



The Shepherd's Voice

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MINUTE WITH MIKE:

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother..."

Matthew 18:15

Summer greetings to you and yours!

May the sun and warmth of this season remind you that The One we call Son has an everlasting love for you, and that warms our hearts in every season.

For years I have thought our community would benefit from public service announcements reminding people that not everyone has air-conditioning, and those of us who have might want to give extra consideration and patience to those who do not. It's simply a thoughtful and constructive thing to do.

Another very thoughtful and Christian thing to do is to share our feelings, good or bad, with those for whom we have them. Too often in our families, our work places and our church folks are talking about hurt or troubled feelings with everyone but those involved. The Bible calls it "gossip." Matter of fact, the Bible teaches us that we have an obligation to talk privately first to those who have hurt us. God's desire is, of course, to reconcile brothers and sisters with one another and to restore and rebuild relations that might have become strained.

As the pastor of our church, I want to extend an open invitation to each of you right now. If you ever have questions or concerns about our church, *please* contact me so we can talk. I have always been willing and open in sharing with all of you. It is not God's will that we talk behind one another's backs.

Let's bless God and follow His Word. Let's be careful with each other as well by showing preference to one another in honor (taken from this year's theme verse - Romans 12:9-13 - worth reading again...).

Bless you and yours and thanks for the privilege and joy I have in being your friend and pastor.

Love,

Mike

WORSHIP BANNERS

Below is an article taken from the John Knox bulletin of 4/1/2018 regarding the banners at John Knox. People have been asking Diane Solomon what has happened to the worship banners from John Knox so she thought it would be good for them to know. Diane would also like it to be known that she is happy with the decision reported in the article. “Think of how many people will be able to see them instead of them sitting on a shelf in my basement. We cannot use them at Good Shepherd,” said Diane.

“The BANNERS hung in the sanctuary have become an important part of the worship experience. Some of the banners are too long for the new Worship Center and have been requested by and disbursed to three churches within the presbytery: First Presbyterian in Allegan; Parkwood Presbyterian in Jenison; and Eastminster Presbyterian in Grand Rapids. Several banners will be kept and shortened for our use at John Knox. It is our prayer that other Christians will be blessed and inspired by their beauty and message every time a banner is hung in these churches.”

In addition, the following has been learned from the May 13 JKPC bulletin. “Over the past few months, many hours have been spent cleaning, clearing and sorting the many varied items that are part of the church’s history. The inventory was distributed to a variety of organizations, businesses, and resources. The bulletin also indicated John Knox congregation worshipped Sunday, May 20, at Parkwood Presbyterian Church. The dedication of gifts from John Knox Presbyterian Church was celebrated. Information from the bulletin stated: “It is with great thanksgiving and deep gratitude that Parkwood Presbyterian Church receives and dedicates the following gifts from our sisters and brothers in Christ at John Knox Presbyterian church: Allen organ, Yamaha 7’ Conservatory Grand Piano, Choir Robes, Choral Music, Music and Choir Robe Storage, 10 Tall Stained-Glass Windows, Worship Banners, and Glory to God Hymnals.”

SEMINARY INTERN

As has been previously announced, our seminary intern Joshua will be traveling to Sierra Leone this summer on a mission trip at his own expense. The Session discussed providing some financial support. The trip will cost \$5,000. Following extensive discussion, it was determined by common consent that since the church members were asked to support this on an individual basis, no church funds would be used. Members are encouraged to support Joshua by picking up one of his envelopes and making a personal contribution as well as through your prayers.

TREASURER'S REPORT (as of 4/30/2018)

\$ 41,092	Balance on Hand 4/30/2018 (less following committed funds)
- 11,000	Building Fund
- 250	Unresolved Brooks Memorial Scholarship Commitment
- 910	Committed Joyful Noise & Mission Funds to PRC
<hr/>	
\$ 28,932	Uncommitted Funds Available

Note:

- Uncommitted funds as of 3/30/2018 were \$31,216.

HOSPITALITY

The next potluck is planned for Sunday, June 10. Due to the logistical difficulties of trying to do this at the Seminary, this is now confirmed for Shadyside Park in Dutton. The Norcha farewell party will be combined with this event. The potluck this time will be a little different from previous ones. There will be cards on the information table prior to the potluck. Choose a card to your liking and bring a dish in that category. Burgers, hot dogs, buns as well as cold beverages, condiments, tableware, and deviled eggs will be provided.

UPCOMING PRESBYTERY OCTOBER MEETING

It's still a bit away, but keep in mind the previously announced October 6 Presbytery biannual meeting in Grand Rapids. We will be looking to recruit a hospitality team to help host this event. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Our church is a very busy place, and admittedly I am not the most effective communicator. If you ever have questions as to whether a certain event is going to take place, please call me (616) 822-9988. There are occasions when weather or illness might cause the cancelation of a previously scheduled event. If you want to check on that particular event, *PLEASE* call me! Thanks, Mike

NEWS FROM THE ASSISTANT PASTOR

As I write this, I am still recovering from being at the annual Medieval Congress, held every year over the second weekend in May at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. It's the largest academic gathering of the medievalists in the United States, and every approach to studying the middle ages is represented. I mostly attend sessions on medieval theology, which is a primary study for me. Once in awhile I have a free slot and can go hear something about Tolkien, since Tolkien studies are well represented at Kalamazoo. I prioritize the sessions about C. S. Lewis and Bonaventure, the two people I study the most, and once I've filled those in I add whatever Aquinas sessions I can get to, since he's very important in my teaching. Some years these topics are all scheduled at the same time, which is very disheartening, but this year they were spread out nicely over all four days.

Now I am in the midst of Calvin's exam week. At each exam, I need to return graded final papers to the exam-takers, papers that were only turned in on the last day of class. That makes for a quick turn-around so I don't get a lot of sleep this week. Our graduation ceremony is Saturday, and once that's finished I'll still have the exams themselves to grade. This year, that means 140 hand-written (and therefore not very legible!) essays to read and grade. Two months ago I talked about my hope that students will be able to articulate a coherent understanding of their faith by the time they write their exam, connecting all their ideas together. Here's a typical question: "Consider whether salvation is a matter of free human choice, or God's election, or some combination of the two. What position currently makes best sense to you and why? Now trace the implications of your choice for the other topics that we have studied this semester." This exercise of walking through the whole semester (which they do twice, since the exam consists of two questions) and thinking about what they have decided they believe and how the things that they believe hold together helps to cement the work of the semester in their memory. By the time they finish the exam, they usually realize that they've learned more than they thought. Even though reading the exams is time-consuming and rather tedious, it can also be wonderful when the student has done well. When a student completely misunderstands something that I thought I explained very clearly, it can be a bit depressing.

I have three trips in quick succession scheduled for late May and early June. First, during the last week in May I'm going to a Colloquium on C. S. Lewis and Friends at Taylor University in Upland, IN. I'm doing the closing devotions for that colloquium, and I'm looking forward to hearing a lot of good scholarship. Then I'm spending June 3-5 in New York at a meeting of Evangelicals & Catholics Together, a group where I represent ECO. C. S. Lewis once said that committed Christians are usually closer in belief to committed Christians from another tradition than they are to the fringe members of their own tradition. So those of us who are orthodox Presbyterians and who take our theology seriously are much closer to orthodox Catholics who take their theology seriously than we are to liberal Presbyterians. I've found that to be very true, and so I enjoy these gatherings. Each meeting we have several members present papers on the topic under consideration, and then after several meetings we draft a statement together on that topic. Here's a statement we put out last fall: <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2017/12/the-christian-way>. I think it's rather beautiful.

The third trip is June 10-13, when I'm going to California to take ECO's Transitional Pastor Training course. I'm not planning on taking a new job as transitional or interim pastor any time soon, but I have thought that I might want to pursue interim ministry once I retire from Calvin, and that might be as soon as five years from now. ECO doesn't offer this course very often and when it's been offered in the past, it's been in the middle of the school year so I thought I'd grab this opportunity. By next month's newsletter, I'll let you know whether this training was worthwhile. In any event, it's always a joy to be with other ECO pastors.

FOND FAREWELL

The last few months we have been part of the Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church (GSPC). We are so blessed in numerous ways being with the GSPC family. We felt at home and experienced freedom of worship in holiness and the fear of the Lord.

However, my family and I are moving to Kansas City, MO, on June 25, 2018, to continue my study toward a PhD at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS) in Biblical Studies in Missionology Emphasis beginning from Fall 2018.

The doctoral program will help me acquire more biblical knowledge and gain experience so I can in turn primarily equip others not only in the Presbyterian Church of Ethiopia (PCE) but also in the Evangelical churches of Ethiopia and perhaps in the churches of the global south which are the fastest growing churches in the 21st century. It will also prepare me to minister to the spiritual needs of the Ethiopian diaspora community in the USA and elsewhere. In addition to this, the doctoral program will help me evangelize cross-culturally wherever the Gospel needs to be preached.

We would like to thank all the GSPC members and Pastor Mike Baynai for your prayers, financial support, fellowship and Christian love for us and our children. We also hope that you will continue to uplift us in your prayers as well as your financial and material love gifts. As a family we will also continue to carry our prayers to you all. May the Lord establish and enlarge the GSPC to be a blessing for many.

Finally, brothers and sisters, we would like to remind you the biblical verse Luke 12:32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”

OUR NEW CONTACT INFO:

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Fikre Norcha & the Family

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The 9:00am Study group will be shifting gears as we begin a 21-week series entitled “Let Me Tell You What I Believe About God!” There will be an introduction week June 3 where materials will be distributed. There is no cost for the class. We’ll skip June 10 as we will be worshipping in the park but resume on June 17th studying The Word, and on June 24 we’ll study God. Please give this very foundational study consideration. There is always child care available. Speak with either Shauna Gipe or Pastor Mike for more details and questions.

DATES:

- No more 10:00am Friday Chapel services at the Seminary until August
- 3rd (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer Meeting, 9:00am Adult Study
10:00am Worship with Communion
Commissioning Joshua for African Mission Trip
Henry Gachini, Liturgist for the month
LISTEN Team meeting after worship
- 5th (Tues.) Home Group; Mike Baynai 4:00pm
- 6th (Wed.) Softball – 8:30pm
- 10th (Sun.) 10:00am Outdoor worship & pot-luck lunch: Shady Side park in Dutton
LOVE Team meeting after worship
- 12th (Tues.) Home Group; Mike Baynai 4:00pm
- 13th (Wed.) Softball – time to be announced
- 14th (Thurs.) Home Group; Dana Bilyea 1:00 pm
Session Meeting
- 16th (Sat.) PRC's Walk for Life
- 17th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer Meeting, 9:00am Adult Study
10:00am Worship - Rev. Matt Wright preaching
LEARN Team meeting after worship
- 19th (Tues.) Home Group; Mike Baynai 4:00pm
- 20th (Wed.) Softball – time to be announced
- 24th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer Meeting, 9:00am Adult Study
10:00am Worship – Norcha's Good Bye
LIVE Team meeting after worship
- 26th (Tues.) NO PRAYER MEETING AT BAYNAIS\
- 27th (Wed.) Softball – time to be announced
- 28th (Thurs.) Home Group; Dana Bilyea 1:00 pm

LEARNING

As of Memorial Day weekend we will not have a teacher until August when Jared returns. So if anyone would like to volunteer to fill in and help teach, it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Shauna so she can make a schedule. Children's ministry will be going to a splash pad on June 30th for some summer fun and a Picnic. More details to follow as the date approaches.

SOFTBALL

The first two softball games were rainouts. There is still room on the team for anyone who might be interested.

FAREWELL TO JARED

Jared, too, graduated from Calvin. This summer he has the awesome opportunity to volunteer as an intern in Lupeni, Romania. He will be working at [Fara Limite Sala de Catarare](#) which is a rock wall climbing gym where youth can climb all year long and experience healthy recreation. Fara Limite's mission is "Empower Romanian youth to overcome social barriers and lead social change." They strive to give youth the opportunities to learn new skills, set goals, and spend time with positive role models and leaders.

If you would like to learn more about the specifics of what he will be doing or have any questions, Jared will be happy to talk with you. If you would like to learn more about the Fara Limite gym, you can visit this site: <http://www.faralimitesdc.com>. He will be travelling through the RCA Cultivate program and will be in Romania for about two months. In addition, he will also be travelling to South Korea to visit his family and watch his brother graduate from high school. He will be back in Grand Rapids in August.

If you are interested in helping him raise money for his trip, you can do so through this fundraising link (<https://www.rca.org/give/jared-swanson-cultivate-volunteer>) or by speaking to him directly. There is no obligation, but Jared has done a wonderful job with the children. He appreciates your prayers, support, and encouragement.

MUSIC NOTES

Corey will be missed as he has left for the employment world, but God does provide and has blessed us again with musical talent to replace him. We welcome Marjorie Boerema and Rachel Gohn to our family of musicians.

Rachel is from Allendale, MI, and a Performance in Music major at Cornerstone University. She runs cross Country and Track and Field for Cornerstone. She likes to cook, write songs, and learn new things. In June she will be going on a mission trip to the Canary Islands through Athletes in Action.

Marjorie states she has come to Good Shepherd through a circuitous route. Born and raised in suburban Chicago, she and her husband Al met at Trinity Christian College and spent 27 years in British Columbia. They became Canadian citizens before returning to the States 15 years ago. Al teaches in the education department at Calvin. They have three married daughters and eight grandchildren. Marjorie has worked as a musician since she was in college, and through the years she has taught voice and piano, sung in amateur and professional choirs, founded and conducted community choirs, played the organ and conducted church choirs, and taught music in elementary schools. Currently she works part time in the office at Madison Square Church. She's a knitter and gardener, among other hobbies and interests. She states, "I haven't worked as a musician in many years, (other than regular Wednesday evening hymn and Psalm singing with a small group) and welcome the opportunity to serve this congregation in worship. We look forward to getting to know you as brothers and sisters in Christ."