

NEWSLETTER

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This newsletter belongs to all of us. Your input is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to submit articles to the editor.

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Mission Statement

As we encounter God's heart of love, our hearts are made new by God's Spirit. We invite people to experience Christ's love, welcoming each one into a caring fellowship, serving Christ with our gifts and resources.



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A LESSON FROM THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

PASTOR DAWN RANCK HOWER

I am by nature a hare. I much prefer short distance sprints to a longer distance runs. My tendency, ever since I was a child, is to jump into something with both feet and then figure it out as I go. I am often less than patient, preferring quick results and action instead of patient steadiness. I pushed myself (and my patient husband) to have the stacks of boxes unpacked less than 2 weeks after moving to our new home. I make to-do lists at home and at work and I expect (am driven?) to cross things off quickly. "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today" often rings in my head when I find myself caught between something needing to be done and wanting to relax.

I know these things about myself – and so, I bought two turtles. Not real ones, but rubber ones – one sits on our desk at home and one sits on my desk at work.

One of Aesop's most famous fables is the Tortoise and the Hare. In the story, a Hare ridicules a slow-moving Tortoise. The Tortoise challenges the Hare to a race. The hare is soon far ahead of the Tortoise, and confident of winning, lays down and takes a nap. When the Hare wakes up, he finds that his competitor, crawling slowly but steadily, had finished the race. After that, Hare always reminded himself, "Don't brag about your lightning pace, for slow and steady won the race!"

On Wednesday, in my devotions, I began by lamenting in my journal all the ways that I am currently feeling inadequate ... many having to do with my list of goals at work that I seem to not be able to get ahead of. I feel like I am moving at Tortoise speed while my goal is to run like a Hare. I poured out the list to God with cries of help.



And then, I read the scripture as suggested for the day in the Rejoice magazine. "For God alone my soul waits in silence, from God comes my salvation. God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken" (Psalm 62:1-2).

"Wait!?" Really? Nothing within me is wanting to wait right now. I have so much to learn, to do, in order to be able to better lead this congregation. The list of things I do not yet know continues to grow, not shorten, as I read through files and as I meet with people.

"Wait!?" And once again I look at the turtle on my desk and am reminded that slow and steady wins the race. That the number one thing on my to-do list is to put my faith and trust in the God who tells me to wait.

And so, once again, I release myself and my to-do list to God, remembering that "God is my rock and my salvation, my fortress."

WISDOM FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

BY PAUL MARTIN

PSALM 119

W 145–152

SUSTAINED BY GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

I will call with all my heart, answer me,
O Lord, and I will obey your

decrees. (v145)

I call out to you to save me, and I will
keep your statutes. (v 146)

God will respond when we call upon Him, even though we may have been guilty of ignoring His laws and decrees

previously. As is mentioned in verse 151; He is always near and we need but be aware of his presence and open to receive His help.

Obedying isn't always easy, especially if we are still reserving our total commitment, and haven't totally submitted to following His leading.

In verse 148 the psalmist gives his experience of remaining awake through the watches of the night to meditate upon God's word and his nearness. Having not been able to sleep well last night, this speaks to me and challenges

me to make use of such times to focus on the word and His presence and nearness in my own life continually.

PRAYER

Lord, speak to me. When I meditate let me feel your nearness. Help me to understand your calling on my life. May I purpose to follow it as I hear your voice speaking and as I meditate on your word. AMEN

LT HIGHLIGHTS

BY JENN ESBENSHADE

LT Retreat – A date was set for a retreat for Jan. 30-31 for the Esbenshade cabin.

Fellowship Meals – A monthly meal will be held on the first Sunday in November and December. In December we will evaluate continuing this on a monthly basis.

MCUSA Convention Delegate – The convention will be June 30 – July 5, 2015 in Kansas City. Dawn is willing to attend as our delegate.

MWC Convention – Dawn will encourage our congregation to go to the convention on July 21-26, 2015. The LT invited Dawn to attend as much of the convention as possible.

Website Update – A man is redeveloping the ELC website and could include our church in that. There is a one-time cost of \$500. The LT gave approval to proceed.

Landis Homes – Larry Guengerich would like to come and share about Landis Homes and some of their programs. Dawn will ask him come and preach on Sunday January 11.

Elder Ballot – Bob A. Martin was given very strong affirmation for his continued role as an elder.

Conversation with Spanish Mennonite – Meetings between NHMC and Spanish Mennonite continue. There will be a meeting after the CROP activity for the committee to discuss future meetings and activities.

Visitation of Older People – The LT discussed the need to find volunteers to continue visiting with those in retirement communities. One idea is to have people that are currently living in those homes visit members who are there. Another idea was for the LT to pick up some of the people who need visiting. A list of people to visit will be made and the LT will evaluate that.

House Fellowships – Nothing has been done with house fellowships since we decided to wait until we got a new pastor. Dawn is working to have new house fellowships up and running in January. There will be a new questionnaire sent out.

Training with Factory Ministries – The most pressing need right now is guidelines concerning use of the Brotherhood fund. A date will be set with Chuck Holt for a meeting to briefly discuss issues of poverty and help us develop guidelines. In the future we will look at scheduling him for a broader discussion of poverty issues.

THE EARLY LEARNING CENTER IS THANKFUL!

BY JEN MORALES

Thankfulness. What are you thankful for? Here at the Early Learning Center we are thankful for so many things. First and foremost, for a God who watches over us each and every day. We are thankful for the congregation. Without your support we would not be who we are. We are thankful for Pastor Dawn who visits with us every day and leads in Chapel throughout the month. We are thankful for our staff. Each day they help to mold these little lives. We are thankful for our patrons. They are an inspiration to us as they work hard to support their families. We are thankful for the children. They are why we do what we do.

Each week, each day we have the chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus. For many of us this is not just a job and we are thankful for that. Each day we get to live life through the eyes of a child. We get to experience the newness of life, the joy and many fun times.

We anxiously invite you to join us on Sunday December 14 at 10:30am for our annual Christmas program. The children (and teachers) put many hours of work into this program. We hope you will take this time to interact with them and show your support. In addition to the Christmas program the children will have artwork displayed for your viewing pleasure.

On this date we will be displaying items that are available in a silent auction. Items will be available to view and bid on December 1-14. The proceeds of this fundraiser will go towards our playground. Due to expectations through the State we will be adding an infant/toddler playground. This project will cost between \$14,000-\$20,000. Look for more information in the next week or two.

Thankfulness. What are you thankful for? We are thankful for so many things. It is our prayer that during this season you will be able to find many things to be thankful for. 1 Chronicles 16:34 says,

“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.”

