

TRUE VINE TIMES JULY 30, 2020

OUR NEWSLETTER:

Feel free to print copies off for yourselves, family, and friends. All previous newsletters can be found on CCAM's website at www.ccamchurch.org and our Facebook page.

Everyone is welcome to submit something that they wrote or wanted to share. Submissions can be emailed to Ann Meyers-annmeyers2003@gmail.com or Jack Keough-jackkeough@rochester.rr.com. Submissions received *before Tuesdays* will be considered for that week's publication.

SAVE THE DATE!

CCAM ANNUAL RETREAT AT BEAVER CAMP LABOR DAY WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2020

CCAM Beaver Camp retreat registration will open to CCAM attenders July 26th. Registration will open to our invited guests on Sunday, August 9th. Please contact one of the Beaver Camp Committee members if you have any questions: Jack and Pam Keough, Cindy Miller, Annie Meyers, Mark Schaefer and Cindy Cooper.

WHY DO THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER?

SUBMITTED BY ROBERT MAST

WRITTEN BY RABBI MARC GELLMAN

(Question from a reader): "Death is the inevitable for all of us. How does God choose who suffers and who dies quickly? So many kind, wonderful, loving people suffer agonizing deaths, while others, not so kind and wonderful, don't suffer at all. Why must good people suffer?"

Rabbi Marc Gellman's Answer: For people of faith, why the righteous suffer is the most difficult question of all. Atheists offer up the same question as "proof" against the existence of God. Although I am deeply troubled by suffering, I've never been as troubled by this question as many people are. In fact those who find this question a stumbling block to faith perplex me. The presumption is that God rewards the good we do and faith we have with health, wealth, and happiness- and in ways that prevent the righteous from ever suffering. In my understanding of

VERSE FOR VICTORY:

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness
can never extinguish it.

John 1:5

SONG SUGGESTIONS:

- ♪ *Dawn* by Rebecca St. James
- ♪ *At All Times* by Caitie Hurst
- ♪ *Freedom Hymn* by Austin French
- ♪ *Afraid* by Tenth Avenue North

CHECKING IN CONVERSATIONS

WITH JACK KEOUGH

It was so nice to speak with Vi Cote by phone. I told her we so miss her warm smile and genuine love for us all. She shared that her breathing has been somewhat difficult, which does prevent her from doing some things like going to the store and getting out of her home. She does accept this limitation, and really appreciates the time when she will be able to get out. Her daughter, Debbie, does continue to get her groceries and run her usual errands. Also, Vi mentioned that her eldest daughter, Linda, who also lives in Clarence helps her with keeping her medications organized. She did express her love of the church and sends her best wishes to all of us. She does appreciate being able to attend church via Facebook but does look forward to when she might be able to join us again. I mentioned to her that we will hold her up in prayer that her breathing might improve.

RIDICULOUS RIDDLE:

#1 *What's bright orange with green on top and sounds like a parrot?*

#2 *There's a one-story house where everything is yellow. The walls are yellow. The doors are yellow. Even all the furniture is yellow. The house has yellow beds and yellow couches. What color are the stairs?*

Answers to riddles are on the back page

Christianity, Judaism and Islam, this was never God's promise. God promises us an accompanied life, a beloved life, a blessed life, and a hopeful life, but not a life unbuffered by loss and sorrow. God is always with us through our sufferings to give us courage and hope. After death, God promises to welcome our souls into a realm closer to God than anything we can know in this life. This promise does not include paying us off for our goodness. Virtue is not a bribe or insurance policy against suffering. When angry or despairing people come to me with this question, I ask them to show me their warranty. They ask, "what warranty?" I answer, "you know the warranty God gave when you were born that nothing bad would ever happen to you. Because if God never gave you such a warranty on your life, you have no reason to blame God for your suffering." I was never given such a warranty yet I love the God who made me, and the God who is with me through my suffering, and the God who will someday kiss me on the lips and take my breath away. My God is a soul guard, not a bodyguard. My faith in God's blessings is like this poem by Lucille Gripping Maharry: "Your blessings, Lord, are greater than the sum of our burdens. They calm our spirits through the darkest night, the deepest sorrow, the sweeping winds of change. Your blessings bring light, the joy, the peace which passes all understanding." Another vexing problem with asking why the righteous suffer is that it can lead to us blaming God for the evil in the world, and away from taking responsibility for the evil in the world caused by what we do and what we allow. Mother Theresa wrote: "When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed." She then goes on to paraphrase the famous passage in Matthew (25:40): "Jesus made it very clear. What you do for the least of my brethren, you do it for me. Give a glass of water, you give it to me. Receive a little child, you receive me" The soaring and profoundly true point she makes is that goodness is not for our reward. Goodness is for others and for God. Our rewards are simply and profoundly contained completely in the goodness we do, not in the rewards we expect to receive. I urge you to meditate on the words of Mother Theresa: "The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, the fruit of service is peace." These fruits are enough for me. These fruits fuel my faith no matter what happens to me. These fruits are enough for me. I hope they will be enough for you.

RIDDLES ANSWERS:

- #1 Answer: A carrot
- #2 Answer: There aren't any stairs—it's a one-story house.

**THE BACK OF CCAM BUILDING TREES
WHICH WERE PLANTED BY LIBBY
WIDEMAN'S GREAT GRANDFATHER,
JONI YODER.**

PANDEMIC POSITIVES:

- ✓ Beautiful weather and an outside place to gather as a church family and worship.
- ✓ A Washington man rescued 2.4 million pounds of farmers' crops going to waste and distributed them to food banks.
- ✓ A nonprofit organization flipped an abandoned prison into a sustainable farm with the help of at-risk youth and jobless veterans.
- ✓ An Indiana cop helped a young boy run his lemonade stand to support law enforcement.
- ✓ An emergency room doctor who survived COVID-19 reunited with his family.
- ✓ A young woman and man saved five children who were caught in a rip tide in Massachusetts.
- ✓ A Struggling single mom donated lottery winnings to an officer shot in the line of duty.
- ✓ An EMS worker reunited with this family after 103 days away.
- ✓ An 87-year-old Korean War veteran finally graduated from high school.
- ✓ The US Senate passed a bill to protect sea turtles, whales, dolphins, and more from drift gillnets.
- ✓ A Texan community helped raise money for a dog for a young boy with autism.
- ✓ A young boy won a bicycle but gave it to his neighbor who did not have one.
- ✓ A visiting doctor saved a drowning boy at a hotel pool.
- ✓ An off-duty police officer pulled a boy away from an approaching shark.
- ✓ A man caught a two-year-old who fell from a fourth story balcony.

