



The Shepherd's Voice

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MINUTE WITH MIKE

And so [Gamaliel told the Jewish council] “in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men (Peter, John and all the followers of Jesus), leave them alone, for if the source of their plan or movement is of men, it will be overthrown; But if their source is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them... Acts 5:38-39

Dearest sisters and brothers in the Lord Jesus,

Long summer day greetings to you and yours! Donna, Jordan and I continue to enjoy this summertime, thankful while mindful about what lies just around the calendar's corner.

I pray every morning at 7:00am with a group of about 30 pastors from all over the country, and even one from Europe. One of them recently prayed that God would “do whatever it takes” to build His kingdom. I liked that – whatever it takes!

As we have been looking at and thinking about theology, one of the great truths that lifts our hearts and gives us peace, comfort and joy is that God, will in fact – do whatever it takes!

Peter and John were on trial for performing mighty works in the name of Jesus. They were brought before the Jewish court, the same court that condemned Jesus just months earlier. The court was about to order the death of these two godly men when one of their members, a certain Gamaliel, spoke up. His words are timeless, if it's of God it will prevail.

God has, is and will continue to do whatever it takes to build His kingdom and accomplish His will. And, He is using each of us individually and all of us collectively as a family of faith. I encourage you to take that to heart – that God's plans cannot fail for the world, for our country, our state, community, even our families and each of us as individuals. God is doing whatever it takes! How about you, are you living a life of whatever it takes to bless God and live your life for Him? Do you thank and praise Him that you are caught up in His great plans, plans that cannot fail? What hope we have in life! What promise we hold for the future!

Bless you as you do whatever it takes to bless and glorify Him in every part of your life! Now and forever. In the love and joy I have in each of you,

Mike

SESSION NEWS

The 70th Stated Meeting of the Session of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church was called to order Thursday, July 8, 2021, at 3:00 PM at the Baynai residence, by Pastor Mike Baynai, Moderator.

Devotions and Prayer – Elder Betty Rittersdorf provided devotions and the opening prayer.

Roll & Determination of a Quorum: Present: Moderator Pastor Mike Baynai; Ruling Elders, Bill Keating, Betty Rittersdorf, and Robert Adams; and Asst. Clerk Jim Miller. Absent: Ruling Elder Gary Lehmann, Asst. Pastor Dr. Laura Smit. *A quorum was present.*

Next Communion will be observed on Sunday, August 1, 2021; the last communion was observed Sunday, July 4, 2021.

Correspondence – None.

Membership – No changes.

Worship Services

Attendance	6/13/2021	29 Adults	0 Children (Library)
Attendance	6/20/2021	33 Adults	0 Children (Library)
Attendance	6/27/2021	24 Adults	0 Children (Library)
Attendance	7/4/2021	26 Adults	0 Children (Clubhouse)

Treasurer's Report –

+\$16,845	Cash on Hand as of 6/30/2021
+\$25,681.32	CD#1 (Northpoint Bank)
+\$15,003.18	CD#2 (Northpoint Bank)
	(LESS FOLLOWING COMMITTED FUNDS)
-\$0	Accrued Joyful Noise offerings
-\$11,000	Building Fund
\$46,404.20	Uncommitted Funds Available

Notes: Uncommitted funds as of end of May were \$45,954. Our Gain in June was \$515.20. Robert Adams was added to the bank account.

Assistant Pastor – Pastor Mike reported that Dr. Laura Smit will be away a great deal in the upcoming 12 months on a sabbatical. She and Mike have scheduled a few dates when she will be able to preach.

Pastor – Following items, events and dates were presented by Mike and discussed:

- A Presbytery-wide virtual prayer opportunity is happening in the next few days.
- The deacons will create a call list for members that don't get email communication to ensure they are kept up to date.
- The deacons met to ensure that one deacon is assigned to each member/family.
- Mike read a letter from 11/7/2015 as a reminder to pray, repent, and seek God's will.
- Mike reported that Joyce Vander Laan is interested in starting a home prayer group.

Mission, Website, & Newsletter

- The website will be updated with elder pictures and bios.
- Fikre will be in Mackinac City for the Presbytery meeting in October.

Brooks Memorial Scholarship Fund – Jim Miller will request \$3,000 from Edward Jones to distribute to the scholarship awardees.

Fellowship

- The Session discussed the challenge of holding coffee/fellowship hour during the summer, particularly at venues that require putting away chairs and extensive cleanup. Motivated members start the cleanup process immediately after service, leaving little time for coffee and fellowship. The Session noted this was a temporary problem and did not find any solution for the few weeks left in the summer.
- Visitor bags were discussed. Betty brought a sample of a small bag of candy and odds-and-ends tied to scripture verses. The church may consider altering the current visitor bags in the future to include something similar. A few church members will be asked to create a short “what do I like about Good Shepherd” statement for inclusion in the bags. Mike will ask Cammi Adams to possibly take member photos to accompany these.

Next Presbytery Meeting – A meeting is scheduled for October at the Church of the Straits in Mackinaw City.

Next Session Meeting – The next Session meeting will be **Thursday, August 12** at 2:00 PM; location to be determined.

Robert Adams, Clerk of Session

DATES – AUGUST

Sunday (1st) Worship and Communion - 10:00am.

As of this printing, we plan on being at the Kentwood Library for the entire month of August. Devotional at Samaritas / The Terraces – Devotions 2:30pm

Thursday (5th) Bilyea’s Home Group Meeting – 1:00pm

Friday (6th) Men’s Breakfast Devotional at Bob Evans – 9:30am

Sunday (8th) Worship – 10:00am

Thursday (12th) Session meeting – 2:00pm

Sunday (15th) Worship – 10:00am

Thursday (19th) Bilyea’s Home Group meeting – 1:00pm

Sunday (22nd) Worship – 10:00am. Devotional at Brookcrest – 2:30pm

Monday (23rd) Newsletter deadline

Friday (27th) Ladies Luncheon at Grand Traverse Pie Company – 1:00pm

Sunday (29th) Worship – 10:00am. Board of Deacons meeting after worship

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES – AUGUST

8	Jean Bailey
12	Bev Schaafsma
15	Toni Kenyi
17	Dan Vanderberg
21	Al/Marjorie Boerema (<i>Anniv.</i>)
24	Marcia Jones
31	Vi Squires

SERVING THIS MONTH

Piano: Maureen Sweet (All month)

Special Music: Pastor Mike (1), Adams Family (8 & 29), “The Danas” (15), Gachini/Wahome (22)

Preaching: Pastor Mike (All month)

MEMBERS/FRIENDS IN NEED OF PRAYER

In need of healing: Jean Bailey, Joyce VanderLaan, Linda Van Heuvelen, and Vi Squires; Home members Joan Walstrom, Pat Doorn, Bob Schaafsma, Cathy Jo Walters, and Barb Bailey

JOYFUL NOISE OFFERING

Our July/August recipient of our Joyful Noise Offering will be Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC), a very well-known and respected ministry operating in downtown Grand Rapids. The mission of the PRC is to provide crises pregnancy counselling and prenatal screening as well as a host of other support services for those who are in need. The PRC is a not-for-profit ministry operating in downtown Grand Rapids (415 Cherry Street SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503). In addition, they have a store and supply outlet on 28th Street in Wyoming. You may learn more about the PRC or contact them at (616) 456-6873. Your Joyful Noise gifts is most appreciated.

LADIES LUNCHEON

You're invited to join some of the ladies of the church each last Friday of the month at 1:00pm, meeting at the Grand Traverse Pie Company on 28th Street near the Belt Line. It's a great time of prayer and fellowship as the "sisters meet with Pastor Mike. (Everyone is "Dutch.") For more information contact Pastor Mike at (616) 822-9988.

HOST A HOME GROUP

For more than four years now we have been blessed as a result of Dana Bilyea opening her home to a church group for fellowship and prayer. It's

called the Bilyea Home Group, and the group meets every other Thursday at 1:00pm. If you would like to host a Home Group of your own, I would be thrilled to join you and offer my assistance in building your group and developing a format. The church could use another Home Group, and God, of course, gets all the glory. Please consider opening your home up for this kind of ministry.

PRAYER POINT

In his masterpiece "My Utmost for His Highest", Oswald Chambers writes (July 12): "The church ceases to be a spiritual society when it is on the look-out for the development of its own organization. We are not here to develop a spiritual life of our own, or to enjoy spiritual retirement; Rather, we are here so to realize Jesus Christ, that the Body of Christ may be built up. Am I building up the Body of Christ, or am I looking for my own personal development only? The essential thing is my personal relationship to Jesus Christ; That I may know Him. To fulfil God's design means entire abandonment to Him. Whenever I want things for myself, the relationship is distorted. It will be a big humiliation to realize that I have not been concerned about realizing Jesus Christ, but only about realizing what He has done for me. "My goal is God Himself, not joy nor peace, nor even blessing, but Himself – my God!" Am I measuring my life by this standard or by anything less?

"Prayer: Father, help us understand and embrace the fact that we are here to do Your will, Your work. We are here to build Your kingdom. So when I become self-absorbed, or my church becomes self-centered, please awaken us to that fact, and renew our hearts in the power of the Holy Spirit. Call us always back to You, Lord Jesus, call us back. Amen"

STATE OF THEOLOGY

The 2020 State of American Theology Study is the fourth in a series of surveys of American adults examining their theological beliefs. Previous surveys were conducted in 2018, 2016 and 2014. Some comparisons are made in this report to questions repeated across multiple years. Other questions have been asked for the first time.

Ligonier Ministries sponsored the 2020 State of American Theology Study conducted by LifeWay Research to measure the current theological awareness of adult Americans and to expand upon earlier findings. Ligonier ministries identified specific doctrines and heresies to test. LifeWay Research helped refine these questions and subsequently surveyed 3,002 Americans.

Questions focused on six key doctrinal areas and included a number of specific areas where Americans differ from historic and orthodox views.

- Beliefs about God
- Beliefs about Goodness and Sin
- Beliefs about Salvation and Religious Texts
- Beliefs about Reward and Punishment
- Belief about the Church
- Beliefs about Authority

In the upcoming editions of The Shepherd's Voice, we will examine these six areas and their findings.

Statement # 17: God will always reward true faith with material blessings in this life.

17% Strongly Agree, 19% Agree, 13% Not sure, 19% Disagree

32% Strongly Disagree (correct answer)

Although God promises material blessings to His people, He says that believers will also suffer persecution (Mark 10:29-30). There is not a one-to-one correlation between true faith and material abundance. Some Christian believers will experience great lack and mistreatment for their faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 4:7-12, Hebrews 11:32-38).

We keep in mind our Lord and Master, who Himself was eternally faithful, suffered even unto death. Of the eleven original disciples, history records that ten of them were martyred for their faith. A sobering and tragic report concerning the suffering experienced by the Apostle Paul can be found in 2 Corinthians 11:22-29; while Paul himself was one of the most faithful persons ever to have lived.

When God promises blessings to and for His faithful, we can be sure that those blessings primarily have to do with eternal reward and bliss. Jesus Himself said, "Do not store up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19-21). We the faithful are in the world, not of the world, (John 15:19, John 17:14-16, 1 John 2:15) and we thank God for that, for our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

So, to say that God will always reward true faith with material blessings in this life would be to completely misunderstand what He clearly stated; "In this world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world!" (John 16:33).

Verses for consideration:

Deuteronomy 28:1

Jeremiah 17:7-8

Psalm 31:19

Psalm 34:8

Matthew 5:6

THE STORY BEHIND “I’M COUNTING MY BLESSINGS”

In April of this year, Pastor Mike had to be away from the pulpit unexpectedly. Our good friend and neighbor Dave Meengs was asked to fill the pulpit. On the day before, Dave asked if Mom and I could sing an old hymn titled “Count Your Blessings” because it went well with the message he planned to give.

So I called Robert and Cammi, as I knew they were already scheduled to perform the hymn Cammi had written. When I explained Dave’s request, they graciously suggested that they give their hymn in the Call to Worship so Mom and I could sing after Dave’s message. I was, and still am, so grateful for their attitudes of solving things instead of focusing on potentially hurt feelings. God is glorified when we work together, and I believe my exchange with the Adams, and the resulting service was brimming with evidence of this truth.

But God’s Glory does not stop there as less than an hour after my phone call with the Adams, Cammi emailed with the following:

“The poetical muse strikes a poet least when he or she expects it! Soon after our talk, I had this little verse pop into my head, and I had to write it down. It took me about 15 minutes or so to write and edit the poem.”

I read Cammi’s poem and immediately found myself singing it because a melody had “popped” into my head. Without hesitation, I sang Cammi’s poem a second time - into the voice recorder on my phone. Then I plugged the phone into my computer and attached the recording to a reply:

“Wonderful! I love it!

As you know, the music muse strikes in the same way, so I had to sing it, of course!

Then I thought a refrain would be good, so here is what came:

Blessings! Blessings! Look what I found!

Blessings! Blessings! All around!

Blessings! Blessings! From our King!

Blessings! Blessings! Of these I sing!

So the recording is very raw, but you will get the idea...

And I am sure there are many other ways to put it to music as well! It is just what seemed to come naturally.”

Now, every single one of us struggles with technology - sometimes often, and sometimes less. I am not unfamiliar with technology, but I want you to understand that I had never emailed a recording before. *I had not even thought about it!* **God gives us what we need, to do what He wants us to do, when He wants us to do it.**

Cammi continued to apply her talents to the song God had gifted; resulting in the song “I’m Counting my Blessings”, that our two mother-daughter duos sang on Mother’s Day this year.

Submitted by Dana Lehmann

(See next page for sheet music.)

DO RIGHT AND REST (DO WRONG AND WRESTLE)

(Submitted by Gary Lehmann)

Do right or wrestle
What does it mean?
Staying with God
Or making a scene?

How many times
Do we come to decisions
That make us decide
To rest or to wrestle?

Think about rest
Means be calm and peaceful.
What gives us the angst
Is to be wrong and deceitful.

Live without faith
And become someone frightful.
Live with grace
And hold on to potential.

Either has rocks
Just how do you climb them?
With rest is always better
With Him as my guide.

My soul seeks peace
So rest it shall seek.
No wrestle will I find
With Him on my mind.

A BLUE LAKE FINE ARTS CAMP PHOTO GALLERY



Seamus was playing 5th chair cello during the concert.



The Adams kids at Blue Lake.



Liam at the Toscanini Practice Pavilion.

