



## February Lamplighter 2021

“Dear Friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because *God is love*. This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” 1 John 4:7-10

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### Transformation

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2

We find two keys words in this verse; conform and transform. To conform simply means to fit into a mold, to become the same or to do things the way everyone else does them. It is being molded or formed from the outside like when one makes cookies at Christmas. Conversely, transformed means to change from the inside. Conforming has to do with our behavior while transforming has to do with our character. One works from the outside while the other works from the inside. Conforming is something we do to ourselves or someone else does to us. (I encourage you to read the article on gaslighting which is found below) Transformation is something God does in us. God wants to work from inside our hearts and minds and souls to make us better, to make us more like Jesus. Those of this world want to conform us to be and do what benefits them.

On February 1<sup>st</sup> we are beginning 50 Days of Transformation. As your pastor I am truly excited for how you and our church are going to grow as we walk through these 50 days together.

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### THIS IS SO EXCITING!

On Valentine’s Day, Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, we will have a special ceremony @ 11:30am for those couples who would like to renew their wedding vows. If you would like to sign up, be sure to talk to Pastor Mark or Pam on or before February 7<sup>th</sup> so everything can be ready for you. We will have a gift for you and a certificate to remember the occasion.

To make this doubly exciting, ***Roger and Gwen Cooper will be here to help us celebrate!***

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### Sanctity of Life Prayer Rally

Because of the snow storm, The Republic County Ministerial Association Rally for Life is now being held on Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, at noon on the Courthouse steps.

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We are still saving Best Choice labels for our new carpet. Be sure to save your labels and drop them in the basket at church. Thank you!



## Pastoral Vote

In the Wesleyan Church each pastor serves under an agreement of two or four or more years. In June of 2021, Pastor Mark will have fulfilled his four-year agreement with Belleville Wesleyan Church. Your Local Board of Administration has come to an agreement with Pastor Mark to serve another four years. This agreement is contingent upon the vote of the church membership. In March of this year a congregational vote will be conducted. To retain Pastor Mark for another four years, a favorable vote by a majority of members shall be required. If you are unable to attend the congregational vote, an advance absentee ballot may be requested. To obtain an absentee ballot contact Vice-Chairman, Deanna Derowitsch or Board Secretary, Ann Bebermeyer.

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WE WILL HAVE COMMUNION ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>.



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## YOUTH GROUP

Thank you to everyone who ordered Little Caesars from our youth. Your products will be arriving on February 11<sup>th</sup> @ 3:00pm. You can pick them up at church or one of our youth can deliver it to you. To schedule delivery, contact Sister Pam at (785) 527-3512.

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## YOUTH GROUP Part 2

Christian Recording Artists: **Sidewalk Prophets** will be in virtual concert on Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm @ Belleville Wesleyan Church. Supper for all youth will be served beginning at 6:30pm with the concert in the youth room at 7:00pm.

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## **Congratulations to our brother, Kyle Morgan, on his baptism.**

God's Word reminds us, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38-39

If you would like to consider being baptized, be sure to speak with Pastor Mark.

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## **GASLIGHTING?**

The term originates in the systematic psychological manipulation of a victim by her husband in Patrick Hamilton's 1938 stage play Gas Light, and the film adaptations released in 1940 and 1944. In the story, the husband attempts to convince his wife and others that she is insane by manipulating small elements of their environment and insisting that she is mistaken, remembering things incorrectly, or delusional when she points out these changes. The play's title alludes to how the abusive husband slowly dims the gas lights in their home, while pretending nothing has changed, in an effort to make his wife doubt her own perceptions. The wife repeatedly asks her husband to confirm her perceptions about the dimming lights, but in defiance of reality, he keeps insisting that the lights are the same and instead it is she who is going insane. (continued on page 3)

Today we are living in a perpetual state of gaslighting. The reality that we are being told by the media is at complete odds with what we are seeing with our own two eyes. And when we question the false reality that we are being presented, or we claim that what we see is that actual reality, we are vilified as racist or bigots or just plain crazy. You're not racist. You're not crazy. You're being gaslighted.

We see mobs of people looting stores, smashing windows, setting cars on fire and burning down buildings, but we are told that these demonstrations are peaceful protests, and when we call this destruction of our cities, riots, we are called racists. So, we ask ourselves, am I crazy? No, you're being gaslighted.

We see the major problem destroying many inner-cities is crime; murder, gang violence, drug dealing, drive-by shootings, armed robbery, but we are told that it is not crime, but the police that are the problem in the inner-cities. We are told we must defund the police and remove law enforcement from crime-riddled cities to make them safer. But if we advocate for more policing in cities overrun by crime, we are accused of being white supremacists and racists. So, we ask ourselves, am I crazy? No, you're being gaslighted.

The United States of America accepts more immigrants than any other country in the world. The vast majority of the immigrants are "people of color", and these immigrants are enjoying freedom and economic opportunity not available to them in their country of origin, but we are told that the United States is the most racist and oppressive country on the planet, and if we disagree, we are called racist and xenophobic. So, we ask ourselves, am I crazy? No, you're being gaslighted.

Capitalist countries are the most prosperous countries in the world. The standard of living is the highest in capitalist countries. We see more poor people move up the economic ladder to the middle and even the wealthy class through their effort and ability in capitalist countries than any other economic system in the world, but we are told capitalism is an oppressive system designed to keep people down. So, we ask ourselves, am I crazy? No, you're being gaslighted.

Communist countries killed over 100 million people in the 20th century. Communist countries strip their citizens of basic human rights, dictate every aspect of their lives, treat their citizens as slaves, and drive their economies into the ground, but we are told that Communism is the fairest, most equitable, freest, and most prosperous economic system in the world. So, we ask ourselves, am I crazy? No, you're being gaslighted.

The most egregious example of gaslighting is the concept of "white fragility". You spend your life trying to be a good person, trying to treat people fairly and with respect. You disavow racism and bigotry in all its forms. You judge people solely on the content of their character and not by the color of their skin. You don't discriminate based on race or ethnicity. But you are told you are a racist, not because of something you did or said, but solely because of the color of your skin. You know instinctively that charging someone with racism because of their skin color is itself racist. You know that you are not racist, so you defend yourself and your character, but you are told that your defense of yourself is proof of your racism. So, we ask ourselves, am I crazy? No, you're being gaslighted.

Gaslighting has become one of the most pervasive and destructive tactics in America. It is the exact opposite of what our country was meant to be. It deals in lies and psychological coercion, and not the truth and intellectual discourse. If you ever ask yourself if you're crazy, you are not. (continued on page 4)

Crazy people aren't sane enough to ask themselves if they're crazy. So, trust yourself, believe what's in your heart. Trust your eyes over what you are told. Never listen to the people who tell you that you are crazy, because you are not, you're being gaslighted.

Sadly, we are living with the reality that "Truth is nowhere to be found...truth has perished; it has vanished from their lips." Isaiah 59:15 & Jeremiah 7:28

Sophocles said: "What people believe prevails over the truth."

G. K. Chesterton once said, "When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing—they believe in anything."

For the record, I did not write the above and I am not sure who the author is or he or she would be credited.

I included this in our newsletter because as your pastor, as someone who loves you, I am convinced that you need to know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help us God. I want you to understand what is being done to us on a daily basis from many directions. I do not care about your political party affiliation, this is not about politics, it is about truth and life and the ability to live our faith freely. I encourage you to think through what you are being told and compare it with the Word of God. Don't listen with a deaf ear, or see with a blind eye. Question what you are being told through the newspapers and magazines and commercials. Question what you are being told by politicians and pastors too. Question the motives and ask who benefits from what is being promoted. Question if there is a hidden agenda. Do your own research, and use some of your own critical thinking skills to get to the truth. Listen to God speaking through His Word and His Spirit.

Jesus reminds us, "If you hold to my teaching (The Bible), you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

My greatest hope and prayer for each of you is to live in a country where you are free to enjoy and express your faith in Almighty God!

Remember, I love you and I can't wait to see you Sunday!

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Romans 12:2



**"Because we care!"**

# Happy Valentine's Day!

- Candle Light
- Cards
- Chocolate
- Cupid
- Date
- Dinner
- First Kiss
- Memories
- Movie
- Pink
- Poem
- Proposal
- Red
- Romance
- Roses
- St. Valentine
- Sweetarts
- Teddy Bear
- True Love



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