

FAITH FLIGHT

God Save Us From God

When the skies are dark and all around us seems chaos with the news in Ferguson, Gaza, Liberia, and the terror of ISIS, I am quickly reminded of our recent small group study, *Surprised By Hope*, a book and study by Bishop N.T. Wright. Out of many things that I gained from this study, one that stands out is to consider how we live into the words of the prayer we recite every week "thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." This idea of 'Kingdom of God' that may seem so foreign is talking about God's kingdom here on earth. This shatters any of our categories that I like to think of as the 'evacuation model', a model that is so focused on saving oneself that it leads to a removal of our responsibilities to our neighbor and all of creation.

Jesus spoke much about living into God's presence in the here and now, or as we say in our more churchy words, "The Kingdom of God." Rather than the evacuation mode, this is one we live with our feet, where our street credit comes from how we walk the walk. When asked the most important of commandments, Jesus gave the most beautiful summary of God's law, "To love God with everything we got, and the same goes for people." (*translation mine*). So as people of hope in a world that is motivated by fear, how are we going to walk?

God's purpose throughout history has been restoration of all things. In the resurrection, God did something new. Brian McLaren, pastor and theologian, helped open new worlds for me in understanding a loving God in my journey through seminary education. One simple translation that helped me see God in a new way was to translate the word 'righteousness' as 'restorative justice.' In August as I was at retreat and Brian was the keynote speaker, he continued to help open my eyes to our amazing creator by looking at some of our most difficult and violent passages in Scripture, but not in isolation, but rather in the context of the many books. From the most violent texts of Judges, we looked at this next to the opening of Ruth followed by Matthew. You come to see an evolving and new understanding of God that culminates in one whose judgment is one of justice, who feeds the masses, and whose abundance is more than we could ever imagine.

To look at the larger story, may we be transformed to see God not as a God of violence, or as a God of patriarchy, or as a God of sacrifice, or as a God of choosing favorites, but may we see God as one whose purpose is loving and restoring relationships. Or as N.T. Wright shared in our study, "people who believe in the resurrection, in God making a whole new world in which everything will be set right at last, are unstoppably motivated to work for that new world in the present." While the news may make everything seem dark, may we live in the hope of sharing light in the darkness. This is reflected in how we love and care for one another and how we live out the belief of a God of non-violence, a God of inclusion, and a God of justice. From the words of the prophet Micah who shared a new vision of a non-violent and transforming understanding of God:

With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
Micah 6: 6-8



Welcome to a new year of Sunday school starting September 7th!



Spirit of Life welcomes everyone to the new Sunday school year. We will start Sunday school immediately after church service & snacks beginning September 7th. Children are invited to join the Pre K – 1st grade class or the 2nd – 5th grade class which will meet upstairs. Youth entering 6th grade through 12th grade will meet in the youth room upstairs. Adults will meet in the Conference room.

We will be following a new curriculum this year called Faith Weavers which follows the common lectionary. This means that the Sunday school lesson will be the same as the scripture reading and sermon theme used in the church service. All ages will be using the same curriculum so adults, youth, and children will have the same lesson theme.

We have several volunteers lined up to teach but we could also use more teachers (or substitute teachers). The curriculum is very easy to follow so don't be afraid to teach. Please contact Karen Johnson if you could help teach this year.



Begins Wednesday, September 17, 4:30-6:30 pm

Meeting in the middle of the week; meeting between generations; meeting to share our faith

We are so excited to start our 2nd year of M&M at *Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church*. The program will be 9 weeks in the fall (September 17 through November 19—no meeting Oct. 15). It will be 13 weeks during the Winter & Spring (January 7 through April 15—no meeting March 25 or April 1).

4:30-5pm—Recreation time with afterschool snack (Outdoor & indoor play, relay races, balloon volleyball & more)

5-5:30pm—Worship skills (Singing, scripture reading, instruments & more)

5:30-6pm—Bible study divided by age (Curriculum based with craft activity)

6-6:30pm—Dinner time (Family style with table parents...could include singing, games or after dinner activity)

Children preschool through 5th grade are invited to join us for M&M at 4:30pm. Middle school age youth may join us at this time to be helpers, or do their homework. *Middle school youth will not be supervised.

All children, youth, parents, grandparents and adults are invited to join us at 6pm for dinner. A free will offering will be taken for dinner.

*We're looking for volunteers to set up, cook, clean, serve as table parents, drivers & helpers. Volunteer once a month, 1 or 2 months at a time or what your schedule allows. Please contact Loretta Hunt (set-up, kitchen, cleaning), Merry Close (table parents), or Karen Johnson (helpers & drivers) to get involved.



Wednesday Club

Wednesday Club will be having a **Pot Luck Lunch** at the church on Wednesday, September 10th, at 12:00 noon. All are welcome. Call Janna at 952-686-0268 for more information.





September BIRTHDAYS

09/01 Julie Raatz
 09/02 Trista Hansen
 09/03 Phyllis Monitor
 09/03 Alice Gracek
 09/08 Pat Buchholz
 09/10 Ethan Grimm
 09/20 Patty Scott
 09/21 Lance Ullom
 09/25 Ester Neba
 09/26 Bobbi McCluskey
 09/26 Henry Milbrandt

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



Men's Breakfast for September

The September Men's Breakfast will be held on September 6, at 7:15 a.m. at the church. Larry Buchholz will be providing bagels for breakfast. Please come and enjoy a time to visit and contemplate God's blessings.

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ALICE GRACEK

Thanks for the good food brought to us the night of the Stockholders Banquet. God Bless all involved. From Vern and Lois Hauser

Dear friends of this super church! I love and miss all of you. I hope to be home very soon. I love you all! Bobbi McCluskey

CARD CARE LIST REMINDER :

If you had someone on Loving Community Ministry Team's Card Care List in August 2014 and wish them to remain on in September 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.

Garage Sale

The church will be holding a Garage sale on September 25, 26, and 27. Your help and your stuff is needed. Clean out your closets, your basement, your attic, your garage. **Donated items will be accepted** starting after church on Sunday September 21st, 11:30-4:00. Monday, 22nd 8:00-8:00, and Tuesday, 23rd 8:00-11:00AM. **Please sign-up to assist** in receiving donations, work with set-up and pricing, as well as clean-up after the sale. NOTE: No old TVs and only items that are in wearing/working condition should be donated. *Please know that all items will be priced to sell. Any items not sold will be donated to community resale shops.* Any Questions contact Bob Shepard or Duane Brause.



2014 South of the River CROP Hunger Walk

Save the date! **October 12, 2014**, St. James Lutheran Church in Burnsville will once again host the CROP Walk. The event last year was very successful, with about 230 walkers, and funds raised totaling just under \$15,000, with everyone gathering in a festive atmosphere on a gorgeous fall day.

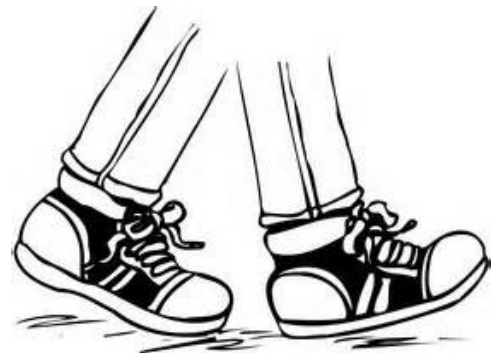
This year, the planning committee has set a goal for 300 walkers, and fundraising total of \$20,000. Three local agencies are designated this to receive a share of the funds raised: 360 Communities, Open Door Pantry (formerly Eagan/Lakeville Resource Center) in Dakota County, and the CAP Agency of Scott County. They will share 25% of the proceeds from the walk; the remaining 75% supports Church World Service in their global efforts to end hunger in a long-term, sustainable way. More information can be found at www.cwsglobal.org, and search for the South of the River CROP walk, or on Face book at Twin Cities South of the River CROP Hunger Walk.

The route has been shortened somewhat, and the direction reversed, AND there will be wonderful pre-walk activities again, including live music, children's games, and samples of homemade apple pie; frozen pies will be available for purchase, with proceeds going to the CROP walk. There will also be a food drive again to benefit our local agencies even more, and representatives from these agencies will be on hand to talk about the work they do to support food security in our communities.

You have several options for supporting this wonderful effort: You can sign up to be a walker, and raise funds for CWS. You can sponsor one of our walkers. You can volunteer to help with registration or route logistics on the day of the walk. You can bring non-perishable food items to church for the food drive. You can buy a South of the River CROP Walk shirt. You can volunteer to help at the Sunset Pond rest stop.

Contact Denise Lewis at 651-686-9476, or dlewis9476@comcast.net, for more information or for any questions.

In addition, there will be a **bake sale** in conjunction with our upcoming church garage sale, with proceeds going to the CROP Walk; again, contact Denise Lewis for more details.



Here's the recipe for the **Italian Beef Sandwiches** we served at Pat and Larry's anniversary celebration. I'm also including the Garlic Parmesan spread we served with the sandwiches. I can't take credit for the spread, but I've been asked for the recipe.



Italian Beef:

- 5 lbs chuck roast
- 2 cups water
- 2 pkgs au jus seasoning
- 1 pkg dry Italian dressing
- 2 cans small diced green chilies

Put all ingredients in a crock pot and cook on low for 12 to 24 hours.

Serve on a hard roll.

Variations:

- use some of the liquid from the crock pot for dipping sauce
- melt mozzarella cheese on sandwich
- serve with garlic Parmesan spread (recipe below)

Creamy Roasted Garlic & Parmesan Dip (Makes about 2 ½ cups)

Ingredients

- 3 garlic heads
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Slice ¼ inch off top of each garlic head. Place garlic, cut side up, on foil and drizzle with oil. Wrap garlic in foil to seal. Place on rimmed baking pan and roast 1 hour. When cool enough to handle, squeeze out garlic. In food processor, add mayonnaise, sour cream, cheese, lemon juice, thyme, salt and garlic. Process 30 seconds or until mixture is smooth, scraping bowl occasionally with rubber spatula. Transfer to serving bowl; cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours or up to 3 days.
- Serve with crackers, toasted baguette slices, potato chips or cut vegetables.

Lectionary Texts and Service Highlights

Sunday, September 7

Exod. 12:1-14; Ps. 149
Rom. 13:8-14; Matt. 18:15-20

Sunday, September 14

Exod. 14:19-31; Ps. 114, or Exod. 15:1b-11, 20-21
Rom. 14:1-12; Matt. 18:21-35

Sunday, September 21

Exod. 16:2-15; Ps. 105:1-6, 37-45
Phil. 1:21-30; Matt. 20:1-16

Sunday, September 28

Exod. 17:1-7; Ps. 78:1-4, 12-16
Phil. 2:1-13; Matt. 21: 23-32

VITAL SIGNS...for June

WEEK	ATTENDANCE		(+/-)	CONTRIBUTIONS		(+/-)
	2013	2014		2013	2014	
Week 1	71	60	-11	\$3,368.22	\$2,469.00	(\$899.22)
Week 2	46	64	+18	\$1,900.00	\$2,133.00	\$223.00
Week 3	54	53	-1	\$1,822.00	\$1,368.00	(\$454.00)
Week 4	37	70	+33	\$3,426.00	\$5,266.04	\$1,840.04
Week 5		75		\$1,062.44	\$1,030.00	(\$32.44)
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE / TOTALS	45	65		\$11,578.66	\$12,266.04	\$687.38

VITAL SIGNS...for July

WEEK	ATTENDANCE		(+/-)	CONTRIBUTIONS		(+/-)
	2013	2014		2013	2014	
Week 1	35	59	+24	\$1,560.85	\$928.00	(\$632.85)
Week 2	41	45	+4	\$2,363.00	\$1,689.00	(\$674.00)
Week 3	54	45	-9	\$1,616.00	\$3,067.00	\$1,451.00
Week 4	49	50	+1	\$3,170.00	\$2,887.00	(\$283.00)
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE / TOTALS	45	50		\$8,709.85	\$8,571.00	(\$138.85)

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

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,
September 9, 2014

SESSION MEETING/

6:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 18, 2014
SESSION RETREAT: September 20,
10-3 @ Bob & Ruth Shepard's home

Update on food shelf donation garden:

As of August 18, just under 150 pounds of fresh produce have been 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.



We will be participating in a new project from Minnesota Food Share, their Harvest Campaign. This program encourages local congregations to collect fresh produce and deliver it to local food shelves; the produce should be locally grown in home gardens or community gardens. So, if you have a home garden, you are invited to bring in some of your extra produce on Sundays in September, and we will add those donations to the harvest from our church garden, boosting our total donation to RFRC.

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.

SPIRIT OF LIFE STAFF

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PARISH ASSOCIATE Rev. Tony Winter
tonypwinter@gmail.com - 507.360.3343

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR Shari Shaw:
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

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NURSERY CAREGIVER Trista Hansen:
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OFFICE spirit@spiritoflifeav.org / www.spiritoflifeav.org
14401 Pilot Knob Road / Apple Valley, MN 55124
952.423.2212

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
PLEASE CALL 952.807.4413



10 PM ~ SUNDAY, September 21
for the October issue.



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 worshiping
the God made known in
Jesus Christ.*

DATES TO REMEMBER

WED, SEPT 6	MEN'S BREAKFAST
SUN, SEPT 7	SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS
MON, SEPT 8	NEW SOCIABLES 8:30 AM
TUES, SEPT 9	DEACON MEETING 7:00 PM
WED, SEPT 10	WEDNESDAY CLUB 12:00 NOON
WED, SEPT 17	M AND M BEGINS
THURS, SEPT 18	SESSION 6:30 PM
SAT, SEPT 20	SESSION RETREAT 10AM-3PM AT BOB & RUTH SHEPARD'S
THURS, SEPT 25	GARAGE SALE 8 AM-7 PM
FRI, SEPT 26	GARAGE SALE 8 AM-7 PM
SAT, SEPT 27	GARAGE SALE 8 AM-1 PM

Weekly Events

MON	Cubs @ 6PM	TUES	Scouts @ 6:30PM
WED	6:30PM BELLS, Scouts	THURS	Cubs @ 6PM

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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