



FREE FROM GUILT

By John Kester, Pastor

As a child, one of my prized possessions was a green 5-speed bicycle with a banana seat and a sissy bar. I was one of the first kids in my neighborhood to have a 5-speed bike. I bought it with my own money and was really proud of it. One summer day my brother and I were playing at the school across the street from our home. For some reason, to this day I do not know why, my brother grabbed my bike, got on and began to ride away. I tried to catch him to get my bike back but could not. In my frustration, I bent down, picked up a rock and fired it at him. Unfortunately I had failed to factor in two things. I didn't allow for his speed and I neglected to notice the schoolhouse window behind him. There was a loud crack that signaled a broken window.

This event immediately ended any spat my brother and I were embroiled in and we began to search with downcast faces for the school janitor to confess what had happened. We found Rudy in the basement and told him what had transpired. Much to our surprise he said, "Oh, that is OK. Windows get broken all the time. No one ever confesses. Thank you for being honest. I will take care of it." What a relief. Even though I had done wrong I didn't have to pay the penalty. Furthermore I didn't have to feel guilty because I had confessed what I had done and I had been forgiven.

In some small way this story illustrates our relationship to God when we sin. Our sin is costly. Someone has to pay for it just like someone had to pay for that window. But when we are willing to confess our sin to God in repentance two remarkable things happen. First, God tells us that we do not have to pay the price for our sin. Just like Rudy did with the window, He says I will take care of it. Secondly, we do not need to feel guilty because everything is out in the open. We didn't hide anything and the sin was still forgiven. We may remember our sin, but we are not burdened by the actions of the past.

Sometimes I think we fail to enjoy all the benefits of God's forgiveness. We are grateful that we do not have to pay for our sins but we still carry around the guilt associated with our past. Someone said a rather profound thing to me recently. If God has forgiven me of my sin shouldn't I forgive myself? What this person was saying was neither that we should forget our sins of the past nor even that we should stop feeling remorse for them. But rather, we should not allow the guilt associated with the sins of our past keep us from going forward.

God does not do anything in half measures. When we confess our sin to Him, He deals with it completely. He pays the price on our behalf and He removes all cause for guilt and shame. The Psalmist said, "**as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.**" (*Psalms 103:12*) What we did in the past does not affect the way we relate to God now. We are forgiven. That is good news.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

900 State Highway 99
PO Box 307
Cleveland, MN 56017

(507) 931-5924
clchurch@live.com
www.clevelandchurch.net

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

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 am – Bible Classes for 4 Years-Adult
10:00 am – Fellowship Time
10:30 am – Worship Service including Junior Church

Link to prior monthly newsletters
for the Cleveland Church of Christ
http://www.clevelandchurch.net/index.php?p=1_212



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

- April 2 – KJLY Women’s Day, Mankato, MN
- April 3 – Hour of Prayer *
- April 6,13,20,27 – Ladies Bible Study at 6:30pm
- April 3 – Good Friday Service at 7:00pm *
- April 9-10 – 30-Hour Famine for 7th-12th Youth *
- April 10 – Fund-raising breakfast 8:00-10:20am *
- April 10 – Monthly Building Offering
- April 12 – Dorcas Fellowship at 1:30pm *
- April 12 – Church Board meeting at 7:30pm *
- April 21 – May Newsletter articles due

LONG RANGE PLANNING

- May 1 – High School Graduation Recognition *
- May 1 – Hour of Prayer *
- May 2 – PHCA Youth Early Bird Registration ends *
- May 4,10 – Ladies Bible Study at 6:30pm
- May 5 – National Day of Prayer for America
- May 6 – Crossroads College “Dream Banquet”
- May 8 – Mother’s Day
- May 8 – Monthly Building Offering
- May 12 – Set up for Free Clothing Give Away *
- May 12-14 – PHCA Work Weekend *
- May 13-14 – Free Clothing Give Away *
- May 19 – June Newsletter articles due
- May 27-30 – PHCA Fishing Weekend *
- May 30 – Memorial Day
- May 29 – Cleveland School Commencement

BIRTHDAYS: April 3- Oliver Rogers; 5- Calissa Guentzel; 6- Tony Dittrich, Sherm Rupe; 7- Brenda Davis; 9- David Crow, Marshall Heldberg; 10- Zach Will; 13- Kim Wobbrock; 16- Jeff Jaster; 18- Wally Krenik; 19- Brandon Rogers; 23- Simba Nyamutora (son of missionary in India); 24- Lisa Sprague; 25- Larry Filter, Brandon Koppelman; 28- Jim Schmidt

ANNIVERSARY: April 7- Graydon & Ellen Dickie



BIBLE 101

The ability to study scripture and understand how the Bible fits together into one cohesive piece is one of the key skills a Christian needs in order to live a life for Jesus. Some people learn these skills at an early age in Sunday school and camp and VBS. Some people have not had the opportunity to learn those skills early in life so they need to develop them later on in life. We want to help people learn how to study and understand scripture so we are offering a class called Bible 101 to help interested people learn how to study scripture and understand what it means for their lives. This new class will be offered on Sunday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00am starting on April 3.

PRAYER MEETINGS



The church draws close to God and to each other when we make prayer a priority in our lives. We have begun a more concerted focus on prayer together. We will meet Sunday, April 3 from 4:30-5:30 pm to pray together and we will meet again on Sunday, May 1 for prayer. At this gathering we will be mindful of the National Day of Prayer that is being observed on May 5.



30-Hour Famine

Our annual 30-Hour Famine is happening this month! Our teens and sponsors plan to stop eating before bed on Friday, April 8, and fast together until breakfast on Sunday morning, April 10. We are planning to gather at 9:30 on Saturday, April 9, for a day of fun, service and learning. Our purpose for this event is to raise awareness of global hunger concerns and to do a small part to alleviate global hunger by raising money to support a young boy in Columbia named Jesus. We need to raise at least \$420 to provide for his needs. Our fund raising goal for the event is \$1000. We will conclude the famine with a **Pancake Breakfast** that is open to the public with freewill donations accepted to help with our fundraising. The breakfast will be Sunday, April 10 from 8:00 until 10:20 am.

DORCAS FELLOWSHIP

The Dorcas Fellowship will meet on Tuesday, April 12 at church at 1:30pm. All ladies are welcome to join this time of fellowship.

CHURCH BOARD MEETING

Members will meet at the church on Tuesday, April 12 at 7:30pm.

DVD ADULT SUNDAY CLASS

The adult Sunday school class using DVDs will begin a new DVD series starting Sunday, April 24 at 9:00am. Watch for announcements for a new DVD series title in the weekly bulletin, on our website and on Facebook.

2016 GRADUATES

We will be honoring our High School Graduates Amy Den Herder and Alec Rogers on Sunday, May 1. They will be graduating from Cleveland High School.



FREE CLOTHING

GIVE AWAY MAY 13-14

If you do spring cleaning of closets and dressers remember to save gently used clothing in good condition for our Free Clothing Give Away. Please talk to Shelly Will or John Kester if you can volunteer for this event either before or during it. Set up will be on Thursday, May 12.



Good Friday Communion Service



Easter Sunday Trumpet Trio
Evan Koppelman, Alec Rogers, Shane Rogers



2016 Summer Camp Schedule

Pine Haven Christian Assembly

www.pinehavencamp.org

The 'Early Bird' rate for youth campers concludes on May 2.

Based on grades going into Fall 2016

Cleveland is in Zone A

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| Work Weekend | May 12-14 |
| Fishing Weekend | May 27-30 |
| Ladies Retreat | June 10-12 |
| 11th-12th Grade | June 19-25 |
| 9th-10th Grade | June 26-July 2 |
| Family Week | July 3-8 |
| 5th-6th Grade Zone A | July 17-22 |
| Adult Weekend is 75th PHCA Anniversary <i>HOME COMING</i> <i>WEEKEND</i> | July 22-24 |
| 7th-8th Grade Zone A | July 24-30 |
| Deeper Life | Aug 3-7 |
| Greenhorns (3rd-4th Grade) | Aug 7-10 |
| Family Weekend | Aug 11-14 |
| Motorcycle Weekend | Aug 19-21 |
| Ministry Leadership Retreat | Aug 21-23 |
| Last Chance Camp | Sept 2-5 |
| Weekend Craft Retreat | Sept 15-18 |

CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

The camp season is getting close. If your child is planning to attend camp and will need a ride please sign up on the clipboard in the foyer. Because we believe church camp is an important influence on the lives of young people, we are delighted to announce that we will pay half the standard tuition for any child from our church who wants to attend Pine Haven Christian Assembly. This year a code is needed to indicate that our church is supplying a scholarship. Please check with John Kester or look in our registration binder to find this code. Early bird registration special for youth campers ends May 2. Some of the people of our congregation have been greatly blessed by the ministry of PHCA. If you would like to continue that legacy and send a child to camp you can earmark a check PHCA and place it in the offering plate.

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