



The Shepherd's Voice

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A MINUTE WITH MIKE

God blesses those people who refuse evil advice and won't follow sinners or join in sneering at God. Instead, the Law of the LORD makes them happy, and they think about it day and night. They are like trees growing beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves. Those people succeed in everything they do. That isn't true of those who are evil, because they are like straw blown by the wind. Sinners won't have an excuse on the day of judgment, and they won't have a place with the people of God. The LORD protects everyone who follows Him, but the wicked follow a road that leads to ruin.

Psalm 1

Spring time greetings to you and yours!

It seems we've waited a long time for spring to come! So too as the people of God we wait expectantly for the Lord's return. And He will come just as surely as the spring rains and flowers come after the long cold winter.

On March 10th we begin the seven-week season of Lent; that time when God's people take time to reflect and prepare for the remembrance and celebration of the Easter event. It is not only the single most significant event in the church year, it's also the most significant redemptive event in all of human history: That God Himself would come and ransom His people by exchanging places or positions with us. He took on our sin so that we could take on His righteousness. He died so that we can live. He was condemned so that we would be pardoned. What an exchange! What a mighty God we serve!

Dr. Laura and I will be bringing a preaching series for this year's Lenten season from the book of Psalms. The Hebrew word for Psalm (tehillh) is translated - praises! The main focus of the book is about living a life of holiness and happiness under the reign of the Divine King and His Messiah. The book calls us to meditate on the instruction of God so that we can experience the blessed life, a life of abundant holiness.

I would encourage you consider reading a Psalm a day for the seven weeks of Lent, it would make for a great spiritual discipline. And come to church prepared to worship The One who calls us to holiness. He is holy, and we are His people, created in His image. We are truly a holy people! Let's sing His praises then together!

Bless you as we welcome the coming spring time. Bless you as we welcome the Lord into our hearts anew.

In His love and joy,

Mike

SESSION NEWS

Membership

Active Membership as of 1/9/2019	52
No change this period	
Active Membership as of 2/20/2019	52

Consent Agenda

Minutes of the Congregational Meeting of January 27, 2019 were approved. A revised budget reflecting a recent additional pledge was adopted. Wilfred Keating was appointed as the church's Assistant Treasurer. Consent agenda was adopted as presented.

Treasurer's Report

\$ 40,525	Balance on Hand as of 1/31/2019 (less following committed funds)
- 11,000	Building Fund
<u>- 92</u>	Accrued Joyful Noise Offering
\$ 29,433	Uncommitted Funds Available

Treasurer's Notes:

- As noted in the Consent Agenda, a motion was made to confirm Bill Keating as Assistant Treasurer and add him to our signature card at the bank.
- The Treasurer recommended that we change our banking account to an interest-bearing account, and that we transfer \$25,000 to a 9-month CD at 2.55% with 5/3 Bank. **A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve this action and the Treasurer was instructed to act accordingly.**

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

- We recently received an appeal for funds from Wendy McDonald, Lois McDonald's daughter, to assist her in obtaining new Adult Foster Care housing. This appeal was received through Andrea Millard, Wendy's court-appointed guardian. The funds to be advanced would be in the form of a loan, repayable during 2019. Through voice and e-mail communications, the Session voted to approve this transaction.
- Unity Reformed Church – The Session reviewed their proposal to rent their church, as well as additional details concerning the possibility of merging our two churches. After lengthy discussion, it was determined that just renting the church, without a long-term potential for merger, was not interesting to us at this time, and that any action taken now is premature considering the issues they have pending. The Clerk was instructed to draft a letter to Unity outlining our position on these matters and suggesting we revisit the matter late in the spring or early summer.
- Leadership Training & Session Retreat – Mike is suggesting we use a leader for this whom he's contacted, and after discussion it was determined to schedule this after Easter.
- Mike will be away on vacation March 22-25, including Sunday March 24. He's recommending that Peter Vande Brake, the Principal of Potters House School, provide pulpit supply for that date. This proposal was approved by common consent.

Adult Ed & Children's (Shauna Gipe) – The bible study class started up again on January 13. Shauna is still working on the curriculum for the children's classes. Shauna noted that the class time of 9:00 AM didn't allow enough time for class attendees to attend to other duties/activities before worship began at

10:00 AM. Scheduling worship for 10:30 AM was suggested but after due consideration was not deemed practical. No further action was taken at this time.

Nominating Team – The nominating team directed by Gary Lehmann has met, and they are looking for two new Elders and one new Deacon. At this time, Bettye Kay has volunteered to serve another term as Deacon, and Bill Keating has accepted a nomination to serve as an Elder. It was noted that they are still seeking one new Elder.

Calvin Seminary Rental – Jim Miller has received the new rental agreement from Calvin for the period of March 3 through August 25; same rate and conditions as in the past. It was approved by common consent; Jim will sign and return to Calvin.

MARCH DATES

1st (Fri.) Men's Breakfast 9:30am –
Bob Evans

3rd (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 9:00am
Study, 10:00am Worship, Communion /
Bhama Cairns special music; LISTEN
Team (Home Groups & Prayer) meeting
after worship

7th (Thur.) Bilyea's Home Group meeting
1:00pm

8th (Fri.) Seminary Chapel services begin –
10:00am

10th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 9:00am
Adult Study, 10:00am Worship, Rev. Dr.
Laura Smit preaching; LOVE Team
(Worship) meeting after worship

March 10th – Daylight Savings Time begins...

13th (Wed.) Session meeting 7:00pm

15th (Fri.) Seminary Chapel service 10:00am

17th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 9:00am
Adult Study, 10:00am Worship; Heart of
the Church Brunch after worship service in
Student Center

19th (Tues.) Baynai's Home Group meeting
7:00pm

21st (Thur.) Bilyea's Home Group meeting 1:00pm

24th (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer, 9:00am Adult Study,
10:00am Worship Third Sunday of Lent – Rev. Dr.
Peter Vande Brake preaching, Henry Gachini
Liturgist, LIVE Team (Mission & Media) meeting
after worship, Maureen Sweet play the organ

31st (Sun.) 8:00am Prayer meeting, 9:00am Adult
Study, 10:00am Worship, Fourth Sunday of Lent
Carrie Barrett – Liturgist, Board of Deacons
meeting after worship

MARCH EVENTS – Sunday Services

Sunday Services

3rd - Samaritas (Terraces) 3:30pm
10th - Samaritas (the Lodge) 2:15pm
17th - Vista Springs 2:00pm & 2:45pm

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE FOR MARCH

Children's Message:

3/3 - Jared Swanson
3/10 - Dana Lehmann
3/17 - Sandee Keating
3/24 - Shauna Gipe
3/31 - Angie Wiley

Children's Volunteer:

3/3 - Natilina Kenyi
3/10 - Carrie Barrett
3/17 - Shauna Gipe
3/24 - Rachel Wahome
3/31 - Angie Wiley

Greeters:

3/3 - Roger & Marie Zoerner
3/10 - Bettye Kay & Joyce VanderLaan
3/17 - Al Schumacher & Elaine Miller
3/24 - Bill & Sandee Keating
3/31 - Dana Bilyea & Phyllis Miller

MARCH BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSERIES

1	Rachel Kimbrell
3	Mieraf Hailemariam
8	Shauna Gipe
13	Pat Doorn
20	Mike Baynai
20	Joyce Vander Laan
24	Sandra Keating
27	Don Walstrom
23	Zoerners, Roger & Marie / Anniversary

AN INVITATION FROM LAURA

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is on March 6. We won't be having our own service that day, but there are many churches in the area that will be recognizing this special day. My other church, Calvin Christian Reformed, has an Ash Wednesday evening service at 7 o'clock, which I plan to attend. It's a quiet and meditative service that I always look forward to. You're welcome to join me. Calvin CRC is located at 700 Ethel SE. There's also an entrance to the parking lot off Franklin. Calvin Seminary has a chapel service on Wednesdays at 10 am. I assume that they will recognize the beginning of Lent in some way, but I don't know if they'll be imposing ashes. If you'd like to go to a service in a familiar space, at a familiar time, that would be another great option.

NEWS

Do you have any "Books on Tape?" We have members that are struggling more and more with impaired vision. Should you wish to either share or donate any "Books on Tape", please bring them to church and leave them on the lobby table clearly marked either "PLEASE RETURN TO..." or "FREE TO KEEP".

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The next meeting of the monthly men's breakfast at Bob Evan's (M-6 and Kalamazoo) is at 9:30 am on Friday, March 1. Join them for fellowship, encouragement, and tasty food. Pastor Mike brings a short devotional followed by prayers. Gentlemen, please mark your calendars and plan on coming.

GOD CAN

Pastor Mike has occasionally listed small needs that do not require a lot of time or hard work around the church. The Nominations Team has been working at seeking people to serve as church leaders for the coming year. This is an annual task as people rotate off as Elders and Deacons. Other needs are always present. Thank you to those who have stepped up to help in the area of Children's Ministry. The devotion on "God Can" from the "The Upper Room" focuses on this very topic.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

What is God inviting me to do today,
to which
I will say "I CAN"?

SAY CHEESE

The Session is putting together a pictorial directory for our members and friends. Pastor Mike will be taking pictures for the directory, so please watch for the opportunity to have your picture taken.

READ ACTS 3:1-10

Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9)

When my children were preschoolers, I would ask them to do something like pick up toys in their rooms or make their beds. Sometimes they responded, "I'm too little!" even when they were big enough to perform the task. They were just not ready to accept responsibility for having that ability yet.

As children we might have said, "I'm too little." As adults we tend to say, "I can't." But sometimes when we say we can't do something, we are closing all possibilities without even trying. All too often, we say we *can't*, when in fact we should more honestly be saying that we *won't* – for a variety of reasons.

When Peter told the lame man to stand up and walk, thank goodness the man didn't respond by saying "I can't." He had faith that the power of God had healed him, and he stood up, walking and leaping and praising God! I don't want to limit the

possibilities that God has for me – shutting things down by saying “I can’t” without even trying. With God, all things are possible. (See Matt. 19:26)

Prayer: Dear Lord, open our eyes to the Things that seem impossible to us, but which can happen through you. Amen.

David McCain – Louisiana

FORTY DAYS – FORTY ITEMS

As we approach Ash Wednesday, March 6, and the first day of Lent, Diane Solomon has proposed a

challenge to Good Shepherd: Each day of Lent, remove one item from your closet that you no longer wear or need and put it into a trash bag. At the end of the forty days donate these items to a place that can share them with someone who can really use them. This makes a wonderful mission project that our church can do in addition to the regular Joyful Noise Offering. Pastor Mike has noted that he would be happy to do the transporting to the Missions Store. Spring really is right around the corner and the time when many clean out the closets anyway. So why not put unwanted items to good use?

IN APPRECIATION

Thank you to Dan and Anne Vanderberg, Shauna Gipe, and all who worked so hard for the delicious brunch served following the church service on the 17th. Jim Miller was recognized for all the work he has done not only in the founding of Good Shepherd but in the hard work he has continued to do since then. He’s been the “Jack of All Trades” for the church with his willingness to step up wherever and whenever there is a need. He continues to serve as Clerk of Session and Treasurer. Pastor Mike quipped, “He’s done everything but sing in the choir.” Thank you again, Jim, for your work and dedication to Good Shepherd. And thank you to Phyllis for accepting all the time that it has required to accomplish all of this. *See photos below from the Heart of the Church Brunch.*



Jim thanks his Family of Faith



Mike says Jim can do anything but sing.



Group Hug

