



NEWSLETTER



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FROM THE PASTOR

God's Concern For His People

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” Romans 8:35

Another year has begun. For some it may be an unusual year filled with blessings. These will be so remarkable that they will be remembered. For others it will be an ordinary year. Nothing special will take place. Still others will experience sorrows beyond measure.

Floods, earthquakes, and other disasters in nature that strike in an irregular fashion, unexpected sickness and death, as well as other usual and unusual concerns may touch us this year.

All over discouraged people will ask, “How”? How can I find peace for my grief-torn heart? Where? Where can I find assurance as life adds affliction to adversity?”

The apostle Paul has news for us. He reminded the Romans, and he reminds us as this year opens, that there is nothing that can separate us from God's love in Christ. Throughout this whole year our Lord offers us the important blessings He has provided for us: forgiveness of sins, salvation, and eternal life. He reminds us of His concern for us. He reminds us He will be with us every step of the way.

What an important bit of information! Surely this message is much more important to us than to have our favorite college football team win on January 1st, 2014.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The beginning of a new year is a time to look back and reflect as well as a time to look ahead. Sure, we are all a bit excited about what the New Year may bring, but

probably somewhat apprehensive at the same time, especially as we all grow a shade older. As we look back, 2013 was a year marked by a lot of growth and excitement at Open Bible. In the February newsletter we will take a brief look at some of those happenings.

As we look forward, we do not know what the future may hold but we have the assurance that our Heavenly Shepherd will show us the way he wants us to travel. Our task is to continue to follow him in love and obedience and trust each step to Him. We can trust our all-knowing God for the unknown future.

That unknown future begins each day with a day we have never seen before. It is a new opportunity and it will be filled with things we cannot anticipate or even prepare for. It thus behooves us to recognize our limitations and lean heavily on God – intentionally choosing to live in His grace and strength rather than relying on our own resources.

The newness of each day is also a gift worth celebrating. Psalm 118:24 declares “This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Of course, we face many unknowns today – and some could be difficult. But the treasure of each new day is very special – so special that Moses was led to write in Psalm 90:12 “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Our God always knows where we are and what we will be facing. Nothing is hidden from His sight. He knows our thoughts and actions. And he knows what will happen in the future.

God knows everything and he knows you and me intimately. He is aware of each temptation, each illness, each worry, and each sorrow we face.

What a comfort to experience care from the one of whom it is said in Romans 11:33 “Oh, the depth of the riches both of wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”

Every new day is a precious gift. May we thankfully embrace each one with confident trust and humble celebration. Remember, Instead of living in the shadows of yesterday, walk in the light of today and the hope of tomorrow.

All God's blessings,
Greg Wendorf

WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

By Leslie Nelson



Dorothy Plybon has been a member of Open Bible for nearly one year now. She has a secretarial and customer service background, some of the time working for the US Government. Dorothy also worked in a pump

shop and foundry for 22 years. Her last job was in a trust department at a bank.

She attended the Parks School of Business in Denver, but was born in Havre, Montana. She was raised on a farm until about the time she started school. At that point her family moved to nearby Rudyard, MT, where Dorothy spent her grade school and high school years.

Besides Montana and Colorado, she has been splitting her time between West Virginia and Florida for 14 years now.

Dorothy is a big reader, enjoying many of the popular authors, such as Fern Michaels, James Patterson, Judith Kranz and Nora Roberts. Her favorite movie is "Pretty Woman," but she doesn't watch much TV. She loves ballroom dancing, and plays golf and billiards. In her quiet time she works jigsaw puzzles, solves sudoku, walks, and gives her doggy, Hannah, plenty of love and attention.

Dorothy was raised in a Christian home and was baptized as an infant and also confirmed in Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Rudyard. She met her husband, Ernie, in Colorado Springs, and they were married when he got out of the service in 1958. He died on November 1st, 1990, after losing a battle with cancer. They had 4 sons. The oldest, David, died at 17 years of age. One son is now living in Barboursville, WV, one has just moved back to the old family home in Rudyard, MT, and one is living in Winder, Georgia. Dorothy has two granddaughters and one grandson.

She has lots of favorite restaurants in The Villages: Wendy's, Applebee's, Cracker Barrel, Carrabba's and Outback Steakhouse. We'll have to start a new small group: Out to Lunch!

FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee has been busy this past month reviewing services for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Eve. This time of year is always so wonderful to worship, sing familiar carols and hear again the lessons on our SAVIOR'S birth.

We have been spending time planning out services from now through Lent. We are especially looking at having special music in all of the services. Some new hymns, new singing groups, and new Psalm arrangements but the same Gospel message that we have been hearing for centuries.

Stephen Bautista will be singing in our service this month and later in the day, at 4:00 pm, he will be putting on a concert that is open to the public. The date is January 19th.

Then in February the Branches Band will be playing our service on the 9th and they will also be having a concert at 4:00 pm that same day. The public is invited to this concert also.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

December is always a busy time of year but 25 of our members were able to carol with us on Saturday, December 14th. We caroled at both Carriage House and Steeplechase. Many of the residents were present at Carriage House to hear us sing and at Steeplechase we sang for them during their dinner hour. Many of the people joined us in singing the familiar carols and some even walked up to mix with the choir. Pastor Dale had a brief devotion with the groups and invited them to worship with us on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. After caroling we all came back to the Fellowship Hall for a chili dinner provided and prepared by Armand Occhetti. It goes without saying that the carolers enjoyed the hot chili.

Plans have been made for a Movie Night in January. We have chosen Friday evening, January 24th for our first activity of 2014.

Come join us on Friday the 24th at 6:30 pm for a movie trivia quiz. Show time is at 7:00 pm beginning with a short comedy, just like the good old days, followed by a feature film.

Bring your own snacks to share and your own soda or water.

This should be an enjoyable evening so mark your calendars now. Remember, Friday the 24th. Hope to see many of our members present. Why not invite a friend. This is a good way to introduce them to Open Bible.

Have a Blessed New Year.

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

The December meeting of the church council was held early, on Thursday, December 5th, to accommodate individual schedules.

The treasurer's report showed a favorable balance at the end of November of \$1,412.63. YTD our balance is a positive \$39,672.95. What a blessing from our awesome God. As of November 30th our mortgage balance stands at \$434,145.95.

Pastor reported that our communicant membership is at 123. Average church attendance in November was 135.

Seven calls were made by pastor on visitors that attended our Friendship Sunday worship.

Pastor had an off the street baptism of a baby that brought 16 adults and 2 children to the church. Pastor shared with those in attendance the plan of salvation before he baptized the baby. What an evangelism opportunity!

The Board of Elders will be expanded with the appointment of 4 new elders.

An Assimilation Committee will be formed shortly to make sure that our new members are feeling at home at Open Bible and are involved in some activity provided by the church.

The council will be taking the appropriate steps to form a Long Range Planning Committee.

The present Evangelism Committee is being revamped and a new start will begin in January.

With our newly established committees please consider serving if asked to do so.

Pastor Dale and Ron Brutlag are assisting Pastor Schulz with worship planning and service set up especially with extra music.

Council approved a position description for organists along with qualifications and responsibility list for our organists that was brought forward by the Worship Committee.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

2nd Semester from January – March 2014

New Life in Christ Class - Taught by Pastor Schulz

A great refresher class on the basic teachings found in God's Word. This seven week study will look at the natural knowledge of God, the work of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit including spiritual gifts, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the end of the world with discussions on Judgment Day, Heaven and Hell, church fellowship, the history of the Lutheran Church, and the differences in Lutheran Church bodies today. If a person would like to join Open Bible as a full-time member and is not already WELS, this class would be a pre-requisite to membership.

The class begins on Thursday January 16th from 6:30 pm until 8:00 pm. The final class will be on Thursday February 27th. (7 weeks)

Women's Bible Study - 6 consecutive weeks - Led by Judy Anderson

You are invited to spend time in the light of God's Word looking at some of the challenges women face in their lives today. Whether these challenges appear as positives or negatives, the bottom line is that we are not facing them alone - it's "You and Me, Lord!"

1. As I Experience Brokenness caused by sin!
Tuesday January 21st at 1:00 pm.
2. As I become physically tired!
Tuesday January 28th at 1:00 pm.
3. As I become emotionally drained!
Tuesday February 4th at 1:00 pm.
4. As I become spiritually challenged!
Tuesday February 11th at 1:00 pm.
5. As I see new opportunities to serve You!
Tuesday February 18th at 1:00 pm.
6. As I celebrate relationships blessed by You!
Tuesday February 25th at 1:00 pm.

**Wednesday in the Word - Taught by Pastor Schulz
Older and Much Wiser!**

A six week study on the prophets Elijah and Elisha as they deal with issues of depression, loneliness, contentment, life-changing health issues, persecution for being a Christian and much more. We will be studying the books of I Kings 17 to 2nd Kings 7. The studies will be held on Wednesdays from 5:00-6:00 pm beginning on January 8th. The Older and Much Wiser class will conclude on February 12th. On February 19th and 26th, we will engage ourselves in a 2 week study on the book of Ruth.

Book Club - Facilitator is Pastor Schulz

January 28th from 4:00-5:30 P.M. at Open Bible.

Discussion: A Lutheran Look at Mega churches

If you would like to order your book, you can either order it yourself from Northwestern Publishing House, or our church secretary, Karen Pearson can order a copy for you and you can reimburse her.

**SPLASH (Single People Loving and Serving Him)-
Facilitator is Pastor Dale**

The Singles of Open Bible will meet on January 13th at 1:00 pm. The discussion will be on the Conversion of the Apostle Paul. Following the study, the group will be planning activities for the next 3 months, which include some exciting fellowship and recreational activities.

Godly Men of Leisure - Facilitator is Dennis Duessler

The group is discussing a Bible study booklet on some of the issues retired men and men in general face. They meet monthly at Perkins Restaurant off of 466. Their next meeting is on January 24th at 8:00 am.

The Defenders - Led by Ken Wells and Bill Sigurdson

This group meets once a month to shoot 50-100 rounds at the Gun Club off 44 near Leesburg. Ken and Bill supply everyone with targets or you can buy one for \$1.25. The cost to use the range is \$10.00. Following the activity, the group has lunch at Beef O' Brady's and devotes time to pray for our country and military. On some months, to save on ammunition costs, the group will look at battles in the book of Judges.

The North County Group - Led by Alan Johnson

These are a group of Open Bible members from the Ocala area who meet twice a month on Sunday nights from 6:00-8:00 pm. They will meet on January 12th and Sunday January 26th at the home of Alan and Pam Johnson. Topics to be announced later.

The 466A Group - Taught by Pastor Schulz

This group meets twice a month for two hours at homes of members at Open Bible who live in the southern portion of the Villages in the 466A area. The group meets on Thursdays from 2:00-4:00 pm. They start off with a few mixers, have a 50 minute study with discussion, devote time to prayer, and then have some light food and drinks provided by the host family.

Engage, a series of short films, is a new style of Bible study that fits right where you are and shows you where God wants you to be.

January 16th - Home of Bob and Margie O'Connell

January 30th - Home of Bob and Carol Hinz

Quilters - Facilitator is Ruth Niermeyer

Meets on January 3rd at 9:00 -12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall. Join these ladies as they make some great homemade quilts.

WOMEN OF OPEN BIBLE

We will meet January 8th at 1 pm in the Fellowship Hall. All ladies are welcome. Hostesses for January are Nancy Gonia and Jeanette Kellam.

A few events that Women of Open Bible sponsored in 2013 were:

- Spring Salad Luncheon & Fashion Show in April.
- A Ladies Luncheon held in June.
- Ocala Consignment Bus Tour in Nov.
- Advent by Candlelight on Dec. 8th.
- Ladies Christmas Luncheon.

I would like to thank all the ladies who helped make these events a success as they were enjoyed by many.

I also want to thank the Banner Committee for the beautiful Open Bible, Advent and Christmas banners they made to help beautify the church.

More help is needed with the Sunday Coffee Hour. Please sign up in the kitchen pass through. This is a great way to get to know fellow members at Open Bible.

God's blessings on your New Year.

Your Sister in Christ,
Sandy Hahm, President

ALTAR GUILD

2014 Altar Guild Serving Schedule for January – March:

January	Linda Gustrowsky
February	Joan Blaho
March	Bonnie Farnsworth

CONCERT AT OPEN BIBLE

Need A Pick-Me-Up?



Join us at Open Bible on Sunday, January 19th at 4:00 pm for a refreshing afternoon of music!

Stephen Bautista
(The James Taylor of Christian music)

Come hear Stephen share his uplifting and inspiring Christ-centered music.

Admission is FREE. A free will offering will be taken to help support Stephen's Music Mission. His CD's will also be available for sale after the concert. A great opportunity to bring a friend to Open Bible to listen to music and see the insides of our church.

Check out Stephen at his website:
www.StephenBautistaMusic.com

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Phil & Karen Herring – 1
Ed & Marilyn Pearson – 25

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Armand Occhetti – 3
Carol Hinz – 5
Chuck Major – 7
Ed Pearson – 8
Dave Mottl – 11
Eva Orcutt – 12
Fred Aguda – 15
Leslie Nelson – 18
Joan Mucci – 19
Loreli Aguda – 22
David Langer – 22
Nancy Gonia – 24
Sharilyn Bielefeldt – 25
Joan Blaho – 29
Bob Hinz – 31