

Ripples

Stillwater Free Lutheran Church

“Sharing Jesus Christ with Our Neighbors”

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MARCH

**“Those who know your name trust in you, for you,
Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.”**

Psalm 9:10

From the Pastor's Desk

How about that weather the last few weeks?

Things were seemingly moving right along to an early spring and then BAM!!! 15 below zero at night and temps in the teens during the day – BRRRRR!!

Then snow, snow, snow. I didn't use my snowblower once all through the winter, until this last snow storm!

Then, all the snow melts in what seemed like a few hours, only to wake up the next day to more! Holy Smokes – Just make up your mind already!!!

I heard once or twice since I've been here, that if you don't like the weather, just wait ten minutes. Sometimes, it sure seems that way!

Being a Pastor is sometimes just like the weather in North West Montana! Things can - and do - change in a moment!

Just look at what has gone on in our congregation in the last couple of months!!! It seems that it has been one thing after another! And occasionally, I just want to throw up my arms and say ENOUGH!!

During these times, I sometimes get pretty discouraged. Especially when I look at what is going on in the world around us, and I see that same stuff sneak into our ranks here at Stillwater!

I wonder to myself – what is going on here?? But we are told by both Jesus and Paul that wolves will come in among us, and cause havoc!

It is during these discouraging times that I praise God for the Deacons board holding me up in prayer, and some very good friends who help me stay grounded in reality, and of course for my wonderful wife and best friend who not only prays for me and keeps me grounded but she also reminds me that we are all sinners, saved by the marvelous Grace of Jesus Christ, and because of that we all need to give grace to each other.

Thinking about the work of God and our congregation, have you ever noticed that we sometimes butt heads and have friction with our fellow Christians? Did you know that there are numerous passages in the Scriptures detailing how we are to treat each other? I think we all have a favorite that we turn to when conflict arises.

With the stresses of the world, and all we have going on at Stillwater, I thought, I would share my favorite.

Paul tells us in Romans 12:18 – If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

This verse is in the middle of Paul's discussion on Christian living. He tells us first of all to not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Too often the world around us lures us away from God – but Paul tells us to renew our mind – Go back to the teachings we know are true! Go back to the basics!

Then as he is talking about the Christian life, he gives a list of things to do in verses 9 through 16. These verses are focused on how we are to treat each other. Unfortunately, we seem to fail way too often, so Paul tells us what to do in verse 17 – Don't repay evil with Evil!

It is in the conclusion of this list that my favorite is given - live in peace – if at all possible, as much as depends on you.

Notice how Paul puts this. We are to do what we can to live in peace – this is not dependent on what others do – but as much as we can do!

And, as I was looking at this verse, and doing some studying, it seems that all the New Testament writers have something to say about the way we treat each other.

That made me wonder why God saw fit to tell us how to treat our neighbor so often?

The answer is so obvious that it almost slapped me square in the face! He tells us so often, in so many different ways – because we screw it up so often!

So, as we look ahead to a new month of ministry – let's remember we are all in this together! We are all Sinners, saved by the wonderful, marvelous Grace of God! So, let us serve each other and our community – for the Glory of God!

Submitted by,
Pastor Craig

Cookbooks are still available!

See Rachel T to get yours.

\$10.00 each, and all proceeds go to the

Activity Center

March Featured Recipe:

CHEESY CREAMY SCALLOPED POTATOES

Cheesy white sauce:

3 TBSP Butter

3 TBSP Flour

1 tsp Salt

½ tsp pepper

2 (12 oz.) Evaporated Milk (3
Cups)

1 tsp Minced Garlic

¼ Cup Chopped Onion

1 Cup (4 oz.) Cheddar Cheese

(Evaporated milk substitute: 2¼ cup whole milk and ¾ cup half-and-half). Heat 3 tablespoons butter in saucepan over low heat until melted. Blend in flour, salt and pepper. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until mixture is smooth and bubbly; stir in milk, garlic and onion. Cook on low for 5 minutes. Add cheese, heating until melted.

Potatoes and assembly:

2 Pounds Red Potatoes (6
medium) raw, thinly sliced

1 TBSP Butter

¼-½ Cup (1-2 oz.) Shredded
Cheddar Cheese

Layer sliced potatoes in greased 2-quart casserole dish in several layers, topping each layer with cheesy white sauce. Dot with 1 tablespoon butter and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Cover and bake at 350° for 40 minutes. Uncover and finish baking 60-70 minutes longer.

Linda Herset

Free Flyers Youth Group

The Free Flyers are committed to serve the community through our strength in Jesus Christ.

Hello all, the last two weeks have consisted of six inches of snow and negative temperatures that would make Siberia look like a summer vacation spot, followed by forty-degree weather that turned the parking lot into Flathead Lake, so that means it must be March! Recently I've been thinking (I got a headache from it, but there's a first for everything) about constants in life, things that will always stay the same.

Unfortunately, one of the only absolute constants for everyone is sin, no matter how hard we try, including even becoming a youth pastor, so you don't do it anymore, we all struggle with and commit sins daily. Mankind has had this burden since Adam and Eve decided to go on a fruit cleanse, and in the Old Testament, the Israelites are a great example of our cyclical downfall. The people would fall away from God, He would allow another people or country to come in and capture Israel, causing them to again remember their helplessness without God, and repent. This happened more times than there are Fast and Furious movies (and there's like thirty of those), and then finally we read in Isaiah 42 about *The Servant*. It was clear that Israel needed a servant, a selfless volunteer, to intercede for them and take on all their sins, but nobody from Israel could fill that role. If you're trying to wait until the end of this newsletter to figure out who the servant is, spoiler alert, it's Jesus, our Lord and Savior. His precious blood atoned for our sins, and though we will still struggle with the constant of our iniquities, we have the constant gift of grace and eternal salvation, courtesy of the perfect Servant. Isaiah 43:11 reminds us, "I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior." Our Heavenly Father is not going anywhere, and He is CONSTANTLY there with open arms, so let's not stay discouraged on our inability, but rejoice in Jesus' abounding ability!

Another thing to rejoice in is our youth ministries, we have kept steady numbers, still have been able to meet every week, and not that many reported mutinies against the youth leader, hallelujah! February was filled with dodging trees and kids (night skiing) and learning to put out a grease fire (Valentines dinner). Youth group itself has stayed pretty steady throughout the year going from 6-7:30, with an average of twelve students, and studying *Journey Through the New Testament* every Wednesday night. On

February 5th, we had our group night ski with our sister church Faith up on Big Mountain in Whitefish. Thirteen kids came from Stillwater, and eleven of them left with us (the other two were picked up I promise), and it truly was a wonderful time of fellowship and laughter for all. The other big event the youth participated in in February was our Valentines dinner fundraiser. Seafood was on the menu, and the kids did a great job of cooking everything, they didn't let me anywhere near the kitchen, and they crushed it. Besides dinner, we also played a couples' game, held a silent auction, and a live auction as well, which ended up raising a total amount of \$1,655, so a huge thank you to everyone who participated and donated items for the auctions, gave money, or both. Thanks to everyone's contributions and donations for fundraisers like this, the youth get to go on trips like night skiing, Bible camps, bowling, and all the other events that you have all supported us with. Confirmation still has three months left with our three wonderful students, who just recently memorized all ten commandments, so if you sin in front of them, now they can tell you exactly what commandment you're breaking. They are definitely kept busy by the lessons and required sermon notes, but they are the purest lessons you can study, the entire doctrine of Christ and Christianity. If you or anyone you know is interested in youth group, confirmation, or possibly a young adults Bible study, please let me know and we would love to have you or answer any questions at all you might have!

Thank you everyone to reading this, first of all for actually making it to the end, I can't even read the whole thing, but more importantly and seriously, for your spiritual, moral, and financial support. Rachel, the youth group, and myself are so grateful for all these gifts, but the one we will always continue to ask for is prayer, prayer, and then some more prayer. As we remember God's love and constant presence, let us also remember to have a happy March!

God Bless,

Bryce Timmerman



Women's Missionary Federation

Eleven women met on February 18th at Judy Hogan's home. Elaine opened with devotions titled "The Heart in my Pocket". Bonnie led us in our Bible study titled "Jesus Came to Save Sinners" from the passage of 1 Timothy 1:1-17. There was great discussion on the Law and Gospel and our great need for both.

Linda gave our treasurer report. We have \$410.51 in the bank. Our mission offering this month goes to World Missions. We discussed having an election in November. We will elect a treasurer and president this year, and next year we will elect a vice president and secretary. Please pray for these elections. For the time being Gayle will continue as president and Bonnie will be the vice president. Next month we will meet on March 18th at the church. Elaine will be the host and Gail will be the co-host. Sherri will lead our Bible study, and Neila will have devotions. Judy Karboski has volunteered to do a report on a missionary family. Wednesday, March 17th will be the last week for the Enduring Faith kids' program until next fall. Julie Brubaker will head up the yard sale this year. Start planning for this and help wherever you can.

March 2nd Bonnie will find out about her surgery. Please keep her in your prayers through all of this. Please also keep all the ladies in your prayers and church as well. Thank you, Judy, for opening your beautiful home for our meeting and also for the fantastic lunch that was served.

Submitted by,
Elaine Lessor

After-School Program

We have had consistent numbers for the afterschool program, and although many families have been exposed to Covid, the Lord has provided and kept all healthy. We continue to prioritize teaching the children the Word of God and could always use prayers for the children and all the helpers. If you are wondering what else you can do to support this ministry please contact Karla.

Feeding the Flathead

Much thank you to all who cooked and baked for serving on February 22nd! The numbers were a bit lighter this past month, we served 47. Thank you to Pastor Craig, Sherri, Michael, and Haylee Meyer for serving that evening. I heard they enjoyed connecting with those that came for meals at Central Christian Church, many of which are regulars.

Thank you to All who contributed to the meal of chicken cacciatore, a roll, salad, and a baked cookie!

Appreciation goes to Judy K., Lusha A., Rachel B., Marcia B., Judy H., Rose and Darryl A., Elaine L., and Juanita H.! Many hands do make light work!

Our next serve date is March 29th, and as always if you would like to participate, let Sherri, Susan or Lori know.

Isaiah 40 talks about comforting God's people. What a wonderful way to do that with a warm meal on a cold night!

from Lori, Susan and Sherri



Sunday School & Wednesday Evening



Enduring Faith - God Redeems His People

"Claimed and Tested", "Fishers Follow", and "The Wine Sign."

These are the titles of our LAST 3 Wednesday Evening Bible Time topics. Can you guess what we will be studying by these titles?

Come on out on Wednesdays, 5:30 pm dinner with Opening and Bible Time beginning at 6:00 pm through March 17th and find out if you guessed correctly!

Submitted by,

Karen Van Scoten

Building Project Report

The council decided to dissolve the building committee at the February 18 meeting. This committee was formed in accordance with the congregation procedure manual for the purpose of developing and overseeing a building plan to construct an activity center. Since the plan was designed and approved by the congregation and has been under construction since October 2019 it is no longer necessary for this committee to exist. I will continue to provide project updates in the monthly newsletters and by other media means available like texts, email, and the like. Any major project issues that might arise will be brought to the council for resolution. Congregation members should feel free to contact me at any time with project related questions or issues.

In last month's newsletter I reported a 2021 fundraising plan was being developed. I am now expanding that to include a construction plan which will allow our contractors to schedule and prioritize work as funds become available. For example, the insulation of all exterior walls was recently completed. Drywall, tape, texture, and painting has begun in the restrooms and will continue into the two offices, coatroom, and storage room on the East side of the building. The plan is to complete the restrooms by Easter April 4. Work on the septic system will resume when weather permits.

The (7) remaining doors have been ordered as has been (2) 4 ft. X 6 ft. mission signs. A donor is covering the cost of the signs which will be installed on each end of the activity center. The estimated cost of the inside work described above is approximately \$110,000, and the funds are available. I am meeting with Mark Van Derveer from Kalispell Electric to review the estimated electrical trim-out costs. The restroom electrical work is already included in Matt's estimate.

Other issues such as acoustical sound boards, wall carpets, floor striping and the like will be addressed as we move forward. Thank you for your continued support and prayers. As we enter this Lenten season may we give God the glory and praise for His many blessings that have made this project possible.

Respectfully submitted by Ed Van Scoten

Congregation Project Representative

Prayers for March

Please take this home and use it all week long.

"Whatever you ask in prayer with faith, you will receive." Matt 21:22

Church Work & Ministry

Sharing Jesus Christ with our Neighbors
Building Project
Church Leaders, Staff & Worship Team
Stillwater Men's Group & Youth Group
Stillwater & National WMF
Feeding the Flathead
After School Program
InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
Child Bridge Ministry & Foster Families

General Prayers

Marriages and Families
Our Country and Leaders
Workers in the Harvest Field
Military and First Responders

Health Concerns

Sylvan Herset
Joyce Banzet
Jeremy Hartle
Deb & Jonny (Timmerman)
Timlick Family at the passing of Jeff
Andy Bauer (Jorgenson)
Bench Family
Bob Cartwright

