

Another Word October 5, 2021

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

Our picnic was a great success. We want to thank Bill Freytag for the pizza, Peg Bille for the cupcakes, Ralph and Carol for the hot dogs, Ellie for the cold drinks, and Carolyn Stoler who brought cookies.

We are planning an outdoor work day Saturday, November 6th starting at 10am. More info to come.

There is a leadership meeting planned Sunday the 10th at 9am. Everyone is welcome as we plan the workings of the church.

This Thursday, the finance committee will meet at the church at 5pm.

Our study of "The Art of Living" by Henri Nouwen is half way through the first book. The lessons are very thought provoking and we are having great discussions. If you are interested, you can still step in Tuesdays at either 10:30am or 6pm. We are planning to have another study for Advent. Last year we started a Max Lucado study but needed to shut down early, so we will again present it in December. If you need a study guide, let me know so we can get a few more on order.

Our scriptures for Sunday the 10th are: Psalm 22:1-15 and Mark 10: 17-31. Lana Bell is Elder.

Here are a few prayer requests. A friend of mine, as well as a class mate, Tom Rochelle, had a heart procedure done on Monday. Also, Karen Light's surgery will take place today in Cleveland. Please pray for Ellie's friends who lost their son to covid last Sunday. And for Carrie, Dale and Mona's daughter who is having tests this week. Please keep them all in your prayers. May we pray...

O gracious God. You are our strength and our guide. Our lives can turn from peace to chaos in the matter of seconds. But because of Your love and direction, we can withstand any storm life can send our way. You will never desert us, and in times of pain and suffering You allow us to lean on You. We thank You for providing our daily needs. We ask for protection for all those who watch over the weak and oppressed. Guide us to a greater understanding of life and the knowledge that You mold us to be the people You want us to be. Please accept our prayers for those in need of Your healing, peace, and care. We raise this prayer to You in Jesus' name, Amen.

I was recently reminded of a sweet childhood memory of mine from the early 50's. Each summer we would jump in the old Buick, and drive non-stop to Panama City Florida to visit our father's side of the family. (No, the trip was not the good memory.) Then for a few days, we would become reacquainted with Grandma and Grandpa Pate.

The road in front of the house was sand, which was really cool. It was like having a giant sandbox. I learned to ride a bike there, and we were allowed to roam with the other kids of the neighborhood. When it rained and we had to stay in the house, we drew and colored pictures,

drank Co-Cola (For you northerners, that's a Coca-Cola) and made countless cars, trucks, and buildings with a huge Erector Set.

Grandpa always sat in a chair in one corner of the room. Next to him, was a small table that held his magazines, books, and pipes. But on one of the shelves, there was a black Ocarina. It was made from clay, had 5 or 6 small holes, and was hand painted with beautiful flowers. Grandpa called it a "sweet potato." If I remember correctly, Grandpa could play a few songs on it. But the best part was that he allowed Tom and I to play it. It was heavy, a little awkward, and it took a little patience to figure out where to put your fingers, and how hard to blow. To this day, I can still remember the soft, melodic, and unusual sounding notes that came from it when you did it just right.

The Ocarina starts out as a lump of clay. The lump is then fashioned into its distinct shape; holes are cut into its shell, and then painted. Once it is ready, it undergoes high temperatures which cures and hardens it so it may be used for its intended purpose; to make beautiful music by and for its owner.

Isaiah 64: 8 says, "Yet O Lord, You are our Father. We are the clay, You are the potter; we are all the work of Your hand." Note the word "yet." Isaiah, in chapter 64 is saying, "We are all sinful and have strayed," **YET**, You O God, are in charge. He is asking for God to shape us, to mold us, even to put us through trials that will shape us into beautiful instruments to be used for His purpose, His will, and His glory.

It took some time for Tom and I to learn to make music with Grandpa's Ocarina. There were trials, disappointments, as well as successes. It is

the same with our lives. We all have been shaped by the Great Potter. But at times our lives may seem not to have direction or a purpose. That's when we need to remember that we are molded, shaped, and even placed through heat and trials by God, in order to be transformed so we may walk in step with Him, and make beautiful music throughout the world.

In His Peace,

Rich