



# On the Same Page

“The rich and the poor have a common bond, The LORD is the maker of them all.” (Proverbs 22:2) “The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding sees through him.” (Proverbs 28:11)

## A Developing Direction

### Forever-Family Fellowship

**We will teach and practice truth-and-love relationships with brothers-sisters in Christ that must survive/thrive in the present because we believe that these relationships will last forever**

### All-Week-Long Worship

As the local body of believers gathers each Sunday for worship, **we will inspire a worship experience for all age groups that will travel with you all week long.** What we do on Sunday will assist you in your singing, in your praying, in your devotion, and in your witness.

Conversely, it is as you worship all-week-long that you will be prepared to enter into gathered worship on Sunday.

### Day-to-Day Discipleship

As followers of Christ, we are disciples every single day. Respect for and commitment to Scripture is essential. **We will show you how to interact with and respond to God's Word, both as individuals, and in groups.**

### Moment-by-Moment Mission

God, the Architect of the world and of our lives arranges appointments and interruptions. Each of us is called to represent His Son for the glory of His Name. **We will cultivate a mind-set for moment-by-moment mission, whether close to home, or far away.**

## To Africa (and Back)

Sunday, February 19, 2017

There is some evidence that says I am not a good traveller. My wife is much better at it, and so I'm better with her. But nonetheless, I'm going with a group, to Togo, W. Africa, for the purposes of medical missions (I'm more missions than medical), and so once I get to NYC, I guess I'll just follow the leader.

Togo won the prize a couple of years ago as the least happy nation on earth. Another group ranked poverty among African nations, and Togo also came out on top (or, bottom). I expect that one of the outcomes of this trip will be a renewed sense of gratefulness that, for some reason, with no credit to me, I happened to be born and live in the US of A. But there are a couple of caveats.

I am completely sure that we can find many people in our country more miserable than most individuals who make up the Togolese population. I expect to find a lot of joy in Africa, and a lot less worry about some of the things we worry about. Yes, the Togolese people may have very real concerns that have to do with life and death issues. But which misery is worse: that of lacking opportunities for improving one's life? or that of having wasted many kinds of golden opportunities that have been afforded us? It's a different kind of sadness, or frustration, or despair.

Which is why rich people, like Americans, can be most miserable. We have the best of education and health care and tons of choices, and yet many look back and find that they have only [chased the wind, and are reaping the whirlwind](#). In no way am I trying to make light or less of poverty. To go to bed hungry, or to have no options for finding relief for your child's disease, is fearsome.

Do we remind ourselves often enough that those who are poorest monetarily can be among the most rich psychologically and spiritually? And likewise, are we challenging ourselves often with the thought that those who are the most well off in economic terms can be among those who are the poorest psychologically and spiritually? The pursuit of the dollar which is far from almighty guarantees neither real wealth nor happiness.

Further, if happiness and real wealth are not directly tied to the number of dollars we have, then we can be free to pursue true happiness and real wealth where they can be truly found. Here is my suggestion: Find them in Jesus. [“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” \(2 Cor. 8:9\).](#)

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**Martin Luther, Preface to Commentary on 1 Peter** (commenting on 1 Peter 1:22)

**If you want to remain chaste, you must take hold of obedience to the truth in the Spirit; that is, one must not only hear and read the Word of God, but one must take it to heart. Consequently, it is not enough to preach or hear the Gospel once. No, one must constantly move forward and progress. For the Word has such grace that the more one deals with it, the sweeter it becomes. Although the doctrine of faith is always one and the same, one cannot hear it too often, unless there are impertinent and coarse hearts.**

Luther's Works: Vol. 30, Concordia, 1967, p.41

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## News and Notes

**Prayer Time:** Sundays, 9 a.m., in the sanctuary

Please pray for Pastor Steve on a missions trip to Togo, W. Africa with CWE, sharing the Gospel with Togolese people before and after their medical appointments.

**Ladies Bible Study**, studying 1 Peter, meets each Tuesday, 10 a.m.

There is a brown bag lunch for those helping set up and test **the new Grand Prix track** after worship today. **Weigh-in for all Grand Prix cars is on Tuesday evening, 6:30-7:30, and the event itself is on Wednesday during our regular Awana times: 6-7:30 p.m.**

**Thanks to our Circle of Grace ladies** who put together **130 gifts and invitations for our friends at American House.** They were delivered to each door this past Sunday evening.

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## **Weekly Worship @ 11:00 a.m.**



**This Sunday, February 19**, while Pastor Steve is in Togo, W. Africa, Andrew Winter, a student at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, will visit our congregation and preach in our morning worship service. Please pray for Andrew in advance, and come expecting to be blessed by the Word.

**Last Sunday, February 12**, we examined the few verses that describe John the Baptist's public ministry, as he prepares the way for the ministry of Jesus. The center of his message is repentance, and we will note the concrete expressions of repentance that John teaches. [Listen to the message here.](#)

**Sunday School classes meet on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m.**

Our Adult class will study and engage in discussion on the theme of the morning message. Our children's class is learning "The Christian's Armor," from this list in Ephesians 6.