

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- As we begin a new church year, may we recommit ourselves to prayer, encouragement, and seeking the lost.
- I want to say thanks to each and every one of you!

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

Final Update from Erica	2
What's Happening	3
In Pursuit	4
In Pursuit, Cont.	5

Mustard seed

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Renewing Our Mission

I have found that it is important to review and renew the various commitments that I have made in order to keep from losing my focus. Without reviewing my commitments, it becomes impossible to keep “the main thing the main thing.”

As a church, our mission needs to be renewed from time to time as well. We need reminders to keep our minds and hearts centered on our God-given mission that was also taught and carried out by Jesus.

The words in Ezekiel 34:4 outline a clear mission statement for us to follow in our new church year. According to the prophet Ezekiel, our mission as a church should center around three main

things: strengthening and encouraging each other in our faith, praying and caring for the sick and injured, and always being faithful in our outreach to the lost.

As we begin a new church year, may we recommit ourselves to prayer, encouragement, and seeking the lost. I would also ask for your prayers for us as pastors, that we would remain faithful in being leaders who pray, care, and evangelize.

Scott Swartzendruber



Final Update from Erica

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WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

Greetings! Well the kids are back in school. The days are growing shorter, and we look forward to harvest and the Fall Festival. Hope you all had a good summer. Now, for what's happening.

Dean & Karen Schrock are first-time grandparents. Their daughter Erin & her husband Ben Yoder are the happy parents of a little girl. Scout Cordell weighed 8 lbs. 10.5 oz. and was 20 5/8 inches long. She has already slept 7 hours straight on one occasion. Congratulations on the new addition.

If you had trouble getting a hold of Todd Thompson here recently, he had a good reason why he never returned your call. Todd's cell phone "melted" in his car on one of those hot summer days. And I understand it took a "pretty penny" to retrieve all the info from his old phone plus buy a new one. Ouch!

Jack Seward had his tonsils removed this summer. So if you didn't see Jack for several Sundays, I guess he was at home feeling pretty miserable. It took about four weeks to recover. Glad you're feeling better.

Merle and Marlinda Beachy volunteered to be tour guides at a lighthouse. They spent one week at Little Sable Point Lighthouse on Lake Michigan. They and another couple gave tours from 10 am-5 pm each day in exchange for a place to stay. And no, they did not stay overnight in the lighthouse. What a neat vacation.

Ed D. & Mary Jane Miller took a trip to Alaska on a Mennonite Your Way tour. They saw lots of wildlife,

panned for gold, learned about sled dogs, visited Chicken, Alaska, spent 4 days on a cruise, and visited with their great nephew, who is a bush pilot. Those were just some of the highlights. Welcome home.

And speaking of home, Dave & Mary Groh will be leaving Kalona in October to return to Canada and live near their son, Michael, and family. Mary has had a great summer in that she has not done any canning. What a nice break. They will not be able to take canned goods across the border. Hope they don't go hungry!

Now in closing we would just like to mention something we read in a recent obituary. "The church that focuses on reaching out to others will avoid many problems that arise when congregations are concerned only about themselves." Just food for thought.

Blessings to all, Ed V. & Carol Miller



Be ye fishers of men. You
catch them—He'll clean
them.

In Pursuit

Another church year at KMC is now beginning. I have spent more time reflecting on the new year and the past year during the last couple weeks than I ever have before. It is something that I do at the end and beginning of the calendar year, but not usually for the church year. What is different about it this time? I would guess that it is my relationship with God that has changed.

It hasn't been a year that I would love to repeat. In fact, in many ways it is just the opposite. But I absolutely would not give up how much more important God has become to me.

My year did not bring the major problems that so many people have faced and are facing. I did not have to deal with life threatening illnesses in my family, nor divorce, drug problems, financial ruin and other such things. I am not in any way trying to say that my year compares to these things. My year consisted of the constant dripping faucet sort of difficulties that slowly drive you crazy. One drip isn't a big deal. It is each additional drip that comes that interrupts the peace you once had in your mind.

My year started with the challenge of my daughter's allergies and migraine struggles. It was very frustrating to not know on a day to day basis whether or not your child was going to be able physically to attend school. I struggled with why I couldn't do the right combination of things to make her feel better and have the life I envisioned for her. It took me what seemed like forever to hand the situation over to God and quit trying to handle it myself. I kept thinking that I had given it to God and then I would find myself trying to handle things all over again. Finally, I got to the point where I truly knew that I had no control over the situation. Did it make her health better? Not right away. But I didn't have the burden weighing me down like it did be-

fore. Thankfully, God blessed us with doctors who realized in January that she needed surgery, which she had in February. Since then she still has allergy and migraine issues at times, but it is like night and day compared to before the surgery. I don't know which to praise and thank God for more, the burden God took over for me or for the giant improvement of her health.

Over the past year, Curt and I have had other "opportunities" (challenges would be another way to put it) as well. There have been some really difficult business decisions to make, employee deaths, employee illnesses, retirements, break-ins, theft, equipment breakdowns, personal adjustments, and the list goes on and on. Our prayer requests to friends and family must have seemed endless at times. And I must say that there have been times over the last year I have felt dumped on. In Dad and Mom's 35 years of owning JW's, they never had to attend the funeral of a current employee. We had to do that not once, but twice.

These women were Godly women. They were anchors of faith. They reflected God. Do you have any idea the blessing you have to be around people who not only are saved, but who choose to live out that faith on a day to day basis? We were truly blessed. It was a huge blow to have the blessing of these two women taken from our midst.

Since April we have 6 fewer of our day time employees. Two died, two retired, one moved and one is currently fighting stage four lung cancer. There have been many days since April where life has been hard.

Granted, God has provided. He has brought us employees to fulfill our needs so that we can keep the store up and running and to take care of our customers.

(continued on page 5)

But I absolutely would not give up how much more important God has become to me

(Cont. from page 4) God has given us strength to accomplish everything that was needed to be accomplished. Even more than that, it is amazing how often the scripture that I was studying before things happened often gave me the faith to get through.

God's Word is truly alive. It can change you if you are open to it and if you ask for wisdom and revelation. A couple of weeks before Lent I felt compelled by God to memorize scripture during Lent. Even more than that, I felt God telling me to get up an hour earlier than I normally do in order to memorize the scripture. I am NOT a morning person. My take on mornings is that they should start at 10 am., because I really don't function great before that most days. I normally get up at 5 am to go to work at 6 am. To do what God was asking me to do meant that I would be getting up at 4 am. And not only that, but I would be trying to memorize scripture with a brain that doesn't want to function.

It was amazing that it wasn't that hard for me to get up at 4 am. And my brain was really clear and not fuzzy while trying to memorize the scripture. Don't ask me to do it now. I think that period of blessing has passed. My point is this: That memorized scripture saved me, protected me, comforted me and oh so much more during the times of struggle this year. God prepared me for it without me knowing why. If I had been disobedient to Him, I would not have been prepared and I can't imagine how I would have handled it.

I have questioned God a lot this year about why there are so many struggles. Some are tiny, some are humongous, and there are all sizes in between, but everyone has them whether they will admit it or not. I am learning to accept more of them with a better attitude. James 1:2-4 helps me to see some positive in struggles. *"Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you*

know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing."

I Peter 1:6-7 is also encouraging and shows me hope. *"So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold-though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world."*

The number one thing that I have learned this past church year is that if I listen for God He will make sure I am prepared for whatever struggles I will face. It doesn't mean that I will enjoy the struggle, but it will mean that I will be able to get through the struggle. Plus, my faith will grow and get closer to what God wants it to be. This will bring me closer to God. Going through a struggle, being prepared by God helps me to get "MORE" in my relationship with God. I get to be closer to God. I get to see more of God. There isn't anything better than this.

So this is my challenge to you for this new church year. Want 'more' relationship with God. Ask God how to prepare; listen, and then do what God tells you to do. Ask God for revelation in reading His Word. Spend more time alone with God. Speak to Him. Listen to Him. Praise Him. Thank Him. If you want 'more' from God and you will do these things you will see the 'more' from God. I do not doubt this one little bit. As always, *in pursuit*, Dawn Wyse

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Peace
starts
with a
smile.