

Softball action is back in Lunenburg

Lunenburg Girls' Softball made its long-awaited return Saturday, July 11, at Bolter Field in Kenbridge after the COVID-19 pandemic significantly delayed the possibility of any play in 2020. The Lunenburg and Crewe Belles, girls ages 13-19, got play started for the day, and the Angels, girls ages 9-10, closed things out in the evening Saturday.



Savanna Fowler lines up a hit for the Wild Katz.



Emily Kelley prepares to unleash a pitch.

At right, Olivia Dunbar makes an accurate swing for her team.

Photos by Titus Mohler



Kynzie Nowlin judges the trajectory of a hit in right field.



Chelsey Williams wears a smile that reflects the joy many felt Saturday with the return of softball.



Alyssa Inzeo sends the ball back into the infield following a hit.

CHURCH: ‘God gets all the credit for this’

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outside its building than it was in traditional worship services before the pandemic. Since Easter, the church has baptized 19 people.

“We try to make sure we do the (online service) every single week for those who might be on vacation that still aren’t comfortable coming out,” Bailey said. “We’re actually seeing a lot of churches that have moved back to indoor services, they’ve got folks still attending drive-in because they don’t feel comfortable yet going back into a building.”

Bailey is not in a rush to get back to worshipping inside the church building.

“Everybody keeps asking, ‘When are you all going to open church back up?’ Church has never closed. We’ve never stopped worship the whole time. We are still going strong,” Bailey said. “So we were not

in a hurry to make any decisions to get to this point and we are not in a hurry to rush back. We want to do what is best for the people. We want to be the good needed.”

Bailey said Kenbridge Christian may start going back into its building in the next month or two, but that doesn’t mean the drive-in and online services will stop, saying there will likely be a lot of people who may not be comfortable returning to indoor worship just yet. He said parishioners do miss interacting with each other but are learning how to fellowship from afar.

“People are still social distancing themselves, but they get out of the cars. They can talk. They wave,” Bailey said. “You definitely sense the, ‘I can’t wait to get back in the building.’”

Bailey said the elders of the church have been constantly checking on members of the church family, making sure everyone has what they

need through the pandemic.

“This is not what we want, but it is what is needed,” Bailey said. “They are accepting of that, and I love it.”

Others outside the community are also taking notice of the church’s success in bringing the community together. The Richmond law firm of Allen, Allen, Allen and Allen named Bailey one of Allen and Allen’s 28 Hometown Heroes for Virginia in 2020. He was one of three honorees awarded for connecting the community to resources.

“I don’t think I deserve this award,” Bailey said. “I was just doing what was needed in our community. God has definitely provided everything we needed to do drive-in right off the bat.”

But the drive-in services were not seen as a good move by some of Bailey’s colleagues. He said he had several friends contact him saying he was being selfish and didn’t care about his

people by having worship in a parking lot when they could just have services online.

“I tried to explain to them that we didn’t have a lot of options here. Not everything has internet here,” he said. “The interesting thing is about a month later, those same people were contacting me saying, ‘Can you give you me some information on the drive-in.’”

The service hasn’t always gone according to plan. The church had its biggest challenge Easter Sunday when shortly after the service began, with at least 444 people in attendance, the FM transmitter used to send the audio to car radios suddenly stopped working.

“God gets all the credit for this,” Bailey said. “Everybody said it was a good Plan B. There was no Plan B. We had not planned on this to happen.”

The service was quickly switched to Facebook Live. Those in attendance with phones or laptops began listening

to the service through Facebook and turned up the volume so people in cars around them without access could hear.

“It worked out beautifully. It actually got shared and more people we able to able to enjoy it with us,” Bailey said.

Bailey, who has been the pastor at Kenbridge Christian Church for nearly 18 years, said he hopes this time of pandemic and the innovations it has brought to worship will help change traditional church services for the better. He talked about a story in the book of Romans where the Apostle Paul was dealing with an issue in the early church. The traditional Jewish followers were leaving the church while the new Gentile Christians began pouring in with their own ideas about how church should be done.

“I hope that doesn’t happen again. I hope those who have been in church longer, accept and do whatever it takes to reach those who don’t

yet know Jesus as their savior,” Bailey said. “We are seeing a lot of doors opening up that had it not been for a pandemic would not have happened. God is definitely opening doors. I just pray we are smart enough to journey through them and not ignore or slam them shut because we are uncomfortable.”

Kenbridge Christian Church has grown significantly during Bailey’s nearly 18 years there. He said the church had 40 attendees per week, most of them elderly when he arrived in August of 2002.

“God has exploded it,” Bailey said explaining how the church grew to an 80 average for worship the first two years and then grew to 100 before arriving at the 115 number brought by the growth of the drive-in and online services.

“It’s been a fun journey,” Bailey said. “I’ve enjoyed the ride that God’s got us on. I look forward to whatever he’s got planned for the future.”

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TOWN OF KENBRIDGE
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STATUE: ‘I cannot stand what is going on with the state capital’

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Edmonds made a motion to call for a public hearing to remove the statue. His motion was supported with a second by Edward Pennington but failed 2-5.

Edmonds and Pennington were the two opposing votes in the subsequent 5-2 vote to approve the referendum.

Although the referendum vote is an advisory referendum and does not require the supervisors to go along with the vote of the people, Hankins and Supervisor Wayne Hoover assured the voters they would go along with the results of the referendum.

“I cannot stand what’s going on with the state capital,” Hoover said. “I cannot stand some of the decisions the governor is making that offer no input. I think by allowing the people, the residents of this county to make the decision, I can assure you, whatever the vote is in November, that is what I am voting for.”

The question of the statue on the courthouse lawn was brought up by Rev. Wiley and Carole Wallace who sent a letter to the county last month asking that the statue be removed.

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