



His Mansion

*A newsletter from
First United Methodist Church
of Southbridge*

"In my Father's House, there are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you..."

SUMMER 2021

Pastor's Corner

Dear friends in Christ,

The past month has been difficult, to say the least... We have lost Trey, our adopted son. Trey joined us earlier this year as a boy scout wanting to volunteer with our meal ministry. He started hanging out with us, coming to worship, to Bible study, all the time telling us "I'm not a Christian, I'm more of a Buddhist." He loved music, wrote his own lyrics and eventually joined the praise band.



*"Summer afternoon—
summer afternoon; to me
those have always been the
two most beautiful words
in the English language."*

Henry James



@Pastor_Sabina

family when the machines were disconnected and Trey passed away.

We did not know anything about Trey's family. He did not share. But I found lovely, faithful people, who gave our church to Trey as his space. But as much as Trey did not talk about his family, he did share about his church!

What we remember most about Trey was his generosity, his sense of humor, open mind and will to learn.

There was also a dark side living in this young man. He felt he did not belong anywhere; he was bullied; he self-medicated with drugs and self-harm. He wrote beautiful but very dark poetry. He opened us to us and found a home, maybe because many of us are quite broken and went through the same pain.

We were all crushed by the news. Several of us went to the prayer vigil, to the wake, and organized Trey's celebration of life service. And what a beautiful service it was. Our old sanctuary can sit about 350 people. It was standing room only. The community had come together.

Our God is a good God. And he makes beauty out of ashes. Trey's legacy has been growing.

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Trey ended his life short of his 17th birthday. I was honored to be asked by his family to be with them during his last few days, while he was on life support at UMass. I was also with the



Our volunteers!





FREE CLOTHING/HYGIENE PRODUCTS/BLANKETS/FOOD

The closet is open!! Donations appreciated!!

Prayer of the Month



Father, Creator of all, thank You for summer!
Thank you for the warmth of the sun
and the increased daylight.

Thank You for the beauty I see all around me

and for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy Your creation.

Thank You for the increased time I have to be with my friends and family,
and for the more casual pace of the summer season.

Draw me closer to You this summer.
Teach me how I can pray
no matter where I am or what I am doing.

Warm my soul with the awareness of Your presence
and light my path with Your Word and Counsel.

As I enjoy Your creation, create in me
a pure heart and a hunger and a thirst for You.



(Tom Felton), his quest to disprove rumors of a risen Messiah makes him question his own beliefs and spirituality. As his journey takes him to places never dreamed of, Clavius discovers the truth that he's been seeking.

MOVIE NIGHT

August 25, 2021

“Risen”

Roman military tribune Clavius (Joseph Fiennes) remains set in his ways after serving 25 years in the army. He arrives at a crossroad when he's tasked to investigate the mystery of what happened to Jesus (Cliff Curtis) following the Crucifixion. Accompanied by trusted aide Lucius

Save the Date!

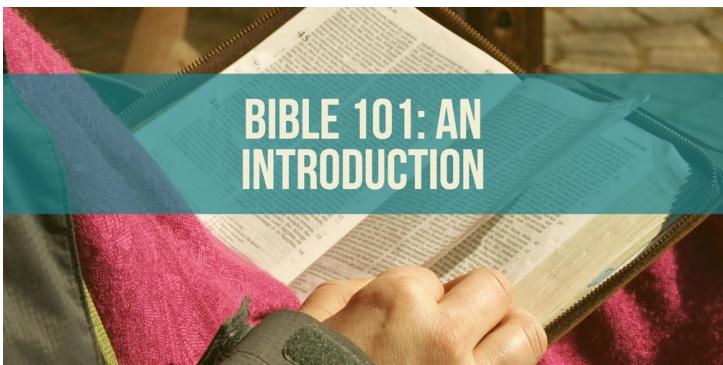
Our second United in Prayer Walk will be on September 11, 2021, from 11am to 2pm. Join many churches in Southbridge! The walk will start at 12 and will go through downtown Southbridge. We will meet again at 1pm for worship on the Town Common.

UNITED in PRAYER

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

GALATIANS 5:13

Verse of the Month



Bible study is usually on Monday evening (dinner at 6pm and study at 6:30. Please note that it will be moved to Wednesdays at 6pm from 7/14 to 8/11.

COMING UP IN OCTOBER

CHURCH HISTORY DAY



Our doors will be open for the community to view old articles and artifacts, and bring home some memories as well! Stay tune!



Bishop Devadhar (Bishop of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church) will be joining clergy and laity on August 21 from 4 to 6 pm at Trinity UMC in Springfield (361 Sumner Ave). Light refreshments will be available.

This is a time for all of us to share challenges, joys, and questions.

Interested in going and meeting the Bishop? See Pastor Sabina, we will carpool from the church.

Devotional by Mike Binckle

"Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." — Matthew 26:31-34

The only reason we are shocked when we stumble is because of our own religious pride. God is never surprised, disillusioned, or confused by our failings. At the Last Supper, when Jesus said, "All of you will stumble tonight," Peter slammed his hand down on the table and said, "Wait a minute! I will never stumble." Like many of us, Peter had more confidence in his own dedication to the Lord than he had in the Lord's dedication to him. His relationship with Jesus was based on misplaced confidence in his own devotion. For this reason, Peter was probably the only one shocked when the rooster crowed and the sound of his third denial was still echoing off the walls. Though every believer's personal dedication to God is absolutely crucial, we must understand that our dedication to the Lord is only an outcome of His dedication to us.

Lord, it is my intention to live a sinless life before You. But in my own strength that is impossible. It is only through Your powerful gift of righteousness that I can stand before You, clothed in Your righteousness, and none of my own.

The strength of our commitment and obedience is in the drawing power of Jesus's tender leadership.

Pastor's Corner

(Conclusion)

We had started a small pollinator garden in the front of the church and named it “Trey’s Garden”. Donations of money, flowers, soil and manpower started pouring in and the garden has now expanded to the entire front of the church. And it continues growing! Trey’s family spent hours tilling, carrying dirt, planting and more! They also started coming to worship and even “fixing things” around the church.

Our own congregation has felt a new spirit running through it, a renewal of sorts.

Trey, this is all for you, in your name. We know you are now with Jesus, at peace, whole. You were a gift, a loan from God for a short time. You may not have been a good fit for this life but we know you now have a new life with God, a full life. You are loved unconditionally, accepted, and you can now call yourself a Christian because Jesus is with you.

We will miss you. Until we see you again, be well my friend.

With peace, gratitude and grace,

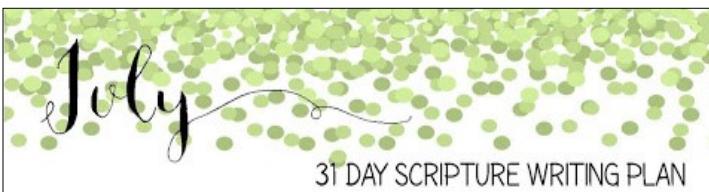
Pastor Sabina



Trey’s Garden,
the beginning



What is a pollinator Garden?
See page 6



EACH OF THE SCRIPTURES BELOW TAKES TEN MINUTES OR LESS TO COPY OUT. COMMIT TO SPENDING TEN MINUTES EACH DAY LISTENING TO GOD'S VOICE AS YOU SIMPLY COPY THESE TEXTS OUT OF YOUR BIBLE.

Week 1

- DAY 1- PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9
- DAY 2- JOHN 14:23-27
- DAY 3- JOHN 14: 28-31
- DAY 4- 2 TIMOTHY 1:6-12
- DAY 5- PSALM 94:12-15
- DAY 6-PSALM 94:16-19
- DAY 7- JOSHUA 1:7-9

Week 3

- DAY 15- PSALM 55: 9-14
- DAY 16- PSALM 55: 16-23
- DAY 17- PSALM 118: 5-9
- DAY 18- PSALM 118: 10-14
- DAY 19- ROMANS 8: 1-5
- DAY 20- ROMANS 8: 6-10
- DAY 21- ROMANS 8: 11-15

Week 2

- DAY 8-1 PETER 5: 5-8
- DAY 9-1 PETER 5: 9-11
- DAY 10- LUKE 12: 22-26
- DAY 11- LUKE 12: 27-30
- DAY 12- LUKE 12: 31-34
- DAY 13- LUKE 12: 35-40
- DAY 14- PSALM 55: 1-8

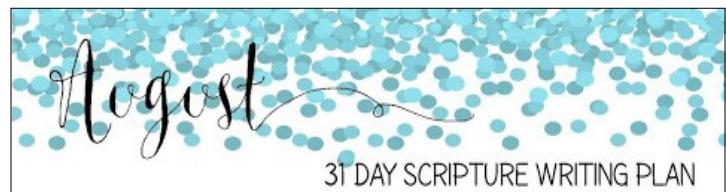
Week 4

- DAY 22- ROMANS 8: 16-21
- DAY 23- ROMANS 8: 22-27
- DAY 24- ROMANS 8: 28-33
- DAY 25- ROMANS 8: 34- 39
- DAY 26- ROMANS 15: 1-6
- DAY 27- ROMANS 15: 7-13
- DAY 28- ISAIAH 26: 3-8

Week 5

- DAY 29- ISAIAH 26: 9-13
- DAY 30- LUKE 12: 6-10
- DAY 31- CHOOSE YOUR OWN VERSES

*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.
Psalm 119:18*



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Week 1

- DAY 1-1 JOHN 1:1-4
- DAY 2-1 JOHN 1:5-7
- DAY 3-1 JOHN 1:8-10
- DAY 4-GALATIANS 5:13-15
- DAY 5- GALATIANS 5:16-18
- DAY 6-GALATIANS 5:19-21
- DAY 7- GALATIANS 5:22-26

Week 3

- DAY 15- PSALM 32:4-6
- DAY 16- PSALM 32:7-11
- DAY 17- MARK 2:15-17
- DAY 18- JOHN 8:12-14
- DAY 19- JOHN 8:15-18
- DAY 20- JOHN 8:19-20
- DAY 21- ROMANS 2:1-3

Week 2

- DAY 8-ROMANS 7:4-6
- DAY 9- ROMANS 7:7-8
- DAY 10- ROMANS 7:9-12
- DAY 11- ROMANS 7:13-15
- DAY 12- ROMANS 7:16-20
- DAY 13- ROMANS 7:21-25
- DAY 14-PSALM 32:1-3

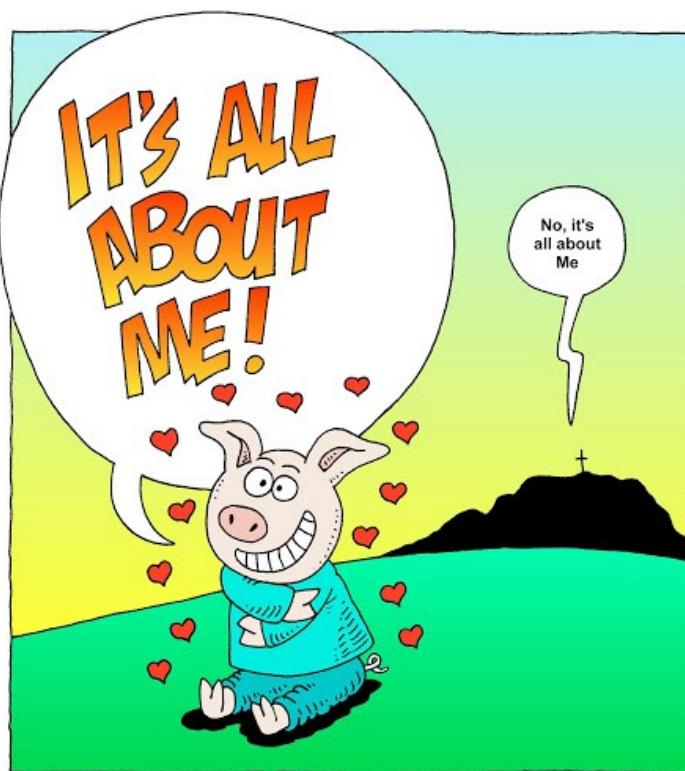
Week 4

- DAY 22- ROMANS 2:4-6
- DAY 23- ROMANS 2:7-11
- DAY 24- ROMANS 2:12-16
- DAY 25- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-3
- DAY 26- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4-6
- DAY 27- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-12
- DAY 28- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:13-15

Week 5

- DAY 29- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-18
- DAY 30- PROVERBS 21:1-3
- DAY 31- CHOOSE YOUR OWN VERSE

*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.
Psalm 119:18*



What is a pollinator garden?

In simple terms, a pollinator garden is one that attracts bees, butterflies, moths, hummingbirds or other beneficial creatures that transfer pollen from flower to flower, or in some cases, within flowers.

Planting a pollinator garden is more important than you may realize, and even a small garden can make a huge difference as pollinators have suffered greatly from loss of habitat, misuse of chemicals and spread of invasive plant and animal species.

Many pollinators have disappeared and others are endangered.

A flower must be pollinated in order for fertilization to occur, with fruit and seed production dependent upon fertilization. Approximately 75 percent of all food crops grown in the United States depend on pollinator animals such as insects, reptiles, birds and some mammals.

STORY OF AN HYMN

"Grace Alone"

**Words and Music by Scott Wesley Brown
and Jeff Nelson.**

The Song is based on scripture from Ephesians, Chapter 2: verses 8-10

"Grace Alone"

1. Every promise we can make, every prayer and step of faith, every difference we will make is only by his grace. Every mountain we will climb, every ray of hope we shine, every blessing left behind is only by his grace.

Refrain: Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown he will provide. Christ in us our Cornerstone; we will go forth in grace alone.

2. Every soul we long to reach, every heart we hope to teach, everywhere we share his peace is only by his grace. Every loving word we say, every tear we wipe away, every sorrow turned to praise is only by his grace.

Refrain

When Martha Whitmore Hickman read through the words of this hymn, two things came to mind. One is the sentence from Georges Bernanos novel "The Diary of a Country Priest", in which the protagonist says, at the end of the book, "All is grace."

The second thing that came to mind is a scene that took place several years ago. In church one Sunday, and at one point in the service a woman rose to sing. She had been a singer all of her adult life. She had struggled with many circumstances: poverty, discrimination, turbulent family relationships. She was struggling now with cancer, and she knew that she would die. Parishioners were astonished that she could summon the strength and courage to sing.

The song was, "Lord, Don't Move This Mountain"-- her rich contralto voice clear and strong, asking the Lord in song for nothing more than the strength to climb. Except for her voice, the room was utterly still. She sang the song through to the end. Her hand caught at the side of the lectern. She sat down. It was her last time to come to church. She was transfigured, and so was everyone.

We all have our stories, times when we have felt the indwelling presence of God so strongly that it seemed almost to pass through our skin and make us one with creation. Or times when we have seen in the life of others a radiance and peace that seem totally inconsistent with the difficult circumstances of their life. This is the "grace alone" that this hymn celebrates.

Scripture: Ephesians Chapter 2: verse 8-10

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the Gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Prayer: Eternal God, may we recognize your hand in the blessings that are ours. Amen



What is a Psalm of Lament?

Lament is a major theme in the Bible and particularly in the book of Psalms. To lament is to express deep sorrow, grief, or regret. The psalms of lament are beautiful poems or hymns expressing human struggles. The psalms of lament comprise the largest category of psalms, making up about one third of the entire book of Psalms. These psalms are prayers that lay out a troubling situation to the Lord and make a request for His help. The psalms of lament are poetic hymns meant to be sung to God. They deal with issues that were and still are central to the life of faith for individual believers and the whole community of faith. The lament psalms express intense emotions, real human struggles, and the anguish of heart experienced by the people of Israel as they lived out their faith individually and corporately.



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Sundays	10 am:	Worship service at the church and live worship on Facebook
Mondays:	6:30pm:	"Bible 101" small group (dinner at 6pm)
Wednesdays:	3:30 pm:	EspressSoul
Fridays:	1 pm—6pm:	Carol's Closet
	5:00 pm:	Rosilda's Kitchen (Free meal)
Saturday:	10 am—2 pm:	Carol's Closet