

MARCH 2022 | ISSUE NO.5

BEARING FRUIT

The Official Newsletter of Friends Church North Carolina

ARTICLES TO HELP
YOU THROUGH:

Welcome-1

**Quotes By Quakers &
Devotion- 2-4**

Upcoming Events-4

Something New- 5

Announcements-6-7

Tech Help- 8

Blessing Bags- 8

**Black History
& Freedom -9-10**

Celebration! -11

Recap- 12-15

WELCOME!

Welcome to your Friends Church North Carolina Newsletter!

This is a monthly e-newsletter dedicated to keeping you up to date on current events within FCNC.

We strive to highlight topics of interest such as announcements, who/what we support, recent activities, upcoming events etc.

How can you help?

Let us know if you have information that falls into these categories at an FCNC level. Email information, pictures or ideas to our Social Media Coordinator,

Jenny Gullion at: jenny@friendschurchnc.org



Quotes by Quakers

”

...LAY IT TO HEART AND LET THE
OPPRESSED GO FREE....

Mary Fisher (1623 – 1698)
began life as a maidservant until George Fox
convinced the entire household of the truth of
Quakerism. Mary soon joined the Valiant Sixty,
spreading the message of commitment to a living
Christ and the equality of all believers. Notable places
she traveled to spread the Quaker message were
Barbados, New England, and the Ottoman Empire.

Learn more [here](#).

“

A word of Devotion

TIME FOR FREEDOM

By: Terry Linthicum

"Have you ever had those moments where all the world around you stood still and for a short time all is at peace? Maybe there's a place where you would kick back and feel a warm gentle breeze flowing across your face. Nothing can harm you. You are truly free. Life is good.

I hope you have, and I pray you still enjoy those moments."

continued on next page

While I was growing up near Caraway Mountain, NC, a life changing event happened on a routine summer day. A kind stranger came by to see my dad in the front yard. He told my dad he owned several acres that adjoined our land. On his land was a two acre pond with a small summer cottage nestled against the shoreline. The stranger explained that he worked a lot and never got to enjoy his summer place. He asked my dad to help him out by checking on it from time to time. Little did I know that what came next would change my life forever. The stranger smiled at me, looked at my dad, and said, "Tell that boy of yours to treat it like it's his. If he's around my place a lot then that's even better." My dad smiled, shook hands, and agreed to help out.

From the time I was eight to the time I was twenty, I spent many hours in my new sanctuary, to fish, to get away, and to be alone. Most importantly, I realized that in this place I could talk to God without interruption. I could use my audible voice. God and I shared many conversations about everything from family situations to the high school girl who broke my heart. I've never felt more free in the Spirit than I did then. I made it a priority to talk to God about everything that was on my mind. Sometimes, when I was satisfied with life in general, I would just lay back in the grass and look at the trees and the sky and praise God for His awesome handiwork.

Those days have long passed and I wonder sometimes if I've missed out by being so busy that those moments are far and few between now. Sure, I'm doing more work for The Lord than ever, but I've come to realize lately that deep inside I'm still that boy who needs his Father, his Creator, his Provider, his Savior. I need the One who first loved me. I truly miss those long and meaningful conversations with the Father.

Therefore, I'm making a confession and a promise to regain that same childlike faith.

Paul writes these words in Romans 8:6, "For the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is peace and life."

You see, being a Spiritually minded believer leads to freedom, to peace, to life. A believer who lacks consistent conversation with God sacrifices the closeness of the relationship. When this happens, we find ourselves doing religion instead of strengthening the relationship.

So, where's your mind at right now in your walk with Jesus? Is it on business as usual, on the past, or on the things of this world? My prayer for you this year and years to come is that you find the time and place to sit awhile with The Father, to talk, to sing, to cry, and to rejoice. Sometimes, we need to just realize who He is and that He loves you. Look, I'm certainly not a genius or a soothsayer, but I do understand one thing for sure. I find more wisdom, peace, and freedom when I'm alone, in a special place, and talking to the one who loved me enough to send His son to die for me.

Remember the old hymn "In The Garden." He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am His own. What a beautiful thought. Let's all find our childlike faith again. I'm sure we'll be glad we did.

-Terry Linthicum



Upcoming Events:

March 4th-6th

Young Friends Spring Retreat
@ Ridgecrest Conference Center

March 18-19

Mid-Year Gathering at
Marlboro Friends

March 20-25

Friends Disaster Service trip
(See more info on page 7)

Attention Committee Members Don't forget to let us know if there is any upcoming dates we should add to our newsletter by the 15th of each month

Lets Try Something New

By: Tommy Sluder



"Let's try something new!"

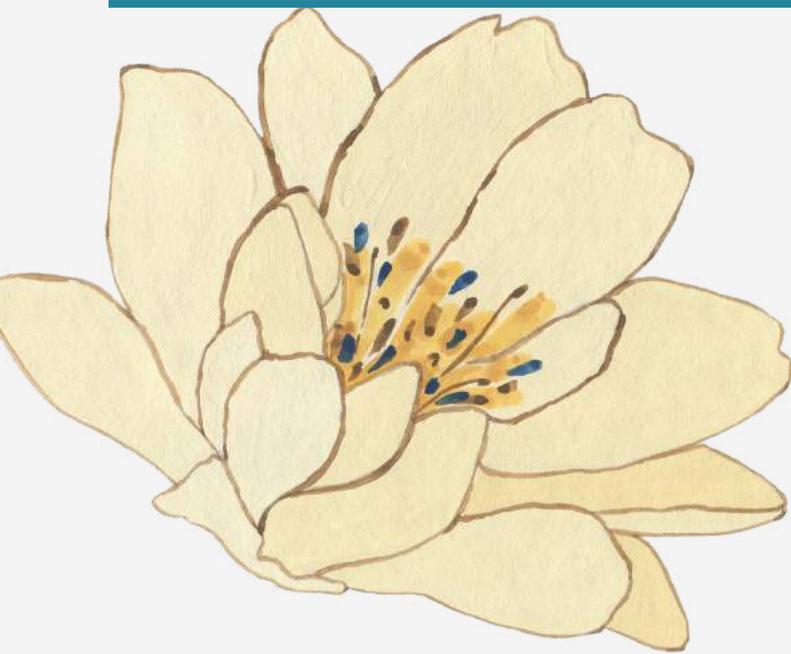
That was the thought among many lay leaders at Centre when faced with the dilemma of "Sunday School" sickness. Prior to COVID-19, we identified a decline in the attraction of Sunday School. We, like many other churches and meetings, maintained the traditional model of Christian Education which held classes, usually age/generation specific, reading from a preprinted quarterly, prior to the worship service.

With the pandemic throwing some wrenches in our ability to meet, Sunday School was initially suspended and then as we adapted to new worship spaces, both outdoor and indoor, an adult group continued to meet and share together in the Word. Our young Friends felt the brunt of the pandemic as they were not gathering in person at all but only through online platforms. Our worship service was held at 10:00 to beat the heat of the summer and that time stuck through our return indoors.

As time went on and restrictions changed, we again were called to address the need for improved Christian education that could reach every generation. After several weeks of discussion and consideration, we approved a trial period of 90 days where worship would remain at 10am but "Sunday School", now called "Fellowship Groups" would meet both before and after worship. We have our older generations (the early risers) who are meeting at 9am and our youth/children meeting at 11:15am.

A new group, called "The Gathering" was started and is comprised of anyone, post high school, that has a desire for a safe space to experience God's Word, open discussion, fellowship, laughter, a few tears, and just being among friends. Since its inception, our "Sunday School" attendance has been the highest since before the pandemic but more importantly, participation of those attending has been above any statistical tabulation. Bonds have been strengthened, new friendships have been forged, and most of all, God has provided a way forward so there is something for everyone at Centre Friends. The question remains - **will you try something new?**

~Tommy Sluder



Announcements:

An encouraging reminder to get ready...
Spring is ALMOST here!
March 13th-Daylight Savings Time begins.
March 20th- first day of Spring.

More about Mid-Year Gathering



***Friday, March 18, 2022 @ 7:00pm-8:30pm *Saturday, March 19, 2022 @ 9am**

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Program Committee, I would like to share more information about our Mid-Year Gathering. Friday evening March 18 begins with a concert by Chi Rho from Wake Forest University, followed by a time of worship and fellowship. Refreshments include a coffee bar, and the ladies of Marlboro Friends are preparing sweet treats to complement the coffees.

Saturday morning begins at 8:30 with registration in the Family Life Center. You can pay for your lunch then, grab a cup of coffee or a quick snack, and pick up your packet of information. There will be an offering basket provided for donations to Friends Disaster Service. FDS traveled to New Bern in January to aid flood victims and plans to return in March.

The business session will begin promptly at 9 am and conclude at 9:45. Many of the reports and other information will be in your packet.

Dr. David Horner will begin his first workshop at 10 am and conclude at noon. A boxed lunch from Above and Beyond will be served in the Family Life Center. Lunch will be your choice of three sandwiches, pasta or potato salad, a cookie and drink. The second workshop will begin at 1:30 pm. Please advertise this event to your youth and young adults, especially the Friday evening concert. We look forward to sharing this time of worship and fellowship with you!

Brenda McKinney



North Carolina Friends Disaster Service

AN OUTREACH MINISTRY OF N.C. FRIENDS

Gary Dodson, Co-Coordinator
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Sophia n.c. 27350
Phone 336-495-6790

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Phone 919-656-9030

Eastern N.C. Disaster Relief March 20 - 25, 2022

New Bern, North Carolina

In January, we made a building trip to New Bern. During this trip, we saw there was still a tremendous need for volunteers to help families continuing to deal with homelessness. We saw families who have been out of their homes for years due to hurricanes. These families are depending on volunteers to help them get back into their homes. We decided to make another trip to New Bern to help additional families. During this trip in March, we will be doing home repair work for these homeless families.

We will be working with the Baptists On Missions Disaster Group as we did in January. We will be staying at their New Bern Rebuild Center and they will be providing us with all our meals. The accommodations will be dormitory style with women in one area and men in the other. If you would like to participate, please contact one of the Co-Coordinates listed above as soon as possible.

*****Please Keep Jim Littleton in your thoughts and prayers. He is recovering from a severe bicycle accident this past weekend. *****

**Lodging : Baptists on Missions – New Bern Rebuild Center
2108 Old Cherry Point Rd.
New Bern N.C. 252-571-6347**

Meals will be provided by the Baptist on Missions group.
Plan on meeting Sunday afternoon at 5:00 PM at Moore's BBQ 3621 MLK Blvd.
New Bern NC for a group meal.

Please share this information with everyone at your meeting/church.

➤ Thank You for your continued support of the

If you have any announcements

Let us know at ↘

jenny@friendschurchnc.org



★ This information was in last month's newsletter, but it is important! Any meetings that would like to reach out for some "tech" help would benefit greatly from a conversation with Samantha.

Does your Meeting need "Tech" help?



Samantha Sprinkle, a young adult who helps with the technology at **Archdale Friends** is willing to help Friends churches in FCNC become equipped or improve their technology outreach; website and or social media,. She has helped enhance Archdale Friends technology outreach, you can view what Archdale Friends publicizes by going to their website: archdalefriends.com, Archdale Friends Face Book page or watch a worship service on line. If your Church/Meeting is interested in contacting Samantha she can be reached at Samantha.sprinkle@gmail.com. She will explain how she might be able to assist you and share her fees.

ATTENTION: Last month we had Samantha's e-mail address printed incorrectly! If you reached out and heard nothing back this could be why. This should be her correct e-mail address, don't hesitate to contact her!

"Blessing Bags" From Concord Friends

Ministry and Counsel sponsored a Blessing Bag project this past fall. Members were asked to donate specific items each week during September and October for the needy. Some items included chapstick, socks, snack foods, wipes, soap, toothbrushes and paste. Volunteers stayed after worship service on November 7th to put the Blessing Bags together. The bags were available to interested members over the next couple of weeks for distribution. Many members have shared their positive experiences handing out the bags. These bags ended up not only blessing the needy, but the givers as well. We appreciate everyone's help making this a successful project!

To see more of what Concord Friends is up to, check out their Facebook page [HERE](#)



Black History & Freedom



You may have noticed that this month's newsletter subtly carries the theme of "Freedom". As children of God we enjoy the Freedom that comes from being reconciled to him. We thrive in the Freedom his Spirit brings. Along those lines; as many of you know, February was Black History Month. I didn't want this month's newsletter to pass by without celebrating. Celebrating the black community as well as the Religious Society of Friends level of participation in helping to abolish slavery. Below is a small bit of information about NC Quakers involvement in the Underground Railroad provided by Guilford College. Click [HERE](#) for so much more information.

Underground Railroad Stories

Being "underground," or highly secret, meant that all involved in the activities could not risk sharing what they were doing except with those people with whom they were directly working. Amazingly, there were no "leaks" in the system, according to Addison Coffin, son of Vestal Coffin. But years later stories by Levi and Addison Coffin were written about what had transpired (Vestal died in 1826). A few local stories are shared here.

LEVI COFFIN FIRST SEEING THE ENSLAVED

Levi Coffin, the "reputed President of the Underground Railroad," dates his "conversion to Abolitionism from an incident which occurred when I was about seven years old."

There was a coffle of slaves (chained together in couples) who passed by on the Salisbury road. Levi and his father observed and spoke to them. They learned that the slaves were very unhappy because 'They have taken us away from our wives and children, and they chain us lest we should make our escape and go back to them.' Levi asked many questions of his father and learned about "the meaning of slavery, and, as I listened, the thought rose in my mind -- 'How terribly we should feel if father were taken away from us.'" This, he said, was the beginning of his being in sympathy with the oppressed. (From Reminiscences by Levi Coffin, 1880)

LEVI COFFIN LEARNING ABOUT THE LIVES OF THE ENSLAVED

“Runaway slaves used frequently to conceal themselves in the woods and thickets in the vicinity of New Garden, waiting opportunities to make their escape to the North, and I generally learned their places of concealment and rendered them all the service in my power.” He fed them scraps of bacon and cornbread meant for hogs, and “many a time I sat in the thickets with them as they hungrily devoured my bounty, and listened to the stories they told of hard masters and cruel treatment. . .” (From Reminiscences by Levi Coffin, 1880)

FIRST PASSENGER ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD - JOHN DIMERY in 1819

During the time of the Benjamin Benson trial in Guilford County there was “a free black man named John Dimery [who] became the first known fugitive to be spirited away from Guilford County to the free states.” He had been freed by his master elsewhere in North Carolina, and come to live with his wife in New Garden. In 1819 the old master died and his sons came to New Garden to collect Dimery in the night. Dimery enlisted his daughter to “run for ‘Mr. Coffin.’” Vestal and his friend Isaac White caught up with and detained the kidnappers while “the woman of the house” quietly untied Dimery, who “disappeared into the woods.” Addison Coffin reports that Dimery “was started on the Underground Railroad that night and soon landed at Richmond, Indiana.” (From Life and Travels by Addison Coffin, 1897)

LEVI AND VESTAL COFFIN INTERVIEWED FREEDOM SEEKERS, WITH THE HELP OF SOL, AN ENSLAVED AFRICAN

“... Sol would manage to bring the person, by night, to some rendezvous appointed, in the pine thickets or the depths of the woods, and there Vestal and I would meet them and have an interview. There was always a risk in holding these meetings, for the law in the South inflicted heavy penalties on any one who should aid or abet a fugitive slave in escaping, and the patrollers, or mounted officers, frequently passed along the road near our place of concealment.” (From Reminiscences by Levi Coffin, 1880)





Celebrating 350 years of Quakers in North Carolina

2022 marks the 350th year since William Edmundson and George Fox splashed through the Great Dismal Swamp and held the first Quaker service in North Carolina. Quakers would go on to become a major force in the religious history of North Carolina. Within three decades, there was a Quaker governor of the colony, a majority of Quakers in the Assembly, and North Carolina Yearly Meeting organized as the first official European religious group in the Carolinas.

Dan Warren from Marlboro Friends has many Quaker ancestors and reports that Quakers had actually been in North Carolina since 1665. Henry Phelps and family of Rhode Island were being persecuted because they were Quakers. They relocated to the Albemarle Sound region in 1665. Edmundson and Fox visited Phelps in his home in 1672 and Phelps cried because he hadn't seen another Quaker in seven years. So, 1672 marks the first minuted Quaker service, not the date of the first community in North Carolina.

An informal group of Friends across North Carolina has begun discussions about observing this anniversary. Some are already in the works: a lecture series on North Carolina Quaker history; local tours of Quaker sites; and tours in Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties including the Newbold-White House.

The main suggestion by the group is Friends in various meetings should develop their own distinctive programming, sharing the Quaker message in ways relevant to each group.

Our FCNC Committee includes David Millikan, Beth Saunders, Lindsay Shore-Wright, David Hobson, Dan Warren and Brenda McKinney. The group welcomes volunteers interested in our N. C. Quaker heritage and would like to encourage participation in activities commemorating this 350th anniversary. If you would like to join this group or have activities planned in your monthly meetings, please contact Brenda McKinney at dbmckinney@surry.net.





February RECAP

Tribute to Billy Britt

Greensboro - Billy Miles Britt, 91, passed away Saturday, February 12, 2022, at Friends Home West.

"I'm doing fine, but I'm not ready to jump any fences!" became Billy's daily proclamation later in life. Born the last of six children to the late James Berry and Omega Parks Britt in Goldsboro, NC, Billy grew up on a farm with numerous livestock, including an unfriendly bull that made him realize how fast he could run and jump over a fence in his twenties.

Named after a famous evangelist, Billy Sunday, he would often pretend to preach sermons to his sister, Lorraine, when they were growing up. After he left home in 1950 to fulfill his sacred calling into full-time Christian ministry, Billy never forgot his roots and referred to his experiences on the farm in sermons, keynote addresses, committee meetings, and general conversation. He often said, "You can take the boy out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy."

"The country" made an indelible impression on Billy and throughout his life, he let everyone know he was from Wayne County.

He met his sweetheart, Viola Seymour, at a Friend's Youth Quarterly Meeting and married her at Goldsboro Friends Meeting on December 27, 1950. They just celebrated their 72nd anniversary.

Education was important to both Billy and Viola; Billy earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in theology from People's Bible College (John Wesley College) and then a Bachelor of Arts degree in religion from Guilford College on the same day that Viola earned her degree (1956). Billy later earned a master's degree from Guilford College and received two honorary doctorates from John Wesley College and Carolina Evangelical Divinity School. Billy began his ministry in 1951 and traveled between three churches that first year- Centre Valley in Virginia, Rhodes in Goldsboro, and Hopewell in Asheboro- while attending college. Billy often remarked that he and Viola were so poor in those days, they could barely "rub two nickels together." They were thrilled when he assumed his first full-time position at Randleman Friends Meeting and the congregation provided a new parsonage for them. In 1962, Billy was called to pastor Spring Garden Friends Meeting in downtown Greensboro where he served for thirteen years.

In 1975, Billy became Superintendent of North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends (NCYM), a position he held until semi-retirement in 1995. In that role, he traveled to over 80 churches in NC, VA, and Miami to provide leadership, promote Yearly Meeting programs, and provide encouragement to pastors and congregations. He became known as a pastor to pastors, and helped develop a retirement fund for Quaker ministers. In addition, he helped launch several new projects such as NC Friends Disaster Relief, a youth musical group named Serenity, and a divinity school for Quaker (and non-Quaker) ministers to receive graduate degrees. He was involved in numerous community and civic organizations such as Sertoma Club and the Greensboro Lions Club, where he served as Chaplain for many years.

In retirement, he enjoyed traveling abroad with Viola, his favorite trip being to the Holy Land to walk the paths where Jesus walked. He loved spending time with his grandchildren, supporting Joy's musical endeavors, and authored three books, Lest We Forget, a book about former NC Quaker ministers, Giants in the Land, about former NC Superintendents, and My Quaker Life, his memoirs which he wrote with his daughter, Joy.

Billy was known for his upbeat attitude and sense of humor, often joking with the nursing personnel at Friends Homes such that they referred to him as their "buddy." He loved to read books on history and biographies, particularly about U.S. presidents and world leaders.

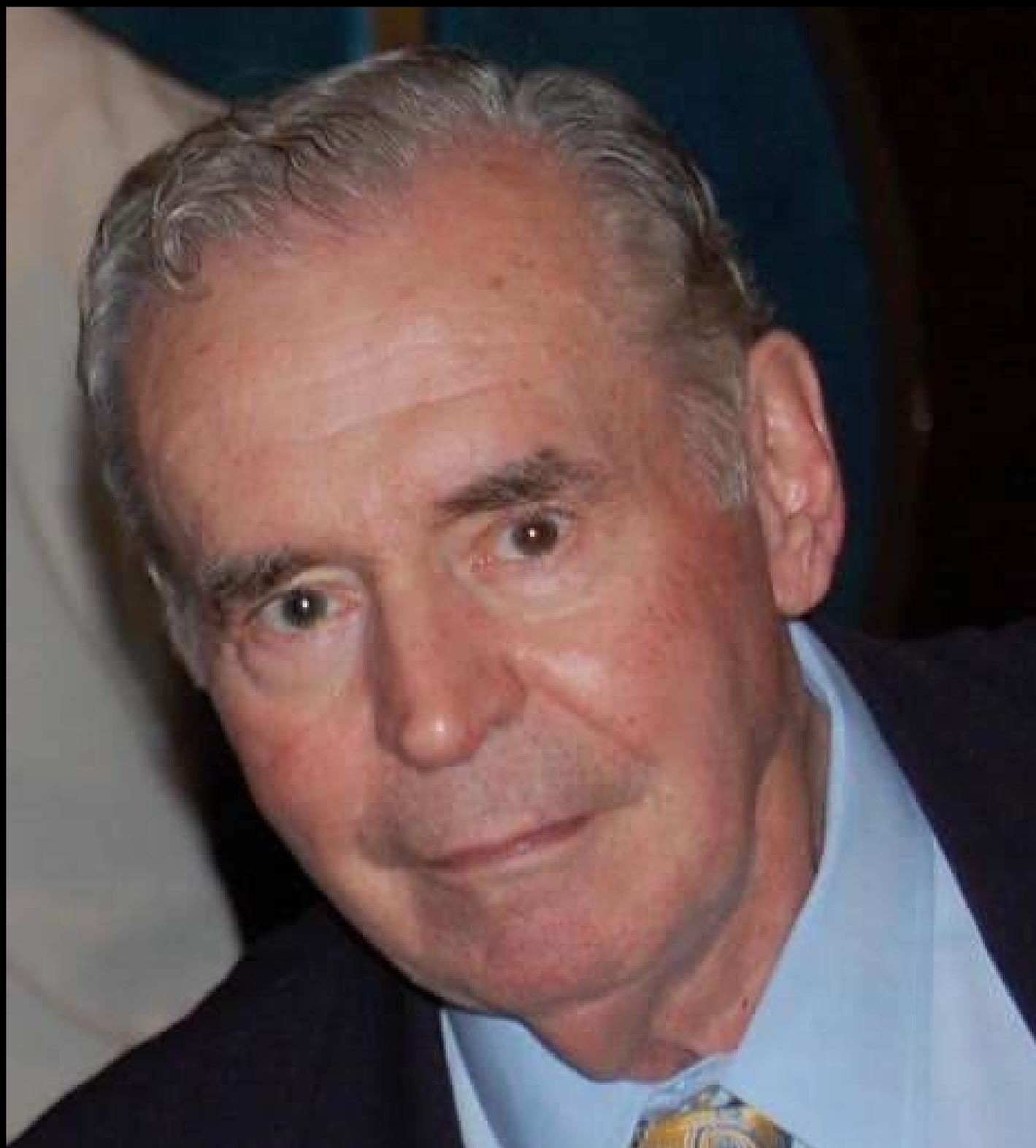
He was loyal to his faith, his family and friends, and to his beloved peanut butter, ice cream, and bananas. We will always respect and admire Billy as a man who lived his life through the Holy Spirit's direction and guidance. He will be deeply missed until we see him again in eternity.

Billy leaves behind his wife of 72 years, Viola Seymour Britt, daughter Joy and son-in-law Dan Reavis, four grandchildren-Byron Miles Britt, Jr., John Reavis, Kat Reavis, and Owen Britt, and sister Lorraine Allen. He is now rejoicing at being reunited with his parents, son Byron Miles Britt, Sr., sisters Wilda Thomas and Melba Creech, brothers Arnold Britt and Woodrow ("Woodie") Britt

-Tribute copied from Cumby Family Funeral Service website

Billy Miles Britt

December 4, 1930 ~ February 12, 2022



Pastors Retreat 2022

The pastor's/spouses retreat had a mixture of 22 attendees, including pastors, spouses, retired pastors and guests.

President Tommy Sluder, pastor at Centre, sent the following list of what happened:

Tranquility

Rest

Peace

Laughter to the point of tears

Encouragement

Fun

Great food for free at Fishy Fish Café

Sightseeing/historical tour in Southport

Prayer

Spontaneous a capella hymn singing

Spirit moving worship courtesy of Beach Road Baptist Church Worship Team

Honest conversation about the past

Honest conversation about the future

Morning devotions

Ferry trips

Golf (including an investigation of the spontaneous moving ball, a suspect has been developed but charges were not sought...yet)

An Uno game where 1 hand that lasted 1 hour and 5 reshuffles – Congratulations to Ray Luther on his win

Everyone seemed to say this was much needed due to the last 2 years of stress from the virus that shall not be named!

"As Superintendent, I visibly saw our pastors decompress to some degree. Worship was emphasized with guest leaders, and the singing from the heart of each participant was awe-inspiring. Several commented that it was great to worship without having to plan/lead!" -Mike Wall

