

HEARTBEAT

Hope in Christ Church Monthly Newsletter

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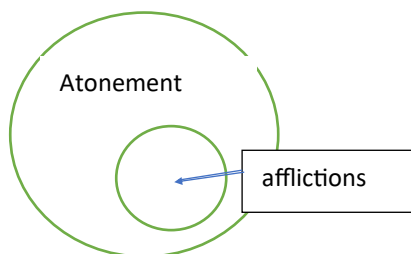
Suffering and the Christian Life

By Pastor Scott

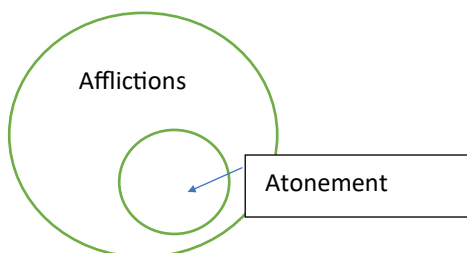
Colossians 1:24 is a passage that puzzles me. The verse reads, “Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.” I have always gotten hung up on the fact that Paul insinuates that something lacks in Christ's afflictions. I have often mistakenly confused this suffering with his atonement and I think this is what has made it so hard for me to comprehend what Paul could possibly be saying. How could anything be lacking in Christ's sufferings on the cross for our salvation? If something lacked, would that make his atonement incomplete?

But recently I am reconsidering my initial presupposition which equates Christ's afflictions and the atonement. What if the atonement is but a part of Christ's afflictions, but not the whole?

Whereas I saw it this way:



What if, it is really this way:



Such a change would give greater understanding to how our sufferings could 'fill up what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions.' The crucial thing I am coming to see is that this passage is dependent upon a robust understanding of our union with Christ. It takes seriously the statement that we are the body of Christ (1Cor 12:12) and it believes that if we are suffering or afflicted then Christ our head is suffering and afflicted as well (1Cor 12:26). This means that the afflictions of Christ are much larger and more transcending than I have ever imagined. The cross didn't end all his suffering, it ended the war for the salvation of people. But the suffering we experience now, the afflictions we experience now are experienced by the risen Christ just as a husband or wife or parent or child feels the pain and hardship as they watch a loved one go through a major illness or trauma.

For me, this change of perspective grants me the resources which I need to undergo the hardships of life. For, if Christ is afflicted with me, then that means the strength of Christ, the victory of Christ, the resources of Christ are also available to me. He is my head, I am his body (Eph 5:23). His power to sustain through the suffering, just as it sustained him through the crucifixion, is available to me. My struggle is really his struggle, just like when I hit my thumb with a hammer, my mind must deal with it. So also, Christ my head, must sustain, care for, and nurse me through the affliction so that I am restored to wholeness and useful to continue His work.

I hope this alternative perspective is helpful, and I welcome any feedback on my tentative thoughts.

Thank you letter from the Council

Submitted by Ida Richards

Six months ago, our lives looked quite different than they do today! Who would have guessed an unrelenting, contagious, microscopic virus could cause us all to first put our lives on hold, then bring us to change so much of how we live. As much as it came at us sideways, God was not taken by surprise. And He has been with us every step of the way. I give Him all the praise for His faithful care.

But now I would like to recognize so many servants who have given so much for our church family to keep us all connected and serving our Lord.

First, thank you, Pastor Scott, for shifting so quickly to leading the Council in Zoom meetings, and for teaching us how to come together to check in and pray for each other via Zoom. You took us through various locations as you persevered in finding the best way to bring us God's Word week after week. You even preached twice on Sunday as needed. And you have faithfully walked with any of our body who needed you as much as you could. You have listened to the Council as we worked to comply with the guidance of the CDC, and helped get it in place. You have said again and again you were willing to do whatever it takes to serve God in serving us.

Thank you to our Worship team. You stepped in to figure out the technical details of producing a spliced-together, smart phone-filmed, creatively quilted YouTube worship service! And each time we were still led to bring our hearts to the Lord. Talk about a steep learning curve! Thank you, Ruiter and Senti families, along with the Koning and Roberts families, for welcoming us into your homes to worship with you – what a special gift! And then we stepped into learning how to Live Stream! We especially thank Brian for his hours of work, and then bringing us his friend, Craig, to figure out all the challenges along the way. Thank you, sound booth team, for getting the service from paper to screen to all those worshipping at home. Thank you, Jan and Don, for your willingness to lead the evening service worship. And thank you, Koning family, for giving us those praise celebrations from your home.

Thank you, Marjie, for picking up all the changes we threw at you to help us keep connected to our family. You helped get all we needed to meet the safety precautions. And in all the 'please can you's, you kept loving us!

Thank you, cleaning crew, for helping with the safety steps, cleaning our church over and over, and physically distancing all the chairs in the Sanctuary. We always appreciate your faithful service for our church family.

Thank you, Building and Maintenance team, for quietly taking care of our campus right on schedule, and taking care of whatever needs fixing. Thank you, Doug Scholten, for keeping our landscaping clean and weed-free.

And for my fellow Council servants, thank you. You have spent so much time reaching out to our church family over and over, making sure any needs could be known, and bringing prayer and encouragement. You have flexed to make sure we keep meeting on schedule, even via Zoom! And you stepped up to get the safety measures in place to help keep our church family as healthy as we can for those who are able can gather to worship together.

And our church family. We thank you! You have been patient and encouraging through it all. When we contact you to bring you encouragement, you cheer us on! When the YouTube Service was glitchy you understood. When it just didn't work or something went awry, you gave us grace. When we ask you to follow the safety steps, you do it without complaint and with humor. For those who feel led to wait for now to join services, thank you for praying for all of us. Thank you for patience, love, and encouragement. For those who can't even connect to the On-line service or don't have e-mail, thank you for persevering in grace to stay connected any way you can. All of you have continued to support the church, both in prayer and financially, and the Council, our mission, and one another. We know it's been a difficult 6 months, and we still have a ways to go.

In Hebrews 10:25 we read, "And let us not give up meeting together. Some of you are in the habit of doing this. Instead let us encourage one another and all the more so as you see the Day approaching." So, even if you are unable to meet in person, or even if you find life challenging with the changes, we ask you to continue to reach out to one another, and pray together. We will continue reaching out to you.

Do you want to learn how to Zoom? Ask one of us to teach you. Continue to make phone calls or send a note to others. We are all family! As changes come to us, we can face them together. Thank you for your prayers and words of encouragement. Our hearts are full.

Lifting all praise and honor to our God and King,

Thank you from Diane Button

Thank you so much for the unlimited support I have received throughout the last 16 years as I served as Children's Ministries Coordinator. Your support enables me to use the God given gifts I have to lead, teach, pray for, and most of all love the kids that have grown up attending Children & Worship and Sunday School classes. The relationships I've built with them are life long and all that they have given back to me in love, thankfulness, joy, laughter, hugs, and tears, will be forever in my heart.

By expressing all that, it's a way of showing with you how much the church council's and congregation's support has allowed me to grow in my own faith while ministering to the children and young adults of our church. I will truly miss the special connection I have with the kids as the Children's Ministries Coordinator, but I will always have and share the love we have for each other. Thank you for the very generous "thank you gift" as well. That was surprising and so much appreciated.

In Christ's love, Diane



Giving in July 2020

	<u>July</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$ 1,224	\$ 19,828
General Fund Offerings	\$14,705	\$147,447
Rent / Utilities Income	1,451	19,605
Interest Income - Undesignated	<u>11</u>	<u>187</u>
Total Undesignated Income	16,167	167,239
General Fund Expenses	<u>(15,394)</u>	<u>(138,707)</u>
Income Over (Under) Expenses	<u>\$ 773</u>	<u>\$ 28,532</u>

Total 2020 budget, including ministry quotas	\$ 273,588
Year-to-Date Budget for 8 months	\$ 182,392
Total Undesignated Income	<u>167,239</u>
Income Over (Under) Budget	<u>\$ (15,153)</u>

Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 12,500

Deacons Digest

By Elaine Snapper

The deacons are working on preparing a budget for next year, and team leaders will be asked to submit budgets in the next month.

Monetary gifts were given to Diane Button for her retirement and also an appreciation gift was given to Marjie, who resigned as of Friday, August 7.

Family Promise Update

By Ali Laninga

Night Without a Bed was a smashing success! With 23 teams and 301 donors. You helped raise \$23,653! That's \$13,653 over our goal! Thank you to every team member, donor, volunteer ... everyone who participated, helped spread the word, and donated. We're helping families who are experiencing homelessness in Whatcom County connect with the resources they need to learn new habits, build self-sufficiency, and work toward stable housing.

Due to COVID-19 precautions, our families continue to be hosted in separate "motel rooms" at a static site that a local congregation graciously gifted to Family Promise of Whatcom County. These accommodations include beds, microwave, mini-fridge, separate bathrooms and closets. This set-up allows our families to stay together while at the same time maintaining safe distancing protocols. Our support and host churches are continuing to deliver food a couple of times a week. In addition, arrangements have been made for separate, off-site housing in case quarantine becomes necessary. Thank you for continuing to support our families during this time. Your care is needed more than ever.

Family Update:

The two families we have in Family Promise right now are continuing to work hard at overcoming barriers to housing, and Marikka (caseworker) is continuing to find alternative resources to help replace/supplement those resources that aren't as readily available in our current climate. Being able to move forward toward their own housing is much more challenging right now and requires a lot of patience.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Tutoring - with the school districts largely opening for virtual learning, we are in the process of looking at bringing on a pool of tutors available in different subjects that could help support children and parents with online learning. We are committed to have our space set up to accommodate all needs necessary for a successful learning environment. We do not yet have concrete answers on how the schools will be supporting students that are sheltered this fall and will be looking into this over the next couple of weeks.

Overnight volunteers - As new families move in, there may be a need to start the overnight shift again, but not for at least one month. It would entail volunteers sleeping in Day Center and there would be an on-call phone in case of an emergency.

Important date for Hope in Christ Volunteers:
**Our next week to serve will be October 26-
November 1**



Getting to Know Our Church Family

By Elaine Snapper

This month I am featuring Ken and Elaine Wick. Elaine was born in East Ely, Nevada and has four siblings, three brothers and one sister. She attended school in Ely, Nevada through high school and then attended Washington State University, having won a National merit society scholarship. She majored in Child Development and Psychology. Elaine left Washington state after her fiancé died and attended the University of Washington for a short time. She met Ken when working as a waitress in a restaurant he owned.

Elaine worked various jobs which allowed flexibility with her family until 1987 when she started working for Whatcom County. She worked in the Land Use Division for 23 years until she retired in 2007.

Ken grew up in South Seattle near Sea-Tac Airport and has two brothers and a sister. He attended Glacier High School in South Seattle near Burien and started working at the age of 14 as a dishwasher at the Seattle World's Fair. Ken bought his own restaurant at age 19 and continued in the restaurant business until 1985 when he bought a mobile sharpening service. He owned and operated this business until 2007 when he retired.

Ken and Elaine were married in 1970 and have three daughters, three son-in-law's and five grandchildren. One daughter lives in Grand Haven, Michigan and two daughters live in Colorado.

Ken and Elaine's favorite hobby is spoiling grandchildren. They both like to travel, watch sports, play cards and visit with friends. Elaine is a voracious reader and Ken likes his sudoku.

Elaine says she never had an ah ha moment when she started walking with the Lord. Though she was raised in a bad environment, God put a woman in her life that stopped by every Sunday from fourth grade through high school to take her to church. It wasn't until 2000 at a Christian retreat that Elaine began a much more personal relationship with Christ.

Ken has attended church regularly since 1970, but

had an ah ha moment at a Promise Keeper's weekend in 1993. His walk with the Lord has continued to deepen over the years.

Ken and Elaine just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, and they want to thank everyone for the cards, video chats and prayers. They feel very blessed to have such a wonderful church family who have shared in their sorrows and their joys for so many years. They thank God for all of you.

We are thankful that Ken and Elaine joined our church. They have been a blessing to us and we wish them good health and happiness during their remaining years.



September

- 3 Lorraine Brouwer
- 6 Kyle Sentkowski
- 6 Chantel Obbink
- 11 Jan Scholten
- 11 Barbara Zylstra
- 15 Troy Jones
- 16 Abigail Cunningham
- 16 Rochelle Senti
- 19 Isaac Speyer
- 24 Ellie Roberts
- 25 Jennifer Boer
- 28 Aaron Speyer
- 30 Jonathan Senti