



## FROM THE PASTOR

Today I got a phone call from Susan Gorman who had visited our worship services at Open Bible a few weeks ago with her husband Charles. She said she appreciated the voice mail left on her phone, and the card that was sent to them in the mail. She said they really enjoyed our worship services and would one day be back. However, first and foremost, they have a house to sell back in Alva, Florida. That house is a heavy burden weighing on them. The real estate market is dead where they are living. As a result, they are unable to experience the joy and happiness of living full time in this area.

Every one of us is just like the Gorman family. We have an obligation, not in Alva, Florida, but to our God. We are stuck with a debt hanging over our heads. Just declaring bankruptcy or having a bad credit rating won't do it. This debt needs to be paid back not in dollar bills but in a life spent apart from our God in hell. The Bible tells us that the "wages of our sins is death." But a person named Jesus Christ has heard about our debt dilemma. He took immediate action. He came and paid the entire mortgage price. This mortgage price was not made with silver or gold, but rather with his holy precious blood and his innocent sufferings and death. Because of Jesus, we are now free to experience an abundant life in the villages of this life and in the life to come.

So much is happening at Open Bible Lutheran Church. We are making personal visits on guests who stop in to see us on a Sunday. We are setting up a New Resident Outreach Program where we will make contact with newcomers in our neighborhood. We are gearing up for a Friendship Sunday. A Grief Support group is in the works. Sunday afternoon worship services look to begin soon at Steeplechase. A Sign committee is preparing to do research in order to upgrade our church signs so we might have better visibility in our community. Bible classes, choir, quilters, and our ladies group, are gearing

up. Packing food for those suffering from hunger, and a Hoe-down and Church Picnic are being planned for October. I am so thankful for the many talented people that God has blessed us with at Open Bible. May God continue to bless our congregation as we strive to reach out to the lost and to nurture the saved.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

The September congregational meeting annually consists of a number of reports from various individuals along with a brief update on what has occurred during the past nine months at Open Bible. At the January annual meeting we go a bit more in depth with written reports from each church group as well as a presentation of the annual budget, and any other items that may need congregational approval. So let's take a brief look at what has occurred.

First and foremost in our thoughts of the past nine months is just how many blessings God has so graciously continued to shower down upon Open Bible. As things unfolded during the church year it became more than obvious how God's stamp of approval was in place. Early in the year we made the announcement that Pastor Dale had decided to retire from the public ministry. It was with a great deal of regret that we accepted the fact that our shepherd of the past six and one half years was closing a door in his life. But as so often happens, when one door closes, God opens another for his family of believers. In early May a call for a new Pastor was extended to Pastor Mark Schulz from Trinity Lutheran Church in Bay City, Michigan. In late June, with God's guidance and direction, Pastor Schulz accepted our call. Once again it became very evident that God knew our need as well as the overall need for outreach in this area.

Various other events filled the Church calendar during 2012. We continued our tradition of having meaningful, Christian musical concerts by hosting Susan Ann in February and the wonderful concert choir from

Wisconsin Lutheran College of Milwaukee, in March. We also experienced a wonderful spring concert by the children of our sister congregation from King of Kings in Orlando that we co-hosted with our neighbors from the Steeplechase Senior retirement complex. February also brought retired professor David Kuske to Open Bible for a Saturday morning presentation on Bible interpretation and why we can still trust the teachings of God's master peace. We also finished our training for the use of our church security system and activated it in the month of March.

March also brought us the season of Lent and Pastor Dale's sermon series entitled "Meditations on great hymns for Lent". It was also the month we continued our tradition of inviting friends and guests for our annual Friendship Sunday.

April witnessed the conclusion of the Lenten season with a memorable Tenebrae "Service of Darkness" on Good Friday and our two Easter Sunday services literally sandwiched around our annual Easter breakfast hosted by the men of Open Bible. The month also saw a number of our members participate in an important recertification in CPR and AED training at the fire station in the southern section of The Villages. This valuable training last took place two years ago and thankfully we have not had to utilize this program yet at Open Bible. The month also was the beginning of our Pastoral search process. It began with a survey sent to all our members seeking their feelings concerning the perceived strengths and weaknesses of our congregation that would then be utilized in putting together a call list of men from which would hopefully come our new Pastor. The survey results were very interesting and useful not only for our new Pastor search but also as an evaluation tool in determining where we are in our journey together as a Christian Congregation.

July witnessed the completion of the work of the Long Range Planning Committee. That group, consisting of Ruth Vance, Mary Burel, Dennis Duessler, Herb Schaefer, Pastor Dale and myself updated the original document and hopefully set the direction for this church going forth. Many thanks to all committee members for their hard work and dedication.

The month of August witnessed a couple of very special events at Open Bible. We first said good bye to the public ministry of Pastor Dale with a well-attended fellowship dinner and program on August 11<sup>th</sup>. Two weeks later, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, we followed up with a wonderful installation service and catered dinner for Pastor Schulz. The installation ushered in his tenure as the third Pastor in the history of Open Bible. The end of

August and the beginning of September has been a very busy time for Pastor Schulz as he settles in and begins his ministry amongst us.

As I'm sure you can tell it has been a very active period of time at our church. Pastor Schulz has hit the ground running and is in the midst of developing some new programs designed to bring new souls to Christ and Open Bible. As we go forth under new leadership it has already become quite evident that outreach truly is going to be our number one priority. New faces on Sunday mornings are becoming the norm. I'm also sure that many of us have questions about what other changes may lay ahead. But change is both inevitable and necessary. If everything stays the same, how do we grow and measure progress? The answer is simple. We have a heavenly shepherd who has guided this church so faithfully in the past and we know he will do so into the future. May God continue to pour out His grace and mercy on each and every one of us at Open Bible Lutheran Church.

God's Blessings,  
Greg Wendorf

## WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

By Leslie Nelson



We are finally catching up with 2 of our "long-time" members, if there is such a thing in a 10-year-old congregation! Nancy and Dave Gonia retired from their jobs in computer programming (Nancy) and

facilities and repair (Dave) for the Milwaukee Public Schools in 2004, discovered The Villages, and have been part of our Open Bible congregation since then.

They have a fascinating family, as many of you may have noticed. All 5 of their children were adopted from Korea! Dave and Nancy were married in 1971 at Trinity Lutheran Church in rural Jackson, WI. Nancy is the oldest of 8 children and by 1975 was getting impatient to start a family. Adopting through a local agency seemed impossible, but God had an answer. Their social worker from Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services heard about Korean adoptions, and the Gonias agreed to be the guinea pigs.

Viola! Their precious first child, Michelle, was "delivered" in 1976. She is now 37, so was only a little baby when Nancy and Dave welcomed her. The others,

Danielle, Matt, and Ben, arrived right on schedule every 2 years or so, except for Brian, who was a later delivery, arriving in 1989 at the age of 7.

What a joy these children have been, and now the family rejoices to have 5 grandchildren: Aidan, Alyssa, Austin, Katie and Andrew, and we rejoice with them whenever they are present to worship with us.

To back up a little, Dave was raised in a Catholic family in the Bay View area of Milwaukee, while Nancy was raised in a Lutheran family on a farm between Cedarburg and West Bend. Dave graduated from Milwaukee Area Technical College and Nancy from the U of W Milwaukee. They met at Marty Zivko's, a teen dance club in Hartford, WI, about a year before they were married at age 21.

Their first home was a bungalow duplex on Delaware Avenue in the Bay View neighborhood, and as the children kept on coming, they moved to bigger homes a couple of times, but always staying south of Oklahoma Avenue. (The North Side of Minneapolis is bad, too! - Ed.)

These days Nancy and Dave split their time between our Village of Winifred, and their condo up in Kewaskum, WI, which is pretty close to most of their family. While up there, they enjoy good fish fry's and also the Asian food which their kids seem to prefer. Their reading and viewing habits are closely aligned on history, travel, culture and science.

While the kids were growing up, they did a lot of camping in the Midwest, along the Blue Ridge Mountains and out West. In the next few years, they would like to travel to the Adirondacks and the Finger Lakes area of New York, and all the way to Western Canada. A riverboat cruise in Europe would be very special.

In the meantime, Dave bikes 100 to 150 miles a week! Nancy prefers making quilts and stoneware pots, and our church quilting ladies will be glad to have her back soon!

## WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

The Worship Committee held its first meeting with Pastor Schulz on Thursday, September 6. The full committee was present and discussion was held on various topics dealing with our worship services. Most of our time was spent on getting pastor up to speed on what the Worship Committee did during the first year

of functioning. It was decided to resubmit to the Board of Elders our proposal from last year to change the time of our Advent, Lenten and other evening services to make them available to our members who work and for our outreach efforts. Discussion was also held on Thanksgiving and Christmas services. At our next meeting we have been asked to study the feasibility of changing the seating configuration in the sanctuary from straight rows to rows sitting at a slant. Last year the Worship Committee presented to the congregation the blessings of preparing for the worship service by spending time in the sanctuary before the service to mediate, pray, listen to the preludes, and preparing oneself for worship. This year we would like to look at the worship service itself to see what really makes up our worship services.

The worship service operates in the past, present, and future. The God that we worship is the same one that the Old Testament people worshipped, the same God that we New Testament Christians worship and the same God that future believers will worship. Our God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

He is with us: to bless us, to speak to us in the steady course and cadence of His Word, to come to us in the satisfying gift of His sacraments, and to promise that He will come again and receive us to Himself in heaven. Our weekly worship service reinforces these truths and becomes a real Sunday meeting with God. Worship is an external witness that God has served and is serving His people with His gifts. As such, God is the center of our worship and our lives as Christians.

Worship renews us to be lights of Christ, the light of the world. In worship, God reaches down, informs us of His redemptive love for us in Christ, and lifts us up for growth and service. The worship service, rich in the Words of Christ, builds up our lives and our words in Christ so that we give thanks to God the Father through Him. It virtually begs us to invite others to come also and receive the gifts of salvation. This is why worship is so important to the Christian believer.

Next month we will look at the parts of the service and why each one is included in the service.

## ALTAR GUILD SERVING SCHEDULE

October	Barb Matthias/Sally Stocks
November	Audrey Hoerchner/Leslie Nelson
December	Joan Blaho/Leslie Nelson

## CHURCH PICNIC & HOE-DOWN

Mark your calendars for the upcoming Church Picnic and old fashioned Hoe-Down. The date to save is Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. We will start out with a picnic at 5:00 pm. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be grilled. We ask that those attending bring a picnic "dish" to be shared by all. Suggestions would be: potato dishes, baked beans, chips and dip, fruit, dessert, and relishes. Iced tea, lemonade, and coffee will be provided. There will be a sign up sheet in the pass through starting in early October.



Following our meal we will be hosting a Hoe-Down in the fellowship hall. Comfortable clothing and shoes will be the dress for the evening. Come prepared to do-si-do or maybe learn the Texas two step, or western line dance.

We have plans for many activities this year so look for a schedule to come later.

## WOMEN OF OPEN BIBLE

Hello Everyone and Happy Fall!

Reminders of dates for our events in October:

**October 6<sup>th</sup>** – Fall Rally at Bay Pines Lutheran Church, Seminole, Fl. (near Tampa) 10 am.

Sign-up by kitchen pass-thru and we need drivers. Pastor Guse, speaker. Leave church at 8 a.m.

**October 8<sup>th</sup>** – Women of Open Bible Officers & Fellowship Events Committee Members planning events and activities from October through December, 2012 – 1 pm at church.

**October 10<sup>th</sup>** – Monthly meeting at 1 pm to discuss many items on agenda and vote on them.

Hostesses are Gail Rathgeber and Sandy Pawlowski.  
ALL LADIES INVITED.

Your Sister in Christ,  
Marilyn Acklam, President

## SERVICE PROJECT

We have our twenty volunteers for the Kids Against Hunger project. We ask that those who signed up fill out a waiver form which we will take with us on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to arrive at the project site by 9:30 am. We are scheduled to work from 10:00 - 12:00 noon. The American Legion Hall is located on Rolling Acres, just south of 466. If you would like to make a donation to Kids Against Hunger you can do so the day that we work.

We thank all of our members who volunteered for this service project.



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Jerry & Carol Yahn – 1  
Mike & Gloria Butzow – 3  
Dave & Dianne Bliss – 8  
Huns & Linda Gustrowsky – 9  
Les & Carol Stauske – 11  
Duane & Judy Anderson – 28  
Don & Ardith Schmidt – 31

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Sharon Affeldt – 1  
Russ Niermeyer – 2  
Bette McConkey – 4  
Daniel Langer Jr. – 8  
Ken Phillips – 8  
Art Hartwig – 9  
James Langer – 9  
Stephen Langer – 11  
Carol Sonnenberg – 11  
Carol Beetch – 13  
Zoey Langer – 14  
Dennis Duessler – 17  
Daniel Langer – 18  
Don Schmidt – 18  
Matthew Draeger – 27  
Lyndon Carrier – 29  
Herb Schaefer – 29