

West Swamp News

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Ripple work day

Inside this issue:

Pastor's Corner	2
Worship	2
Community	3
Stewardship	4
Mission	5

A small group of West Swampers, most from the Mission Commission, helped out a partner congregation on May 13 with some inside and outside work.

Ripple Church is ecstatic that they raised the \$200,000 downpayment to purchase the church building they have been meeting in, and have arranged a manageable mortgage to complete the payment. Praise God!

The West Swamp crew trimmed away branches growing too close to the building, weeded beds front and back, clipped spent daffodils, and bagged up all the garden waste. (If this happens again next year, someone with experience thinning out hostas would be helpful!)

Inside work included sanctuary sweeping, and sorting and clearing a room that will be used this summer as Ripple hosts a city-run reading program.

FYI

- Two comforters are still available to purchase. Your donation of \$58 or more goes to purchase batting for the knotting program. (Feel free to request different colors and they'll see what they can do!)



Top: After trimming tree branches, Bob Walden roots out weeds at the sidewalk's edge. Left: Pastor Michael does a clean sweep of the sanctuary. Bottom: Once the front beds are looking good, Karen Parzych starts on a plot behind the church.



Pastor's Corner: The rhythm of life

As the days get longer and the temperatures get warmer, and memories of snow and ice fade, it's time for vacation. Whether you are going somewhere exotic and far away, or perfecting your staycation, vacation—rest—can help us reconnect with some deep truths about how God made us to be.

In the account of the creation of the universe in Genesis, the text points out for us that: "By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done (Genesis 2:2, 3).

And rest is a priority that is built into the Ten Commandments. "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you

shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy (Exodus 20:8-11).

By the time of Jesus, what had been intended by God as a blessing to humanity had become a burden, an observance that was more about negatively abstaining from work than positively entering God's rest.

In Mark 2, Jesus is being attacked by the Pharisees because some of Jesus' followers were eating the leftover grain in a field they were walking by on the Sabbath. Jesus says to the Pharisees, "The Sabbath was made for humanity, not humanity for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

We need to hear Jesus' word to the Pharisees as a gracious word to us. In our culture, work often defines us. When we meet someone, the first question we often ask is, "What do you do?" We are prone to prioritize doing over being.

On a trip to Lancaster this week, I saw a series of billboards on the highway that simply said, "You are enough."

Recognize that your value, your worth, is not contingent on what you do or accomplish. You are valuable to Jesus simply because you are created in God's own image. You are valuable to Jesus because you are the recipient of his fierce love, not because of anything you do or don't do.

So be reminded by seasons of rest of from where your value comes.

Peace,

~ Pastor Michael

Worship: Summer worship plans

Summer is approaching! Time to switch gears.

Chimin' In and the Choir will be taking a break for the summer, and will return in the fall. We will have some special music, impromptu choirs and small ensembles. We hope you'll be willing to participate if asked to sing in a group. Even better, feel free to offer your musical talent!

With hot weather approaching, we will have some services outside in the pavilion, and some in the fellowship hall in the comfort of air conditioning. (We're spoiled!) Also, we plan to have at least one informal service that will include some "round table discussion," as talked about at the annual meeting.

Save the date: Men-O-Lan Sunday, with Solidarity and Harmony, is Aug. 13. Come for worship and don't hurry home. Stay for lunch and activities—boating, swimming, fellowship, walking the trails, playing games, etc. More details to come.

~ Joan Hallman

Community: Spring happenings

What better way is there to officially kick off summer than a picnic?! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, June 21 at 6:30 pm for a fun evening of roasted hot dogs, an array of salads and picnic fixings, and ice cream!

There will be outdoor activities and good fellowship, at the pavil-

ion at church. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish to share if possible.

This is an excellent activity to invite family and friends. You won't want to miss it!



Help us celebrate all fathers, father figures, and the special men in our lives on Father's Day. On Sunday, June 18 there will be a special Fellowship Hour refreshment time in honor of the men.

But that's not all! There will be an extra "To-Go" treat for all men!



The monthly Senior Luncheons have been a fun time for our "over 60" friends to meet for good food and fellowship. We are thankful for everyone who made these events possible—and there are many!

We will take a summer break from the luncheons, but we hope

to see everyone at the picnic in the pavilion on June 21.

Senior luncheons will resume in September – join us!



*Let us think of ways to motivate one another
to acts of love and good works.
And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do,
but encourage one another,
especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.
Hebrews 10:24-25*

Stewardship: A four-month financial check-in

I can't believe it's almost the end of May. A good time, before the summer travel and activities ramp up, to see how we are tracking financially against our budget.

At April 30 we are reporting a year-to-date deficit of \$5,101. By comparison last year, at April 30 we showed a \$6,546 deficit.

Four months into the year we should be approximately 33% through our budget of \$212,703.

As for the total receipts, we have received \$67,491 or 31.7% of the budget. Last year during the first four months, the receipts totaled \$69,985 so it would be a worthy goal to close that gap in the coming months.

Total disbursements so far this year are \$72,592 or 34.1% of our spending plan. We have realized some savings this year with fuel oil expense, as the price per gallon has dropped during the sea-

son in light of the relatively mild temperatures. Most of the other expenses are tracking fairly close to budget.

Still to come this year is our capital improvement project, of replacing the pavilion roof, so your prayerful consideration of our Church finances is greatly appreciated.

*~ Randy Rush
Moderator Deacon
Stewardship Commission*

Mission: Want to make some Dignity Kits

The Mission Commission is always talking about welcoming ideas from the congregation. So I've got one to propose: Let's have a party to make an MCC Dignity Kit item.

Did you know that in rural villages around the world girls stop attending school around a certain age? It's when they begin to have menstrual cycles. Without

proper facilities at their schools and without access to menstrual products, girls are forced to stay home from school each month. Eventually they fall far behind and give up on getting an education.

MCC Dignity Kits include a Reusable Pad System that enables girls to stay in school and women to have jobs outside the home.

The System includes 3 waterproof base units that hold pad inserts in place, 8 absorbent fleece pad inserts, and one small transport bag. Sewers are urgently needed to make these items.

Anyone interested in having a sewing party one or two times this summer to make these much needed items? I first thought it would be a nice women's activity, but men could do it too. For those who don't sew, there's cutting and measuring and poking involved.

Let me know if you would like to do this—and what a good time for you would be. If there's enough interest, we'll make it happen!

~ Lynne Rush



A reminder toward a slightly “greener” church

Recently Pastor Michael asked me if it was time to order more plastic communion cups. I reminded him that we now use the reusable glass cups since we decided at a past annual business meeting to avoid using plastic and Styrofoam. He thought we must have done that before he started as pastor.

That made me curious about when this decision was made, so I did a little research. I found this in the minutes of the 2020 meeting:

“Lynne expressed concern on the use of plastic and Styro-foam for Church functions. She would like to eliminate this and suggested that either everyone bring their own utensils or have volunteers to wash utensils after functions. Also, Barb Moyer suggested a few people get together to educate themselves regarding recycling. Motion made to not use Styrofoam and plastic utensils. Seconded and carried.”

I can’t blame Pastor Michael for forgetting about this decision. I think a lot of people have. And no wonder—less than three months later we had other things on our minds: COVID, a lockdown, figuring out how to do church in very different circumstances.

It was not only convenient, but often a necessity to use one-time use, throw-away communion cups and utensils during that time. Now, however, it is a choice we can make.

I know that I am more invested than some in making the choice to not use plastic and Styrofoam. That’s why the Knotters no long-

er use plastic utensils for snack time. I gather and wash the silverware. We’re now using glass and ceramic mugs and glasses too (I got tired of washing flimsy plastic cups for reuse).

I don’t want my convictions about plastic make more work for someone who doesn’t share those convictions. That’s why I’m more than willing to wash silverware and dishes after a church event. Unfortunately, I’m often involved in leading something and can’t do it immediately. Leave them soaking in the sink and I’ll take care of them after the service or the next day.

To end, let me share WHY I feel strongly about this. I read too much. Yep, as I learn what is happening around the world, I can’t ignore my part in it.

As church secretary, I get emails from MCC with announcements and info. The latest one included a link to MCC’s initiative **Climate Action for Peace**. MCC partners work to support people in adapting to the challenges of climate change.

In Zimbabwe **Score Against Poverty** installs solar panels for homes and clinics. Some families receive biodigesters that transform manure into biogas for cooking and other uses. Other families receive fuel-efficient stoves that are lessening reliance on firewood.

These new technologies help reduce emissions to mitigate climate change, and in the

process transform the rhythm of life for women. They no longer need to walk miles to gather firewood, and can cook food in half the time in a safer environment. This gives mothers more time for family, leisure and activities that generate extra income.

It is countries like Zimbabwe who are suffering the costs of a changing climate. Yet the lifestyle of rural families did not cause climate change.

The United States is the largest cumulative emitter of climate change causing greenhouse gases at over 400 billion tons; Zimbabwe, mere tons.

I know that I am inconsistent in my actions to make a more just and equitable world, but each step I take helps. Each step WE take helps. Cutting out plastic and Styrofoam is one step toward a better planet. What other steps can we take as a church to promote climate justice for peace?

~ Lynne Rush



Tamara Kudoma turns on a stove fueled by the biogas digester at Mwenezi Government High School (Zimbabwe). MCC photo/Megan Mast.



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Reflecting God in our
living, loving and serving

Calendar of Events

June

3, 2 pm—Trumbaursville Comm Day
4, 9:30 am—Prayer Breakfast
4, 11:30 am—Congregational Mtg
6, 7 pm—Community Com.
13, 7 pm—Mission Com.
16, 6 pm—Men-O-Lan staff picnic
18—Father's Day
20, 7 pm—Ministry Team
21, 6:30 pm—Hot Dog Social
25, @12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch
27, 7 pm—DISCO

July

2, 9:30 am—Prayer Breakfast
4, 7 pm—Community Com.
11, 7 pm—Mission Com.
21, 12 pm—Sunday Lunch Bunch
18, 7 pm—Ministry Team
20, 7 am—Villages Service Trip
25—7 pm—DISCO

Regular Activity

Tuesdays, 8 am—Knotting & Quilting



June

6/3 Mike Opdyke
6/4 Linda Rice
6/6 Allison Bevan
April Huff
Michael Opdyke
Jeff Searfass
6/9 Leon Propst
6/12 Kaitlin Kennedy
6/14 Michael Howes
6/17 George Mellan
Eileen Riley
6/22 Brook Stauffer
6/23 Marian Hinkle
6/27 Shawn Husvar
Eli Mood
6/29 Cindy Raub

July

7/1 Jonathan Opdyke
7/2 Haley Stauffer
7/3 Richard Rosenberger
7/5 Pov Sar Loch
7/9 Mike Olimpo
7/22 Kevin Riley
7/27 Evelyn High
Mark Kemmerer
7/30 Sue Conrad Howes