

FROM THE PASTOR

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

My dog Brodie is most comfortable with a routine. He gets up every morning around 6:30 A.M. I put on his leash and take him for a two mile walk. He then eats his breakfast and proceeds to lie around the house, following my wife from room to room. Late in the day, he gets another walk, has dinner, has some play time in the back yard, and then lies around waiting for the family to go to bed. If there is any change in the routine, Brodie gets extremely nervous. Change scares him. As human beings, we are like my dog Brodie, in that we like a routine. If change takes place, we too can get nervous. But our Lord assures us today in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Our ever present Lord will be with us and bless us and guide us through the changes that take place, so long as we keep our focus on our real mission in life, to reach out to the lost and to nurture the saved.

As we move into the month of September, there will be some changes. These changes are happening so that we can continue to carry out our mission of reaching out to the lost, and nurturing the saved. On September 7th, we will begin a Sunday morning Bible study on the Life of Moses, from 8:00 AM until 8:45 AM. This study is 8 sessions, followed by a six session study on the book of Judges. Our Sunday morning studies will end on the last Sunday in November since we will be moving to a second service at that point. As your pastor, I am all about getting people into God's Word, and applying it to their lives. In a recent survey of our congregation, there were several people who checked interest in having a

Bible study on Sunday mornings. I realize there may only be a small number who have interest in this study on Sunday mornings, but even a few in the Word, who might not be in the Word otherwise, is important to me. A second addition to our fall schedule will be a woman's Bible study led by Pam Riches. It will begin on September 15th at 10:00 AM at Pam's home. It is entitled, "That the World May Know Him". This study traces the steps of Jesus, learning about the people, culture, and leaders of the time. The third addition, will be a small group Video study called, "The Truth Project." The location of this study is yet to be determined. Of course, The Wednesday in the Word study, a women's study at church on Prayer by Judy Anderson, The Singles, the Quilters, Men of Leisure, The Choir, the Defenders, the Book club, the 466A group, the Fellowship group, North County group, the Women of Open Bible, Grief Share, and the New Life in Christ group will be up and running in September as well. For a small church, there will a lot happening here.

One change that may make us the most apprehensive is the move from one service to two services from December through March 2015. The services will be at 8:00 and 10:30 AM. The reasoning behind this decision made by our congregation is four fold: First, it will give people two chances to worship their Lord on a Sunday. A person who might not consider coming to an early service, may come to a later service. So we will have two chances to reach a person with the Gospel. Secondly, two services will provide more space for worship as well as fellowship. There will be no overcrowding. Third, we will be able to give more time to guests. When 25-30 guests come to a single worship service, it is a real challenge to show Christ's love and hospitality to them all. Fourth, two services will provide more opportunity for God's people to serve their Savior by being ushers,

greeters, and members of our choir. We still will have time for fellowship after the first service and before the second service begins. Remember, this is only for 4 months.

I have asked our church secretary to call all our full-time and associate members to determine which service they would consider attending on a Sunday morning. This information will help us in our planning for ushers and greeters to staff those services. So please expect a phone call from Karen in the next month. Finally, our Steeplechase worship services will continue. I plan to conduct them from 9:30-10:00 AM on Sundays. Please continue to pray for me that God renews my energy, and helps me to structure my time wisely.

Yes, there will be some changes when September comes around, but with our powerful Lord behind us, these will be changes for the better. Go Open Bible!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It wasn't long ago I heard someone remark, "You just can't trust anyone these days". There certainly seems to be more truth in that statement than we care to admit. It is very difficult to operate and work together in situations that are lacking in trust. From little on, trust has played a huge role in our lives. Children learn to trust and depend on their parents for most of their needs. Teenagers place great emphasis on trusting relationships with friends. Marriage is a special relationship based on mutual trust. How about the trust between a Doctor and his patient especially when it comes to a surgical procedure?

Here in this life our confidence or trust is often misplaced and we end up being frustrated or disappointed. We find the Christian life difficult because we seek for God's blessing while we live according to our own will. We place too much emphasis on our own strength or know how only to find some form of failure. We build our assets with investments and then a recession comes along to threaten our security. In the end we find that self-reliance is able to produce nothing but depression or despair.

On earth there is no sure and guaranteed cure for all that ails us. There is no insurance policy that will protect us against illness and eventual death. Neither does God tell us in his word that we will have a heaven on this earth. Quite the contrary, God made it very clear to our first parents, Adam and Eve, that because of their sin, life here on this earth would be difficult.

In spite of the burden of sin placed upon us by the fall of Adam and Eve we need to press on and trust. No matter how scary our journey may feel today or how hopeless our future may seem, the assurance of God's never failing presence can and should provide us with the courage and comfort to make it through. We remember that Jesus Christ shed his holy precious blood not so that we might spend an eternity battling and struggling through this sin-befouled world. He redeemed us that we might one day be delivered from this present evil age and live with him in the bliss and glory of heaven. Remember, God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

Through a plan so simple, yet so far beyond our understanding, God placed our sin on His son. He permitted His son, Jesus Christ to die the death of the cross so that by faith (trust) in him we might have life eternal as a free gift. Jesus Christ thought you were important enough to die for. The cost of your sin is more than you can pay. The gift of your God is more than you can imagine.

To keep us in this faith, God graciously watches over us every moment of every day and night. For those who accept this redemption and trust the precious promises of God, there is great comfort. With the unknown that lies ahead of us, remember to always give thanks and trust God's word. It is powerful enough to overcome anything!

All God's continued blessings,
Greg Wendorf

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

The following article is helpful to show us how we can build a relationship with a total stranger so that one day we can tell them about Jesus.

1. LOOK APPROACHABLE

We've all seen people walking down a hall with their head down or sitting at a table engrossed with their phone. Body language speaks volumes, and they're sending signals that they don't want to be bothered. Instead, get interested in the people around you. A smile shows that you're open to a conversation.

2. SAY HELLO

It sounds simple, but a quick "hello" will break the ice. Marriott Hotels has a "15-5 rule" for its employees. Whenever an employee comes within 15 feet of anyone in the hotel, they must acknowledge the guest with eye contact or a friendly nod. If the person comes within five feet, then the employee must smile and say hello. Try it with people in the grocery line or wherever you have a captive audience.

3. ASSUME THE OTHER PERSON IS SHY

Seventy percent of people proclaim they're shy. Knowing this puts you in the same boat.

You don't have to be an extrovert to talk to a stranger. We're all so worried what other people might think about us. The truth is that no one cares because they're worried about themselves.

Instead, take the focus off of you and put it onto the other person. The best connectors I know will tell you they're shy, but that doesn't stop them from creating powerful networks. They simply know that it takes other people to get to their goals and they come out of their comfort zone.

4. FIND COMMON GROUND

Whether it's a mutual friend, location, experience, or point of view, find something in common with another person and start a conversation. While the weather is always a safe topic, you can also ask the person if they have children or pets. Or pay attention to your environment. Robinett, who grew up in Idaho, says she once made a new acquaintance because she noticed he had an Idaho license plate.

It's really easy to find common ground. I can strike up great conversations with people on airplanes or in airports simply because we're both in transit.

5. BE FULLY PRESENT AND LISTEN

Give the people you are meeting with the courtesy of your full attention when you are with them.

"Bill Clinton is known for his ability to be fully present even when he is with someone for a few seconds. "The average attention span is eight seconds. Paying attention makes you more memorable and your communication richer."

6. DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO ADVANCE TO THE NEXT STEP

If you're striking up a conversation with someone in a parking lot, you probably won't meet them again, but if there was something of interest in your exchange, then it's perfectly fine to ask for the person's business card.

Follow up within 24 hours by sending an email to simply say thank you. Within a week, send something of value, such as an article you think the person might enjoy reading. The focus is ongoing from being strangers to building a relationship.

By Stephanie Vozza

WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

Bob and Margie O'Connell



The Villages may be known as the friendliest community, but Open Bible may very well be the friendliest church! Bob and Margie O'Connell said that the

friendliness of Open Bible was one of the main factors that attracted them to us. It has become a fairly common theme, but again, the introduction of two of our new members, Bob and Margie O'Connell, first visited Open Bible as a result of being befriended by Jerry and Ina Taylor at a Villages social function. Bob and Jerry realized they didn't previously know each other, but found that they served at the same Navy assignment in their youth. After visits from Pastor Schulz and going

through the class process, Bob and Margie become members.

Bob and Margie met in Pennsylvania at a dance and were married on a ship in St Thomas. Together they have seven children – Karrie in W Virginia, Kellie in Slydel, Louisiana, Bob Jr and Jason in Baltimore, Maryland, Michelle in Sanford, Florida, Jenni in Orange City, Florida and Michael in Harrisburg, Pa, and 13 grandchildren. They are a most interesting couple as both have been associated with law enforcement for many years. Bob had been a police sergeant for 32 years in Baltimore and Margie was a secretary for many years at AMP, Inc. in Harrisburg, Pa and retired as a secretary in the Major Case Unit in Hernando County Sheriff's Office in Florida. After Bob retired in 2001, they moved to the Villages, the Village of Charlotte in 2012.

Bob said he now punishes himself with learning to play golf two to three times a week and plays billiards. Although Margie has the past musical experience of playing piano, clarinet and accordion, Bob has joined the chromatic harmonica group in the Villages. They do concerts and Bob has even gotten one of our Open Bible members playing the harmonica! Some Sunday, we may be favored with harmonica accompaniment to our music. Bob said he had no previous musical experience, so this is a surprise pursuit for him, but something he greatly enjoys.

Both Bob and Margie are quite busy and are blessed with reasonably good health, although Margie suffers with controlled Parkinson's, which makes her tire easily. Margie was raised Catholic, with Catholic schooling through high school. Bob was raised Lutheran. Both enjoy our style of worship and the music, and Bob especially appreciates singing a familiar hymn. When they were asked about advice to younger people, they said "get involved and have an interest in multiple things". They said parents should get their children involved in different activities so that they don't have regrets of missing out later in life.

Bob and Margie are very friendly and easy people to talk with. Margie's warm demeanor fits her past when she lived in Hershey, Pa, volunteering to cuddle babies at the Hershey Medical Center. We

welcome Bob and Margie and greatly appreciate having them worship with us.

By Michael Benrud

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The church council met on July 24th. Here are the highlights from the meeting:

- June expenses were \$949 more than income. We are still \$14,000 in the black for the year. The mortgage balance as of 6/30/14 was \$415,091.
- An extra car directional sign will be placed on the back of our golf cart stop sign to show car drivers how to get into our parking lot.
- Security cameras have been placed in two locations in the fellowship hall to monitor activity between 11:00 PM and 3:00 AM. The one camera by the front doors will also be running while the secretary is in her office.
- Winter schedule starting times for December through March will be at 8:00 and 10:30 AM.
- More ushers and greeters will be needed when we have 2 services.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Tom & Sandy Pawlowski – 2
Bill & June Murray – 3
Jerry & Joan Mucci – 11
John & Sherilyn Bielefeldt – 13
Bill & Sharon Sigurdson – 17
Keith & Renda Mackey – 21
Earl & Doris Schlicht – 25
Jack & Sharon Affeldt – 31

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Joe Price – 1
Nikki Mitra – 2
Jim Orcutt – 2
Roger Acklam – 3
Ron Schultz – 3
Jim Musiel – 5
Bill Murray – 8
Carol Yahn – 9
Doreen Schaefer – 10
Peggi Carrier – 11
Gail Rathgeber – 11
Marvin Krahn – 14
Alan Johnson – 14
Gordon Roback – 16
Phil Herring – 19
Ron Dahm – 21
Esther Hartwig – 21
Russ Follett – 25
Pat Knack – 25
Sandy Pawlowski – 25
Linda Draeger – 26
Jim Johnson – 30