

OCTOBER 2016

ARC MAGAZINE

**The Sovereignty Of God
On A Desert Island**

C. John Steer | P4

**How We Love God and
Serve People**

Pat Wester | P10

**15 Years of Celebrate
Recovery at ARC**

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Go Fish...

A Church-Wide Life Group
Experience Beginning This Fall



AUTUMN RIDGE CHURCH

SAT. 5:30PM | SUN. 9:00AM & 10:30AM | AUTUMNRIDGECHURCH.ORG

Our purpose is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who love God and serve people.



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FALL SERMON SERIES

What is the Gospel?

If we are going to Extend the Truth in this Second Year of Truth we need to know what the truth is. Twenty of the New Testament books refer to the impact of the gospel. We will look at six of them. It will help us to see something of this multifaceted jewel of truth that God has entrusted to his church.

Date: September 24-25
Sermon: THE GOSPEL IS ABOUT JESUS
Scripture: The Gospel in Mark

Date: October 1-2
Sermon: THE GOSPEL IS GOOD NEWS
Scripture: The Gospel in Luke

Date: October 8-9
Sermon: THE GOSPEL IS SAVING
Scripture: The Gospel in Romans

Date: October 15-16
Sermon: THE GOSPEL IS TO BE PROCLAIMED
Scripture: The Gospel in First Corinthians

Date: October 22-23
Sermon: THE GOSPEL IS A PARTNERSHIP
Scripture: The Gospel in Philippians

Date: October 29-30
Sermon: THE GOSPEL IS ETERNAL
Scripture: The Gospel in Revelation

CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM

MINISTRY CONTACTS

- Senior Pastor** | C. John Steer
- Executive Pastor** | Pat Wester
- Children** | Pam Cray
- Counseling & Care** | Dan Farm
- Serving** | Karen Foster
- Group Life** | Paul McDonald
- Students** | Jason Motte
- Missions** | Woody Roland
- Worship** | Alan Shoumaker | April Rowe
- Administration** | George Beech
- Generosity** | Bob Stanhope

For a complete listing of our leadership team, please visit the church website at: AutumnRidgeChurch.org/leadership

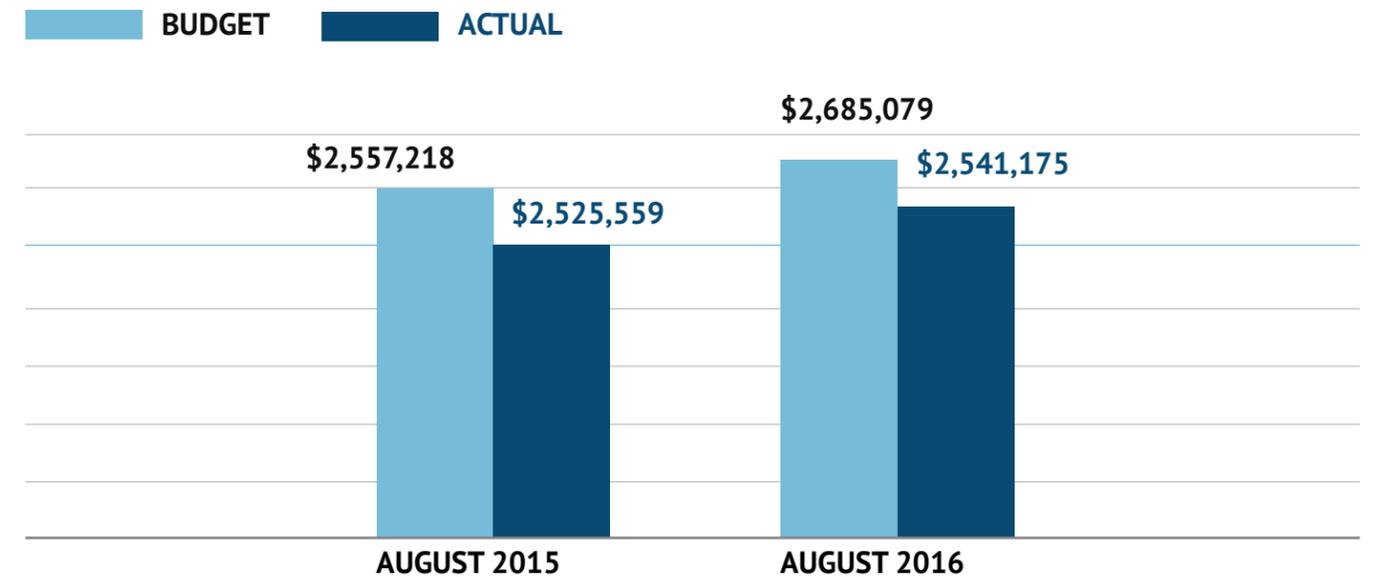
You may contact our staff via email at:
Lastname.Firstname@AutumnRidgeChurch.org

ELDER BOARD

- Mark Foley – Chair
- Brad Anderson
- Jim Baber
- Harold Burden
- Phil Fischer
- John Folkerts
- Chris Grenz
- Steve Merry
- John Scales
- Cheolsu Shin
- Bob Stanhope
- Mark Topazian

You may contact the Elders via email at:
Elders@AutumnRidgeChurch.org

GIVING REPORT

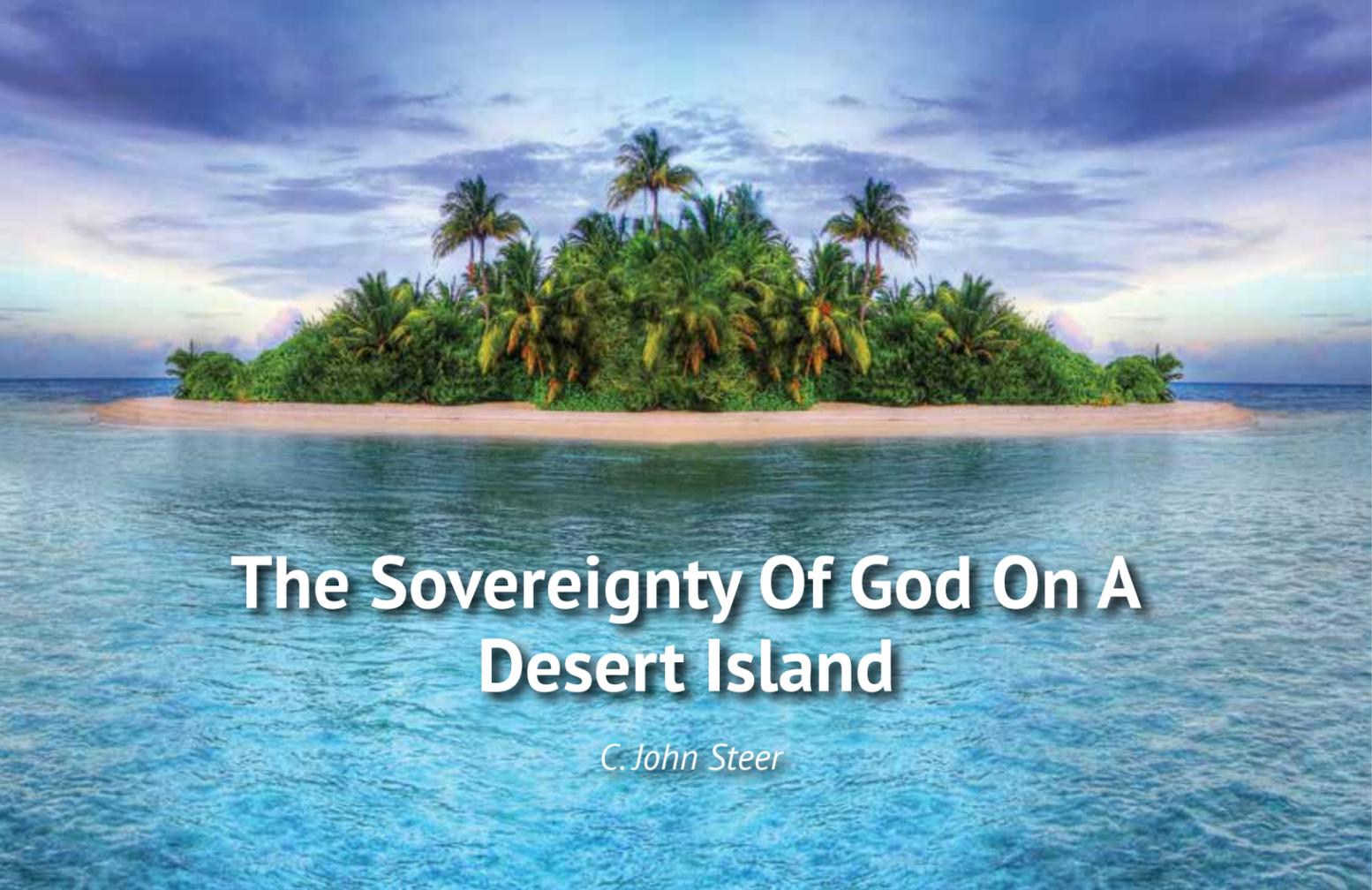


OCTOBER SENIOR SAINTS BIRTHDAYS

OCTOBER 1 | RUSTY FIEK
 1856 16-12 St NW | Rochester, MN 55901

OCTOBER 4 | EVELYN ROLAND
 2205 2nd St SW #249 | Rochester, MN 55902

OCTOBER 21 | LEONARD GIESLER
 1326 41st St NW | Rochester, MN 55901



The Sovereignty Of God On A Desert Island

C. John Steer

There is a game played with famous people who are asked, “If you were marooned on a desert island, what five books would you take with you?”

I’ve always thought this exercise odd for a couple of reasons. First, if you had enough advance warning to select a library for your island home, wouldn’t you also have enough time to avoid the experience altogether?

Second, it is all very well for the celebrity to impress us with his choice of Shakespeare, *War and Peace*, and the collected works of Calvin and Hobbes, but why not make your first pick *How to Escape From a Desert Island* or *Building a Boat from Driftwood*? This, of course, is being unfairly critical. The purpose of the exercise is to learn what books have impacted the big shot and often hear the story behind them.

No one has ever asked me to provide a list of my favorite books, but if they did I would have to put *The Sovereignty of God* by Arthur Pink near the top. I first read this when I was a student in high school. When I finished it, I found I understood the Bible better as it now made a lot more sense. The truths of that slim volume (my copy is only 160 pages) have stayed with me throughout my life. In particular it influenced my thinking in three areas.

The first is my salvation. The expression “the sovereignty of God” means the supremacy of God and the kingship of God. To say God is sovereign is to declare that God is God. In his electing grace God calls a people to himself. Pink notes, “It is true that man has a will, but so also has God. It is true that man is endowed with power, but God is all powerful.” This means my salvation is all of God’s doing. I can take none of the credit, which means God must get all the glory. The

reason is that before God saved me, I was dead in my sins and so incapable of seeking God. While I could not pursue God, he pursued me.

God regenerated me and gave me saving faith, and having grabbed hold of me, God assures me that he will never let me go. My feelings come and go. (I tell my colleagues the reason I don’t like doing the sunrise service on Easter morning is because I’m not sure I believe in the resurrection at that hour of the day!) While my thoughts about God may waver, his thoughts about me never do.

Second, remembering the sovereignty of God has helped me cope with tragedy. Our family, like yours, has experienced a certain amount of sadness. We can’t escape it, living as we do in a fallen world. I don’t think I would have survived the death of our daughter without my feet firmly grounded on the truth of God’s sovereignty. Scripture says God ordains our days. He knew exactly how long Kirstie would live. Her death was no surprise to her loving Heavenly Father. In his wisdom, God answered our prayers for her healing by saying “no.” He assures us that his plans for us are good and not evil, to give us -- and Kirstie -- a future and a hope.

To us the world is filled with accidents and coincidences. Those words do not appear in God’s vocabulary. Nothing catches him off guard. He orders the events of the world, big and small, for his glory. This doctrine makes sense of the story of Israel. They are God’s beloved people, and yet they are taken into captivity in Babylon, a thousand miles from their home. To Israel this may have appeared arbitrary and unfair, but God had ordained it and had a purpose in it. In the New Testament, the great Apostle Paul is succeeding wonderfully in his missionary work when he is arrested and sent to Rome. We might wonder how much Paul could have done without this unfortunate setback, but God was sending his apostle to the capital of the Roman Empire so he could reach members of the Praetorian Guard who watched over Paul in his prison cell. In this way the gospel infiltrated Caesar’s household.

Third, the sovereignty of God has influenced my understanding of success. All of us feel a pressure to perform and do well. Pastors are no exception. Over the years I have read umpteen books on how to do church better. They have titles like *Vertical Church*, *Simple Church*, *Sticky Church*, *Messy Church*, *Imagine Church*, *Center Church*, *Essential Church*, *Transformational Church*, and *Disappearing Church*. They nearly all have something good to say. They are the experience of a pastor who has tried a particular approach and found it worked for them, but because God is sovereign, it doesn’t always work elsewhere. Reading these books and going to church growth conferences one can feel a terrible failure, but God’s sovereignty teaches us God’s omnipotence and God’s sufficiency.

In seminary I read *The Sovereignty of God* again. It has influenced my ministry down to this day. To the best of my ability, I preach the Bible, and then let God be God. One of my favorite experiences is when a member of the congregation thanks me for saying something I never said or even thought of saying. It shows me the Holy Spirit is at work, taking God’s word and applying it to the hearts of his people to relate to their particular situation.

In my study, I have photos of Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Martyn Lloyd-Jones. I will never be like them, but I can learn from them. Both of them passionately proclaimed the sovereignty of God. I find the preachers today who really minister to me do the same thing. Men like J.I. Packer, John Stott, John Piper, and Tim Keller have this deep and abiding conviction that we do the very best we can. We pray, we study, we prepare, and then we leave the results to God.

If I ever did find myself on a desert island, it would be the sovereignty of God that would sustain me. I would know God is behind this experience. He had decreed this should be part of his gracious purpose for me. My life’s motto is borrowed from Henry Martyn. It is, “I am immortal until God’s work for me to do is done.” This removes the fear of death and allows me to look for practical lessons and opportunities for growth in difficult situations. Truly, God is sovereign, even on a desert island.

Autumn Ridge Young Marrieds and Young Families

Calling all young couples and families! We are so excited to have our fall kick-off to start the year! We have passionate people behind getting Young Marrieds and Young Families ministries going strong.

Here is what you need to know:

Who are Young Marrieds and Young Families?

Traditionally, we would be defined as people in their 20s and 30s, but we are going to leave the defining up to you. If you feel like you fit the description, please come and join us.

What is this event?

A fall kick-off event for the whole family, filled with food, bounce houses, and many other activities for a fun afternoon of meeting new people.

When and Where?

October 9th, 2016
4pm in the CENTER at Autumn Ridge Church.

Why?

Because we want to get to know you, and we want you to get to know others. We want you all to know that you are loved in this church!

Parent And Child Dedications For 2017

January 8 at 9:00am

February 12 at 10:30am

March 25 at 5:30pm

April 23 at 9:00am

May 14 at 10:30am Mother's Day

June 17 at 5:30pm Father's Day

July 16 at 9:00am

August 27 at 10:30am

September 23 at 5:30pm

October 15 at 9:00am

November 26 at 10:30am
Thanksgiving Weekend

December 23 at 5:30pm

2016 Schedule Update

We just added one more dedication service for 2016:

Sunday, November 27, at 9:00am
(Thanksgiving Weekend)



Question: "Why should I talk about my faith in the workplace?"

Answer: As followers of Christ, there are many reasons why we should be eager to share our faith in all circumstances. However, in the case of our workplace, there is one other consideration. As employees, we have made a commitment to yield to our employer the full benefit of our services for a given amount of time. To be a good Christian witness, we must first follow through with this commitment. Evangelistic efforts should not interfere with the duties we committed to fulfill (1 Thessalonians 5:12-14). If they do, then our actions will betray our words, and the credibility of our witness is lost. So we should be eager to be the best workers our employers have (Colossians 3:23). This will lend some authority to our words later when we do share our faith.

Among the many reasons to share our faith are three imperatives:

1) Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ commands it. During His last moments on earth with His disciples, Christ could have said anything. What He chose to tell them was that they were to go with His blessing and power to preach the Gospel so that others could come to know the saving power and blessed relationship with Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

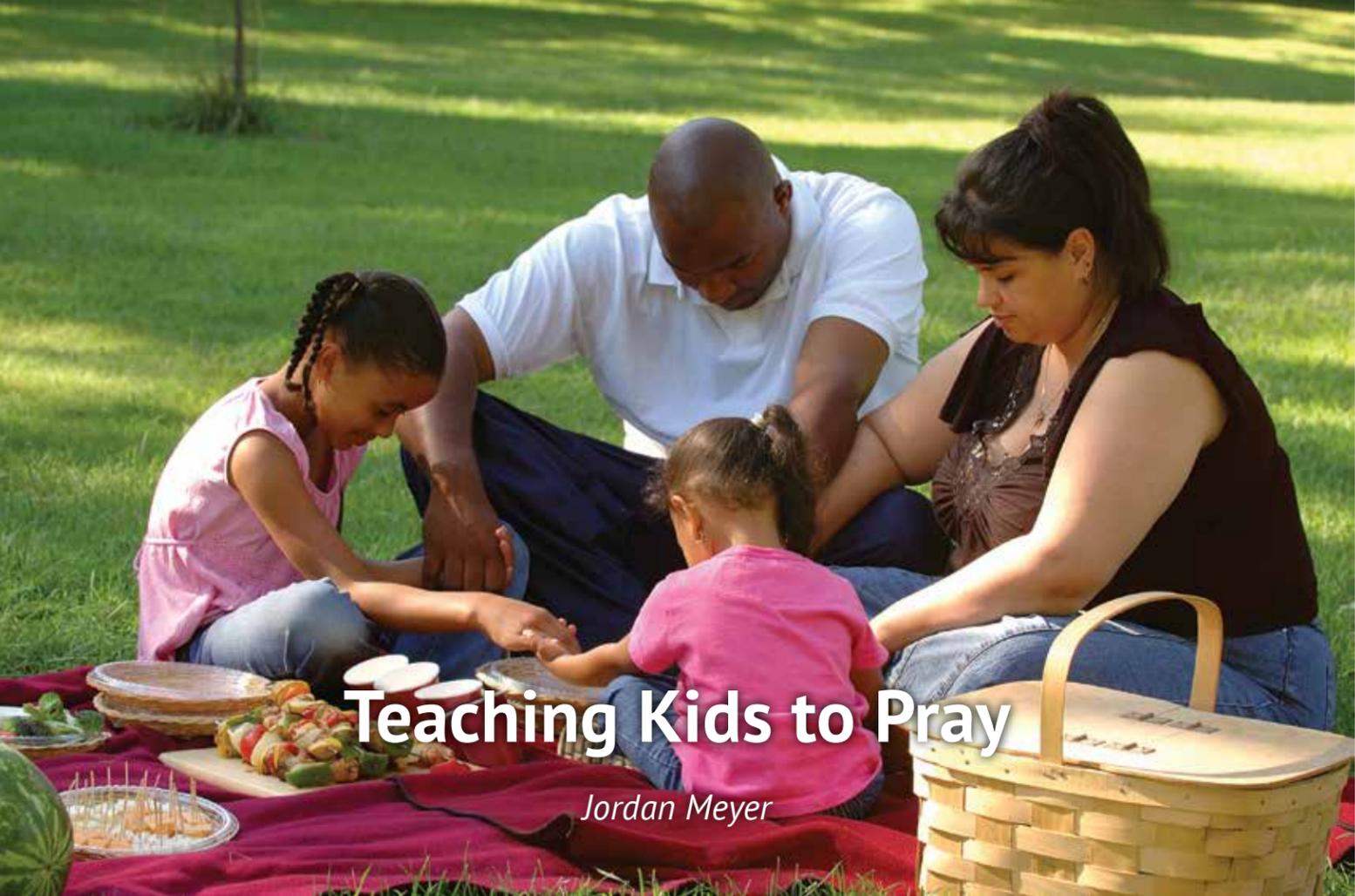
2) Duty demands it. If we have been redeemed by Christ, then we have been given something that is not our own. Without

God's grace, we would be lost for all eternity. Chances are most of us came to faith and salvation because someone shared with us; how can we then not do the same for others? Jesus said that as we have freely received, we should freely give (Matthew 10:8). We have been entrusted by God to be His messengers to the lost (Acts 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:4).

3) Gratitude prompts it. An attitude of heartfelt gratitude is one of the many things that mark a true believer in Jesus Christ. The more we honestly examine the depravity of our own hearts, the more we recognize how great is the forgiveness that was and is extended to us, and the more we are thankful to God for redeeming us. This thankfulness expresses itself in giving Him credit for what He has done for us—that which we could not do for ourselves. The best way we can thank God is to give Him all the glory for what He has done for us and tell others of His great love and mercy.

How do we go about sharing our faith in the workplace (or as we interact with others as we go about life)? Look for articles in future ARC Magazine editions and listen in to some of the faith stories that members of our congregation will be sharing this fall.

Used by permission from gotquestions.org.



Teaching Kids to Pray

Jordan Meyer

A little boy's prayer: "Dear God, please take care of my daddy and my mommy and my sister and my brother and my doggy and me. Oh, please take care of yourself, God. If anything happens to you, we're gonna be in a big mess."

One night Mike's parents overheard this prayer. "Now I lay me down to rest, and hope to pass tomorrow's test, if I should die before I wake, that's one less test I have to take."

These are just a few of some great stories parents have of their children's prayers. Children often love to pray themselves or be prayed for by Mom or Dad. In my own house, my children often are the ones who remind me to pray at meals and before bed. Prayer has always been something I really need to work on.

I think this is true in many other households as well. As we go into a year with outreach as a focus, I want to make sure my children understand we can't reach others without talking to God first. Outreach can be a very difficult thing for kids to do. Many times the opportunities offered by the church or the community to serve others are things children simply can't do. Prayer, however, is something children of all ages can do.

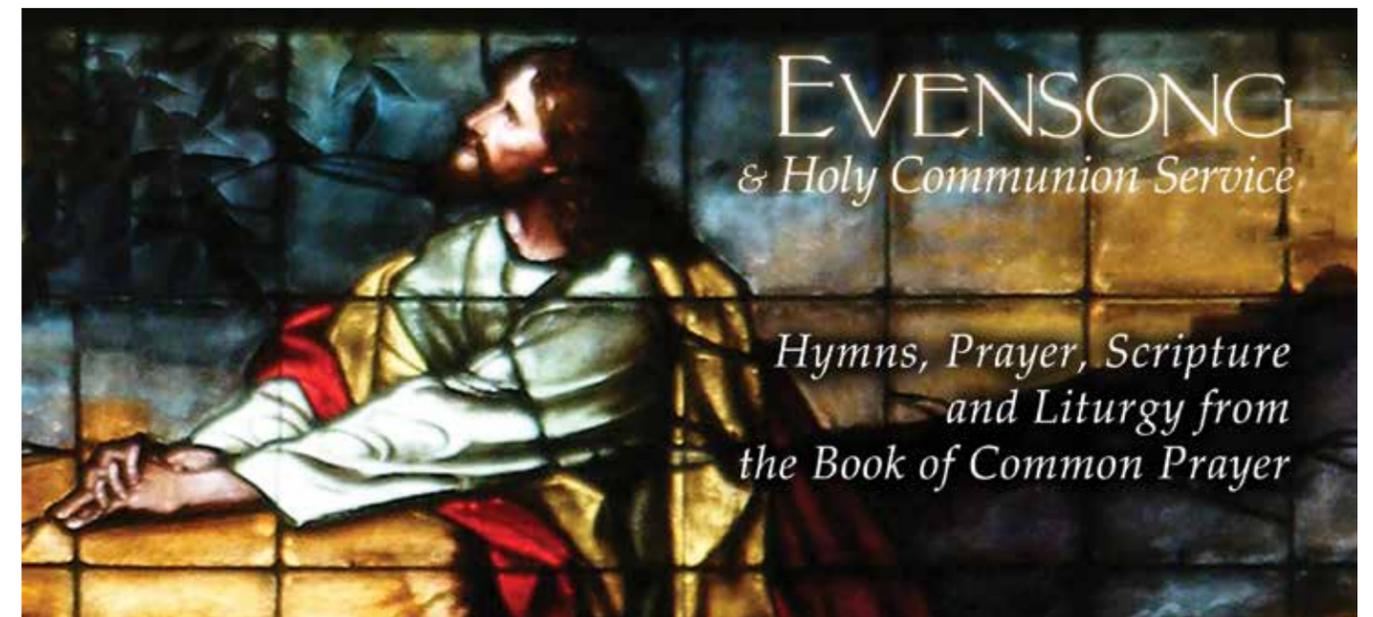
I am often reminded of James 5:16, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." If we teach our children to pray, imagine how powerful that could be as an outreach to the world! "With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or think of" (Ephesians 3:20).

Outreach opportunities will be offered to children this year, and prayer will be at the forefront. Each Sunday and Wednesday in our small groups, the leaders will be asking the children to share prayer requests, and together they will record them in the class prayer journal and pray over them. They will celebrate together as God answers the prayers, even when the answer is "no." They will wait patiently together, and pray without ceasing until it has been answered. Together the children will thank God, pray for themselves, pray for others, admit their sins, and say prayers of praise to God.

I want to encourage you to continue this in your own home. At the dinner table, before bed, or any time when you can all be together, take out a prayer journal and ask for prayer requests, praises, and thanksgivings. Encourage your

children to admit to God the things they've done wrong, to praise Him and thank Him, or to pray for their friends, family, and community. Celebrate with each other the prayers that are answered, and encourage each other to be patient for the ones that haven't.

For more ideas on establishing a more consistent prayer life, check out these books and articles: *The Circle Maker* or *Praying Circles Around the Lives of Your Children* both by Mark Batterson; "Teaching Children to Pray" and "The Best Ways to Pray with Children" by Cheri Fuller (find these two articles at Lifeway.com).



EVENSONG AND HOLY COMMUNION

6pm • Sunday, October 23 • Timothy Chapel

John and Gretchen Steer invite you to join them for a service of hymns, prayers, scripture readings, and liturgy from *The Book of Common Prayer*. Evensong meets once a month during the school year.

How We Love God and Serve People

Pat Wester



extend
the TRUTH

Our mission statement says we as a church “make disciples who love God and serve people.” This is a reflection of Jesus’ words in Matthew to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.” But this still begs the question of how we do this distinctively as a church and as individuals. After talking with many people in our congregation about how we should be doing this, we have described it this way:

In the power of the Spirit, we will equip Autumn Ridgers to be disciples where they live, work, and play, and share our hope in Jesus.

This is really what I Peter 3:15 commands us to do. “*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have, but do this with gentleness and respect.*” We need to challenge and encourage one another to live our lives in such a way, whether it is at work, in our homes, in our neighborhoods, at our leisure events, or at our children’s activities, that we engage others with the hope in us, Jesus Christ. A good example of this is the faith story we had by a member of our congregation, Shawn, at the weekend services on September 3-4. If you missed it, go to our website and watch it. Shawn described how he is trying to be a disciple in his workplace. He is living out I Peter 3:15.

Over the course of the next few years, we want to continue to emphasize how we can be disciples of Christ who love God and serve people. As we enter our second year of truth in our “Three Years of Truth” campaign, we are focusing on extending the truth by reaching out into our community. The best way to do this is to have all of us *be disciples where we live, work, and play.*

Our commitment as a staff is to do our part to help equip you to do that. We will provide a safe environment for conversation to which you can bring the people with whom you are engaging. We have some opportunities for that coming up.

Equipping:

- There are many tools on the website that will help get you started.

- We already have Life Groups that are doing a study called “Go Fish” to help people know how to engage the people around them. It is only 6 weeks long, and your Life Group could easily insert this into your fall schedule.
- If you are not in a Life Group, talk to Pastor Paul McDonald.

Safe Places and Spaces to Generate Conversation

- During the Missions Festival next month, we will have the drama improvisation group “Fish Sticks” at our church. This evening event will be a great opportunity to invite a friend to laugh, have fun, and hopefully, open up new conversations.
- Students and Children’s Ministries each have several opportunities to invite friends to attend. These can help break down the cultural barriers that are often in the way.
- With Christmas season coming, don’t forget to invite people to our adult and children’s musicals. Most people enjoy the music and Christian emphasis.
- Each Sunday morning we have Hospitality Hotspots throughout the church, where you can engage in conversation with people. Some of these spaces are available during the week also.

We will continue to find ways to help you to *be disciples where you live, work and play, and share your hope in Jesus.* If you feel you need more help doing this, we would love to hear from you. We can help you figure out how to live out I Peter 3:15. You can contact any of the pastors or staff.



Israel Trip

Paul McDonald

Join Pastor Paul and Peggy McDonald for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Departing March 21st 2017

13 days walking in the footsteps of Jesus: Jerusalem, Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Caesarea, Mount of Olives, Calvary, and many other locations in the Holy Land. Much more than informational, this trip is transformational.

More information at:
Mcdonald.Paul@AutumnRidgeChurch.org or call Paul at 288-8880.

Go Fish! Life Group Study

Paul McDonald



Three Years of Truth is poised to move to year two, which we are calling “Extend the Truth.” It will be a year where we take an honest look, as a congregation, at how to effectively move the Gospel message out into our community. OUT to where we live, work, and play.

We know when it comes to sharing our faith, many of us respond with some amount of fear and trepidation. I can recount many conversations with everyday Christians who struggle to share their faith with confidence and ease. Many feel that evangelism isn’t their “gift,” but in fact, evangelism is something we are all called to. This fall, in conjunction with the sermon series “The Gospel”, we are

encouraging all of our current Life Groups to participate in “Go Fish!,” a six-week curriculum that will explore the motivation behind sharing the Gospel.

Discover together God’s heart for those who don’t know him and the role we each can play in introducing others to him. Along the way, you will be equipped with tools to help you make sharing your faith a natural part of your life. If you are not currently in a Life Group and would like to take part in this study, we are forming new groups right now. Simply email LifeGroups@AutumnRidgeChurch.org



When we go into the Adult and Juvenile Detention Centers to serve those who are incarcerated there, we are often faced with a number of labels. Words like “First Degree,” “Level Two,” and “Third Offense” become identities people wear. Past actions become names they respond to. In fact, the very names they are born with get replaced with numbers, and the word “criminal” blankets over all.

Often times the people they spend the most time with are known by their labels: probation officer, social worker, lawyer, case manager, corrections officer, treatment specialist.

A young girl incarcerated at the JDC has been focusing with me on one particular label for the past 3 months: REDEEMED. As often happens when we start talking about words like loved, forgiven, adopted, made new, she became visibly upset. The enemy had told her for so long the only labels that matter are the ones given to her in a courtroom. She had never been told that Jesus Christ has washed away every one of them and replaced them with her true label: A Child of God.

To watch the transformation that happens when the Holy Spirit begins to work in someone’s heart, to physically see the relief that washes over their faces when the enemy is put in his rightful place, and his labels are cast out, is something we praise God we get to be a part of frequently here at Next Chapter.

Although it is always our intention to build long-lasting relationships here at Next Chapter, sometimes God allows us only a brief time to plant the seeds. We often don’t get to see if the seed hits fertile soil or even if fruit eventually grows. We have to trust the Gardener.

Yesterday as she was making her list of contacts for her next placement, my young friend put me at the top under her Probation Officer, Social Worker, and Defense Attorney. After she wrote my name, she paused and looked up at me. “What do I call you? I mean, what are you to me?” she asked. “Well, what do you think I am to you?” I replied. She thought for a minute and promptly wrote: Courtney Dugstad, Next Chapter Ministries, Person I Trust.

Now that is a label I am happy to wear.

Here at Next Chapter, our mission is to build long-lasting relationships with those in our communities that have been impacted by crime, restoring them to God, to their families, and to their community with the Gospel. Our Ministry is supported solely by people like you who hear our stories and feel called to come alongside us financially in helping live out our mission. We are humbled by your response to that call. Thank you!

To find out more, please visit our website at NextChapterRochester.org or call us at 507-529-5799.

Two Autumn Ridge Students Leading Their Universities



Two of our young people who have been raised in our Student Ministry have gone on to make a name for themselves, now they are in college. **Nicole Arpin** is the Student Body President at Taylor University. She explains, “My role is threefold. First, I lead a core cabinet of nine student leaders in the Taylor Student Organization. These students each lead their own cabinet (intramurals, student senate, activities councils, etc). Second, I represent the student body to administration in regular meetings with university leadership. Lastly, I represent the school to the student body and wider community at assemblies and conferences. I’d appreciate your prayers as I participate in Taylor University’s process of “developing servant leaders marked with a passion to minister Christ’s redemptive love and truth to a world in need.”

Spencer Moir has been elected Student Body President at North Dakota State University. He writes, “I ultimately represent the voice of the NDSU student body at every level of the university. I oversee a 12-member executive team along with my vice-president, Anuj Teotia, that supports the student senate and leads initiatives to better the university. A unique opportunity I have during my term is to advocate for NDSU and students all across North Dakota for the next biennium at the upcoming North Dakota legislative assembly.”

Please pray for Nicole and Spencer in these important positions of responsibility. We know that many great politicians began their careers in student government. Who knows? Maybe Nicole and Spencer will be a future Congresswoman or Congressman, a Senator, or even President.

Pursuing the Call

Dan Farm



dedicating my life to strengthening and healing marriages. For the past few years, you as a congregation have allowed me to spend a great deal of my time counseling individuals and couples in our congregation. The recent completion of my doctoral studies, my certification as a Board Certified Pastoral Counselor, and the positive experience at ARC, has affirmed the calling Claire and I have sensed from God to dedicate ourselves to opening a full-time counseling practice in Rochester. My desire is to have a greater impact on marriages in Rochester and the surrounding community. Effective January 1st, we will be opening Renewal Counseling & Coaching in Rochester.

I want to make it perfectly clear that this decision is based on a calling from God. As a matter of fact, the leadership of Autumn Ridge has reached out to me, and asked if I would consider staying on part-time as the Pastor of Enrichment. In this role, I would participate on the preaching team as well as providing marriage and family enrichment classes once a month, working with the Stephen Ministry, and leading two large events a year to strengthen marriages. I have enthusiastically agreed to this new part-time position and look forward to serving you, my church family in this manner. Autumn Ridge Church is a part of the fabric of my family’s life, and we look forward to continuing to worship with you and serve alongside you for the Glory of our magnificent God. If you have any questions about my transition, I would love to talk to you and share what God is doing in our lives. Again, we love you all dearly, and I look forward to continuing to serve you as a pastor of this great church.

Your Friend,

Pastor Dan Farm

Five years ago I started the journey of pursuing my doctorate at Denver Seminary. I wanted to better equip myself to be the pastor God created me to be for Autumn Ridge Church. When I began the journey with the blessing of the leadership of ARC, I was enrolled in the Executive Leadership track. I was looking forward to equipping our church staff and ministry leaders to lead others in reaching our world for Jesus. However, shortly after beginning the process, I sensed God re-directing my studies towards Marriage and Family Counseling, so I switched concentrations, and he opened my heart to a whole new path.

I had the privilege of being trained at the feet of some of the most amazing Christian counselors and professors who inspired and mentored me. I began to see the possibility of

15 Years of Celebrate Recovery at Autumn Ridge Church

Gary Seaquist

I am thankful to God for his faithful guidance of our CR ministry through the last 15 years. It has been an amazing journey! Celebrate Recovery, as a national movement, began 25 years ago at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, CA. Now more than 30,000 churches worldwide have CR programs for helping people find healing from their life's issues. We started our CR group with 6 people in our living room in the fall of 2001 and moved into the Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church in February, 2002 with 35 people, worship band, café, gender specific small groups, and a separate child care ministry. CR has proven to be an effective ministry, giving people the tools to break free from their destructive or just troublesome hurts, habits, and hang-ups. In addition to our own growth, we have helped other churches in Minnesota start their own CR groups.

The following testimonies give a glimpse of how God is using CR here. Consider how it may benefit you.

"I am thankful to God for CR because..."

...I know I am loved and cherished by Jesus Christ. (Tom).... they are a loving family to me. (Carla)

...I get to come every week where I am accepted as I am, where I am, and who I am. CR gave me hope! (Bill)

...I came into CR with a victim mentality from emotional and physical abuse. Through CR I have learned to be victorious in Jesus Christ. (Ruth)...He gave me the courage to trust Him enough to heal my deepest hurts. (Amy)

...I can identify with people with similar hurts and hang-ups and benefit from their experience, strength, and hope. (a grateful believer)

...it has changed my whole life. CR keeps me close and sober today, and it has helped me live on life's terms by using the power of Jesus Christ. (Wade)

...I was delivered from addiction by the power of God. I continue to draw strength from Him and the wonderful people I share this special group with. (Corey)

...AA stopped working for me. My AA sponsor brought me to CR and that was it. CR picked up where AA dropped off. I have never felt so full and right following the 12 steps with Jesus. I needed AA to start with, but then I needed CR to continue and to find Jesus. He's all I need with the steps and the CR group. (Renee)

...it's giving me a way to grow out of my dysfunctional behaviors of 58 years, and the 12 steps keep me walking with Christ and working on my character defects. (Bobbi)

...it keeps me accountable and reaching out to others. (Linda)...out of my weakness, God is helping me grow through Christ. (Royce)

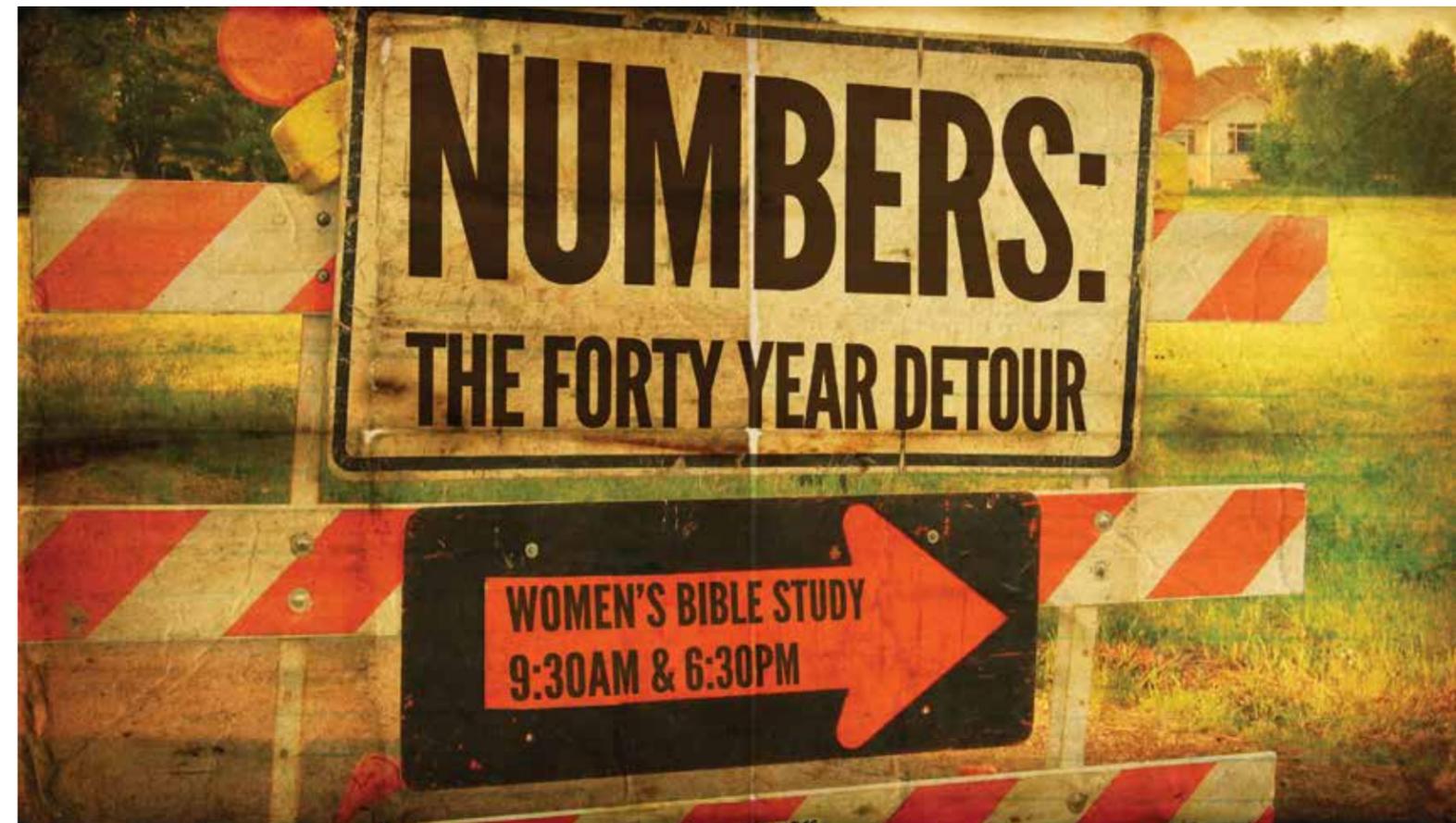
...its program helps me acknowledge my sinfulness, experience God's forgiveness and healing, and grow as a grateful follower of Jesus, who saved me. (Mark)

...I make friends that are dealing with the same issues, and they are real. (a grateful believer)

...it brings together people of all walks of life with a wide range of life's issues through the common thread of humanity and faith. (Erin)

CR meets at Autumn Ridge Church in the Upper Room on Fridays @ 7:00 pm.

Celebrate Recovery
A CHRIST-CENTERED Recovery Program



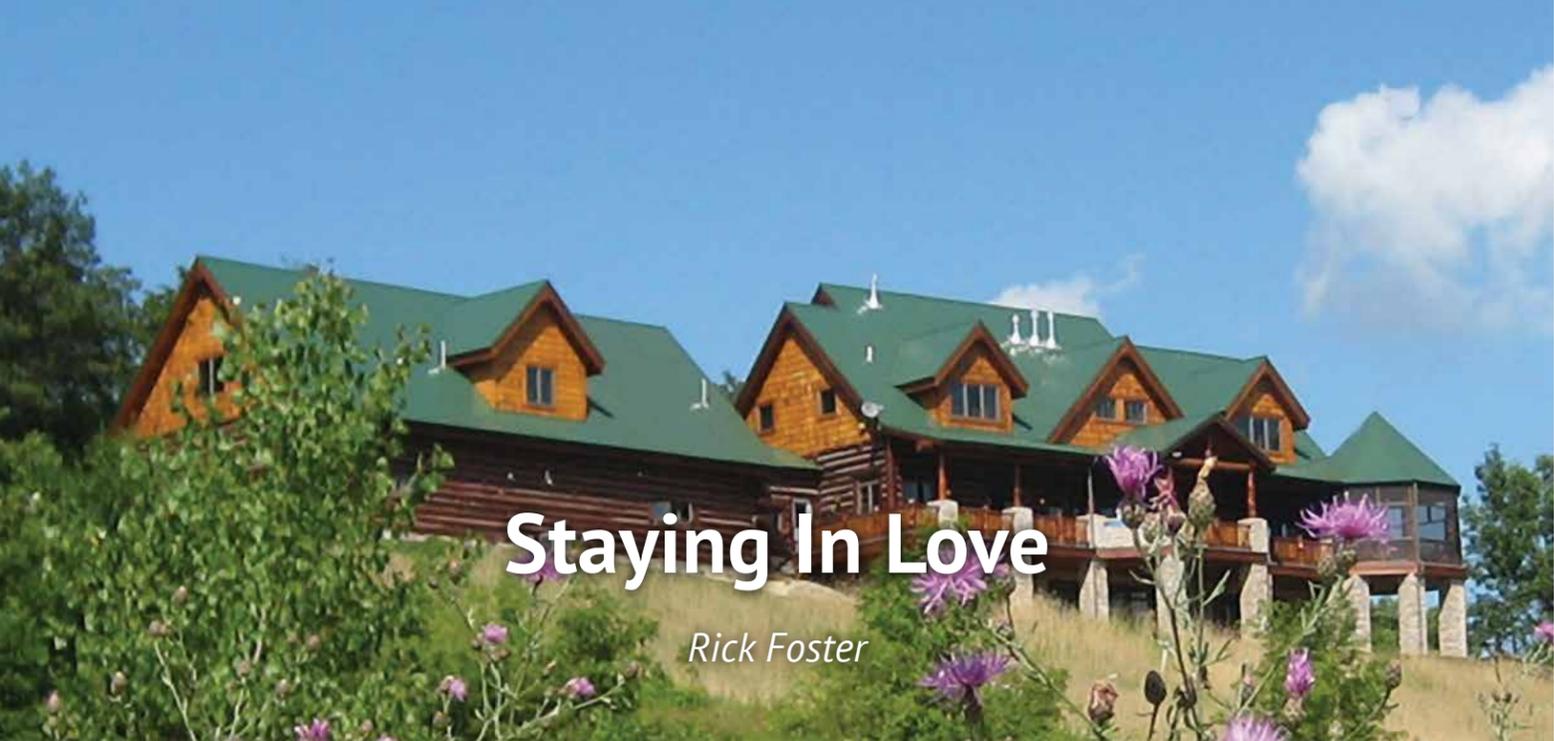
THE FORTY YEAR DETOUR: LEARNING TO TRUST GOD WHEN LIFE IS HARD

This fall Women's Bible Study is doing a series on the book of Numbers called "The Forty Year Detour: Learning to Trust God When Life is Hard." The Israelites left Egypt with high hopes of reaching the Promised Land in record time. Yet through their grumbling, disobedience, and rebellion, that journey turned into a teaching moment that lasted forty years, as they wandered in the desert almost within sight of their destination.

So often our own actions result in delay, confusion, and problems, yet we don't usually see the consequences in time to prevent them from happening. Numbers has a great deal to teach us about God's loving consistency and faithfulness even when we are faithless and full of doubt.

You can join Women's Bible Study at any time during the semester. If you haven't yet attended, think about joining us mornings or evenings on Wednesdays, from September through May. We have a dynamic teaching team of six: Lorie Dahlstrom, Juli Fischer, Svea Merry, Angie Pankratz, Gretchen Steer, and Jann Wright. Each week includes a teaching lecture followed by life groups for discussion, prayer, and community. A full children's program for preschoolers is provided in the morning, and the evening session occurs during Kids' Clubs, so you can attend without having to arrange childcare. Women's Bible Study is free of charge.

Just stop in at the morning study, which meets in the sanctuary, or the evening study, which meets in Common Grounds, and we'll get you registered.



Staying In Love

Rick Foster

At Autumn Ridge Church, “Marriage Matters” is more than a catchy name for our marriage ministry. We believe healthy marriages build healthy families, which in turn build a healthy church, community, and society. It’s been said falling in love is easy. Staying in love takes a lifetime.

Every marriage experiences challenges from time to time. Over the years as life happens, couples may get complacent about their marriages. That doesn’t mean there are major problems. It just means their relationships may not be getting the attention they deserve. We all become busy with careers, children, personal interests, and, yes, even church. All those activities are good, but not at the expense of maintaining balance and intimacy in our marriages.

Each month the Marriage Matters ministry offers a marriage retreat designed specifically for married couples to relax, enjoy time together away from life’s stresses, and learn some valuable skills to make even a great marriage stronger. Retreats are held at Elizabeth Lodge, a lovely retreat center on 40 acres of wooded land on the banks of the Zumbro River. During the weekend, couples will view and discuss video segments from well-known pastors and teachers. Each session is facilitated by a couple from the Marriage Matters team. Another couple from the team manages all the logistics of the weekend, taking care of the meals,

snacks, and cleaning, so couples can spend the weekend focused on each other. This retreat is planned around you.

Between sessions there is plenty of time to enjoy being together. Take walks around the grounds, sit by a fire together, or spend time dreaming. There will even be time to catch a nap or two. It’s your time to get away from the busyness of life to learn some new skills and enjoy being together.

Retreats are limited to five couples in order to provide a comfortable environment where spouses can enrich their relationships and get to know other couples.

No matter where you are in your relationship, at the very beginning, or if you have been married for years, the Marriage Matters ministry wants to come alongside you to help you make your marriage the best it can be. Because marriage truly does matter.

The next retreats are scheduled for Oct. 7-9, Nov. 11-13, and Dec. 9-11.

For more information, go to the church website and click on Ministries > Marriage > Retreats.

Gracious Service

George Beech



At the risk of embarrassing a servant of God in our midst, I will point out an example of a most gracious brother in Christ, Max Gernand. Max has been a life-long follower of Christ and has served in roles as diverse as teaching Sunday school, evangelizing on mission trips, and serving on our Elder Board. He is a self-taught carpenter and has shared his extraordinary talents in woodworking with the church to build Pastor Steer’s office furnishings, the pulpit, the communion table, and the cross in the sanctuary. With the help of Brent Den Hartog, Lance Gabrielson, and Drew Gernand, Max also completed all the woodwork in the Timothy Chapel.

Now Max has made a beautiful, new Connection Center desk for the church lobby. At this desk we will welcome guests and create a recognizable place to get information regarding the many opportunities to grow in our faith, be generous in our gifts and services, and get connected in a community of believers. The Connection Center desk represents the acute attention to detail and craftsmanship that God calls us to achieve.

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” Colossians 3:17.

I am deeply grateful to all the volunteers who please our Lord daily in their service to others in our church. If you are looking for an opportunity to use your God-given talents in his service, please go to the beautiful new Connection Center desk, and chat with your brothers and sisters in Christ about showing faith through works.

It is difficult to quantify the amazing and gracious service our ministry partners contribute to the body of Christ here at Autumn Ridge. The strength and outreach of the church is exemplified through her volunteers. Some may be surprised to hear that it takes between 250 and 300 faithful servants to fulfill God’s command to serve others each week during our three services. Certainly, we do not serve one another to earn a reward from God or to exalt ourselves, but to show thanks to Christ who saved us from sin.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” 1 Peter 4:10.

*Castle Church in Wittenburg Where
Luther Nailed His 95 Theses*



Celebrate The 500th Anniversary Of The Reformation In Germany With John And Gretchen Steer

October 23 - November 2, 2017

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed up his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. This action began the Protestant Reformation. Five hundred years later Autumn Ridgers will be gathering at that very spot on October 31, 2017. You can be part of the observances of the act that started the Reformation by joining John and Gretchen on a trip to Germany.

The tour will include visits to Rudesheim, Mainz, Rothenburg, Erfurt, Leipzig, and Berlin. It will have a particular emphasis on Luther's life and work. Other highlights include a half-day Rhine cruise, trips to the Dietrich Bonhoeffer museum, the Bach Museum, and sites of modern interest such as Buchenwald concentration camp and the Checkpoint Charlie museum in Berlin. A detailed brochure is available in the literature racks around the church.