



THE CHURCH IN **ACTION**

Showing Evidence of Growth In Christ

By John Kester, Pastor

*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
To him be glory both now and forever! Amen (2 Peter 3:18)*

*Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity
(Hebrews 6:1a)*

I have been thinking a lot lately about what it means to grow in Christ. Clearly, as the passages above state, God wants us to grow in Christ and reach a point of maturity in our faith. What is less clear is how we would ever know if this is happening in our lives. Is there some sort of measuring stick that we might use to determine if we are approaching the goal of maturity in Christ? Maybe. There are several behaviors that scripture encourages Christians to participate in that demonstrate that a Christian is making progress in their effort to become mature in Christ.

Paul said in Romans 12:12, "Be joyful in hope, patient in tribulation, faithful in prayer." Paul encourages the Romans to have a faithful prayer life. Prayer helps us in two ways. It teaches us to rely on God when things are tough. It also helps us recognize the source of blessing when things are good. When we pray we draw closer to God.

Secondly, Paul writes to his young friend Timothy and encourages him to "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
(2 Timothy 2:15) When we delight in the word of God and seek to know it better we show signs of growing in Christ.

A third way we show that we are becoming more like Jesus is when we serve others. Paul said this to the Galatian churches: "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (Galatians 6:10) Jesus said if we want to be great we must be the servant of all. Service is evidence of growth.

A fourth sign of maturity in Christ is a willingness to share what we have with others. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Romans 12:13) When we give without expecting anything in return we demonstrate that the love of Jesus is growing in us.

Lastly, I want to suggest that a willingness to talk to others about the Savior who claims your allegiance is a sign that we are growing in Christ. Acts 22:15 says. "You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard." When we tell people about what Jesus has and is doing in our life it is the act of a maturing Christian.

Starting near the end of September we are going to try, as a congregation, to see if we are making any progress in these 5 areas of growth. Watch for more details as we accept the challenge to grow in Christ.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS SEPTEMBER 2014

All events are at the church building unless otherwise noted.
* Indicates an article is elsewhere in this newsletter.

- September 1 – Labor Day (USA)
- September 9 – Dorcas Fellowship at 1:30pm
- September 9 – Church Board Meeting at 7:30pm
- September 14 – Friend Day *
- September 18 – October Newsletter articles due
- September 21 – Monthly Building Offering

BIRTHDAYS: September 3- Claudia Essman; 4- Grace Samuel (missionary daughter in India), Lenny Schmidt; 7- Rachel Heldberg; 15- Ardis Ely; 17- Brad Will; 21- Del Brunson; 26- Mike Ely, Fritzner Ideas (VBS sponsored child in Haiti); 30- Brandon Duciaume

ANNIVERSARIES: September 9- Tony & Julie Dittrich, Ken & Sandy Krenik; 11- Bruce & Rose Oles; 12- Dave & Claudia Essman; 20- Rich & Becky Kern; 30- Mike & Selena Ely



PINE HAVEN CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY www.pinehavencamp.org

With summer coming to an end, there are still a few opportunities to participate at PHCA. Last Chance Camp will be held on Labor Day weekend, August 29 - September 1. For those of you who enjoy scrapbooking, there will be a session that you can attend, September 11-14.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

- Amy DH, Mary DH, Anna D, Ellen D, Laura D, Alyssa H, John K, Olivia K, Betty L, Zach R and Zoe R went to PHCA this summer.
- 50 plus attended our church picnic on Sunday, August 10.
- The last section of the parking lot is now paved.



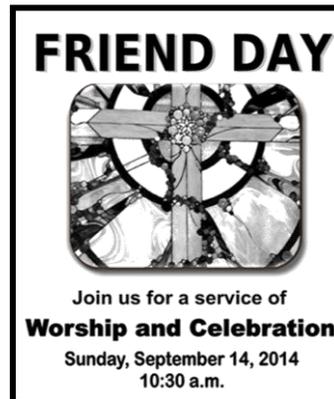
OUR SYMPATHY

We extend our condolences to the family of Steve Davis who passed away on August 3, 2014. Please continue to keep Brenda Davis and her family in your prayers.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



What can we say but "THANK YOU, LORD!" The VBS week was a tremendous event that blessed its children and staff alike! We hosted 29 different kids throughout the week with 23 of them having perfect attendance. During VBS we had 25 different staff with over 26 additional people contributing to VBS one way or another. Our mission goal was to raise a minimum of \$420 and blessings upon blessings were given to the amount of \$701.26!!! Fritzner in Haiti will receive his basic care (= \$420) plus extra gifts of food, school supplies and other items – more than ever before. Best of all was the great experience of learning that God is the supplier of all our needs! Thanks goes to each child who attended, each parent or friend who got them to VBS and each staff member or contributor. It could not have been done without God and without you! Lots of pictures of VBS can be seen online by going to www.clevelandchurch.net and following the picture links OR using this direct link <http://1drv.ms/1nDCSj9>.



On September 14th, the Cleveland Church of Christ will host our annual Friend Day service. We delight in this opportunity because it gives us the chance to share what God has given us. We are privileged to share from our material blessings when we share a meal together. We get the opportunity to share the truth of the word of God when scripture is explained. We have the privilege of sharing in the ministry of evangelism that Jesus gave to those who would follow him. And maybe best of all we have the privilege of sharing the love of Jesus to the people who come to our Friend Day service. We look forward to sharing with all those who attend Friend Day this year.



FRIEND DAY SIGN UP SHEET

There are several opportunities to serve in connection with our *Friend Day* service on September 14. Please sign up on the lists in the foyer if you are able to help with food or in the kitchen. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Chicken, Potatoes, Baked Beans, Dinner Rolls & Beverages will be provided.



YOUTH GROUP

We are excited to announce another year of Youth Group activities beginning on September 21. Right now the plan is to meet on Sunday's from 4-6 pm. We encourage all teens, 7-12 grades to come on the 21st and help plan a calendar of events for the coming year. Some things we can promise you about Youth Group is that we will have good food under the capable leadership of Steve Den Herder. We will play some fun and silly games. We will spend some time talking about what it means to be a follower of Jesus and how we can become better at fulfilling this goal. We encourage our young people to come and to bring a friend.



FALL PROGRAMS

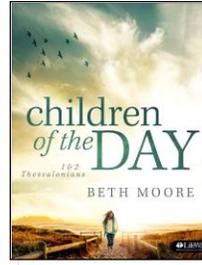
We are still in the planning stages for our youth Sunday School program. We really want to offer a program to help kids grow in their faith and learn more about God's word. Our problem right now is that we are struggling to find the right people to teach our young people. We need three sets of teachers for 2nd grade and younger, third through sixth grade and seventh through twelfth grade. If God is moving in your heart and prompting you to consider teaching, please talk to John Kester ASAP.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

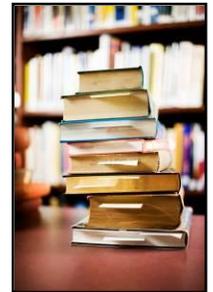
Keep your eyes open for items to purchase for shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Learn about OCC, its mission and how to fill and pack a shoebox, at their website located at www.samaritanspurse.org/occ. Our Cleveland church family is looking forward to our 15th year of packing shoes boxes for needy children around the world.

BETH MOORE BIBLE STUDY



Our next Beth Moore Bible Study for the ladies will start on September 17th. The study will run for nine weeks and will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. Each session includes a teaching video by Beth Moore and would be beneficial for new as well as more mature Christians. The study will be on 1st & 2nd Thessalonians and is called "Children of the Day." In the study we will learn how to let go of past mistakes and discover your circumstances are not coincidental. No matter where you are at or what you are facing, you will come away encouraged that even though it may not feel that way, you are exactly where Christ wants you to be! "We are children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness." 1Thessalonians 5:5. There is a cost of \$18 for the book. Please sign up by September 7 or call Sandy Krenik (507-317-5632).

DAVID KESTER SCHOLARSHIP FUND



In 2010, a generous gift was given to establish a scholarship fund to honor the memory of David Kester, a beloved former pastor of the Cleveland Church of Christ. Its purpose is to encourage students from the church to attend a Christian college. It is to encourage young people to grow in their faith and to make serving Jesus a priority in their lives. Because of David's love for Crossroads College, his alma mater, first preference will be given to a student attending Crossroads. Second preference will be given to a student attending a sister school of Crossroads, and third preference will be given to a student attending any Christian college. To apply for this scholarship, students are asked to submit a letter to the Cleveland Church of Christ pastor stating where they will be/are attending college, their intended course of study, and a one-page essay that discusses their relationship with Jesus and how they see themselves serving him in the future. Students may apply once per year as long as funds are available.



facebook

Pictures you see in this email newsletter and previous email newsletters have NOT been in our mailed printed edition. See them and many others on Facebook at "[Church of Christ, Cleveland, MN, USA.](#)" "Like" and "Follow" us for the latest pictures & happenings with occasional "blasts from the past." We have several Cleveland church "alumni" among our FB friends and that has been a neat online gathering of church family.



2014 Church Picnic (Indoor-Outdoor)
Church of Christ, Cleveland, MN, USA
Sunday, August 10, 2014



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CHURCH OF CHRIST

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OUR HEAD: Jesus Christ
PASTOR: John Kester
CHURCH SECRETARY: Lisa Koppelman

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 am – Bible Classes - All Welcome
10:00 am – Fellowship Time
10:30 am – Worship Service

Link to prior monthly newsletters

http://www.clevelandchurch.net/index.php?p=1_212