

# THE FORECAST

A Bi-Weekly Newsletter

AUGUST 26, 2021

## Rayne Memorial United Methodist Church

3900 Saint Charles Ave New Orleans LA 70115 // 504.899.3431 // www.raynenola.org



### "THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT."

My friend, Jake Hall, just left his job. Jake is a wonderful pastor, and one of my favorite preachers. We met while serving as "residents in ministry" at Wilshire Baptist Church, Dallas, almost 20 years ago. Vivacious - that's the descriptor that fits Jake best. As he served his latest church in central Georgia, I suspect the congregation sucked out some of his vivaciousness. Knowing Jake, I have every reason to believe he faithfully served with his congregation to the bitter end. The thing about being "full of life" is having it filled up around you, so that both the pastor and the people pour life into each other all along the way. Vivaciousness is hard to keep up, especially if one is mostly milling around a graveyard.

"It is a dance, isn't it? Serving with a congregation...what a dance," Jake would often say. Partners share the music, find the rhythm, and glide together in God's grace. Sadly, though, this dance is one very many of Pastor Marissa and my clergy colleagues are starting to stop. Probably no surprise to you who read this newsletter, or those of us who know ministers, rabbis, or priests: the shortage of people coming into the "calling" is down to a trickle, while the number of people exiting the career is streaming.

For my part, I don't know that I consider turning in my dance card too often. For one, I did that already, over a decade ago, and I find no reason to retrace those steps. Plus, there's you - a glorious dance partner. While we United Methodists essentially live year by year as pastors and people, I'd like to think we're doing our best to find the rhythm best suited to dance to God's tune. Come COVID or hell or highwater. What I find more troublesome than thoughts of departure: the anxiety of insecurity. How are we doing? How are things going? What's our future look like...through pandemic...into LGBTQ+ full participation...amid climate change? Just writing those questions makes my palms start to sweat. And I remind myself that faith has little to do with having all the answers, and more about asking good questions. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, says the Wisdom poet, lean not on your own understanding (Proverbs 3:5). That is as terrifying as it is glorifying, at least that is what I'm finding.

That leaves me here with this other image, one that I need more now than ever before. ***Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me...*** The 23rd Psalm does not erase all my anxiety, granted. But it does redirect my stumbling feet. Wherever else this path of ministry leads us, the Lord is present with us, and willing to guide our steps.

W.H. Auden says it just right: The sense of danger must not disappear; the way is certainly both short and steep, however gradual it looks from here; look if you like, but you will have to leap.

Letting go,

*Jay*

### PLEASE NOTE

**HYBRID WORSHIP  
(ON-SITE & ONLINE)  
IN THE  
SANCTUARY  
AT 8:45A & 11A**

### Summer Office Hours

**Monday:**

9a-1p

**Tuesday:**

10a-2p

**Wednesday:**

12-5p

**Thursday:**

10a-2p

**Friday:**

Closed

# CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

---

Monday, August 30th  
6p  
Zoom

You are invited!

The Church Council is made up of the leadership of our church - and our meetings are always open.

Sunday, February 17th  
5p, Fellowship Hall

Come to learn more about our church and find a new place to serve.

Email Jay - [jay@raynenola.org](mailto:jay@raynenola.org).

## FLOWERS

---

If you'd like to celebrate or remember an important occasion or person - a nice way is to donate the altar flowers for worship!

Flowers can be given in honor or memory of someone. They can also simply be for the glory of God!

If you'd like to purchase the flowers for a coming week, please contact Susie. You can call the office (899-3431) or by email ([susie.vanderkuy@raynenola.org](mailto:susie.vanderkuy@raynenola.org)).

Flowers coordinated by Rayne cost \$55, and can be taken home after worship. You may also arrange your own or pick up an arrangement from your favorite florist!

## MEET THE PASTORS

---

Are you new to Rayne? Have you visited and want to know more about our congregation?

We welcome you! Share some time with Pastor Marissa and Pastor Jay.

Sunday, August 29th - come and go from 9:45a to 10:30a.

Join us at Pastor Marissa's parsonage beside Rayne Church at 3925 Pitt Street.

## LECTIONARY

---

*A weekly set of Scripture readings.*

**August 29**

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 - Psalm 45:1-9  
James 1:17-27 - Mark 7:1-23

**September 5**

Proverbs 22:1-23 - Psalm 125  
James 2:1-17 - Mark 7:24-37

## MASK MANDATE

---

Please note, while indoors a face covering must be properly worn at all times.

We ask that you do not bring food or drink to small groups at this time so that everyone can leave their masks on at all times while indoors.

## CRESCENT CITY CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

---

Save the Date!  
**September 30 - October 10**

"(over)come together"

For details, visit  
[crescentcitychambermusicfestival.com](http://crescentcitychambermusicfestival.com)

## THE SCHOOL FOR CONTEMPLATIVE LIVING

---

- **Mindful Movement**  
with David Cabrera musician and meditation teacher.  
**Saturdays, 9-10a, Zoom.**

For more information and more opportunities go to:  
[www.theschoolforcontemplativeliving.com](http://www.theschoolforcontemplativeliving.com).

To join one contact William:  
[livingschool12@gmail.com](mailto:livingschool12@gmail.com)



# NEW FALL STUDIES

Small Groups at Rayne



## THE DIFFICULT WORDS OF JESUS



### - The Difficult Words of Jesus -

Wednesdays, 6-7p  
September 8 - October 13  
Zoom (Online Only)

Ever thought... "Wow! Jesus - that was harsh?"  
This study examines Jesus' most difficult words and is based on the book study of the same name by Amy-Jill Levine.

Email Marissa to register - [marissa@raynenola.org](mailto:marissa@raynenola.org).

## THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS



### - The Teachings of Jesus -

Wednesdays, 6-7p  
September 15 - October 20  
Parsonage & Zoom

Facilitated by Pastor Jay and the Methodism Class  
What did Jesus even *mean*? What did he *really* teach?  
**Come find out!**

Email Jay for more information - [jay@raynenola.org](mailto:jay@raynenola.org).

## WOMEN OF THE HEBREW BIBLE



### - Women of the Hebrew Bible -

Tuesdays, 7-8p  
September 21 - October 19  
Zoom (Online Only)

Have you met Huldah, the prophet, or Yael, the warrior? The stories of over 50 women are told in the Hebrew Bible. See how some of them shaped the Jewish people and discuss how their stories speak to us.

Facilitated by Nancy Hopkins

Email Nancy to register- [Nancy.hopkins@raynenola.org](mailto:Nancy.hopkins@raynenola.org).

## SURVEY OF THE HEBREW BIBLE



### - Survey of the Hebrew Bible -

Sundays, 4-5p  
September 26 - October 31  
Pastor's Office & Zoom

Facilitated by Pastor Jay and Wendy Rihner  
Join us for a six week investigation of one whole side of our Bible. Find out what is the "torah" and who are the Prophets and why do they even matter... and so much more!

Email Jay for more information - [jay@raynenola.org](mailto:jay@raynenola.org).

# PRAYER LIST

---

## **We pray for healing of –**

Martha Gatlin, Darien Mason, Sr., Doris Billings, Sue Aspinwall,  
Richard Moore, Ray Cook, Stephanie Stennett, Chuck Pate,  
Andrew McLetchie, Barbara Everett and her daughter - Renee,  
Judy Mastainich, and Marilyn Miller's brother - David and his spouse Debbie.

## **We share in the grief of –**

Mary & Connor Butler in the loss of **Lee**, Mary's husband and Connor's father.



## **PRAYER REQUESTS**

---

James 4:8 reminds us, *“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.”*

During this time of much change, comfort is found sensing the nearness of the Creator.

If you would like to share prayer requests,  
email them to Pastor Marissa - [marissa@raynenola.org](mailto:marissa@raynenola.org).  
Or mail a note to the church addressed with "Attention: Marissa."

Please indicate if the request is public (shared in the newsletter)  
or private (supplied to the Intercessory Prayer Group).