

August 30, 2023 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement*

Interim pastors are called to ‘take out the garbage’ The work of interim pastors is not often appreciated, but it is necessary.

By Thomas Wesley Moore IV.

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, But only God who gives the growth. — 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

As I prepared a sermon on this passage this spring, these words took on new meaning for me. I am called to be an itinerant pastor. At the time of this sermon, I was working at West End Presbyterian Church in West End, North Carolina, and I knew I would not experience all the fruits of my work during the 18-month contract. It was my job to till the ground for the next minister. God would bring the growth, but I would plant the seeds and water. Reflecting on Paul’s metaphor, I would add that it is the interim pastor’s job to take out the garbage threatening the fragile ecosystem.

In fact, taking out the garbage may be more fundamental to a church’s health than tilling, planting, and watering. Interim ministers set the garden up for success. If there’s garbage everywhere, it will be harder for healthy plant life to thrive. So it is with congregations. All pastors must watch for trash in the garden, but the need to take out the trash as an interim minister is even more incumbent to me. The goal of transitional pastors is longevity for the congregation and the incoming pastor. I need to be the bad guy so the next pastor can enjoy a long honeymoon with the new parish and focus on relationship building.



Moore.

The garbage in the garden can look like old policies that need updating because the congregation is not the same size it was. The garbage can be certain traditions that must die to make room for new growth. The garbage can be toxic behavior that poisons the mini-ecosystem.

Though it may feel like it at times, tossing out the garbage is not a one-person job — the church is a community, after all. Over the years, I’ve worked with brave folks to update policies, bury certain traditions, and stand up to those who are acting in unhealthy ways. In the Presbyterian church, ruling elders and deacons, current participants in the congregation, and members of the various presbytery committees are all called to partner together to clean up the trash. It is all our responsibility.

Cleaning up garbage is not easy work. It is not glamorous. And it often isn’t appreciated — there is a low probability of a congregation to name a building after someone known in the church world as “the garbage man.” *continued*

Interim pastors, continued

Yet, in all things, God gives the growth. No matter our roles and official titles, we are instruments in God's hands for such a time as this. We may not see the full fruits of our labors, if we see any product at all, but I think that's what Paul is getting at in I Corinthians 3:7. We are a speck. But, through the power of the Holy Spirit, our labors will be used for God's glory. It is God and God alone who provides the growth, not the current occupant of the pulpit.

OUR WORSHIP CHANNELS

CLICK ON THE LOGOS



WORSHIP THIS WEEK:

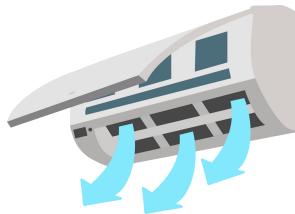
PSALM 85: 8-13

ROMANS 10:5-15

SERMON: 'CONFESS'



calvin and hobbes



Until further notice, we will gather for worship in the Barksdale Room, where we will **TRY** to make it cooler.

WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

Waynesboro/East Augusta
CROP HUNGER WALK

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA



Presbytery's Big Event

Shenandoah Presbytery's Big Event this year will be on Saturday, September 9th, 2023 at Massanetta Springs Conference Center. Our conference theme is "Faithful Decisions in Difficult Times" as we consider Christians are called to join God's work in making all things new amidst 21st Century challenges.

This year we are excited to welcome speakers Rev. Dr. Teri McDowell Ott, Editor/Publisher of the Presbyterian Outlook and author of the book **Necessary Risks: Challenges Privileged People Need to Face**, and Rev. Dr. Mark Douglas, Professor of Christian Ethics at Columbia Theological Seminary and author of **Modernity, The Environment, and the Christian Just War Tradition**. They will lead us through worship, a keynote address, and afternoon breakout session; as always, informal conversation between sessions and during lunch should be a highlight of the day.

Registration opens at 8:30 am in Stewart Hall, with Welcome and Worship beginning at 9:30. Cost for the day is \$20 and includes lunch in the Massanetta Dining Room. After lunch, we will meet again in Stewart for 2 workshop/discussion times. There will also be an intentional space in the adjacent Calvin Room for quiet reflection/prayer during the day. Click on the links below:



[Information](#)



[Registration](#)



[Child Care](#)

This Week in History.



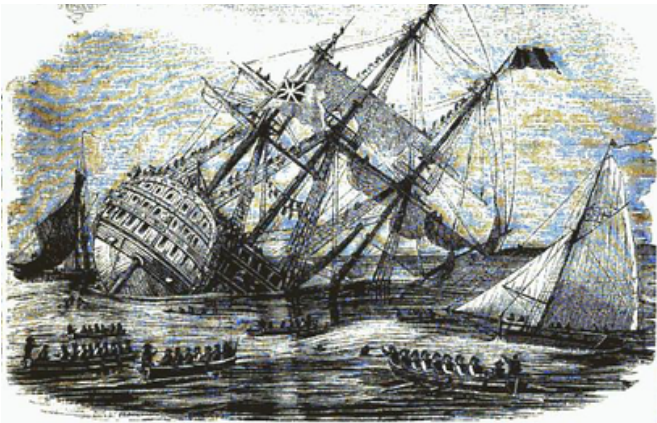
Charles Gates Dawes is born in Marietta, OH. A lawyer and banker, as a General, he would chair the general purchasing board for the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I. Vice President from 1925-29, he would receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his plan for German reparations. An avid musician, his *Melody in A Major* became a well-known piano and violin song in 1912. In 1951, Carl Sigman added lyrics, transforming the song into the pop standard, *It's All in the Game*.

August 27, 1865



Elizabeth Ann Bayley is born in New York, NY. Raised an Episcopal, she married William Seton in 1794, and had five children. After his death, she would become Roman Catholic, opening the first American parochial school in Baltimore, MD. In 1812, she founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph. Sister Seton would be the first American-born Roman Catholic saint, canonized in 1975.

August 28, 1774



The 100 gun Ship of the Line **HMS Royal George** sinks while under repair at Spithead off Portsmouth, England. While being rolled for hull maintenance, a gust of wind allowed water to flood into open gun ports, sinking the ship within minutes, and drowning 900 men.

August 29, 1792



Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin is born in London, England. She would be raised by her father, a political philosopher after the death of her mother, a famous champion of women's rights. Mary would carry on a scandalous affair with the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, marrying him after the suicide of his first wife in 1816. She is most famous for her novel, *Frankenstein, or the New Prometheus*, but also edited and promoted the work of her husband, who would die in 1822.

August 30, 1797



Princess Diana dies at age 36 from massive internal injuries suffered in a high-speed car crash after being pursued by photographers inside a tunnel along the Seine River in Paris, France.

August 31, 1997



Rocco Francis Marchegiano is born in Brockton, MA. Under the name **Rocky Marciano**, he knocked out 'Jersey' Joe Walcott for the heavyweight title on September 23, 1952. He would retire in 1956, as the only undefeated heavyweight champion.

September 1, 1923