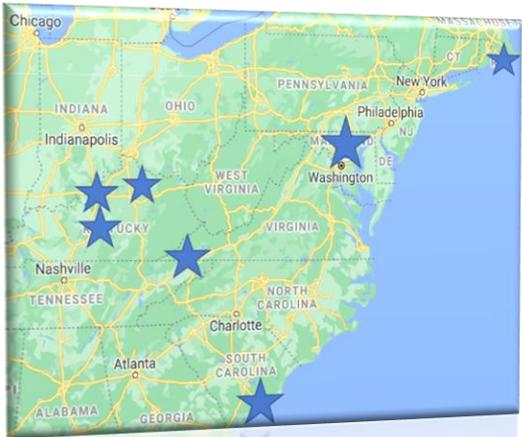


Theological Musings from Dave's Laptop

November 17, 2020

We've looked at John's *Revelation* for the past two Sundays, and today the *Laptop* begins with seven churches that are not the "Seven Churches of Revelation." This *Laptop* is a bit of a reminiscence, which I hope you'll forgive.

The Seven Churches with which I begin are the seven churches I've served during the past fifty years. In a nutshell, the journey has looked like this:



1. **Middletown Baptist Church**, Middletown, Rhode Island: Music Director, 1972
2. **Dorchester-Waylyn Baptist Church**, Charleston, South Carolina: Music Director, 1973
3. **First Baptist Church**, Carlisle, Kentucky: Pastor, 1980-1985
4. **Severns Valley Baptist Church**, Elizabethtown, Kentucky: Minister of Pastoral Counseling and Family Life, 1987-1989
5. **St. Matthews Baptist Church**, Louisville, Kentucky: Minister of Pastoral Care, 1989-1991; Associate Pastor, 1996-2001
6. **First Baptist Church**, Bristol, Virginia: Pastor, 2001-2011
7. **Columbia Baptist Fellowship**, Columbia, Maryland: Pastor, 2012-2020

While it has been a joy to serve each of these congregations, I've told you many times that I've never had as much fun serving a congregation as I've had with you! I've thanked God for you *every single day* of the past nine years!

We might well have had more time together had colon cancer and prostate cancer not overtaken me two years ago. Thanks be to God (!!!), the treatments appear to have been effective, and at the moment, I feel fine (other than the extra weight with which the prostate treatment blessed me).

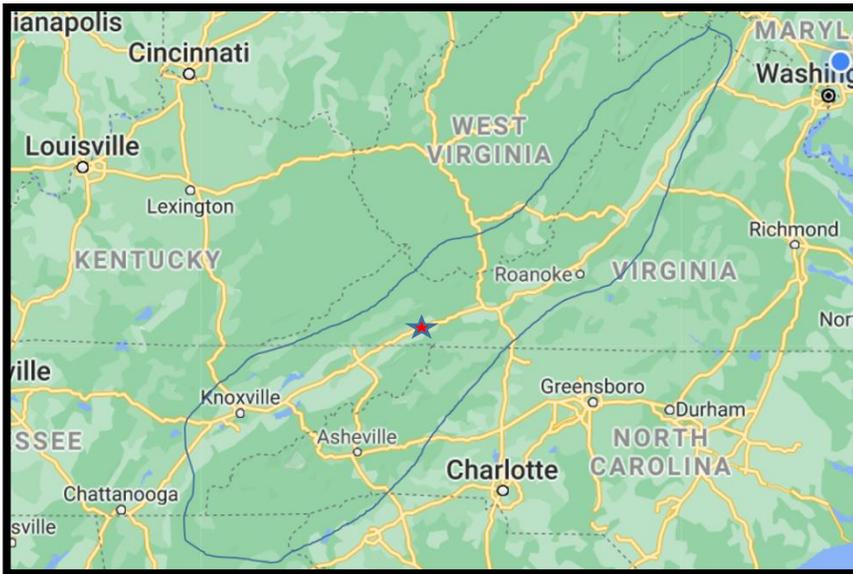
At the same time, concern about the ramifications of possible recurrence caused me to announce my retirement for the end of this year, so as to consolidate our households in just one location should my health decline or collapse. So it is that our Search Team is in their second round of video interviews with their short list of possible candidates for the position of Senior Pastor for CBF, and that Jill and I have been thinking about such consolidation.

Our plan has been to sell my condo in Columbia and for me to move over to our house at Lake Holiday in Cross Junction, Virginia, where Jill worked and where she lives most of the time. The house badly needs updating, which we had put off until now for a bunch of reasons; and this summer we engaged a designer to work with Jill on what she'd like to have happen in that home. We developed such a plan, but when cost estimates came back, it was clear that we can't afford to make the changes Jill's heart desires, and we moved to Plan B.

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Plan B involved looking for another house somewhere . . . but where? We've lived in lots of places (I didn't mention Texas before, because I didn't serve a church there), and we didn't have strong feelings about returning to any of them; though we do have a preference for the southern Appalachians.

As you know, Jill has made great sacrifices in order to make it possible for me to serve with you here at CBF. While she loved her work as a lactation consultant at Winchester Medical Center, Jill has spent most of the last nine years living by herself

120 miles from me; so when it came time for the next move, I told her I'll go "wherever you want to go."

So it is that for the past several months we've looked at hundreds of houses online, and we've traveled up and down the "target area" shown on the map multiple times to see them. We've seen lots of nice houses, but nothing that warmed Jill's heart.

Then, about ten days ago, Jill found a house in Abingdon, Virginia (where the little red star is on the map) that she wanted to see. I found a bunch of houses for her to consider in that area, as did our realtor, but she said, "I only want to see this one." I said, "You want to drive *six hours* (from Winchester) just to look at *ONE* house?!" and she said, "Yep."

So, on last Friday (the 13th, no less), we drove to Abingdon, and now we have a contract in underwriting for to purchase this house.

Jill is happy. So I'm happy. Makes leaving you a bit easier, but it's still going to be hard, 'cause I love you (She does, too 😊).

Dave

P.S. Come see us!



1143 Rockwall Drive
Abingdon, VA 24210

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