



NEWSLETTER



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FROM THE PASTOR

Grow Old Gracefully

Growing older is strange and mysterious to me, and I'm not quite sure I've got a handle on it yet. It surrounds me -- I feel it in my back and legs when I get up in the morning, and I see it in my hair which is as white as white can be.

If we let it, age can be frightening and we can focus a bit too much on our bodies. But to me, well, there's an excitement brewing on the horizon that's beyond compare. I'm so glad there is more to look forward to.

Francis Chan illustrates this concept using a long rope with about 4 inches of red tape wrapped around its end. He says: "Pretend this rope just goes on forever. Now imagine that this rope is a timeline of your existence. You see this red part? This would represent your time on earth. You've got a few short years here on earth and then you've got all of eternity somewhere else. What blows me away is some of you -- all you think about is this red part."

You know, it's so true -- our lives are short and eternity, well -- it goes on forever. So why spend this time getting upset about aging when, for the Christian, there's something so vast and wonderful waiting? Since time is short -- there's all the more reason to make sure that it's well spent. We should spend our time in light of eternity, making choices with heavenly goals in mind instead of earthly ones.

That means we want to participate in weekly worship at our church, take in Bible study opportunities, and look for ways to serve others by

involving ourselves in ministries that our church offers.

I read something along those lines recently in a devotional by Christian author Max Lucado. He said: "As we get older, our vision should improve. Not our vision of earth, but our vision of heaven. Those who have spent their life looking for heaven gain a skip in their step as the city comes into view. After Michelangelo died, someone found in his studio a piece of paper on which he had written a note to his apprentice. In the handwriting of his old age the great artist wrote: 'Draw, Antonio, draw, and do not waste time.' Well-founded urgency, Michelangelo. Time slips. Days pass. Years fade. And life ends. And what we came to do must be done while there is time."

So whatever stage of life we're in, I think it's wise to remember that with this little bit of time we have -- we need to spend it well. So spend it well. There can be no greater way to spend it, than to win souls for Christ. So let's get to work. As the Bible says, "Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The pace of summer usually calls for a more relaxed period of time. June, July, August, and most of September passed quickly but the pace of activity remained constant here. The Church council did not meet in the month of June because of individual travel plans but it more than made up for it with marathon sessions in July, August and September. Although the choir also took a break for the summer our Sunday services were blessed with a wide variety of musical groups and/or

soloists who performed all to the glory of God. When the choir returns to performing as a group in October you will notice that we were very fortunate to receive about seventy used black and/or blue choir robes from a sister congregation in Wisconsin.

You may have also noticed in the September newsletter the very interested and motivational article written by our choir director Stacy Vance concerning the WELS Triennial International Music and Worship Conference held in Wisconsin this summer. Both Stacy and our head organist Judy Hainen were able to attend and bring back lots of interesting music and information. We look forward, with eager anticipation, to seeing and hearing some of the music and worship ideas they brought back that are all designed to enhance our worship services.

By the end of September twenty four new members will have joined Open Bible since the beginning of the year. We were all very pleased that this outstanding group of fellow believers chose Open Bible as their church home. God's direction and guidance continues to be on display.

Although the pace slowed a bit in June, never the less, it was still a busy period here at Church. Of special interest was our women's group conducting their summer luncheon at Eaton Beach on Lake Weir. (A small side note; one of the assistant coaches of the Green Bay Packers has a home on the same Lake. Anyone know who it is?)

July turned out to be quite an interesting month. The Rev. Kevin Stellick and his family arrived from Taiwan and made a very interesting presentation about WELS outreach in China. A great cookout followed the presentation. We currently have five missionaries working with underground churches in mainland China. Please spend some time in prayer for those individuals and the important work they are doing under some very difficult conditions.

The Church Council also dealt with what we hope is a very limited problem with the discovery of termites in our conference room. The problem has been addressed and the Council will continue to carefully monitor the situation in the months to come. We also experienced some problems with

our air conditioning units and after careful study decided it was in our best interest to switch our service to an Ocala based company for a year trial period.

Even though the weather really heated up during the month of August, things remained on a pretty even keel at Open Bible. Much of the month was spent in preparation as our many small group organizations began gearing up for September and the beginning of new fall service, fellowship and worship opportunities. If you are looking to get more involved, and we certainly encourage you to do so, there will be many different areas of interest to explore. Please check out the bulletin inserts for the times and locations of these small group opportunities.

Due to the fact that a number of its members were not in the area, our long range planning committee did not meet during the summer months. They, too, will resume meeting shortly with some new direction as they continue with their work as assigned by the Church Council.

Last, but not least, and certainly most important, regardless of the time of year, the word of God never takes any time off at Open Bible. As a matter of fact, as you already know, plans are under way to provide two Sunday services during the months of December thru March. Service times will be 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. with a fellowship hour between services. With anticipated future growth, the return of our winter residents, and to prevent any overcrowding in our worship facility, as well as in the fellowship hall it is our hope that these two service opportunities will best serve our membership. We realize this will provide a number of challenges but when have there not been challenges at Open Bible? God's grace and mercy has always been on display and in abundance. He has guided us to this point and time. I'm more than confident He will continue to do so.

All God's blessings,
Greg Wendorf

WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

Jean Butts



At Open Bible, most of us are accustomed to our traditional worship style and our familiar WELS sanctuary. One of our newest members discussed the major reasons she left one of the very large churches in the

Villages area and joined Open Bible. Jean Butts explained that she attended a mega church for a time but was originally confirmed Missouri Lutheran and was very accustomed to the traditional Lutheran Church. So, when she attended the mega church, it was easy for her to differentiate between her past church experiences and the new. It bothered her that the large church no longer had a sanctuary, but rather was referred to as the auditorium. The altar area had become the stage. And it really hit home when Jean heard one of her fellow parishioners tell the pastor that his sermon was certainly entertaining. But Jean couldn't really remember any Godly biblical message in the sermon. Also, because the membership was so large that the pastor had no idea who his parishioners were, and the fact that the pastors changed so often, Jean was led to believe she was at the wrong church.

Jean belongs to a charity sewing group with her friend, Jeri Leeper, who invited her to Open Bible. Jean said "when I met the pastor at the door, saw the cross with Jesus and the smaller sanctuary, it reminded me of church when I was a child." "I knew I was home!" The practice of friends inviting friends to Open Bible and then becoming members is thankfully a very common theme – and thank you, Jeri Leeper!

Jean grew up in North Olmsted, Ohio. She then lived in Avon Lake, Ohio and a few years in Maine while her husband, Donald, was in the Air Force. Jean and Donald raised two daughters. Tammy, who is married, lives in Texas and Terri, who is married lives in Ohio. Jean says her only grandchildren are four legged and have tails. She and Donald grew up a few blocks from each other

and started dating in high school, which led to their marriage of 51 years. Unfortunately, Donald passed away two years ago after a very difficult time from diabetes which led to an unsuccessful kidney transplant and other difficulties. Jean says she is adjusting to being alone, but does not like spending much time in the house. She plays golf four days a week and as she lives in the Ashland neighborhood of the Villages, she plays golf with a regular neighborhood golf group. She also plays on the championship courses once a week. (Obviously, she must be a good golfer!)

Jean is involved in a small group charity sewing assembly. They meet one day a week and make cancer hats, newborn blankets, dialysis mitts, pillows and other items which are donated. She said her group willingly accepts new members and even those who don't sew. Some members crochet or cut fabric and all enjoy the three hours of service work and the lunch after. The group eagerly welcomes donations of fabric and yarn.

Jean hates the cold (like most of us) and is very grateful she and her husband moved to The Villages ten years ago. Jean, we are blessed to have you at Open Bible and we thank you for becoming part of us.

By Michael Benrud

SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITES

OCTOBER 2014

Sunday Morning Bible Study (Led by Pastor Schulz)

Life of Moses (PowerPoint Study)

Meeting in the front of church from 8:00-8:45 AM

Take a trip to Egypt. Learn about how Moses resembles us in so many ways. 8 Sessions- September and October, 2014.

Wednesday in the Word at 5:00 P.M. (Led by Pastor Schulz)

Revelation: Renew Your Vision (PowerPoint Study)

Learn about what we face as Christians as we await the return of Jesus Christ. Discover what the Battle of Armageddon really is, how false teaching will

cause many to fall, and enjoy graphic portrayals of heaven. September and October, 2014.

SPLASH Single People Loving and Serving Him (Led by Pastor Dale)

Meeting twice a month, once for study, and once for recreational activities

First meeting Sunday October 5th – 11:15 AM after the church service. Brunch at Golden Corral off 466.

Monday, October 13th, 1:00 PM Bible Study.

Coordinators: Joan Sanderson, Nancy Rodriguez, and Angela Spengler.

North Country Group (Led by Alan Johnson)

Meeting twice a month on Sundays from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM.

October 12th & 26th – Meeting at the home of Alan & Pam Johnson.

Topic: Whole Bible Project: James and Titus

466 A Group and Vicinity (Led by Pastor Schulz)

This group will meet twice a month on Tuesdays.

Tuesday October 21st from 1:00-4:00 PM at the home of Klaus & Helga Maass. Sign-up early as space is limited.

Topic: Study on Prodigal God.

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP (Led by Dennis Duessler)

Men at Leisure (Meets at Perkins Restaurant at 8:30 am. on Friday, October 10th. Travel through Great Chapters of the Bible this fall.

The Truth Project (Led by Armand Occhetti)

Starting October 20th 2:00 – 4:00 PM. Here are a few Topics: Veritology: What is Truth? Philosophy and Ethics: Says Who? Anthropology: Who Is Man? Theology: Who Is God? Plus More...

Defenders (Led by Ken Wells and Bill Sigurdson)

Meets on the last Friday of the month at 11:00 AM October 31st

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY (Led by Judy Anderson)

Prayer: An Audience with a King by Joel Petermann

Thursdays at 1:00 PM, here at Open Bible.

Looks at prayer from this perspective: Jesus is the King and you are his subject. Every time you pray, you are going before the King. Improve your prayer life by using scriptural guidelines to approach your Redeemer-King – 6 Sessions.

New Life in Christ (Pastor Schulz)

Group meets at church on Fridays for seven weeks starting October 10th at 3:00 PM. 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.

Open Bible Book Club (Pastor Schulz)

Group meets at church on Tuesday October 28th at 4:00 PM.

Respectable Sins by Jerry Bridges

Women of Open Bible (Led by Sandy Hahm)

Wednesday October 8th at 1:00 PM for service, spiritual growth, fellowship, and recreation. Meets September-May.

Quilters of Open Bible (Led by Ruth Niermeyer)

Meets on the First Friday of each month at church at 9:00-12:00 PM – First meeting will be October 3rd, 2014. Group creates quilts for those in need in our community.

Fellowship Group (Led by Joe and Paula Malec)

Meets once a month for a recreational activity. Friday, October 10th Movie Night starting at 6:30 PM. Feature film: Samson & Delilah in High Definition color!

Adult Choir (Led by Stacy Vance)

Meets on Wed. from 6:15-7:15 PM.

GRIEF CARE

GRIEF CARE (Facilitator by Patricia Major)

Tuesdays, 2:00 – 3:30 PM.

8 week video-based small group to help those who have lost a loved one in death.

Women of Riches (Led by Pam Riches)

Meets on Mondays at 2:00pm at the home of Pam Riches. The study will be That the World May Know-Promised Land 5 Faith Lessons.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The most important component of the worship service is when God approaches us through the Word and Sacraments and shows us exactly how much we are worth to Him. However, there is a second component of worship and in that part we tell God how much He is worth to us. This then is the part of worship that requires input from the congregation.

When we hear the Word, partake of the Lord's Supper, or observe a baptism we see what God has done for each one us sinners. He loved us so much that He gave up His one and only Son to come to earth, live our perfect life, suffer the punishment for our sins and then to die to make the final payment for not His imperfection but ours. And to seal this payment for mankind He rose on the third day proving His victory over sin, death, and the devil. So in each worship service we see just how important we are in His sight. But there is more to our worship as mentioned above.

Knowing what He has done for us, we are compelled to show our gratitude to Him for His gift of grace. So how do we do this? To be compelled means to capture and hold our attention, to cause someone to believe in a truth, in this case the TRUTH, and to cause us to feel that we must do something in return for this gift of GRACE. Here is where the second part of worship takes place.

As worshipping Lutherans we take the middle of the road when it comes to worship. We don't veer to the right where God's Word is the most important part of the service and nothing else matters. Just hear the Word and it will do the job. No sermon, no singing, no praying. Nor do we veer to the left where the Word is secondary to everything else. Singing, drama, praying is more important than God's Word.

Rather we go down the middle and use God's Word and enhance it with liturgy, hymns, psalms, prayers, and responses. When these parts are added to God's Word they can and do hold ones attention and they also cause the believer to look

to ways they can serve their Lord in gratitude for what He has done for each believer.

So our worship services are more than just God's Word. The Worship Committee understands the importance of The Word but we also know the importance of offering compelling worship services for our members. To this end we pray that our worship services will not only show us God's love for us but also our love for God.

To that end may our worship services be a celebration of God's love for us and our love for God.

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

September Council Highlights

The church council met on September 18th. Following are the highlights from the meeting:

- August income was \$5,172 more than expenses. The mortgage balance as of 8/31/14 was \$411,511. Capital expenses for the year are more than \$3,000 over the \$10,000 amount budgeted.
- It was decided to wait until fall of 2015 to request a grant from the Antioch foundation for our building expansion project. More details of the project are needed before a grant is requested.
- An electronic keyboard will be purchased using donated funds.
- An account with Wells Fargo Advisors will be opened that can be used to accept stocks and mutual funds from members as contributions.
- A 4 person core group of individuals will be appointed to oversee long range planning.
- The door between the Pastor's office and the secretary's office has been removed and replaced with drywall.

Science vs Bible Corner By Dr. Kevin Peil

Question: Who was Cain's wife?

The Bible clearly teaches that all humans are descendants of Adam and Eve-therefore there had to be inter-marriages between brothers and sisters. Consider the following:

*Adam and Eve were genetically perfect. Their genes contained no mutations since mutations need time to occur and accumulate in the population.

*The first few generations following Adam and Eve would have inherited near-perfect genes, largely undamaged by mutations.

*There would have been an almost zero chance of harmful deformities in the offspring of brother-sister marriages because of the near-perfect genes.

*With the passing of many centuries, many harmful genetic mutations had accumulated in humans. By the time of Moses it was necessary for God to institute laws against inter-family marriages. (See Leviticus 18-20)

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Jerry & Carol Yahn – 1
Mike & Gloria Butzow – 3
Dave & Dianne Bliss – 8
Ron & Christina Moelling – 8
Huns & Linda Gustrowsky – 9
Les & Carol Stauske – 11
Jim & Pam (PJ) Johnson – 12
Dennis & Pat Knack – 21
Duane & Judy Anderson – 28
Don & Ardith Schmidt – 31

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Sharon Affeldt – 1
Russ Niermeyer – 2
Bette McConkey – 4
Ken Phillips – 8
Art Hartwig – 9
James Langer – 9
Carol Sonnenberg – 11
Carol Beetch - 13
Zoey Langer – 14
Sandy Fehlhaber – 17
Dennis Duessler – 17
Don Schmidt – 18
Dave Buss – 26
Herb Schaefer – 29