

# Gray Weekly News



Week Leading to Sunday, September 4, 2022

## Forgiveness: Your Health Depends on It

[www.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org)

What Jesus says about forgiveness? “And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.” *Luke 23:34*

Whether it’s a simple spat with your spouse or long-held resentment toward a family member or friend, unresolved conflict can go deeper than you may realize—it may be affecting your physical health. The good news: Studies have found that the act of forgiveness can reap huge rewards for your health, lowering the risk of heart attack; improving cholesterol levels and sleep; and reducing pain, blood pressure, and levels of anxiety, depression and stress. And research points to an increase in the forgiveness-health connection as you age.

“There is an enormous physical burden to being hurt and disappointed,” says Karen Swartz, M.D., director of the Mood Disorders Adult Consultation Clinic at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. Chronic anger puts you into a fight-or-flight mode, which results in numerous changes in heart rate, blood pressure and immune response. Those changes, then, increase the risk of depression, heart disease and diabetes, among other conditions. Forgiveness, however, calms stress levels, leading to improved health.

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## 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost



1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:12-17

Psalm 103

Mark 1:1-17

**“I Believe in Forgiveness”**

## News and Notes

### THIS WEEK

**Sunday, September 4**

Please join us on Sundays at 11 am. If you are unable to come in person, you can watch our livestream at [graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com](http://graymemorialumc.org/facebook.com) or [graymemorialumc.org/youtube](http://graymemorialumc.org/youtube), at 11 am or any time after that at [graymemorialumc.org/](http://graymemorialumc.org/)



If you have prayer requests, please contact Norma Adams, Jennifer Skinner or Gail Teems.

You may also call the church office at 850/385-6441 or send a text to 850/933-8469.

### Prayer Requests

Terry Witherspoon, co-worker of Tom Teems  
Annette and Myron Rhodes on the death of her mother  
Nancy Gibbons, Pastor Beth's mother  
Norma and Sam  
Anita's friend Lori suffering from breast cancer  
Toni's friend Bekah  
Patsy and Betty  
Jack, Randy, Jim & Jane Workman  
Joyce and Bob  
Juan's sister Norma  
Donna West, having health issues

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Can You Learn to Be More Forgiving? Forgiveness is not just about saying the words. "It is an active process in which you make a conscious decision to let go of negative feelings whether the person deserves it or not," Swartz says. As you release the anger, resentment and hostility, you begin to feel empathy, compassion and sometimes even affection for the person who wronged you.

Studies have found that some people are just naturally more forgiving. Consequently, they tend to be more satisfied with their lives and to have less depression, anxiety, stress, anger and hostility. People who hang on to grudges, however, are more likely to experience severe depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as other health conditions. But that doesn't mean that they can't train themselves to act in healthier ways. In fact, 62 percent of American adults say they need more forgiveness in their personal lives, according to a survey by the nonprofit Fetzer Institute.

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Forgiveness is a choice, Swartz says. “You are choosing to offer compassion and empathy to the person who wronged you.” The following steps can help you develop a more forgiving attitude—and benefit from better emotional and physical health.

**Reflect and remember:** That includes the events themselves, and also how you reacted, how you felt, and how the anger and hurt have affected you since.

**Empathize with the other person:** For instance, if your spouse grew up in an alcoholic family, then anger when you have too many glasses of wine might be more understandable, says Swartz.

**Forgive deeply:** Simply forgiving someone because you think you have no other alternative or because you think your religion requires it may be enough to bring some healing. But one study found that people whose forgiveness came in part from understanding that no one is perfect were able to resume a normal relationship with the other person, even if that person never apologized. Those who only forgave in an effort to salvage the relationship wound up with a worse relationship.

**Let go of expectations:** An apology may not change your relationship with the other person or elicit an apology from him/her. If you don't expect either, you won't be disappointed.

**Decide to forgive:** Once you make that choice, seal it with an action. If you don't feel you can talk to the person who wronged you, write about your forgiveness in a journal or even talk about it to someone else in your life whom you trust.

**Forgive yourself:** The act of forgiving includes forgiving yourself. For instance, if your spouse had an affair, recognize that the affair is not a reflection of your worth, says Swartz. Forgiving

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**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Jenny Brown Baxter and her husband Victor welcomed their daughter, Vivianna Santina Baxter, on August 24. The family is doing well and, of course, Claudia is overjoyed to be a grandmother! Welcome to the world Vivianna!



## ***SHOE DRIVE FOR ASTORIA PARK ELEMENTARY***

As you know, over the last year we've been working to build more partnerships with nearby elementary schools. We provided the staff at Ruediger Elementary with lunch twice and some of our members volunteered at their end of the year fun-day celebration. In an effort to broaden our impact, we reached out to Astoria Park Elementary. We found out they have many students who need shoes. **This September we will be collecting new and gently used children's shoes in sizes 3.5-7. Terry Williams has graciously agreed to oversee the collection!** Everything we collect will be taken to Astoria Park in early October. These shoes will be put to good use. When children come to school without shoes, with worn out shoes, or shoes that don't fit, the school counselor will be able to provide them with a new pair. You can bring in donations as soon as this Sunday and the collection will continue through September 30.

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Welcome **NEW**  
**MEMBERS**

### **NEW MEMBERS TO BE RECEIVED IN SEPTEMBER**

We will be receiving new members on Sunday, September 11. If you've been attending Gray for some time but haven't yet joined, let's make it official! Contact the church office for more information.

## EVENTS THIS WEEK

Wednesday, August 31	7 pm	Bible Study with Todd Clark via Zoom
Thursday, September 1	10 am 5:30 pm	Bible Study with John Rogers Choir Practice
Sunday, September 4	11 am	Worship Service

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### Next month:

Saturday, September 10	8 am to 12 noon	Church Work Day
	4-7 pm	Town & Country Neighborhood Fall Block Party
Sunday, September 11	4 pm	Charge Conference with District Supt. Wayne Wiatt – Open to All