

AUGUST 2022

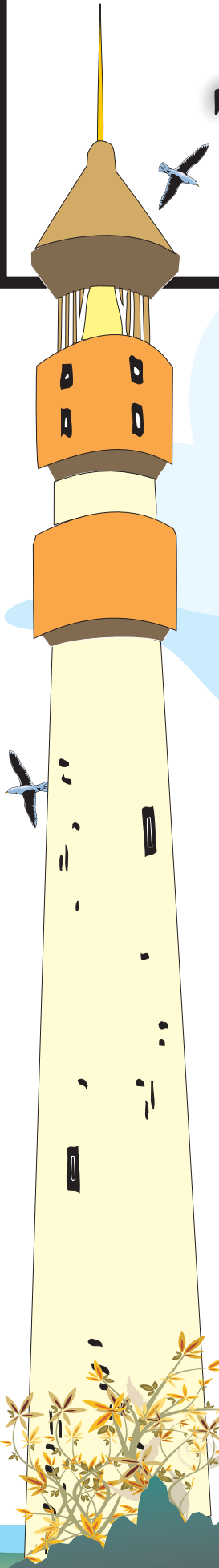
The Lighthouse

The Lord, the Eye of the Hurricane
Rev. Shannon Philio, Assistant Pastor

Well, hurricane season has returned once again. Constant torrential rain, thunder, lightning, powerful 75-200 mph winds, destructive storm surges, hour after hour. Please join me in prayer for the Lord's mercy and compassion upon the MS Gulf Coast this year. I was two years old when Hurricane Camille struck, and my family and I survived that storm and all other hurricanes since. In the center of the hurricane is the eye, a place of perfect calm. It's eerie. Though the winds violently blow and rage all around it, only light winds blow in the eye. Hurricane eyes can be 20-30 miles wide and may extend 400 miles. I remember as a kid throwing the football and riding my bike in the eye. In the eye, there is no fear, there is no panic. The best word to describe it is peace.

So with us in the hurricanes of our lives. With the Lord as our center, there is calm and peace, even in the darkest of life's storms, as in the eye of a hurricane. Those hurricanes in our lives can be occupational or financial storms. They can be emotional or psychological. Perhaps the hurricane you are facing is a physical trial or relational storm. Maybe the hurricane you are facing is an academical storm, learning something for work or school. Perhaps the largest and most powerful hurricane we all are facing, however, is spiritual, combatting Satan, the world, and the flesh, humbling our hearts, mortifying sin, putting it to death, and walking in the Light with the Christian armor of Ephesians 6:10-18 and then clothed with the Holy Spirit. Zechariah 4:6 says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord." Ephesians 5:18 commands us all to be filled with the Spirit. And Galatians 5:25 tells us to live by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit.

Jesus says in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." In Mark 4:35-41 and Luke 8:22-25, we read of Jesus and His disciples crossing the Sea of Galilee when a furious squall arose with the waves breaking over the boat. The boat was swamped. The experienced disciple fishermen



were terrified. Jesus was asleep in the stern. Literally, sleeping in the midst of the storm. The disciples woke Jesus, and He stood up and calmed the storm and then asked His disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you not have faith?" I think of Peter chained between two soldiers in a Jerusalem jail by order of King Herod in Acts 12:1-7. King Herod had just put James, the brother of John, to death. Certainly Peter must have been fearful he too would share a similar fate. However, what do we find Peter doing, bound with two chains between two soldiers? He was sleeping. The angel actually had to strike Peter in the side and yell, "Wake up!"

God desires for you to have that type of peace, His peace, in the midst of the storms in your life. Isaiah 26:3 says, "You, O Lord, will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." And the very next verse, Isaiah 26:4, exhorts us all to "trust in the Lord forever for the Lord is an everlasting rock." Psalm 34:14 says to seek peace and pursue it. Peace is only found in Jesus Christ. Psalm 34:14 points forward to John 14:27. Seek Christ! Pursue Christ! Receive Christ as your Lord and Savior. And then trust in Him always, and have faith, especially in life's storms. God says, "I will be the eye in the hurricanes and storms of your life. Trust Me!" And when God is the eye in the hurricanes in your life, you can experience His peace. That's the secret.

We can experience Christ's peace through prayer. Philippians 4:4-9 provide us great guidance on finding God's peace. Verse 4 says to "rejoice in the Lord always." Paul then repeats himself, "I say it again: Rejoice!" Why? Verse 5. "The Lord is near." God is with you always. Jesus says in Matthew 28:20 He is with us always unto the end of this age. His name Emmanuel means "God with Us." Psalm 46:1 says the Lord is an always-present help in times of trouble. Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything." Don't be anxious about life's hurricanes. Easier said than done, I know. What are we to do then? Verse 6 continues, "But in every situation, pray with thanksgiving." Why thanksgiving? Because we know God hears and answers our prayers. 1 John 5:14-15 remind us that if we ask anything according to God's will He hears us and answers. So we pray with thanksgiving. And verse 7 of Philippians 4 says the peace of God which transcends all understanding will protect your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Your hearts? In other words, your emotions, your feelings, when you are just ready to break down. And your minds, your thoughts,

your frets, when you just can't quit obsessing over the past, the present, and the future, or usually, as in my case, all three at the same time. The Lord gives peace through prayer. And then in Philippians 4:8-9, we learn by sustaining a righteous thought life, thinking upon that which is noble and true and praiseworthy (verse 8), and by living a godly life in word and deed (verse 9), walking in faith and trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and King, our Savior and Redeemer, we are promised the God of peace will be with us, "And the God of peace will be with you." So, not only can we experience the peace of God, but we are now also promised the God of peace. Isn't that great? Praise Him from Whom all blessings flow!

Something very important I want all of us to understand. Peace does not necessarily mean deliverance. Peace and deliverance are two separate things. Many of us are making peace dependent upon deliverance or problem resolution. In fact, we may not be seeking peace after all but rather deliverance. The promise in Scripture is peace in the midst of the storm and turmoil, not necessarily deliverance or a trouble free life. The promise of Scripture is the eye of the hurricane. Salvation and deliverance are promised in the Scripture too, of course. But until the Lord provides them, we have to be patient. And in the period of such patience and prayer, the Lord promises us John 14:27 and Philippians 4:4-9 peace. Don't make peace dependent upon deliverance or problem resolution because they are two separate promises. Jerry Bridge in his book The Practice of Godliness writes, "First, examine your motives. You may not be experiencing peace because you are still holding onto deliverance instead of peace. Are you looking for the wrong answer? Secondly, look to the Holy Spirit to bring you that peace. Remember, peace is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). It is His work to produce peace within you. Yours is to cultivate by prayer, asking and seeking, and we must be content until we experience it." You can experience peace now in the midst of your storm and even sleep like Jesus and Peter did. Psalm 3:5 – "I lie down and sleep for the Lord sustains me." Psalm 4:8 – "In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

The days ahead in our world, our nation, and our lives are uncertain. The days ahead may be dark and scary for some of us. However, the Lord desires for us to experience His peace in the midst of life's storms and hurricanes. If you listen to K-LOVE Christian radio on your FM radio band,

channel 107.1, you might hear an encouraging song by Ryan Stevenson entitled "In the Eye of the Storm." The chorus reminds us:

In the eye of the storm,

You remain in control.

And in the middle of the war,

You guard my soul.

You alone are the anchor

When my sails are torn.

Your love surrounds me,

In the eye of the storm.

And so I pray according to the Aaronic blessing of Numbers 6:24-26 that the Lord's peace be upon you and yours. If Senior Pastor Horn (Tim) or I can do anything to help you find or sustain the Lord's peace, please don't hesitate to call. Shalom.

*And now an update from our
missionaries to Chile,
John & Cathy Rug...*



Dear friends,

We are pleased to present to you the newest member of our family, Eartha (yes, John's previous dog's name was Bertha. Don't blame us. She was already named! haha). John and Eartha arrived home on May 12 after being introduced and trained together for 3 weeks at The Seeing Eye in Morristown, NJ.

Eartha is a happy, sweet and affectionate puppy, Her favorite resting spot is anywhere she can have contact with her people! She enjoys her work and as soon as John picks up her harness she is alert and begins whining because she wants to go for a walk!



We just wanted to bring you all up-to-date about Eartha. However, we also have some immediate prayer requests.

1. Unfortunately, it appears we will not be at 100% supported in order to return to Chile in August. At this time, we are at 82% of our total support, which means we are still lacking a considerable amount to get back to the field. If your church, and/or another church in your area would like to hear about our ministry in Chile, both in church planting and in mercy ministry with people who are blind or have low vision, please let us know. We would love to spend some time with you. If you or your church were planning on giving but just haven't "pulled the trigger" yet, please consider doing so sooner than later.

2. Our second urgent prayer request is for funding for CEMIPRE. Our board members are actively looking for support from within Chile so that soon, CEMIPRE can become primarily funded through Chilean funds. There has been a significant drop in giving to this project (CEMIPRE 90831) such that we are currently averaging donations between \$450 and \$500 a month, although expenses are closer to \$3000 a month. Funds must then be transferred from our ministry account to make up the shortfall. As you can imagine, this is making it even harder to get back to the field. Please pray for wisdom as to whether the Lord would have you give a one

time gift or an ongoing pledge to keep CEMIPRE running. In order to acquire the needed Chilean funds, we need to hire an Executive Director whose sole purpose would be to find local funding. However, this person's salary would add an additional \$1000.00 per month to the need.

We are seeing amazing things happening in CEMIPRE. More people are coming to us for help, and the Lord has been providing student interns from the universities in the areas of Audiology and Speech, Psychology and Occupational Therapy. Praise the Lord! In some cases the OTs are able to go to the homes of some who aren't able to physically make it to our facility. All our rooms in our buildings are in use, and sometimes it seems as though it would be impossible to accommodate everyone, and yet the Lord works it out!

As far as the church plant in Concon goes, we are hearing great things, and that attendance has grown significantly. We itch to be back in the fray! Please continue to pray for the church in Concon and the church planting team there.

We realize that everyone is feeling the economic crunch we are experiencing, but at the same time, we know the Lord makes no mistakes, and seeing the exciting growth of CEMIPRE we feel certain that it is His will for it to continue. Please pray with us to that end.

We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. – *1 Thessalonians 1:2*

In Him,

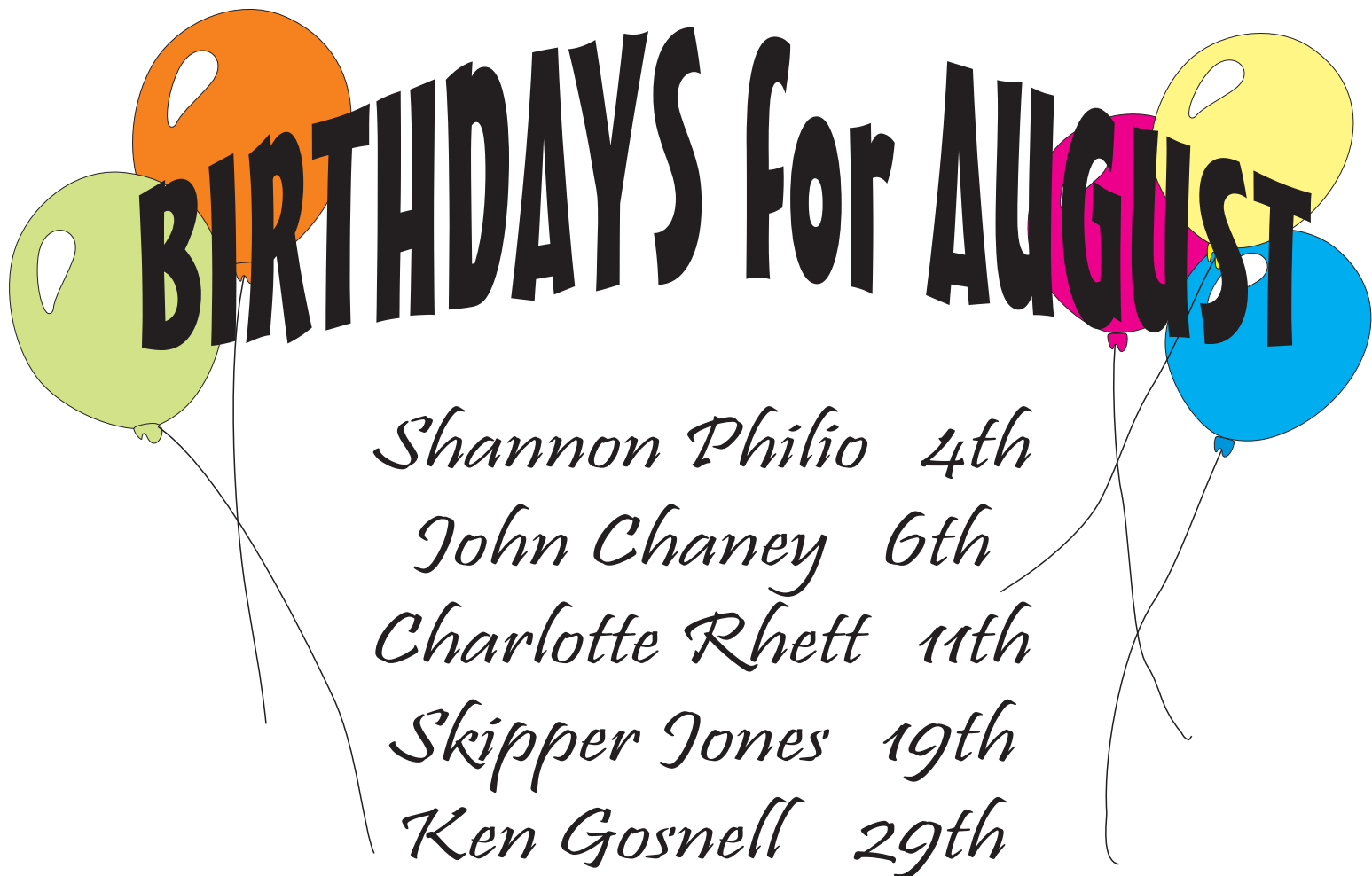
John and Cathy

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CEMIPRE #90831

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John's email: jrug.mtw@gmail.com
Cathy's email: crug@mtwsa.org

Our missionaries love to hear from us! Please consider sending John & Cathy a note or giving them a call.



Dates to Remember for August

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| August 6 | Men's Breakfast at 8:00am in the Fellowship Hall |
| August 7 | Communion at the morning service |
| August 14 | Monthly luncheon after the worship service, please bring a dish to share |
| August 21 | Communion at the evening service |

Join us for Sunday School starting August 7th, as Pastor Horn will start teaching on the book of Revelation.