

MINUTE WITH MIKE

*Only be strong and very courageous;
Be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded:
Do not turn from it to the right or to the left,
so that you may have success wherever you go.
This book of the law [God's Word] shall not depart from your mouth,
but you shall meditate on it day and night,
so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it;
For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.
Joshua 1:7-8*

Dearest sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Thanksgiving Time greetings to you and yours. May the spirit of giving thanksgiving rest in the fact that you know and adore The One to whom we give thanks!

I'm growing more excited as each day passes. We're going to be moving into a "new home." There are a hundred and one things to attend to, and I am thrilled that the Elders on Session, and Jim Miller as point person on the project, have most everything under control. The team is looking into furniture and fixtures, flooring and flat-screens. They are making decisions for us regarding our signage and window (or street appeal) and our kitchenette. They're doing a great job!

What I would like to focus on in this "Minute" is the congregation's side of the move - Your work. Here are a few of my thoughts:

- Nothing could be more important than to pray!
Ask God's favor and direction as we step out in faith.
- Please, please, PLEASE, keep in mind that everything is about God,
It's not about us.
- We're moving into the community to serve,
Not to be served.
- Our new home is not about what makes us happiest,
But what's most effective in doing God's work.
- It's all about reaching people who don't know Jesus,
It's not about those of us who already belong to Him.

So please plan to be patient and thoughtful with one another as we all work more authentically to go about God's work and mission for us/for His church. Please be loving and welcoming as we attract visitors and guests as we are moving into the "neighborhood" so that we can more effectively reach people for Jesus. God is giving us an opportunity to do an important work now for Him. Let's all pray and be faithful to Him about that work.

In His love, your brother, friend and pastor,

Mike

SESSION NEWS

The 22nd Stated Meeting of the Session of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church was called to order Thursday, October 7, 2021, at 7:30 PM on Zoom, 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 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, November 7, 2021; the last communion was observed Sunday, October 10, 2021.

Correspondence

Sent "purge" letters to Glenda and Christine Williams. Neither has responded. A motion was made and approved to remove both from the active rolls.

Membership

Active Membership as of 9/8/2021	49
• Death of Jean Bailey	
• Removal of Glenda and Christine Williams	
Active Membership as of 10/7/2021	46

Worship Services

Attendance	9/12/2021	30 adults, 3 children at Shadyside Park
Attendance	9/19/2021	35 adults at the Kentwood Library
Attendance	9/26/2021	30 adults at the Kentwood Library
Attendance	10/3/2021	23 adults and 6 children at the Kentwood Library

Social Media

Robert reported that he was unsuccessful in finding who has the password to the church's Facebook page. It is extremely difficult to convince Facebook to give the password to someone else. Robert will look into creating a new Facebook page, possibly supplying the church's nonprofit paperwork in order to be recognized as an official organization.

Treasurer's Report for 9/30/2021

+ \$14,338.06 Cash on Hand as of 9/30/2021
+ \$25,692.22 CD#1 (Northpoint Bank)
+ \$15,012.64 CD#2 (Northpoint Bank)
(LESS FOLLOWING COMMITTED FUNDS)

-\$69 Accrued Joyful Noise offerings
-\$11,000 Building Fund

\$43,973.92 Uncommitted Funds Available

Notes: Uncommitted funds as of end of Aug were \$45,245.18. Our Loss in Sep. was \$-1,271.26.

- The Kentwood Library has been paid through the 3rd week of December. Worship service the week of Christmas will have to be held elsewhere, as the Library will not rent the space that week. Jim will ask about the clubhouse at his condo.
- A motion was made and approved to offer to pay mileage for those who attended the presbytery meeting in Mackinaw City in an official capacity.

Consent Agenda – Approve the Clerk's and Treasurer's Reports. **A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

Pastor

- Mike reported that Dr. Laura will be leaving for Egypt and Kenya for about two months starting in early November. She is expected to return before Christmas.
- Mike held another Wednesday phone call-in prayer meeting this week. No one is attending these prayer calls possibly because they cost money.
- The current sermon series on the State of Theology will run up until Advent. In January, Mike will start a new sermon series, possibly on the book of Acts.

Mission

- Betty reported that the Mission Team decided on the Joyful Noise offerings for 2022:
 - Jan/Feb Manna Media (Jim)
 - Mar/Apr Mel Trotter Ministries (Diane)
 - May/June In The Image – S.H.O.E.S. Program (Betty)
 - Jul/Aug Pregnancy Resource (Mike)
 - Sep/Oct Women at Risk (Dana)
 - Nov/Dec Forgotten Man Ministries (Mike)
- The church will once again be gathering Angel Tree gifts for the Norcha family.

Personnel

- Gary reported that the Personnel team will be meeting with Mike to start his annual evaluation.

New Church Home

- The landlord has accepted our lease offer and has agreed to pay for ½ the cost of the “cross wall” that divides the worship space from the meeting space. The landlord further agreed that we can amortize the cost of the other half into our monthly rent over the life of the lease agreement.
- Jim reported that our real estate agent was told that we may need to have a second bathroom because of the number of people in the space. Bill offered that the building code of Kentwood used to have a

provision that a second bathroom is not needed if the space is used for 4 hours or less. Jim will continue to work with the real estate agent on this point.

- Mike reported that another presbytery church may have a video projector that we could have. He also reported that the church in Cleveland put a large screen TV in their storefront property that looped through various Biblical and church-related pages, and that this outreach is still talked about to this day. Something for us to think about.
- Jim will start the process of creating a “wish list” of things we would need in the new space.

Other Business

- A reminder that Dave Wallis from the Church of the Straits will be attending a luncheon with Session members on November 6.
- Stewardship will be addressed during the October 24 and 31 services. Consecration Sunday is November 7.
- A motion was made and approved for the church to pay the cost of Maureen to play at Jean Bailey’s memorial service.
- Bill reported that CTS still seems to be under construction, and the church may not be able to return there before the storefront is complete. Mike will check on the status.

Next Session Meeting – The next Session meeting will be **Thursday, November 11** at 7:30 PM on Zoom. Gary will lead the devotion.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Adams. Clerk of Session

DATES – NOVEMBER

3rd Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm
5th Friday: Men’s Breakfast Devotional at (Bob Evans) – 9:30am
6th Saturday: Visit from Rev. Dave Wallis; Presbytery Review
7th Sunday: Consecration Sunday Worship & Communion (Kentwood Library at 10:00am) Devotion at Samaritas [Cathy Jo & Bob] – The Woods 2:30pm
10th Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm
11th Thursday: Bilyea’s Home Group at 1:00pm Session Zoom meeting at 7:30pm
14th Sunday: Worship (Kentwood Library) at 10:00am
17th Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm
21st Sunday: Worship (Kentwood Library) at 10:00am; Devotional at Grand Village [Barb] – 2:00pm
22nd Monday: Newsletter deadline

24th Wednesday: Prayer Call at 7:00pm
25th Thursday: THANKSGIVING DAY
26th Friday: Ladies Luncheon at Grand Traverse Pie Company at 1:00pm
28th Sunday: First Sunday in Advent Worship (The Clubhouse) at 10:00am; Devotional at Brook Crest [Joan] at 2:30pm

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES – NOVEMBER

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

SERVING THIS MONTH

7th: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Marjorie Boerema – Musician, Special Music – Adams Family (X2), Rachel Wahome – Communion Bread
14th: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Marjorie Boerema – Musician, Special Music – Mercy Kamau
21st: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Maureen Sweet – Musician, Rachel & Henry – Special Music
28th: Pastor Mike – Preaching, Maureen Sweet – Musician, Dana & Dana – 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, 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.

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 meet every other week on 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

November is that time of the year when our church conducts a Stewardship Campaign. The purpose of this initiative is multipurpose:

- We remind ourselves of the joyous reality that God is owner and giver of all things.
- We are called to manage the bounty He has given to each of us.
- We commit to do the good works with the many gifts God has bestowed on us.
- The church asks us all to pledge financial support for the coming year.

You'll receive mail regarding this campaign. Special messages will be 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

"My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. On God my salvation and my glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. (Psalm 62:5-8)

Are you wanting to pour out your heart before the Lord? You have an opportunity to do so each week on Wednesday at 7:00pm. Join Pastor Mike, Dr. Laura and others as we together, "pour out our hearts before Him".

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

Access Code: 6914064

STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFTS

It's that time of year when we express our love and appreciation to church staff for their work and dedication over the past year. It's been a difficult year for everyone, but once again, we are asking for donations from church members for Christmas love gifts for the Good Shepherd staff. Gifts are designated for all paid staff including ministerial and musicians. Please get your donations

in by December 17. Envelopes for donations will be available prior to Sunday services starting Nov. 28. Make sure your donation is marked with "Staff Gifts" in the memo of checks or on the envelope.

CHRISTMAS CHOIR

As a church family it is important, even necessary, that we make a joyful noise to the Lord and that we always sing His praises. It is in that spirit that we invite any and all to join this year's Christmas Choir. You don't need to be skilled in song or script, simply that you have a heart to joyfully praise God. Rehearsal and performance dates are listed below. Please plan to join us then. Should you have any questions, please speak with Cammi or Pastor Mike.

Rehearsals Dates:

- After church at 11:15am – November 14 & 21, December 5 & 12
- Before church (warm up) at 9:40am – December 5, 12 & 19

Performance Dates:

- November 28 (First Sunday in Advent)
- December 5* (Second Sunday in Advent)
- December 12* (Third Sunday in Advent)
- December 19* (Fourth Sunday in Advent)
- = Cammi Adams directing

FACEBOOK CHANGE

Good Shepherd has a new Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/GoodShepherdPresGR>. The old page had no content and no followers, and the Session could not find out who had the password. The midweek blasts and worship information is now being posted regularly on the new page. If you know anyone who has a Facebook account, please share this news with them.

CHRISTMAS ANGEL

The Mission Team has again asked Anne Vanderburg to lead us all in a Christmas Angel Mission Project benefitting the Norcha family. Anne has lists of items from the family in regard to

their Christmas wishes. Those lists are available on a side table at the Library on Sunday morning. Simply pick up a slip and do the shopping. All the gifts are to be brought to the church on Sunday, December 2 for a wrapping party. A light luncheon will be served on the 2nd as well. If you would prefer to simply make a cash gift to the family, we encourage you to do so. Speak with Jim Miller or Betty Rittersdorf if you have thoughts or questions. Thanks for your loving generosity!!

WARMING EARS REPORT

2020 -- The year of Covid.

We started out sewing our hats every other week as usual. When Covid got bad, we decided to quit getting together to sew. We didn't know what to expect or when we could get together. We thought we were going to quit making hats period. Mary and I decided to get together and work on hats as much as we could to use up the polar fleece I still had. Finally, a couple of the gals said they would sew at home – so we had more help and more hats. It was unbelievable that we finally made and donated almost 2,500 hats last year. We sent our 1,000 hats to Juarez (as usual). In December, it was recommended that people should stay inside and away from other people. Mary and I decided to deliver the hats to missions. We called several missions and said we could deliver hats if they wanted – but they had to come to our car and get them. This way it was safe for all of us. They were so happy and so were we. We delivered about 1,500 hats to Mel Trotter, Guiding Light, Holland Rescue Mission, Matthew's House, Buist, and Degage Ministries. We felt so blessed to be able to give so many hats in this time of isolation.

2021 – We are again sewing hats – every other week but with fewer helpers. One of the gals moved to another state. Another couple aren't able to help right now – so we have a very small group of four to five ladies sewing now. We have 1,600 hats finished right now and hope for more before the end of the year. We still plan on sending hats to Juarez again this year. The rest of our hats will go to missions that would love them.

A LETTER FROM FIKRE

Dear Ps. Mike and Good Shepherd family,
Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We hope you all are well and doing good. We are praying may the Lord continues to flourish Good Shepherd church and also may God continue to use you for His glory.

Thank God we are fine, and despite some challenges and struggles, we are pressing on toward the intended goal. The children are doing good. Amanuel has started the second-year college classes at the University of Missouri. He is thinking of studying Aerospace Engineering or Computer Science. Yesem is in junior class, and next year she will be finishing high school. She is 16 now. Mieraf is in 8th grade and 13. Next year she will go to high school. Alem is doing fine and still working four days a week to support the family. She is also still struggling with her teeth issues. Her English is somewhat better now.

I am in the dissertation phase. Currently, I am taking a dissertation seminar to prepare to start writing. The writing process may take me one year or less, but it depends on my dissertation committee members that if they read and return my papers on time, I may finish earlier than expected unless I have to wait for their feedback. I pray that the Lord assigns me, good committee members, to understand me to complete and return to my ministry as quickly as possible. My dissertation topic is somewhat confirmed that at first, I was thinking to write on prophecy area, but I found it complicated and controversial. Therefore, I plan to write on Ephesians 4:30 about Paul's concept of "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit of God." What does the Apostle Paul mean in Ephesian 4:30 when he instructs believers not to grieve the Holy Spirit?

As I mentioned to you some time ago, we have started a church planting in North Kansas City, Missouri. Despite Covid-19 struggle and hindrance, we are meeting to glorify God every Sunday 4:00 pm-6:30 pm at Fairview Christian Church. Fairview church allowed us to use their facility in the afternoon. We have about 43-50 adult members and 16 Sunday school children. It is a good start, and I hope it will be a successful diaspora church. I am preaching every Sunday, and Alem is leading women's fellowship and prayer programs. Yesem, and Mieraf teach Sunday school children. We did not start offertory, and so we all are ministering voluntarily for God's glory.

The PCE news back home in Ethiopia is not encouraging that the PCE general secretary is struggling with infected liver, and he was in the hospital for a while. As they told me, the PCE churches are also struggling with resource challenges, and due to political and war crises, people are suffering high inflation and a shortage of food. So life is getting harder in Ethiopia. There are several unexplained difficulties in the country: corrupted political leaders, Covid-19, drought, civil war, a sense of genocide in the North, locusts, economic sanction from the USA and the West in general, and money lover false prophets and teachers in churches exploit God's people. I do not know what is going on in that country! Just we are praying and grieving.

We want to thank you for your unconditional and faithful support over the years!

The Lord be with you and protect you all the time.

With our love and prayers as always!

Fikre & family

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 of the findings regarding beliefs about the church are very interesting. Almost a quarter of Americans believe Christians should be quiet about political issues. Almost six in ten see valid alternatives to corporate worship, and more than a third say entertaining worship services are a "must have" if a church expects to be effective. The vast majority, however, say anyone can learn about theology as opposed to only clergy and professional religious staff.

Regarding beliefs about Biblical authority, the survey found the following. Americans remain divided down the middle on whether abortion and sex outside of marriage is sinful. A similar finding is only half of

those surveyed believe the Bible has authority over our day-to-day choices. Sadly, however, more than half say religious belief is about opinion rather than objective truth. And equally as sad, a quarter of those surveyed think God is unconcerned with their daily decisions.

Statement # 5: Biblical accounts of the physical (bodily) resurrection of Jesus are completely accurate;

The event actually occurred.

45% Strongly Agree 21% Agree 9% Not Sure 11% Disagree 14% Strongly Disagree

(Correct response – Strongly Agree)

All four of the Gospels clearly teach the history of the earthly life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. This teaching is based, we're told, on accounts from eyewitnesses who themselves heard and saw what Jesus said and did (Matthew 9:9, Luke 1:1-4 and John 21:20-24). Additionally, these four Gospels all agree that Jesus was raised from the dead bodily by the power of God (Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-49 and John 20:1-28). The historical fact of the bodily resurrection of Jesus is so important that the Apostle Paul tells us that the Christian faith is a false faith IF Jesus did not rise from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:12-28).

Americans with evangelical beliefs are more likely to agree with this statement as opposed to those without evangelical convictions (98% v. 59%). Additionally, Americans who attend a church service at least once or twice a month are more likely to agree as opposed to those who do not (89% v. 48%). Finally, Americans in the age group 18-34 are those least likely to agree with this statement.

The 66% who agree, however, in the 2020 survey are similar to the 66% in 2018, the 64% in 2016, and the 68% in the 2014 survey.

(This from CRU – formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) To begin with, everything about Jesus is unique: The predictions of His coming. His birth. His life. His teachings. His miracles. His death. And especially His resurrection. It is history's most significant event.

The validity of Jesus' claims about Himself rests on the Resurrection — whether He rose from the dead or stayed in the grave. Many skeptics say that to believe that Jesus rose from the dead is nothing more than a blind leap of faith with little or no basis in truth. When confronted with the facts, however, those who are intellectually honest have been forced to admit that the Resurrection is a historical event based on undeniable evidence.

Evidence for the Resurrection: Christ predicted His resurrection. The Bible records, "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things ... and be killed, and be raised up on the third day" (Matthew 16:21, New American Standard Bible). Even though His followers did not understand what He was telling them at the time, they remembered His words and recorded them.

Jesus made numerous appearances to His followers. He comforted the mourners outside His tomb on Sunday morning. On the road to Emmaus He explained things about Himself from the Old Testament. Later, He ate in their presence and invited them to touch Him. The Bible records that Jesus was seen by more than 500 at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6). Some may argue that a few people could have agreed to a deception, but how can one explain the collaboration of 500 people?

Jesus' followers had unrelenting faith in the Resurrection. Those disciples who were once so afraid that they deserted their Lord now courageously proclaimed this news, risking their lives to preach. Their bold and courageous behavior does not make sense unless they knew with absolute certainty that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

The growth of the Christian church confirms the Resurrection. Peter's first sermon, which dealt with Christ's resurrection, stirred people to receive Him as their living Savior. Luke records the thrilling results: "That day there were added about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). And that group of believers has multiplied across the globe. Today, there are over two billion people across the nations who follow Jesus.

The testimony of billions of transformed lives through the centuries shows the power of the Resurrection. Many have recovered from addictions. The destitute and despairing have found hope. Broken marriages have been restored. The most conclusive proof for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that He is living within believers today transforming lives.

The Resurrection sets Christianity apart. No other religious leader has risen from the dead and conquered sin.

The Significance of the Resurrection: The Resurrection confirms that Jesus is who He claimed to be. Let us consider the magnitude of this event.

The Resurrection proved that Christ was divine. The fact that Jesus Christ died on the cross does not prove in itself that He is God. Jesus proved His divine nature by fulfilling the predictions of His death and by His return from the grave. The Bible declares that “by being raised from the dead [Christ] was proved to be the mighty Son of God, with the holy nature of God Himself.” (Romans 1:4, The Living Bible)

The Resurrection proved Christ’s power to forgive sin. The Bible claims, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.” (1 Corinthians 15:17, NASB) By rising from the dead, Jesus proved His authority and power to break the bonds of sin and to assure forgiveness and eternal life to all who accept His gift of salvation.

The Resurrection revealed Christ’s power over death. The Bible records, “Christ rose from the dead and will never die again. Death no longer has any power over Him.” (Romans 6:9 TLB). The Resurrection secured our victory over death as well and “lifted us up from the grave into glory along with Christ, where we sit with Him in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 2:6, TLB)

The Resurrection defeated God’s enemy. From the moment of Satan’s original rebellion until the day of the cross, the devil fought viciously and cunningly to overthrow the kingdom of God. At the crucifixion Satan must have thought he dealt the final and decisive blow in this age-old war. But this was the devil’s most serious miscalculation. The cross was not a sign of defeat. The cross was heaven’s triumph! When Jesus Christ rose, the power of sin and death was forever shattered. Because of the Resurrection Christians don’t have to fear Satan or death again.

PHOTO GALLERY



Who Knew Donna Was a Master Angler?

Mike and Donna went on a day-long fly-fishing excursion on the Muskegon River recently, with a guide, to celebrate their anniversary. Donna caught this beautiful 8 pound brown trout, with a fly rod! Of course they were practicing good conservation measures and released her back into the river.



Gathering at the recent Presbytery meeting in Mackinaw City, which was hosted by our good friend, Dave Wallis, Pastor of The Church of the Straits. It was so nice to be reunited with Rev. Fikre Norcha who came all the way from Kansas City to be there. Fikre was pleased to be able to thank Pastor Dave personally for all the support The Church of the Straits has given Fikre during his study at the seminary in Kansas City.

