

Did Christ die for nothing?

Inside this issue:

College-Age Ministry	2
Finance Reports	4-5
Calendars	8-10
Lily Order Form	11
Property	13
Children's Ministry	14
Young Life	15

My immediate response to this question is, "Of course not! Don't be ridiculous. It's Christ's death that brought forgiveness of sin, provided the path for salvation, and humiliated the evil principalities of the world. It's in Christ's death that He met (and continues to meet!) the world in its suffering, paid the consequence of sin, and began the process of restoring creation with the Creator. Of course Christ did not die for nothing!" Yet upon that response a follow-up question comes to mind: Do I still live as though Christ died for nothing?

This morning as I began my day I was led to Galatians 2:21 in which Paul states, "I do not nullify the

grace of God; for if justification comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing." As I read and began to reflect upon this verse, I summarized it in this way: If I believe that anything I do adds or takes away from the justification I have in Jesus Christ's work on the cross, then Christ died for nothing. If I believe that any aspect of what I do adds to my salvation, helps earn God's approval, or makes God love me more or less, then Christ died for nothing. If I look back on my day and feel like I lived obediently and therefore I'm in good standing with God, then Christ died for nothing. If I believe that any aspect of God's love towards me depends upon what I do or do not do, then Christ died for nothing.

continued on p. 14

Ashland XD Attends CCO Jubilee

Back Row: Barouk, Maggie, Chris, Tanner, Jake, Jenny, Sarah, Kyle.
Front Row: Logan, Morgan, Sarah.

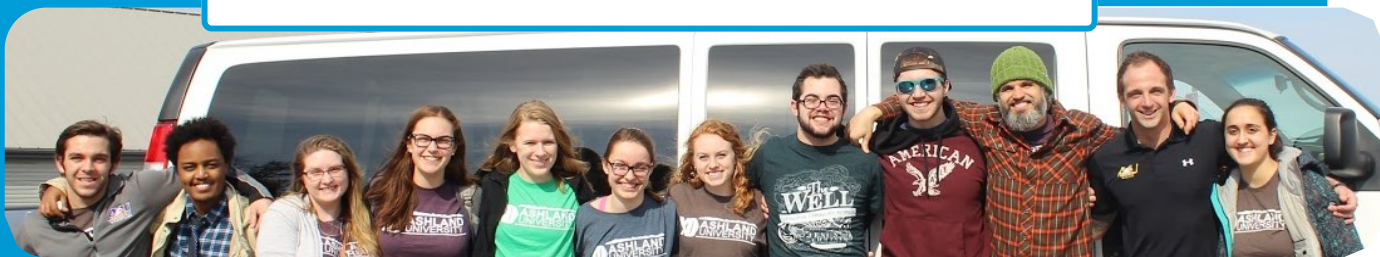
CCO (Coalition for Christian Outreach) has partnered with FPC to bring me, Jake Blasdel, here to challenge college students at Ashland University to live out their faith in every area of life. One of the great opportunities for students that captures this vision and purpose is the Jubilee Conference.



Jubilee is a conference where 3,000 plus students experience firsthand from worship gatherings, speakers, and workshops how to integrate their faith from "Sunday to Monday." Many times we

continued on p.2

Ashland XD—CCO continued from p.1



Kyle, Barouk, Logan, Jenny, Sarah, Nicole, Morgan, Tanner, Chris, Jake, Brock, Maggie

live our lives of faith disconnected from our studies and our 40 hour work weeks. At the conference students can interact with people and speakers that demonstrate through their lives, stories and illustrations how they are seeing Christ restore and redeem their work, field of study, and industry. We had the great privilege to take 10 students and Brock Kertoy, who works in the Graduate Admissions Department and is an AU Assistant Women's Soccer Coach.

Here is a taste of some things that I learned and am processing now that I am back. Author and principle of The Washington Institute, Steve Garber challenged us with the Hebrew word "YADA." He shared that if we are to have a true Hebrew and Christian view of the world we must "KNOW" the world or "YADA" the world. To truly know means to "have knowledge of, which means

we have responsibility to and if responsibility to then to care for." He proposed that the hardest question in the world is "Can you really know the world and love the world?" As a husband, father, campus minister, outdoor leader I am challenged with this. Now that I know the difficulties, challenges and realities of these areas and the responsibilities they bring, am I willing to pay the cost to truly CARE for them? If I and we engage in this fully then we are truly "knowing" them. If so, we are "YADA" (knowing) life with an accurate biblical worldview. So, with so much to CARE for in our world, ask the Lord "What is mine to CARE for?"

One area that I believe that Lord has called me to YADA, to care for, is seeing more minorities and those of other races experience the world of Recreation and Adventure. I picked up a book at Jubilee by the keynote speaker of the WEA (Wilderness Education Association) conference that I will be taking 5 students to February 25-27. It is titled "The Adventure Gap." We will hear this week about the first African-American team to summit Denali in Alaska. He speaks about how there is a gap in our world with minorities not taking to the mountains for recreation and

continued on p. 3

Nick, Barouk, and I on top of Chimney Mountain in the Adirondack Mountains of NY



Birthdays



MARCH

1st Terrence Webb
 6th Doug Click
 8th Tim Mast
 10th Cindy Click
 12th Matt Madden
 14th Meredith Beer
 15th William Downs
 Braylen Jarvis
 21st Karen Ford
 22nd Lindsey Saffle
 Jordann Saffle
 24th Susan Keil
 26th Carl Armstrong
 27th Connie Nordstrom
 David Steury
 30th Danielle Conley
 31st Beverly Bixler

APRIL

2nd Carolyn Shenberger
 5th Carolyn Freer
 6th Vinny Foley
 Dex Sedwick
 7th Jamie Kash
 8th Justin Dew
 9th Judy Frame
 10th Sally Smetana
 11th JoAnn Ford Watson
 14th Linda McKibben
 15th Erin Skafec
 19th Jake Blasdel
 20th Brent Sponsler
 21st Anne Beer
 23rd Betty Plank
 25th Ronald Baum
 Bill Manos
 28th Maylyn Latham

MAY

1st Matthew Latham
 4th Jakin Parker
 8th William Beck
 Dee Eiserling
 Edie Lerback
 Corinne Sedwick
 11th Judith Webb
 12th Jean Hudkins
 Preston Sponsler
 13th John Saccomen
 Julia Schoonover
 18th Catherine Hiner
 20th Dick Bonesteel
 Judy Mengel
 25th Ellen Saccomen
 26th Matt McClain
 28th Angelica Morales
 Allison Skafec

Ashland XD

continued from p.2

adventure. It is exciting to look back upon our Fall Break Trip and recall how the Lord had Barouk from Ethiopia on our trip. He climbed 2 mountains with us and just had a remarkable trip. I look to the Lord and how he has uniquely positioned us at a campus that has many international students and the potential for restoration in this area in years to come. Please pray for the 5 students that I will be taking to this Outdoor Leadership conference: Chris, Jesse, Ben, Ashley and Logan.

Jake Blasdel



To the family and friends of

Minta "June" Etzwiler who
 passed away on
 February 13, 2016

Helen L. Pifer who passed
 away on February 13,
 2016

W. David Horner who
 passed away on
 February 19, 2016



Matilyn Kelly Paullin
 was born on December 31
 to Matt and Jamie Paullin.
 Grandmother is Krystal
 Paullin.

Financial Reports

01/10/2016 08:08 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Balance Sheet (UNAUDITED)
 Consolidated - December 2015

Page: 1

	Current Year
<hr/>	
ASSETS	
CASH ACCOUNTS	
Sutton Bank Checking Acct	\$87,337.31
Janney Montgomery Scott	133,694.68
Subtotal Cash Accounts	<u>221,031.99</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS	 <u><u>\$221,031.99</u></u>
 LIABILITIES	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
200th Campaign Fund	\$22,114.88
Property Purchase	24,000.00
CCO - College Ministry	184.00
Memorial & Special Gifts	
Nancy Donley Estate	15,561.86
Kitchen maint. Liab. a/c	708.18
Subtotal Memorial & Special Gifts	<u>16,270.04</u>
Year End Liabilities	80.04
Presb. Mother's Study	3.01
Youth Ministry	
ACCF - Johnson	2,238.09
Subtotal Current Liabilities	<u>64,890.06</u>
OTHER LIABILITIES	
Pre-Paid Pledges	27,846.14
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>92,736.20</u>
 FUND BALANCE	
Fund Balance	<u>\$128,295.79</u>
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	<u>128,295.79</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	 <u><u>\$221,031.99</u></u>

Includes collections of \$207,786.02 for the 200 for 200 campaign & expenses paid of \$185,671.14 for a net amount available of \$22,114.88.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FINANCE REPORT - DECEMBER 2015**

<u>Contributions/Receipts</u>	<u>DEC. 2014</u>	<u>BUDGET 2015</u>	<u>DEC. 2015</u>
	<u>YTD</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Pledges	\$191,858.00	\$170,000.00	\$177,452.20 *
Non-Pledged Contributions	\$48,838.07	\$65,000.00	\$64,437.51
Loose Offering	\$5,218.56	\$6,000.00	\$5,597.00
Prior Year Pledges	\$1,247.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,525.00
Church Use Donations	\$425.00	\$1,000.00	\$925.00
Whiting Fund	\$37,500.00	\$37,500.00	\$33,000.00
ACCF – Program	\$12,977.50	\$13,000.00	\$13,102.85
ACCF – Building	\$6,559.00	\$6,500.00	\$7,045.00
ACCF - Mission	\$2,477.25	\$2,500.00	\$2,608.50
Interest/Investment Income	\$488.91	\$85.00	(\$708.09)
Miscellaneous Income	\$3,188.95	\$4,500.00	\$2,355.67
Total Receipts	\$310,778.24	\$311,085.00	\$311,340.64
<u>Expenses</u>			
Personnel	\$191,609.69	\$207,622.00	\$202,364.68
Health Insurance	\$13,362.96	\$14,234.00	\$14,234.52
Property	\$32,038.42	\$22,325.00	\$17,585.67
Property Insurance	\$8,963.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,209.00
Utilities	\$22,534.73	\$22,280.00	\$19,737.89
Finance	\$345.42	\$350.00	\$411.82
Per capita assessment	\$5,124.77	\$5,019.00	\$5,019.00
Session Expenses	\$352.86	\$1,200.00	\$1,010.88
Worship/Music	\$1,529.11	\$1,560.00	\$1,965.57
Office	\$10,168.73	\$11,300.00	\$9,023.26
Discipleship	\$4,570.44	\$2,225.00	\$2,597.11
Pioneer Club	\$357.40	\$1,000.00	\$209.39
Stephen Ministry	\$148.48	\$600.00	\$0.00
Mid Week Gathering	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$564.75
Formational Prayer/Training		\$1,000.00	\$500.00
College-Aged Ministry	\$1,991.40		
Mission /Giving /Support		\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00
DEACONS			
Invite	\$15,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Connect	\$4,223.87	\$5,500.00	\$4,000.52
Send	\$2,690.46	\$6,000.00	\$2,428.72
Deacons - Miscellaneous	\$3,389.80	\$1,000.00	\$1,321.73
Total Expenses	\$318,401.54	\$327,215.00	\$305,184.51
EXCESS INCOME / EXPENSES	(\$7,623.30)	(\$16,130.00)	\$6,156.13

* Includes Prepaid pledges of \$22,433.76



HEALING CARE MINISTRIES' (HCM) EVENT AT FPC

Living Out of My True Self: The Journey of Being Defined by Christ

Friday, April 22, 6:00pm-
Saturday, April 23, 3:30pm

\$48 for early registration/ \$55 per person

We live in a world that encourages us to seek fulfillment of our core longings in things other than Jesus. Unfortunately, the foundation of our true identity in Christ can be lost to things such as acceptance, success, demands of life, comfort, self-protection, etc.

In Living out of my True Self, you will learn what it means to be defined by Jesus and the building blocks of self-definition in Christ. You will also experience the power that comes from living out of your true identity.

This day and a half seminar will be facilitated by Pastor Mike and will consist of a series of video based teachings by Dr. Terry Wardle, small group sharing and processing, and experiential exercises.

We are hosting this event at our church. More information will be forthcoming, but we encourage you to make note of the dates. This event is a good finale to Pastor Mike's Lenten sermon series, "Letting Go: Trusting Jesus with Our Deepest Desires."

For more information about similar events, visit www.hcminternational.org



Living Out of My True Self: The Journey of Being Defined by Christ



Mark your calendar for this six-week small group led by Pastor Mike.

Wednesdays May 4-June 8.

More Details to Come

Women's Fellowship Group

Monday, April 4th is the first meeting at Tia Sponsler's home from 6-8pm. We will be growing together in faith, vulnerability, and joy.

We will be journeying through the book, *Come Along: The Journey into a More Intimate Faith*.

Through ten illuminating encounters, walk into Jesus' life, love and delight! Laugh, grow, and rest in Christ's presence as you share these vivid meetings with the One who loves you more than life itself. With humor and spiritual depth, Jane Rubietta passionately draws you into the hope of a freeing relationship with Christ—freedom from false expectations into the brilliance of being fully loved.



Let Jesus delight in you.

Call Tia with questions.



Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 20:

10:00am Worship with palm processional and Communion

Wednesday, March 23:

5:30pm Oasis

Maundy Thursday, March 24:

8:00pm Worship with Communion, candlelight, and the choir.

Good Friday, March 25:

12:00-3:00pm Community Worship Service at Trinity Lutheran Church

Resurrection Sunday, March 27:

9:00am Breakfast

No Sunday School

10:00am Worship with Communion

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us at the
GARDEN OF WEEDIN'
All Daughter Banquet

Sunday, May 1
5:00pm
Fellowship Hall



Thank you so much for all your cards and prayers for me before, during, and after my heart surgery. They were much needed and appreciated.

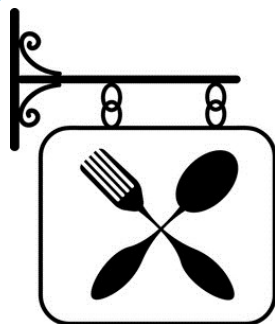
Bob Stokes

The church office
will be closed

Good Friday, March 25

and

Monday, March 28



Lunch Bunch

Get an early Jump on spring by joining the Lunch Bunch at Jake's in Ashland on Tuesday, March 15, 11:30am. Reservations to Cora Walker no later than Sunday, March 13.

What a beautiful gift it is to be a member of this dear congregation and church family. I am SO grateful for all of your thoughtfulness. I have cards and valentines on the fridge flowers to enjoy and food in the freezer, drivers and shoppers, and most especially visits and prayers. I realize that this healing process is taking longer than any of us imagined and I thank you all for helping me continue learning patience. Once again I am limited in reading, computer, TV eye stimulation, which is very difficult for me.

Now I start my day with hymns on my iPad and listen to streams of mercy never ceasing. My prayer has become, "Whatever happens today, put a song in my heart to sing in gratitude to You at the end of the day and remind me of Your many blessings to include in this song of praise and reveal to me new ones each and every day."

Sharing God's love, Jolynn

March

First Presbyterian Church of Ashland

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Host ACCESS	2 Host ACCESS Session Packet Info Due 9:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Oasis 7:30pm Choir	3 Host ACCESS	4 Host ACCESS	5 Host ACCESS
6 Host ACCESS Hunger Sunday Communion	7	8 8:00am Memorial & Gifts Team 9:00am Staff 6:30pm Session 6:30pm Deacons 8:00pm AA	9 9:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Oasis 7:30pm Choir	10	11	12
13 Daylight Savings Begins Lily Orders Due	14 5:15pm PMS meet @ Yoders' Office	15 11:30am Lunch Bunch @ Jakes' 8:00pm AA	16 9:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Oasis 7:30pm Choir	17 10:00am Worship Ministry Team 10:30am Finance Ministry Team	18	19
20 Palm Sunday Communion	21 Monthly Newsletter Deadline	22 9:00am Staff 8:00pm AA	23 9:30am Bible Study 5:30pm Oasis 7:30pm Choir	24 Maundy Thursday 8:00pm Worship Communion Tenebrae	25 Office Closed— Good Friday 12:00pm Community Worship Service @ Trinity Lutheran	26
27 Easter 9:00am Breakfast 10:00am Worship Communion	28 Office Closed— Easter Observed	29 8:00pm AA	30 9:30am Bible Study 7:30pm Choir	31		

April

First Presbyterian Church of Ashland

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Private Baby Shower
3 Hunger Sunday Communion	4 6:00pm Women's Fellowship Group @	5 8:00pm AA	6 Session Packet Info Due 9:30am Bible Study 7:30pm Choir	7	8	9
10	11	12 1:00pm Bridge 6:30pm Session 6:30pm Deacons 8:00pm AA	13 9:30am Bible Study 7:30pm Choir	14	15	16
17 2:15pm Worship @ Kingston	18	19 8:00pm AA	20 9:30am Bible Study 7:30pm Choir	21	22 True Self Event	23 True Self Event
24 Compassion Sunday	25	26 8:00pm AA	27 9:30am Bible Study 7:30pm Choir	28	29	30

May

First Presbyterian Church of Ashland

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion 5:00pm All Daughter Banquet	2	3	4 Session Packet Info Due 9:30am Bible Study True Self Small Group 7:30pm Choir	5	6	7
8	9	10 1:00pm Bridge 6:30pm Session 6:30pm Deacons 8:00pm AA	11 9:30am Bible Study True Self Small Group 7:30pm Choir	12	13	14
15 Communion Pentecost	16	17 8:00pm AA	18 9:30am Bible Study True Self Small Group 7:30pm Choir	19	20	21
22 Communion	23	24 8:00pm AA	25 9:30am Bible Study True Self Small Group 7:30pm Choir	26	27	28
29 Loud Sunday Offering to Benefit Young Life Camp	30 Office Closed— Memorial Day	31 8:00pm AA				

One Great Hour of Sharing

The West Africa Initiative

Since 2007, the West Africa Initiative (WAI) has assisted in the rebuilding and rehabilitation of Liberia and Sierra Leone following years of civil wars. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People) have worked together with the people in West Africa to improve their lives and communities. Your generous and consistent gifts to OGHS are joined with the gifts of creativity expertise, and commitment of our church partner in West Africa to strengthen and reinforce sustainable development and food security.

So Much Accomplished:

Increased Food Security & Livelihoods

More than 65 communities have received training and assistance to establish farming and microbusinesses, leading to self-reliant food production and decreased effect of food shortages.

Tools for Women to Lead

Hundreds of women have participated in livelihood training programs through the WAI, including beekeeping, raising livestock, and moringa tree production. These programs equip women with the knowledge and tools to provide for themselves and their families.



Still so Much to Do:

Recovering from the Ebola Epidemic

The recent Ebola epidemic was a major setback for the progress in West Africa.

Caring for Orphaned Children

It's estimated that more than 25,000 orphans live in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Your gift can lift up the people of West Africa as they work to solve these challenges.

Three Ways to Give:

- Through FPC via pew envelopes
- Text OGHS to 20222 to give \$10 now
- Online: presbyterianmission.org/give-oghs



Lily Order Form

\$8.00 each

Due Sunday, March 13



In Loving Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Given by: _____

Please use one form per lily. Return this order form by Sunday, March 13 with your payment to either the church office or place it in the offering plate. Checks should be made payable to the First Presbyterian Church and please put "Lily" on the memo line. Thank you.

FPC will no longer be delivering lilies to others.

You are encouraged to take your lily with you Easter morning, March 27, after worship.

Passport to **Entertainment and Enrichment**

Following are brief description of books CSLA has given our library in January and February.

Year of the Snake 1989

by Sue Lile Inman

Although 1989 was China's Year of the Snake, the novel does not deal with China. Instead, it shows that individuals and organizations can have their own year of the snake, the serpent long a Christian symbol of temptation. In fact, the two main protagonists are Presbyterian pastors. Their personal and professional lives present them and the congregation with many problems.

Lock, Stock, and Over a Barrel

by Melody Carlson

Daphne Ballinger has been a writer for a New York newspaper for a dozen years. Feeling the need for a change, she returns to her hometown of Appleton when her grant aunt dies. Daphne is to inherit her aunt's estate if she fulfills the requirements. She is to live in her aunt's home, care for the two cats, continue writing her aunt's advice column, and marry within a year.

Dating, Dining, and Desperation

by Melody Carlson

The sequel to the novel described above revolves around Daphne's hopes and attempts to find "Mr. Right." Her friends try too hard to "help" her. Her life does present her with a couple distractions. One is her befriending a little girl who has come to live with her ill grandmother. When the woman dies, her son, the girl's uncle, comes on the scene. Will he be "Mr. Right?"

It's Good to be Queen: Becoming Bold, Gracious, and Wise as the Queen of Sheba

by Liz Curtis Higgs

Little is revealed about the Queen of Sheba in the Bible. But in the first thirteen verses of I Kings, chapter ten, is the account of her visit

to King Solomon. She was intrigued by his wisdom and sought answers to many questions. Higgs presents and discusses the verses phrase by phrase. She inserts one fictional aspect in the form of brief messages from the queen giving her comments on her situation as it is presented in a given chapter.

Amish Sweethearts

by Leslie Gould

Neighbors for years, Lila Lehman and Zane Beck have become the best of friends by the time they reach their teens. Zane would like to be more than just a friend. Although she doesn't admit it, Lila would too. However, obstacles line that path. Lila is Amish and Zane is not. Her father opposes the relationship and instigates the courting of his daughter by the bishop's son. As the result of an argument, Zane joins the service. At the end of the novel, Zane and Lila have reconciled and realize that to achieve their dream of being together, they will have to take it "step by step."

Where She Belongs

by Johnnie Alexander

As she was growing up, Shelby Kincaid spent much time at her grandparents' home, Misty Willow. Now a widow with two small girls, she wants to buy the property so her daughters can experience similar happy times there. Shelby contacts the current owner, A. J. Sullivan. She is prepared to dislike him because the belief is that the Sullivans "stole" the property and caused other problems for her family. She and the girls do move there but obstacles to finding the peace she desires keep cropping up. Confronted by the possibility that they will not be able to remain there, Shelby finally realizes that people, not a place, provide the peace she seeks.

- Beverly Bixler

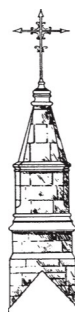
Opportunities for Serving God and Our Community

Within our community, the need for volunteers to provide vital services to folks in need is huge. The list below is a sampling of only 4 organizations where a great variety of talents and interests can be put to use. The opportunities range from interacting with clients to providing clerical services. In most instances, special training is required, and in some, background checks. Please consider how God may be calling you to serve a few hours a month, a week, or a year in an area where your greatest interest lies.

- Ashland Christian Health Center
419-903-0475
Receptionist, housekeeping, outside work, hosts and hostesses, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, nurse assistants, medical assistants, nurse practitioners, emergency medical technicians
- Associated Charities/Ashland County Food Bank 419-281-6061
Food Bank, Clothing Bank, Easter Program, Back-to-School Program, Thanksgiving Program, Christmas Program
- Rape Crisis and Safe Haven Domestic Violence Shelter 419-282-6097
Telephone hot line, work with clients in shelter, housekeeping, fund-raising
- Hospice of North Central Ohio
419-289-4852
Volunteer Coordinator 419-281-7107 ext. 1091
Reception desk, administrative support, deliveries, mailings, sewing, prayer shawls, direct contact with patients and families, staffing at What Goes 'Round Thrift Shop in Mansfield



Mission Ministry



Property Ministry

The last few weeks have been very productive for the Property Commission. Those in church noticed the piano has been moved which opens up the whole front of the sanctuary. A little carpet trim and that project will be finished. Thanks to Doug Click for his handiwork.

Our angel painter, Linda Mohrman, has been busy touching up areas that need it. Please thank her for her wonderful work.

The external tuck-pointing and patch up inspection has been done. A proposal will be coming soon to break out the work to be done in phases with costs. John Saccomen is in charge of the project.

Ken Eckenroth is working hard on the audio upgrade and necessary electrical work needed. Patience is the key word for this project; installation and training will follow as we integrate it into our worship service. There will also be some modifications in the balcony to accommodate the new equipment.

A new water fountain has been installed in the office hallway with another to follow in fellowship hall later.

The last few weeks of demolition at the old middle school only points out how much we need that parking area. Be assured plans and strategies are being discussed as the site is prepared to go to auction.

Prayerfully consider a donation to the fund to help our efforts to buy the property. Remember that those funds are designated for the purchase. If we are unsuccessful in our bid to buy the middle school property, the funds will be used as permanent improvement money for our building.

Bill Dravenstott

Did Christ die for nothing?

continued from p.1

“And when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.” (Col. 2:13-15)

This is the nature of grace. We have done nothing, nor can we do anything to earn God’s favor. Our salvation (justification) rests solely in the work of Jesus Christ. It is only through faith in this reality that we can be “saved.”

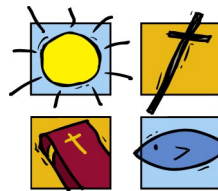
“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.” (Eph. 2:8) This is very foreign to us; we are used to having to earn most things in life that we receive. Even the love that we receive from others is often earned. Because God’s saving grace is so radical, we can quickly move back into an attitude of having to earn God’s love and forgiveness. It’s hard for us to convince ourselves that we are simply to have faith in Christ and receive the blessings. It seems too simple, yet any other attitude towards God’s grace is to make the claim that Christ died for nothing. It seems too simple, yet any other attitude towards God’s grace puts my faith in me and in my works, meaning that Christ died for nothing. It seems too simple, yet any other attitude towards God’s grace is to put my trust in religion instead of the relationship with God offered to me in Jesus Christ, meaning that Christ died for nothing.

And yet when we begin to grasp and receive this radical, unconditional, grace-filled love of God in Jesus Christ it becomes the source of a radical transformation that God begins within us. It brings incredible freedom. It meets our deepest desires. It gives us the courage to let go of “the sin that clings so closely” so that we can “run with perseverance the race that is set before us.” (Heb. 12:1) Even our running

becomes our rest because it is a running that we do out of pure delight, knowing that Jesus has already finished the race, received the trophy, and in place of His name written upon it our own. To believe anything else is to believe that Christ died for nothing.

As we continue our Lenten journey of “Letting Go”, may God grant us the trust to let go of any belief or action within us that minimizes the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross. I pray that our lives of faith will bring honor to Christ’s faithful death, that we will not “nullify the grace of God,” and that we will live fully and freely in God’s incredible love.

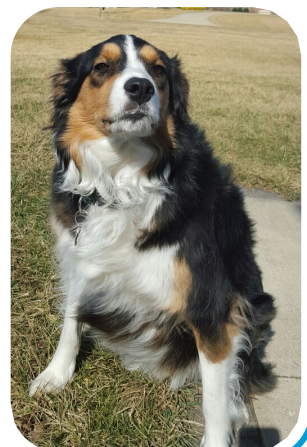
Grace & Peace,
Pastor Mike



Children's Ministry

You may have noticed a furry friend at church on Sundays. Her name is Shelby and she is a new work for the children. She is for children that are having problems controlling their energy by exhibiting disrespect, rough housing, or frustration. She's also there for the children to learn patience and caring as they train her. So far she has fit in just like family.

The kids during Oasis are planning and preparing their own camp for this summer. Please ask them about it as they are having fun and are super excited!



Ashland County Young Life



New Young Life Leaders Reid, Quinn, Gabby, Alyssa, Grace, Scott, Courtney

This past year Young Life celebrated 75 years of participating in the lives of teenagers all across the globe. Our current outreach covers all 50 states as well as more than 90 countries worldwide. Here in Ashland County, Young Life has been around for 7 years, and from top to bottom, our recipe for success is simple. Young Life leaders go meet disinterested and disengaged kids on their turf and on their terms. All over the world, Young Life leaders are mentors who are intentional about meeting and treating every kid with a sense of God given worth.



Wyld Life Team Matt, Grace, Scott

This spring has given us a lot to be thankful for. First, earlier this fall God sent us a handful of college students who came to Ashland University looking for us because they wanted to volunteer as Young Life leaders.

Capernaum Team
Sean, David,
Sarah, Gabby

I don't think this has ever happened before, and hidden in this blessing was the added surprise that 3 of these students were kids who were involved with Young Life and us in high school.

After going through our Leadership Training Program and interviewing with us and the Committee, 7 of these students were placed as leaders in the surrounding schools. Last month we officially opened Capernaum, Young Life's ministry to kids with disabilities, and Wyld Life, Young Life's aptly titled outreach to middle school kids, at Ashland Middle School.



First Presbyterian Church of Ashland
320 Church Street
Ashland, OH 44805



Phone: 419-289-6205
Email: office@ashlandfpc.org
Facebook: FPC Ashland
Instagram: [fpc_ashland](https://www.instagram.com/fpc_ashland)

www.ashlandfpc.org

Address Service Requested

PRSRT STD
Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID

Ashland, Ohio
Permit No. 258

To:

Spring 2016



Prefer to get this
newsletter by email?
Contact the office at
the email address
above.

PDF files
of our newsletters
are also available
on our website.

Celebration Sunday Soup Lunch

February 7, 2016

