



As We (Re)Gather

By Pastor Chrissy

The month of June marks one year since we resumed our weekly, in-person worship services. In many ways it feels like much longer than that yet, in many ways it is hard to believe twelve months have passed since staff and lay leaders sat down to record worship elements with our smartphones and digital cameras. Even though the pre-recording phase of our pandemic experience ended last summer, the challenges and constantly changing seasons of Covid persist. Each new variant threatens a wave of worry, illness, and hospitalization. Each new variant decreases confidence that even the best-laid plans might actually come to fruition. At Greystone, we continue to monitor the situation and plan accordingly.

One of the biggest gifts of our community here at Greystone is that we are all different. A recent survey from the deacons showed that diversity. Members of Greystone ranging from 20 to 95 years old responded sharing feedback, thoughts, and ideas for how we might move forward in ministry and mission together. I have shared an overview of these responses with the Diaconate and Leadership Council. I plan to share it with the whole congregation at the quarterly Church Conference on June 26th. (I hope you will all plan to be there.) What this means though, the fact that we are all so different is that we must consider a broad range of perspectives and opinions as we

move forward. Additionally, since this congregation is gifted with a strong and empowered laity, it means that the living church bears the marks of its congregants. There is no more perfect example of this than the long history of volunteer musicians and worship leaders. Worship at Greystone is truly an expression of the gifts of our members. We will talk more about this, and how it relates to the survey responses at the church conference.

I bring this up now because I wanted you all to know, without any doubt, where we are in the process of regathering our church. Yes, we are still very much in the midst of that process. In fact, regathering our congregation is the number one ministry priority for staff and lay leaders at this time. So here's where we are.

Our church mission statement reminds us that *"With Christ as the Cornerstone, we will build a church of living stones, where every member is a minister and is equipped to express God's love by word and deed to all people."*

We believe these things happen best when we worship, grow, give, and serve together. To that end, as we continue regathering our church, our first priority has been on worship. Even though in many ways, worship is the most complex thing we do (it involves many volunteers, relies on congregational interaction, and hopes that as many people as possible will gather in one room), as a church we believe we are first and foremost a worshipping community. Therefore, finding ways to worship together is our first priority. The staff and lay leadership have spent endless hours in prayer and planning creative ways to worship together, honoring the gifts and skills of our volunteers, as well as the spiritual needs of the congregation.

(cont'd next page)

("As We (Re)Gather", cont'd from page 1)

Each week, we remember you – each one – and we attempt to create a worship experience that is meaningful, comforting, and transformative for you and the people with whom you share a pew.

In addition to worship, the last twelve months have ushered in opportunities to regather for discipleship and faith formation. This looks like Sunday school classes gathering in person or in some kind of hybrid in-person / online capacity. This also looks like Wednesday night education opportunities for adults. These have fluctuated between online, hybrid, and in-person based on the status of Covid cases in our area and technological capacity.

Most recently, we've added an additional layer of offering some in-person missions opportunities. This is something the Missions Committee is excited about and continues to work toward as we move forward together. Some recent examples include participating in a Habitat build and working at a Walnut Creek Cleanup event. Greystone members have continued to partner with Marc and Kim Wyatt in their work with refugees and newcomers. Most recently, we have embraced a new commitment through the establishment of Welcome House Greystone. If you are feeling called to hands-on mission, here's a chance for you to work directly with our neighbors. Jerry Chiles is the chair of the Missions Committee; he'd welcome your call! Moving forward, there will be more ways for you to join with others as we serve our neighbors. Save the date for a Rise Against Hunger packaging event that we're planning for Sunday morning, October 2.

As we continue to look forward, we are all excited about more opportunities to worship, grow, give, and serve together. If all goes as planned, this summer will hold all kinds of gatherings (both social and spiritual) for the people of Greystone to (re)gather. As we do, please continue to hold space for difference, recognizing we all come to this place with unique needs and hopes. I believe that makes us look more like God's beautifully diverse kingdom. I also believe that with God's help, in these experiences of and with one another, we are being made new.





Coming soon to Greystone..



How many of you get excited about church management software? We're guessing the answer is very few or none of you, as this subject probably isn't on the top of our hobby or interest lists. But let me introduce you to **Realm!** Greystone is making the switch to a new and updated software that does more than just manage our church operations. Realm will enhance our congregational engagement and communication with one another!

Realm will allow you access to an online church directory, management of your pledges and giving, registration for church events, communication with your committees, teams, and other church groups, and will provide many more resources for our staff and leadership in the areas of pastoral care, accounting, scheduling, discipleship, and more. All of this will be possible through the Realm app and web page.

We are excited for this opportunity to enhance many of our ministry areas, as well as provide a broader spectrum of connections among our members. Don't worry—we will spend intentional time through training and resources to provide a clear explanation of how to use Realm. But for now, stay tuned as we look forward to this exciting update coming soon at Greystone!

Heritage: Then and Now

By Carla LeNoir

In a couple of months, the Stewardship Committee will have its annual pledge campaign. We'd like to ask each of you to reflect on our church heritage during that time. We have all benefited from those who were here before us - our beautiful buildings and campus, having a church van, the preschool program, and our relationships within the community to name a few. We are truly blessed as we benefit from the generosity of Greystone's previous generation. Have you ever thought about the legacy you're leaving for those who come next; the heritage they'll inherit and hopefully continue?

As a church, we'll examine what heritage means for different people. Most of us have a family heritage with traditions we try to replicate. Our church heritage can be just as significant in forming who we are. Maybe you were a part of Greystone those first few years and for all you've done, we thank you. Maybe you recently started attending and can envision all the possibilities ahead. Or you could fall somewhere in between. Regardless, we all love our church and her people. We each have our favorite activities and programs. During our **Here on Earth** series in May, we discussed the need to treat the earth with care and nurture it. Let's do the same for Greystone as we plan to give our time, talents, and financial support in 2023. What does heritage mean to you? How will you honor that heritage then and now?

Music at Greystone

by Pastor Christian

I am looking forward to working in the office again beginning on June 14 and I am extremely thankful for having been able to work from home throughout the winter and spring! I am grateful for Greystone's generous new family leave policy as well as the flexibility that was offered due to the COVID pandemic, and I am so incredibly appreciative for the time I have been able to spend at home with Thayer. With that being said, I am also very excited to get back into a more regular rhythm at Greystone this summer!

Church Music Course – On the weekday mornings of June 13-24, I look forward to auditing an online course that's being offered by the Church Music Institute in cooperation with Brite Divinity School. The course, titled "Music in Christian Worship," is described as "A foundational course for clergy and musicians about the church's music, covering theological underpinnings in various traditions, various worship streams and how music relates to them, congregational song, choral song, music leadership, language, and staff relationships." In my past study, I have been fortunate to have had the mentorship of Sally Ann Morris at the Wake Forest University School of Divinity. In planning worship and taking a class with her, I learned most of what I know about contemporary church music and hymnody, and I also learned how to effectively and meaningfully incorporate diverse music into worship. However, even with my background as a classically trained musician and educator, my experiences with Sally, and my brief career in music ministry thus far, I have never had the opportunity to fully explore the history of music in the church. In taking this course, I am excited to learn more about the musical foundations of the Christian church and also about important musical traditions and preferences across denominations and generations (and specifically within our own Baptist heritage). I expect this course to help me develop a deeper theology of music in worship that will ultimately result in a richer worship experience for all at Greystone.

Summer Music Offerings – We are thrilled to have our children and youth leading music in worship again! As we continue to regather, there will continue to be more opportunities for them. We are working hard to get our Music Lab up and running this summer, so be on the lookout for news about that. Our Adult Choir will be rehearsing from 6-7 p.m. in the sanctuary on Wednesday nights from June 1 – August 31. All are invited to sing – even if you'd like to just try it out, please feel free to come this summer! Our Handbell Choir will continue to ring, and our rehearsal time is flexible based on ringers' availability. Some basic music-reading skills are helpful, but not necessary. If you'd like to ring, we'd love to have you!



I would always love to hear from you about the role music plays in your life and faith! If you would like to participate in the choirs or any part of our music ministry programs, or if you would just like to talk about music and faith matters, please feel free to see or email me!

GREYSTONE YOUTH



WHAT TIME IS IT? IT'S YOUTH SUMMERTIME!

By Pastor Anna Beth

To borrow a line from the one and only *High School Musical* series: "What time is it? It's summertime!" And that means there is a lot in store for our youth ministry in the weeks and months to come. We have had a roller coaster year as a youth group, but each of our youth have been faithful and flexible with everything that has come their way.

I am so excited to spend my first summer with the Greystone Youth, getting to experience many milestones and adventures with each of them. We will begin the summer by celebrating our high school and college graduates while our youth lead worship on Youth Sunday (June 12).

One week later (June 19-24), we will head back to Passport Camps in Greensboro, North Carolina. This year's camp theme is **BIG**—we will be reminded that "our BIG God invites us to nurture a BIG faith," joining in the BIG community of God's children "to live into our identities and gifts that allow us to make a BIG impact in God's great, BIG, beautiful world." Throughout the camp week, we will serve on mission sites throughout Greensboro, participate in worship and Bible study, and have fun at the camp parties and activities each day.



At the end of July, our high schoolers are going to Frederick, Maryland to serve with Group Mission Trips.

After stopping in Washington D.C. on the way up, we will serve at home



construction sites in Frederick with church groups from across the country. The week will provide many opportunities for worship, church group devotions, and free time as a youth group.

In addition to these two trips, our youth group will have several opportunities to gather and fellowship. Our focus of the summer is to create space for belonging, conversation, fun, and fellowship—this is actually a larger goal and purpose for the youth group in general. We finally have the opportunity to be together for real this summer, and we are so grateful for that. Time spent together is a gift of seeing God's presence alive in each of our young people.

GBC KIDS

news by Pastor April

Our children have been busy this spring. From a seder-style meal on Palm Sunday to colorful crosses on Easter, they loved learning about the story of Easter and our faith traditions about how and why we celebrate. While adults were listening to the conversation between Pastor Chrissy and our former Pastor Dennis, our kids were busy creating sunshine to share with our 'super senior' church members. They are continuing to learn American Sign Language and are excited to share some of this with you in worship on June 5.



Summertime is here!

Summer is here and we are excited to spend some time having fun in the sun! Our summer calendar will be out soon. We will go mini-golfing, meet for ice cream, have a party at a local park, and round out the summer with our traditional pool party. In between all of that, we will get our hands dirty in our missions garden, and do a little reading and crafting too.

PASSPORTkids

July 5 - 8 our 3rd - 5th graders will head for the hills of Montreat and 4 fabulous days at Passport Kids. We will have a BIG time worshiping, studying, and playing together as we discover how BIG God's world really is and what a BIG role we play in it. We will surely come home with BIG stories to tell.



Spirit of Justice Team Resources Webpage

By Laura Nelson

Since the creation of the Spirit of Justice Team, the Greystone community has had a dedicated place for anyone to share, discuss, learn, and grow in our understanding of seeking justice as a necessary element of discipleship. As a caring community with unconditional support as our foundation, we've had tough conversations and challenged each other to discover new ways to answer our call to seek justice as followers of Jesus (Isaiah 1:17, Micah 6:8, Luke 4:18-19). As we have individually come across tools and resources that have helped us learn, we have shared them with one another. These shared resources are available to the entire Greystone community to access via the church website, under Ministries / Spirit of Justice / Resources (or you can [click here](#) for a direct link).

The Spirit of Justice Resources page is a compilation of everything from podcasts to statistical reports, grouped into five categories: General/Intersectional, Creation Justice/Environmental Stewardship, Food Insecurity, LGBTQ+ Justice, and Racial Justice. The resources included represent work done by individual team members to broaden their understanding of each topic and might surprise you. We have found that some of our best conversations and learning can come from engaging with viewpoints beyond our own and encouraging each other to step outside of our comfort zones.

The Spirit of Justice Team meets in person monthly and is an open team that anyone can engage with. Come by and join the discussion, send in resources that have contributed to your growth as a justice seeker, or contact the team if there's a topic for which you'd like to see resources offered on the page. Just as the Spirit is alive and moving, so too is our commitment to never stop exploring the depth of God's love for all creation.



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