



# NEWSLETTER



June, 2015

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## FROM THE PASTOR

### *Getting Older and Wiser*

***Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day." 2 Corinthians 4:16***

It comes as a shock, and it shouldn't. We look in the mirror and see new wrinkles, graying hair, sometimes a person we hardly recognize. We wonder, "How did I get this old? It seems just like yesterday that I was a child, a teen, a young man."

Today I must admit simply that I am old. Not an easy admission because when I was young I remember what I thought of old people. Old people were out of touch, could not do anything fun, mostly sat around getting older. Now I am one of them.

Growing older does not have to be a burden. Though there are some things we simply must accept in an aging body, we need not accept bitterness, grumpiness, or a complaining attitude.

When I was a pastor in Michigan, I once visited a shut-in who had a doll collection. I enjoyed the look on her face when she would pick one of them up. It was almost as if I could see the little girl still inside her.

I think that is the way to be. We ought to grow wiser, more understanding of the faults of others, and generally kinder in our later years. But I think it is important that somewhere inside we keep alive the child, the sense of wonder, the sense of excitement. I think Jesus meant something of the kind when He said we must be like little children to enter His kingdom.

**Prayer: Dear Lord, help us to keep the child alive, even as we grow and mature and waste away outwardly, keep us renewed inwardly. Amen.**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

The months of February through May were once again our busiest months of the year. With many of our winter residents in attendance our beautiful church was often times close to capacity in spite of the fact that we went to two Sunday services from December through March. The Church Council then did some recent evaluating and along with the recommendations from the Music and Worship committee it was decided not to have two services next December but continue the practice during the months of January through March. Services times for the future will be decided in the months to come.

March was a very significant month at Open Bible. Not only did we enter one of the most significant time periods in the church year, the season of Lent, but we began a new program designed to allow members the opportunity to make contributions to the church in the form of stocks, bonds, and/or mutual funds. In late March members had the opportunity to listen to a certified WELS financial planner who spoke about planning, gifting, and/or document assistance amongst other items. These planning opportunities were only offered as a means of providing some assistance to members who were interested.

Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> was a very special Sunday for Open Bible. Between services we were fortunate to welcome 13 new members into our congregation. We also had 1 adult baptism and a

wonderful performance by the church choir. These events, coupled with a very inspirational message from Pastor Schulz, made for a marvelous service all to the glory of God. The day wasn't over when the service ended as many members and guests returned at 4:00 for a tremendous concert put on by the Wisconsin Lutheran College Choir of Milwaukee Wi. That concert was followed one month later by another outstanding performance put on by the Michigan Lutheran Seminary Concert Choir. A large crowd enjoyed an evening of beautiful Christian music provided by some very talented young people.

The first week of April completed the season of Lent and the culmination of Pastor's Lenten theme of Jesus as King. We were very fortunate to experience a series of wonderful services of Word and song provided by both Pastor Schulz and Pastor Dale. The series couldn't help but strengthen our relationship with our Lord and Savior who so willingly sacrificed His only Son Jesus Christ so that we could be assured of spending eternity with Him. Special thanks are in order once again to Walt Farnsworth and cooking crew for another wonderful Easter Breakfast. Also special thanks to Sandy Hahm and Carol Benrud for their fine work as President and Secretary of the Women of Open Bible whose terms of office ended recently. The torch now passes to Mary Ellen Schultz and Nancy Gonia who I'm sure will continue the tradition of excellent leadership of our women's group.

During the month of April we returned to our regular Sunday Service schedule and in May we reconnected with weekly Wednesday and Sunday Bible study opportunities. May also brought us a return engagement from the kids of King of Kings Lutheran School in Maitland Fl. The students gave a wonderful performance at the Steeplechase Retirement Residence in what has become an annual event.

At the present time ground work for our future building project continues at the committee level and you will be hearing more about this as information becomes available. The work never seems to be done at Open Bible and I truly believe that's exactly what God has in mind for our congregation. Future growth, new programs and

the continuation of preaching God's word in its truth and purity are also a part of our construction process. And let's remember that the most important construction project of all time cost our Lord dearly. It was the cost of paying for our sins. It began with a manger, then to a cross and finally an empty grave. And we will continue to reap the benefits for all eternity.

All God's blessings,  
Greg Wendorf

## WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

### SKIP AND JUTTA OWENS



One of the wonderful aspects of Open Bible is the concentrated effort by our members and family and friends to pray for those who are experiencing health

difficulties. On occasion we see the miraculous recoveries of those we pray for and see the unexplained answers that God brings to the many prayers.

Skip and Jutta Owens have had a year of great difficulty. Skip had a very serious heart attack in October 2014. It is a rather moving account of the fact that an EMT unit happened to be next door to their home when he had his heart attack. If not for that coincidence, it is expected that he surely would not have survived. After being given a small chance, Skip survived the surgery. And more recently, a bout of pneumonia was the cause of another dire prediction of non-survival. But, belief that anything is possible with the prayers of many and God's help, Skip is home. He is relatively healthy and happy, knowing that if the end should come soon, Heaven is a better place. Skip misses golf greatly and hopes to get back to the links soon, but for now, he is enjoying the neighborhood gatherings on their beautifully landscaped front yard patio and appreciating his improved health.

## CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

### May Council Highlights

The church council met on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Following are the highlights from the meeting:

- March income was \$5,182 more than expenses. Year to date income was \$24,280 more than expenses. The mortgage balance as of 4/30/15 was \$394,134.66.
- The following were accepted as new members by profession of faith:
  - Ingeborg Holzmann
  - Elisabeth Pittel
  - Donna Davis
- Approval was given for Armand Occhetti and Pastor Schulz to take an online evangelism course titled "The Mission of the Church" offered by MLC.
- The building committee is still in the process of getting more information regarding the different options for expanding the church building. A meeting is scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup> to review some drawings provided by Jeff Meyer.
- The subject of ways to offer worship opportunities to Carriage House and Buffalo Crossing was discussed. Several different options will be investigated.
- Approval was given to provide Sunday School for Ty Mitra this summer.
- The following payment guidelines were established for funerals:
  - Organist: \$50
  - Soloist: \$50
  - Meal: \$100
  - Pastor: Honorarium (determined by family)If the family is unable to cover some or all of these costs, the congregation will cover them.
- A plan for handling medical emergencies during services was discussed.

Skip and Jutta are recent new members of Open Bible and bring with them the distinction of being one of our most world traveled members. Skip is a career Army Veteran with his first tour to Vietnam in 1965 in combat and a second tour as a logistics officer. Apparently, Skip felt a distinct need to serve his country as he ultimately served 25 years in active duty, retiring in 1989 and then served another 14 years with the Department of Defense as a civilian. Skip and Jutta met in Belgium and have been married 34 years. Jutta spent some of her employment years in the banking business, but most of it was with the Department of Defense as a Budget Analyst, resulting in employment options for the many moves that she and Skip experienced. In all, they made 11 moves during their careers, in multiple states and countries. Skip has many historical accounts of his many years in public service, such as working with Alexander Haig, Supreme Allied Commander, commanding the US and NATO forces in Europe.

Skip comes to Open Bible from a Southern Baptist background and Jutta a German Lutheran Church. They visited our church after Jutta saw the prominent front facade visible from 466. They first met Pastor Dale and then Pastor Schulz. They were attracted to the Bible teaching, rather than the "feel good" preaching of other churches they visited. They are both so thankful for the quality of life they live and their closeness to God. We at Open Bible appreciate getting to know the Owens' and are grateful to have them as part of our church family.

By Michael Benrud

## DEFENDERS

Defenders will meet June 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM at R/D Tactical Solutions in Ocala. Contact Bill Sigurdson for more information

- It was decided to have a cake for Father's day instead of passing out small gifts to the men of the congregation.
- There will be no Council meeting in June.

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Alan & Pam Johnson – 1  
 Gene & Bette McConkey – 3  
 John and Janis Liermann – 5  
 Frank & Genie Selvey – 7  
 Greg & Carol Wendorf – 7  
 Jerry & Mary Brooks – 10  
 Ron & Diane Brutlag – 14  
 Joe & Mary Price – 15  
 Ken & Elisabeth Wells – 15  
 Tom & Betty DeWitz – 18  
 Larry & Ardyce Fronk – 20  
 Fred & Judy Hainen – 20  
 Ken & Brenda Severa – 20  
 Dan & Karen Pearson – 25  
 Walt & Bonnie Farnsworth – 25  
 Ray & Norma Welch – 28  
 Bob & Carol Hinz – 29

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

June Murray – 1  
 Elvin Schlegel – 3  
 Maya Ute Mitta – 4  
 Pat Holmes – 5  
 Joanne Stuedemann – 7  
 Jeanne Schulz – 9  
 Brenda Severa – 11  
 Mary Whitford – 11  
 Carol Stauske – 12  
 Ruth Niermeyer – 13  
 Ken Wells – 13  
 Viola Smith – 17  
 Jennifer Schlegel – 19  
 Frank Selvey – 21  
 John Kiewra – 25  
 Ardyce Fronk – 27  
 Mary Brooks – 29  
 Ted Hahm – 29  
 Norma Welch - 29