

PASTOR'S MUSINGS – APRIL 2019

The Bible teaches that we wear our character like clothes. It's what people see first and how we are judged.

-The apostle Paul tells the Christians in Galatia that they "have all put on Christ as a garment" (Gal. 3:27 NEB).

- In I Peter 5:5 (NKJV), disciples of Jesus are urged to be "clothed in humility."

- In our Baptismal liturgy we proclaim that we "die to our old sinful nature, and put on Christ."

- We even acknowledge this mystery in our Death and Resurrection liturgy: "As in baptism, Todd put on Christ, so now in Christ may Todd be clothed with glory."

Having chosen in our baptism to "put on Christ as a garment" means that our nature and character are daily being transformed into Christ-likeness. As Jesus was loving, compassionate, forgiving and accepting, so we, who love him and serve him, become more like him.

I want to thank you for genuinely pursuing, as individuals and as a church, the character of Christ, our Lord. There are numerous examples I could draw upon, but the one I that I am most humbled by and joyful about occurred at the March meeting of our Skipwith Leadership Council.

In response to the General Conference's decision to maintain the status quo with regard to limiting the acceptance and inclusion of members of the LGBTQIA community in the full life of the church, our church's leadership voted unanimously (19-0, plus 3 non-voting guests) to continue being welcoming, accepting, inclusive and affirming of all people. Further, we voted to include our name on an ad in the Richmond Times-Dispatch expressing our solidarity with sister United Methodist Churches in the Richmond District (see the next page).

"Putting on Christ" means we will welcome all people who want to love God, love each other, and strive for peace and justice according to Jesus' example. Hearts and minds are not transformed through legislation but through relationship.

For God's Glory & Our joy,

~Pastor Todd