

# Laurel Church of Christ

## Family Focus

December 5, 2021

### OUR LEADERS:

#### Elders:

David Hudson  
Shawn Donaway

#### Deacons:

Dave Hudson  
Lanny Sowell  
Danny Snyder

#### Evangelist:

Dale Nelson  
501-207-3808  
dale.nelson@laurelcoc.com

#### Benevolence:

Phil Winter

#### Care Ministry:

Wayne Mathis

#### Treasurer:

Don Trader

#### Media Ministry

Don Trader  
Julio Brennick

#### Youth Leader:

Troy Mathis

#### Contact us:

1010 S. Central Avenue  
Laurel, DE 19956

laurelcoc@laurelcoc.com

Phone: 302-875-7748

www.laurelcoc.org

Send bulletin items to:  
dknewwoo@gmail.com or  
Text/call 443-521-2401

### FATHER, FORGIVE THEM

By Dale Nelson

Louis Zamperini was a survivor. In 1943 he found himself in a series of unfortunate events during his time in the US Air Force. When his plane crashed into the ocean, he drifted at sea for 47 days before being “rescued” by the Japanese military and placed in a prison camp.

Still Zamperini endured. He suffered immensely, especially at the hands of one particular prison guard—Mutsuhiro Watanabe, who was also known as “The Bird”. After two years, Zamperini was freed. However, the horrors of his imprisonment haunted him at home. Zamperini became an angry alcoholic, and that anger and hatred ate away at his soul. The bottle and his own nightmares did what The Bird couldn’t do: they broke him.

One day, in an attempt to save their crumbling marriage, Zamperini’s wife insisted that he attend a gospel meeting. Zamperini agreed, and as he listened, he thought of all the times he’d prayed for God’s deliverance and all the times God had answered him; indeed, God was the reason that Zamperini could call himself a survivor.

On that day, Zamperini gave himself to Christ, praying for forgiveness and deliverance from all the pain his PTSD was causing. From that day on, he made it his goal to personally try and find those who had wronged him and extend forgiveness to them. In 1950, Zamperini visited a Tokyo prison holding several of his former prison guards. He forgave them. In 1998 Zamperini returned to Japan once again, and tried to meet The Bird, but Watanabe refused to speak with him. Zamperini forgave him anyway.

To me, Zamperini’s ability to show mercy and forgiveness is the most impressive thing we as Christians can take away from his life’s story. Despite horrific treatment and tragedy, Zamperini, with God’s help, was able to forgive his tormentors. His actions mirrored those of Christ, when he said of his tormentors, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34). In the same way, let us forgive those who hurt us. In doing so, we will be more like Christ, who has forgiven us of so much more.

## Being like Christ John 15:4-5

## Pray for the sick:

Faith Fooks, Dave Newberry, Gloria Hurley, Terry Hastings, Kay Murphy, Kristy Brady, Robin Anderson, Natalie Anderson, Pat Tucker, Michelle Tucker, Sandi Holt—continuing health concerns.  
Donald Morris (Penni's B-I-L); in Hospice care  
Condolences to the families of Melissa Carney and Joann Lynch who passed away and to Amy Ellis in the death of her step-sister.  
Lanny Sowell and Amy Mathis; undergoing tests.  
Thea's friend Cindy's brother Dwight; back surg.  
On-going personal Bible studies.  
Kerri and family—(Dad 's return of brain cancer)—friend of Dale and Maddy.  
Jean Hudson fell on her face on the concrete.  
Marissa (Robin Anderson's niece; shock trauma  
James McCartney; prostate cancer (has not spread to his bones)  
Michael Roulis (Eleanor's son); vertigo  
Mary Mussler; by-pass  
Rhonda Cipolla and her pregnancy  
Danielle Pedri's infant son Jacob (Delmar teacher)

## Opportunities for study and worship

Sunday: (In person and virtually at:  
[www.laurelcoc.org](http://www.laurelcoc.org))

Bible Classes	9:00 a.m.
Worship	10:00 a.m.
Teen Devo	6:00 p.m.

Tuesday:

Men's Bible Study	8:30 a.m.
Women's Zoom study	7:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study at building	6:30 p.m.
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We invite you to attend any of our service times, and we look forward to welcoming you, and pray that you might find a home here with us in Laurel and with God in heaven as His child.

If you need Media help — connections, addresses, or general questions contact: Don Trader or Julio Brennick

**Bus Trip:** *To Sight and Sound* to see *David*. We have reached the deadline for letting Ginger know if you wish to go.

**CHRISTMAS TEA** for ladies Dec. 18th at 12:00, FLC. RSVP to Julie. Bring wrapped ornament to exchange.

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING** will be Sunday the 19th. Meet at the FLC AT 4:00.

**CAROLERS OF ALL AGES NEEDED** to ride float and sing in Christmas parade in Laurel which was moved to Monday, Dec. 6th at 7:00. Refreshments will follow in the FLC. Delmar's parade was Saturday. Contact Troy if interested in participating.

**CROWN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CLASS** coming in Feb.

## WHO WE ARE

The body of Christ in Laurel, Delaware is a family of believers knit together in love (Colossians 2:2), striving to serve God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24) and carrying the gospel to the lost (Matthew 28:18). We are an autonomous body with Christ only as our head, and elders shepherding the flock of God (Acts 20:28).

We have been entrusted with the gospel (I Thessalonians 2:4) and so it is that we speak. The congregation seeks to uphold the doctrine and practice of the first century church using the only true standard, the Bible, as our guide (2 Peter 1:3). It is our prayer that all would come to a knowledge of the truth and partake in that divine fellowship in the body of Christ, being immersed for the remission of sins, and beginning life anew with Christ as Lord (Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1). Our plea is that we might be one in Christ, and serve the Lord faithfully unto death to receive our crown (Revelation 2:10).