



# On the Same Page

“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” (James 1:5 NAS95)

## 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.**

## Grace and Graciousness

Sunday, September 3, 2017

God in His grace has reached out and blessed us in ordinary and extraordinary ways. He did so, not because we deserved such grace, because He desired and chose to do so. This grace is more variegated than the flowers that the ladies will see this coming week on their outing to the dahlia farm. It is a prism of goodness that fills our lives. Every sweet experience, whether pleasing any of our senses or activating our minds our affecting our emotions - all these things are only possible because of the many-colored grace of God.

Of course, God's grace as applied in redemption is even greater. God blesses His children with a changed past, forgiving their sin. He gives them a new identity, breaking their bondage to Satan and binding them in covenant relationship with Himself. He seals our future with promises and with the heavenly Spirit who now dwells in our hearts, leading and provoking and protecting. We are never alone; we always have Someone who prays for us; and we are invited to call the Ruler of the universe “our Father.”

Such grace is, as John Newton wrote, amazing. It is also infecting. With the gracious Spirit's help, this grace penetrates deep down into our psyche, so that what rises up and out of us is - gracious. Grace-filled Christians (and there are no other kinds) are gracious. And yet, the world's experience of professing Christians is often much different. What has gone wrong?

Well, for one, we have. As Martin Luther said, we are at the same time saints, and sinners. I have a t-shirt with that quote on the front. One of our ladies saw me wearing it, and said that the “sinner” was more obvious than the “saint.” I think she was talking about the font and the color. But then, I'm not so sure. Maybe she, or God, was telling me that His infecting grace has not yet penetrated near so deep as it needs, so that my most unguarded responses when stressed or frustrated are not the same as those responses when worshipping alone with Bible open or together with others in song - gracious. Because grace and graciousness must go together.

If you have indeed tasted that the Lord is good, how is the flow of graciousness? Where are the inconsistencies? Are there certain people or places in which the graciousness disappears, and the old man comes out. We know, don't we, that God's grace never disappears. Nor should our graciousness. We can be truthful, but gracious. We can disagree, but with grace. The gladness of God's grace must never give way to the madness of our own malice.

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Martin Luther, "The Bondage of the Will" (1525). Luther writes about our need for the Law - not because it justifies or saves us. No, rather, it condemns us. But it is necessary to reveal to us our sin, which we would otherwise relativize or dismiss, as evidenced by this week's arguments on gender and marriage.

**"Therefore, the law is necessary to make sin known so that when its gravity and magnitude are recognized, man in his pride who imagines himself well may be humbled and may sigh and gasp for the grace that is offered in Christ."**

Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings. Augsburg Fortress, 2005, p. 177.

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## News and Notes

**Prayer Time:** Saturdays, 7:30 a.m., at the Milford Tim Hortons; Sundays, 9 a.m., in the sanctuary  
**September is Coming!**

- **American House service, Sunday, September 3, 3 p.m.**
- Ladies interested in visiting **Summer Dreams (dahlia) Farm open house**, please let Jane or Evie know, and plan on meeting at the church building on **Wed., September 6, 5:30 p.m.**
- **Sunday School kickoff is Sunday, September 10, 9:30 a.m., as we seek to teach more children, gather and influence our youth, and grow the fellowship and knowledge of our adults. Plan to join us.**
- **Awana begins Wednesday, September 13. This year we are adding "Trek," - Awana designed for Middle Schoolers. Please see John Dickey about how you can help.**

**Please note the church's new phone number: 248-717-3564**

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

The final message of the **Summer Series** is "**Jesus' Plain Preaching**", from Luke 6:43-45, called "Well-Built," is available [here](#).

**This Sunday**, in preparation for Lord's Table, we will look at our "dare prayer," challenging one another to ask God daily for wisdom throughout the month of September (cf [James 1:5-8](#))

**Sunday School (normally) meets each Sunday morning, 9:30 a.m.** Our adult class is studying subjects related to the morning message (this week, building God's building); there is a class available for youth; the children's class is reviewing books of the Bible, and key characters found in each (next week, Ruth).

However, this week, **September 3, we will be joining for Potluck Breakfast at 10 a.m.** in place of Sunday School, right before our 11 a.m. worship gathering.

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