

Country Faith Church

Winter Newsletter



“Growing & working together to love God, love each other and spread the Gospel.”

December 2017—February 2018

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Pastor's Heart - Pastor Larry Dorman

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.” (Is.60:1-2)

As I write this, each day brings new allegations of abuse, harassment, and misconduct. From Hollywood, to the corporate world, to the political arena, people are stepping down, being fired, sued and arrested. I believe many (if not most) of these allegations are real. Stories of terrorists running over innocent pedestrians, mass shootings, and suicide bombers seem to fill the headlines on a weekly basis. Ethnic cleansing and persecution are causing hundreds of thousands of families (people like us) around the world to flee their homes with nothing more than what they're able to carry. We live in a broken world. A world Isaiah describes in the above verses as “covered in darkness”. A world that Jesus said would be filled with tribulation (John 16:33). Is there hope? Yes there is!

Jesus also said in John 16 that we may have “peace in Him” and to “be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world”. Beloved, what a privilege to know Jesus Christ, to have His peace within, to let Him rise in our hearts, and allow His glory to shine in our lives! He Loves this broken world and wants to rescue souls (people) out of darkness. I was once lost in the woods at night. I was tracking a deer in a large wooded area and lost my bearings. Not a good feeling for a boy raised in the Bronx! After some minutes of anxiety and fear, I saw a distant yard light and got my bearings back. I knew where that homestead was, and I was drawn to that light. People all around us are spiritually wandering in darkness. Many are filled with fear, uncertainty and anxiety. Inwardly, they are looking for a light. Jesus is the light that they need to see, and we who have received Him, are the ones that He has called to reflect His light.

As we approach the new year, Becky and I are looking forward to “Arising and Shining” together as a church family. We appreciate all the love and support and feel extremely blessed to serve together with you at CFC. May this Christmas and coming New Year be filled with much joy and many blessings for you and your family!

Pastor's Heart - Pastor Jim & Laura Binder

I love the part of the Christmas story where the angels appear to the shepherds and declare the coming of the Christ child and then they top it all off with, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill to men". (Luke 2:14) Imagine the shepherds amazement. Shepherds were the lowest of the low in that day. They were considered expendable people who didn't have enough going for them to mingle with other people and they couldn't even testify in a court of law because their thoughts were not considered of any value. That always amazed me since everyone knew that the greatest human king Israel ever had himself once been a shepherd. But that was the culture of that day, people looking down on one another for whatever reason. Not only that but they were being ruled by a corrupt government, taxes and crime were up, unemployment was high, war were always looming and religion was more and more "out of touch" in the common man's mind. Does that sound familiar? It was a dark time to live and may people were asking why God (if He even existed) didn't do something about it.

HE DID!

God sent His angels to proclaim the birth of His Son and when they showed up, the shepherds were terrified. I can imagine they may have thought, "Now what? What more bad news can this tired old world take?" Instead they were told of "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill towards men"!



Peace? Good will? What is that? WHERE is it? Is this some kind of sick joke? Is God lying to us? In my somewhat warped imagination, I can picture these questions running through the shepherds minds.

I also think these same questions run through people's minds today when they hear the Christmas message.

Where is the peace and good will today? This was promised centuries ago and all we see in human history since then is wars and carnage. Surely God exaggerated this stuff.

If you know Jesus as your personal savior you know that the peace spoken of those many years ago is not a political peace. True peace is not the absence of conflict on the earth but the absence of sin in the heart. True peace is not ON the earth but IN the hearts of believers. It is peace with the Father when all our sins have been washed away by the blood of Jesus. God and the angels didn't lie or exaggerate anything! It's true and glory to God for it! And just like when the lowly shepherds ran to the people and reported what they had witnessed, we too can share with others what WE have seen happen in our own hearts. Many may doubt us as Gods messengers, just like many doubted the shepherds but Peace WILL be on earth as long as Gods people are here with the peace and good will of God IN our hearts.

Laura and I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and we pray that peace, the true peace that only believers can know and experience will reign in your hearts in this season! And all year long!

Pastor's Heart - Pastor Brad & Carrie Binder

With each year that goes by my stack of holiday memories grows, and so does my appreciation for them. When I was kid, I had little to no desire to sit down and thumb through a few photo albums. Now, I often swipe through the hundreds of pictures on my phone enjoying the memories of past holidays. I have even noticed in some recent photos that I am slowing entering the metallic years of life: a little silver in the hair, a little gold in the teeth and a little lead in the rear. I also can't help but notice how different the holidays have become since I was a kid.

I have fond memories of Christmas with all my grandparents. I did not notice it as much then, but I can see now how much my grandparents enjoyed the Christmas season with their children and grandchildren. I can still see twenty plus grandkids and their parents crammed and spread throughout the living room as my Grandpa Binder sat in his brown lazy boy with his reading glasses on reading the story of Jesus' birth. It is still hard for me to believe that we all sat quiet enough for us to hear him read it out loud, but we did. I think it was because we all knew how important it was to Grandma Binder that we listen, and no one wanted to disappoint Grandma.

Now that I think about it, I can't remember one single gift I received at those Christmas' at Grandma and Grandpa Binders. But, I do remember my family, my cousins, playing outside in the snow and warming up afterwards, the smell of the house, laughing, listening to Grandpa read scripture, Grandma's hugs, the chaos of opening presents, and the long goodbyes. I truly am blessed beyond words.

I am not so foolish to believe that everyone has all good memories of Christmas as I have. But, the lesson is still the same for all of us, whether we have good or bad memories. We get a fresh crack at Christmas each year. We have a chance to make it a Christ-centered season full of love and joy, or we can make it about the holiday chaos that culture has become seemingly comfortable with. We can allow the poor memories dictate how we make future ones. Maybe though, just maybe (probably certainly) God wants to use you to be that little (or big) ray of Jesus that will instill a memory that will be a constant reminder of what Christmas is really all about...Jesus. Get lost in the "exceedingly great joy" of the Lord this season. Be intentional about making memories with family and friends because only God knows how those memories will shape someone's life.

Matthew 2:9-11

And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with **exceedingly great joy**. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary and fell down and worshiped Him.



A Note from Nicky Ubert - Children's Minister

How many of us have participated in a White Elephant Christmas gift exchange, or something similar, where you can choose a gift from a pile (or take someone else's)? How do you choose which gift to take? Do you go for the biggest, the smallest, or the best wrapped? Do you try to figure it out by analyzing the look of the package, the feel or the noise it might make?



This season I've been thinking about the physical present we might give someone. Often I'm excited to buy a gift for someone and I know exactly what I want to give them, other times the act of shopping can be a chore or a burden for a variety of reasons. Although it can be wonderful to bless someone with a physical gift, a simple act that can bring JOY to both the receiver and giver, we have an opportunity of greater importance to impart a more lasting gift.

What if you could give that gift to someone that truly never ends? Who wouldn't want to do that and who wouldn't want to choose that gift?!?! The only gift that can last forever is a life that has eternal hope through the sacrifice Jesus made at the cross for every one of us. It can be difficult to share that gospel message, even though we are all called to, with friends and family and although we might share, the decision of acceptance really isn't up to us.

There is, however; another powerful gift we can give someone – *PRAYER*! Prayer is a gift in and of itself that draws us into a closer relationship with God. What if we took the opportunity to pray over each and everyone one of those physical gifts we give!! Have you ever done that? Speaking to myself here!!! I can honestly say I don't think I have intentionally prayed over a gift I gave someone. Now I don't mean praying for the gift specifically but rather with the person in mind on the receiving end. What if we took that gift and intentionally prayed specifics things for that person and maybe even took it a step further and journaled those specific prayer requests. We could see how God is moving in their life (and ours) maybe through those very prayers. Prayer is a powerful gift and the act has eternal impacts. There is opportunity to teach our kids, during a much commercialized season, the "real value" in giving a gift, covered in prayer. Make it a family tradition and assign a gift/name to each family member and help them create a list of things they could commit to praying for. The prayer could be for a period of time or as long as necessary. If you have younger children keep the list simple but if your children are older challenge them to think it through and be thoughtful. It's easy to get caught up in the season of Christmas (decorating, shopping, busyness...etc.) but intentionally creating family traditions through it helps us apply correct focus on Christ and will benefit everyone (eternally).

I love Christmas; the sights, the smells, the feelings it evokes. Perhaps instead of it being something that we take out when we "set up Christmas" and then put away when done, the continued intentional prayers for those we gave gifts to will help keep the real feelings and purposes of Christmas with us much longer.

I want to thank everyone at Country Faith Church for the love and support you continuously show our family. I am blessed to work for, and alongside, wonderful people. It is an honor to serve in the children's ministry program at CFC. I *pray* your holiday season will be filled with Joy, Peace, and Hope in Christ.

Ephesians 1:18 "I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance."

Holiday Schedule

With the Christmas season here, our church schedule changes just a bit...below are a few changes that everyone will need to be aware of. Please be sure to mark your calendars~ Have a blessed Christmas!

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE:

December 3~ Normal Sunday

(Sunday School @ 9:00am, Worship Service & Christmas Program Choir Practice @ 10:00am & Jr. Church during sermon-time)

December 10~ Normal Sunday

(Sunday School @ 9:00am, Worship Service & Christmas Program Choir Practice @ 10:00am & Jr. Church during sermon-time)

December 17~ Normal Sunday

(Sunday School @ 9:00am, Worship Service @ 10:00am & Jr. Church during sermon-time)

December 24~ NO SUNDAY SCHOOL OR JR. CHURCH

Church starts at normal time, 10:00am but will be a shorter service for families to enjoy together.

(ONLY Nursery will be provided after worship...*if your child normally goes to the 3-4 yr. old Jr. Church classroom, please keep them with you~ please don't send them to nursery.* Thanks!)

December 31 ~ NO SUNDAY SCHOOL...

Church starts as normal (10:00am) and Jr. Church through grade 4 provided during sermon time.

January 7 ~ Back to Normal Sunday Schedule.

(Sunday School @ 9:00am, Worship Service & Kids Worship for 1-6 Graders @ 10:00am & Jr. Church during sermon-time)

Also a couple dates to remember....

Saturday, December 9th ~ Morning ~

Kid's Program Practice at church, 9:30-12:15pm.

Sunday, December 10th ~

During Morning Worship Service ~

Preschool, 5/K Nativity Performance

Afternoon~

1st-6th Grade Christmas program at church, 4:30-5:30pm.

(Fellowship time afterwards~ please bring a plate of goodies to share...you can drop them off at the kitchen before the program.)

December 25th~ Merry Christmas!

December 31st ~ Lift Night to join together to worship & pray in the new year from 6-7:30pm



Lift Night

Sunday, December 31st from 6-7:30pm

We look forward to a time to thank, praise and worship the Lord and to join our hearts together in prayer for the coming new year.

Child care will be provided for children up through Kindergarten.



Family Celebration & Child Dedication Sunday

There will be a Family Celebration / Dedication Service on **Sunday, February 18th** during our worship service. Those interested in having their child or children dedicated, or have any questions, please contact Pastor Larry, Pastor Brad, or Nicky Ubert (Children's Minister).



Passover Seder

Save the date:
Wednesday, March 28th
here at CFC
More details to come...



Haiti Christmas Outreach

Dacia Olson is heading back to Haiti soon and is blessed to be going while the They Deserve Better Ministry is doing their annual Christmas Outreach in Port-Au-Prince on Thursday, December 21st. Here's a little note from Dacia...

"I am looking forward to being in Haiti at that time to be involved with purchasing & distributing the toys to the children.

I am asking for prayer support for the ministry as they prepare for this outreach & for safe travels for me.

If you feel led to donate to the Christmas outreach to help purchase toys, there will be a designated box in the back of the sanctuary through Sunday, December 10th. Please make checks payable to Country Faith Church.



If you have any further questions or want to know more you can talk to me at church, phone, or text me (218-766-7764) or Facebook me.

Thank you for all your support.

Dacia Olson



Spring Care Groups

"Therefore encourage each other and build each other up, just as you also are doing." - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

In a culture that's moving faster all the time, many are lacking something that the Bible teaches is very important; real relationships. We feel that much of the New Testament teaching regarding "church life" is best experienced in a small, informal, group setting.

Along with studying God's Word, Care Groups are a place to get to know and appreciate others and build lasting relationships. It's a great place to pray for and care for each other in a practical way. We have Care Groups that meet in various locations and times for all ages and seasons of life.

Spring Care Groups are scheduled to run from the week of Wednesday, February 8th through Wednesday, May 2nd. Look for more information to come out in January.



WORSHIP SUMMIT 2018

Saturday JAN
20

Country Faith Church
(Rural Clearbrook, MN)

9am
Registration **FREE**

Whether you are on a worship team or just simply love to worship the King, you are invited to a day of pressing into the Lord. Chuck Porta and Jeff Deyo will be here to bless us as they minister God's Word, helping us explore this awesome subject of worshipping our Creator and Savior. This event is free to attend, however a free-will offering will be taken to bless Jeff & Chuck and their ministries.

Registration Deadline Sunday, January 7th
Brochures available!



JEFF F DEYO

Jeff Deyo is known internationally as the original lead singer of the Dove Award-winning group Son-icflood. He is the founder of Worship City Ministries, which is the umbrella under which he writes, speaks, and leads worship around the world. From training worship teams to leading worship

for large and small events, Deyo's music exists to help worshipers deepen their walk with God by helping them encounter his transforming presence. In addition, Deyo now holds the high honor of being a full-time faculty member at North Central University in Minneapolis, MN. He serves part time as Music Director at Celebration Church, in Lakeville, MN and has been married to his college sweetheart, Martha, since 1992. Together, they have 4 beautiful children, Roman, Evan, Channing, and Clara.



CHUCK PORTA

Chuck Porta has been in full-time ministry since 1975. Chuck has pastored three churches during that time (16 years) with the remainder devoted to itinerant traveling ministry. Chuck brings a clear prophetic word to the Body of Christ challenging and encouraging the church to walk in a faithful covenant relationship with the Lord. He also brings oversight to a number of churches working with them to fulfill the call of God. He also calls together God's leaders for times of worship, word and personal ministry. He founded and leads Ram's Horn Ministries which has sponsored events over the years to edify the Body of Christ. Recently he has been bringing an in depth seminar on the Life of Paul. He has traveled throughout the US and has also spoken internationally. He and his wife, Kitty, live in Eden Prairie, MN. They have four children and eight grandchildren.

SCHEDULE

9:00am	Registration
9:30-12:00pm	Worship, Sessions 1 & 2 (Short break between sessions)
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch Break (On site for those registered)
1:00-3:00pm	Worship, Sessions 3 & 4, Q&A (Short break between sessions)
3:45pm-5:30pm	Rehearsal with Jeff Deyo and Local Team (Summit attendees welcome to stay and observe)
7:00-8:30pm	Worship & Ministry (All are welcome, no need to register if only attending this)



Mustard Seed Homes

PO Box 155 • 256 2nd Ave. SW
Clearbrook, MN 56634
218-776-2789 • Fax 218-776-2786
www.mustardseedhomes.org
A program of the Clear Waters Life Center

Mustard Seed Homes Application Excerpts

We have had hundreds of applications to Mustard Seed Homes over the years. Most have come from homes broken by divorce, drugs, or even death. Many have mental health issues; Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, anxiety, depression, and substance abuse are the norm. Common alcohol and drug treatment programs only begin to scratch the surface of much larger wounds that these men bear. Most have not had a healthy parent role model, and fathers are rarely in the picture. This epidemic will only grow in the days ahead. As most of you can attest, this journey is no quick trip around the block. It takes time to go the distance. Grace and mercy trump the work the thief has done, but unfortunately, building trust takes time. These men need to learn to trust God and the people whom He puts in their lives. As you read through these, ask the Holy Spirit what you can do to help change the course of these lives!

Jesus said, "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME (the Messiah) BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PREACH GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR."

Excerpt #1: I am 21. Both my biological parents were addicted to drugs and alcohol. My mom drank while she was pregnant with all of her kids. At the age of four, I was adopted by my auntie and uncle. I spent the next twelve years living with them and where I started going to church. I am Baptist. We would go to church every Sunday and sometimes Wednesday. I grew up reading the Bible. My mom wouldn't let us do a lot because it went against what the Bible said. Any way I left the home when I was sixteen due to abuse. I would stay with friends till I would get caught then go to juvie, then to foster homes. I would then run away from these homes till I was eighteen. Then I was really on my own. I started drinking and doing drugs. Also I would sleep with different women just so I would have a place to stay. I started to steal just to get by, and if I could get one I would have different jobs. I first got in trouble with the law with a first degree burglary charge, credit card fraud and criminal sexual conduct all at the same time. After that it was all drinking charges. I went to prison and have one year and six months in. I really do want to change and start over.

Jesus went on to say: "HE HAS SENT ME TO ANNOUNCE RELEASE (pardon, forgiveness) TO THE CAPTIVES,"

Excerpt #2: I am 20. My father abused and neglected me until I was 4 years old, so I don't remember it today. I was adopted by my grandmother. Bullied throughout school I turned to music for strength. I listen to artists that have and are going through the same things I have. I have been emotionally abused by the girls I have dated and been close to. I've been used for every material and emotional service I could provide. Faith is not a big part of my life, it's more spirituality. For two years leading up to July 3rd of this year, I used drugs heavily, starting with marijuana and leading to prescription pills and LSD. I overdosed one day, and the next day I wanted more. Not wanting my life controlled by drugs, I attempted suicide by over dosing on trazadone. I was put in inpatient mental health for seven days until I admitted to a petition for commitment. I was then sent to inpatient treatment at Glenmore and have stayed clean since.

"AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND"

Excerpt #3: I am 35. My life has been a rollercoaster since age 14 in and out of jails, treatments, and prison, both as a juvenile and an adult. I've been high on drugs or drunk on beer or liquor my whole adult life, only sober when locked up. Somehow, I've always had a job; I had to to stay high. I worked to play you could say. I went to prison in 2004-06. I had two beautiful children, but I still never sobered up. I would always try to sober up for someone else - courts, probation, a girlfriend, or family, but never for myself. It has been about a year now that I truly, truly, truly want to be clean. I want to for me. I am tired of this life that I've been living - tired of excuses after excuses to my children. Why am I in jail again? I'm at my wits end and looking for help! I've found God. I want to work on my faith, my addiction, and to become the person/father I can be. I'd like to one day have the ability to help people that struggle with drugs.

Jesus came "TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED (downtrodden, bruised, crushed by tragedy)." Luke 4:18 AMP.

If these short stories have touched your heart in any way, please contact us.

There may be a way that you can help make a difference in lives like these.

For more information on Mustard Seed Homes, go to our web-site mustardseedhomes.org

Building Lives, Growing Relationships, Imparting Hope

Kids' Camp 2018 - Mark Your Calendars NOW!

A quick note about Kid's Camp 2018! Our dates for Kids Camp 2018 have been set and will be held Thursday, July 12th– Saturday, July 14th. **So mark your calendars early and we hope to see you there next year July 12th-14th of 2018!**



Any questions please get in touch with Nicky Ubert!

Splasher's Water Park Fun Trip

Hey... CFC 3rd-6th graders are you ready to hit the waters at Splasher's of the South Seas!! Join me on this FUN trip to the CanadInn in Grand Forks **tentatively scheduled for Monday, February 19th** (President's Day). We'll spend a few hours splashing our way through the waterpark and close the day with some pizza & pop before heading home. Look for more specific information including departure time, cost, and release forms very soon! ***Don't forget to invite a friend to join you!*** Adults if you are interested in chaperoning on this event please get in touch with me!



Upcoming Kids' Worship Schedule

December 10th: Christmas Celebration for 1st-6th at 10:00am, Practice for Program if needed.

December 17th: No Kid's Worship, please stay with your family in the sanctuary for Worship

December 24th: No Kid's Worship, please stay with your family in the sanctuary for Worship.

December 31st: No Kid's Worship, please stay with your family in the sanctuary for Worship.

January 7th: Kid's Worship, Room #4 at 10:00am.

January 14th: Kid's Worship, Room #4 at 10:00am.

January 21st: No Kid's Worship, Communion Sunday- please stay with your family.

January 28th: Kid's Worship, Room #4 at 10:00am

Kid's Worship will continue, the following months (Feb. - May) with the same rotation of No Kid's Worship on 3rd Sunday for families to be together for communion. Any changes to the schedule will be communicated in advance as best possible.

If you have any questions please check with me!

Blessings,
Nicky Ubert



Nativity Christmas Program for 3's-4's & 5K

The Nativity Christmas Program will be held Sunday, December 10th at the start of service (Approx. 10:00am). *All kids' that fall in this age group are welcome and encouraged to participate.* They have been practicing in their JR Church classrooms to get ready for the program. At this age it is always fun to see what creativity they will bring to the stage!

A few reminders-

- Costumes will be provided for the Nativity scene.
- Please plan to come to Sunday school on December 10th (9:00am). We will combine the two groups, dress them, practicing singing the songs and go through the small drama.
- We will walk to the sanctuary together as a group.
- When the program is finished we will quickly remove costumes and they will go back to sit with you until released for Jr Church. Please help your young ones find you.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

Nicky Ubert or Heidi Syverson



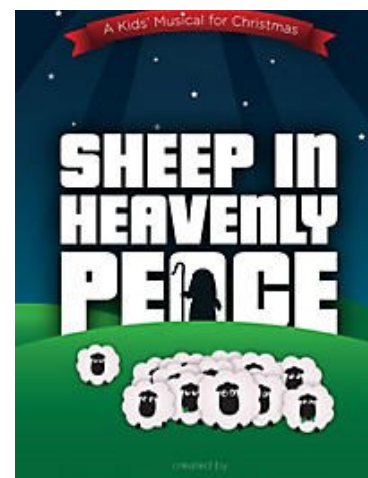
CFC Kids' Christmas Musical

Sheep in Heavenly Peace

A Ron Howard and David Guthrie production

Join us Sunday afternoon, December 10th at 4:30pm, at Country Faith for a fun, entertaining yet TRUTH filled Christmas musical creatively presented by the kids of Country Faith!

"Bethlehem's homes and inns may be bursting at the seams with travelers for the census but because of the animals they brought with them, the stable is simply out of control! Bethlehem's top temp agency must call on their most eager but often inept family of workers, the Wooltons to step up and answer the call! What they expect to be an unglamorous assignment will soon put them face to face with the angel Gabriel, a sky full of the heavenly Host, and ultimately the Good Shepherd himself-Jesus!"



There will be lots of singing, acting, choreography and humor throughout the program! Afterwards, we'll all join together for some fellowship and goodies in the fellowship hall. Beverages will be provided, **please bring some goodies to share.** They can be dropped off at the kitchen before the program starts.

So please plan to join us and invite friends and family! The kids have been working hard to prepare and are excited to share the message so come be both entertained and blessed!

Blessings,

Christmas Program Planning Team (Cindy W., Darcie O., & Nicky U.)

Children's Ministry Upcoming Teaching Topics

Sunday School

Sunday School Winter Quarter Dec 3 - Feb 25th, 2018

3's-4's/ 5K: One Accord Heart Shaper Curriculum

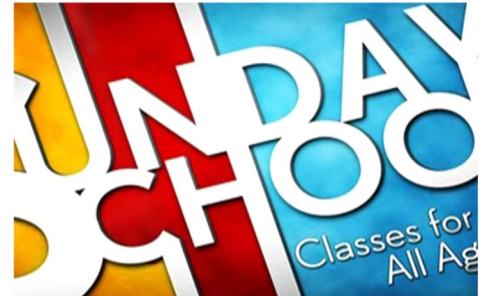
Jesus was Born
Jesus Pleases God
Jesus Loves Everyone

1-2 Gr: Radiant Life Primary Curriculum

Jesus Comes to Earth
Jesus Begins His Ministry
Jesus Loves Sinners

3&4 Gr: One Accord Heart Shaper Curriculum

God's Power, God's Care
God's Kingdom
God's People



9:00-9:45am (starting Sept 10th)

5&6 Gr: One Accord Heart Shaper Curriculum

God's Plan Unfolds
Growing Up
The Bible Teaches How to Love

Junior Church

3's&4's: Hand's on Bible Curriculum

Jesus is Born
Jesus' Miracles
Zacchaeus

5K: Hand's on Bible Curriculum

Jesus' Birth
Jesus Grows Up
Jesus is With Us

1-2 Gr & 3-4 Gr:
Character by God's Design Curriculum

*9 Month study rooted in scripture to help equip kids with character qualities they need to become the person God created them to be.

Truth, Honesty, Obedience



**Each Sunday during
the Sermon
(Nursery-4th Grade)
(through 6th grade once a month)**

Junior Church

5-6 Gr:
Grapple Curriculum

*helping preteens grapple with Biblical answers to their common questions

Relationships
Faith Questions
Choices



Quinten's Fingers - By Luke Lundell

As many of you have probably heard, my son Quinten had an accident involving his fingers back in the middle of October. My wife and I were down in the cities for the weekend, and our kids were staying with my brother and sister-in-law in Bemidji. The accident happened after church. Quinten had gotten his pinkie and ring finger of his left hand smashed between a door jamb and a loading ramp. His pinkie was nearly cut off and his ring finger was damaged pretty bad as well. It was severe enough that he was flown to the cities to a level 1 trauma hospital to have surgery on his fingers. A plastic surgeon performed the surgery of attaching tendons, and realigning bones, putting a pin in his pinkie finger, etc. He did the surgery, and we were able to leave the hospital that same night. Praise God, it all went well and a month later, he is healing excellent.

Through this scary event, we were able to experience some amazing things. I'd like to expound on three of them:

- The power of prayer and being obedient to the nudges from the Holy Spirit when he prompts you to pray for somebody.
- The power of Biblical preaching and how God orchestrates His will in all things.
- The power of the body of Christ, His church.

It wasn't until a week after the accident, did we find out that while at church the Sunday of the accident, a gentleman was compelled to pray for Quinten. Little did he know what to pray for or why, but he just started praying for him. Now, I can't say that if he didn't obey the Holy Spirit's prompting to pray for Quinten that the accident would have been worse or had a different outcome. But I can say that by obeying the Holy Spirit, the man's faith was greatly strengthened. And by sharing the story with others, it is of great encouragement, to me at least, to obey those promptings from the Holy Spirit to pray for someone who He puts on your heart. Even when you don't know why. The man had no idea what was going to happen just hours later with my son. But he was obedient and prayed, and his faith and others was strengthened because of it!



We also were able to experience the sovereignty of God and the power of preaching. As I said earlier, we were in the cities for the weekend. We were with another couple who used to live there and we had the privilege of attending the church that they used to go to. The sermon preached that morning was excellent! And little did we know that only a few hours later would we be experiencing the main points of the sermon. The Pastor was preaching through the book of John, and the Sunday we were there, he preached out of chapter 11, the death of Lazarus. At the end of the sermon, he gave us all an exercise. We were to-

1. Write down our two, maybe three, most difficult things going on in our life.
2. We were asked to pray, think, and write down how Jesus might glorify himself through our difficult circumstances.
3. We were to pray, think, and write down how our faith and others will be strengthened through our difficulties.
4. And finally, we were asked to give thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:20)

We definitely were able to apply and experience them later on that day! God is so amazing, how he orchestrates everything. I believe God ordained that specific text to be preached in advance to prepare us for what we were going to experience just a few hours later. He is in control of ALL things! It definitely was a very difficult circumstance for us. From not knowing what was happening in all the confusion, to being 4 hours away from our son when he was in pain, to not knowing what might happen to his fingers. We had time to meditate on how Jesus would be glorified through this whole incident. We had time to pray and ask God the Father to strengthen our faith and others as well. And we were able to experience Philippians 4:6-7- "do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your

Quinten's Fingers (cont)

minds in Christ Jesus.” God is worthy to be praised in ALL circumstances, no matter the outcome. And to be in His presence during a scary time is so very comforting.

Another, and the most powerful experience we had through it all, was experiencing the body of Christ in a mighty way. What I mean is that we were able to experience the church in a tangible way. The calls and texts of encouragement were overwhelming. By the time we finally found out that Quinten was going to be flown to North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale, we were already to St. Cloud on our way home. So we turned around and rushed to the hospital. As word spread about what had happened to our son, the calls and texts flooded in. It was by far the most emotional part of the whole event. The love from our brothers and sisters in Christ was overwhelming. And what made it even greater was that it wasn't just our loving body of believers at Country Faith greatly encouraging us, but it was also our Bible study group in Fosston offering support and prayers, our family members, and even brothers and sisters in Christ that we had met just days earlier, offering their homes if we needed a place to stay and to help anyway they could. God is so good! He set up His church for many reasons, and we were able to taste just a little bit of His glory through His church!

Operation Christmas Child

This year as a church, we packed and sponsored 488 Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes! As I write this we have boxes on their way to South Africa and others are still awaiting shipment from the Minneapolis processing center. In the past our boxes have gone to Madagasca, Tanzania, Kenya and I'm sure many more places!

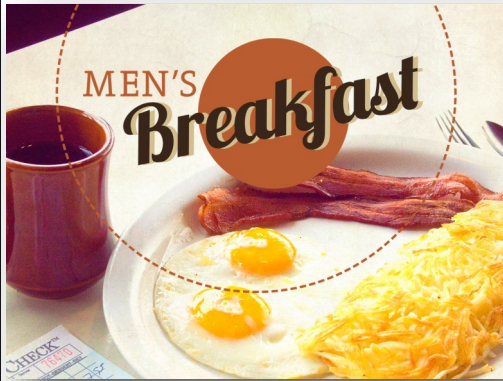


One thing I love about printing an on-line label is you will receive an email letting you know specifically where your box was delivered.

How exciting to know that God will use our boxes to bring joy and His love to children all around the world this Christmas season! Check out stories and testimonies at SamaritansPurse.com

Thank you for helping make this another successful year with the OCC ministry.

Men's Ministry



Men's Breakfast

Saturday, December 9th, 7-8:15am at CFC

Come and enjoy a GREAT breakfast, a time of fellowship, and a testimony from one of our brothers in Christ that will exalt Christ and encourage you!

Men's Bible Study

Sunday Nights, January 7th through February 4th at 7:00pm here at CFC, the men will begin the new Conquer Series. This is "a DVD based study for men, featuring five compelling lessons by former U.S. Marine fighter pilot and senior pastor, Dr. Ted Roberts. The Conquer Series, unrivaled in its scope and authority, is a life-changing, 5-week discipleship study that lays out the battle plan for purity. It provides men with biblical strategies, scientific facts and insight on how to use God's weapons to become conquerors. **Sign up at the information center. Cost is only \$10 and includes a study guide for each man.



Men's Winter Conference

Mark your calendars for Friday, February 23rd - Saturday, February 24th, 2018 here at Country Faith Church. Brochures with more information will be out sometime end of December or beginning of January.



Women's Ministry - Karleen Dahlberg

What did 2017 look like for the Women of CFC?

January - February - We offered a class Friday morning and Monday evenings focusing on mentoring by Carol Kent, Becoming a Woman of Influence. Our end goal was to begin a mentoring ministry at CFC.



March - A pottery event -A group of ladies went to Glazed and Amused in Bemidji

April 1st - We hosted a One Day Event called Renovate, Restore, Renew which was attended by about 100 ladies. Worship, main sessions, breakout sessions related to renovating our lives, lots of great decorations including a photo shoot area and a catered meal made up the day. Were there changed lives? Yes! Which is another story I could tell. Come ask me or Stacy about it and we will share it with you!

April and May - Nicky Ubert and Heidi Syverson led a Friday morning class on family which was attended by moms young and old! Our goal is to help moms understand how God wants them to do family and raise their children for the Lord. We provided child care also.

June - Another activity very well attended @ Life Center in Gonvick - Making Yard Yahtzee games which included lots of food, fun and fellowship!

August - An evening book event sharing books, games and an ice cream sundae bar. This was unique and fun hosted by Lisa Peldo, Adele Graser and Charis Nordlund.

Summer also involved training led by Lisa Ubert and Charis Nordlund for those interested in mentoring!

September/October

1. Bible studies - We offered 2 women's Bible Studies Friday am and 1 on Monday evenings. The studies were Discerning the Voice of God and The Names of God.
2. Woman's retreats - Middle of October Thrive Conference (Lysa Terkeurst and Ann Voskamp, speakers) in St. Cloud was attended by several ladies from CFC and TLC. The end of October we made the beautiful trek to Tenstrike Church for the northern hub Truebridge retreat for Fri night and Saturday. Our theme was Simply Chosen! Women from Destiny in Bemidji, Harvest Fellowship in Frazee, Tenstrike Community Church, CFC and TLC in Erskine were our speakers! It was a sweet time of challenge and fellowship.
3. Mentoring Program, Treasured Friends was launched on a Sunday am. Twelve women who have been trained and are waiting to connect with women were prayed over by our CFC leaders. Check out their brochure explaining the program and the godly ladies waiting to mentor.

December - As I am writing this, our next big event is the Christmas Tea. We anticipate over 200 women attending. Our theme is The Best Christmas Ever. Sue Hoiland heads up this huge event and engages many helpers including our men! She sincerely sought the Lord regarding His desire for this event for 2017. She heard Him impress upon her that His desire was for this 2017 Christmas Tea to happen. We are anticipating His presence and His purposes accomplished bringing Him glory through this Christmas Tea!

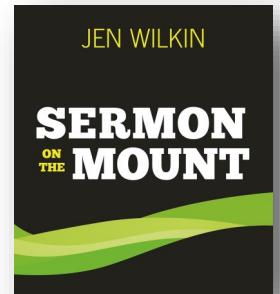
Women's Ministry - Karleen Dahlberg (cont)

What Will 2018 look like for the Women of CFC?

We are still in the planning stages for 2018 but I will tell you what I know.

Jan/Feb/March - Women's Bible Studies will begin in January. Watch the church bulletin and check out the Women's Ministry Cart for more information. We will be offering 2 very different opportunities for **Friday am** as follows:

1. Women's fellowship coffee/discussion time on current life issues. Day care will be provided for your little one. April Gazelka will host/lead this time. The focus will be getting together as women to talk about the challenges they face, learn from others and seek direction from the Lord in a relaxed warm setting. Your time together may include a short devotional or a fitting video clip. You will need to come join the group to see what all will happen! I know there will also be a variety of espresso coffees to be tasted and savored. There will be no homework with this class ☺!
2. Different women have expressed to me the desire to really be able to study the Word of God. They want to dig into the Scriptures and understand them by truly doing the with themselves. We are looking at offering this type of study by Jen Wilkin on the Sermon on the Mount studying Matthew 5,6 and 7 for 11 weeks. I am including a quote by Rachael Starke which describes the why and the what for including this type of study at CFC..... "The landscape of women's Bible study writers and teachers has expanded significantly beyond Kay Arthur and Beth Moore in the past several years. Today, books and Bible studies by Priscilla Shirer, Lysa TerKeurst, Christine Caine and others occupy prime shelf space in Christian bookstores, and are frequent go-to choices for womens' small group Bible studies. Many reasons for this growth are understandable. All of these women are articulate, engaging, fluent in the language of the Bible, and passionate about helping women grow in their understanding of Scripture and their relationship with the One it reveals. The study materials they publish are polished and thoughtfully constructed to keep women engaged and motivated in their study. But other commonalities, specifically, a hermeneutical approach that places women and personal circumstances at the heart of the story of Scripture, has popularized an approach to the understanding and appropriation of God's Word that can be overly therapeutic and sentimental. This approach potentially sells women short in their understanding of who God is and how the gospel is good news only when He is at its center, instead of them."



[Wilkin's inaugural study on the Sermon on the Mount](#) (published jointly by [Lifeway](#) and [The Gospel Coalition](#)) is essentially a practical application of the principles she covers in her bestselling book, *Women of the Word* (published by Crossway). Its format follows the one that has been the foundation for the interdenominational study she leads in Flower Mound, Texas, attended each week by over 600 women, and heard by several thousands more online. Each week's lesson is comprised of five days of homework intended to raise questions, small group discussion topics to help wrestle with questions, and a 25 minute video-based teaching time designed to resolve questions. In each week's lesson, Wilkin works to center our study of Jesus' most famous sermon in the context of the rest of Scripture. Her questions on each passage focus on three critical areas: what the passage says, what it means, and how it should change us. Change will flow from what a passage reveals about God's character, how that revelation shapes our view of our self, and our necessary response. In her introductory comments, Wilkin encourages us to set aside our go-to commentaries or even study Bible notes and to "dwell in the I don't know" as we wrestle with text directly. As an aid in this, the back section of the study contains a widely-spaced printing of the entire passage where you are encouraged to make notes and circle or highlight thematically pertinent words and phrases as the study progresses."

Evening women's Bible Study? We will possibly be offering an evening women's Bible Study in late March and April. If you are interested in such a study, please talk to Stacy or myself.

Women's Ministry - Karleen Dahlberg (cont)

We are currently developing an expanded women's vision planning team at CFC so there will be more to come in 2018. Stacy and I are personally very excited about the plans God has for women at CFC! My heart is also very thankful for the women of our church who have hearts to serve each other and serve our Lord Jesus Christ. You women are bright lights shining in a dark world pointing with your lives to Jesus who has redeemed us and brought us into His wonderful glorious kingdom! You bring joy to Stacy and myself and we are honored and blessed to work with each of you!
Karleen

Youth Ministry



Weekly from 9-9:45am



Sunday, June 24th - Saturday, June 30th, 2018
Becker, MN

Who: 9th - 12th Graders only

Cost: \$450 / Teen (Fundraising options will be available in the future to help out)

If you'd like to give towards helping a teen with their registration money, please contact Pastor Brad.

More details to come...

What is TeenServe:

TeenServe holds one-week missions trips for teens in 7th-12th Grade. Teens and their adult leaders spend the day blessing a family in need and then get blessed each night during life-changing programs. It's hard to say which part of the day is more impacting! All the details are covered for you! Teens & adults signed up will stay at the area school at night, food, project materials, daily devotions...it's all included!

~ Community Impact ~ Life-changing Messages ~ Serving Hands ~
~ Enthusiastic Worship ~ Faith Experience ~

www.teenserve.org

Youth Ministry

Mark your calendars:

TrueBridge Youth Retreat -

Friday, February 9th - Sunday, February 11th

More details to come...



Youth Night Schedule - Sunday Nights

For Teens 7th - 12th Grade

December 3rd - 7:00pm Youth Night

December 10th - 7:00pm Youth Christmas Fun Night
(after the Kids' Christmas Program)

- Ugly Sweater Contest & Lip Sync Battle

December 17th - 7:00pm Youth Night

December 24th - NO Youth Night (Merry Christmas)

December 31st - NO Youth Night (Happy New Year)

January 7th - 7:00pm Youth Night

January 14th - 7:00pm Youth Night

January 21st - 7:00pm Youth Night

January 28th - 7:00pm Youth Night

February 4th - Super Bowl Party

February 11th - No Youth Night (due to TB Youth Retreat)

February 18th - 7:00pm Youth Night

February 25th - 7:00pm Youth Night

As always: Invite your friends, All are welcome!



Weekly Schedule:

218-776-3367 ~ cfchurch@gvtel.com

Sundays:

Sunday School: 9:00am

Worship Service:

10:00am

Tuesdays:

Men's Prayer: 6:30am

Youth: 7:00pm

www.countryfaith.org

- For Sermons & up-to-date information

Find us on Facebook: Country Faith Church
(Now Streaming Weekly on Facebook Live during the sermon)

Youth: Join our "Elevate Youth Group" group on Facebook