

FROM THE PASTOR

Keep Scattering the Seeds

A number of years ago, when I was a pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, I regularly conducted 3 worship services on a Sunday afternoon at the Berkshire House of Correction. At the end of the service, we would offer coffee and doughnuts to the inmates. I must say, that if an inmate knew you were having coffee and doughnuts, the attendance would always seem to swell. Anyway, for years, people would ask me the question, "How many of the inmates have changed their lives? How many have joined your church?" I would always respond that only a handful actually joined our church. I didn't have any idea of how many lives were changed. The people who asked me the question sometimes led me to believe that they thought the ministry to prisoners was a waste of time. They visibly couldn't see the visible numbers justifying the effort.

I have always felt that some of the people we witness to over the years, we may not see immediate results, but that one day we will see them in heaven. In fact, they may indeed say to us in heaven, "Thanks for taking the time to share Jesus with me!" What a joyful day that will be. At times, the Lord allows us to see the results of our scattering the seeds of his Word. Below is an email I received while on vacation. It came to my old congregation in Bay City, Michigan, via email. I have changed the last name of the man and his girlfriend to preserve their identity.

"Hello my name is Michael Schmidt , I've been trying to find u ever since u left Berkshire county. U ministered to me as a young man of 21 while I was at the house of correction I wanted to tell u how u changed my life , how much my faith depends on the things you taught me .if I had not met you theres no telling what would of ever happened to me. There are tears in my eyes now finally relieved I can tell you ,thank you mark for your teachings and my faith is as strong today as the day you

asked me this one question "how do I know Jesus is real" the answer today same as in 1988 because my heart tells me so you were there during the hardest point of my young life when I got out u came to see me and my young girlfriend Barbara Lasco . I was touched by your kindness and have never forgotten you. I married Barbara and had 2 beautiful children, sadly enough my angel lost her life to a drunken driver ,I raised my kids on my own never forgetting the words u asked me concerning my heart and Jesus ,all though life was hard back then .my faith remained and Jesus has taken me by the hand and shown me mercy in countless ways my children grown now have prospered and I'm even a grandfather,blessed with a granddaughter now 4 yrs old . ive spent the last 25 yrs as a contractor living in Warwick Rhode Island .I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your teachings and your kindness,I remember the man who came into my cell and loved me as Jesus does ,the talks ,the sermons and the doughnuts! I'm thankfuly that I found u and could tell u how much you helped me, I would love to talk to you again! Thank you again."

What more important work can you do in life than to share Jesus with others. What a touching story Michael relates to us. Therefore, keep scattering the seeds, members of Open Bible. We may not see the results until heaven, but what a joy one day to have someone come up to us and say, "Thanks, for telling me about my Savior! I am here because of your witness to me."

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's early September and even though it remains very warm and summer like in Florida, seasonal change is being felt in other parts of our country and worldwide. Each of the seasons has its own uniqueness and beauty and has made a significant contribution to our lives. We may not seem to notice all the changes the seasons have to offer here quite as much as elsewhere, but they're all a part of God's great plan.

God designed the four seasons so that they would work together to bring a complete cycle of life and death thus assuring new life and growth. That same God who makes things grow would also help us bear fruit and by his grace direct us through the seasons of our lives in eager anticipation of someday spending eternity with our Lord.

Our lives were planned to be very similar in pattern, to the seasons. Our youth could be compared to springtime as we resembled young flowers that sprung out of the earth and signal a new beginning filled with hope and excitement for the future. As young adults we were like the warm days of summer as we worked long and diligently at the things that God assigned to us and built our hopes and dreams for the rest of our lives. Autumn signaled that our productivity had neared its peak and we began thinking in terms of harvesting those fruits of our labors as well as making solid preparations for the next phase of our lives. Winter brought an end to our major productivity but it also quietly ushered in a new and exciting era. If all went according to plan, we would complete the cycle of preparedness and enter that special time referred to as retirement.

In God's perfectly designed plan for us, he has allowed for times of fruitfulness and activity. He has also built in times of quiet and rest. Because of God's amazing grace we can enjoy seasons of harvesting the fruit of our faithfulness, knowing that he will also be there to help us overcome those times of heartache and grief. We make a big mistake if we put our hope and trust in things of this earth. We are only here for a short time. Our citizenship is in heaven. We are called to live for Christ and to serve. Just as in nature, the seasons of our lives work together to bring about God's perfect will for each one of us.

I once heard mankind as being described as characters in a novel with God as the author. We must all play the roles in the story the way the author assigns them. God has the entire story laid out. We go through life day by day, season by season, turning one page at a time, dealing with whatever arises. And like characters in this story, we're helpless to know or change what's coming next. Thankfully our loving Savior – God is in control of the times of our lives. Through Jesus Christ, God wrote himself into our story to save it – and us – from disaster. Because of His awesome love, God promises to bring the seasons of our lives and our story to an amazing, happy ending.

God's blessings to all,
Greg Wendorf

WHO'S WHO AT OPEN BIBLE

By Leslie Nelson



By now many of us are getting to know Joseph and Mary Price, who came to us from Ohio last year. They were both born there to Christian parents and baptized in Lutheran churches, Joe in

Youngstown and Mary in Plain City. Mary grew up living on several farms in central Ohio, attending grade school and high school in Asheville and Croton, while Joe was raised and went to high school in Girard. He went on to Capital and Ohio State Universities, both in Columbus, where he became a dentist. Mary also attended Capital Univ., and that is where they met and were married 56 years ago, in the Seminary Chapel. Mary became a schoolteacher and taught for a few years in schools in Williamsport, Columbus and Warren before retiring in 1960 to raise their family.

The Prices have three sons: Joseph, an architectural consultant in Alpharetta, GA; George, an insurance underwriter in Shadyside, OH; and James, also an architect in Rossford, OH. Mary and Joe have three granddaughters, Emily, Bethany and Anna.

Joe retired in 2001, and they eventually heard about The Villages through advertisements and word of mouth. The deciding factor in their decision was having a WELS church in the community.

Pizza seems to be the favorite food in the Price household. Mary enjoys reading historical novels and mysteries. Joe's favorite author is Clive Cussler, and he likes war movies. Mary has two favorite movies: "Chalk Garden" and "Inn of the Sixth Happiness."

The Prices are both avid readers, which explains their interest in heading up our church book club. They also like to swim and enjoy attending the Civil War Club. Joe rides his bicycle, and they both like exploring in their golf car. They began traveling when the boys were small, and have been in all of the states, including Alaska and Hawaii. They have also been to Canada, many of the Caribbean islands, Europe and Australia. These days they are concentrating on visits to Georgia and Ohio to see their family.

Mary has been transcribing material into Braille for the blind for over 30 years. Among other materials she has brailled is Meditations for the WELS. Joe helps her now, acting as her reader.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

Fall Semester Schedule-September-November 2013

If you would like to join any of these groups, you are welcome to do so. Please call the coordinator for more information.

Wednesday in the Word (Led by Pastor Schulz)
September 11th, 18th, 25th at church at 5:00 pm

BE PREPARED TO ANSWER

Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims, Where did the Bible come from? Why do the Innocent Suffer? Other Tough Questions in this 8 session study.

SPLASH Single People Loving and Serving Him (Led by Pastor Dale) Monday September 16th at 1:00 pm
Great Chapters of the Bible

A look at very important chapters of the Bible. Meeting twice a month, once for study, and once for recreational activities or service projects.

Coordinators: Joan Sanderson, Nancy Rodriguez, and Angela Spengler

Ocala Group (Led by Alan Johnson)
Sunday September 15th from 6:00-8:00 pm

At the home of Dave and Kim Mottl

Topic to be determined at first get together.

2nd meeting on September 29th at home of Alan and Pam Johnson.

466A Group and Vicinity (Led by Pastor Schulz)
Tuesday September 10th and 24th from 3:00-5:00 pm

Angels and Demons

Meeting at the home of Jim and Eva Orcutt.

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP (Led by Dennis Duessler)
September 13th at 9:30 am at Perkins Restaurant
Men at Leisure.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY (Led by Judy Anderson)
September 12th and 26th at 1:00 pm at church
Great Women of the Bible

Take a closer look at women in the Gospel of Luke.

Open Bible Book Club (facilitated by various group members)

September 24th at 10:00 am at church
Angels and Demons

Women of Open Bible (Led by Sandy Hahm)

September 11th at 1:00 pm

Meets the 2nd Wed. of each month Sept. – May.

Quilters of Open Bible (Led by Ruth Niermeyer)

October 4th, 2013 from 9:00-12:00 pm

Group creates quilts for those in need in our community.

Fellowship Group (Led by Ron and Diane Brutlag)

September 27th "Forever Plaid" 8:00 pm

Adult Choir (Led by Stacy Vance)

Sept. 11th, 18th, 25th from 6:00-7:15 pm at church

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

August Council Meeting

The Church Council met on August 15 after taking the month of July off. Therefore the meeting was lengthy and much was put forth for discussion. The highlights of this meeting follow:

- The treasurer gave his report of both June and July. Offerings continue to be above our expenses. We thank the Lord for this. At the end of July the checking account was at \$62,776 and we have \$50,000 on deposit with LACE. We do have a large surplus and we will be asking the congregation what should be done with it. Currently our mortgage balance is \$442,109.
- The council approved the 11 new members: 2 by transfer, 8 by confirmation, and 1 by profession of faith. Another reason to thank the Lord.
- The fall schedule was announced and there will be numerous opportunities for Bible study available this fall.
- The signage committee made a presentation to the council and came forward with their proposal. More discussion will be forthcoming.
- We would like to remind our members that there is a quarterly congregational meeting scheduled for Sunday, September 29th at 11:00 am.
- If you have concerns or questions regarding our congregation please contact a council member. Members are Greg Wendorf, Herb Schaefer, Les Stauske, Duane Anderson, Walt Farnsworth, Ron Brutlag, Dan Blaho.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Why do we sing a Psalm every Sunday in our worship service?

The singing of the weekly Psalm in our Sunday service is relatively new for the Lutheran Church. We first started singing the psalm when our new hymnal, "Christian Worship" came into use. Before that a sung or chanted psalm was used in some of the Graduals, Introits, and in the services known as Matins and Vespers. In the old TLH we had a listing of many psalms but they were to be read and not sung.

However, the singing or chanting of psalms goes all the way back to Old Testament times. Psalms were what tied the Jewish people together no matter where they lived. The psalms were their first hymns used in the synagogues and especially in their festive services. They became quite familiar with the Messianic psalms and were reminded of God's promises to his people. The medieval church used large portions of the Psalter in its liturgical and musical portions of the Mass. Psalms were set to music in many of the monasteries and chanting of these Psalms became very popular.

When "Christian Worship" was compiled fifty-nine of the 150 Psalms were included in a musical setting. Only 59? The intent was to sing the best of the psalms into the minds and hearts of the worshipers. Those chosen were favorite psalms, Messianic psalms, and those most edifying for corporate worship. They were also selected to fit the Sundays and festivals of the church year.

The singing of these psalms was intended for a cantor, the pastor, a small group, a choir or the congregation. A variety of ways changes up the service and the effect of the psalm. The psalm is always sung after the first reading for the day.

Today, by singing the psalm of the day we join past and present worshipers in praising our God. Sing the psalm with meaning and gusto as it gives us a truth about our awesome God and fits into the theme of the service.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

It looks like many of our members are planning to attend "Forever Plaid" this month. The musical is at the Melon Patch Theater in Leesburg. It is located off of HWY 27 on 13th Street. If you are traveling on 441/27

we would continue on 27 until you come to W. Main St. Turn left here and make another left unto 13th St. The theater is on the left about 2-3 blocks down 13th. It is right by the big Baptist church complex.

We will be collecting ticket money this Sunday and the next. Cost will be \$16 per ticket. As of this writing we have 26 individuals signed up. There is room for a few more but we would need to know soon.

Many are interested in dining out together before the musical. I would suggest that those who would like to go with a group should meet at church at 5:00 pm. We plan to go to the local Olive Garden. This way those who wish to car pool can also meet at church. If you have questions or concerns please contact Ron or Diane Brutlag.

Activities are being planned for the coming months so check out the monthly newsletter to see what is in store. We already have a date for our Christmas Caroling at the Carriage House and Steeplechase. The date is December 14th. We will carol at Carriage House at 4:45 and at Steeplechase at 5:30. We hope to have a chili supper following the caroling. We still have to ask our chili chef if he is willing to make the chili again this year. We will also be asking carolers to bring some Christmas cookies for dessert.

WOMEN OF OPEN BIBLE

Fall is almost here and it is time for Women of Open Bible to start up again. We will be meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 11th at 1 pm in the church fellowship hall. All ladies of Open Bible are invited to attend. This is a great opportunity to get better acquainted with your sisters in Christ.

Our first outing is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 15th. It is an Ocala Consignment Bus Tour. We will take a 45 passenger coach bus to 5 consignment shops in Ocala. Finger foods and beverages are provided at each stop. 21 gift certificates will also be given away. Departure from church at 9:15 am and return back at 5:15 pm. The cost is \$25 per person. Watch for the sign up sheet in the kitchen pass through later in September. Since we can only take 45 people we are offering this to our church members first.



The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society Fall Rally will be held on Saturday, October 12th at New Hope Lutheran Church in West Melbourne. Pastor Goeglein will speak on the work

being done at the Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong. Registration will begin at 9:15, and the rally will begin at 10:15. Registration deadline is September 30th.

If you have any questions about Women of Open Bible please call Sandy Hahm at 352-350-1510.

Sandy Hahm, President

CHILDREN'S CHURCH AT OPEN BIBLE

In a continuing effort to offer more opportunities at Open Bible we have an opportunity to offer a Bible Story study for children during the latter portion of the Worship Service. During Children's Church, children learn the basics of the faith. The Word in pictures, songs and activities cements these truths in their minds. Children who experience Jesus every week will never forget that truth.

We are asking you to consider being a member of the Children's Church team. The teams would consist of a teacher and an aide and be available based on an agreed upon schedule. The hope is that we would have enough team members to teach at least once a month. The schedule would begin on September 8, 2013 and end on December 22, 2013.

Any questions or comments contact Pam Johnson (352-390-6982) or Pastor Schulz.

THANKSGIVING DINNER

FALL IS IN THE AIR

The leaves are starting to turn colors in our northern states. Plans for Thanksgiving come to mind as it is the next family holiday. Should they stay home or go over the river and through the woods to Grandmother's house? For most of our families, Florida is not a quick weekend trip.

Grandpas and Grandmas here at Open Bible will start their day with a worship service, giving thanks to the Lord for the abundant blessings He daily bestows upon us. Our souls will be fed with the Word. Then our thoughts will turn to feeding our bodies. Filling our plates with the All American Thanksgiving meal.

For a number of years, the family of Open Bible gathered to feast together, like the Pilgrims and Indians. Are you interested in bringing back this fine Open Bible Tradition of Thanksgiving Dinner? It works quite simply and is a wonderful way to spend your Holiday. No

cooking a full meal, no waiting in line at the restaurant, no bill, no tip, and no dishes to wash.

The turkey, gravy and dressing are all provided along with beverages. It is well organized. You sign up for an item on the list. Example, it could be a bowl of mashed potatoes, a green bean casserole, cranberry relish, rolls, or a pie. It all blends for the Norman Rockwell Dinner.

We need to know how many people would be interested in participating in this event. There is "An Interest Sign Up Sheet" at the kitchen pass through window.

Associate members, many of you will be back with us. Let us know if you would like to join in, email to Karen, the Church Secretary at: secretaryopenbiblechurch@centurylink.net

Time passes quickly and we would like to give you the answer in the October newsletter if this is a go! We need your response by Monday Sept. 23rd to make the Newsletter deadline. Remember, sign up at the kitchen or email your RSVP if you plan to join this Family Fellowship. This is only a quick count. We can fine tune all the details later if enough of you would like to have Thanksgiving Dinner here at the church.

ALUMINUM CAN REMINDER

Please remember that only aluminum cans are collected and placed in the Sigurdson's van on the first and third Sunday of each month. We are not collecting tin cans, aluminum pie plates or foil – just aluminum cans. The Women of Open Bible thank you.

SNOW BIRD PICNIC IN MILWAUKEE

Warm feelings of Open Bible fellowship was obvious at the 5th Annual Snow Bird Picnic held in Milwaukee, August 2nd at the Yahn's. After a noon pot luck, loud and frequent laughter was heard in conversation, sheephead and rummy royal card games. Twenty friends enjoyed the perfect afternoon weather followed by a fish fry at a local restaurant. All who attended said they were having a great summer but expressed eagerness to join the Open Bible family this winter.

We miss you all.
Carol Yahn

BIRTHDAY CARD REQUEST

Many of us at Open Bible are privileged to know a member of St. Marks of Leesburg by the name of **Esther Fretwell**. Esther played a role in the early history of our church. She attended Bible classes at Church on the Square, made donations to our Church and has attended a number of our functions over the years. She is very supportive and very much wanted to attend our 10th Anniversary service but health reasons kept her away.

Monday Sept.30th will be Esther's 98th birthday. Since many of our members know her we are suggesting that as many of you as possible consider sending her a birthday card. What a tremendous surprise for a wonderful Christian lady to receive a large number of cards on her special day from people she knows as well as those she does not. It would be a heartfelt gesture on our part to recognize her in this way. If you are interested please consider sending a card to her at:

1416 Griffin Road, Apt. 20
Leesburg, Fl. 34748

Thank You,
The Church Council

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Del Draeger – 4
Sandy Hahm – 4
Keith Mackey – 5
Karen Herring – 8
Joyce Miller – 9
Mike Benrud – 14
Dan Pearson – 14
Dennis Knack – 20
Audrey Hoerchner – 21
Pat Krahn – 22
Connie Dale – 23
John Walters – 29
Jerry Taylor – 30

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Pastor Rodger & Connie Dale – 9
Richard & Sally Langer – 12
James & Sandra Fehlhaber – 14
Russ & Monine Follett – 28