

## Staying Connected 9/10/2023

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

For the next twelve months, you (as in you 'all, as in all members and friends of St. Andrew and anyone else interested, for that matter) have the opportunity to increase your familiarity with the Bible, your understanding of GOD'S vision for us, for our congregation, and for creation, and sense of GOD'S tremendous love for you and for all people. This will happen through a program called "Through the New Testament," or TNT. Many of you have likely already heard some about this. We hope that many will make the commitment to join in this program.

"Through the New Testament" is based on the fact that there are 260 weekdays in the year and 260 chapters in the New Testament. Beginning on Monday, September 11, all those participating will begin by reading Matthew 1 and then completing a Bible study on that chapter. It should take only about 20-30 minutes to do. On Tuesday, it will be Matthew 2, Wednesday is Matthew 3, and so on. Each study begins with some background to that particular chapter, or information about the context in which the New Testament writings take place or about people in the study, and so on. Then two or three questions based on sections from that chapter will help you to dig deeper into the text or consider how it relates to your personal walk as a follower of CHRIST. Each person decides on the best time each day to do this, though it is encouraged that you do it at regular time each day. If you miss a chapter, weekends when there are no readings assigned can be used for catching up. People can also join in at anytime wherever in the readings we, as a congregation, are. We also hope to add a time each week when folks can come together to ask questions or share thoughts on the readings from that week.

The first time I offered this program was about twenty-five years ago. During that first year, in addition to the personal study and a time for folks to gather to share and ask questions, I preached on a portion of the readings for that week. (I have to say it was interesting to be preaching on Easter texts during the Christmas season!) One lady from the congregation described her experience this way: "I read and study the text, and then come discuss it with others from church, and then when I hear the text on Sunday, it's like meeting an old friend." I love that description of reading the Bible as "meeting an old friend." Perhaps, through TNT, others will come to feel the same way about GOD'S word.

The study is available in the entry to the worship center or from the church office. A donation of \$10 to cover the cost of printing and is suggested, but no payment is required as we want as many people as possible participating. It's also recommended that each person get their own copy rather than sharing, so that you have your own record of your own answers to the study.

If you haven't yet, please consider committing to a year of spending time with GOD in GOD'S word. Share in this commitment with others from our church that we might all grow in our faith

and understanding of GOD'S love and purpose for us. Join in this experience of reading Through the New Testament in one year. You will be blessed.

In CHRIST'S love,  
Pastor Jeffrey