

# FAITH

## *In Focus*



Engaging the Word...Impacting the World

Vol. 16 Issue 27

July 17, 2016

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## WELCOME TO FAITH!

### From Pastor Tom's Desk...

"Spiritual disciplines" is a term we use to describe certain practices designed to help us grow in our Christian discipleship. These practices include worship, Bible reading, prayer, solitude, simplicity, and service, to name a few. Sometimes we refer to these practices as "means of grace" because they help us open ourselves to the flow of God's grace into our lives.

Some people resist the term "spiritual disciplines," thinking it implies religious works intended to win God's approval. This could not be farther from the truth. The real purpose of spiritual discipline is intentional spiritual growth. Our maturity in Christ doesn't just happen. Certainly it is a product of the Spirit's work in our lives, but we must cooperate with the Spirit by making ourselves available to Him.

Howard Rice addresses the issue this way:

"Discipline in the Christian life is not a luxury...These means of grace [spiritual discipline] are not a method of deserving God's grace, but a pattern by which we enable ourselves to be receptive to grace and remove the barriers that God permits us to erect as the price of our freedom. These tools, or aids, are ways by which we open ourselves to God's free grace."

The busy, noisy world that surrounds most of us can often get in the way of our growth in Christ. We simply get pre-occupied with the urgent and forget to prioritize time and energy for the Lord. I have found that I need to actually schedule time with the Lord into my daily routine. If I don't, I typically come to the end of the day and realize I haven't

been in the Word, I haven't prayed, and I haven't even thought much about God's presence in my life.

On the other hand, spiritual discipline helps us prioritize God's purpose in our lives. It puts us in a mindset that recognizes God's presence and acknowledges the many gifts He gives us each day. It also calls us to pause and listen for what God might want to say to us. (This is the essence of Bible reading and prayer.) It calls us, as well, to give our lives away for Christ's sake rather than seeking self-advancement all the time.

As the word implies, "discipline" challenges us to do the right thing whether we feel like it or not. There are mornings when I get up not feeling much like a Christian! I have learned that spending an hour with the Lord in the morning changes my whole perspective and motivates me to serve Christ another day. Discipline is not easy—its not doing "what comes naturally." But it is worth the effort it requires because it allows God's grace and love to grow in our lives. I pray that Christ is growing in your life!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Tom

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### In Gratitude...

We are extremely grateful for a recent gift of \$30,000 that has come to the church. The governing Board has spent much time and prayer considering how to use this special contribution. At this week's meeting, the funds were allocated as follows:

\$2,000—down payment on a car for Pastor Jacob in Gabon

\$5,000—Gift to E-4 Project to help build a medical clinic in Gabon

\$6,440—Sealing and striping of front parking lot

\$16,560—contribution to the General Fund to cover operating expenses.

Again, we are grateful to the family who made this contribution. They have requested that the gift remain anonymous.

*Thank  
you*

### Current Prayer Concerns...

- Pray for this weeks Vacation Bible School
- Pray for our search for a new Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Worship
- Pray for the Gabon Mission Team, leaving on Friday
- Vicki Quellhorst and Cierra Otting, already in Gabon
- Joann Boyer, recovering at home from hip replacement surgery
- Heidi Siebenaler, upcoming MRI on July 21
- Jay Berkey, receiving chemotherapy
- Vivian's cousin, Kim, fighting infection

### Community Choir Forming...

The churches of New Bremen will be cooperating again this year in sponsoring a community picnic on August 28 at Crown Pavilion. The evening will include a concert by AC Swing, and the churches have been asked to form a community choir for the closing, patriotic song of this concert. Rehearsals will be held on August 11 St. Paul's Church from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., and at the Pavilion on August 25 from 8:30 to 9:00 p.m. There is no need to sign up—just come to the rehearsals! For more information contact Scott Kuenning at 419-305-1500, or email, [scott@wotvh.com](mailto:scott@wotvh.com).



### Women4Christ Bazaar...

Women4Christ Bazaar is a local, multi-denominational group that will be holding a retreat this fall. To help defray the cost of the retreat, they will be holding a bazaar at Immanuel Church in Kettlersville on Saturday, August 13, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Items for sale will include crafts, home items, woodworking items, baked goods, and a silent auction. For more information about the group or the bazaar, call Jodi Rinehart at 419-204-9768.

### Transition Plan...

As a part of our staff transition plan, Pastor Trent will begin preaching twice a month. The Search Committee interviewed three candidates for our Pastor of Discipleship and Worship position last week. Please pray for them as they seek God's guidance for a preferred candidate.

Pastor Tom is now 80% time and salary. He will be taking Fridays as an additional day off. He will be with us through the end of December.

### Sunday Cookout...

Pastor Trent and his wife, Stephanie, will be hosting a cookout NEXT SUNDAY, July 24th. Signup in the foyer. It will begin after the second service, please bring lawn chairs. If you would like to bring food, say whether it is a main or side dish to help Pastor Trent and Stephanie know how much food to prepare. If it is raining we will go to the Youth Center.

Pastor Trent's address:  
09269 State Route 219  
New Knoxville.



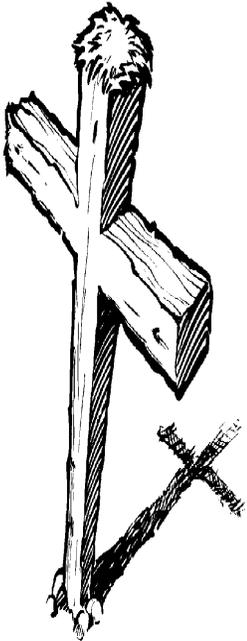
### Financial Report

Offering July 10, 2016  
 General Fund: \$6,309  
 Local Mission: \$210  
 Great Commission: \$452  
 Adult Mission Trips: \$61  
 Deacons Fund: \$200  
 Building Fund: \$10  
 Kitchen Fund: \$10  
 Youth Center: \$10  
 Tea House: \$10

### Attendance

Week of July 10, 2016  
 9:00 Worship—88  
 10:30 Worship—98  
 Kids—39; Adult Workers—10  
 Total Worship—254  
 International Class—14

# RENEW



# MINISTRIES



Sunday, July 17, 2016

## Today

9:00... Early Service

10:30... Late Service

## This Week

Wednesday... Summer Youth Group

2:00-4:00 pm

# COMING EVENTS

July 20 ...Canoe Trip

*Leave Youth Center @ 10am return  
at 3pm*

*The world with its lust  
passes away, but he who does  
the will of God remains forever.*  
1 John 2:17

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