

Summer Sermon Series

June 16 – September 1
Stories That Shaped Us

8:00 a.m. Chapel Service
9:15 a.m. Garden Service
11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Service



When Edward R. Murrow initiated the *This I Believe* radio broadcast in 1951, he said, “We hardly need to be reminded that we are living in an age of confusion. A lot of us have traded in our beliefs for bitterness and cynicism, or for a heavy package of despair, or even a quivering portion of hysteria. Opinions can be picked up cheap in the marketplace while such commodities as courage and fortitude and faith are in alarmingly short supply.”

How true Murrow’s sentiments continue to be! This summer will provide a platform similar to Murrow’s long running radio show and the NPR broadcast of the same name. He invited butchers, bankers, generals, people who are homeless, and CEOs to join his show to share a brief credo or statement of belief. Through our *Stories That Shape Us* sermon series, we will hear how our pastors, pastoral residents, parish associates, and director of music have had their credo—their belief in God—shaped.

In addition, we hope that you will join in the storytelling!

First, join us in reading *This I Believe* edited by Jay Allison. It is a book filled with eighty credos from people from all walks of life—from Bill Gates to a part-time hospital clerk in Massachusetts. You might love some of them—and disagree vehemently with others. Still, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* lauds the book as “a welcome change from the sloganeering, political mudslinging and products of spin doctors,” and we hope it will create life-giving conversation for our church. We will be encouraging folks in small groups and after-church classes to meet and discuss the book and, ultimately, write credos of their own.

Second, this summer we will invite you in to our *Support the Story* giving campaign. Each week we will present a story for the congregation to support financially. Some of these stories will come from within our church and some from partners in our greater community. One week, perhaps, we will be challenged to purchase a washer and dryer for a disabled veteran; another week, purchase one-hundred new books for Beyond Basics in Pontiac; and another week we might be asked to fund a choral scholarship for our music program. Each week a new story will be revealed and our goal will be to include as many people in support of it (even with only \$1) that we can!

At the end of Murrow’s first broadcast he said, “In talking to people, in listening to them, I have come to realize that I don’t have the monopoly on the world’s problems; others have their share, often far, far bigger than mine. This has helped me to see my own in a truer perspective. And in learning how others have faced their problems, this has given me fresh ideas about how to tackle mine.” I hope this summer’s *Stories That Shape Us* series offers us the same inspiration!

Stay warm,
Pastor Nate

June 16 – Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips



Isaiah 60:1–3

This word of encouragement comes at the end of a long period of exile for God’s people. It is meant to encourage them to jump into this new chance of being alive as a community! I see this as central to my call to ministry – to help people to catch the dream of what is to come!

June 23 – Rev. Angela Ryo



John 10:1–10

Whenever I feel lost or get into a survival mode, I come back to this text. Jesus came so we can thrive, not merely survive! This text always brings me back to what’s important to our faith formation: building community and listening to the right voice so that we may have life and have it to the fullest.

June 30 – Rev. Chris Hallam



Jonah 3:6–4:11

I have always loved Jonah because I know that I can be all too like him at times. But through Jonah’s story we can learn how much bigger God’s plans are than our own and how far reaching God’s love truly is.

July 7 – Rev. Marjorie Wilhelmi



Exodus 3:1–14

Gerard Manley Hopkins says, “The earth is charged with the grandeur of God.” It’s all around us, but how often do we notice? Moses, in the middle of his workday, recognizes this presence in a nearby bush. When he takes the time to turn aside and pay attention, his whole life is transformed. I do believe this is the constant invitation and ever-present possibility for us all.

July 14 – Glenn Miller, Director of Music



1 Corinthians 14:15

This text, which is the motto of the Royal School of Church Music, underscores not only for myself and fellow church musicians but for the entire body of Christ the call to glorify God through both our hearts and minds working in balance.

July 21 – Rev. Jasmine Smart



Genesis 37:1–4, 2–28

The Joseph story started out as a childhood favorite of mine since I resonated with some of the character’s experiences. It continues to give me hope that God can bring about goodness and love even from difficult circumstances.

July 28 – Rev. Dr. Keith O. Provost



Select verses from Matthew

The Sermon on the Mount is by far Jesus' longest explanation of what it looks like to live as His follower and to serve as a member of God's Kingdom. In many ways, Jesus' teachings during the Sermon on the Mount represent the major ideals of the Christian life. I have come to view it as an ethical will Jesus gave to us—a gift of wisdom and direction on how to live a life as it was intended to be lived.

August 4 – Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips



Matthew 11:25–30

I have always felt a responsibility to fix what is broken. Maybe that is a *first child* thing! This text reminds us that Jesus is the carrier of burdens and author of freedom; I have always found it to be a liberating reminder when it feels like I am worn down from trying to do too much.

August 11 – Tyler Brinks



James 1:17–27

When I need to be reminded how I as a Christian should act, I turn to Jesus first and then to James. James tells us to be doers of the word, not merely hearers who deceive ourselves. As Christians we have a responsibility to witness to the love of Jesus through our actions. People know that we are Christian by our actions, namely by the love that we practice towards our neighbors. As a community of faith, let's continue practicing our mission statement and show people God's transforming love through our actions.

August 18 – Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips



1 Peter 2:1–9

I love this passage because it reminds me of the privilege of serving in God's company of praise. God has pulled us together as a community to do something very special in the world. I am so passionate about discovering what he hopes for his *holy nation*!

August 26 – Rev. Fernando Rodríguez



1 Corinthians 1:18–25

This was a text that was pivotal for me when I was beginning to take my faith seriously. Many thought I was crazy for making my faith a central part of who I was, and especially, for pursuing the path to ordained ministry. The text helped me tremendously during moments of uncertainty when I questioned whether or not I was on the right path.

September 1 – Rev. Alex Kim



Genesis 25:19–34

Maybe it's because I'm a twin that this passage has always resonated with me. Are you Jacob? Are you Esau? These two, constantly in conflict, can sometimes be a great reflection of the world we live in. Yet, God can still make something beautiful...

Summer Reading Group Schedule

Join us for one or both of the summer reading book discussion sessions! We will discuss the book during the first meeting, and you will write and share your own stories that have shaped you and your beliefs in the second meeting. Lunch will be served at all meetings. Registration is not required.

Dates:

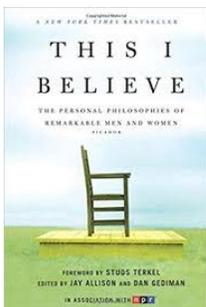
Session 1: Sundays, June 23 and 30

Session 2: Sundays, August 4 and 11

Time/Location:

12:15 p.m. in Abbey 27

Small groups will be meeting at various homes and places throughout the summer! Check with your small group to see when and where you're meeting for the summer!



In the early 1950s, prominent American newsman Edward R. Murrow and three colleagues came up with a novel idea: to ask individuals to write their own personal credo, a story of the rules by which they lived, in six hundred words or less. The reason was simple: at a time of uncertainty about the future, when matters of belief divided our country and the world, Murrow felt that broadcasting a daily personal reflection on one's guiding principles would help listeners find answers to their own questions about living.

Stories are powerful. Stories shape us. This summer, we want to think about our own defining stories that have shaped us and bless others by sharing those stories. Where is God at work in your life? What stories in your life have shaped you into the person you are today? We can't wait to hear all your stories this summer! Join us in reading the book, *This I Believe*, listening to others' stories and telling your own stories!

Support the Story!

Building off the stories we will hear from our pastors and leaders about important texts that have shaped their lives, we will also listen to stories in our community of people and organizations doing great things. During worship each week this summer, we will learn stories about how these organizations impact the communities they serve and how we can support their story financially.

As we envision a world where every heart experiences God's transforming love, we will hear stories about what is being done to support homeless veterans, how senior citizens sometimes struggle to cover rent, the impact the summer music camp led by Glenn Miller has on youth, how the leaders of Micah 6 community are gathering their neighbors in Pontiac, and many more. Let's continue to take steps to living into the world we envision by supporting these stories with our generosity!



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