

## **LISTENING TO THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD – FROM PASTOR LAWRENCE**

Join Us in Creating a Space Where We Hear Our True (and Evolving!)  
Calling

Have you ever felt a moment arrive when you want to say, “*Ok Lord. Now I’m ready but I’m not sure for what .... Let’s start*”? Moses did. Moses experienced different and distinct callings during his thirds of life - 0 to 40, 40 to 80 and after 80. Have you considered how your callings are changing at different stages of your life?

If you have ever felt the desire to learn from the past to start again, then the Bible is filled with role models. The story of Moses offers a compelling paradigm. Born under a death sentence for being a Jewish male, Moses’ parents risked everything to hide him from Pharaoh’s agents. Moses’ life took a major turn when Pharaoh’s own daughter discovered and adopted him. For the first forty years of his life, Moses lived the tension of being a Jew who was also a Prince of Egypt.

At about forty years old, that tension become untenable when he lashed out and killed an Egyptian beating a Jew. Moses then fled into the wilderness leaving behind everything. For the next forty years we know nothing of Moses’ life other than he became a husband, a father, and a shepherd.

Then one day when Moses was about eighty years old, he took his flock *beyond the wilderness*. There God called Moses. Forgotten by almost everyone but God, the Lord called upon a murderer and stutterer to challenge an empire; to win the trust of his own Jewish people; and to forge a nation.

*You have been CALLED for such a time and for such a place as this* - That is the essence of the Myrtle Collaboration, named for Esther who was called to battle the potential genocide of Jews.

As you may have already heard, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary selected Oxford Presbyterian Church as one of eight

congregations from across the United States to participate in the Myrtle Collaboration. Core members of our Myrtle Team include, John Bailer, Pat Gifford, Pastor Marc and me.

Prayerfully, the outcome this collaboration will fashion OPC to become even more a community of CALLING. Specifically, the goal is for our congregation to be an incubator in which the entire church family is discerning the Lord's call through each stage of our lives. Whether in the first thirty, the second thirty, or the third thirty of life – how may we become a transformative body of Christ that calls, sends and recalls one another in this world that God so loves?

Moses and Esther (Myrtle) take their place as role models. These mentors reveal to us that while we may not start *all over* again, we are granted *new* starts throughout life.

*Join us in creating a space where we hear our true (and evolving!) calling. We have been CALLED for such a time as this!*

#### Next Steps

In the first phase from the Spring through early Fall of 2019, the Myrtle team will create a variety of opportunities for this congregation to listen deeply to our life experiences and what the Lord is calling us toward in such a time as this.

In the fall, we will apply for a grant of up to \$30,000 to turn the listening into a new or renewed ministry. We are not in competition with any other congregation or organization. The grant is simply and truly God's amazing grace.

That new or renewed ministry will be focused on enhancing God's call in every season of our lives. For 2020, Oxford Presbyterian Church will explore a new or renewed ministry as we become more fully a congregation that CALLS each ONE of US to LIVES of MEANING and PURPOSE at every age – in every stage of life