2026 05 June Times Ink

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." **–** *Philippians 4:8 (New International Version)*

Most of us (or so I'm told) have times when we're trying to remember something that we know we know but we just can't seem to recall what it is. It's like going to get something from the kitchen and grabbing a half-dozen things to take to the table – except the one thing you actually went to the kitchen for in the first place. When that would happen to my dad, he used to say that the problem was that our brains only have so much capacity and because he was old, he had already filled his brain completely full. That meant, if he wanted to remember something new, he'd have to empty out something already in there to make room. And the conundrum, he said, was that everything already in his brain was much too significant to delete, so that's why he couldn't remember that new thing he was trying to remember.

I shared that with a friend recently when I lost my train of thought in the middle of our conversation. She didn't buy it. But it did get us talking about what the unimportant things are that we fill our brains with and how that clutter affects our overall outlook on life.

There are lots of ways to clutter up our brains: doom scrolling and getting lost reading media threads; anticipatory worrying—especially about things over which we have no control; watching endless news commentaries by people with whom we already agree; engaging in negative conversations; remembering embarrassing moments or past grudges; reading books with no social redeeming quality; ruminating over past mistakes or perceived short comings; memorizing fascinatingly useless facts (a snail can sleep for 3 years, 'typewriter' is the longest word you can type using only the letters on one row of the keyboard, there are 293 ways to make change for a dollar until, that is, we no longer have pennies). Ok, maybe remembering trivia isn't pathetically useless but the other brain-cluttering activities are certainly not helpful.

What would we do differently if we flipped a switch and changed what we're filling our brains with? We could read books that challenge our thinking and expand our horizons; engage in meaningful conversations with people who hold perspectives that are different from our own; focus on gratitude for the small joys in life; surround ourselves with supportive and positive people; celebrate achievements—no matter how small; acknowledge other people's strengths and contributions. To this list, my friend and I also added: immerse ourselves in reading the Bible; study scripture with others to expand our understanding; participate fully with others in church worship and teaching; and engage in personal prayer time and weekly intercessory prayer (praying on behalf of others and seeking divine intervention for the needs and concerns of others).

We believe it is possible to feel more calm and relaxed, more optimistic and enthusiastic, more grateful and joyful, and that we will be able to serve others more fully if we spend less time filling our brains with clutter and more time in God's Word. *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." – Matthew 11:28-29 (New International Version)*

We invite you to join us for Sunday morning worship service at 9. I also invite you to learn more about our weekly Intercessory Prayer Time and our Bible Study groups. (*www.CommunityChurchOfHuntington.org or call the Church at 802-434-4854 and leave a message. And, I'm also in the phone book. We'd love to chat with you!)*