THE CORINTHIAN

MEN'S NIGHT OUT

Thursday, Oct. 8
5:45pm Bost Memorial Hall

Putting on the Armor
Dinner and Fellowship
RSVP

TRUNK OR TREAT

Sunday, Oct. 18
4:30-6:30pm

We need volunteers!
If you are willing and able, sign up!

YOUTH FALL RETREAT

Oct. 30–Nov. 1
Camp Hanes, Grades 6-12

Click for more info and to register

PASTOR'S PEN

By Pastor Nick Perrin

Dear Church Family,

So… who here remembers 2020? If you don't, that's okay. It probably only means that you've been blocking it. After all, 2020 was a really, really bad year. So bad, in fact, that 2020 was awarded a "Special Governors' Award for Worst Calendar Year EVER" by people who are supposed to know about this stuff. Who could argue with that? 2020 was universally bad.

Sometimes we experience years that are normal for others, but bad for us personally. In his memoir, Michael J. Fox looks back on 2018 as "a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad year." For me, my bad year will probably go down as 1977 – my eighth-grade year ('nuf said). After a calendar year full of scandals involving various Windsor Castle notables, Queen Elizabeth II declared 1991 not an annus mirabilis (wonderful year) but an annus horribilis (awful year) for the royal family. You don't have to be a Latin scholar to put together that you'd rather have "mirabilis" than "horribilis."

Pastor Nick Perrin

Senior Pastor

Now I'm still newish around here, but our church family knows a thing or two about bad years. Though we are still a way from New Year's Eve, I think we can "call this one." In the church business, they say that you're only one resignation away from a crisis. So, what do you call it when several staff depart within a few months of each other and for different reasons? You call it an annus horribilis, maybe even a community trauma.

People respond to trauma in different ways. Listening to people at Corinth over the summer, I have heard expressions of apprehension, hurt, anger, sadness, and regret. I also suspect that many – but not all – of these expressions of emotions were our way of processing grief – grief over a past that we will never recover. When grief shows up at your door, it usually means that anxiety will be coming soon enough after he parks the car (as C. S. Lewis once said, "No one ever told me that grief felt so much like fear"). This year has left our church with a lot of emotions to entertain, but grief is the one we see through the doorbell camera. ***(Continued on Page 3)***

Refresh for Moms first weekend event!
In case you missed it, this fall Refresh for Moms is piloting something new: a WEEKEND gathering for moms.

October Refresh Events:
Wednesday, Oct. 21
9:30–11:30am
Bost Memorial Hall

Saturday, Oct. 24
10am–12pm
Mitchell House Sunroom

Click here to register for childcare (ages 4 and under).

Same heart, same community. A new time, just for you!

Corinth Calendar

Visit corinthtoday.org/calendar to find more Corinth events.

This week's Wednesday Night Dinner Menu:
– Pork Roast
– Roasted Vegetables
– Cooked Apples
– Corn Muffins, Rolls
– Dirt Cake
– Salad Bar

"Parents of Prodigals" Book Study with Brandi Long

If you're walking through the pain of a prodigal relationship, you don't have to walk alone. Click here for info and to sign up.

Corinth Adults Over 50 Annual International Potluck Dinner

Join us on Saturday, Oct. 10 at 5:30pm in the Abernethy Student Center for a meal and fellowship. Click here to RSVP.

To add something to the prayer list, email Barbara Bell, bbell@corinthtoday.org.
Join us for a time of prayer every Sunday 8–8:10am and 10:30–10:40am in the Althouse Archives room.

Recent Deaths
- Brent Helton (Charlotte) Son of Ricki, ricway@charter.net and Wayne, whelton64@charter.net Helton

Health & Other Concerns
- James Ross (Charlotte CMC Hospital) our landscaper; "silent" blood clot, in danger of losing his leg
- Doug Abbott (healing from sepsis) Mollyrose Wright's father, mollyroseabbott@gmail.com
- Beth Holland (home; injured in fall) b.gh@charter.net
- Chad Miller (CVMC 443 for a stroke; Rehab soon) His wife is Andrea Miller, our Childcare Coordinator, andrea@corinthtoday.org
- Jane Mosteller (successful neck surgery Oct 2) janepmosteller@gmail.com

PASTOR'S PEN CONT.

Grief is not so much a problem to be solved as a journey to be walked through. Many of you reading this will be familiar with the five legs of the grief journey: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. From where I'm standing, I see Corinth family members all over the spectrum in terms of how they're processing the loss of yesteryear. On any given Sunday, some are at the anger stage: they're just mad and they're not even sure whom to be mad at. The family sitting right next to them, however, has reconciled themselves to the new reality, as transitional as that reality is. But then, come next Sunday, everyone's in a different place again. Three steps forward, two steps back.

Sunday before last, Pastor Bob (my predecessor at Corinth) wonderfully reminded us that all pastors are interim pastors and that no church is defined by a single person/leader – not Pastor Bob, not Pastor Nick, not Pastor Amy, not Pastor Paul, not Pastor Kevin, and not Pastor Barbara. This list of names is merely a roll call of interim servants, who, dependable as they may be, should not be depended on. Because Jesus Christ has graciously brought together this glorious community of believers, our mission and our community must depend solely on the presence of Jesus Christ. And if our mission and community were to depend on anything else or anyone else, we would all be in a lot of trouble.

Some of you reading this have grieved our transition, but you are as "in" as you have ever been at Corinth; in fact, some of you have stepped forward and you're actually more "in" than ever. I am thankful for you. Meanwhile, others of you have stepped back from Corinth and are not quite sure when, if ever, you will step back in. If that's where you are, please know that I am no less thankful for you. Stepping back may well be exactly what the Spirit is leading you to do, and I want to support you and encourage you in that journey. I hope and trust that Corinth is the kind of community where you can walk through your stages of grief at your pace, without being burdened by anyone's expectation that your grief path will follow some clean, linear progression. The rest of us will be there for you – to love well and listen well, and all without judgment on how the Lord leads us. That includes me, by the way. Here's my cell: 630-247-3218.

Wherever you are on the grief spectrum, however much your grief feels like fear right now, I want to close by issuing a reminder and a heads-up. First, the reminder: Corinth is not going away. And that is because we serve a God who is far bigger and far more resilient than any challenges that have been thrown our way. We are not just positioned for survival but, I'm convinced, we are poised for transformation. After all, God is in the business of transforming our horrible years into miraculous years – even if we might not perceive that transformation right away.

As I said, wherever individual Corinth people are in their grieving process, we as a church will give space for that process to play out – as long as it takes. At the same time (here comes the heads-up), that doesn't mean we as a church are pulling over to the side of the road: we must continue both to look forward to what God has for us and to move forward, advancing both our mission and our strategic priorities. Speaking of strategic priorities, you'll be hearing about some exciting, new opportunities in a few weeks. We need to continue to band together as we get past the past.

God is on the move. And he has been on the move, even through what may go down as Corinth's "worst calendar year" in decades. I'll say it one more time: God can take what is horrible and transform it into what is miraculous. Let's continue to move forward expecting him to do no less.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Nick