



Newsletter



August 2020

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From the Pastor by Pastor Mark Schulz

“When Life Throws You A Curve”

At times in our lives things don't go the way they should, at least according to our human understanding. Living in the Villages Florida means an opportunity to meet many new friends, to enjoy recreational activities galore, to worship Jesus with our Open Bible family, to hug, shake hands, and communicate with others who are merely just a foot or two away from us. We crave being close to people. But all of this has changed with Covid 19. Now, we tend to lock ourselves up in our homes, and only venture out to get a few groceries, go to the doctor, or play a round of golf. You may be thinking in frustration, “There is no good reason why this should be happening to me”?

The times when we run into the proverbial wall in life are the times when we need to review Jesus' words, from Matthew 10:29-31: “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” In those words he patiently reminds us that God is in control. We have not been left alone to take on the problems of this world. He tells us that every bird in the sky and every hair on our heads are in his hands. If these insignificant things

are worthy of his attention, we can rest assured that the bigger problems are falling under his watchful eye as well.

God has quite an investment in you and me. He gave his Son's life for us. He is not about to give up on us when some problem seems to be blocking our way. Our God and Savior will not forget one of his own. When problems occur, it is time for prayer, reflection, and trust in God, who loves and cares for us.

When I was a child, I had dark brown hair. Over the past 15 years, it has turned totally white, and it is thinning more every month. Though I am not fond of losing my hair or being gray, it does bring a certain peace; whenever I look in the mirror I am reminded that God is in control, even keeping track of the hairs on my head as he promises in Matthew. Therefore, I am assured again and again that he is going to help me through the troubles that may, at times, seem insurmountable.

Let us pray daily that he might bless us with hearts that trust him. “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of your enemies, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Deuteronomy 31:6)

President's Message

It is early June, 2020 as I pen the words of this newsletter. It seems as though the problems and troubles of this world are going from bad to worse. Illness that doesn't seem to want to go away, anger and hatred all around us, depression, anxiety and pessimism abound on a daily basis and the list could go on and on. It is so very important for all of us to be aware of ourselves and those around us as we strive to survive these temporary, yet overpowering circumstances.

Most important of all is that we remember to place our trust and faith in our Lord and Savior. Nothing happens in this world that is beyond the knowledge and power of our God. Scripture often reminds us that the Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all.

The following story gives us perspective as we compare our life to a train ride with God as the engineer.

At birth we boarded the train and met our parents, and we believe they will always travel by our side. However, at some station our parents step down from the train and leave us on this journey alone. As time goes on, other people board the train and they become significant in our lives i.e., our siblings, friends, children and loved ones. Many step down and leave a permanent vacuum. Others go so unnoticed that we don't even realize they have vacated their seats. This train ride will be full of joy, sorrow, fantasy, expectations, hellos, goodbyes, and farewells. Our

success on this journey depends entirely on our willingness to serve God and do our best to have a good relationship with each and every one of the passengers.

The mystery is not knowing which station we ourselves will step down. Living a loving, caring, productive, Christian life is the only way to ensure we will leave our desired legacy. Then when the time comes for us to step down and leave our seat empty, we will leave behind beautiful memories for those who will continue on the train of life.

I wish you a joyful journey on this train of life. Reap success and give lots of love. More importantly, thank God for the journey.

Lastly, I leave you with the following words of comfort from my favorite author, Max Lucado:

You have a God Who Hears You,
The Power of Love is Behind You,
The Holy Spirit is Within You,
And All of Heaven is Ahead of You.

You Have Everything You Need!

All God's Blessings,
Greg Wendorf

Music & Education Report

By Randy Cochran

WORSHIP

A worship plan is in place through the month of September. It started with the July 5 patriotic service. Upcoming worship will include:

- periodically singing the Lord's Prayer
- a musical benediction
- violin/flute solos
- periodically singing the creed
- guitar accompaniment
- CD accompaniments
- congregational participation in new songs
- 5th Sunday special worship with food social to follow
- special Labor Day service recognizing and giving thanks for our job force
- handbell choir debut in September
- and much more!

You might have noticed that we are introducing different formats for worship. They will change about every four weeks. This is to allow some creativity in our worship experience.

HANDBELLS

Lord willing, handbells will make their debut September 27. Thank you, Pam Johnson, for continuing on as director this coming year.

CHOIR

Because of lingering COVID concerns, I'm not quite sure how the choir season is all going to pan out. I plan on surveying the choir to get their thoughts as to how comfortable they would be/or not be in coming to choir practices and performing in worship.

KEYBOARD PLAYERS

The immediate plan is that I will play three services per month, plus any special services. The remaining services will be covered by Hymnsoft or Mary Burel.

SHUT IN VISITS

While Pastor was on vacation, I made three shut-in visits. What a joy to spend time with our Open Bible members. And what great stories from the past!

ASSISTED LIVING VISITS

I met with Alan Johnson in July to discuss our ministry at the three local assisted living facilities. Again, COVID will dictate what we can and cannot do in these facilities. Until then, we will find ways using technology to conduct virtual activities...pending cooperation from assisted living management.

466A BIBLE STUDY GROUP

I will be meeting with Jim and Sandy Fehlhaber the first week in August to discuss our plans for the year. We will discuss how COVID will play a role in how we conduct these Bible studies.

SPLASH

Single People Loving and Serving Him

I met with Sandy Pawlowski to discuss upcoming SPASH events. Our kickoff event will be September 14, Monday, 1 PM in the fellowship hall area. A special invitation will be sent out encouraging all those interested to attend. Activities we are considering: a dog show, Singing River Tours, movie, wine/beer tasting, rodeo, dinner, Christmas house tour, and others!

CAREGIVERS

I met with Judy Anderson to discuss what has been done in the past to assist those who are caring for spouses who are having health issues. Our first event (depending on the COVID situation), will be held October 1, Thursday, 2 PM in the fellowship hall. It will be a one-hour workshop led by Mel Parker, former Open Bible member and retired insurance administrator. He will review the steps one needs to take before and when a loved one dies. Each attendee will go home with a packet detailing everything covered in the workshop. Attendance will be limited to 25-30 people. If future workshops are needed, more will be held. THIS WORKSHOP IS ABSOLUTELY FREE! Sign-up will be publicized as the date gets nearer.

SANCTUARY SPEAKERS

According to Mabe (the audio/visual company who has been doing work at our church), the speakers in our worship area were "fried" during the last lightning strike that hit Open Bible. In other words, they are not working properly, and need be replaced in order to provide quality sound.

COVID 19

As previously mentioned in my report, the virus is impacting the way we approach our many ministries here at Open Bible. Yes, we would like everything to get back to normal, but we must be safe, creative, and patient as we await that day.

MANY THANKS

Kim and I thank you all for the warm welcome and kind words. We look forward to our ministry here at Open Bible!

Serving Him,
Randy Cochran
Music and Education



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

The Church Council met on June 18th, 2020.

Items discussed included:

1. Live streaming of the 9:30 am Church Services is being investigated and \$800 was approved to purchase a computer that will allow us to live-stream.
2. The Altar Guild has established an arms-length procedure for Communion.
3. Additional sound proofing of the offices is being investigated.
4. \$2,000 was approved to purchase 4 rock microphones and 3 handheld microphones due to the shutdown of the 600 band system by T Mobile on July 13th thus making the current microphones inoperable.

5. \$1,200 was approved to have Mabe Pro, Inc. update audio visual systems necessary to project Church Services in the Fellowship Hall and Welcome Center.

*Yours in Christ:
Les Stauske
Secretary*

How We Got the Bible Ten Key Points

1. The Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21).

2. The Bible is made up of 66 books that were written over 1600 years (from approximately 1500 BC to AD 100) by more than 40 kings, prophets, leaders, and followers of Jesus. The Old Testament has 39 books (written approximately 1500-400 BC). The New Testament has 27 books (written approximately AD 45-100). The standard Hebrew Bible today has the same text as the English Bible's Old Testament, but the Hebrew Bible divides and arranges the text differently.

3. The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek.

4. The books of the Bible were collected, arranged, and recognized as inspired sacred authority by councils of rabbis and councils of church leaders, based on careful guidelines.

5. Before the printing press was invented, the Bible was copied by hand. The Bible was copied very accurately, in many cases by special scribes who

developed intricate methods of counting words and letters to insure that no errors had been made.

6. The Bible was the first book ever printed on the printing press with movable type (Gutenberg Press, 1455, Latin Bible).

7. There is much evidence that the Bible we have today is remarkably true to the original writings. Of the thousands of copies made by hand before AD 1500, more than 5,700 Greek manuscripts or fragments of manuscripts from the New Testament alone still exist today. The text of the Bible is better preserved than the writings of Caesar, Plato, or Aristotle.

8. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls confirmed the astonishing reliability of some of the copies of the Old Testament made over the years. Although some variations exist (mostly spelling variations), no variation affects basic Bible doctrines.

9. As the Bible was carried to other countries, it was often translated into the common language of the people by scholars who wanted others to know God's Word. By AD 2000, there are still 3,000 groups with no Bible in their own language.

10. By AD 200, the Bible, or some of the Bible, was translated into seven languages; by AD 500, 13 languages; by AD 900, 17 languages; by AD 1400, 28 languages; by AD 1800, 57 languages; by AD 1900, 537 languages; by AD 1980, more than 1,100 languages; by AD 2006, 2,426 languages have some portions of the Scripture.

Small Group Ministry

It looks like most of our small group activities have been suspended until further notice. Here is a list of our small groups:

Wednesday in the Word:

Led by Pastor Mark Schulz – a Bible Study on different topics.

466A Group Bible Study

Led by Randy Cochran
This is a group especially for those who live around the area of 466A.

Handbells

Facilitator: Pam Johnson.



Happy Hearts, Happy Hands Handiwork

Led by: Sandy Pawlowski
This group creates quilts for those in need in our community. Also, many will bring their knitting, crochet, and embroidery to work on. So, if you have any craft project you are working on, please come and enjoy the fellowship.



WinGS:

Women in God's Service



Led by: Genie Selvey
WinGS will have their next monthly meeting on the second Wednesday of the month. Sept. – May.

SPLASH: Single People Loving and Serving Him

Led by: Randy Cochran
SPLASH:



is an organization for singles. We have a Bible Study and brief meeting the second Monday each month.

North Country Group

Facilitator: Alan Johnson
Meets the 2nd & 4th Sundays at 6:00 pm at Alan & Pam Johnson's home in Ocala. All are welcome to join, contact Alan Johnson if interested.

Men of Leisure:

Led by: Dennis Duessler



Meeting on the second Friday of the month at 8:30 am at Bob Evans on CR466.

Friday Fore-Giving Golfers

Facilitator is Sandy Fehlhaber



This group meets once a week on Fridays to golf the Executive courses in The Villages. Teams are determined by the Sunday prior to the golf date. Each golfer is equipped with a small plastic bag with extra-long tees and a business card from Open Bible to hand out to unchurched golfers. Still meeting!

Ladies Tuesday Bible Study

Led by Pam Johnson Meeting Tuesdays at Open Bible (check back when it will resume)

Sunrise Saturday Morning Golfers:



This group is for those of you that would like to golf at The Villages executive golf courses in the morning. This group's coordinator is Doug Tharp. Please contact him if you are interested in joining. Still meeting!

Fantastic Friday Game Day!

Will be back in the fall! For fellowship and fun playing sheepshead, uchre, hand & foot, rumicube or bring a game to share and friends to play with. Facilitators: *Carol Yahn, Sandy Pawlowski.*

Golf Cart Ministry:



If you are interested in driving the golf cart to pick-up people from the surrounding Independent Living Facilities and bring them to Open Bible

Worship services. Contact Joe Malec.

Choir: Music Director is *Randy Cochran.*



Caring for Caregivers

Is caring for Caregivers for you or someone you know?

Most people focus on the person receiving care. Their prayers are for the person who is ill, injured, etc., but it is often the caregiver who has the greater burden. Caregivers need prayers and support too.

Caring for Caregivers is a support group at Open Bible. We meet on the

first Thursday of the month at 2:00 pm.

Do you know a caregiver who could benefit from this sharing, learning experience? All past, present and potential caregivers are welcome. Invite other caregivers to be your guest.

Randy Cochran, facilitator.

New Life in Christ

New Life in Christ Bible Study, Led By Pastor Schulz: This class will be offered when needed.

This is a class for people interested in becoming a member and a good refresher course for members. It is a wonderful review of the basic teachings of Scripture.

Altar Guild: Leader: Mary Burel. If there is anyone interested in finding out more about the Altar Guild, Please contact Mary Burel.

Early Bird Bible Study:



Led by Pastor Mark Schulz Usually meets on Sunday mornings before church.

Mornings with Mommy



Jane Valley is the director and if you are interested in helping her, please give her a call at 989-450-1937. We expect 8 – 10 children. Please contact Jane Valley if you have a child (up to age 5) that would like to attend.

Meditations & Forward in Christ

Karen Pearson, Church Secretary will put the next **Meditations** and the last few months of the **Forward in Christ** in your mailbox for you to pick up when you return to church. Please let her know if you are not here in the summer months. Thanks!
KarenOpenBible@gmail.com

Church Key Holders

Reminder: If anyone has a key to the church, please let the church secretary, Karen Pearson know that you have one. Thank you for your cooperation.

Did You Know?



Can Collection: Bring your “crushed” & “rinsed” cans to church on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month. Put your cans in the back of the car parked out in front of church. Thank you from the Women of Open Bible (WinGS.)

Food Pantry Collection: Please bring non-perishable food items on the 1st Sunday of the month. A collection bin is located by the front doors. Gordon & Shirley Roback will take the items to the donation site for the Wildwood Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen.

The 2020 Flower Calendar has been placed on the bulletin board near the water fountain. The cost is \$35.00 per arrangement or \$70.00 for both. Please

indicate on your envelope payment is for “flowers”. Two families may sign up for a Sunday and share the cost. If you have questions, please call Carol Stauske at 352-292-3079.

Emergency Contact Information

Open Bible can add an emergency contact person’s information to your file. Please indicate the person’s Name, Relationship to you, their phone number and the state/country that they live in.

Please give this to our church secretary, Karen Pearson and she will add it to your file. You never know when this will come in handy.

God’s Cake

Sometimes we wonder,



'What did I do to deserve this?' or 'Why did God have to do this to me?' Here is a wonderful explanation!

A daughter is telling her Mother how everything is going wrong, she's failing algebra, her boyfriend broke up with her and her best friend is moving away.

Meanwhile, her Mother is baking a cake and asks her daughter if she would like a snack, and the Daughter says, 'Absolutely Mom, I love your cake.' 'Here, have some cooking oil,' her Mother offers. 'Yuck' says her daughter. 'How about a couple raw eggs?' 'Gross, Mom!' 'Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?' 'Mom, those are all yucky!' To which the mother replies : 'Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves. But when they are put

together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake!

God works the same way. Many times we wonder why He would let us go through such bad and difficult times. But God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good! We just have to trust Him and, eventually, they will all make something wonderful!

God is crazy about you. He sends you flowers every spring and a sunrise every morning. Whenever you want to talk, He'll listen. He can live anywhere in the universe, and He chose your heart.



Happy Birthday

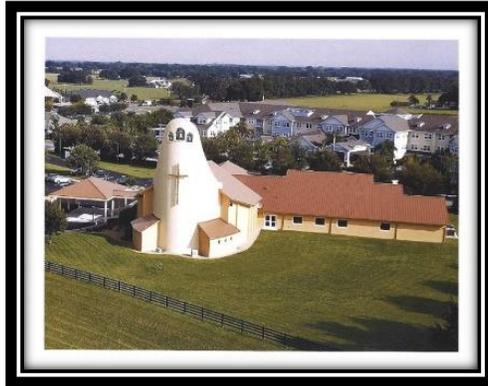
Ken Nelson - 1
Nikki Mitra - 2
Jim Orcutt - 2
Roger Acklam - 3
Ron Schultz - 3
Jim Musiel - 5
Carol Yahn - 9
Doreen Schaefer - 10
Peggi Carrier - 11
Gail Rathgeber - 11
Marvin Krahn - 14
Alan Johnson - 14
Vanita McCurnin - 14
Gordon Roback - 16
Ron Dahm - 21
Russ Follett - 25
Pat Knack - 25
Sandy Pawlowski - 25
Linda Draeger - 26

Happy Anniversary

Alan & Liz Koch - 2
Ralph & Pat Omness - 3
Matthew & Amy Hand - 4
Roger & Robin Otto - 14
Bill & Sharon Sigurdson - 17
Keith & Renda Mackey - 21
Patrick & Vanita McCurnin - 23
Ken & Jeanne Nelson - 23
Earl & Doris Schlicht - 25
Art & Patricia McCartin - 30

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Randy Cochran 407-637-4876 Staff Minister of Music & Education

“Growing in Christ through the Word, Making His Salvation Known”
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Listen to our Radio Ministry on Sunday's at 103.5FM
"The Shepherd." Our time slot is 11:05 – 11:30am



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