



The Shepherd's Voice

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MINUTE WITH MIKE

But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

2 Thessalians 2:13-17

Fall greetings to you and yours my dear friends,

Praying this newsletter finds you and yours turning to the Lord Jesus, just as surely as the leaves in the trees are turning glorious in splendid colors.

The Elders on Session and I continue to be very concerned not only for each of you and your families but also for our community, country and world. We are often perplexed as to how and what to do in response to all that is happening in our world today. We are convinced that prayer is needed more fervently than ever. Please keep praying. Thanks to all of you who pray down our printed Prayer Page every day. Bless you for your service of intercession.

We are believing that we can safely return to *the traditions* of two events that have been near and dear to us all: prayer meeting and time to fellowship. Beginning on October 4th we will invite all those interested to come a bit early (9:30am) and join me in a time of concentrated prayer before worship in the conference room behind the faculty lounge. And, we once again on that date will begin to have a time of fellowship and refreshments after worship in the main lobby area. We believe these two events will strengthen us as a church family and help us to participate better in the life of the church and to encourage one another. Please plan to make these two events an automatic part of your Sunday routine.

Further, I am calling the church to begin a series of Home Gatherings where one of you would volunteer to open your home to others in our church family at a time and date that is suitable for you as host. Pick the date and time, let me know to put it on my calendar, and then invite some of your brothers and sisters from the church to visit. I will provide a brief time of biblical teaching followed by prayer. I believe that one thing we have learned from the present crisis is that we all need to turn to Jesus more intentionally and more seriously than we have in the past. Please take the initiative to contact me and let me know that you are willing to be a host.

Finally, your Session encourages you as well to continue to reach out to others in our church, especially those you don't see in church on Sunday. Call them, write them, pray for them. And, if at all possible, we want to encourage all of us to remain faithful in upholding all the financial commitments we've made to the church. Your gifts are most appreciated and very useful in meeting our financial commitments.

We believe it is time now to be the church; ***“So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.”*** The events of the past six months have taught us that now is the time. Jesus is Lord, and we are the “glory gainers” (verse 14 above).

“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

Blessings to you in the joy and privilege you’ve afforded me in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Mike

SESSION NEWS

Clerk’s Report –

Next Communion will be observed on Sunday, October 4, 2020; the last communion was observed Sunday, September 6, 2020.

Correspondence – None.

Funerals – Pastor Mike presided at a funeral in Holly, Michigan, for Connie Jones, Donna’s mother, on Friday, September 4, 2020.

Membership

Active Membership as of 8/20/2020	54
Active Membership as of 9/10/2020	54

Worship Services

Attendance	8/23/2020	10 Adults	0 Children (<i>partial virus shutdown</i>)
Attendance	8/30/2020	33 Adults	10 Children (<i>outdoor worship & picnic</i>)
Attendance	9/6/2020	31 Adults	0 Children

Treasurer’s Report –

\$ 28,218	Cash on Hand as of 8/31/2020
+ 25,463	Certificate of Deposit (Fifth/Third)
	(less following committed funds)
0	Accrued Joyful Noise offerings
- 11,000	Building Fund
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\$ 42,681	Uncommitted Funds Available

Notes:

- Uncommitted funds as of the end of July were \$42,279. *Our cash GAIN in August was +\$402.*
- The Treasurer informed the Session that we have been able to negotiate a reduction in the chapel rent from the Seminary, and that for the period of August through December, 2020, our rent will be reduced to 50% of normal including no charge for coffee or the auditorium.

Consent Agenda -

Approve the Clerks and Treasurer’s Report and the minutes of the Stated Session. Meeting of August 20, 2020. **A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

Pastor – Pastor Mike led a general discussion of the status of the church, particularly as it has been affected by the pandemic. The following points and decisions were noted:

- We will tentatively plan to restart coffee fellowship on Sunday, October 4.
- In October we will review the status of attendance and pledges, taking whatever action seems called for at that time.
- After the Christmas holidays, we'll plan on assembling a Task Force for a retreat to discuss long range plans for the church.

Other Business –

- Worship – installation of officers is scheduled for the service on September 12. We will be installing Gary Lehmann as a returning Elder and Joyce Vanderlaan as a returning Deacon.
- Missions – in response to a plea from Henry Gachini to provide help for his Pastor brother Jackson in Kenya, the Session agreed by common consent to provide Jackson with \$50/month through December and a 2-month Joyful Noise offering in 2021. Mike will follow-up with Henry to determine how we'll get the money to Jackson.
- Personnel – it was noted that Mike's annual review is due soon, as well as reviews for other employees.

Next Presbytery Meeting – The fall meeting will be by Zoom conference on October 3, 2020; 9 AM to Noon. Presbytery is inviting any of our church members who wish to participate to sign up and register.

Next Session Meeting – The next Stated Session meeting will be on **Thursday, October 8** at 1:30 PM at the Seminary.

Closing Prayer – Pastor Mike closed the meeting with prayer; adjourned at approximately 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Miller, Clerk of Session

DATES

Thursday (1st) Bilyea's Home Group Meeting at 1:00pm
Friday (2nd) Men's Breakfast – Bob Evans (M6 @ Kalamazoo) 9:30am
Sunday (4th) Worship and Communion at 10:00am; Prayer meeting and Fellowship to resume
Thursday (8th) Session 1:30pm (at CTS)
Sunday (11th) Worship Service at 10:00am
Thursday (15th) Bilyea's Home Group Meeting at 1:00pm
Sunday (18th) Worship at 10:00am
Monday (19th) Newsletter deadline
Sunday (25th) Worship and Dedication of Prayer Shawls at 10:00am
Friday (30th) Ladies Luncheon (Location to be announced) 1:00pm

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

4 Marilyn Potgeter
5 Jim/Betty Rittersdorf (Anniv.)
8 Dan/Anne Vanderberg (Anniv.)
15 Christine Williams
18 Gary Lehmann
19 Jim/Phyllis Miller (Anniv.)
20 Bhama Cairns
31 Betty Rittersdorf
31 Lois Stephens

MEMBERS/FRIENDS IN NEED OF PRAYER

Elaine Miller, Jean Bailey, Barb Bailey, Cathy Jo Walters, Joan Walstrom, Wally Leffel, Fikre and family, and Bob and Bev Schaafsma, Linda VanHeuvelen, Pat Doorn, Lois Stephens

SERVING THIS MONTH

Preaching in October – Pastor Mike
Liturgist in October - Henry
Sound in October - Lehmann & Adams families
Musician in October - 4th - Maureen, 11th - Arlene,
18th & 25th - Maureen
Communion Sunday (4th) - making Communion
Bread - Rachel Wahome
Serving Communion (4th) - Rachel & Henry

WARMING EARS UPDATE 2020

What a difference six months make! Six months ago we found out about Covid and how serious it was. We were in quarantine and asked to social distance. After working for a couple of months on sewing hats – we were forced to shut down in March for an unknown duration of time. After a few months of not getting together, we decided to meet in a public park – social distancing – and see each other. After twenty years together for most of us, we have gotten to be like a family. We talked and caught up on everybody's life. We all felt like we should be doing SOMETHING. Most of the ladies didn't want to get together in somebody's house – but would like to sew hats for missions. A couple of gals said they would get together – but practice social distancing. Some of the ladies are picking up hats to sew at home and returning them to be finished. A couple of times a month three or four of us ladies get together to work on the hats. We really wanted to have 1,000 hats to go to Juarez, Mexico, again this year. We met this goal a month or so ago. We also wanted 1,000 hats to go to In the Image. We are currently working on this goal. Since the Santa Claus Girls are not operating this year, we would like to make more hats to donate to people who might not have enough winter clothes to keep them warm this winter as well as to schools for

the kids who need them. We have now over 1,350 hats made and will work until the polar fleece runs out. After that is unknown. After that the future of Warming Ears is uncertain. At least we will have hats to give out this year.

Thanks for all your donations and prayers during the 20 or so years we have been doing this mission. We all have grown so much and learned so much through it.
Diane Solomon

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Bev Schaafsma
1831 Maple Knoll Dr. SE
Grand Rapids 49548

Thanks for caring thoughts, prayers, and cards. Bev

Wally Leffel is once again at Beacon Hill Assisted Living. Because of his hearing loss it is difficult to contact him by phone. He would enjoy cards, however. Address is 1845 Boston St Room 6, Grand Rapids 49506

A WORD ABOUT REOPENING OUR CHURCH

The Session has discussed at length when and how to carefully reopen all of the activities and programs that we are accustomed to experiencing. We, of course, want to keep all of us safe and healthy. To that end we feel we can once again safely offer a Prayer Meeting before the service (9:30am - in the conference room behind the faculty lounge) and a time of fellowship and refreshments after worship (in the main lobby area). We will prayerfully continue to consider offering the following: Sunday morning 9:00am Bible Study Class and Children's Church.

5 DISCIPLINES

In the September issue "5 Spiritual Disciplines to Lighten Your Load" by Michelle Rabon was introduced, with promise of more to come in future newsletters. The first discipline was PRAYER. The discipline for October is: Memorize Scripture

This is a discipline that goes overlooked too often. It is one that we need to be using daily. The action of memorizing Scripture keeps our minds focused on the power of God's word in our life.

Maybe anxiety or worry is a great struggle in your daily life. Memorizing verses like [Philippians 4:6-7](#) can benefit as a constant reminder to turn our anxious thoughts into thankful thoughts.

Scripture memorization can look like keeping an index card with your verse on it around the house where you see it and read it often. I have seen people write the first letter of each word in the verse on their hand as a reminder of what they are working on memorizing. There are many ways to do it. Pick a verse a week or month to work through.

YOU'RE INVITED ...

The ECO Presbytery's October meeting will be held by Zoom on-line conference instead of a live meeting; of course, due to the COVID 19 virus problem. It will be held on Saturday, October 3, between 9 AM and Noon. The Presbytery has invited all interested members of ECO churches to attend this on-line conference, as they may wish. Your Session and Pastor's recommend that you do this for the insights you can gain into the workings of our governing body. Our church will be represented by Pastor's Mike and Dr. Laura, as well as our appointed voting commissioner, Jim Miller.

If you wish to attend this conference, *you must register before October 1*. The link for registration is:

<https://forms.gle/sMUB7fNZcDCTaciG6>.

Upon registration, you will be provided with the necessary login and password information for joining the on-line conference on Oct. 3.

WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT OUR CHURCH

There are many aspects of our church which I love; in particular, our dedication to the Bible and the Word of God, and our tradition of being a Reformed church, committed to the principles of ECO.

Most of all though, I love our family of faith. I have such fond memories of when we started Good Shepherd, and on the first Sunday of worship at the Kentwood Library we had 56 former JKPC members united in a common cause: worshipping God in a traditional way without blowing in the wind of the latest popular trends.

When I look around the chapel on Sunday morning, I feel surrounded by love; fellow dedicated Christians who all share in the same

beliefs and faith. Dear friends whom I love deeply in return. Truly, a family of faith and love, sharing our love for Jesus.

Your brother in Christ,
Jim Miller

JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

The Joyful Noise Offering for the month of October (as well as the month of September) is designated to benefit the work and ministry of the Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC). The PRC offers not only counseling and ultra-sound screening for women who wish, but also free STD testing and resources for those who are in crisis. Your support is deeply appreciated and pleasing to the Lord Jesus. Thank you for giving generously.

BLESSED IS THE NATION WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD

This is one of my favorite banners. Actually, I have had more positive comments on this banner over the years than all the others. This banner is just a smaller version of the banner that was occasionally hung at John Knox for many years. This banner is usually hung at Veteran's Day and other Memorial Holidays. The red, white, and blue of the banner reminds us of our flag and all the memories associated with it.

I do think that our nation was so blessed because we believed that God is our Lord.
Diane Solomon



FROM DONNA AND MIKE,

Mike and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all of the prayers prayed for my mom during her illness. We thank you too for the love, prayers, cards, and support you shared with and for us throughout that time and even to this day.

In His love, Donna and Mike

ELECTION DAY

Tuesday, November 3 is the national day of election. Aside from a president, we will elect a number of other national, state and local officials. Each position is important and worthy of our heartfelt prayer and respect. You don't need me to tell you how important it is that you exercise your God-given responsibility and vote. But you can't vote unless you are registered. The Family Research Council has provided an extremely friendly way to register. Simply text 76076 and then message "myvoice" ("myvoice" must be one word - no space between the two words...). With that you will receive voter registration information. If you are not registered or if for any reason you have difficulty getting registered, please speak with one of our Elders who can assist you in getting registered to vote. My prayers for you and our nation as we go to the polls this November 3.

Bless you, Mike

