



# The Shepherd's Voice

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## MINUTE WITH MIKE

*And may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow in love for one another,  
and for all people, just as we also do for you;  
So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father  
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.  
1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 (NASV)*

Dearest beloved,

Falling leaves greetings to you and yours. I'm praying that your love and devotion to our Lord Jesus is changing more spectacularly as you walk with Him and know His gracious favor.

E.M. Bounds writes, "What, then, is God's work in this world? Rather what is the end He seeks in His great work? It is nothing short of holiness of heart and life in the children of fallen Adam." Later he writes, "We might as well face the situation first as last. There is no use to shut our eyes to real facts. If the church does not do this sort of work, if the church does not advance its members in holiness of heart and life, then all our show of activities and all our display of church work are a delusion and a snare."

It is my heart's desire that you and I are all together becoming holier. That is, more and more like Jesus; Gentle, yet truthfully courageous. Honest, yet lovingly careful. On mission, yet not so busy as to neglect even the most insignificant soul.

As we are talking about our "own place," I pray that each of us would pray to God that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness, so that we together might be a church family that *increases and overflows in love for one another and for all people*. No show, no gimmicks, no hypocrisy, only authentic love and genuine humility and gratitude.

Bless you, dear ones, in your endeavor to know His complete holiness!

In His love and gratefully your brother and friend,

*Mike*

## SESSION NEWS

The 21st Stated Meeting of the Session of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church was called to order Thursday, September 9, 2021, at 7:00 PM on Zoom, Pastor Mike Baynai, Moderator.

**Devotions and Prayer** – Elder Robert Adams provided devotions and the opening prayer.

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

### Clerk's Report

**Next Communion** will be observed on Sunday, October 10, 2021 (This is not the first Sunday since Mike will be out of town on the 3rd); the last communion was observed Sunday, September 5, 2021.

**Correspondence** – None.

### Membership

Active Membership as of 8/8/2020	49
Active Membership as of 9/8/2021	49
No change	

### Worship Services

Attendance	8/15/2021	26 adults, 0 children (Kentwood Library)
Attendance	8/22/2021	34 adults, 0 children (Library)
Attendance	8/29/2021	35 Adults, 0 Children (Library)
Attendance	9/5/2021	24 Adults, 2 Children (Shadyside Park)

**Social Media** - Posting content on the big three social media platforms is not hard. The key is doing it consistently. Daily posts are a must. Apps exist that can automate/schedule posting, so a person doesn't have to physically post all the time. More importantly, if no one (i.e., current members) likes, shares, re-posts the church's content, then nothing will get shared. Robert will look into gaining access to the church's Facebook page.

**2022 National Gathering** - Will be held Thursday, February 3, 2022, in Dallas, TX. Mike reported that this meeting is just a gathering with no business agenda. Therefore, the church will not be sending a representative.

**Rental Negotiation** - On Sunday, August 29 the Session appointed Jim Miller as an agent for the church authorized to negotiate and sign lease documents.

**ChurchTrac** - Our current subscription to ChurchTrac allows 125 names to be entered. We are currently at 122. Mercy Kamau has been added as a Regular Attender.

### Treasurer's Report for 8/31/2021

+\$15,548.96 Cash on Hand as of 8/31/2021  
+\$25,686.77 CD#1 (Northpoint Bank)

+\$15,009.45 CD#2 (Northpoint Bank)  
(LESS FOLLOWING COMMITTED FUNDS)  
-\$0 Accrued Joyful Noise offerings  
-\$11,000 Building Fund

\$45,245.18 Uncommitted Funds Available

Notes:

- Uncommitted funds as of end of July were \$45,565.21. Our Loss in Aug was \$-320.03.

**Consent Agenda** – Approve the Clerk’s and Treasurer’s Reports, and the minutes of the Stated Session Meeting of August 12, 2021. **A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

### **Pastor**

- Mike reported that he held a Wednesday phone call-in prayer meeting this week.
- Tia Bawi has agreed to guest preach while Mike is away on October 3. Mike will ask Sandy to be the liturgist that day.
- Dave Wallis has asked to meet with the Session. He is pastor of The Church of the Straits in Mackinaw City serving as a representative for/of our Presbytery. The Session discussed the possibility of a Saturday luncheon in October, given the distance Dave has to drive and his need to return home before Sunday to preach.

### **Other Business**

- The Session discussed the landlord’s response to our lease offer for 4464 Brentwood Center. The landlord agreed to provide everything except for a partition wall to separate the worship space from the classroom/storage area. Estimated cost would be \$3880. Jim will ask if the landlord would pay that cost up front, and the church repay it monthly as part of rent. Jim will ask the agent about scheduling a time for others to see the property for themselves. [As of this writing elders will view the property on Sunday, September 12 at 10:00am]. Mike will ask a friend for a recommendation for a real-estate attorney. A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, September 19 to present the congregation with final lease details.

**Next Presbytery Meeting** – An in-person meeting is scheduled for October 1 and 2 at the Church of the Straits in Mackinaw City. Mike and Robert will attend.

**Next Session Meeting** – The next Session meeting will be **Thursday October 14** at 7:00 PM on Zoom.

**Closing Prayer** – Pastor Mike closed the meeting with prayer; adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Adams. Clerk of Session

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## **DATES – OCTOBER**

1<sup>st</sup> Friday: Men’s Breakfast Devotional at (Bob Evans) – 9:30am

1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday - Saturday: Presbytery Meeting in Mackinaw City

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Worship (Kentwood Library at 10:00am) Tha Bawi pulpit guest

- 6<sup>th</sup> Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm  
 7<sup>th</sup> Thursday: Session meeting at 7:00pm (Zoom)  
 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Worship & Communion (Kentwood Library at 10:00am)  
 13<sup>th</sup> Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm  
 14<sup>th</sup> Thursday Bilyea's Home group meeting – 1:00pm – All are welcome  
 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Worship (Kentwood Library at 10:00am) Devotional at Grand Village – 2:00pm  
 20<sup>th</sup> Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm  
 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Worship (Kentwood Library at 10:00am) Stewardship Sunday # 1, Devotional at Brook Crest at 2:30pm  
 28<sup>th</sup> Thursday Bilyea's Home group meeting – 1:00pm – All are welcome  
 29<sup>th</sup> Friday: Ladies Luncheon at Grand Traverse Pie Company at 1:00pm  
 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Worship (Kentwood Library at 10:00am) Stewardship Sunday # 2

## **BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES – OCTOBER**

- |    |                                |
|----|--------------------------------|
| 4  | Betty Kay                      |
| 4  | Marilyn Potgeter               |
| 5  | Jim/Betty Rittersdorf (Anniv.) |
| 8  | Dan/Anne Vanderberg (Anniv.)   |
| 9  | Marv DeYoung                   |
| 18 | Gary Lehmann                   |
| 19 | Jim/ Phyllis Miller (Anniv.)   |
| 31 | Betty Rittersdorf              |

## **SERVING THIS MONTH**

- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Tha Bawi – Preaching, Jim Miller – Liturgist, Marjorie Boerema – Musician, Mercy Kamau – Special Music, Sandee Keating – Fellowship  
 10<sup>th</sup>: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Marjorie Boerema – Musician, Adams Family – Special Music, Rachel Wahome – Communion Bread  
 17<sup>th</sup>: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Maureen Sweet – Musician, Dana & Dana – Special Music  
 24<sup>th</sup>: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Maureen Sweet – Musician, Rachel & Henry – Special Music  
 30<sup>th</sup>: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Marjorie Boerema – Musician, Adams Family – Special Music

## **MEMBERS/FRIENDS IN NEED OF PRAYER**

Barb Bailey in the passing of Jean, Joyce VanderLaan as she continues with shingles pain, Linda Van Heuvelen, Vi Squires; Home members Pat Doorn, Bob Schaafsma, Cathy Jo Walters, and Joan Walstrom

## **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 28<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **MEN OF THE CHURCH**

The Men of the Church meet every FIRST FRIDAY of the month at 9:30am at Bob Evans (Kalamazoo Ave. at M6). After a brief devotional and prayer, the gents enjoy a breakfast and great conversation. All are welcome to join us.

## **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 we generally meet 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.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

Every year at this time our church conducts a Stewardship Campaign. The purpose of this initiative is multipurpose. Most importantly we remind ourselves of the joyous reality that God is owner and giver of all things, and we are called to manage His bounty. We all take the opportunity to

remind ourselves to put to good work the many gifts God has bestowed on us. Additionally, the Session of the church asks us all to pledge support to the church for the coming year. Those pledges are important because our church operates on a balanced budget. That means we make spending plans based only on the income that has been pledged. You'll receive mail regarding this campaign. As well, we will have special messages delivered on Sunday, October 24 and 29 and culminating on Consecration Sunday, November 7. If you would like to help with this year's Stewardship Campaign, please speak with either Jim Miller or Pastor Mike.

## PRAYER OPPORTUNITY

With all that's going on in our world, many of the children of God are crying out more and more for God's help, mercy and strength. As I write, Haitians are picking up the broken pieces left in the wake of a terrible hurricane. There are floods in Europe, fires burning in the west, drought and "natural disasters" occurring all over the globe. All of this "birth pangs" in light of the pandemic caused by COVID 19. So, it is fitting for God's children to

call upon our heavenly Father for relief. We are doing this in a number of ways to be sure. Certainly, in private devotions as each of us spend more time in our "prayer closets." We are also gathering together to pray with the Body of Christ.

To that end, the Elders along with pastor Mike would like to invite you, your family members and friends to a time of telephone prayer. We'll begin this prayer time on Wednesday, September 8 at 7:00pm. You can join in the call by dialing the following and following the prompts:

Dial-in-number: 1-602-580-9612

Access Code: 6914064

Some of you may simply wish to call in and listen, others may wish to share prayer needs and concerns while others may wish to pray. You'll not be asked to do anything you would not want to do. Pastor Mike will be leading the call and depending upon how many join, the call should last about 15 minutes.

We encourage you to make this a regular part of your spiritual discipline as we all need and even must cry out to God for help.

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## 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.

Beliefs About Rewards and Punishment More than six in ten Americans expect Jesus to return and judge all people. However, fewer expect people to be punished in a place called hell. More than a third of those surveyed believe God always rewards true faith with material blessings in this life.

However, unbiblical concepts of relative truth have influenced every sphere of life in the US, including ethical issues that continue to be at the forefront of public debate. In 2020, a large percentage of evangelicals still appear to reject the biblical arguments of "gender fluidity," and this has been trending in a positive direction. Yet it remains concerning that one in five evangelicals still appears to reject the Bible's teaching that our gender is given to us by God (Genesis 1:27).

As these ethical discussions and other social issues are featured prominently in political discourse, this raises the question of how Christians should be involved in politics. In this most recent survey, evangelicals expressed strong support for the freedom of Christians to join the national and political debate.

### Statement # 21: Christians should be silent on issues of politics.

11% Strongly Agree | 13% Agree | 11% Not sure | 22% Disagree

43% Strongly Disagree (correct response)

The mission of the church in baptizing and making disciples of Christ is primarily spiritual, but that does not mean Christians must be silent on political issues (Matthew 28:18-20). The Bible addresses many political

issues including capital punishment, abortion, ethical commerce, slavery, gender equality, care for the poor and disabled as well as many other issues. Believers who seek to be faithful to the Bible cannot be silent on political matters where biblical teaching applies. Moreover, Paul appealed to his political rights as a Roman citizen showing that Christians make appropriate use of whatever political rights they possess, including the right to speak to political issues (Acts 16:35-39, Acts 25:1-12).

[From Decision Magazine] Do Christians have a moral or Biblical obligation to participate in government?

The Gospel applies to all areas of life, and the Bible instructs us about government and political authority. Christians should exclusively focus on sharing the Good News and discipling others in the faith because Jesus' final command was to make disciples (Matthew 28:16-20).

In Romans 13:1-7, Paul describes the governing authorities as "ministers of God" and says they are responsible for administering civil justice. Although God is sovereign, He chooses to use human governments to carry out His will in the civil sphere. Government, after all, was God's idea, and Christians should engage with it in a way that is consistent with its God-ordained purpose.

Queen Esther used her influence in the Persian government to save the Jewish people from a state-sanctioned genocide (Esther 8). The Prophet Jeremiah instructed the exiles in Babylon to seek the welfare of their new city. He also commanded them to pray for the city, "for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7). A thriving society would benefit God's people as well as the city's other inhabitants.

Because government and its laws are an inextricable part of our lives, there is no way to avoid some level of involvement. This is true for Christians, who, though "sojourners and exiles" (1 Peter 2:11) in this world, are nevertheless citizens of the "City of Man" as well as the "City of God." Christians ought to endeavor to be good citizens of both cities and leverage their influence for the advancement of laws, policies and practices that contribute to the flourishing of our neighbors.

Compelled by love for our neighbors and a desire to steward our God-given responsibilities, we must, as Christians, engage in the political process. But we must engage Biblically. This requires that we be prepared to grapple with the moral issues of our day, the reality of our two-party system, and follow our Christian convictions to their logical end by voting for candidates and parties that support clear Biblical values.



## Worship and Potluck, in the Park!

