

Shepherd's Staff *We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.*

November 2016 *"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.

Tom's Plant

The plant was beautiful when I received it. The leaves were plentiful and dark green in a woven basket for a pot. The gift was given at the passing of my brother. It grew well for quite a while with regular watering and it was a pleasant reminder of the good times I had with my brother, who was the one just older than me. Yet as I was doing what I thought was right for the plant it began to show signs that something was wrong! The beautiful green leaves were turning brown and withering at an alarming rate. More water did not seem to help at all so I tried the drastic measure of re-potting the plant. I was alarmed when I found the plastic bag inside saturated with water to the point of rotting the roots. Placing the plant into a new ceramic pot, with a drain to prevent over watering, I continued to watch as more of the plant slowly died away, too far gone to save, until there were only about two bundles remaining.

If watering regularly was not helping, even though the roots needed to start over, I backed off on how much water I gave the plant. While the life of the plant seemed to remain in jeopardy for a while, it seems that kind of tough care was what was needed. The plant is now coming back with a full and beautiful bundle of green leaves. It was a challenge that in a way makes me thankful for what my brother went through in his fight with cancer and leukemia. Now in his rest in the presence of God I know he is flourishing again.

It is tough to take a hard look at something we want to keep and see some areas of struggle. Areas that require drastic measures in order to keep what we wish to keep going. That is, in a way, what we have been doing with our study in the book, "Autopsy of a Deceased Church" written by Thom Rainer. In medicine, the study of those who have died have provided the living with prescriptions for healthy living. That is the intent of our study in this book. While we heard about fourteen churches that died, we are able to glean knowledge from their closing to make us stronger.

One important observation must be made though, and that is we are not looking at a closing situation! We are a viable church but we would be wise to take this opportunity to give ourselves a "self-administered check-up." While going through the different chapters we read of the symptoms that precipitated the dying of churches but with an eye to learn. Knowledge is always beneficial if we truly use what we learn to avoid a similar problem. We can also rejoice in the knowledge that we are not sick as a church to the point we must fear dying.

This leaves us with taking the lessons we have learned and applying solutions to prevent the "disease" before it becomes a real problem. While giving up some of our favorite things may be needed we must always bear in mind that while we call this place "our church," it is really the church or body of our Lord here on earth. Doing what makes us stronger may not always come easily but if letting go of having things our way makes us stronger then we will receive the blessings God has in store for us.

Prayer for the filling of the Holy Spirit in all of us is where we should start. Being filled with the Spirit will help us to see God leading us and using us as He sees fitting. Being the body of Christ in the world may mean taking us from what was our comfort place, such as a pot that was too small for us, and giving us room to grow new roots into His promises and grace that will allow us to flourish well into the future. While any change or adjustment is rough at the time, we can with God's help see the glory of God among the living as we live, individually and corporately, for Him.

Pastor Rus

UPCOMING EVENTS:



- Do you have a place to gather on Thanksgiving Day? Do you know of someone without a family to go to? The Mehmen Family would like to invite those from our church, our community and beyond to enjoy the Thanksgiving meal with us. A meal with all the trimmings, games, and fellowship will provided on Thursday, November 24 from 11:30 until 1 pm. Please contact Deb or Ken if you will be joining us.
- SOUP SUPPER!! November 11 is the Soup Supper. Chicken Noodle, Broccoli Cheese, Chili, and Vegetable Beef along with assorted breads and desserts. Cost is \$7 (more than 1 bowl of soup too!) \$5 ages 5-11, and 4 and under are Free! Invite your friends, neighbors, family!!
- Sunday, November 13, 6 pm. Everyone is invited to hear Dave & Joan Becker speak on their faith through their struggles with son Mark and mental illness. This is a very powerful message **you need to hear**. Again, the public is invited and a light lunch will be served after.

We are Thankful: Thanksgiving Blessings Mix Recipe

Ingredients

- 2 cups Bugles brand corn snacks
- 2 cups small pretzels
- 1 cup candy corn
- 1 cup dried fruit bits or raisins
- 1 cup peanuts or sunflower seeds
- 1 cup M&Ms-brand chocolate candy
- 16 Hershey's-brand chocolate kisses
- Blessings Mix gift tags



Instructions

In a large bowl, gently mix all ingredients except Hershey's Kisses.

Place 1/3 to 1/2 cup Thanksgiving Blessing Mix in small cellophane treat bags. Add one Hershey's Kiss to each bag. Close bag with chenille stem or twist-tie.

Add a printable gift tag or bag topper, or hand-write your own tags, with the wording below.

Cut out tags, and attach one to each bag.

Makes 16 Blessing Mix gift bags.

Thanksgiving Blessing Mix Poem

- Bugles: Shaped like a cornucopia or Horn of Plenty, a symbol of our nation's abundance.
- Pretzels: Arms folded in prayer, a freedom sought by those who founded our country.
- Candy corn: Sacrifices of the Pilgrims' first winter. Food was so scarce that settlers survived on just a few kernels of corn a day.
- Nuts or seeds: Promise of a future harvest, one we will reap only if seeds are planted and tended with diligence.
- Dried fruits: Harvest gifts of our bountiful land.
- M&Ms: Memories of those who came before us to guide us to a blessed future.
- Hershey's Kiss: The love of family and friends that sweetens our lives.



November Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

11/3 Erma Aswegan
 11/3 Lois Mennen
 11/3 Dennis Schipper
 11/4 Brandy Reints
 11/6 JoLynneHusz
 11/8 RusBoersma
 11/13 Jean Trey
 11/14 Brooke Merrill
 11/14 Wendy Mulder
 11/17 Annie Allspach
 11/19 John Husz
 11/20 Noah Merrill
 11/22 Kayla Stirling
 11/25 Nancy Mehmen

Happy Anniversary

11/6 Kevin & Shelly Meester
 11/10 Dennis & Lois Mennen



Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20th of the month.

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Sunday School Teachers w/Lesson Topic#</i>		<i>Coffee*</i>
11/6	Dave & Betty (N)	Dale M.	Ryan & Stacy	A New Generation Receives the Law	Mike & Kayla
	Larry & Mary (S)		Jodi	Warnings From Israel's History	
11/13	John & Karen (N)	Gerald H.	Kayla & Shelly	Doubting & Rebellng	Irv & Amy
	Dennis & Sharon (S)		Brooke	Spiritual Blessings	
11/20	Frank & Betty (N)	Mark K.	Amy & Kay	Thanksgiving	Dennis & Sharon
	Ryan & Stacy (S)		JoLynne	Thanksgiving	
11/27	Steve & Charlene (N)	Delbert	Kamie & Nancy	The Birth of John Foretold	Gene & Janet
	John & Jodi (S)		Brandy & Joel	The Birth of John Foretold	

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

#The teacher schedule and lessons will be in the bulletin. You can always check the website as well- the bulletin is always on there (even before Sunday!!) www.parkersburg-crc.org If you need to change a Sunday, please call one of the teachers.



Thanksgiving Day

Fourth Thursday of November



AMERICA
CANOE
COLONY
CORNUCOPIA
ENGLAND
FALL
FAMILY
FEAST
FREEDOM

GRATITUDE
HARVEST
HOLIDAY
INDIANS
MAIZE
MAYFLOWER
MILES STANDISH
NEWWORLD
NOVEMBER

PILGRIMS
PLYMOUTH
PUMPKIN PIE
PURITANS
SQUASH
STUFFING
THANKSGIVING
TURKEY
YAMS

