



The Shepherd's Voice

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A MINUTE WITH MIKE

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28 (NASB)

Dearest Members and Friends of GSPC,

New Year's greetings to you and yours!

Praying that the "old" was kindly and precious to recall, and that all things "new" will be powerfully received from the hand of God!

A great prayer or statement of faith to that end is Romans 8:28! God knows all and exactly what He is doing. I work on that myself hoping to trust Him more and more to be in charge of every aspect of my life. Oswald Chambers says in his devotional My Utmost for His Highest, "The idea is not that we do work for God, but that we are so loyal to Him that He can do His work through us. It's as if God were to say, 'I reckon on you for extreme service with no complaining on your part and no explanation on Mine'. God wants to use us as He used His very own Son."

Shall we encourage each other as we walk into a new year to trust God more completely? To depend on Him with a new sense of urgency? To rest in His sovereignty with a greater dependency?

We claim He is God! Shall we live into the new year with a revived sense of love, devotion and adoration? I think so.

To the praise of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Forever and ever. Amen.

Bless you in the coming year and always!

In His glorious and love and joy!

Mike

SESSION NEWS

Clerk's Report –

Next Communion will be held on Sunday, January 6, 2019

Correspondence –

- A letter of appreciation was received from the Seminary for the additional \$1,000 funding for the ECO scholarship fund.
- A letter of thanks was sent to Wendy Cowan for her and her sister Heather's \$250 donation to our Angel Tree project.

Membership

Active Membership as of 11/14/2018	52
No change this period	
Active Membership as of 12/12/2018	52

Treasurer's Report

\$ 36,482	Balance on Hand as of 11/30/2018 (less following committed funds)
- 147	Nov. Joyful Noise Collection
- 11,000	<u>Building Fund</u>
\$ 25,335	Uncommitted Funds Available

Notes:

- Uncommitted funds available as of 10/31/2018 were \$26,754.

2019 Budget

The Treasurer presented a budget for 2019 with projected income based on the just-completed Stewardship Campaign. Barring the receipt of last-minute pledges, the budget projects a loss of \$8,478. Any additional pledges received between now and the Annual Congregational Meeting will be reflected in a revised budget. After extensive discussion of a number of line items in the budget and the recognition that there are no expenses that can be reduced or eliminated, a **motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer's recommended budget as submitted.**

Pastor – Pastor Mike offered the following for consideration and discussion:

- The annual meeting of the congregation for the purposes of a review of the annual report and voting on several measures, including the budget, will be held on the last Sunday in January (the 27th).
- He is working on scheduling a luncheon with the two chief executives of the Seminary at Houlihans; probably on Jan. 15. He will advise the Session when a final date is confirmed.
- Leadership Training – after some discussion, it was decided to table further leadership training until after the holidays.
- Discussions with Unity Reformed Church have not proceeded to any degree, although he just received a communique from their lead Elder proposing several meeting opportunities. No action taken.

Adult Ed (Shauna Gipe)

The Adult Bible Study Class will resume on Sunday, January 13 with overview of just how the Bible we know and love was put together and when. This one-time class will begin at 9:00am. On January 20 the Adult Bible Study class will begin a 12-part study of the book of Genesis. The study is part of the Knowing the Bible series and was written by Mitchell M. Kim (J.I. Packer; Theological Editor). There is no cost for the book. For more information and to join the class speak with Pastor Mike. Shauna is still looking for a new book or study material for the children. Jim Miller recommended a Sarah Young illustrated Children's Bible be considered.

Stewardship & MAG (Jim Miller) – Jim is still waiting to hear from Church of the Straits about scheduling a MAG meeting. The Stewardship campaign is completed, and we received pledges from 33 households, with 5 anticipated pledges not received. The total pledged is approximately \$3,000 less than last year.

Nominating Team –

- The Session decided that it was time for a change in Nominating Team leadership, and Gary Lehmann volunteered to be Nominating Team Chairperson. Henry will be notified and asked to continue to serve as the Elder-at-large.
- It was noted that we need to fill 2 Elder positions and 1 Deacon position, with consideration given to allowing existing officers to opt for an additional new term.
- The expiration of existing Elder's terms was discussed, and some confusion was noted. Clerk Miller will send everyone a report on the terms as recorded in the church's official register.

Hospitality – Next potluck is tabled until after the holidays.

Next Presbytery Meeting – It was noted that the next ECO meeting will be the national gathering in Colorado Springs in January 2019. No one will be attending from GSPC. The next presbytery meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2019, in Fredericksburg, OH.

Next Session Meeting(s) – The next Stated Session meeting will be on **Wednesday, January 9**, at 7:00 PM at Pastor Mike's home. The next fellowship and prayer meeting at Mike's will be at 7:00 PM on December 18. Elders were urged to attend.

LEARNING TEAM (Children's Ministry)

Children's ministry will be meeting after church at Baker Book House Sunday, Jan. 13 to pick out new curriculum. Anyone who has experience teaching children or picking curriculum would be greatly appreciated. Also, children's ministry will be meeting for sledding Saturday, Feb. 9th at the KROC Center sledding hill.

A New Schedule for Children's Messages and Children's Volunteers is out for 2019. If you would like to help with the Children's Ministry in any capacity, please speak with Shauna Gipe.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Children's Message</u>	<u>Children's Volunteer</u>
1.	Jared Swanson	Carrie Barrett
2.	Sandee Keating	Sandee Keating
3.	Dana Lehmann	Shauna Gipe
4.	Angie Wiley	Angie Wiley
5.	Carrie Barrett	Shauna Gipe

AND FROM FATHER PATRICK

Dear Mike,

I sincerely thank you for your friendship and prayer during my time at Calvin College. My flight back home was safe and pleasant. I met friends and family members healthy. And everyone is in holiday mood now.

All the good wishes from the Good Shepherd family is highly appreciated by me. Extend my fraternal love to one and all. Be sure we are friends and I will keep in touch with you always. Kind regards to your wife too.

Thank you and God bless you richly, Patrick

FROM WYCLIFFE BIBLE TRANSLATORS

- Wycliffe Bible Translators were established in 1942.
- In the world today, there are 7,099 different languages spoken.
- Only 3,312 of those language groups have some portion of the Bible available in their native dialect.
- Only 1,1521 have a complete New Testament available in their native dialect.
- Only 670 of the more than 7,000 language groups have the complete Bible translated in their native tongue.
- Wycliffe is involved in seeking to establish an additional 1,636 translations.
- There are 114,000,000 people in the world without any access to God's Word.

WOMEN AT RISK

Women at Risk International (WAR) will be holding a human-trafficking awareness workshop on Saturday, January 12 from 9:00am until 4:30pm at Grace Bible Church (3715 Wilson Road in Grandville). The event includes lunch and requires a registration (cost is \$35.00). For more information please speak with Pastor Mike who is planning on attending. Also see graphic nearby.

CHURCH CLOSINGS

As we get into the depths of Michigan winter, we must be aware of the possibility of serious snow storms causing us to have to cancel a Sunday service. In these cases, Pastor Mike and Elder Jim Miller will confer and decide whether to cancel a service due to bad weather. Notification of a closing will be made in the following ways: An e-mail will be sent as early as possible, and notifications will be sent to WOOD-TV and WZZM-TV, who will include our closing in the crawl at the bottom of the screen. You may also call Jim or Pastor Mike.

GREETINGS FROM THE COOKS

Hi Mike and all Shepherdians,

“Wow, what a year it's been! Many new happy things going on and a few sad ones too. The biggest sad thing is missing all of you guys in church. I will never be able to find the words to say how much Cindy and I appreciate all of you. You all made our life in Michigan more enriched through fellowship and prayer. Anyway, we are well and hope that all of you are too. Enjoy your Christmas and know our prayers are always with all of you. May God bless you always.”

Joseph Cook – Terrell, Tx

MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The annual meeting of the congregation is scheduled for Sunday, January 27 immediately following worship. The purpose of this meeting is:

- Present the 2019 church budget
- Receive and vote on Pastor's terms of call
- Present various reports, including the Treasurer's financial statement
- Elect at least three members-at-large to the Nominating Team.

Elders are planning for a question and answer period as well.

PRAYER FOR HEALING (From Kathy Walters)

Lord, You invite all who are burdened to
come to you.

Allow Your healing hand to heal me.

Touch my soul with Your compassion for others.

Touch my heart with Your courage and
infinite love of all.

Touch my mind with Your wisdom, that my mouth
may proclaim Your praise.

Teach me to reach out to You in my need.

Help me to lead others to You by my example.

Most loving heart of Jesus, bring me health
in body and spirit,

that I may serve You with all my strength.

Touch gently this life which You have created, now
and forever more. – Amen

JANUARY DATES

1st (Tues.) NEW YEARS DAY
4th (Fri.) Men's Breakfast 9:30am – Bob Evans
6th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 10:00am Worship
Communion / Bhama Cairns special music
LISTEN Team (Home Groups & Prayer) meeting
after worship
9th (Wed.) Session meeting 7:00pm
10th (Thur.) Bilyea's Home Group meeting 1:00pm
12th (Sat.) Women at Risk Training session
13th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 9:00am Adult
Study, 10:00am Worship, Rev. Dr. Laura Smit
Preaching, LOVE Team (Worship) meeting
after worship
15th (Tues.) Baynai's Home Group meeting 7:00pm
20th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 9:00am Adult
Study, 10:00am Worship, LEARN Team (Adult
Ed. & Children's Ministries) mtg. after worship
24th (Thur.) Bilyea's Home Group meeting 1:00pm
27th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer, 9:00am Adult Study,
10:00am Worship, Annual Meeting of The
Congregation after worship

JANUARY EVENTS

Sunday Services

6th - Samaritas (Terraces) 3:30pm
13th - Samaritas (the Lodge) 2:15pm
20th - Vista Springs 2:00pm & 2:45pm
27th - American House 3:00pm

BIRTHDAYS OF MEMBERS & FRIENDS

1 Peter Kenyi, Natlina Kenyi
7 Roger Zoerner
11 Andrew Kenyi
16 Dani Schumacher
17 Anne Vanderberg
31 Marie Zoerner

ANNIVERSARIES

11 Gary and Dana Lehmann

THE FIKRE NORCHA FAMILY ANGEL TREE PROJECT – THE GIFT OF GIVING



Fikre & Alem Norcha and Children – Summer, 2018



Good Shepherd Elves Wrapping Gifts and Loading the Sleigh

In early December Anne Vanderberg had an awesome experience. When thinking of Christmas, she suddenly felt a need to do much more than normal so she determined she would do something outside her family. As she thought about the Norche family who had left our church to move for more advanced study for Fikre, she determined she could do something for them, but once again, she was plagued with the feeling that she could do better than that so she brought all of this to the congregation and proposed that a love box of Christmas gifts be sent by church members. She contacted Fikre and inquired as to what would be appropriate gifts for the different family members. The list was shared with the church, and people either purchased the gifts or donated money for the purchase of those gifts along with some miscellaneous gifts. The congregation is appreciative of Anne's sharing her initial experience and for her leadership in this effort. On December 18 a wrapping party was held at a luncheon after the church service.

Below Anne reflects on the outcome.

Thank you so much! I am also still in awe at how well today went. Our church should be so proud ... we came together, all of us, for a noble purpose. We were happy to see everyone, of course, but to witness His plan coming together before my eyes ... I'm just so thankful for everything. Thankful for those who donated an item or two, for those who contributed wrapping paper, tape, etc., for those who planned the meal, setup an cleanup so our children had lunch, Shauna and Jared for taking the children to the store for a little lesson on how it is better to give than to receive, for Barb Bailey's brownies, Al Schumacher shuttling wrapped presents to the staging area for boxing, all the elves wrapping ... And thank you, Pastor Mike, for having the tables set up and labeled when I got there, for packing all the wrapped presents into shipping boxes! Thank you, Jim, for documenting it all with photos.

There was one moment where I just stood and took in the scene. Listening to the happy chatter of those eating, watching young and old wrap presents together, laughing and enjoying themselves as they worked. It was almost overwhelming. My heart swells now just reminiscing.

Today is a day I will never forget. And I hope we set a memorable example for our children.

Love, Anne

Fikre's response upon hearing from Dana that the packages were on the way was:

Dear Jim & precious Good Shepherd family,

Thank you very much for your love gift.

Yesterday we had been expecting Alem's gift from Amazon [Singer sewing machine] but the whole day there was no sign. However, when we wake up early in the morning for children school we saw the box outside our door. It was just like Santa's surprise gift and we rejoiced. Our Children said, "Oh! Santa has visited us, but, of course, we know that Jesus is our Santa. We know that we have received this gift because of Him. Glory and praise be to His name.

Alem is overwhelmed by joy.

God bless you all and continue to use you for his glory!

Fikre and family.

And upon arrival of the boxes:

Dear Ps. Mike and all,

We wanted to let you know that all the six surprising and mysterious boxes are arrived. Every one is tempted to open but it is promised to open only on Christmas day.

We have no words to thank you guys; you made a huge difference in our life.

Let the Lord reward you in his own way!

Thank you and God bless you!

Fikre & Family

In a separate e-mail Jim Miller also received a thank you note from Fikre thanking him for the printer sent to replace his broken printer.

SEEING THE UNSEEN

Up to 300,000 American children
are at risk of human trafficking.

Would you recognize the signs?

Learn how you can fight human trafficking as a

Civilian First Responder

and help liberate victims of human trafficking
in your neighborhood.

For more information and to register, please visit www.warinternational.org/civilian-first-responder

JAN
12
2019

Grace Bible Church
3715 Wilson Ave
Grandville, MI
9AM - 4:30PM
\$35 per person

Women At Risk™
INTERNATIONAL

www.warinternational.org

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;
Where there is hatred – let me show love,
where there is injury – pardon,
where there is doubt – faith,
where there is despair – hope,
where there is darkness – light,
where there is sadness – joy.

O Divine Master grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled – as to console,
to be understood – as to understand,
to beloved – as to love.

For it is in giving – that we receive,
it is in pardoning – that we are pardoned,
it is in dying – that we are born to eternal life.

