

River News

October 2021 Newsletter



From The Pastor's Pen

~ Pastor Sarah Flack

Dear River Church and River Church Friends,

Have you ever been afraid? We all have probably been afraid at least once in our lives, and some of us live with fear on a much more frequent basis. In fact, some of you might even say, “How could you not be afraid when you look at the world around us?” Worry over the future, over health issues, about our loved ones, and dozens of other things can inspire fear in our hearts, sleepless nights of tossing and turning, and even a sort of paralysis where we hesitate to make decisions for “fear” of making the wrong one.

The first time fear shows up in the Bible is in the garden of Eden after the man and woman had sinned by disobeying God. Genesis 3 tells of God walking in the garden and calling out to the man, “Where are you?,” and verse 10 records Adam’s reply: “I heard You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.”

That day, the Bible tells us, God responded to the actions of the serpent and Adam and Eve; sin had real and lasting consequences. But from that moment God also put into motion a plan so that our lives do not have to be ruled by irrational and uncontrollable fear.

The fear of the Lord--awe and respect for Him as God and dread in the face of His anger toward sin--is a proper kind of fear. We do need to keep a proper perspective about God that reminds us that He is God, mighty and awesome in power, who spoke the universe into being. At the same time we also need to remember that this same God sent His One and Only Son Jesus to die on that cross so that reconciliation with God is available. The God who raised Jesus from the grave on the third day is the same God who offers salvation to all who would trust in Jesus alone as their Savior. As followers of Jesus we have been spared from the wrath of God toward sinners. We do not have to fear what eternity holds for us, because we have an eternity with God to look forward to.

But what about other fears--when we fear for what the future holds for our country, for those we love, and for our own remaining time here on earth? We have God’s Word that we can hide in our hearts, His words that will comfort and encourage and strengthen on the days when fear threatens to overwhelm.

Words like those of Psalm 56:3-4: When I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

Or the words of Philippians 4:6-7 that remind us: Don’t worry about anything, but in everything through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And let the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

May you find courage, hope, and freedom from fear in the Word of God this month!

Pastor Sarah



Elder Ministry ~ Dean Wilkie

Fellow citizens of that heavenly kingdom;

As I address this month's newsletter it's a chilly day, a beautiful day the sun is shining bright all seems well in the world. But those that have been a few years on the face of this earth know, this is fall and there's cold and darkness ahead. The days that we live in, the season that we are currently in, in God's kingdom we see uncertain times, days of dread and anxiety.

But as believers in the word of God, do we face these fearfully or faithFULLY? When we look to see what faith is; one of the best places to look first is Heb 11:1, that tells us FAITH, is a confident assurance in things hoped for, and a conviction of things not yet seen or realized. I always like to go grassroots (it's part of my nature), so let's look at it from the gardener perspective. Faith, can be seen in things hoped for as the gardener who plants a seed and confidently waits for that flower to someday bloom, or waits in anticipation of that tasty tomato. Waiting in patient confidence even though it's a long time before it's appearing!

We can see examples of faith if we continue to read in Heb 11:4. We read of :

Abel, who offered a better sacrifice.
Enoch, walked with God and was no more.
Noah, who built an ark for the saving of 8.
Abraham's and Sarah's, examples of faith.
Joseph and Moses, leading God's people.
Joshua, bringing down the walls of Jericho.

There's multiple examples of people that walked in faith, through the pages of God's word.

In dark days or troubling times, we need to keep our focus on Jesus, the author and finisher or completer of our faith. Look at Peter, when Jesus called him out of the boat Peter(walking on water) took his eyes off Jesus, he changed his focus to the storm and the seas and he began to sink. Saints, when we are walking by faith and take our eyes off Jesus, and focus on our troubles, struggles and the problems of the world; in other words our eyes are on the TV evening news - then we begin to sink, our faith is shaken and our strength is diminished.

Therefore let us change our focus back to the word of God; to the promises of God the Father, in Jesus Christ our Lord. The promises that Jesus our Lord and Savior, left us, let us keep The Faith, be strong in His promises believe in Him, and the power of His gospel!

In closing this newsletter, I'd like to read from 1 John 5:5: *"Who is it that is victorious over and conquers the world - but he who believes in, adheres to, trusting that, Jesus is the son of God."*

Be glad and rejoice for we are blessed,

In Christ service - Elder Dean



Grief Ministry

~ Laura Schafer

How Should Christians Grieve?

Our community has experienced tragic and unexpected deaths in recent days. One thing is certain, in this life we will experience deep loss and deep grief. No grief is deeper than the sorrow of loss. At such times it is important to consider how Christians grieve. Christ has Lordship over all our life, yes, even our grief. Scripture teaches us all we should do, including how we should grieve. When dealing with the loss of a believer, we should grieve in a certain way. What? How? Why?

How do Christians grieve? Paul provides instruction in 1 Thessalonians 4:13. “We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.”

The first thing is grieve! It is good and right to grieve. Death is tragic; death is sorrowful; it is okay to grieve. This scripture gives us permission to. The scripture does NOT say “we do not want you to be uninformed brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve.” Grief could have been forbidden, but that is NOT what it says. Instead, Paul tells us to grieve in a certain way. What is that way?

Grieve hopefully. Paul says, “you may not grieve as others who have no hope.” We must not grieve as unbelievers do. Christians can experience grief but without despair, sorrow but without defeat, sadness but without hopelessness. Christians experience true sorrow and true hope. How can we feel that true hope?

We have hope because Christians grieve temporarily. Our grief will come to an end. Paul proves this by pointing to the past in 1 Thessalonians 4:14 “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.” Jesus truly returned to life and his resurrection is a promise, a proof and a down payment that we, too, will return to life. What happened to Him will happen to us. If it wasn’t for Jesus, we would have no hope! But Jesus rose so we have the greatest hope!! “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.” Paul points to a time when the great promise will be fulfilled. At that time those who are dead and those who are alive WILL BE reunited. The scripture continues with “The dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and we will always be with the Lord.” Our hope for the future, those who have gone and those who remain will be reunited in the presence of Jesus Christ FOREVER!

While our loved ones are no longer with us, they have not ceased to be. They have simply gone on ahead. “We are confident, I say and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 5:8. Because Jesus rose again, they will rise again. Because Jesus conquered death, they will conquer death. Because Jesus lives, they live. And so, we grieve. We grieve in times of loss. We grieve for days, weeks, years and sometimes for a lifetime. The pain and sorrow are real, our grief is real. But we can grieve hopefully knowing our grief is temporary. And as Paul concludes “therefore encourage one another with these words.”



Women's Ministry
~ Char Frese and Wendy Falzano



Whaat?? October? Summer is officially over.

But fall is here! Another wonderful season given us by our creator. The crispness is refreshing, the change in the colors is beautiful and the apples are ripening!

This month our gathering will be October 16th and we will be making APPLE PIE! Come join us as our very own Char Frese gives us a demonstration.

Even if you already know how, it is so much fun to be making our pies together.

YES, you will be making a pie too!! You can take it home and bake it, gift it or freeze it for the holidays.

You will need to bring some of your own kitchen tools, a pie plate and some of the ingredients but we will provide the shortening and the apples.

Remember, you are always welcome to bring a friend or even perhaps a daughter or granddaughter as a helper!!

Contact Char Frese (315-221-1303) or Wendy Falzano (518-526-6149) to get the list of things you need to bring and to reserve your spot.

Because it may take a little longer than the usual slotted time, we will be meeting from 9:30 –12:30 on that Saturday (October 16 th).

Come join us for the fellowship and fun!!





Breaking The Chains

Biblical Recovery Ministry

~ Ken and Michelle Kavanagh

Are You A Light In The Darkness

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

(Matthew 6:23)

We see so much through our eyes on a daily basis...the sun shining brightly, acts of kindness by others, love being shown from a parent to a child, the husband or wife we are speaking our marriage vows too, the child we are bringing forth into this world. We also see other things...a homeless person, an ill person, our current difficulty, the anger of someone towards another, violence and abuse, an accident that takes a life, the burial of a loved one. All of these things can dim our light if our focus is off balance.

We are called to be a light in the darkness, but when we witness or experience things that are not good and hear things that are negative, our light can slowly dim. We can go through the motions of doing what we should be doing but the light that once shined so brightly may start to dim because of things we see, hear or experience. It's like trying to warn someone of danger in front of them and grabbing a flashlight to shine the light on what they are about to step on. However, there are no batteries in the flashlight for the light to shine so they can see the danger. You can warn them them all day long, but if you do not have the light of Christ within you, all you are doing is waving a dark flashlight. Although you might be saying the right words, they may come out with a negative tone or one of criticism instead of love and kindness.

What are your eyes looking at? What are your ears hearing? How is it affecting you? Are you becoming negative, angry, and frustrated? Or are your eyes focused on God and you have peace on the inside while there are storms on the outside. Maybe you are in a situation where you are trying to help someone remain hopeful during their crisis but watching their situation and hearing their negative words have brought you down. If so, get on your knees and begin praying for God to remove all negativity from your mind and heart and to help you to focus on the good in that person. Once we start focusing on the negative side of a person or situation, that is all we will see. Ask God to help you to see the positive side so your light does not grow dim.

“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light” Ephesians 5:8

Meet Your Leaders



John and Charlotte Frese

John & Charlotte Frese were married May 27, 2006. It was a second marriage for both. John has three adult children which includes Juliann Sutterfield, Traci-lynn Farley and Troy Frese. Charlotte has two adult children which includes Jennifer Pasini and Jeffrey Soules. They have 13 grandchildren total from ages 2 years old to 19 years old. They live on Macomb Settlement Road, Clayton and enjoy hobbies such as bike riding, camping, traveling and reading. Charlotte's hobbies also include baking and sewing.

They enjoy sharing childhood stories with each other such as John was born in the village of Skaneateles. His mother, Ava, was a school teacher and his father, William, was a banker. He had one older brother, Bob. John graduated from St Lawrence University and worked as a commercial underwriter until his retirement in 2004.

Charlotte was born in rural Lewis County on a farm near Naumburg. Her mother, Rose, was a homemaker and her father, Daniel, a farmer with a meat market on the property. She had six older brothers, Clarence, Donald, Herbert, Darius, Duane and Clyde Widrick. Charlotte graduated from Jefferson Community College and retired from Cape Vincent Correctional Facility in 2014 as an executive secretary.

John and Charlotte started attending River Community Church soon after they married in 2006.

Ministry Events

Men's Ministry Night at the Ballpark



Youth Group Bonfire



Quicksand

By Carol Garnsey

Be careful with that life of yours.
It is like quicksand, swallowing you up.
Go here, go there, do this, do that.
Running about, day after day.
You'll never remember all you did or say
A week from now, a month from now.
All that time-it fled away.
It is through, it didn't stay.
What, I ask you, did it do for you?

Suppose you had stopped, had taken a look.
Suppose you had picked up that holy book.
Suppose you had looked to the center of your own being
And put aside the quicksand of life's busy schemes.

You had a choice. You can change your drive.
You can let Christ guide your step.
You can still take that every day step,
But with Jesus beside you - man's wish no longer rules.

You no longer get perturbed, should you do this or that.
You no longer say that wrong word or go off to do that
Wrongful thing. You'll be surprised at the peace you feel.
You'll be out of the quicksand.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through

Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:6-7)



REVERB

Overnight Teen Event

Who: For teens in Middle School and High School
What: Overnight teen event with bowling, trampoline park, and more!
When: Friday, November 5th
Where: Rochester, NY

Permission slips are needed and can be obtained at Youth Group.



We'd like to wish the following a very Happy Birthday!!!

- 10/2 Shawn Schemerhorn
- 10/2 Billie Lawrence
- 10/4 Bob Gumm
- 10/4 Calla Cavanaugh
- 10/12 Ami Gydesen
- 10/22 Wanda Collins
- 10/23 Asher Flack
- 10/27 John Frese

Our Newly Paved Parking Lot!

We recently repaved our parking lot and it came out great!



We'd like to wish Harold and Katie Chapman a very Happy 69th Wedding Anniversary on October 4th! You both are a wonderful example of how to keep a marriage going....love and a deep faith in God.



If you have an anniversary or birthday coming up and would like to enter it in the newsletter so we can celebrate with you, just send your name, date of your anniversary and how many years you are celebrating (you can also send your wedding photo and/or current photo) or date of your birthday, to michellekavanagh@riverchurchny.com. Please send it within the last 2 weeks prior to the month of your anniversary (ex: if your anniversary is in Nov, send your entry within the last 2 weeks of Oct).