

Another Word Aug. 4, 2020

To family and friends of First Christian Church,

Last Sunday morning was interesting. A few weeks ago, we made the decision to continue to hold our services at the pavilion, rain or shine. However, as we watched the radar and approaching storm cell, it became very clear that we had better go inside. Temperatures were taken, masks were worn, and we all sat 6 feet apart. Thank you Brian for adding beautiful music, and thank you to those who came, stayed, and worshipped together inside for the first time since March.

Our scriptures for Aug. 9<sup>th</sup> are Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b, and Matthew 14: 22-33. Our theme is; God takes the weak in spirit and gives them strength and leadership.

The Ashland County Ministerial Association will be hosting a Sacred Assembly Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5 to 6:30p.m. at Freer Field in Ashland. This community wide gathering is to pray for repentance of our national, community, and personal sins. To call upon our God in Heaven to "Heal our Land." (See Joel 1: 13-14) I would love to see a thousand people (including some of us) gathered together in prayer.

Kim's knee surgery went well on Monday. Please keep Kim as well as Arlene Whitmer, Dick Baum, Mike Reynolds, and Larry Laser in your prayers.

May we pray. Dear God of life, we thank you for our lives, and thank you for your love. Sometimes our days are so busy we forget to remember you, to wait for you, to listen for your voice. Please forgive us for being so easily distracted. We pray for the safety of our first responders and for those working around the clock to find a cure for the virus that is plaguing your world. We pray for the families who have been affected, as well as those we remember that are close to us.

We thank you for providing for us our daily needs and thank you for your guidance and protection. We hold these prayers up to you in Jesus' precious name, Amen

One winter years ago, a company I worked for took us to Cancun, Mexico for a sales meeting. The meeting only lasted about 30 minutes. It turned out that as a reward for our hard work, we were given 5 days to enjoy the ocean, sunshine, and beautiful sandy beaches.

One day, 2 of us sculpted a twelve-foot alligator on the beach. It was so good no one would believe we made it. However, we didn't consider one thing; the tide. We went out the next day to admire our work, and you guessed it, the alligator was gone. The high tide erased it.

In a very real way, that's kind of like our lives so far this year. High tide, in the form of the coronavirus, has hit our world with a suddenness and disruptive power that threatens our economy, our businesses, our relationships, the very lives we've built. It seems that overnight, a lot of what was there is suddenly gone, or going. It's sobering to see just how little control we have over what we have built.

But maybe, this virus has done us a favor. It has revealed how fragile many of the things we depend on really are. Jesus tells a story in Luke 6:47-49, about two men who build houses. One on a rock, the other on sand. Both are good houses, similar in shape and size, until the storm came. The one built without a foundation, (without Jesus) collapsed "and it's destruction was complete." Maybe that's how you are feeling since the virus hit.

But, Jesus said, the one who built his house on a sure foundation, (his life around Jesus), when the storm struck, "it could not be shaken because it was well built."

There are many storms that threaten our lives. A loss of a job, health issues, the loss of a loved one, even an invisible virus. We all need

someone to rely on, someone to trust, someone to hold on to when the storms and high tides of our lives threaten to wipe us off the beach.

That someone is Jesus. Hebrews 6:19 says “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” Firm and secure! Jesus is the foundation; Jesus is the barrier we need to survive the onslaught of the high tides of our lives. And all you need to say is, “Jesus, I’m yours.”

In His peace,

*Rich*