MISSION COMMITMENTS THAT MATTER

At the end of April, we had the wonderful privilege of receiving a visit from our friend and mission partner Scott Burdsall. His ministry in London (which you can always read about in your monthly newsletter) is what we might call front line work of international missions. Though he remains in the cultural West, his work among Bangladeshi Muslims transports him as if he were another five thousand miles to the east in South Asia. You can think of it as the missionary and the mission field having met in the middle in London. I'm so thankful for our church and mission committees strong support of Scott, and our other mission partners.

This recent visit also has me reflecting on the theme of missions and the history of congregation in general. I remember distinct conversations with stalwarts of previous generations about the importance of designating our giving to missions – not by dollar amount, but by percentage. The aspiration was always 25% but varied factors saw that percentage drop as low as 10% for a time. I also recall when the commitment was made to increase it by 5% annually until we returned to that one-quarter threshold. But this wasn't just a financial decision, there were also some fundamental commitments associated with this move.

About eight years ago, our Session worked in partnership with our Mission Committee to develop some core commitments that would serve as a guide for accessing the type of mission partnerships we wanted to pursue. You may have noticed that they are posted directly across from the elevator in the entryway of the sanctuary. The statement begins, "As Christians, it is our calling to be faithful to Christ and obedient to the Great Commission. Our hearts' desire and prayer to God is that, through our efforts, all over the world many would receive and rest upon Christ alone as He is offered to them in the gospel." It goes on to emphasize our core commitments: the Gospel, partnership, church planting, service, and prayer.

Speaking of Church Planting, we affirm, "We believe that the church is the immediate goal of mission and the only divinely ordained instrument for the spread of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ around the world. We are therefore deeply committed to the work of selecting, supporting, sponsoring, and sending church plants and church planters." That's why we are committed to Scott's ministry (we could also add here Jeffery Lancaster and the Huber Family). We are committed to the spread of the gospel through the planting of churches in places like London which has a culture from South Asia in one of its neighborhoods, and in places like downtown Chicago that are relatively close but feel 5,000 miles away from us.

The Church is God's "Plan A" for Kingdom advancement and there isn't a "Plan B." Our support of church planting is our commitment to be about God's mission. I want to express my gratitude to all past and current members of the mission committee and the way they have demonstrated a clarity of focus to navigate our congregation into strong partnerships with those persons and agencies focused on gospel ministry – just like we seek to be in our own corner of the world; where I am so please to be with you all as,

Your Pastor & Friend,

ELDERS

Keith Wilson - Clerk
Jim Mueller
Mic Penry
Patrick Shovar
Todd Stegmiller

DEACONS

Dorothy Rursch - Chair Teresa Weber - Secretary Jim Balmer Teresa Balmer Marlin Krueger Darcy Krueger

TRUSTEES

Mel Block - Chair
Larry Pithan - Secretary
Ken Benningfield
Kim Freyermuth
Jeff Fuhr
Phil Fuhr
Darren Hall
Colby Mueller
Cindy Oak
Bill Sloan
JR Thomas



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Amy Ryser
- 4 Amy Nitzel (Schelker)
- 7 Beth Easterla
- 7 Peggy Weiss
- 9 Mic Penry
- 10 Cade Reimers
- 13 Teresa Balmer
- 13 Colton Landi
- 14 Wyatt Fuhr
- 19 Jason Ruggles
- 19 Bob Stegm<mark>iller</mark>

- 19 Teresa Weber
- 22 Olivia Freyermuth
- 22 Phil Fuhr
- 23 Pam Ehm
- 24 Lee-Ann Druckmiller
- 24 Jonathan Gierlus
- 27 William Parchert
- 30 Kyle Johnson
- 31 Darcy Krueger
- 31 Debbie Tomlin

Thank you **ALL** so much for the overloaded gift basket of gift cards, snacks, drinks, and stuff for the kids! It's appreciated more than you know!!!



Please keep those prayers coming! It helps and is working!

Much love, Dillon, Kayla, and Beckham

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Dewey & Shirley Flemming
- 9 Brad & Andrea Schafman
- 12 Michael & Joyce O'Hare
- 17 Matthew & Jennifer Youck
- 18 Matthew & Elisabeth Tomlin
- 21 Mark & Diane Freyermuth
- 22 Bill & Pam Ehm
- 24 Jason & Kelly Ruggles
- 25 Jake & Sydney Maxwell
- 25 Michael & Sharon Orr
- 27 Jason & Beth Flickinger
- 30 Jim & Teresa Balmer
- 30 Korey & Tara Miller
- 30 Bob & Kathy Stegmiller







2024 Communicant Class





welcome

TO OUR NEWEST FAMILY MEMBERS!

(From left in top left phot) Kinley Fuhr, Josey Stegmiller, Raegan Miller, Olivia Freyermuth, Emma Pearson, Cade Fuhr, & Max Fuhr.

(Taylor Freyermuth, pictured in the two photos just above, far left, will be received into membership with the adults on Sunday, May 5th)

We are so thankful to God for our newest members and look forward to seeing how God grows them and uses them for His glory here at Edgington EPC and in our community!



March 26, 2024, at 7pm

Location: Conference Room

Present: TE Zach Hopkins and REs Jim Mueller, Mic Penry, Patrick Shovar, and Keith Wilson. Absent (Excused): Todd Stegmiller. A quorum is present.

Pastor Zach acted as moderator of the meeting. Zach opened the meeting with prayer and read from Luke 21: 5-36. The Elders prayed for individual members of the congregation. The Session reviewed and discussed Chapter 5 of *Strange New World*, by Carl R. Trueman.

Approval/Amendment of Docket: Motion was made and seconded to approve the docket. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the March 5th, 2024, Session Meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and carried.

Zach's Report: Zach reported on members with health concerns and prayer needs. During March, he conducted three office visits and a lunch meeting. He conducted Communicants Classes and coordinated the Elder examination of Communicants. He also served on the RLP CHC Search committee, RLP Coordinating Council, and the EPC Permanent Judicial Commission.

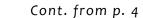
Correspondence: Zach shared an email that he had received from an individual that had listened to one of his recent sermons online and intends to attend our worship services.

Old Business:

- Zach reminded Session of the Easter schedule: Good Friday Worship with Communion 6pm, Easter Sunday, 8:30am breakfast and 10am worship. There will be a choir on Easter Sunday. Zach will serve Communion at the Good Friday Service with the REs assisting with ushering.
- Zach has scheduled dates for a Spring Adult Member Class: April 14th, 21st, and 28th and expects six or seven individuals attending. Ruling Elders are encouraged to attend one or more classes.
- Scott Burdsall will be visiting on April 21st and teaching Adult Sunday School and preaching. The Mission Committee is coordinating a luncheon for him.

New Business:

- The Session discussed the recent draft of a Pastoral Letter of Racial Lament and Hope that was drafted by a committee of the EPC. Zach asked for feedback and indicated that this will be put on the agenda of the April 26th 27th RLP meeting.
- The 41st RLP meeting is scheduled for April 26th 27th in Aplington, IA. It was moved to elect Mic and Keith to serve as delegates. The motion was seconded and approved. Zach mentioned that Nathan and Lyndsey Flickinger may attend as observers.
- RHS Graduation is scheduled for May 19th. Zach suggested incorporating recognition of graduates and promotions in the May 12th Worship service. The Session approved the recommendation.
- Zach mentioned that the RHS FCA organization Baccalaureate service was scheduled for May 12th.





- The 44th EPC General Assembly is scheduled for June 18th 20th in Cordova, TN. Motion was made to elect Zach to serve as delegate to GA. The motion was seconded and approved.
- Next Communion will be held March 29th, 2024, on Good Friday and Sunday, April 7th. The next stated Session meeting is April 30th, 2024. The Session will discuss Chapter 6 of Strange New World, by Carl R. Trueman at that time.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:36pm. Motion Carried.

Teaching Elder Zach Hopkins closed the meeting with prayer.

Keith Wilson, Clerk of Session



Date: 4-17-24

Present: Mel Block, Jeff Fuhr, Phil Fuhr, Kim Freyermuth, Colby Mueller, Cindy Oak, Larry Pithan, Bill Sloan, JR Thomas, Treasurer Barb Freyermuth, Session Representative Jim Mueller. Mel opened the meeting with a prayer at 6:58pm.

Treasurer's report for March reviewed and approved.

Minutes for March meeting reviewed and approved.

Old Business:

- Spring yard cleanup completed.
- Replaced sump pump in old basement.
- Refinish of baptismal font not complete yet
- Need to revise access to bell tower
- Office intercom not working

New Business:

- Discussed possible future projects including basement window replacement, SS wing windows replacement, cover pine walls in old basement, new boiler, new carpet in sanctuary.
- Need to repair ruts in front lawn caused by siding project.
- Trustees measured proposed parking lot expansion. Will prepare a formal request to send to the school.
- Asked for volunteers to help with BB gun shooting at VBS.
- Discussed possible ways to add video screen to the balcony to allow better viewing.
- Reviewed and approved bid from ADB contracting to complete the siding on the SS wing and north sanctuary. Also approved bid to add ventilated soffit for the SS wing.

Mel closed the meeting with a prayer at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Pithan

Date: 4/16/2024

The Mission Committee met on 4/16/2024 via text.

Mission money as of 3/31/2024 - \$6197.02

Old Business:

- The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.
- New members: Todd was approached by two potential new members. Jim received one of their phone numbers.
- Scott Burdsall: Scott will be in town for Sunday to lead Sunday School, preach, and meet with the members. The committee will get together to prepare a luncheon to sit with him and listen to his work overseas. This will be a great opportunity for the committee to understand what the church is donating to.
- Kelly, Eric, Deb, and Jim attended the Pregnancy Resources Banquet along with other members of the congregation (Dana Johnson, Lori Meyer, and Steve Wagamon)

New Business:

- The members of the Committee discussed what will be brought for the luncheon with Scott.
 The members also voted to approve an additional \$1000 donation.
- Kelly, Eric, and Jim will attend the Youth Hope Banquet on 4/18/2024 along with Nathan and Lindsay Flickinger, Dana Johnson, Marlin Krueger, and Mic Penry.
- Jim will be setting up the new group chat to include the new members and remove the old members.

Next meeting - May 21, 2024 at 6:30pm.

NEED A HAND OR ENCOURAGEMENT? ASK A DEACON!

The Deacons' charge is to care for the church body. You may already know that we provide delicious treats to celebrate new members, collect coats for those in need, and organize blood drives. But did you now that we are ready to serve in other ways, too?

Here are some of the ways a Deacon can help out:

- Visit shut-ins (including those who are temporarily unable to make it to worship) to provide cheer and recordings of the sermon.
- Deliver meals to those who are injured, ill, or have experienced a loss
- Visit widows(ers) to comfort and provide company.
- Send cards to recognize milestone birthdays and anniversaries, and express condolences
- Organize transportation to doctor's appointments (please give advance notice)

Please, if you or someone you know could benefit in one of these areas, please let a Deacon know right away. We try to anticipate needs, but we are only human, and need help with knowing needs!

The 2024 Deacon team includes: Jim & Teresa Balmer, Marlin & Darcy Krueger, Dorothy Rursch, & Teresa Weber.





WELCOME RECEPTION FOR NEW MEMBERS

Sunday, May 5th, During & following worship service

Please join us during the service as we receive our newest family members into membership and then be sure to stay after the service for a reception hosted by the deacons n the basement where you can introduce yourself, if you haven't already, and welcome them personally.

Thank you to the church family.

It has been a year of adjustment and learning. Your kindness, prayers, and consideration have been so appreciated.



Mary Ann Kadel "wife" of Robert Kadel

FOOT CLINIC Next Clinic: Monday, May 20th

If you would like to receive a pedicure done by a medical professional, please call the church office at 309-795-1713 to schedule an appointment.







Check out the next several pages for the ministries we support and for ways that you can get personally **INVOLVED!**

{get involved

PROUDLY SERVING SENIORS SINCE 1968









Meals are available for a suggested donation of \$3 to anyone 60+ years or with a disability. If you are new to the program, you need to call 309-788-6335 the day before to request your meal.

Those who attend regularly come early to play cards and enjoy each other's company for a little longer than just meal time.

If you would like more information or want to check out the menu for the month click the Project Now logo above for the link to their website or call 309-788-6335.



Camp is one of the most powerful tools we possess to positively impact kids and teens! We have a long list of young men and women who have made lifechanging commitments at camp! Camp has always been a great place to hear God's voice, feel His presence, and experience His love.

The need for camp has never been greater! Statistics show teens are currently more obese, spend less time outdoors, exercise less and spend HOURS each day on screen media than any other time in history. Childhood anxiety is up 20% mostly linked to the constant access to cell phones and social media. Additionally, our youth deal with difficult home lives, emotional and mental baggage, past traumas, and hunger. Many of our kids have little to no experience with church or God. Camp Summit offers an escape and is a safe place to feel release. Each day at camp our kids have three nutritious meals, loving role models, Christcentered lessons and messages, and have a lot of fun!

God has been impacting hundreds of kids and teens at Camp Summit for 23 years! We believe this summer is going to have

THE NEED FOR CAMP

Teachable Moments for



Social Skills Self-Respect Responsibility **Children** play



outside an average of **4 minutes a day**.

Average screen time is



per day!

Kids and teens take home

hundreds of

Bibles from Camp Summit!

83% of Christians accept Christ between ages of 4-14

Only 1 in 4 youth



1 in 7youth in our community are food insecure

a great impact, and we're preparing for a monumental summer. We are so excited for what God has planned! Kids and teens experience love, encouragement, healing, and HOPE at YouthHope's Camp Summit!

Mark Drake, Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank you for your generous support of Pregnancy Resources. If not for you, this lifesaving ministry that spans more than 115 hours of availability, six days a week, simply could not happen.



Here is just some of what your financial support has provided. In 2023, Dr. Brenot and your team of volunteer radiologists reviewed more than 1,400 ultrasound scans and over 6,500 images provided in 783 ultrasound appointments. These free ultrasounds had a powerful impact on new mothers seeing their baby for the first time. Among the hundreds of babies that were seen on the ultrasound scans, your nurses were able to see four sets of twins and a set of triplets. As an identical twin myself, that makes me very happy.

In 2023, because of the compassionate, life-affirming care Pregnancy Resources was able to provide, **at least 52 abortion appointments for clients were canceled**. If you've ever wondered if you're making an impact, you can stop wondering. Because of you, because of your generous support, last year **an average of one life was saved every week**.

An unwavering commitment to support and care for women does not end with or depend on what choices they've made. Too often, the complications that can arise from having an abortion require immediate intervention. Last year, your Pregnancy Resources nurses were able to provide virtual visits and post-abortion medical screens for dozens of women.

Because of your commitment, you've helped supply life-changing assistance to new parents in a way that demonstrates being pro-life means so much more than just being anti-abortion. Supporting the sanctity of life also means caring for and supporting mothers and fathers on their journey to become successful parents in very tangible ways. That's why Pregnancy Resources is committed to continuing to offer both expanded infant and toddler supplies and to facilitate a wide variety of parenting classes, Bible studies, and fatherhood classes.

So, on behalf of the Board of Directors, let me say we feel very blessed to have witnessed all God has accomplished through Pregnancy Resources because of your generous support. We are excited to see how God continues to move, shape, and grow this life-saving ministry. Thank you.

-Tim McCloud, Vice Chair, Board of Directors (To read the full 2nd Qtr. Newsletter, click **HERE**)



PRC 101 Volunteer Training

June 18-20, 2024 (Morning ONLY – TENTATIVE)
October 15-17, 2024 (Morning or Evening)
*Morning Trainings are from 8:45am to 12:15pm &
Evening Trainings are from 5:30pm to 9pm.*

Now only 3 days, our volunteer training is required for volunteers who want to work directly with the women and men we help. Training covers helping skills, fetal development, adoption, abortion procedures and risks, ministry goals, and Biblical training on the sanctity of human life.

Want to register? Sign up online, **Register Here!** Need more info? Contact Maia @ 563-386-3737 or Maia@qcpregnancy.org



2024 BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG

We will be participating in Pregnancy Resources' Baby Bottle Boomerang again this year from Mother's Day - Father's Day. You can pick up your bottle at church on Mother's Day, take it home, and start filling it with coins (dollar bills & checks also fit nicely in them!) Then, return your bottle by no later than Father's Day.

M & S

So much to tell...I wish you could have been there with me because I just can't fit it all into a newsletter.

I almost didn't make this trip. My life felt too busy and I thought of E...... as a place where the gospel has reached many thousands...not an "unreached" area - which is where I feel I (and ITEN) should focus my efforts. While that's true, I learned, once

For safety reasons we are not linking the full report. If you would like to receive their regular updates via email, please contact the church office and Lisa will connect you with M & S to be added to their email list.

again, that Jesus, as Lord of the harvest, has this incredible way of raising up his harvest laborers. This little class of 18 (not all are pictured) are being used to bear witness to Christ in some of the most unreached corners of the horn of Africa... and north Africa.... Dr. A...., himself a former Muslim (pictured below), established the degree program in Muslim-Christian relations. The more I heard from him and the students, the more I realized God is using these people and their institutions in His harvest fields. I found myself humbled and grateful.

My course was titled "The History of Muslim Christian Relations" which sounds a little blah and boring, but trust me, there is plenty of good, bad, and ugly in the history of the interaction between Muslims and Christians. These E....... brothers and sisters, living in a country that is 40% Muslim (and growing), have seen all sides of it too. So the topic is alive and pertinent to the church in E....... There is a great deal of fear there as Muslims challenge the status quo and seek to have positions of influence in government. We talked through so many dynamics of the historical interaction between the two faith communities. Inevitably, we ended up discussing contemporary ministry issues. Of course, I felt right at home speaking about these issues. Questions like the Muslim's view of Jesus, the Islamic understanding of Jesus' death, the concepts of inspiration, incarnation, salvation etc., all have rich, theological comparisons to the way Christians have historically understood them.

In reporting back to you on what I saw and experienced, two things stand out. First, Jesus' church is truly global. The church of Jesus Christ is no longer (and never was) white or Western. It is a multi-ethnic body. Our brothers and sisters in Africa and Asia are carrying the torch of the gospel and spreading Christ's light in some of the most desperately, needy places of our world.

Second, I felt my own experience of ministry to Muslims is not for naught. Nothing is wasted. Even though I've never served in E...... or the horn of Africa, the similarities are clear. I was conversant with issues these younger African servants face and was at least able to give them a little historical perspective as they pursue deeper understanding of their ministry contexts.

How to join us in prayer over the coming weeks:

We give thanks for:

- Fruitful travel and ministry in E......
- The birth of our eighth grandchild--Laraine...

We ask you to join us in prayer for the following:

- April 7- M... preaches at a local church this Sunday, April 7.
- April & May- Continue to pray for our ITEN team please. We are dispersed team of theological trainers. We tend to fit the three qualifiers--experienced, educated and entrepreneurial. Pray that we will also be led of the Spirit to fruitful training. Upcoming trainings include K....... (involving us); V..... and U..... (involving others of our ITEN team)
- **April 19- May 7** M and St travel together to F..... and K....... later this month. The F..... portion is to connect, for the first time, with kinfolk of S's F..... grandmother. **Pray** for wisdom as we seek to notice and respond to the Spirit's work in that place. The K....... portion is to visit our ITEN team members D and C. They will involve us in some of their training initiatives. Please **pray** for fruitful communication and encouragement for both us and the Bs.
- **Fall 2024** We're also laying groundwork for an exploratory trip to N.... in the Fall. **Pray** for good communication and clear understanding of what our involvement there should be, if any.

....It was great to be all together for a week for Easter and also to celebrate a wedding with some friends here. S.... is now in the US for the next couple months and the rest of us are in the UK currently on Easter break, then back to school for the summer term and exam season for J...... Please do keep us in prayer over the next couple months, as this time feels very weird for all of us.

For safety reasons we are not linking the full report. If you would like to receive their regular updates via email, please contact the church office and Lisa will connect you with S & C to be added to their email list.

Hope many of you will get to connect with S.... - sorry that the rest of us can't be there too, but know that we appreciate you all and are grateful for you!

An update and prayer requests about some of the happenings of the past month:

S.... had a time away in Europe this past month visiting friends and also doing some study and prayer time. He was able to spend time with a good Egyptian friend and have many faith discussions. Do **pray for this friend and his family to understand truth.**

I was able to help with many school assemblies about Easter. It was great to see the kids so engaged and listening. At one school, which is quite near our home and almost all Bengali students, we asked the kids what Easter was about and we got answers of "eggs, Easter bunny, Santa!" it was such a good opportunity to share what Easter is really about with hundreds of kids.

I also helped with some Easter experiences, where a secondary school class comes to a church and participates in an interactive explanation of the Easter story. The school that came is a girls school where I currently help run a lunch time craft club. It was great to see some of the girls from lunch club and have them connect more about Christians and what we believe and who we are.

One night at girl's club I was talking with one of the girls about Heaven and Hell and she was sharing the Muslim view of death and what happens when you die. Then she asked about Christianity, saying that she heard if you were baptized, then you got into heaven. I was able to share with her that it is faith in Jesus and His forgiveness that is important, and that faith is what saves. **Pray for this girl** and her willingness to listen and have discussions like this, and pray for understanding for her.

We've seen slightly lower attendance at Asha services, craft mornings, and ESOL because of Ramadan, but not as big a dip as we expected, which is encouraging. **Pray** for those that have kept attending Asha things, even during Ramadanfor open hearts to understand what it is that draws them in, and the love of Jesus for them.

In family news:

A...... had a school parent's morning where I was able to go into class for an hour and see a lesson and also see and hear about what they have been learning this term. It was encouraging to see her happy and learning so much and loving school and giggling with her friends. Also looked around and realized I was the only white parent in the room.

A......'s school is always a good reminder that our part of London is very diverse, and the right place for reaching out!

Took a trip up to S....... one Saturday with J.....- he was able to visit the University and talk with staff and learn about his course. We both enjoyed it and felt like the right place for him, so as long as he gets the required exam grades he'll be headed very north for university!

Prayers for this month:

Eid al Fitr is Wednesday. **Pray** for all those that we know and all our neighbors that will be celebrating. A little explanation - Muslims have just had a month of fasting during the day (Ramadan) and this Eid marks the ending of this fasting month. Many will attend mosque in the morning and then have a huge celebration with family in the afternoon. Children will get gifts, there will be lots of food, everyone will be very dressed up. By us it will also mean that many shops will be closed and streets will be pretty quiet, other than people going to family homes. If you have any Muslim friends or colleagues, you can wish them "Eid Mubarak" which means "blessed Eid"- asking about Eid and plans and food always seems to work as a good opening to conversation too.

This Saturday a good friend who leads Girl's club and works at a local church is getting married. Many of the girl's club girls will be attending the service. **Pray** for the time - for blessing on the couple, but also for those attending who have never been to a Christian wedding before, and for chances to discuss it all over cake!

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Cont. from p. 11

School has had a two week break for Easter and many of our normal activities have stopped during the break time. **Pray** for everything as it starts up again next week-for good attendance and for wisdom for us as we plan events and studies and services - that God would work through us.

This May and June J.... has A-Levels. It will be 8 tests, each about 3 hours long, spread out over about a month. These are basically the only grades that count from his last two years of learning, and the grades that decide his university future. It is pretty high stress level. **Pray** for him as he studies, and for me to support him well at this time. With love

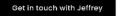
C, for S.... and the kids



Home About Get In Touch Upcoming Events

You don't have to figure it all out on your own.

You can meet with an experienced chaplain offering a listening ear and helpful counsel to support you amidst life's challenges and opportunities.





JEFFREY LANCASTER

Hey Gang,

It's been too long. Here's an important update.

I've been juggling a lot trying to envision new ways to skin the cat in our ongoing effort to plant a church in Chicago.

Let me start with a little reminder of the challenging realities Cathy and I have faced while laboring to establish a missional church in this great city:

Reality #1 We moved here knowing no one and sought to plant a church from scratch. That was always going to be a challenge no matter how you sliced it. We came here full of faith, hope, and love in Christ – along with a lot of fear and trembling given the daunting task.

Reality # 2 The Covid pandemic started about 5 months after we began networking. This hit us where it hurts, but God rather miraculously allowed us to keep cultivating relationships during this strained 2-year period.

Reality #3 Our Chicago Neighborhood – We live in the Lakeview neighborhood - It's the home of Wrigley Field, and it boasts a population of 107,000 people which makes it the largest of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. Depending on whose data you believe, it's the first or second most unchurched Windy City neighborhood. We have way above the national average of Millennials and Gen Z'ers. Also, we're far beyond the national average of Nones in our neighborhood.

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Cont. on p. 13

Reality #4 – State of the church in the United States

Jim Davis and Michael Graham (with Ryan Burge) in their bestselling book, The Great Dechurching: Who's Leaving, Why Are They Going, and What Will It Take to Bring Them Back? share the following concerning data.

"What we have witnessed in the last twenty-five years is a religious shift about 1.25 times larger [My insert: 1.25 times larger than the previously largest religious **growth** shift] but going in the opposite direction. In that time, about 40 million people have stopped attending church. More people have left the church in the last twenty-five years than all the new people who became Christians from the First Great Awakening, Second Great Awakening, and Billy Graham crusades combined. Adding to the alarm is the fact that this phenomenon has rapidly increased since the mid-1990's."

You might ask: What impact has this had on church planting in the United States? Again, let me share the research from *The Great Dechurching*:

"Membership has dropped by roughly a third across all religious traditions over the last twenty-five years. This invariably has caused more churches to close and has made it more challenging to plant new churches."

"According to Lifeway Research, in 2019 approximately 3,000 Protestant churches were started in the US, but 4,500 Protestant churches closed. Just five years prior, in 2014, the same Lifeway study found that 3,700 churches had closed and 4,000 had opened. As you can see, the rate of church planting has slowed, and the rate of church closures has accelerated. The dechurching phenomenon is likely a large factor in those shifts."

This is all a part of a staggering reality. And, it has serious repercussions locally.

I was eating lunch with one of Chicago's ministry leaders a few weeks ago. He works with an organization that launches church planting initiatives in Chicagoland and in many other cities across the United States and across the world. This group partners with global networks which do groundbreaking work in many hard to reach countries. This friend shared with me that his network is having a very difficult time finding church planters for Chicago. He sounded more than a bit despairing as he shared this news.

Not sure if we're crazy or profoundly moved by the Holy Spirit, but Cathy and I still feel resolved to stay on task.

Big question for our Prayer and Financial Supporters: Will you keep hanging with us in this effort?!?!?! We need you sharing in this mission with us.

Here's the essence of our plan moving forward:

Big Hairy Audacious Goal:

Launch the inaugural worship service of an EPC Missional Church called Resurrection City Church Chicago (RC3 for short) by the year 2029. The desire is for this work to become particularized in due time and then to function as a missional church planting church movement in Chicago.

Objectives:

- 1. Launch Jeffrey as a Chicago Work/Life Community Chaplain beginning in 2024
- 2. Establish a growing social media presence for the Chicago Work/Life Community Chaplain work by the end of 2024
- 3. Continued engagement in regular discipleship ministry.
- 4. Continue building goodwill with sister ministries and churches as well as non-profits in the city
- 5. Build and minister Christ organically in a Life-Sharing Community Social Community and City Service Community
- 6. Keep Presbytery engaged in and impacted by this Mission
- 7. Continue Raising Prayer and Financial Support Who's with me?!?!?!
- 8. Build a Missional Church Planting Launch Team by 2028
- 9. Establish a succession trajectory.
- 10. Recruit an Assistant Church Planting Evangelist, Worship and Community Arts Leader, and Holistic Ministry and Cultural Engagement Coordinator by 2028.
- 11. Find meeting space for inaugural worship service and prepare for the launch service and follow-up lunch celebration.
- 12. Have plan in place for initial phases of building the worshipping community's life and ministry together.

To the unchurched I became as a chaplain

The apostle Paul used his freedom in Christ to give up his freedom in order find ways to incarnate the presence of our risen Christ directly into the lives of people who were coming from all sorts of various ethnicities and faith systems. I love the way he shares his heart.

1 Corinthians 9:19–23:[19] For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. [20] To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. [21] To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. [22] To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. [23] I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings. (ESV)

To the unchurched I became as a chaplain

My big ministry initiative in 2024 is to try to launch myself out there as a: Chicago Work/Life Community Chaplain. Check out my new website: www.chicagoworklifechaplain.com

PLEASE NOTE: This does not supplant my church planting mission. IT IS A PART OF MY CHURCH PLANTING EFFORT.

People are leaving the church in droves. Chicago is already a very unchurched city. I think my community chaplain strategy is an out-of-the-box attempt to go outside the walls of the church and connect with people where they are – think about the Apostle Paul in Acts 17 going into the center of the hustle and bustle of Athens' marketplace of ideas. He sought to connect with them along the lines of where they were and in light of the big life questions with which they were struggling. Meet them there. Listen to them and serve them. Practically help them. Pray for the Spirit to open more doors giving an opportunity to share the good news of Jesus over time. Let people go at their own pace. I want to offer loving service with no strings attached and see where God leads.

In order to launch this new initiative, I'm hosting a Jazz Happy Hour at the WeWork office where I work. This event is Thursday, April 18th. TO SAY THE LEAST, I COVET YOUR PRAYERS (picture me on my knees begging for prayer support!!!). The WeWork leadership has been so moved by my interest in hosting a jazz happy hour that they've agreed to invite all 9 WeWork's in downtown Chicago and are allowing me to announce my Chicago Work/Life Community Chaplain initiative. I've attached the flyer we're using to promote the event.

If you can donate to help us pull off this and future events at WeWork that would be much appreciated!!

Cathy and I long for you to stay with us in this mission.

Are you with us??

We need your prayer support. If you're able to give, we continue to need your financial support. This is an elongated runway leading up to what we hope and pray will be a vibrant church planting missional church in Chicago.

Sending much love your way from Chicago,

Jeffrey

QUICK UPDATE:

The WeWork Jazz Happy Hour we sponsored last week went really well. About 125 people showed up and stayed for most of the time from 4:00-6:30. We received enormous approbation for the event. The jazz trio did a fabulous job. Our food and drink spread was beautiful and enjoyed by all. People seemed very engaged when I offered myself up as a chaplain willing to help them do life. Quite a number of people told me they think this is a great idea that addresses a big need in society.

Check out this quick Jazz Happy Hour video: https://youtube.com/shorts/YXdlKh62AT4

Things went so well that we're going to try to run with the momentum and sponsor another WeWork Happy Hour on May 30th.

Additionally, I'm offering some lunch seminars at WeWork hoping to address felt need topics and argue for Christ being the ultimate answer to all human needs and longings. See flyers for these events below.

Please pray for the Lord to draw people to these lunch seminars.

14 Cont. on p. 15

Remember, my Chaplain work (https://www.chicagoworklifechaplain.com/) is a part of my overall church planting strategy. Pray for the Lord to give me favor in people's minds and hearts, and ask the Spirit to bless my efforts by having people reach out and set up times to meet with me. Pray for the Lord to give me the wisdom necessary to counsel and coach people. Pray for the Lord to bring fruit from my labors and for the Lord to create a real stirring in people's hearts.

God is at work. Please keep praying, and please consider contributing financially if you're able to do so and if you feel led by the Lord to do so.

THE HUBER FAMILY - Divine Appointments

The start of this year began with quite a bit of travel! Saul with MC5 to Louisville for the Cross Conference; Saul to Chicago to network, mobilize, and present on missions at the Rivers & Lakes Presbytery; and the entire family (including Saul's parents) to Florida for an EPC World Outreach summit. Our last update shared about the conference so I won't spend time on that.

My time with church leaders at the R&L Presbytery was really special! They were the first presbytery and largest group of churches to get behind us as a missionary family, and it's kind of like going home when we get to share at their meeting. Our time in Orlando was with all our stateside WO workers... those doing mobilization, church engagement, diaspora outreach, etc. Since we all work remotely from different parts of the US, the time is always refreshing. We get to deepen in-person relationships with the team we lead and the other teams we collaborate with. What I would like to highlight here though are some of the unexpected relationships we encountered... divine appointments you might say...

First, Marwan. We met Marwan, his wife and son here in Carbondale several years ago and became close with their family. They are a Muslim family originally from Kurdistan (in Iraq) and came to the US seeking asylum. Marwan and I have spent a lot of time together discussing faith and he's always let me pray over him and his family. He's always displayed an openness to the Gospel. They moved away a couple years ago to the Louisville, KY area and we hadn't seen them since. But he came and joined our cohort group at the middle eastern restaurant in Louisville (Cross Conference post), and got to engage one of our coworkers in Gospel conversation during dinner!

Another amazing moment that happened in Louisville was with JD, a young man who works for the city doing hospitality. He immediately shared about his life and some painful experiences he's going through, and the conversation immediately led into talks about sin, forgiveness and freedom in Christ. It was crazy! Nothing was forced or conjured up. He seemed ready. We took the time to stop, listen, and pray, and then got his contact information and were able to recommend some solid local churches with him after we left.

And the lastly, Julian. Our daily routines in Orlando were for mom, dad, and the kids to stay at an Airbnb during the day while Jesse and I were in World Outreach meetings. Usually that meant that Jesse and I would grab an Uber to and from the office so our family had access to the van throughout the day. When our first day of meetings ended, we booked an Uber and hopped into the car with a young man by the name of Julian. He was super friendly and, right away, began talking about a career crisis that caused him to quit his job and begin driving for Uber. The part that really surprised us is that he said he and his girlfriend were sitting down to dinner the night before we met him, and he decided that they should pray over their food... even though he's not religious and never prays. Well, obviously God was opening a door here! Eventually God led our conversation to the Gospel and we got to pray over him and even receive hugs when he dropped us off! Since then, we connected him with a local pastor friend there and he attended church the very Sunday after we met him.

I will go ahead and say that evangelism is not a regular or comfortable practice for us. We've been around people who do it well, but it's not been our thing. Maybe because we're just not looking for those God is already working in. Each one of these young men were ready and hungry to hear about Jesus. We didn't say perfect things... we were just available and God did the work. What special Gospel moments God let us participate in! Please be praying for Marwan, JD, Julian, and their families, that they would come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

EDGINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Treasurer's Report March 2024

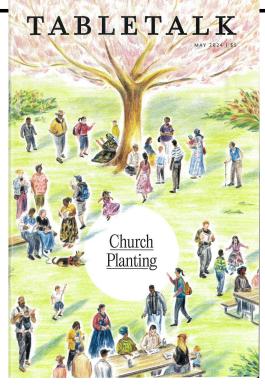
		Re	eceipts	Disb	ursement	Balance	9
General Fund	\$ 97,163.30	\$	33,220.43	\$	18,942.93	\$	111,440.80
Education Fund (Jahn)	\$ 9,738.78	\$	103.20	\$	-	\$	9,841.98
Building Fund (see below)	\$ 98,581.90	\$	17,301.81	\$	4,345.00	\$	111,538.71

998.74 11.69 80.00 30.00 168.80 131.82 89.99	\$	33,220.43
11.69 80.00 30.00 68.80 31.82	·	33,220.43
11.69 80.00 30.00 68.80 31.82	·	33,220.43
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)	375.00 050.00 124.00	\$75.00 050.00 \$24.00 \$

March 2024 MONTHLY REVIEW - Building Fund					
Receipts - March 2024 Cora Schafman Memorial *	16,602.62				
Interest Income - Building Fund Investment Income	8.75 690.44				
		\$	17,301.81		
Expenditures - March 2024	4 245 00				
Past West Gutters	4,345.00 <u> </u>	\$	4,345.00		

^{*} Cora Schafman has blessed this church with a memorial that is an annuity fund that will provide monies annually to the Building Fund!

GET YOUR MAY COPY OF THE TABLETALK DEVOTIONAL



LOCATED ON A TABLE IN THE SANCTUARY FOYER



NEWSLETTER

If you would like to submit something for the newsletter, please be sure to have it in by the deadline.



ALL submissions for the June 2024 Newsletter must be in by **NO LATER** than Wednesday, May 15^h. Items received after that date may not make it into the newsletter.

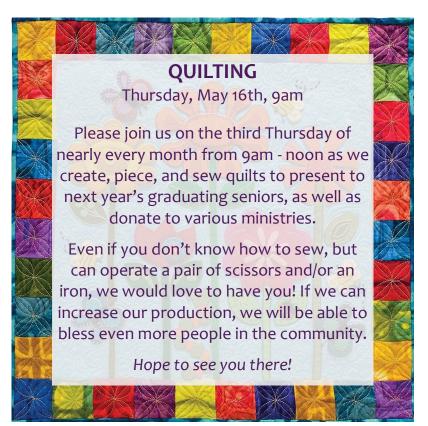
Thank you for your cooperation!

~ Lisa Bowman, Office Manager

Do you know anyone that is not receiving the Edgington EPC Newsletter each month? If so, please contact the church office at 309-795-1713 or edgingtonepc@gmail.com and let me know. I will be happy to make arrangements for it to be received by whatever means works best.

The newsletter is distributed via email and postal service. It is also posted to our Facebook page and website: edgingtonepc.org.

Thank you so much for your help!



CURRENT SERMON SERIES

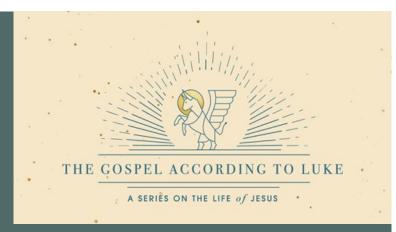
"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" – Luke 19:10

Sunday, May 5th - <u>Luke 6:37-38</u> Sunday, May 12th - <u>Luke 6:39-49</u>

Sunday, May 19th - <u>Luke 7:1-17</u>

Sunday, May 26th - Luke 7:18-35

(Scripture passages are subject to change.)



SCRIPTURE LINKS - Download the apps!







ESV.org is an online Bible reading tool created to help you read and engage with God's Word. While many features of the site are available without signing in, we invite you to <u>create a free account</u>, which makes it easy to save personal notes, highlight favorite verses, and start interactive reading plans.

(Click on the images to go to their websites)



Blue Letter Bible provides powerful tools for an in-depth study of God's Word through our free online reference library, with study tools that are grounded in the historical, conservative Christian faith. We view the Bible as central to our study resources. We intentionally designed the website to include study tools that are linked directly to Bible passages. Dig deep into the Word using commentaries,

encyclopedias, maps/images and much more. One of our most used tools is the Lexicon search, which gives users immediate access to the original Hebrew and Greek words.

IT'S ALWAYS A GREAT TIME TO START FRESH IN GOD'S WORD!

Each year Pastor Zach provides a new reading plan to help equip you to spend time reading through God's Word. This year he has chosen a plan with Navigators.

The Navigators Book-at-a-Time Bible Reading Plan takes you through the entire Bible in one year, providing two reading for each day.

The first reading alternates between Old and New Testament books with the Gospels spread throughout the year. The second reading takes you through a chapter of the wisdom literature and Isaiah.

You can begin at any point of the year!

Each month consists of twenty-five readings. You'll have a few extra days each month to meditate more deeply on something that was significant to you in the past week, to catch up on messed readings, or to revisit favorite passages.



Click on the image for the digital link or see the next 2 pages .

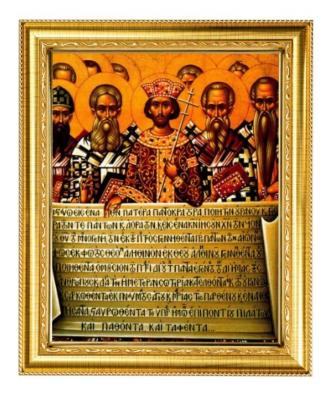
If reading through the entire Bible in one year looms as too large a task, you can alter the plan to meet your needs. For example, you could read the first reading this year and the second reading next year.

In the year ahead, ask God each day to speak directly to you from the Scripture portions you read. Be expectant, and let your continual exposure to God's Word reshape your attitudes and behavior as you gain a better understanding of every part of His written testimony to us.

Pastor Zach is on Facebook Live every Sunday morning at 10am for our Lord's Day Worship Service.



If you are not already a member of our Facebook group, please click on the image for the link. "Like" our page and request to join. We are pretty quick to respond. Make sure you are "following" our page and turn your notifications setting on if you would like to receive a notification when Pastor Zach begins to stream. We will post a worship guide each week in advance of the service.







A GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES:

influential figures from Church History that still matter today

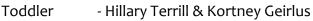
Adult Sunday School Winter 2024

We meet every Lord's Day morning at 9am in the church basement. Please join us!



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Every Sunday morning at 9am



Pre-K - Beth Flickinger 1st-2nd - Katie Pearson 3rd-5th - Kathy Stegmiller

Junior High - Tara Johnson & Deanna Parchert

Senior High - Brandee Neece



All of Scripture is the unfolding story of salvation and Jesus is its focus. We show how Jesus, revealed throughout the Bible, came to seek and save the lost.

We look forward to the privilege of caring for and teaching your children about Jesus each Sunday!

WOMEN'S MINISTRY WELCOMES ALL EEPC WOMEN JUNE 6TH AT 1 PM



The timeless purpose:

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ,
And empowered by the Holy Spirit,
We commit ourselves
To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study;
To support the mission of the church worldwide;
To work for justice and peace; and
To build an inclusive, caring community of women
That strengthens the Edgington Evangelical
Presbyterian Church and witnesses to the promise
of God's Kingdom.

Currently, we meet once a **quarter** in the church basement to pray together, have a nice treat brought by a willing hostess, and discuss how to serve our Lord in our church and community. We work together to choose Bible study materials, Mother's Day/Father's Day treats, Christmas treats for some of our members who are unable to attend church, decorate the church for Christmas, make and share precious quilts, coordinate luncheons, support the food pantry, keep the busy bags stocked for our little ones, set up and help finance the fall harvest party, make decisions together on how to serve in the greater community, and when necessary, we will hold a fundraiser, ETC.

You know how great it feels after church when you have just surrounded yourself by other believers to hear and feel God's word? Well, we end each WM meeting with the MIZPAH: (Genesis 31:49):

"The Lord watch between me and Thee, when we are absent, one from another."

Join us for the June meeting, won't you? Pick and choose if you are willing and how you are able to contribute, even if it is just by joining us for the meeting and helping with ideas. It's truly a fellowship that offers you another chance to surround yourself by other believing women and serve our Lord Jesus Christ! Come feel the blessing!

There were only 3 people attending the March meeting. We are struggling to get more active members involved. Our fear is that we may have to disband the WM if we cannot get more ladies participating. As a group, we need to discuss where we want to go. What is our future???

These are the projects we need assistance with for the 2nd quarter:

- 1. **Secretary:** This would involve taking minutes for 4 meetings. The minutes could be handwritten or typed. Whichever is easiest.
- 2. Hostess: December meeting
- 3. **2024 Graduates:** Sunday, May 12th, our graduates are honored (Jr High, High School and College). Quilts are given to the High School graduates. Someone honors them by name. We need someone who is willing to do the honoring.
- 4. **Women's Ministry Booklet** please look at the women listed and let me know if any changes need to be made OR if anyone is missing.

Thanking you in advance for any help you can give. Please call me if you have questions, concerns or suggestions. God Bless!

Sue Miller, Chairperson 309-781-8231

2024 GRADUATES

We would like to recognize and celebrate all our 2024 students that are moving on to their next adventure!

Please keep them in prayer as they try to discern God's path for their lives.

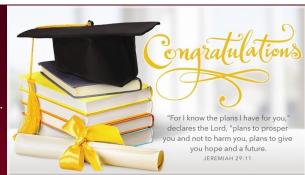
8th Grade moving into High School:

Taylor Freyermuth Cade Fuhr

Mya Gray

Tessa Kafer

Emma Pearson Josey Stegmiller Mason White



High School Graduates:

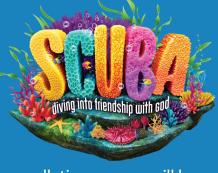
Emma Sill Will be attending Western Illinois University (Quad Cities Campus) in the fall. She is planning to

major in Early Childhood Education.

College/University Graduates:

Kenzie Reimers Graduating from Illinois State University with a Bachelor of Science in Mass Media. She plans to

pursue a Masters in Communication at Illinois State University in the fall.



2024 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Much to everyone's surprise our VBS camp filled in just 14 minutes. Consequently, there was a large number of campers on the waitlist. At our April VBS meeting, those in attendance decided to accept all the children on the waitlist. The preschool children on the waitlist will only be allowed to come 2 days in order to keep the preschool number on Friday manageable. No more children will be accepted after this regardless of

cancellations, as we will be running at maximum capacity.

Our high school counselor quota is also filled, so that registration is also closed.

Now that we have definite numbers, we will start to divide the campers into individual groups. Once that is completed, we will begin to assign counselors to each group.

The counselor training dates are Sunday, June 30th, from 4 - 5:30pm or Thursday, July 11th, from 6 - 7:30pm. <u>EVERYONE</u> who signed up as a high school counselor is required to attend one of the trainings.

Next on the agenda is to figure out a supply list. Once we have it compiled, we will share it for anyone who is interested in donating.

Due to graduation and holidays, our next meeting will be Sunday, June 9th at 12:15pm.

Thank you for your continued prayers as we plan for an exciting, fun-filled week for the children of our community!





2024 Youth Mission Trip July 6th - 13th

WHO: High School Students / Ages 14+

WHAT: You and your group will provide home repairs at no cost for elderly, disabled, and disadvantaged people who need your help. Project crews typically serve the same resident for the entire trip, creating an environment where meaningful relationships develop. Projects typically include painting houses, repairing porches, and general home repairs.

WHY: Because you want to have a meaningful summer experience of service and Christian growth while making new friends from all over the country.



7/7-13 Worksite projects in Winchester, KY – Staying at Local School

WHERE & WHEN?

I think I want to go! What do I need to do?

 Get this trip on your calendar! Make sure you don't have any schedule conflicts. Spots are limited so we need to be sure that those students who sign up can go.



How much is this going to cost?

- A deposit of \$100 will secure your spot. Turn this into the office ASAP.
- A second payment of \$150 is due before the trip.
- The total of \$250 covers **everything**
- Except whatever random snacks or weird things you might want to buy – that's on you!
- Please don't let finances be a factor, there are support opportunities available to help you cover your costs. Just ask!

What's next?

- Register online talk to Cade Reimers or Nathan Flickinger
- When we have our spots filled, there will be more info including: lodging details, tool lists, estimated schedule, and more!

MAY 2024



Sunday School gam Worship Service 10am

EEPC

Phone: 309-795-1713

Email: edgingtonepc@gmail.com
Website: www.edgingtonepc.org

0						1
- - - -	SAT	4	=	18	25	1 h June 13th
	FRI	3 Meal Site	10 Meal Site	17 Meal Site	24 Meal Site	31 Meal Site Lisa in Alaska through June 13th
	THO	2 Meal Site	9 Meal Site	16 Quilting, 9am Meal Site	23 Meal Site	30 Meal Site
	WED	1 Meal Site	8 Meal Site	15 Meal Site Trustee's Mtg., 7pm Newsletter DEADLINE	22 Meal Site	29 Meal Site
	TUE	30 Meal Site Session Mtg., 7pm	7 Meal Site	14 Meal Site	Meal Site Mission Comm. Mtg., 6:30pm	28 Meal Site Session Mtg., 7pm
	MOM	29 Meal Site	6 Meal Site	13 Meal Site	20 Foot Clinic Meal Site	27 Memorial Day NO Meal Site
	SUN	28 B/P Checks Membership Class, 11:30 Sunday School Mtg., 11:30am Youth Group, 5:30pm	5 Food Pantry Sunday New Member Reception Youth Group, 5:30pm	Mother's Day B/P Checks Graduate Recognition RHS Baccalaureate Service, 6pm	RHS Graduation Ceremony, 2pm Youth Group, 5:30	26 B/P Checks Youth Group, 5:30pm