

Another Word Oct 3, 2023

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

I was looking out our back door yesterday morning and realized I needed to get our snow shovels out. No, we didn't get a freak snowstorm. We have a chestnut tree and the easiest way to clean up the nuts and hulls that fall on the driveway this time of year is to scoop them up with the shovel. Besides, it's good training for when it does snow.

The first day of LifeWise was last Wednesday. 75 middle school students came into our building to begin learning about God and Jesus. Their excitement and desire to learn was an amazing thing to witness. We thank all of you for your support of this wonderful program that will continue throughout the school year.

The second jazz concert of the Jazz Society last evening was well attended. Close to 100 were here. The concerts are scheduled for the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

***We had an envelope with a fairly large sum of cash placed in our offering box last Sunday. If it was indeed a love offering please accept our grateful thanks. If you would like credit (for tax purposes) please contact Kim Mercer at the church. ***However, we are also concerned that the envelope may have been put into the box by mistake. (These things happen.) If it was a mistake, all we ask is that you contact Kim or Linda Gardner, identify the type of envelope and the amount it holds.

Our next Living Legacy series will be November 4th at U.H. Samaritan at 663 E. Main St. Our speakers include a financial advisor from Edward Jones, an Elder Attorney from Critchfield Critchfield and Johnson, a home health specialist from CenterWell, and a representative from

Gentiva Hospice and Palliative care. This is a free seminar but you must register to attend. You may call 419-281-1477 to reserve your seat. There are flyers in the gathering area.

Our scriptures for the next 2 weeks are:

Oct. 8: Isaiah 5: 1-7, serving Elder is Matt Henderson. Matthew 21: 33-46. "The parable of the tenants."

Oct. 15: Isaiah 25: 1-9, serving Elder is Shelley Carpenter. Matthew 22: 1-14. "The wedding banquet."

Please keep the McKean family as well as the students and faculty of Mapleton School District in your prayers at the tragic loss of their daughter, Bre McKean. Let us go to prayer.

O God, father of life, we come to you with praises on our lips, and thanks in our hearts. You are the great provider, and know what is on our hearts. (May we each take a few moments to hold up those we know and love who are in need of comfort and healing.....)
It seems our world is pressing in on us and our lives at times, seem out of our control. But you are there, watching, guiding, and lovingly showing to us a more perfect way. We are grateful for your gift of salvation, bought through the sacrifice of Jesus, in whose perfect name we pray, Amen

There are lots of events in our lives that cause us to celebrate; weddings, the birth of a child, a new job or promotion. Even sporting events can cause us to cheer and even at times shed tears of joy. (Not often enough for teams from Cleveland.) How about worship? How should we act during a Sunday service?

There is a moment in the book of Nehemiah that can be instructive. The walls and gates of Jerusalem have been rebuilt and the people who

have been in exile have returned. The people call for Ezra the Priest to read from The Book of the Law of Moses. They stood, bowed their heads, and when they heard the word of God they wept. (Nehemiah 8: 1-9)

Why did they weep? They were reminded of the grace of God; blessings for their obedience, captivity if they disobeyed, and forgiveness if they repented and returned to God. During their lives they had seen and lived through it all, and now have found themselves back home and forgiven, just as God had promised. Their tears of sorrow were turned to tears of joy and outward celebration when they realized they were receiving God's grace and His precious promise!

Every Sunday we also get to hear God's promises read to us. And every Sunday we have a chance to better understand His grace, hope, and peace. As Nehemiah told the gathering, "This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." (verse 10) I like that. The joy of the Lord is *our* strength! In other words, it is perfectly fine to express your joy and release during worship, especially when emotions fill your heart. I can't tell you how many times I have teared up and am unable to speak when my heart has been touched. In fact, I've seen more than a few of you wipe away a tear or want to raise a hand in praise or shout out alleluia or amen! Trust me, God wants you to know that it's ok.

Whether applauding a beautiful song, having a prayer convict your heart, or God's word touch your soul, don't ever be afraid to outwardly express your heartfelt emotions, love, and praises to God.

In His Peace, *Rich*