

FAITH FLIGHT

November 2014

"Thrive" by Casting Crowns

Thrive

"We know we were made for so much more than ordinary lives. Its time for us to more than just survive. We were made to thrive."¹ Thrive? Good Ol' trusty Webster defines this as: 1. To grow vigorously: Flourish; 2. To gain in wealth or possessions: Prosper; 3. To progress toward or realize a goal despite or because of circumstances. As the body of Christ, the first two definitions seem to follow worldly ways, and while I could make a case for #3, are we not asked for so much more in following Jesus? So I ask, what does it mean for us as *Spirit of Life* to thrive?

Perhaps a better place for us to turn is the Word at the beginning of the first Psalm.

*Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
but their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper. Psalm 1: 1-3*

As we are focusing over the next month, may we hear that stewardship is not limited to a season, or a Sunday, or even for the purpose of "funding the budget." Stewardship instead is about transformation and salvation. To be good stewards is to be like trees planted by streams of water, with roots digging deep. It is in the roots of our relationship with God through being in the Word, joining in worship, prayer, and our disciplines that help us to yield rich fruit. With deep roots connected with living water, we can withstand the storms and drought that are part of the seasons of life. Together, may we live like this so that we are digging deep for the purpose of reaching out to others.



¹From Casting Crowns song "Thrive"

Sunday Texts and Service Highlights

Sunday, November 2

Exodus 20: 1-21 Matthew 22: 34-40
Hebrews 10: 1-18

Sunday, November 9

Deuteronomy 7: 1-11 Psalm 137: 1-9; 149: 1-9
Matthew 15: 21-39

Sunday, November 16

2 Kings 2: 1-15 Psalm 23 Acts 1: 1-11

Sunday, November 23

Isaiah 1: 1-2: 5 Romans 15: 1-13 Matthew 9: 10-17

Sunday, November 30

Daniel 7: 9-28 Isaiah 40: 9-11 Luke 1: 67-79

to thrive

~ submitted by the Stewardship Committee

We recently kicked off our annual Stewardship efforts. The church is asking its members and friends to offer an estimate of financial giving for the year. This estimate of giving provides the church and you an ability to plan for the coming year. But we are determined to make this Stewardship Campaign not about this church but about you. Your desires for a church that meets your needs for worship, for spiritual growth, for serving your neighbors.

We also invite everyone to attend our **Stewardship celebration dinner following worship on Sunday, November 16.** It will be a great time to celebrate our many blessings and share fellowship with our church community. Please indicate your attendance along with the number of members in the family who will be attending on the pledge form when you return it.

You will see a wash tub at the front of the church that will fill with candles. Each week we will light a candle for each estimate of giving form that is returned. When an individual or a family returns their estimate of giving form, we will light a candle representing their contribution to making our light brighter. **WE WILL NOT HIDE OUR LIGHT UNDER A TUB BUT WE WILL LIGHT IT FOR ALL TO SEE.**

You will hear the song "Thrive" by the Casting Crowns many times over the next few weeks. The lyrics seem to apply so specifically to life here at *Spirit of Life*.

**"We know we were made for so much more
Than ordinary lives
It's time for us to more than just survive
We were made to thrive."**

Have you noticed?

Our attendance now averages about 60 instead of 40?
The children gathered around the altar for children's sermon, their number, their diversity, their energy?
Wednesday evenings M&M events?
The choir's songs?
The frequent gatherings sharing meals and fellowship?
Are we being better stewards of God's gifts to us?

Would you like to keep our "Spirit" going, to keep our "Spirit" growing?

Consider all of this as you consider what financial resources you entrust to *Spirit of Life*.

Yes, Stewardship is about money – your money. You work hard, you make tough decisions about paying bills. But it is about more than money – it is about souls and love, the souls of *Spirit of Life*, love of your neighbor, and your very own spirituality.

We have a chance – a chance to keep it growing. With YOUR help and God's will "We will thrive!"



BIRTHDAYS

11/02 Frankie Plaszcz
 11/02 Steven Plaszcz
 11/05 Carol Osweiler
 11/05 Patience Mbonifor
 11/11 Russ Lewis
 11/13 Ryder Besse
 11/13 Shanelle Assah
 11/14 Ed Mikoloski
 11/14 Lynnea Casmey
 11/15 Wynn Johnson
 11/17 Gracelyn Scott
 11/19 Renea Stimach
 11/19 Josh Ullom
 11/20 Diane Walker
 11/24 Samuel Haase
 11/24 Kate Brause

**Spiritcare
 Prayer Team
 call 1.507.263.5975
 952.423.2212 (office)**



Men's Breakfast for November

Join the men of the church on Saturday, Nov 8, at 7:15 AM here at the church. Bob Shepard will be serving Ruth's Famous Oatmeal along with muffins. Come and join us.



CARD CARE LIST REMINDER :

If you had someone on Loving Community Ministry Team's Card Care List in October 2014 and wish them to remain on in November 2014, please resubmit them with an update to Ruth Shepard at:

rshepard2@frontier.com or 507.263.5975 or by filling out a blue Prayer Request card during worship.

***BE SURE TO CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX(S) ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CARD.**

***NOTE:** Each month our Card Care List starts with new and updated submissions only.

Communications Policy Statement

It is Spirit of Life's policy to...

▶list names, and place photos of members associated with church events, in the newsletter and on the website.

▶Spirit of Life also acknowledges birthdays (month & day) in the newsletter, during the member's birthday month.

▶Finally, Spirit of Life plans to put a copy of the monthly newsletter on its website.

Any member who does not want his/her name, likeness, or birth month listed in these, or any other church publications, is requested to contact the church office with a formal request to keep their personal information confidential.

Send newsletter announcements to: spirit@spiritoflifeav.org.

Inside this issue

PAGE 1

PASTOR ROB'S ARTICLE

PAGE 2

SUNDAY TEXTS
 "TO THRIVE"

PAGE 3

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS
 CARE TEAM
 MEN'S BREAKFAST
 POLICY STATEMENT
 INDEX

PAGE 4

COMMUNITY SERVICE TEAM
 CROP WALK
 ARMFUL OF LOVE
 MATSIKO CHOIR

PAGE 5

CHILDREN & YOUTH
 MINISTRIES
 RECIPE
 FOOD DONATION
 CHURCH OFFICERS
 LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

PAGE 6

SESSION VISION
 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
 OFFICE HOURS
 VITAL SIGNS
 STAFF CONTACTS

PAGE 7

WEDNESDAY CLUB
 SESSION MINUTES

BACK COVER

DATES TO REMEMBER

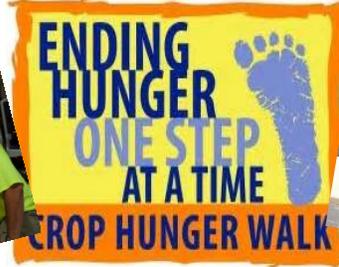
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

ALICE GRACEK

From Your Community Service Team:

South of the River CROP Hunger Walk wrap up

October 12 turned out to be a sunny, warm, blustery fall day, with gorgeous fall colors along the Walk route. All figures are approximate at this point, but we had about 200 walkers turn out. Our local agencies (360 Communities, Open Door Pantry, and CAP Agency) were well represented, and they led us off on our walk by carrying our new banner. We collected approximately 600 pounds of food, which our agencies could use to immediately stock local food shelves. They will also eventually share 25% of the money we raised, which is just under \$14,000 at this time. Thanks to all of you who supported the CROP Walk with contributions of various kinds, with prayers, with fundraising, by walking or volunteering. Thanks to Pastor Rob for leading a drumming circle at one of the rest stops. Thanks to our Scout Troop for helping with collecting food donations and gathering up Walk signs at the end of the walk. The South of the River CROP Hunger Walk represents a great opportunity for us to participate with other churches and community groups to help with something important—ending hunger one step at a time!



News from Community Service/ Mission Team

Gardening season is over, school supplies have been collected and delivered, the CROP Hunger Walk is past—must be time to start looking toward the Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday season! ***Spirit of Life* will again be participating in the Armful of Love campaign through 360 Communities.** We have requested to be sponsors for 2 families, so look for more information on that in later November. We will also plan to bake, package, and distribute Christmas cookies again to our college students, service members, and less mobile members of our congregation; please notify Shari in the office if you know of someone who should be included on that list. We will not be participating in Operation Christmas Child, but will be participating in a Heifer International initiative. (If you have questions about this change, please talk to Denise Lewis) We will be collecting monetary donations for a Knitter's Gift Basket, which includes four fuzzy friends that are keeping Heifer partner families warm all around the world: a llama, an alpaca, a sheep and an angora rabbit—four animals that provide families with ample wool and endless opportunities to build better lives. For more information, go to www.heifer.org.

Matsiko World Orphans Choir

In 2013, *Spirit of Life* began a friendship with the Matsiko World Orphans Choir, a part of the International Children's Network (ICN). We sponsored 2 wonderful kids from Peru for 2013/14. We are coming up to the time again when we'd like to sponsor 2 more children. The first 2 kids are in the program now so our thoughts are to sponsor 2 different kids. The cost to sponsor a child is \$35/month for a year so sponsoring 2 kids will be \$70/month. This provides for their education and minimal living expenses in their native country. This year there are 18 children in the Matsiko Choir from Liberia, West Africa, Peru and New Delhi. If you'd like to help us sponsor 2 children from the choir please make a check payable to *Spirit of Life* with Matsiko Choir in the memo section. It is important to note that all the children from Ebola affected areas were tested before they left their countries and after they arrived for the Ebola virus. None of them tested positive and all have been in the US more than 21 days.



Sponsoring them will be especially fun this year because the choir will be in the Twin Cities March 14 – 19, 2015. By that time, we'll already have chosen 2 children to sponsor and we'll get to meet them. When the choir is here, *Spirit of Life* has offered to help house the group. If you are able to help house the kids and adult chaperones, please let Julie Raatz know. We'd like to have housing arranged several weeks before they plan to be here. We are also going to work with other area churches to set up concerts for the kids. It would be great to have some help with that too.

Some background checking was done and we learned that Guidestar, the non-profit watch dog organization used by many Fortune 500 companies to evaluate charitable organizations, has given their approval to ICN since 2002.

Thank you for your willingness to house, feed and support these very special kids and adults!

Children & Youth Ministries

Children and Youth programs continue with good participation and energy! Sunday School and M&M are “thriving” thanks to a wonderful group of volunteers and teachers - and fantastic children! Plans are underway for a **Children’s Christmas Program on Sunday, December 14** during worship. All children and youth will be invited to have a part in this traditional and meaningful event. If you are interested in helping with this or helping with the Christmas Program, please see Karen Johnson or Chris Sachs.



M&M We invite congregation members to **join us for M&M dinner on Wednesdays from 6:00-6:30**. You are welcome to join a group of children or enjoy your meal at the “adult table”! Since many of our volunteers head off to hand bells and choir, we would appreciate greatly help with meal clean up from 6:30 to 7:15 from those who might be available.

Registration for the **2015 Mission Trip** for our youth has begun. We anticipate sending approximately 16 people to Springfield, Illinois July 11-18. They will once again be doing maintenance and repair work for families in need, as well as nurturing their own spiritual growth with others.

Thanks for your support of the children and youth at *Spirit of Life!*

Mama’s Awesome Manicotti by Alicia Mikoloski

- 1 small tub Ricotta Cheese
- 1 small tub of small curd cottage cheese
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 3 Tbsp sugar (more to taste)
- Parsley (I like it when I can SEE it in the mix)
- Jar of spaghetti sauce

Mix all and stuff into cooked Manicotti shells.



Layer sauce in the bottom of a baking dish, then shells, then more sauce. Cover with remaining cheese mix or remaining mozzarella. Cover with foil, cook about 45 minutes at 350°, then uncover and continue cooking another 15 minutes.

FOOD SHELF DONATION UPDATE:



The final total is a whopping 252.5 pounds of fresh produce delivered to the Rosemount Family Resource Center. This has included fruit such as rhubarb and raspberries, herbs such as chives and basil, greens such as Swiss chard and lettuce, and other vegetables including radishes, snap peas, green and yellow string beans, zucchini and yellow summer squash, winter squash, beets, peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes and cherry tomatoes. *Thank you* to those who cared for the community garden and to those of you who contributed fresh produce from your own garden.

2014-2015

Officers

Session

Rebecca Brandt
Deon Ford
Brian Gracek
Karen Johnson
Julie Raatz
Peggy Roeske
Chris Sachs
Bob Shepard
Walt Ullrich

Board of Deacons

Alice Gracek
Loretta Hunt
Jerry Johnson
Sayra Maberry
Don Roeske

Treasurer

Barb Ostlund

Financial Secretary

Steve Raatz

Please contact the
**Clerk of
Session,
Karen Johnson,**
in regard to
membership
changes and any
Session member
with questions or
concerns.

NEXT LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

DEACON MEETING

7:00 p.m. on Tuesday,
Nov. 18, 2014 (NOTE: 3rd week)

SESSION MEETING/

6:30 p.m. on Thursday,
Nov. 13, 2014



A VISION TO THRIVE! ~ submitted by Session

We heard a lot on Sunday about Survive to Thrive. Although it was focused around stewardship, it doesn't stop there. *Spirit of Life* has survived a great deal in the past, and has come through stronger for every challenge we've overcome. Now it's time to move beyond a mode of surviving into one of thriving. *Spirit of Life* is a growing community in faith, so like any organization, it is critical to have a vision of where the church is headed in the future.

As a session, we've been focused on developing a strategic plan for the future. A critical part of any strategy is to determine what is it we are striving to achieve, so we have spent a great deal of time developing a vision of where we want to be, a mission that tells us the how we plan to get there, and goals, the actual steps we need take to accomplish our mission.

Because the session is a small representation of our membership, we are asking you for your feedback. Some words or phrases that we felt represented what we would like to be could be best described with a picture of a tree. The trunk is Jesus, the roots represent our internal self, with grounding words such as love, grace, nurturing, supporting, learning. The branches represent our desire to branch out into the community. Words represented by the branches include community, warm, welcoming, thought-provoking, service, minister to those in need, follow/model Jesus, and a family of believers. As we discussed how this picture could be put into words, we came up with this vision: *"To be a dynamic community modeling Jesus"*.

But as I said, the session would like to get input from our membership, we represent you. So please, take the next couple of weeks to think about this and give us some feedback. Is this a vision that you feel will lead *Spirit of Life* to a thriving future? Do you envision us heading in a different direction? We are all the church, we are all in this together, and our goal is to create a vision to lead us well into a thriving future!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
 10 PM ~November 16
 For the December Newsletter.

Office Hours
 10:00 AM—3:00 PM M
 10:00 AM—3:00 PM TU
 10:00 AM—3:00 PM W
 10:00 AM—3:00 PM TH
 FOR PASTORAL EMERGENICES

VITAL SIGNS...for September

WEEK	ATTENDANCE		(+/-)
	2013	2014	
Week 1	53	70	+17
Week 2	73	79	+6
Week 3	83	67	-16
Week 4	67	70	+3
Week 5	50		
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE / TOTALS	66	71.5	

***FINANCIALS WILL BE UPDATED NEXT MONTH**

For questions in regard to the Church finances or your personal giving statement, please contact our financial team: Barb Ostlund-Treasurer or Steve Raatz-Financial Secretary

SPIRIT OF LIFE STAFF

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Wednesday Club

Wednesday Club Meeting for the month of November will be held at the church on Wednesday, November 12, at 1:00 PM. The topic for the meeting will be the life of Daniel. A presentation will be viewed and the hostess for the month will be Janna Warren-Perry.

All are welcome to join us.

Pictures from October Wednesday Club



Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church Stated Session Meeting - September 18, 2014

A quorum being present (9 of 9 Session members), the meeting was called to order by the moderator, Reverend Rob Smith on September 18, 2014.

Pastor Smith offered an opening prayer and led a devotion based on Romans 14:1-12 and Matthew 18:21-35. Being in community calls us to value right relationship over being right.

The financial report was tabled until next month when Barb Ostlund is able to be here.

Pastor Rob gave his report. There were no action items. The discussion concerned the vote taken by our General Assembly to divest from three American companies which provide resources to Israel to go into the Palestinian West Bank territories. Bill Davnie will help Pastor Rob find a speaker to present this topic to the congregation following a Sunday worship time

Minutes of the Stated Session meeting on August 7th and Special Session meeting August 31st, 2014 were presented. Bob Shepard moved and Julie Raatz seconded the motion to approve the minutes as read. The motion carried, the minutes were approved as read.

Welcoming Guests committee had no report. Rebecca Brandt will follow up with Marge Lewis and Carol Osweiler who are chairing this committee. They have been sending e-mails and cards to visitors. Youth and Children's Programming committee report was written by Chris Sachs. Sunday school and M&M have started. A Children's Christmas program will be planned for December 14 during church service. No action was necessary. Public Relations chair Peggy Roeske had a written report. News releases were sent on Sunday School and M&M resuming and on the Garage Sale. A brochure about Spirit of Life has been completed and is available in the Narthex. No action needed. Worship and Music committee report was written by Karen Johnson. The worship services were planned for September, October, November, and December. There were action items. The Sign-up for Usher/Greeter/Communion lead for the months of 2015 was passed around. Committee chair Karen Johnson moved that we again take orders for Poinsettias and greens and the additional funds raised be designated to the Community Gardens. No second was needed and the motion passed. Mary Brause will lead the Christmas decorating this year. Committee chair Karen Johnson moved that we fund up to \$200 for decorations from memorial funds. No second was needed. The motion passed. Community Service report was submitted at the meeting by Deon Ford. Committee chair Deon Ford moved that we approve a bake sale fund raiser at the Garage Sale and funds raised be donated to the Crop Walk and we set up a special fund for the Rosemount Family Resource Center monetary donations specified for dairy and eggs. No second was needed. The motion passed. Stewardship report and timeline was submitted at the meeting by Bob Shepard. Elders and Deacons will be asked to make calls to all members, not just to ask for money but to make a personal connection. The Kick off dinner will be October 12th and all Session members and Deacons will be invited. A video was shown entitled "We were made to Thrive". HUB committee report was written by Walt Ullrich. Boy Scout Will is almost done with his project and there may be money left over after the memorial donations were received. October 4th will be the Scout clean-up day. Personnel committee report was given by Julie Raatz. They are looking for someone from the congregation to serve on the Personnel committee.

Adult Ed. report was submitted at the meeting by Brian Gracek. Adult Ed. Sunday School is underway with Carol Osweiler, Tony Winter and Brian Gracek rotating the teaching. Deacon meeting minutes for August 12th and September 9th were submitted by Loretta Hunt.

The usher/greeter assignments were updated. Bob Shepard will be the lead for October. Deon Ford will be the lead for November. Walt Ullrich will be the lead for December. Session members were reminded to attend the Session retreat at Bob Shepard's house on Saturday, September 20th.

There was no New Business.

Concerns and joys of individuals were expressed and prayers were offered. The meeting was closed with a prayer.

Karen Johnson, Clerk of Session



14401 Pilot Knob Road
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Office 952.423.2212

www.spiritoflifeav.org
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org

Mission Statement

Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church, created by the Holy Spirit, seeks to be a loving community where all can grow in faith while serving and worshipping the God made known in Jesus Christ.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- SUN, NOV. 2 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS—TURN YOUR CLOCKS BACK!
- WED, NOV. 5 M & M 4:30PM
- SAT, NOV. 8 MEN'S BREAKFAST 7:15AM
- WED, NOV. 12 WEDNESDAY CLUB 1:00PM
M & M 4:30PM
- SUN, NOV. 16 CONSECRATION SUNDAY & STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON
- TUES, NOV 18 DEACON MEETING @ 7:00PM
- WED, NOV. 19 M & M 4:30PM
- THURS, NOV. 20 SESSION MEETING @ 6:30PM
- WED, NOV 26 ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE @ GRACE LUTHERAN
- SUN, NOV 30 ADVENT BEGINS!

Weekly Events

- | | | | |
|------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| MON | Cubs @ 6pm | TUES | Scouts @ 6:30pm |
| WED | 6:30pm BELLS, Scouts | THURS | Cubs @ 6pm |
| | 7:30pm CHOIR | | |

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

Sunday School/Youth Group/Adult Ed 11:10 AM (September thru May)
* Nursery provided during Worship & Education time

14401 Pilot Knob Road
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