January 24, 2016

CELLPHONE NONSENSE

Glenn Frey, guitarist of the 70’s musical group the Eagles, died last week. He authored some of the group’s most successful and memorable tunes including “Peaceful Easy Feelin’,” “Lyin’ Eyes,” and “Take It Easy.” One pundit wrote that Frey gave the band its “sweet tang.”

The group last visited Atlanta two years ago in 2014 and at that concert one of the members made a memorable statement to the crowd. He asked the people there to silence and even put away their cell phones. “This might be our last visit to Atlanta,” he said, “and we would really like for you to be here with us.” In other words, don’t text. Don’t tweet. Don’t take any selfies. Don’t surf the internet. We are here, right in front of you, and real. We want you to be here with us.

Oh, I love that comment. And we know exactly what he was talking about, don’t we? Each of us has had a conversation interrupted by a cellphone call. We have watched a diner in a restaurant spend the entire meal texting and checking messages, completely ignoring the person across the table. Often, though, that’s okay because the other person was texting, too, and never noticed! I’ve spoken to you from the pulpit about watching parents ignore their children while texting and tweeting. “We want you to be here with us.”

We have deluded ourselves as a culture. We have told ourselves that we are more connected and I suppose we are if one accounts only for the sources and number of information outlets now available to us. There are more options and more outlets, to be sure, but I am not at all convinced that we are more connected. We must be careful to live “in the moment.” We must be careful to converse, to listen deeply to another, to watch one’s eyes and body language, and to listen for voice inflections. Such are the elements of communication. Only in observing those elements are we “more connected.”

Elliott Wilder is the four-year-old son of the Rev. Elaine Wilder and he recently has discovered Siri on his mother’s phone. Siri (Speech Interpretation and Recognition Interface) is the Apple product that answers questions and offers direction (an “intelligent personal assistant and knowledge navigator”). Siri, of course, is a computerized voice but Elliott doesn’t know that. He enjoys the conversations (and even somehow changed his mother’s name on her phone). In a recent conversation, he told Siri what he tells his other close friends. He said, “Siri, I love you.” Siri answered, “Siri is not capable of love. I respect you.” When we heard that in staff meeting, Lori Ethridge said, “That will preach.”

Remember that about your phone, your tablet, your laptop, and every other electronic device that you own. “I am not capable of love.” The person across from you at the table, behind the flower and the salt shaker, can love you back.
Welcome and Parish Notices (8:55 a.m. and 11:10 a.m.)

Invitation to Worship

This is the day that the Lord has made! We have come to rejoice and be glad in it! We are called to preach the Good News of God. We are called to tell of God’s love and liberation. Let us glorify God and sing God’s praises. Let us offer ourselves in worship this day. Amen.

Prelude

Variations on DUKE STREET

D. Johnson

Introit

Come And Fill Our Hearts

Jacques Berthier

*Hymn

Jesus Shall Reign

Hymnal 157

*Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles’ Creed

Hymnal 881

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Gloria Patri

Hymnal 71

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end, Amen.

Anthem

The Tree Song (9 a.m.)

Ken Medema

Chorister Choir

I saw a tree by the riverside one day as I walked along, straight as an arrow and pointing to the sky, growing tall and strong. “How do you grow so tall and strong?” I said to the riverside three. This is the song that my tree friend sang to me: I’ve got roots growing down to the water, I’ve got leaves growing up to the sunshine, and the fruit that I bear is a sign of the life me in me. I am shade from the hot summer sundown, I am nest for the birds of the heaven. I’m becoming what the Lord of Trees has meant me to be: a strong young tree.

The Heart’s Offering (11:15 a.m.)

Antony Baldwin

*universal
Installation of Church Council

Children’s Sermon

*Hymn  Near To The Heart Of God  Hymnal 472

Pastoral Prayer  Rev. Brian Smith

Giving of God’s Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory  The Heart’s Offering (9 a.m.)  Antony Baldwin
As I rise with the dawn, may my soul be reborn; take this heart all forlorn, and refresh me in the morn. In the warmth of the day I consider thy way. May thy love ever stay in my heart, O Lord, I pray. In the still of the night, as I think on the light in my heart burning bright, keep me precious in thy sight. God of each living thing, bless the gift that we bring. Take our hearts’ offering while in joyful praise we sing: Alleluia! (Antony and Lori Baldwin)

Concerto in F: Larghetto (11:15 a.m.)  G.F. Handel

*Doxology
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Scripture Lesson  Luke 4: 14-21

Sermon  FIRST WORDS  Dr. Matthews

Invocation to Christian Discipleship

*Hymn  Forward Through The Ages  Hymnal 555

*Benediction  Purer In Heart (9 a.m.)  Ken Berg
Joy In The Morning (11:15 a.m.)  Natalie Sleeth

*Postlude  The Cuckoo and the Nightingale  G.F. Handel, arr. Biggs

Holy Communion served in the Latimer Chapel at 10 a.m.

Gifts to MFUMC
In memory of Martha Lee Brumby by Lillian & Buddy Darden, Dot & Bill Dunaway, Patsy & Hylton Dupree, Carol & Chuck Franzman, Gaskins Surveying Company, Walter Gresh, Allison & Chris Gruehn, Eleanor & Warren Herron, Dorothy Hindman, Mrs. Howard P. Lawrence, The Gus Logan Family, Ann & Wilder Little, Edward Milligan, Tracy Monk, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Moseley, Lisa & Sam Olens and Carol & Jimmy Hudgins and Family.
In memory of Kathryn Baker by Patsy & Reynold Jennings.
In memory of Susan Rector Ciulla by Mr. & Mrs. Al Rector.
In memory of Ralph Clark by James R. Galt.
In memory of Bill David by Jeanine & Skip Harper.
In memory of Bill Cooper by Patsy & Reynold Jennings.
In memory of Bill Evans by Audrey Casey.
In honor of Bebe & Joe Burnett by R. Martin Burnett.
In honor of Tracy Smith by the Lindell DeJarnett Sunday School Class.
Worship Leaders

Senior Minister:
Dr. Sam R. Matthews

Associate Ministers:
Rev. Elaine Wilder
Rev. Brian Smith

Director of Music:
Bryan Black

Music Associate & Organist:
Brian Parks

Pianist:
Brenda Brent

9 a.m. Service:
Acolyte: Bradley Kemp
Bible Bearer: Rainey Hill
Crucifer: Lyndsay Price

11:15 a.m. Service
Acolyte: Sarah Kate Harris
Bible Bearer: Charlie Mathison
Crucifer: Will Mathison

OUT OF THE HOSPITAL: Lou Jean Arrants, Virginia Miller

SYMPATHY: To Louise Reese at the death of her husband, Kathy and Bill Cadle, Nancy O’Donnell, Ann Cranford at the death of their father, and Andrea Hall at the death of her grandfather, Bob Reese, on January 19, 2016.

FLOWERS: The flowers in the Sanctuary today are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Virginia and Steve Tumlin by Steve and Jean Alice Tumlin, Ty, Ashley, Madison and Chip Tumlin, Sig and Audrey Tumlin and Jamie, Ryan, Ali, Rhodes and Beck Patrick.

The Church Council will be installed today at both worship services. The council will meet on Monday, January 25 at 7 p.m. in the Family Life Hall. The meeting will begin with a short called Charge Conference to hear a report from the Staff-Parish Relations Committee regarding compensation for our ministers in 2016. To make 6:30 p.m. dinner reservations ($10), contact Erin Kimbrel at ext. 7813.

Lenten Lecture Series. Join us on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm during Lent (beginning on February 17) as our 4 ministers offer conversations on the questions people bring to Jesus in Scripture. Register online (www.mariettafumc.org) or contact Erin Kimbrel at ext. 7813.

Coffee and Chocolates for Valentine’s Day! The United Methodist Women will sell organic coffee and organic chocolate on January 31st and February 7th on the Bridge and at the Reception Desk. All proceeds go to support UMWW Mission projects. Purchasing these items also benefits the small farmers in Equal Exchange. For more information, please call Diana Waldrop at 770-429-0204.

Celebration of the Negro Spiritual, directed by Dr. Oral Moses, will be performed at the Marietta Performing Arts Center at Marietta High School on Sunday, February 14 at 3 p.m. This is free and open to the public. To utilize the church transportation please RSVP to Rev. Lori Ethridge. We will depart at 2:20 p.m. from the Polk Street lot. (Rev. Lori Ethridge, ext. 7835)

The 3rd-5th grade Bible study continues on Wednesday nights from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in Room 324. Fellowship with friends and explore the books of the Bible. For more information or to sign up, contact Kelly Duncan at ext. 7812. All are welcome, so invite friends!

Save the Date for the next MFUMC Blood Drive: Next Sunday, January 31. (Forrest Cate, ext. 7806)

Handel’s Messiah Study: Lent, Easter and Beyond. Fred Finzer will be leading a 4-week class beginning March 7 that looks at the music, themes, and use of scripture in Handel’s Messiah. Contact the church office to register for the class. The class meets each Monday from 7-8:30 p.m. (Rev. Brian Smith, ext. 7840).

Wednesday Morning Women’s Bible Study begins a new 7-week series on Wednesday, February 3 at 9:30 a.m. in room 201-b. The group will discuss “Seamless: Understanding the Bible as One Complete Story” by Angie Smith. All are welcome! (Rev. Elaine Wilder, ext. 7826)

Mark your calendars for the annual Daddy/Daughter dance! On Friday, February 12, girls ages 3 years old to 5th grade dance the night away with their dad or another special man in their lives. The dance will be in the Family Life Hall from 6-8 p.m. Cost is $10 per person which includes music from a DJ, photo booth, light appetizers, punch and a candy buffet! (Kelly Duncan, ext. 7812)

Youth parents and families are invited to our Winter Parent Meeting and Fusion Worship tonight at 5:30 p.m. We will have dinner, release the 2016 calendar, worship together and Sam Halverson will be speaking! (Josh Sweeney, ext. 7808)

Volunteer at the food pantry of our community development partner, The Center for Family Resources, in the Mansour Building in Marietta. Shifts are available on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Sign up at www.mariettafumc.org. (Michelle Paracha, ext. 7803)

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