



# The Grapevine

Clarksbury United Methodist Church

15924 General Puller Highway, Hardyville, Virginia October 2020

[www.clarksburyumc.com](http://www.clarksburyumc.com)

Our Mission:

**To receive and share God's love through worship, education, service and outreach.**

## Pastor Ken's Corner

*Matthew 22:15-22 (NRSV)*

*<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. <sup>16</sup> So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. <sup>17</sup> Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" <sup>18</sup> But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup> Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" <sup>21</sup> They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." <sup>22</sup> When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.*

The seasons change and fall is here. We can see the leaves starting to change colors and that is pretty. Those same leaves will be falling into the yards and making more work for most of us. However, I'm going to enjoy the less humid temperatures.

Where has this year gone? It seems to have gone from Easter to October so quickly.

Before we know it, it will be Advent and Christmas...I will stop there and not get ahead of myself.

All of us need to keep our prayers going up for the social tensions playing out in much of the country according to news reports. Are they overplayed and excessive? I rest firm in my faith that **God is still in control, and we are safe in His care**, despite the turmoil of this world.

I am excited with how well our **Prayer Warriors/Prayer Partners** are working at keeping us all connected. I really enjoy the feedback coming from those in our **small groups** and the **Sunday gatherings** we have started at the Maritime Museum at 6 p.m. for now; we will adjust for sunset and weather. Thank you, Randy, Eileen and Jim, for such great music and song which adds so much to the joy of the nurturing aspect of these groups for us all as we continue the **social distancing and semi-isolation**. Thank you, Linda Bartz, for spearheading this project. Please contact Linda or Warren if you are interested in more information about this. It is so good to see each other and to be with friends and brothers and sisters "in person" again.

Thank you to all those who have been doing **drive-bys** and **quick porch and patio visits**. All the phone calls and cards sent keep us connected even when we can't be together in Church. We can be very inventive in finding new ways to stay connected when we put our minds together.

Speaking of Church, our online services, both Facebook and YouTube, are continuing to garner over 400 views each week. Becky is the one who gets credit for the quality and varied participation in these worship services. If you would like to help in some way, contact Becky. Thank you, Lucy, for the lovely flowers. Thank you, members of the congregation, who participate as soloists, singers and readers in the production of these weekly services. All of you have contributed so much to each service, even you at home when you give us such uplifting feedback. **We are a Church**, in the truest sense of the word...**together**, through the power of our Lord Jesus, through the grace of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

I pray that we continue to get some comfort and joy from these online services. Until the time we can be together in person, we will continue to hold each other close through the **common connection** we have amid our **bonds of worship, service and prayer**.

**God works wonders where we see challenges. Keep the conversations flowing.**

I am also very proud, beyond words, with how faithful and loyal you all have been in supporting the church with prayers and tithes, in spite of our inability to be able to support with our presence.

The **Cryer Center Mobile Food Pantry** will be at Clarksbury on **Saturday, October 3**. Our church has the lead again. The Food Pantry and the Soup Ministry have modified the way these ministries are conducted to be in compliance with the CDC and Virginia COVID-19 requirements. Warren and Kathy Wright will supply additional directions to the participants. For the rest of you...we always need prayers; so even if you can't be here to work the Food Pantry, pray for us and the people we serve.

Our **Healthy Church Team (HCT)** (*Pastor Ken Cleveland; Warren Wright, Lay Leader; Suzanne Ramsburg, Financial Secretary; David Dobson, Worship Committee Chair; Eileen Crittenden, Medical; Cheryl Teagle, Nominations and Leadership; Jerry Dant, Nurture Chair; Lee White, Trustees; Becky Wilhite, Trustees, Worship; Betty Tate, SPPRC Chair*) has met three times to look at the COVID protocols for resuming in-person services. **We will continue to meet as there are changes in guidance or other changes.**

Based on inputs from other churches and the composition of our congregation and the restrictions in the protocols which are **MANDATORY** for each Phase/Stage per Bishop Lewis's direction, Clarksbury's HCT has determined that we still see our best avenue is to continue **on-line services** until we are moved into Phase/Stage 3, which is the closest to normal worship. If you have questions or would like any more information on our move to resume in-person services, contact me or any of the other HCT members.

These directions and requirements are spelled out in <http://doc.vaumc.org/News2020/TAM.docx> and a new poster developed for Health Acknowledgment provided here <http://doc.vaumc.org/News2020/HealthAcknowledgementPoster.pdf>

If you have entered the church lately you will have seen the new Health Acknowledgment forms for **single person** entries, the Health Acknowledgment poster, and the excel sign-up sheet for **group gatherings and meetings**.

Fill them out as appropriate and put them in the box on the counter.

We need to continue to wipe down all surfaces with which we come in contact using the wipes and disinfectant spray bottles and towels provided on the table as you enter. Clean when you come in and as you leave.

*<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. <sup>16</sup> So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. <sup>17</sup> Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?"*

Matthew describes a very perilous environment for Christ in which to conduct His ministries. Jesus is always being monitored for the smallest issue or statement that might be used against him by the Church elders and leaders. They even actively tried to trap Him into making statements that would have Him challenge Roman authority in order to give cause to the Romans to arrest Him for sedition or rebellion. Notice how the question was worded to flatter Jesus and at the same time try to have Him make a seditious comment against the Romans or their Laws.

*<sup>18</sup> But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup> Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" <sup>21</sup> They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." <sup>22</sup> When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.*

Jesus knows why they have asked this question. He knows their intent, as Jesus knows each of our innermost thoughts and any "hidden agenda" that we may have. He knows our hearts and our intent, even better than we do. Jesus responds with wisdom that can't be twisted and used against Him.

*"Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."*

This comment is known to most of us. It provides a delineation for all of us for our secular allegiance and obedience and our ultimate spiritual obedience to the WORD of GOD.

We are in the world but not of the world; we follow traffic laws, tax laws, and many other secular laws. Yet, our ultimate spiritual obedience is owed to Jesus. He is the Way, He is the Truth, and He is the Life. We give to the world that which is the world's, and give to God the things that are His. This simple, irrefutable logic leaves those who have sought to trap Him with no recourse but to leave, amazed at His response.

Who is the one YOU count on for strength and reassurance in times of turmoil and fear? Who do you owe your praise and worship to? God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit are who we can depend upon even in these perilous times. **Jesus** is here with us always...to the end of the age!

How dangerous and perilous are our times? In the country? In the county? From COVID-19? From the social unrest? Even in times such as these we can count on **Jesus** to be a calming and PRESENT presence in our lives and in the WORLD around us.

Help me keep the Prayer Warrior/Partners e-mails updated as information and changes become available. Let us continue in faith and hope to be children of God infused with the Holy Spirit throughout all the travails and trials of life in this world.

Let us resolve to not let COVID-19 define who we are...let us be defined by the words, the example and the glory of our **Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ!** I take great joy in how each of you, as a congregation, has reacted to this ever changing situation. The very uncertainty of when anything will happen based on the data acquired by the Virginia Department of Health and the CDC is the moving target of COVID-19 status and response.

Please continue and, if possible, redouble your efforts to keep in contact with people by calling and caring for members of our congregation more closely than you might have otherwise done in NORMAL circumstances. Continue with those cards, letters, and calls which are so important in maintaining our connection as a family and as children of God. Call, text or email Warren or me and we will get anyone with that need connected with people who have offered this service.

May his GRACE, MERCY and LOVE be with you every day, and may every day your awareness of HIS presence through HIS unbreakable gifts to YOU grow.

**Peace & Grace,  
Pastor Ken**



*A Message from Your Lay Leader*  
*How Can I put Jesus 1<sup>st</sup> in my life?*  
*Warren Wright*



In the Gospel reading from Matthew 6:33, we hear these words, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Jesus tells us to seek first, not second, not third, not fourth, but first the Kingdom of God. We tend to use the word first just as another number in a sequence, but there is a priority in this number in Jesus' command. He's telling us to make this a top priority. So how do we do this? We call ourselves Christians, DO WE NOT? So how does a Christian grow in grace and in devotion, love, appreciation, and obedience to the things of God? We are so different, each one of us, we are people of different desires and within those desires we have many conflicts. All of us, as Christians, would like to be able to just push a button and say "from now on I'm going to make God first in my life." Well that'll work until something else occupies our desires, and then we don't want God first in our lives, but the desires that preoccupy us. Think about this, if we had God first in our lives consistently, we'd never sin, would we? So, how in the world do we become more consistent in elevating God to his proper place in our lives? Or straight to the point, how do we become more obedient to God? Plain and simple, we must recognize our weaknesses and the fact that we as human beings are inclined to sin. In 1st Thessalonians, Paul was giving his pep talk to the people of Thessalonica. He said, "we also thank God constantly for this: when you accepted God's word that you heard from us, you welcomed it for what it truly is. Instead of accepting it as a human message, you accepted it as God's message, and it continues to work in you who are believers. Brothers and Sisters, you became imitators of the churches of God in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus." Paul realized through his own trials and tribulations that putting Christ first in your life is sometimes difficult and often times not constant. Paul later encourages the Thessalonians to keep living the way you already are and even do better in how you live and please God- just as you have learned from us. You see Paul was encouraging constant Spiritual development. So how do we as 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians grow and put Jesus first in our lives? As the old Smith-Barney ad used to say "Do it the old fashioned way." Get yourself involved in Prayer Groups, Bible Studies, and Mission Work; use your Pastor to answer your questions. By becoming involved, you will learn what pleases God, and as Paul says, it means learning how to imitate Him in our different ways. If you're uncomfortable with groups, set aside your own personal Prayer time. The Scriptures tell us to meditate on the word of God day and night. I can't tell you how much time that should be and neither can anyone else.

That's between you and God. If prayer was something that Jesus saw as necessary for himself, how much more necessary must it be for you and I? In 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians, Paul tells us how important prayer is. Finally, Brothers and Sisters, pray for us so that the Lord's message will spread quickly and be honored just like it happened with you. Pray too that we will be rescued from inappropriate and evil people since everyone that we meet won't respond with faith. But the Lord is faithful and will give you strength and protect you from the evil one. Isn't that enough promise for you to put Jesus first in your life? As you go through the coming week, say to yourself, "I'm going to do everything possible to put Jesus first in my life, nothing else will be more important!" AMEN

Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd"

## *United Methodist Men News* *Warren Wright-UMM President*



The UMM will meet on Monday October 26th at 7 PM.

Remember that there are no membership or dues requirements to be a part of the United Methodist Men of Clarksbury, just a willingness to serve Jesus Christ within your church and community.

Mission-To Help Men Grow In Christ, So Others May Know Christ.

## *Soup Ministry*

*Kathy Wright; Lucy Blevins, Val Bradley, and Diane Faulkner*



After a summer break, requested by recipients, the soup ministry will begin back on the THIRD MONDAY of September (Sept. 21). The recipients will not receive soup the first Monday, as in the past, because we deliver to them the groceries from the Cryer Center Mobile Food Pantry the first Saturday of each month. This change has been made for the health and safety of our recipients as well as for the person who makes the delivery. If you know of someone who might benefit from the ministry, **please** contact me, Kathy Wright, [kdwright@va.metrocast.net](mailto:kdwright@va.metrocast.net), or my cell, 757-373-9166, or one of the committee members listed above. God Bless.

*Warming Tree and Coat Rack Ministry*  
*Kathy Wright; Lucy Blevins, Val Bradley, and Diane Faulkner*



The warming tree and coat rack ministry will start at the beginning of the Advent season and go through the beginning of March. So, start making, or collecting, those warming items for our warming tree. The coats are to be **NEW or SLIGHTLY USED WINTER COATS ONLY**. If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Wright, chairperson, [kdwright@va.metrocast.net](mailto:kdwright@va.metrocast.net), or my cell, 757-373-9166. God Bless.

**When you harbor bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.**

<b>Annual Budget for 2020 Operating Funds:</b>	<b>\$118,339.00</b>
<b>Total Received for Operating Funds as of September 27:</b>	<b>83,812.97</b>
<b>Total Income Needed to Meet Budget by end of September:</b>	<b>88,754.25</b>

## NURTURE & Outreach

### Jerry Dant

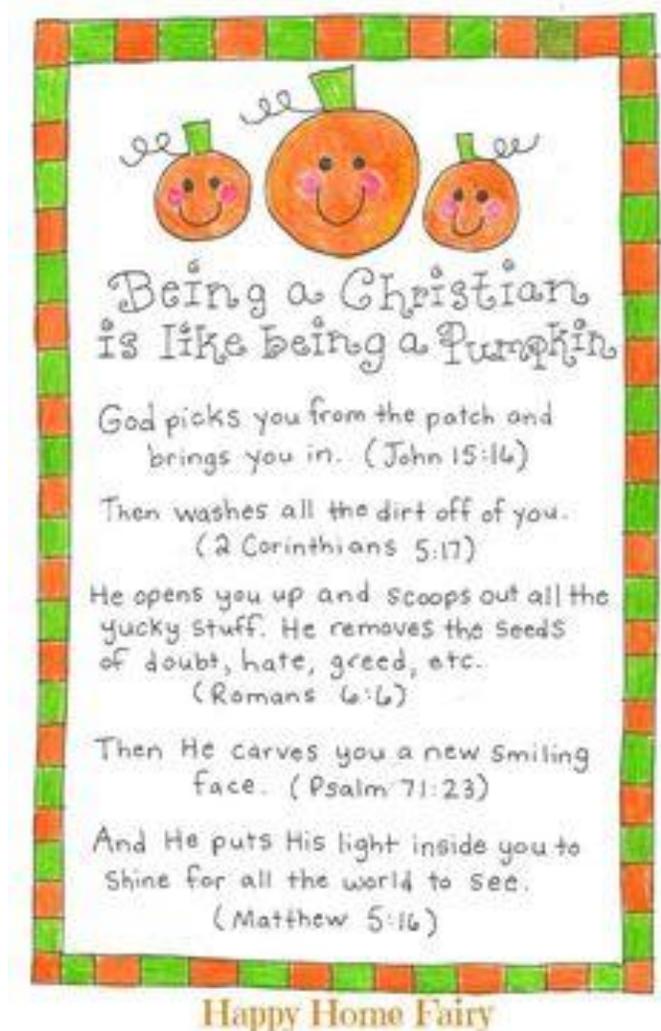


#### NURTURE

Well, we are going into another month without being able to visit or meet together as a church family. Fall is officially here and we will be inside looking out of the window soon and calling ahead and letting a friend know you are driving by and blowing the horn will be a welcomed sight. Cards, notes and phone calls will be appreciated by all until we can visit or meet together. Pastor Ken and Terry have done a lot of drive-by visits and they were enjoyed by all. Let's keep the cards, notes, calls and drive-by visits going until we can meet again.

#### OUTREACH

Let's not forget those in the community, who could use a little extra help. Please call around and maybe someone might need a small favor and you may be able to lend a helping hand. Let's not forget we have some college students who might like to hear from their church family.

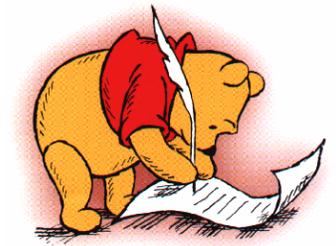


**Mail a letter or card of happiness to our home bound members!**

If your last name starts with the letter listed below, please send a card or note to the shut-ins listed.

Why not make a home bound member smile by sending them a card often as well as on their birthday.

If we all participate, our home bound members will get a card frequently from church members, and will have more great memories of Clarksbury.



<b>A-C</b>		
Roegean Speight <b>09/10</b> James River Convalescent ctr Aberthaw AVE Room 118 Newport News, VA 23601-4199		Jane Crittenden <b>8/22</b> P.O. 30 Hardyville, VA 23070
<b>D-G</b>		
	Reggie Jackson <b>7/12</b> 672 Gloucester Road Saluda, VA 23149	
<b>H-L</b>		
	Myrtle Clark <b>10/2</b> P.O. Box 302 Deltaville, VA 23043	Pastor Jim Salmon <b>5/24</b> 26306 Mattaponi Trail Milford, VA 22524
<b>M-Z</b>		

## College Student Addresses

Sierra Funk 226 Norris A2 Charlottesville, VA 22904	Sydney Funk c/o James Madison University JMU Box 6404 Harrisonburg, VA 22807	
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# OCTOBER POP

## What Is the Power of Prayer?

*“True prayer is neither a mere mental exercise nor a vocal performance. It is far deeper than that — it is a spiritual transaction with the Creator of Heaven and Earth.” (Charles Spurgeon)*

What is the power of prayer? How can prayer bring a person back to life? How can it heal the sick? How does prayer comfort those who are anxious or sinking into the depths of depression? Why do [Christians](#) pray for their future spouses or pray prayers of protection over their children as they send them off to school? How can prayer impact those who don't know Jesus or help in a time of crisis like a pandemic?

The answer is found in one pivotal scripture. In [Matthew 18:18-20](#), Jesus tells us about the power of prayer when he said,

*“Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”*

There are dozens of real-life accounts in the [Bible](#) where Jesus and other disciples battled in prayer. God shut heavens and prevented rain from falling for three years at Elijah's request. He parted the red sea for Moses to lead His people through. He cast out demons; Jesus healed the sick and gave sight to the blind, and, on more than one occasion, raised people from the dead, like Lazarus.

Do we realize the power we have available to us when we take our authority in prayer? If we did, we would be praying in Jesus' name more. There would be no such thing as doubt, fear, or anxiety because we would be on our faces before God, storming the heavenly realms in battle with the darkness and evil forces in our world.

## Talking to God

So, what exactly is the power of prayer? The power of prayer isn't in the words you utter. It's not about what you pray or even how you pray. Prayer can be defined as talking to God, but it is much more than that. Prayer is an act of worship that glorifies God and reinforces our need for Him.

Through [living a life of prayer](#), we communicate with the very source of and purpose for our existence.

It is our fiercest weapon against the enemy and all things in this fallen world. Priscilla Shirer is the author of the *Fervent: A Woman's Battle Plan to Serious, Specific, and Strategic Prayer* says, "Prayer is the portal that brings the power of heaven down to earth. It is kryptonite to the enemy and to all his ploys against you."

Another well-known author, Mark Patterson says, "Prayers are prophecies. They are the best predictors of your spiritual future. Who you become is determined by how you pray. Ultimately, the transcript of your prayers becomes the script of your life."

In other words, who you become, the circumstances in your life and the core of your character are all determined by what you talk to God about. According to the Bible, the power of prayer is, quite simply, the power of God, who hears and answers prayer. Consider the following:

### God Is All-Powerful

The Lord God Almighty can do all things; there is nothing impossible for Him ([Luke 1:37](#)). The character and heart of God is the very fabric of the gospel. When we close our eyes, get on our knees, the spirit of God whispers, "I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?" It's as if to say to our hearts, no need is too great or small.

## God Asks Us to Pray

He invites, encourages, and *wants* us to talk to him. We are to come to him in faith, ([James 1:5](#)), with persistence ([Luke 18:1](#)), with thanksgiving ([Philippians 4:6](#)), within his will ([Matthew 6:10](#)), and from a heart that is right with God ([James 5:16](#)).

In fact, in [Luke 18:1](#) we read, "And he [Jesus] told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart." [Hebrews 4:14-16](#) talks about Jesus as our High Priest and says He can sympathize with us.

[Hebrews 4:16](#) says, "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." We have been given access to the very throne of God through prayer.

## He Answers Our Prayers

The Lord God Almighty answers prayer. "I call on you, O God, for you will answer me" ([Psalm 17:6](#)). "The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles" ([Psalm 34:17](#)). In [John 16:23-24](#), Jesus makes a stunning, sweeping, glorious promise to us:

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."*

In other words, when we ask God to give us a love for our neighbors, he does. When we ask for patience, he begins to tend to our hearts, uprooting areas of impatience and then provides opportunity to practice patience. When we ask him to be near to us, his presence sweeps in and surrounds us like a cozy blanketed embrace filled with his peace and strength.

Even when we lack faith or have very little faith. Sometimes learning to trust God with our prayers is like being a toddler. We wobble, waver and fall, but he doesn't chastise us. Instead, he encourages us to get back up and try again with his hands held out as he says, "Because of your little faith," He told them, "For I assure you: If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" ([Matthew 17:20](#)).

## Power of Prayer and How Do I Tap into It?

The power of prayer isn't in the person praying. It's not a magic formula. It isn't keywords. It is an open heart, humble and filled with awe of who our mighty God is. Rather, the power resides in the God who is being prayed to.

[1 John 5:14-15](#) tells us, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him."

In fact, Jesus rebukes those who pray using repetitions or those who pray in public to seek attention or those who don't have the right heart, "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him" ([Matthew 6:7-8](#)).

[Psalm 107:28-30](#) reminds us, "Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven." *There is power in prayer!*





# The Grapevine October 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Noon Prayer	2 Myrtle Clark  Noon Prayer	3 Mobile Food Pantry Noon Prayer
4 Tommy Crittenden Noon Prayer	5 Noon Prayer	6 Noon Prayer	7 Noon Prayer	8 Jasper Booker Noon Prayer	9 Noon Prayer	10 Cacky Guill Noon Prayer
11 Janis Slaughter Noon Prayer	12 Noon Prayer	13 Noon Prayer	14 Noon Prayer	15 Eric Vaudt Noon Prayer	16 Noon Prayer	17 Noon Prayer
18 Noon Prayer	19 Soup Ministry Noon Prayer	20 Noon Prayer	21 Noon Prayer	22 Noon Prayer	23 Noon Prayer	24 Noon Prayer
25 Jerry Duke Noon Prayer	26 UMM Meeting 7pm Noon Prayer	27 Noon Prayer	28 Noon Prayer	29 Phyllis Motley Noon Prayer	30 Noon Prayer	31 Kathy Wright Noon Prayer

The deadline for the **November 2020** Grapevine will be Friday, October 23

Send items to: [pwalian2@gmail.com](mailto:pwalian2@gmail.com)

**October Birthdays** (If you know of any additions, deletions or corrections that should be made to the birthday calendar, please let the newsletter editor know.)