

NORTONVILLE NEWS

“Fellowship With Christ and Fellowship With Each Other”

By Pastor Josh Puett

While driving to the Chapel one fine morning, rounding the curve on Leonard street by the Grand River, I spotted a group of ducklings and their mother crossing the road. I will not venture to guess the reason they were crossing the road, except that it was likely that they were attempting to reach the other side. Waddling at the front of the group was the mother, and behind her was a neat little line of ducklings. Wherever the mother went, the ducks followed close behind. As the mother reached the other side of the road, the ducklings scrambled behind her, hopping off the pavement and into the lush grass, to continue their journey.

I observed that, when the ducklings moved, they all moved as one. They walked in the same direction. They walked together. They were not scattered about, or confusedly pushing each other aside, or darting in all different directions, they were united in their walk (or waddle?). When ducklings follow their mother, they walk together, not apart.

Likewise, in God’s Word, those that follow Christ are directed to be united in their walk. When believers are truly following Christ in their walk, then they will be in perfect unison with each other, and have perfect fellowship with one another. This truth is described in the book of I John chapter 1, verses 5 through 7

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Stay Connected

Sunday

9:30 am **Sunday** School

10:45 am **Sunday** morning

6:00 pm **Sunday** night

6:00 pm **Sunday** Youth Group

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting at 6:30 pm

Olympians at 6:30 pm

Small Groups

Spring Lake Monday, 6:30 pm

Nortonville Tuesday, 10:30 am

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Check out our website,

www.nortonvillechapel.org

“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” (I John 1:5)

God is described as being “light”, and that “in Him is no darkness”. This speaks to God’s true nature. God is pure, holy, and perfectly good. In God, there is no “darkness”, that is sin or wickedness. Not only is God perfectly good and righteous, but there is no contradiction in Him. Something cannot be both “light” and “dark”. Light and darkness does not mix. If you don’t believe me, shine a flashlight on your shadow, and see for yourself!

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.” (I John 1:6)

If God is light, then we cannot have fellowship with Him if we have darkness in us. John calls you a liar if you claim otherwise! Sin interferes with our relationship with God, because God cannot have sin in His presence. You cannot walk in both the light and darkness, just as you cannot serve two masters. If you walk in the darkness, you have no fellowship with God. To have fellowship with God, we cannot pursue sin and sinful desires, we must actively pursue the way of God.

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” (I John 1:7)

Believers are able to repent from their sin and follow with Him in the light, only because of the mercy of God. When we repent from sin and turn to God, He forgives us, and cleanses us of sin by the sacrifice of Christ. It is because of the blood of His Son that believers are able to have victory over their sin, and have fellowship with God, free from their natural darkness.

If we have a healthy fellowship with God, then we will also have a healthy fellowship with those that have fellowship with God! Just like ducklings, who faithfully follow the steps of their mother, believers who faithfully follow Christ will not be divided. They follow the same master, practice the same path of holiness, and strive towards the same goal.

My father has run several marathons. In a marathon, some may struggle in the back, while others excel in the front. But *all* go the same direction. They have the same goal in mind, to cross the finish line. Believers that are following God’s ways in truth do not struggle in opposition with one another, but are united in their walk.

If our sins have been forgiven by God, and we follow God’s ways, then should we not also forgive our brothers and sisters when they offend us? As God shows mercy on sinners, such as ourselves, believers are called to offer that same mercy and forgiveness toward each other. If we walk in God’s light, should we not reflect that light in our own walk? If God has shown us forgiveness, should we not also show others forgiveness?

If we are following the Lord in truth, then we are united with our fellow believers who follow the Lord in truth. Just as there is no contradiction in the light of God, there is no contradiction in the hearts of believers who walk in the light of God. Do you want to have close fellowship with your fellow believer? Then make sure that there is no contradiction in your walk, make sure that you are following the Lord fully, in truth. If you do, you will have a perfect fellowship with other believers who strive for the same. If we are all walking in the light, as He is in the light, then we will have fellowship with one another! This is the only way to have true fellowship with one another, to be walking in the light together!

Spotlight: Jack Ruster



One of the more quiet members of the Chapel is Jack Ruster. Though quiet and soft spoken, Jack helps in the good work of the Lord.

Jack grew up in the outskirts of Coopersville and still lives there to this day. His dad worked at Heath's Manufacturing, and his mom was a registered nurse at Blodgett Hospital in the maternity department. He was the oldest of their three children.

Every Sunday the family went to Coopersville Reformed Church ("the Big Dutch Church" as it is known to locals). Jack and his sisters went to Sunday School and church services, and catechism on Wednesday nights. Going to church was part of the family schedule. Jack learned about the Lord, but as a young person, he didn't take the Lord seriously enough.

Jack has always enjoyed working with livestock. He owned his first calf when he was in 6th grade. His last year of high school he lived on a farm with his uncle to help milk the cows.

After graduation from Coopersville High in 1972, Jack worked assorted jobs: milking cows, factory work, and driving truck routes for a garbage company. He even tried working on the oil pipeline in Alaska, but he ended up painting houses there for a short while.

Driving semi-trucks was the career path that Jack settled into. He hauled hazardous waste such as: plating sludge; acid; and cyanide, to parts of Michigan. He also drove semis loaded with poultry and beef. The last thirty years of his career he hauled mail for Roth Trucking, a mail contractor. Jack retired in 2020.

Jack had married when he was young, and regrets that he didn't take good enough care of his wife. He wishes that he would have been more mature and patient, but he wasn't leaning on the strength of the Lord. After that marriage ended, Jack married again and was blessed with a daughter and two stepchildren.

In the early 1980's, the Lord touched Jack's heart. He had been attending services at Ottawa Center Chapel and was also listening to Christian teaching on the radio during his semi runs. By God's grace, the Lord brought him to the point where he believed in Christ from his heart and made a true commitment to Christ.

We are glad the Lord brought Jack to Nortonville Chapel, where he is kind and helpful in serving others. He likes to ask questions in Sunday School. His favorite Bible verse is Isaiah 26:3, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."

***Jack still enjoys raising cows on his farm. In fact, during this interview, one of his 22 cows was having a calf! That reminds me of a joke: "What would you get if you cross an angry sheep and a grumpy cow? An animal that's totally in a baaaaaad mooood."

May Birthdays



May 2
Dave Suchecki



May 2
Vickie Buckner



May 3
Lynne Hammond



May 5
Mary Ann Willoughby



May 7
Ken Brondyke



May 17
Alli Campbell



May 17
Sarah Ambrose



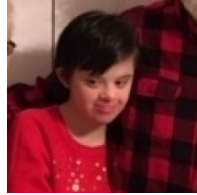
May 21
Bridget Gazlay



May 23
Linda Stellema



May 24
Barb Bar



May 24
Bailey Joy



May 21
Donna Decan-Pranger

May Anniversaries



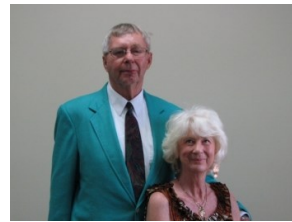
May 7
Rob & Nancy Marshall



May 8
Dewey & Marcia Garrett



May 19
Randy & Kris Arnson



May 29
Reg & Marilee Stroebe



May 31
Pete & Dottie Pellegrom

Calendar

5/12 Mother's Day

5/13 Small Group, 6:30 pm

24/7 Day Of Prayer

5/14 Small Group, 10:30 am

5/15 Olympians & Prayer Meeting, 6:30 pm

5/16 Ladies Bible Study Zoom, 7:30 pm

5/19 Potluck, 11:50 am

5/20 Small Group, 6:30 pm

5/21 Small Group, 10:30 am

Semi-Annual Meeting, 7:00 pm

5/22 Robbinswood church service, 1:30 pm

Last Day of Olympians, 6:30 pm

Prayer Meeting, 6:30 pm

5/23 Ladies Bible Study Zoom, 7:30 pm

5/27 Small Group, 6:30 pm

5/28 Small Group, 10:30 am

5/30 Ladies Bible Study Zoom, 7:30 pm