

Shepherd's Staff

October 2022

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

Too Close to the Edge

On our recent time away, we stayed at a house which has an in-ground swimming pool. This by itself would not be a problem, but a dog with a sense of curiosity made it an issue. I was helping the owner out by cleaning the leaves out of the skimmer while letting Marley run in the fenced in back yard. Things were going well until I heard a splash only to look up and see Marley resurface in the pool. I could only imagine what happened but have a fairly good idea. You see Marley likes to swim in the pond near our home and having never seen an in-ground pool before likely thought the pool had sloping banks for entering. Once his front legs hit the water he was destined to go in with a splash.

Marley in a body of water would not be a stretch but as I stated he was not used to a pool with a steep edge. He would need some help to find his way out of the pool. I called to him in an effort to lead him over to the steps in the shallow part of the pool where he was eager to leave the pool. After all, he is not used to having his head under water when he swims but this time, he went all in. Not a very good experience for a first time in a swimming pool I would say.

The interesting thing is that many of us like to get too close to the edge of sin in our lives. We think that we are in control, just like Marley thought he was in control at the pool's edge but ended up over his head. We play at the edge of sin thinking we can just dip our feet in and still walk away but, like Marley, find ourselves in over our heads. Then we get the panic in our eyes that I saw in Marley. We flounder in the water of sin wondering how we can get back out.

This is where we need someone who can lead us to the safe ground. Someone we can trust in the situation to know where the steps are that will get us back on track where we can shake off the effects of sin in our lives. Fortunately, we have such a person we can call on. He also knows what it is like to be tempted. The only difference is that he never sinned. Because of this he is able to lead us back to a right relationship with God. This is Jesus and calling out of sin is what he does.

Calling is one thing, but we must listen to the voice of Jesus in our lives. We need to heed the call and turn in the direction he leads us. This is not always an easy thing for us to do but if we are going to get out of the pool of sin we need to find the stairs. We cannot on our own find the way, but with the help of Jesus we are assured that we will be successful.

Of course this is a time for repentance in our life as well. Part of repentance means that we learn not to test our own resolve to play with sin again. Jesus can help us with that as well when we keep our eyes on him. He will fill us with the grace of God that will shine the light of love in our hearts so that the darkness of sin will no longer have a place in us. This is much better than falling head first in a pool of sin or water. Just ask Marley.

Pastor Rus

Simple Roasted Butternut Squash

4 servings

- 1 medium butternut squash
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste

Directions:

- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
- Peel butternut squash with a sharp vegetable peeler. Cut in half lengthwise; scoop out and discard seeds. Cut halves into 1-inch slices, then cut slices into 1-inch cubes.
- Combine butternut squash cubes, olive oil, and garlic in a large bowl and toss until well coated. Season with salt and pepper. Arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet.
- Roast in the preheated oven until squash is lightly browned and tender when pierced with a fork, 25 to 35 minutes.





October Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

10/7 Twila Jansen
 10/8 Janet Venenga
 10/16 Stacy Ascher
 10/23 Ken Mehmen
 10/24 Kenneth Kramer

Happy Anniversary

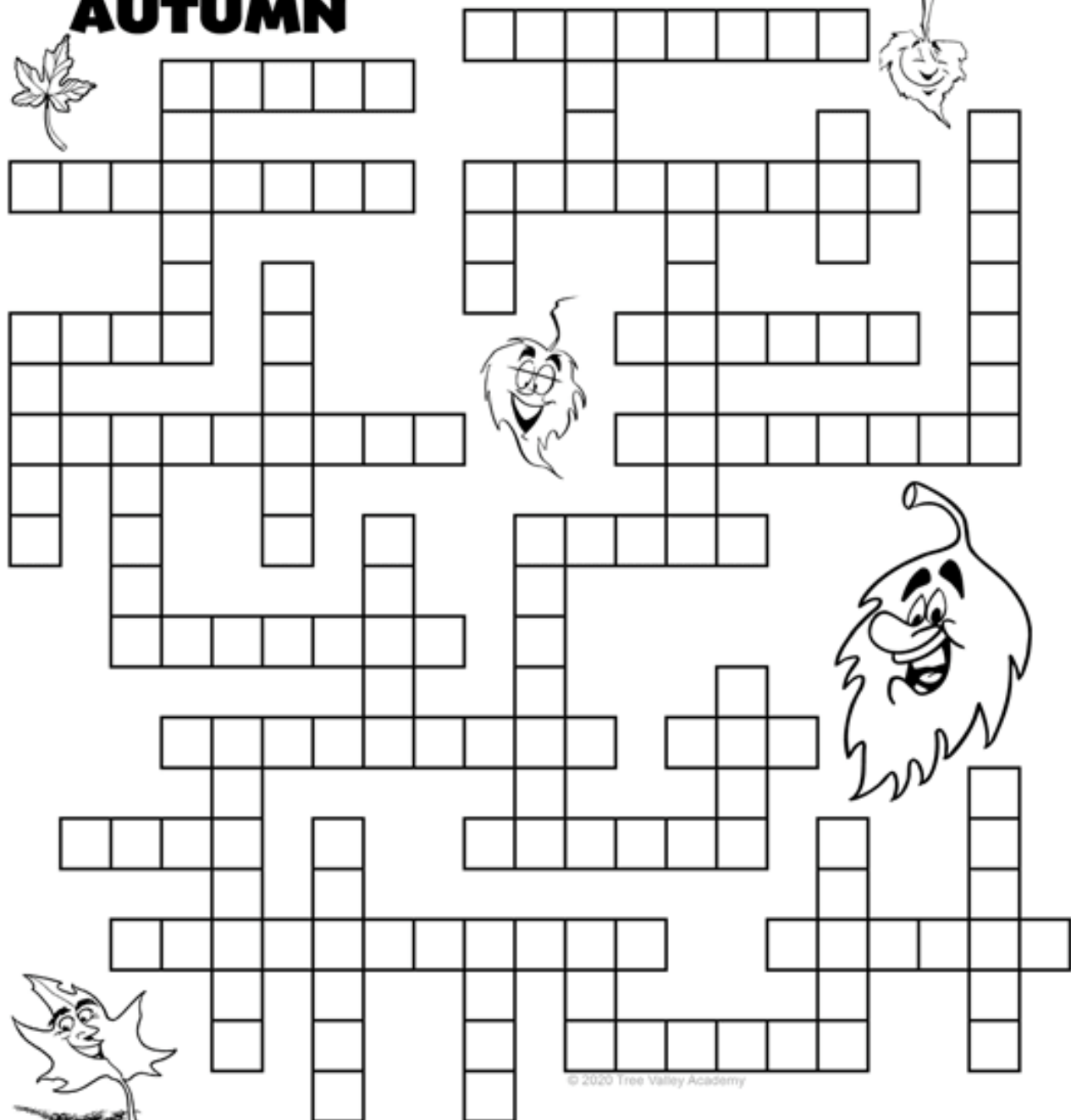
10/15 Ken & Rhonda Meester



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



AUTUMN



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3 letters

hay
owl
pie
red

4 letters

cool
corn
maze
pear
rake

5 letters

cider
crisp
quilt
socks
spice
trees

6 letters

apples
autumn
colors
leaves
orange
school
season
yellow

7 letters

falling
harvest
pumpkin
sweater

11 letters

wheelbarrow

8 letters

chipmunk
mushroom
orchards
rustling

9 letters

chestnuts
deciduous
pinecones