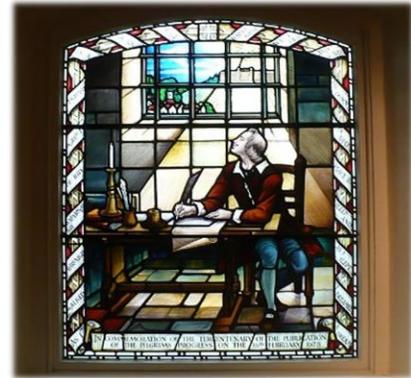


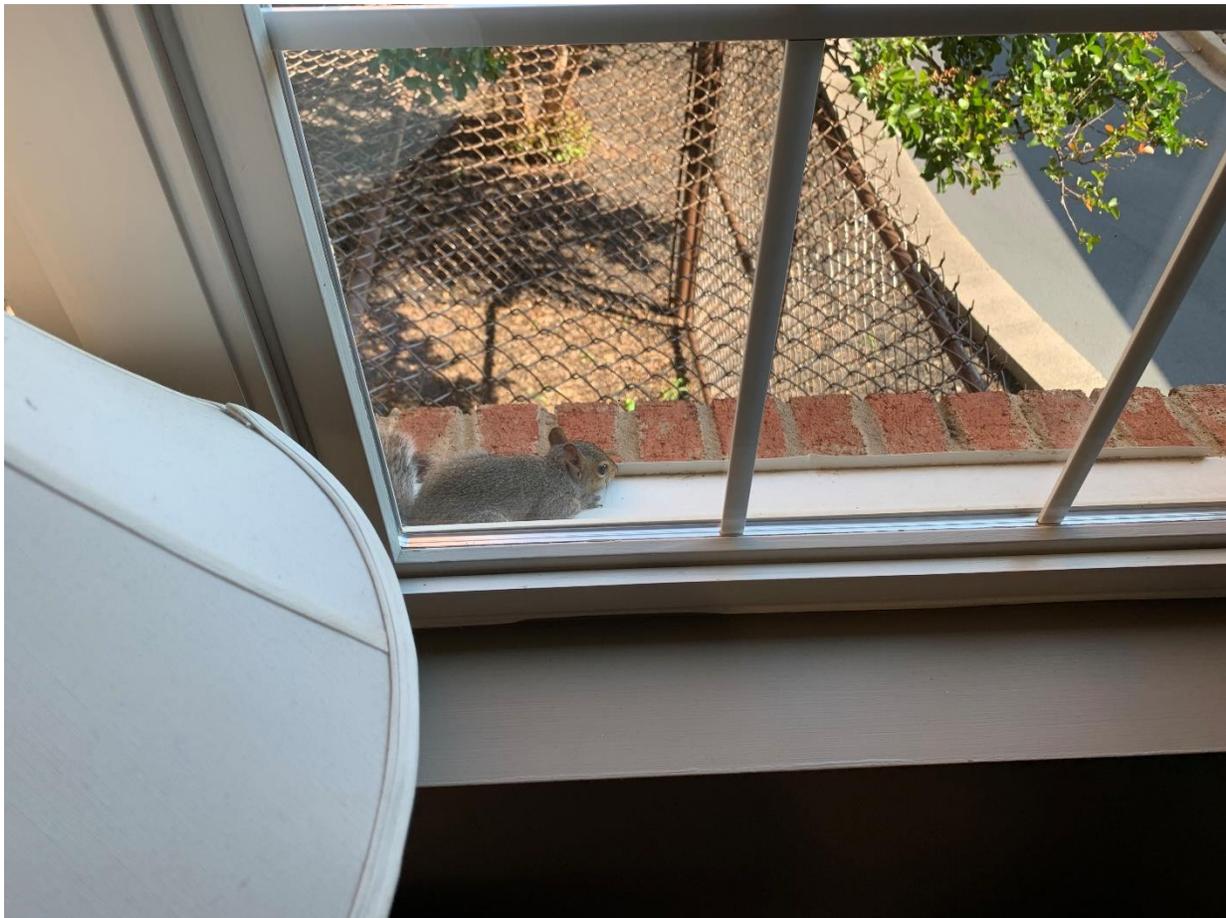
July 6, 2020

Good morning, Everybody.

I trust that the Lord's Day yesterday was faith strengthening and that you've had a good morning so far. Isn't the Lord good? How could we possibly live through a day without the consciousness of His presence and care?



Last week Pastor Jones and I were walking through the hallway that bends around the church office, and we came across this sight. Perhaps the children would like to see it.



It was a pretty small squirrel. We remarked that it looked like a baby. The afternoon was late, very hot, and the little creature had evidently crawled up on the window ledge for shade from the sun.

I have a mixed collection of feelings about squirrels. There are two large pecan trees in our back yard, and if I can keep the squirrel population thinned out, the trees sometimes produce a really nice harvest. But if I'm not pretty diligent (I guess it would be prudent not to go into that in any detail), the squirrels and chipmunks haul away hundreds and hundreds of nuts. I'm alright with sharing with a reasonable number of them, but it's the guys that come swinging from all over the neighborhood, down through the tree branches, across rooftops, and over the phone lines which I confess to getting into a grudge match with. The longer it lasts . . . the harder my heart. That doesn't tend to work out well for the squirrels.

On the other hand, I really enjoy seeing squirrels in other people's yards. Not so much because they're in *other* people's yards, but because I truly do enjoy watching them.

When Pastor Jones and I saw this one, it was a special moment, because what leaped into my mind, was. . .

The bird also has found a house, And the swallow a nest
for herself, where she may lay her young, Even Your altars,
O LORD of hosts, My King and my God (Ps. 84:3 NASB).

A squirrel's not a swallow, of course, but seeing this one nestled up against the side of the building out of the sun's glare gave me the same kind of feelings that I have whenever I read that verse. It came to mind yesterday when I walked down the hall past that window. And I thought of how I'm enveloped with that same sense of being sheltered and safely at home in our building when I come here on the Lord's Day. I'm sure that you know the feelings that I'm talking about. What is it about the very building in which we meet that gives us that comfort and sense of wellbeing that has almost a hallowing effect upon our spirits?

As strengthening and delightful the fellowship of Christians, I've come to realize that it really isn't people, not even the Lord's people, that gives me that secure,

nearly sanctifying feeling. It's the warm association of the building with ***the Lord Himself***. It's the long experience of having truly felt ***His*** presence there. Sadly, not every time we've met, but often enough that it makes me hunger for the sense of it all over again. That's what really makes me want to be there—not just when the building is filled with happy children and friendly faces, but even when, and sometimes especially when the rooms stand empty and quiet. When there's no one there but the Lord, *the LORD of hosts, My King and my God*. There's a sense of having returned home to a *nest*.

I hope that you know what I'm talking about. And that it really isn't so much the fellowship that we have with one another, but the fellowship that you find with the Lord Himself, that creates a homing instinct in your heart for the Lord's Day and the Lord's house. *Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God*.

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick