

# Shepherd's Staff

February 2014

*We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.*

*"You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"*

*Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church*

*Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.*

## Certainty

In today's society we hear about many things that the supposed 'people in the know' tell us are certain. Leaders speak as having authority about topics such as global warming, claiming that it is a certainty. While I do not claim to be an expert, I can see from the weather reports that we do live in weather cycles. We have warming and cooling trends. Many of us with some years in the rearview mirror remember harsh winters, hot summers, and wet springs. Back then we did not speak of global warming. We simply complained about the weather! It did not do any good then either.

In a world with so much uncertainty we long for anything that can be trusted as certainty. Looking to the politicians can leave us empty in many ways as the deadlock we see in government escalates. Many others are sought after as heroes or at least persons we should trust because they entertain us on television or movie screens. I find it amazing how people who make a living pretending to be what they are not are held in such high esteem. At least when we were kids, the attention we received for our pretending was not so great. When mom saw us racing with our bicycles pretending to be flying a military jet at supersonic speed it only brought words of caution.

Looking for certainty may seem like an exercise in futility. Still we can find certainty in life if we know where to look. Psalm 46:10 is one place I find helpful. Here we read, "Be still and know that I am God." These are simple words but in them we find some amazing wisdom. We can be certain there is a God! We can also be certain we can find God through the quiet times in our lives. You know the times when we simply pause from the business of life long enough to actually hear what we were missing, the God times. God does give us certainty in life as we can see from the promise that summer follows the spring time, winter follows the fall time and when we tire of winter spring returns. We also see the promise of the rising of the sun every morning and the systematic cycles of the moon. We also can gain from this knowledge when we look to the theme of Proverbs. Wisdom is found in the knowledge of God. This knowledge also gives us certainty of the love we claim.

Our God who loved us so much that he sent his Son so that we might become children of God is a certainty. We have the testimony of the many believers who choose death over a life denying Jesus. We also have the certainty of God's Spirit living in us adding to the certainty of knowing God. Being certain is not out of reach if we reach for the truth which can be ours in God. Anything else we should likely look at as shifting sand. The movable, shifting trends that cause alarm should not move us from the certainty that never changes, God and his love for us.

Pastor Rus

# To You Who Bring Small Children to Church

There you are sitting in worship or Bible study. Your child, or toddler, is restless. Perhaps they're even a little boisterous. You try to silence them, and nothing. You try to pacify them with food or toys, and nothing. Eventually, you resort to the last thing you wanted to do: you pick them up, and before a watching audience, you make the march out of the auditorium. All the while, you're a little embarrassed. Maybe you're a little frustrated too. You might even think to yourself, "There's no point in coming to church. I get nothing out of it because I have to constantly care for my kid."



I want you — you mothers and/or fathers — to know just how encouraging you are to so many. The little elderly woman who often fills [sic] alone beams with a smile at the sight of you wrestling with your little one. She's been there before. She knows how hard it can be, but she smiles because to hear that brings back precious memories. To see young parents and their small children brighten her day, and she may have just received bad news this week about her health, but seeing the vitality of young ones removes — if but for a moment — her fears.

The older man who always seems to be grouchy notices you too. He's always talking about how children in this day have no respect or sense of good. But, he sees you — a young family — in church, and you don't miss any gathering. Like clockwork, he can depend on the sight of you and your young family. You give him hope that maybe the church isn't doomed after all, because there are still young parents who love God enough to bring their restless children to worship.

Then there's everybody else. Some people will honestly become frustrated by noisy children in church. They have this warped idea that reverence includes absolute silence. It doesn't. When parents brought their children to Jesus, the disciples rebuked them (Matt. 19.13-15), but Jesus rebuked His disciples. He said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." The term translated "children" in Matthew and Mark is *paidon*. The root of the word "pedagogue" is from this word. It defined children of either an infant state, or more particularly, it was with reference to those who were half-grown and could be either males or females.

When Luke wrote his account of this narrative, he used the word *brephos*; which means "infants." Luke wasn't contradicting Matthew and Mark's account, because Luke wrote that they brought the infants "also" (Luke 18.15-17). They would have squirmed, maybe even cried. This was likely why the disciples rebuked the parents; as well as that they might have thought that the children were too young to understand the blessing Christ pronounced over them.

Bring your children to church. ***If you don't hear crying, the church is dying.*** As hard as it might be for you as a parent who's half-asleep, keep on doing what you're doing. You are an encouragement, and you're starting off your children's lives as you should.

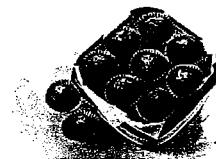
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## Simply Sensational Truffles by Kraft

5 pkt. (4 oz. each) BAKER'S Semi-Sweet Chocolate, divided

1 pkg. (8 oz.) PHILADELPHIA Cream Cheese, softened

Decorations: chopped PLANTERS COCKTAIL Peanuts, multi-colored sprinkles



**MELT** 8 oz. chocolate. Beat cream cheese with mixer until creamy. Blend in melted chocolate. Refrigerate until firm.

**SHAPE** into 36 balls. Place on waxed paper-covered baking sheet.

**MELT** remaining chocolate. Use fork to dip truffles in chocolate; return to baking sheet. Decorate, then refrigerate 1 hour. Store in tightly covered container in refrigerator.

**Tips:** May substitute by using BAKER'S White Chocolate or Bittersweet Chocolate. To make it extra special, add 1 to 2 tsp. of your favorite extract, such as peppermint, rum or almond; or 1/4 cup of your favorite liqueur, such as orange or raspberry, to the chocolate mixture before shaping into balls. Chocolate truffles are rolled in a variety of coatings for a sweet treat that is perfect for gift-giving or for serving on a special occasion.



## February Birthdays/Anniversaries



### Happy Birthday

2/1	Andrew Haan
2/2	John Hanna
2/7	Pat Prier
2/7	Lacey Hay
2/8	Mackenzie Allspach
2/10	Marlyn Allspach
2/14	Nolan Prier
2/17	Sharon Cordes
2/20	AnnaMae Mehmen
2/24	Rodney Mulder



**Reminder:** If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.

### CRC Service Schedule

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
2/2	Kevin & Shelly (N) Sylvia & AnnaMae (S)	Delbert Cordes	Friendship Circle
2/9	Larry & Mary (N) John & Karen (S)	Ken Kramer	Ken & Nancy
2/16	Ryan & Stacy (N) Marlyn & Marcia (S)	Gerald Haan	Pat & Deb
2/23	Ken & Nancy (N) Pat & Deb (S)	Ken Johnson	Brian & Kate

\*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.

