



Your initial reaction might not jive with that statement. Most of us desire certainty, a sure thing. Open-endedness drives many folks crazy! I admit that I can be that way at times. This is on my mind because Mary and I recently watched the HBO/MAX mini-series called "The Staircase." Based upon the 2004 documentary of the same name, this chronicles the fascinating murder trial of Michael Peterson in Durham, North Carolina.

Spoiler alert: it ends with ambiguity.

Different possibilities are presented to the viewer as to what could have happened in the tragic death of his wife Kathleen. There is no mastermind sleuth, like Hercule Poirot of Agatha Christie fame, dramatically and confidently regaling us with the details of a sinister plot. Nope. We, the spectator, must draw our own conclusions and be satisfied with a bit of ambiguity.

Whether we like it or not, life is ambiguous. We are not always certain of what comes next. Sure, we have very high confidence that the sun will rise tomorrow morning, politicians will slander one another, and that Nick Saban and the Alabama football team will win. Expected results. Some we depend upon and appreciate, others less so....

Blessed ambiguity surprises us with the 1980 US Olympic hockey team. Perhaps the discovery of an unknown road offering us an amazing journey or an encounter with an old friend beautifully interrupts our day. We don't want to live our lives like the movie Groundhog Day. Certainly, routine and familiarity provide us needed structure, but uncertainty offers us the adventure of living.

In terms of our faith and God, we also experience both. I believe that the scriptures clearly speak of God as reliable and ever faithful. God is always good, forgiving, merciful, and gracious. We can count on God's unchanging character. Talk about something to celebrate!

On the other hand, God is also the God of possibilities. I don't for a moment think that every moment is scripted and certain. When I counsel people on the "will of God," I explain that it doesn't mean one specific choice or thing. That is like mice in a maze searching for the only possible direction which leads to reward. Not at all. The will of God is that we live life "loving our neighbors as ourselves." We can do that in any number of places, in all manner of occupations, and honestly, in whatever situation the ambiguity of the day might give us!

Summertime brings, I hope, opportunities to rest, relax, and enjoy some life outside the routine. Reading a good book, watching suspenseful "who done it" shows, losing yourself in interesting conversations, and soaking in God's beautiful creation are the order of the season. It's okay not to be certain about everything. Honestly, who ever is? And who would want to be? Where is the possibility in that kind of life? It's certainly not for me. Ambiguity, even when it's a bit uncomfortable, is good for the soul.

"I wanted a perfect ending. Now I've learned, the hard way, that some poems don't rhyme, and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what's going to happen next.

Delicious Ambiguity." — Gilda Radner



# PASTORAL CARE

*Jane Ann Magness & Erica Ford*

Our mission is: To minister to each other's needs and offer encouragement and the warmth of human kindness. To support those who are adjusting to change, loss, illness, or death. To serve those who are home bound. To provide support and solace for our rector. To be available to walk alongside a person in their journey of healing and wholeness and celebrations.

## Caring and Sharing:

- In March, Pastoral Care presented a concern to the Vestry that was brought to the committee by a parishioner regarding handicap access to the church. As a result, it was agreed to check with the town about the process for creating curb ramps on both Church and Gale Streets, and to review any other areas on campus that could be modified to facilitate handicap access. As a result, handicap parking spaces and curb ramps have been installed to facilitate ingress and egress for our handicapped parishioners and visitors on both Church and Gale Streets.
- Pastoral Care has teamed up with Gary Stanley and EYC to introduce the pastoral care ministry to our youth by providing the names of those St. Paul's members on our Care list for whom they can pray and send an occasional note of encouragement. We will support them in serving our congregation and walk with them as we all experience the power of prayer.
- We were recently given the gracious gift of flowers by Sybil Skinner to share with our parishioners who are homebound and / or experiencing and adjusting to challenging times in their lives. Our volunteers created beautiful arrangements and Pastoral Care committee volunteers delivered the arrangements to the people on our Care list. We had a chance to visit with many of the recipients and see their spirits lifted as we shared time together; a blessing to us all. We will continue to participate in this outreach until the flowers are no longer blooming.

Pastoral Care is available to you. Support includes:

- Stephen Ministry
- Meals provided by Angel's in the Kitchen
- Rides for those in need of transportation
- Prayer chain ministry
- Prayer
- Visits from the rector
- Funeral receptions

**"LET EACH OF YOU LOOK  
NOT ONLY TO HIS OWN  
INTEREST, BUT ALSO TO  
THE INTEREST OF  
OTHERS."  
PHILIPPIANS 2:4.**

Please contact the church office for needs of your own or on behalf of someone you know who may need Pastoral Care. We will work to provide the assistance necessary.

If you would like to be part of this ministry, please contact the church office. Our mission is to do God's will and offer spiritual and emotional care for our congregation by being available, present, and willing.

**please contact the church office if you would like to have  
this publication mailed to you**