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NEWSLETTER June 2019



The Unburnt

On May 19, we were reminded by the passage from Ronald Rolheiser's book [Sacred Fire](#) about the two kinds of baptism: John's baptism with water, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel of Mark (1:7-8) John says that the one who is coming after him, will baptize with the Holy Spirit. But in Matthew (3:11-12) and Luke (3:15-18), there's an added detail: that that baptism will be conducted by the Holy Spirit, and will be accompanied by fire. And these two gospels go on to explain that the threshing floor will be cleared, and the wheat will be gathered into the granary, but the chaff will be burned with unquenchable fire. Scary, angry, and hot unquenchable fire.

John's baptism was a baptism of repentance; that when / because we acknowledge our "I can't do it all by myself" humanity, we humbly turn back to God; and in Jesus' baptism, which is an entry into grace and community, we are empowered internally to do those things which would be impossible for us to do through our own willpower alone.

Many of us know the Book of Daniel's tale about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Fewer of us know that when Jerusalem was besieged, and royals and nobles were abducted and brought to Babylon, these four men were given different names by the Palace Master: Daniel was called Belteshazzar, Hananiah was called Shadrach, Mishael was called Meshach, and Azariah was

called Abednego. And because these last three refused to fall down and worship the golden statue (of himself) that King Nebuchadnezzar had erected, he threw them into a fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter than usual. But one of God's messengers appeared to protect them, such that their tunics did not even smell of smoke when they emerged. God protects against fire.

When I was in the process of coming out, I embarked on a wilderness journey with God; and my experience was as though an actual physical wilderness stood just beyond the visual reach of everything I saw around me. I went through my daily routines, to work (often with some difficulty), but also felt the heat and uncertainty of the desert. I didn't understand it fully then, but the masks I had been wearing, were being burned away. God's fire also burns away that which does not serve us well.

In the final episode of the HBO Series Game of Thrones, Daenerys Targaryen, known as (among other things) the Mother of Dragons and the Unburnt, and heir-apparent of the hotly-contested Iron Throne (which rules over the Seven Kingdoms) is **[spoiler alert]** killed. She had gone a little mad with power. And her lone-surviving dragon Drogon, melts the throne into a puddle of molten iron (think: volcanic lava).

This scene reminded me of the passage in 1 Samuel 8:4, when the elders of Israel went to aged Samuel, and asked him to appoint a king over them. Samuel had his doubts, and he prayed to God, and God said: *They have not rejected you; they've rejected me from being a King over them. Ever since I brought them up out of Egypt, they've forsaken me and have served other gods. Listen to them, but warn them. Make it clear just how a king will rule over them.* And Samuel warned them about how a king would take and use their children and their lands.

Daenerys thought she could do it all on her own and bring peace. She rejected communal counsel. She rejected mercy. She thought little of killing countless innocents. And the Seven Kingdom Council which convened after her death, rejected the pattern of "hereditary monarchy" under which they had lived and suffered; and chose instead to elect their leaders democratically; though we Christians understand that even those who are elected — either on HBO or on this side of the TV screen — need John's baptism of repentance and Jesus' baptism of grace and community, in order to lead (more) effectively.

As June's heat increases, and you continue to be formed, you may begin to feel that you're right there in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I pray you will take heart, though, and rest in the assurance that baptism by the Holy Spirit with fire, will purify us as the refiner's fire purifies gold; and is God's way of helping us burn away all the masks, and anything else, which keeps us from fully experiencing God's presence and guidance. And we will become like the Holy Spirit's Holy Unburnt, knowing God as the only King and Queen, to whom we bend the knee.

The Rev. Mike Wernick

**WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH COMMUNITY
MINISTRY**

Kim H. and Laura K.

Current/Upcoming Events

On Sunday, June 9, don't forget to **wear**

Recent Events

The Good Friday offering amounts of \$35 went to **The Pantry** (for Ascension folks) and \$110 to the **Diocese of Jerusalem** (for Holy Cross folks). The Easter offering amount of \$786 was split between **Lutheran Disaster Response** and **Episcopal Relief and Development** to help these agencies respond to the many recent natural disasters both here in the United States and abroad. Thank you to everyone who donated for your generosity!

Thanks to all who participated in the annual **flower sale** to benefit the **Diaper Depot!** Many thanks also to Ludema's Floral and Garden for partnering with us on this fundraiser to provide the beautiful flowers and to Judy M. for coordinating the ordering, pick-up, and sorting of the orders.

ACCESS' annual **Walk for Good Food** (formerly known as the Hunger Walk) took place on the gorgeous afternoon of Sunday, May 5. Thank you to our walkers (Mary T., Paul K., and Rev. Charles H.) and to Mary and Paul for coordinating this event for Two Churches. Thanks to your generous sponsorship, Two Churches' walkers raised \$1,400 to help fight food insecurity!!

Six beautiful afghans made by Two Churches' **Warm Up America** volunteers Ruth B., Deb F., Agnes K., and Kay S. were recently blessed by Fr. Mike. Thanks to Kay S. for bringing in the afghans and setting up the display in the sanctuary.

red or that the **Pentecost offering** will go to Two Churches' **Adult ESL** (English as a Second Language) program. Please be generous!

Our next workday at **St. Mark's Breakfast Café** is Sunday, June 30. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the Community Ministry bulletin board in June. Thanks to Liz R. for coordinating our efforts for this important ministry! **If you sign up but then find that you cannot make it for any reason, please let Liz or one of the other volunteers know as soon as possible so that alternates may be contacted.**

School Supplies



Start watching for sales...our summer collection of **school supplies** for the 3rd - 5th graders in **Kentwood Public Schools' Newcomer Center** will begin Sunday, July 7 and run through Sunday, August 25. The Newcomer Center is made up of refugee students for whom English is a second language. Some of these students are attending school for the first time, and most of their families arrive in America with very little other than the clothes on their backs. Particularly needed items are **dry-erase markers, highlighters, and hand sanitizer (all sizes)**, but any and all school supplies will be gratefully accepted. Please help us

These works of love go to children entering foster care, providing them with warmth, comfort, and something to call their own. If you're interested in participating, please see Kay S. Donations of **washable** yarn (no wool, please) are always much appreciated and can be placed in the basket on top of the collection bins in the Narthex. If you purchase more than one skein at a time, purchasing two or more of the same color is most helpful, as it takes at least four skeins of yarn to make one afghan. Thanks to all who donate(d) yarn to and participate in this special ministry!

Thanks to all who participated in the final **UTO** (United Thank Offering) in-gathering (and for your participation over the years). Collection boxes for our new **TCTO** (Two Churches Thank Offering) are now available on the tract rack by the stairs. Many thanks to Jill B. for decorating the boxes so beautifully and to Lisbeth E. for coordinating the collections. The first in-gathering for TCTO will be Sunday, November 3.

support these students as they embark upon a lifetime of learning! Thank you also to our pen pals who have been faithfully corresponding with the students, a few of whom had previously never written anything.

Community Ministry's **next meeting** will be Weds., July 10, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Kim H.'s condo. Our meetings are open to everyone and **include a potluck dinner**. If you'd like to see what we're all about, please come! Just let Kim know you'll be attending so the meal can be planned accordingly. If you can't make the meeting but would like more information, please see Kim or Laura K.



Diaper Depot

Judy M.

Thursday, **June 6th** from 6-8 p.m.

Wednesday, **June 19th** from 10:00 a.m.- Noon



Thanks to everyone who participated in our Spring Flower Sale. You have beautiful baskets and pots of flowers to enjoy and you helped raise **\$167.65** to keep lots of little bottoms covered!

Our third collection of Direct Your Dollar receipts is over \$65,000! When we collect \$150,000 in receipts, Diaper Depot will receive a check for \$1,000. Thank you for your support!



J2A Pilgrimage news!

We would love your support and prayers as **we embark on our pilgrimage on June 6th**. We will have a special send off during the 10:00 am service on June 2nd and hope you all will be there to pray us off.

Also, anyone that can come up to church at 1:00 pm to pray and sing us off on Thursday, June 6th would be appreciated. Donna H. will lead us in a couple songs to keep our tradition going.

We want to thank you all for your love and support over these past 5 years as we've traveled as a group on a journey to find out about ourselves, our relationship with God, and what we are each being called to do. Please continue to pray of us while we are on our trip; for safe travels, that our hearts and minds will be open to hear Gods voice, and to be brave enough to follow it.

Blessings

Beth, Elizabeth, Sarah, Robin, and Gwen



We want to pray with and for each other as we move along our spiritual journey together. Please lift up the designated persons throughout the week in prayer. May our Lord Jesus Christ use this ministry of prayer to build His Church in love!

May 26-June 1: Al and Ann A.; Mary A.; Ruth B.; Kevin, Jill, Kate, Meg and Beth B.; Tony, Cheryl, Marisa and Anthony B.

June 2-8: George C.; Barb C.; Lenore and Dick C.; Laura D.; George & Lynn D.

June 9-15: Evans and Connie D.; Pam D.; Connie E.; Lisbeth & Jack E.; Rochelle E.

June 16-22: Phil & Mary E.; Den & Debbie F.; Laura F.; Jon & Robin G.; Roger H.

June 23-29: Ralf H.; Dennis & Carla H.; O.D. H.; Dale & Gwen H.; Andy H.

June 30-July 6: Roy & Donna H.; Sue H.; Charles & Sara H.; Kim H.; Al & Mickey I..

Please continue to pray for peace and our troops stationed throughout the world.

Scripture Readings for June

June 2 - Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:16-34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

John 17:20-26

June 9 - Day of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9 (alternate)

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21 (alternate)

John 14:8-17 [25-27]

June 16 - The Holy Trinity

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Psalm 8

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

June 23 - 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 65:1-9

Psalm 22:19-28

Galatians 3:23-29

Luke 8:26-39

Semicontinuous

1 Kings 19:1-4 [5-7] 8-15a

Psalm 42-43

June 30 - 3rd Sunday of Easter

1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21

Psalm 16

Galatians 5:1, 13-25

Luke 9:51-62

Semicontinuous

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20

For Coffee Hour Hosts and Worship Server lists, please consult the previously emailed lists,
which are also posted on the bulletin board outside of the church office.

If you are interested in volunteering in some capacity, please contact:

Hospitality/Coffee Hour - Hannah T. @ hannah.c.temple@gmail.com

Readers for Sunday 10am Worship - Roy M. @ GrandRapidsMorris@comcast.net

Assisting Ministers or Acolytes for Sunday 10am Worship - Rev. Mike @ rectorpaster@comcast.net or
Deacon Kim.

June CALENDAR

Sat. June 1	5:00 p.m.	Worship w/o Music
Sun. June 2	10:00 a.m.	Worship w/Music
Tues. June 4	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Wed. June 5	10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
	10:45 a.m.	Bible Study
Thurs. June 6	9:00 a.m.	TOPS
	6:00 p.m.	Diaper Depot Open
	6:30 p.m.	Morris Dancers
Fri. June 7	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Sat. June 8	5:00 p.m.	Worship w/o Music
Sun. June 9	10:00 a.m.	Worship w/Music
Mon. June 10	7:00 p.m.	Taize Service at St. Mary's Catholic Church
Tues. June 11	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Wed. June 12	10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
	10:45 a.m.	Bible Study
	7:00 p.m.	Altar Guild Meeting
Thurs. June 13	9:00 a.m.	TOPS
	6:30 p.m.	Happy Souls
	6:30 p.m.	Morris Dancers
Fri. June 14	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Sat. June 15	12:00 p.m.	G. R. Pride Festival @ Calder Plaza
	5:00 p.m.	Worship w/o Music
Sun. June 16	10:00 a.m.	Worship w/Music
Mon. June 17	9:00 a.m.	Sr. Foot Care
Tues. June 18	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class

Wed. June 19	10:00 a.m.	Diaper Depot Open
	10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
	10:45 a.m.	Bible Study
	12:30 p.m.	Lectionary Group
Thurs. June 20	9:00 a.m.	TOPS
	6:30 p.m.	Happy Souls
	6:30 p.m.	Morris Dancers
Fri. June 21	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Sat. June 22	5:00 p.m.	Worship w/o Music

Sun. June 23	10:00 a.m.	Worship w/Music
Tues. June 25	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Wed. June 26	10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
	10:45 a.m.	Bible Study
	7:00 p.m.	Council Vestry Mtg.
Thurs. June 27	9:00 a.m.	TOPS
	6:30 p.m.	Happy Souls
	6:30 p.m.	Morris Dancers
Frid. June 28	9:00 a.m.	ESL Class
Sat. June 29	5:00 p.m.	Worship w/o Music

Sun. June 30	7:00 a.m.	St. Mark's Breakfast Café
	10:00 a.m.	Worship w/Music

A Reminder of Our On-going Ministries and Volunteer Opportunities

Ongoing Programs

Don't forget the **"Noisy Offering"** (loose change offering, although paper currency is also gladly accepted!) that we take in on the **first Sunday of each month**. This money is donated to **ACCESS of West Michigan**, a local ministry seeking to end poverty and food insecurity. The May offering brought in \$58. Thanks to Kay S. and Joe M. for counting the donations every month.

Please remember our ongoing collection of non-perishable foods and personal care items for **The Pantry**. This month, we have been asked to collect **toilet paper and paper towels**. The ongoing collection of personal care items is for things such as feminine hygiene products, soap, shampoo, "ziplock" baggies, toothpaste, etc.

These items cannot be purchased with Bridge Cards and can be quite costly, especially for someone already struggling with food insecurity. Watch for “BOGO” sales. Many thanks to all who support this vital ministry to our neighbors, to Kay S. for delivering our donations every month after they’ve been blessed by Rev. Mike, and to Ann A. for contacting The Pantry each month to find out its particular needs.

We continue to collect SpartanNash store receipts to reach the **Direct Your Dollars** goal of \$150,000 in qualifying receipts for the third time. Please remember that the entire printed receipt is needed (e-receipts do not qualify). Once the goal is reached, Diaper Depot will receive another check for \$1,000. Let’s fill up that truck again -- we already have over \$65,000 in receipts!

The **Samaritas** collection of magazines (non-news-oriented preferred), greeting cards, artificial flowers, and washable, tactile fabric (pieces should be at least a square yard) is also ongoing. Please place your donations in the far-right collection bin in the Narthex. Thanks to all who donate, and to Joel F. for delivering the donated items.

Volunteer Opportunities

The **Diaper Depot** needs your help! If you can assist at the scheduled distribution times, please sign up (on the bulletin board next to the Sacristy door) and lend a hand. Currently, help is no longer needed with re-packaging diapers on Sundays. Diapers are ordered online and delivered directly to the church, saving a lot of time in shopping and hauling. Due to the timing of the deliveries, a dedicated person or persons repackage the diapers shortly after their arrival. Thanks to everyone who helps with or donates to this important ministry, and a special thanks to those who have signed up to help out with the July 4 distribution! For more information, please see Shirley N. or Judy M.

The Pantry can always use volunteers! If you’re interested, please see Kay S.

Care Team Ministry

Help is available with rides, food, visits, communion, and calls. If you have a need, or know someone at Two Churches who does, please contact Laura K. or Rev. Mike.

You can find us at:
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Kentwood, MI 49512
HC: 616-949-7034
ALC: 616-455-8108
twochurches@comcast.net

Map it!

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so we can keep in touch with you.*



Two Churches Website