scriptures, we know the rest of the story. We know that eventually Isaac was born. He had two sons, named Esau and Jacob. Although they had troubles of their own, eventually Jacob had twelve sons. With time, the descendants of these sons became the twelve tribes of Israel. The promise for a great nation became a reality.

We as the church believe this good news. We believe God's continuous offers for life. We believe that God brings about radical, unbelievable newness through creation out of nothing, or through the resurrection of the dead or through justification by grace through faith. The life-giving power of God is one of the central beliefs of our resurrected faith.

Journey well, Easter People, Rick

## HBUMC Youth Raleigh Mission Week

Monday, July 12 - Friday, July 16

This summer, we are going to have a Raleigh Mission Week. It is open to all current middle school and high school students.

The week will consist of mission work around the city, meals together, fellowship, worship, and of course fun. We will not be staying overnight (due to COVID-19 projections for that time) but we will have all other aspects of a mission trip included.

Cost of the week is \$150, which covers lunch, dinner, t-shirt, mission supplies, transportation, worship, and fun surprises.

Payments can be made online or by check. **Deadline to sign up is May 30th.** Go to [hbumcyouth.com/missions](http://hbumcyouth.com/missions)

For questions, contact Rachel Carter at [rcarter@hbumc.org](mailto:rcarter@hbumc.org)

## Pastor Molly's Next One and Done Book Study

We'll study:

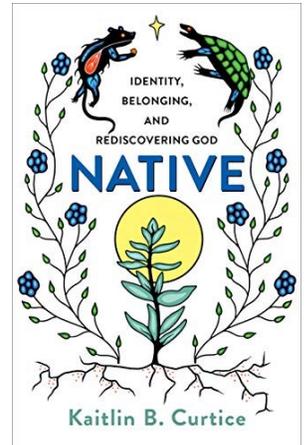
*Native: Identity, Belonging,  
and Rediscovering God*

by Kaitlin B. Curtice

on Tuesday, June 1, at 7pm

via Zoom.

Register at [hbumc.org/signups](http://hbumc.org/signups).



## Scattered to Serve Team Tending to the Women's Center Garden



**NO-FUSS FUNDRAISER**  
give by May 14 at  
[donorbox.org/hbump](http://donorbox.org/hbump)

**BLOOD DRIVE**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 15**  
**9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**  
**STONE STREET PARKING LOT**

Register, log in, and make an appointment at  
[hbumc.org/signups](http://hbumc.org/signups)

JOIN US AT A RECEPTION

*Honoring*  
*Pastor Rick*  
*and*  
*Pastor Adam*



Saturday, June 5  
2-5pm  
Parsonage front porch  
RSVP for a time at [hbumc.org/signups](http://hbumc.org/signups)

Wednesday, Jun 9  
7pm  
Sanctuary

**Prayer Service**  
**Honoring Our**  
**Ministers**

*A service of word and  
prayer offering our  
gratitude and support to  
Hayes Barton's incoming  
and outgoing ministers.*

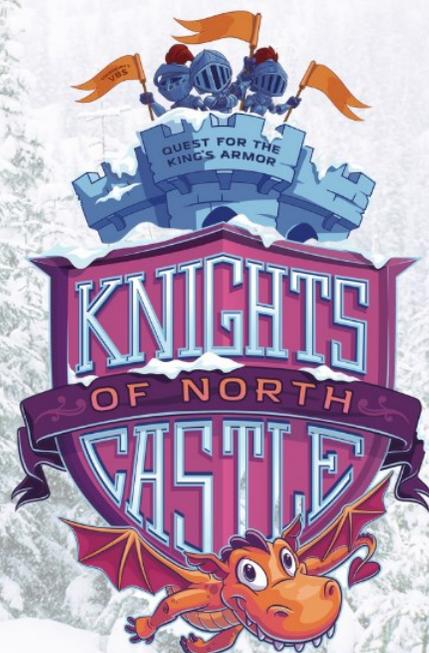
REGISTER AT  
[HBUMC.ORG/SIGNUPS](http://HBUMC.ORG/SIGNUPS)



# Hayes Barton VBS August 2-6

Register by May 15th at  
[hbumc.org/signups](http://hbumc.org/signups)

**May 15th Deadline**



## Prison Prayer Book Project

Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries is embarking on an audacious goal to provide a prison prayer book to inmates and the chaplains who serve them in correctional facilities throughout NC. The prayer book, *Hear My Voice*, contains scriptures, prayers, devotions, art, and liturgical resources for the church year. It was specifically written for inmates.

Covid-19 has devastated the prison population with one in three inmates testing positive and one in four prison officers testing positive. There have been over 50 deaths among inmates and 10 deaths among prison officers.

Providing prayer books to inmates and chaplains is one way we can equip them to draw upon the deepest resource of our Christian faith - prayer! Prayer connects us to God and to others when we feel alone in life's most difficult moments.

Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries is a prison ministry supported and endorsed by both the North Carolina Annual Conference and the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. Through this ministry, trained volunteers lead Disciple Bible Study in correctional facilities throughout NC.

Because of the pandemic, visitation in prisons has been restricted. Our volunteers are waiting and longing for the time to come when they can return. Meanwhile, Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries is committed to offering aid to chaplains and the inmates whom they serve. Offering the prayer book, *Hear My Voice*, is our way of showing support.

A gift of \$10 provides one prayer book. We are appealing to the generosity of individuals and churches to contribute to our Prison Prayer Book Project.

Contributions can be made by check addressed to:

Disciple Bible Outreach Ministries  
PO Box 358  
Oak Island, NC 28465

Contributions can be made online at [www.disciplebibleoutreach.org](http://www.disciplebibleoutreach.org).

For further information, contact Reverend Dr. Mark Hicks, Executive Director, at [mhicksdbom@gmail.com](mailto:mhicksdbom@gmail.com).

## New Church Controller: Brooks Wicker

Brooks Wicker starts working with Russell Wilcox on May 11 and will take his place as he transitions to retirement.

Brooks is a native of North Carolina and a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill. She was a banker specializing in loan accounting systems for 26 years. More recently, she was the church administrator for Pullen Memorial Baptist Church where she remains a member. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling and gardening. Brooks and her partner, Patricia Hielscher, are staff to one feline, Sophie.



## Three Ways to Pledge

1. Mail in your pledge card that was sent by mail or email us to receive a new one.
2. Contact Russell Wilcox at [rwilcox@hbumc.org](mailto:rwilcox@hbumc.org) or 919-832-6435 x1118 with your pledge.
3. Pledge on-line at [hbumc.org/give](http://hbumc.org/give)

If you want to learn more about giving or discuss your pledge with Pastor Rick, Adam or Molly, please call the church.

## Sympathy and Love to

- ✝ Pam Cloud and family on the death of her mother, Polly Bingham, on April 13. Her service was held on April 17 at Sechrest-Davis Funerals and Cremations in High Point.
- ✝ Craig Crowther and family on the death of his mother, Judy Crowther, on April 10. Her service will be held at 11 am on Saturday, June 5, at Sardis Presbyterian Church in Charlotte.
- ✝ Bud Gore and family on the death of his sister-in-law, Doris Gore, on April 24. Her service was held on Wednesday, April 28, at New Hope Baptist Church in Gastonia.

## Births

- ✝ Anderson (Andy) Colie Cashwell & Jackson (Jack) Burgess Cashwell, sons of Katie & Colie Cashwell, brothers of Luke, grandsons of EJ Burgess, were born on April 29.
- ✝ Edwards (Ward) James Midgette, son of Martha & James Midgette, grandson of Margaret & Chris Browning, was born on April 28.

## Wedding

Carlyle Susan Weaver & Duncan Campbell Price were married on May 1 at Hayes Barton. Carlyle is the daughter of Susan & Greg Weaver.



## Memorial Gifts Processed by May 6

In Honor of **Ken & Terry Bryant** to the Pastors' Discretionary Fund by Kermit & Alice Braswell.

In Memory of **Verda "Tommie" Harris Campbell**:  
- to the JOY Class Fund by Josephus & Laura Mavretic.  
- by W. Prentiss & Joan Baker, III.

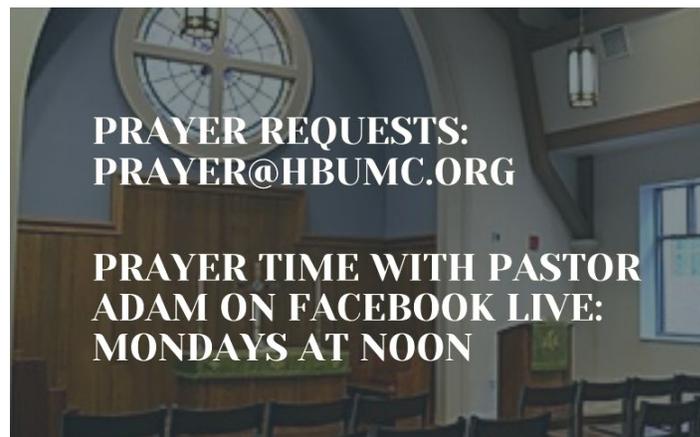
In Honor of **Rev. & Mrs. Rick Clayton** by Joe & Pat Donaldson.

In Honor of **Rick Clayton** to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund by A Few Good Men.

In Memory of **Fran McMillan** to the Pastors' Discretionary Fund by Kermit & Alice Braswell.

In Memory of **Mike Peterson** to the Nursery Ministry Fund by Rebecca Cline.

In Memory of **Carol Smith** by Jack & Virginia Geurin.



## Prayer Bookmarks: 05-02-21 & 05-09-21

### Deaths

Polly Bingham, mother of Pam Cloud  
Judy Crowther, mother of Craig Crowther  
Doris Gore, sister-in-law of Bud Gore

### Births

Anderson (Andy) Colie Cashwell  
& Jackson (Jack) Burgess Cashwell,  
sons of Katie and Colie Cashwell  
  
Edwards (Ward) James Midgette,  
son of Martha & James Midgette,  
grandson of Margaret & Chris Browning

### Wedding

Carlyle Susan Weaver & Duncan Campbell Price

### Ongoing Concerns

Richard Birtch	Nancy Perry
Barbara Freeze	John Phillips
Sherry C. Frye	Jane Preiss
Mary Lou Goodrich	Rhumell Ross
Jo Ann Jones	Barbara Smith
Finlay Carter Judy	Nancy Stamey
Dave Lachapelle	Elvey Thomas
Sheila Lee-Carr	Allison Thompson's mother
Martha Lowrance	Georgia Webb
Margaret Lucas	

### Our Church Leaders

Pastors Rick, Adam & Molly; D.S. Southern; Bishop Ward  
New Pastors: David Beam, Matt Ashburn, Laura Fine Ledford

### Our In-Crowd Members

**Church members who have suffered from COVID  
or are caring for those with the virus**

**Those grieving the over 580K  
who have died from COVID in the US**

**Our Leaders at All Levels of the Government**

This newsletter is also available by email as a pdf, and can be found on the web at [www.hbumc.org/newsletters](http://www.hbumc.org/newsletters)

## Events surrounding Rick's retirement, Adam's new appointment, and our new pastors:

- A love offering will be taken up for Rick & Adam. You may have received notices and remittance envelopes in the mail, or you may give at [hbumc.org/give](http://hbumc.org/give) (select Adam Charville - Love Offering, and Rick Clayton - Love Offering in the drop-down menu).

- **Saturday, June 5th, 2-5pm**, reception at the parsonage honoring Rick & Joy and Adam & Jill. A memory card was mailed to you to complete and bring to the reception or mail back to the church. Sign up for a slot to visit with the pastors at [hbumc.org/signups](http://hbumc.org/signups).

- **Wednesday, June 9th, 7 pm**: Prayer service for Rick and Adam and for David, Laura, and Matt, Sanctuary

- **Sunday, June 13th**: Pastor Rick's final Sunday

- **Sunday, June 20th**: Pastor Adam's final Sunday

- **Sunday, July 4th**: Pastor David, Pastor Matt, and Pastor Laura's first Sunday

## Please Register for VBS by **May 15**

[www.hbumc.org/signups](http://www.hbumc.org/signups)



### In Person Worship through May 16

9am and 11am services in the Stone Street lot (also on Vimeo)

### In Person Worship Starting May 23

9am service in the Stone Street lot

11am service in the Sanctuary (will also be live-streamed)

Chairs will be provided for all services.

Please park in the Reid Street lot and walk down Fairview to the Stone Street lot.

Attendance will be limited; **register to attend** at [hbumc.org/signups](http://hbumc.org/signups)

If you have trouble registering online, call Cheryl Fortineau at 919-832-6435 x1112.

The Commissioner

6

05/10/2021

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PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE  
PAID  
AT  
RALEIGH, NC

### **MAY 16:** **7th Sunday of Easter**

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm 1

1 John 5:9-13

John 17:6-19

### **MAY 23:** **Day of Pentecost**

Acts 2:1-21

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:22-27

John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

### **WEEKEND WORSHIP** **ON VIMEO**

Through May 16, the service will be available at noon on Saturday so that you can worship at a convenient time for you and your family.

Go to [vimeo.com/hbumc](http://vimeo.com/hbumc) to view the service, or previous archived services. For questions, contact Susan at:

919-832-6435 x1135

or [sbaldwin@hbumc.org](mailto:sbaldwin@hbumc.org).