

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

September 2017 *"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.*

### **The Day the Sun Winked**

I was amazed at the attention that was generated recently when the moon passed in between the sun and the earth. The eclipse was the headline news for weeks prior and was still the main attraction days afterward. The rareness of this event caused people to leave their homes and travel to the "path of totality" to enjoy the full extent of this phenomenon as if they were on a pilgrimage. All this excitement so that a wink of the sun may be witnessed.

Interestingly, the predictions are being made for the next time an eclipse will occur, complete with the path the shadow will be most intense. Following some of the news reports gives the impression many held this as a spiritual experience. One witness interviewed had even proclaimed how the "wink" brought people together in a rare form of peace that this nation does seem to be short of otherwise.

I know being at home in Iowa, the eclipse was not so spectacular with the clouds that hid most of the event from our sight. The darkening of the day was more like a dark storm passing along on its way. Perhaps I was even a little disrespectful of the significance of the spectacle as I did not change my routine, working to finish all my normal chores for the day in a timely way. I did not think gazing up at a cloudy sky was that important. Maybe I was wrong.

I am concerned that some who consider this a religious experience are fulfilling what scripture warns about. You remember the warning about worshiping the creation instead of the Creator. If this is the case, it may be part of the symptoms that are plaguing our nation and the world of today. It seems fascinating that people who cannot drive a few blocks to a place of worship of the Creator God will drive hundreds of miles to "worship" the sun. I am afraid to label this as a mockery of God, but in some ways it does seem to fit the category.

Of course some will say it is simply a curiosity that falls under the heading of science and not of worship. Still it makes me wonder if we are turning our backs on God at a time when we need the presence of God so desperately. It would be an amazing occurrence if the world would show the same interest and excitement for the Son who winced because of the pain on the cross. The wink will not have a lasting effect on people. The wince has for many who believe in the Son of God. Perhaps it is only wishful thinking that what the Creator God can do with the shadow of the moon could bring many to the shadow of the cross.

Maybe the work of being an ambassador for the cross will gain new ground as we can compare the power of the wink with the saving grace gained through the wincing, suffering Son on the cross. It was so complete that it has no need to be repeated. Yet it's effect is still able to give hope and bring true peace as well as peace of mind to all who will believe. I know my hope is in the Son, not the sun.

Pastor Rus

## Autumn Blessings

By Deborah Ann



Autumn brings to the soul relief,  
as hot Summer days, slip to an end  
God sent the season for weary hearts  
to restore, repair and mend.

Unlike the Autumn trees,  
that shed their changing leaves  
God sent the season for failing hearts  
to adhere, embrace and cleave.

Just as with the Autumn winds,  
there comes a new refreshing rain  
God sent the season for fraying hearts  
to increase, grow and gain.

The Autumn sun is slow to climb,  
and dips much earlier into the night  
God sent the season for sleepy hearts  
to rise, shine and awake in His light.

God gave to us the Autumn season,  
so we could have a respite and rest  
for it is the season for our beset souls  
to see how much we are blessed!



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## Windshield Wiper Sermon

One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my son Matthew spoke up from his relaxed position in the front seat. "Mom, I'm thinking of something."

This announcement usually meant he had been pondering some fact for a while and was now ready to expound all that is seven-year-old mind had discovered. I was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" I asked.

"The rain," he began, "is like sin. And the windshield wipers are like God, wiping our sins away."

After the chill bumps raced up my arms, I was able to respond, "That's really good, Matthew." Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little boy take this revelation?

So I asked, "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?"

Matthew didn't hesitate one moment with his answer. "We keep on sinning and God just keeps on forgiving us."



# September Birthdays/Anniversaries



## Happy Birthday

9/2 Kellen Reints  
 9/3 Joshua Haan  
 9/7 Deb Prier  
 9/8 Bo Meester  
 9/9 Mark Kramer  
 9/16 Laura Edeker  
 9/17 Henry Heeren  
 9/22 Drake Shepard  
 9/24 Larry Johnson  
 9/26 Ellie Reints  
 9/26 Kenneth Meester

## Happy Anniversary

9/7 Marlyn & Marcia Allspach  
 9/27 Michael & Kayla Stirling



**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.

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
9/3	Pat & Deb (N) Bernie & Herm (S)	Ken Johnson	Paul & Darlene
9/10	Don & Annie (N) Henry & Kathy (S)	Ken Kramer	Mike & Stacy
9/17	Mark & Lanae (N) Irv & Amy (S)	Marlyn Allspach	John & Karen
9/24	Pastor Rus & Mary (N) Delbert & Sharon (S)	Gerald Haan	Cory & Kamie

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

# Autumn Sudoku

Every row, column and mini-grid must contain the letters A C O R N S.  
Don't guess - use logic



S					O
		O	N		
	S	A	O	R	
	O	R	S	N	
		N	C		
R					N