



The Shepherd's Voice

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MINUTE WITH MIKE

Jesus looked at him and loved him.

"One thing you lack," He said;

*"Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor,
and you will have treasure in heaven.*

Then come, follow me."

Mark 10:21

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus,

Post-election greetings to you and yours. As I write this note, the elections have not taken place, so... Regardless though, God is to be feared, loved and worshiped! And as the children's hymn goes, "He's got the whole world in His hands..."

November is also the month in which we as a church family attend to a very important part of our church's business: Stewardship. You know that the idea of Biblical stewardship means that we thoughtfully respond to what and all the Bible teaches regarding stewarding God's gifts to each of us. Certainly, we steward our finances, but there is much more to stewardship than that. The Bible teaches us that we are to steward the heart-gifts God has given to us. That means we are to love and serve as He has equipped us. For some of you that means you call on the Home Members or prepare meals. Others will write cards, while others will help lead worship, provide music, work in the sound booth, or bake the communion bread. We all are to steward the time God has given us as well. That means we are to develop spiritual disciplines of private time of reading and praying. I am here to help you with any and all of that as best I can.

The reason that financial support of the church seems like such an important part of our stewardship emphasis each year is because the Elders of the church seek to prepare and present you with a balanced budget for the coming year of 2021. So, in order to predict and plan for spending, the Elders really need to know from all of us just how much capital they are working with. Please be prayerful about how you steward all that God has entrusted to you.

I will take this opportunity to say thank you for your generous and thoughtful support of the church in years past. And now may He bless and keep you and yours, now and forever!

In His joy and service,

Mike

SESSION NEWS

Clerk's Report

Covid 19 Situation – An extended discussion took place regarding this subject, and the following significant points were noted:

- As a follow on from Elder Miller's remarks to the congregation last Sunday, the Session and Pastor will conduct a brief "town hall" congregational meeting after the worship service on Sunday, October 11 to review the situation and obtain input from the church members.
- The objective will be to work towards 100% compliance with social distancing guidelines and the wearing of protective masks.
- Pastor Mike will reach out to Dr. Laura to ascertain whether she will reconsider her withdrawal from the preaching schedule if we obtain our social distancing/mask objectives.
- For those members who have medical reasons that they cannot wear a mask, the church will offer to provide face shields in lieu of masks.
- We will tentatively consider reviving the fellowship coffee service at the end of November, pending the final approval of D. Bilyea's birthday celebration (see below).

Special Request – The family of Dana Bilyea has made a special request for a birthday celebration in honor of Dana's 90th birthday to coincide with services on Sunday, Nov. 22. Considering that this would likely exceed the 50-person limit currently placed on us by the Seminary, Pastor Mike will communicate with the Seminary to obtain special permission for this event. Assuming that permission is granted, the Session approved this celebration by common consent.

Pastor –

- Mike reported that Norm Sharp's ashes were spread at a location selected by his friend Norm Denoyer on September 24.
- Session leadership training still on hold until after the holidays.

Other Business –

- Worship – Donna will consider reviving the PowerPoint program after they've moved.
- Missions – Mission committee will meet in the month to plan the Joyful Noise Offering schedule for 2021.

Stewardship – Schedule for the Stewardship Drive is as follows:

- Nov. 8 – begin with announcement and sermon orientation.
- Nov. 10 – Stewardship letter to the congregation.
- Nov. 15 & 22 – Follow-up announcements (Minute for Missions).
- Nov. 29 – Consecration Sunday.

Treasurer's Report –

\$ 28,502	Cash on Hand as of 9/30/2020
+ 25,485	Certificate of Deposit (Northpointe Bank) (less following committed funds)
- 22	Accrued Joyful Noise offerings
<u>- 11,000</u>	Building Fund
\$ 42,965	Uncommitted Funds Available

Notes: Uncommitted funds as of the end of August were \$42,681. *Our cash GAIN in September was + \$284.*

Consent Agenda – Approve the Clerks and Treasurer’s Report and the minutes of the Stated Session Meeting of September 10, 2020. **A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

DATES

Sunday (1st) Worship and Communion at 10:00am
Tuesday (3rd) Election Day! BE SURE TO VOTE!!
Friday (6th) Men’s Breakfast – Bob Evans (M6 @ Kalamazoo) 9:30am
Sunday (8th) Worship at 10:00am and Stewardship emphasis begins
Thursday (12th) Session 1:00pm (at CTS)
Thursday (12th) Bilyea’s Home group meeting at 1:00pm
Sunday (15th) Worship at 10:00am – Rev. Dr. Laura Smit preaching
Monday (16th) Newsletter deadline
Sunday (22nd) Worship at 10:00am – Rev. David Meengs preaching; Dana Bilyea’s 90th birthday celebration!
Thursday (26th) Thanksgiving Day
Sunday (29th) Worship at 10:00am – Rev. Dr. Laura Smit preaching; Consecration Sunday; Board of Deacons meeting after church

EVENTS

Stewardship Sunday: November 8th
Stewardship Minute for Mission messages: Sunday 15th & 22nd
Consecration Sunday: November 29th

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

8	Joan Walstrom
10	Tim Lehmann
14	Robert Adams
12	Tanner Gipe
22	Dana Bilyea
30	Rachel Wahome

SERVING THIS MONTH

Musicians: 1st & 8th: Arlene Koenes, 15th, 22nd & 29th: Maureen Sweet

Preaching: 1st & 8th: Pastor Mike, 15th & 29th: Dr. Laura, 22nd Rev. David Meengs
Liturgist: 1st & 8th: Henry Gachini, 15th & 22nd: Jim Miller, 29th: Pastor Mike
Sound: Lehmanns 1st, 15th, 22nd, and 29th and Adams 8th
Communion Bread: Rachel Wahome
Servicing: Henry Gachini and Rachel Wahome
Special Music: 1st, 15th & 29th: Adams family, 8th: Dana Lehmann, 15th: Special guest

MEMBERS/FRIENDS IN NEED OF PRAYER

In need of healing: Bettye Kay (heart and 2 daughters dealing with cancer), Linda Van Heuvelen, Jean Bailey (cancer), Elaine Miller, Leroy (brother of Richard Soward); homebound members Joan Walstrom, Pat Doorn, Cathy Jo Walters, Wally Leffel, and Bob/Bev Schaafsma going through difficult changes

SPECIAL CELEBRATION

Dana Bilyea is turning **90!** Please join us to celebrate on November 22nd! Join us before church (9-9:50a) in the Fellowship space for breakfast treats & coffee ***OR*** after the service (11:10 - 12:30p) for birthday cake! We are hoping Dana’s family and close friends will also attend and join us for the service.

Plans are dependent on the Covid restrictions at the time. Please wear a mask and social distance as requested. If only 50 are allowed for the service, additional seating will be provided for Dana’s family in the auditorium, where they can listen/watch/sing in the service. (If you prefer a smaller gathering with Dana at a separate time, just let her know!)

CHAPEL SERVICES AT RAYBROOK

Pastor Mike has been asked to lead chapel services at Raybrook, something he has hoped to do for some time now. He is scheduled to lead two services; Sunday the 1st and Sunday 8th. These services are not face to face, but recorded live and sent out on the Raybrook closed television system. Your prayers for those two events would be much appreciated.

WELCOME DAVID MEENGs

David Meengs will be filling the pulpit on November 22nd while Pastor Mike is away. He was selected as Pastor Mike's replacement that day because he is a neighbor of Gary and Dana Lehmann. He was born and raised in Byron Center, Michigan. He has been married to the editor, Mary, for 50 years. They have four children: Jeff, Julie, Jennifer and Becky. They have 11 grandchildren. He was a shipping supervisor at the world's largest office furniture manufacturer for 30 years. He and his wife were missionaries to India for 20 years. He has taught Biblical counseling in Africa, the Philippines, Myanmar, Canada and Mexico. In these places he basically taught "Ministry workers" Biblical counseling, especially dealing with addictions. He has been a chaplain in the prison system the last five years and has written seven books on Biblical counseling/discipleship. About two million of these books have now been given away all over the world. He now has books in ten languages.

Six books by David Meengs are given away:

1. Bind Them Upon Your Heart Forever – a yearly devotional book
2. Guard Your Heart – a yearly devotional book
3. Bible Characters, the Great and the Not So Great – a yearly devotional

4. Climbing Out of Depression
5. Excelling in Relationships – a Bible study book on relationships
6. A Psalms Devotional - 250 devotions on the Psalms

ADVENT IS APPROACHING

You are invited to join Pastor Mike and others for this year's Advent Devotions. This study will be done individually at home, and we will all be issued our own book, God Is In the Manger, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The book is \$7.00 if you order it through Pastor Mike. The first Sunday in Advent is November 29.

JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

The Joyful Noise Offering for the month of November and December is designated to benefit the work and ministry of the Forgotten Man Ministry (FMM). FMM is a Christian outreach ministry that provides spiritual counseling and direction for those incarcerated in county jails around the state of Michigan. The Kent County Jail team is especially diligent in love and sharing the good news of Jesus to those who are in very desperate places. Please pray for FMM and support them through the Joyful Noise Offerings. Thank you!

NOVEMBER 3 IS UPON US! IT HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT THAT EVERYONE GETS OUT AND VOTES!!!

MEET REV. JACKSON GACHINI

Rev Jackson Gachini with his wife Mary is a Pastor of Bible Believers Church in Thika Kenya. Jackson went to Raymond Swales Bible College, Thika in 1975-1980. and was licensed as a Pastor of a local church in 1980. He was ordained in year 2001.

Rev Jackson Gachini is the younger brother of our member and Elder, Henry Gachini. His church provides the community with Pastoral care, family prayer meetings and sharing the little they have for the welfare of the family of believers.

The church is a family. They love to pray together and to support each other at the point of their need at this critical moment. Rev. Jackson is a dedicated man of God and a man of strong faith. He loves to pray and preach the word and to visit his members and to pray together. Jack and his wife Mary have no children of their own but have adopted a few needy kids that they care for. It has been difficult for Rev Jackson to serve but for him God has called him to serve knowing that all good things come.



Rev. Jackson Gachini, with his wife, and some of his congregation.

A NOTE FROM HENRY – On behalf of my brother, Pastor Jackson Gachini, please accept my sincere thanks to Pastor Mike and the GSPC Session for offering to support Mission work in Kenya through Pastor Jackson Gachini. It has been extremely hard for him and his congregation to maintain church activities as well as pay the pastor even a few dollars a month. Covid-19 has made everything a big mess.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CELEBRITIES

As many of you are aware, our youngest child, Faywen, has a love for the theatre. Theatrical people tend to be outgoing and unafraid to try new things. They are keenly aware of their environment, in tune with the feelings of others, and are often precocious.

During the month of September, Faywen's 7th grade English class read a book entitled *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park. The story involves two older children who live in an impoverished country in Africa. The stories in the book are based on real life events, which include themes of survival from wild animal attacks and a lack of water and food. Faywen immediately made a connection between GSPC member Henry Gachini and these themes within the book. As many of you know, Henry is a warm friendly person who often captivates us all with his stories of growing up in Kenya. Faywen asked Mr. Henry if he would be willing to answer a few questions about his childhood in Kenya. Of course, he emphatically answered "Yes!"

Faywen's English teacher, Mrs. Zuiderveen, was delighted with the idea. She stated that she was pleased Faywen had made a connection to the book, took the initiative to interview a family friend, and was willing to share it with her classmates.

After church on Sunday, September 27th, Faywen and Mr. Henry sat down and engaged in a charming and informative interview. On Tuesday, September 29th the video was watched and discussed by over 400+ 7th grade students at Grandville Middle School! It seems that not only Mrs. Zuiderveen's 4 sections of English classes had read the book, but the entire 7th grade English Department had also. Faywen and Mr. Henry's interview was the talk of the school for several days. Faywen still continues to get questions or positive comments from a variety of 7th grade students. The video was also posted on the 7th grade English Class Google homepage so that students could watch it again if they wished.

Video link: <https://youtu.be/dwdBag4Z02k>

May God use this experience and video to touch the heart of those school children and to educate them.

Cammi Adams

Ps. Here's a photo we cropped from the video.



CRABBY OLD WOMAN

(Submitted by Dana Bilyea)

When an old lady died in the geriatric ward of a small hospital near Dundee, Scotland, it was believed that she had nothing left of any value.

Later, when the nurses were going through her meager possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital.

One nurse took her copy to Ireland. The old lady's sole bequest to posterity has since appeared in the Christmas edition of the News Magazine of the North Ireland Assn. for Mental Health. A slide presentation has also been made based on her simple but eloquent poem.

And this little old Scottish lady, with nothing left to give the world, is now the author of this "anonymous" poem winging across the internet:

Crabby Old Woman

*What do you see, nurses?
What do you see?
What are you thinking,
When you're looking at me?*

*A crabby old woman,
Not very wise,*

*Uncertain of habit,
With faraway eyes.*

*Who dribbles her food,
And makes no reply,
When you say in a loud voice,
"I do wish you'd try!"*

*Who seems not to notice,
The things that you do,
And forever is losing,
A stocking or shoe.*

*Who, resisting or not,
Lets you do as you will,
With bathing and feeding,
The long day to fill?*

*Is that what you're thinking?
Is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, nurse,
You're not looking at me.*

*I'll tell you who I am,
As I sit here so still,
As I do at your bidding,
As I eat at your will.*

*I'm a small child of ten,
With a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters,
Who love one another.*

*A young girl of sixteen,
With wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon now,
A lover she'll meet.*

*A bride soon at twenty,
My heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows,
That I promised to keep.*

*At twenty-five now,
I have young of my own,
Who need me to guide,
And a secure happy home.*

*A woman of thirty,
My young now grow fast,
Bound to each other,
With ties that should last.*

*At forty, my young sons,
Have grown and are gone,
But my man's beside me,
To see I don't mourn.*

*At fifty once more,
Babies play around my knee,
Again we know children,
My loved one and me.*

*Dark days are upon me,
My husband is dead,
I look at the future,
I shudder with dread.*

*For my young are all rearing,
Young of their own,
And I think of the years,
And the love that I've known.*

*I'm now an old woman,
And nature is cruel
'Tis jest to make old age,
Look like a fool.*

*The body it crumbles,
Grace and vigor depart,
There is now a stone,
Where I once had a heart.*

*But inside this old carcass,
A young girl still dwells,
And now and again,
My battered heart swells.*

*I remember the joys,
I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living,
Life over again.*

*I think of the years,
All too few, gone too fast,
And accept the stark fact,
That nothing can last.*

*So open your eyes, people,
Open and see,
Not a crabby old woman;
Look closer – see ME!!*

Remember this poem when you next meet an old person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within. We will all, one day, be there, too!

