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ARTICLES

Change Stinks

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

With all the baseball lately and using cash at concessions, I've undoubtedly ended up with some change.



Personally, carrying a pocket full of change around is rather annoying, but that's not the change I'm talking about.

Doug left this morning. Our Equipping Adults Pastor is gone. His office is empty. A good confidant and friend will no longer help me process life and ministry every Tuesday morning. No more shared preaching. No more sharing the load of visiting and counseling others. **Change stinks.**

I can see how this change will be good for Doug and his family. It makes sense to get an MDiv. **Yet, I struggle to see how this is good for us, particularly me.** I'll miss the help and friendship. **Change stinks.** At least that's how it feels.

What I know from Paul is “that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28) God had similar words for Jeremiah... “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11) Yet, for the Christians in Rome and the Israelites with Jeremiah, life was not so good. Persecution and suffering were the new norm. Change had been bitter and difficult.

Somehow in the midst of difficult situations and unwanted changes God is still at work doing something good. Consider Marla’s perspective in her Facebook post below. She’s been battling cancer for just over a month, life is completely upside down, yet she sees God at work!



Is it possible our resistance to change, struggles, and suffering is more about our eyes and heart than it is about our

situation? Could it be that the comfort and security that comes from consistency also blinds us to the possibility of a better way, a better future?

While change is hard, as followers of Jesus, we have the assurance that God is always working for our ultimate good. Thus, we must look to the future, resting in God’s goodness and running into change with faith like Doug. He left family behind to come to us. He now leaves behind a new family and a secure income, trusting that God is working a good plan. Welcome change. Risk failure. Follow Jesus.

Maybe Doug will return. Maybe we’ll find someone better (this seems really impossible). Maybe we’ll just mobilize more believers to fill the gaps? **Regardless, we must trust that God is working for our good... growing our faith and molding us into Christ-like leaders who are developing and deploying more Christ-like leaders.**

So, here’s my challenges to you in living this faith out...

1. Consider what changes stink for you now.
2. Call on God to help you see what he is doing.
3. Commit yourself to trusting and following Jesus.

4. Change something you hold too tightly to. (For instance, I know God wants me to exercise, but I refuse. Maybe it's apologizing to someone, volunteering somewhere, or beginning daily devotions. Whatever it is, change it. It might smell better than you ever imagined.)

VBS Wrap-Up

By Adrea Daane

This year's VBS was such a great week! I came into the week excited to see how God would work...and as always, He didn't disappoint! God was working in the hearts of over 50 volunteers and over 110 kiddos!!! The first day as we ended our time together the kids were si



nging and praising with so much energy and excitement it brought tears to my eyes. What an awesome opportunity for our kids to grow in their faith. Throughout the week the kids dove into stories that taught them about the different aspects of God's love for them. They saw how Jesus was our ultimate example of love, memorizing a portion of 1 Corinthians 13. Again, at the end of the week, as I was

trying to thank my volunteers the tears had to be held at bay again...there was not a volunteer/guide who didn't go above and beyond for the kids that walked through our doors. If you know any of our guides especially...please say thank you!!! Each child in their groups were impacted by them beyond what they could imagine. I am humbled to be a part of such an amazing community of believers and cannot say thank you enough for the support I and the program in general receive each year.

As we move into a new school year I encourage you to outreach to any kids/families around you. We saw a lot of new faces again this year at VBS and it's so fun getting to know each and every one of them. Our fall programming will start right after Labor Day, with Bible Class again running from 6:30-7:30 starting on September 4th and Sunday School will kick off on Sunday the 8th from 10:45-11:30. Look for more information as the dates get closer!

The Importance of a Coach

By Jessa Ter Beest

Coaches can have incredible influence over kids' lives. Their attitudes are often much more important than their own skill level because a coach with average skills

and a positive attitude can often do much more for a team than a coach with the best skills surrounded by negativity or pride. That's why we refer to our youth leaders as "coaches". We have leaders that are invested into our kids just like coaches of sports are invested into their players. Most of us will admit that we struggle to know all the answers when it comes to Bible Trivia, but just like in sports, what the kids really need is someone with a positive attitude pointing them in the right direction (Jesus) - back to the Bible or prayer - where they can find the answers together.

Coaching youth group is a big time commitment - it's hard to give up those couple hours on Wednesdays or Sundays throughout the school year - but I would like to challenge you to look at your schedule. Have you "made the time" when your child's sports team needed a coach? Have you "squeezed it into your schedule" to give your time to fantasy football or volleyball rec league? Please consider making the time to coach middle or high school youth group. I promise that the reward will be greater than the sacrifice and these kids will never cease to amaze you in how much you can grow by spending time with them.

If you feel God tugging on your heart to learn more about coaching, please

contact jessa@altoreformedchurch.org.

We need you! Please follow God's leading.

Golden Lifers Update

By Julie Medema

Time again to write a short note of encouragement from Golden Lifers.

Riding in the car last week, we noticed once more the swift passage of time. We saw amber waves of grain. We saw corn tasseling, tomatoes ripening, and combines running. Everything speaks of God's promise of growth!

Speaking on promises, someone once counted all of God's promises in Scripture and found that the New Testament has 1,104 promises, and the Old Testament has 7,706 promises! Incredible, isn't it? The wonderful thing about it all is that even though each of us can't count God's promises, we know we can count on them. 1 Kings 8:56 tells us "there hath no failed one word of all His good promises."

I love the promises of God, and I hope you do too! I love the promise of salvation. Who but God could devise such a plan? I love the promise of the Holy Spirit coming to live within me, to make my body His temple. I love the promise of

answer prayer, of help in time of need, of sustaining strength. I love the promise of Heaven, and Jesus preparing a place for us.

On our drive, we also saw barns and buildings decaying, silos no longer being used, and old machinery rusting. It reminded us of how temporary and passing this life is. But, hey, we look forward to better things - treasures in Heaven which will neither rust nor decay, and where all of God's promises will be fully realized.

Library Update

By Deb Navis

Do you like to read a good mystery book once in a while? Well I do! I like to keep guessing how the plot will turn out.

We have many books written by christian mystery authors in our library. One of the last ones I read was written by Dee Henderson titled "Taken". Here is a short summary of the book: Abducted at the age of 16 and coerced into assisting the Jacoby crime family Shannon Bliss has finally found a way out. She might have enough evidence to put her captors behind bars. But she realizes that if the Jacoby family learns she is still alive they'll stop at nothing to silence her. Can private investigator Matthew Dane help her? He will need to uncover what happened to her

- even if it means stirring up a hornet's nest of secrets.

And now you will have to read the book to find out, as they say, "the rest of the story".

Also, here are some more mystery authors you may want to read and look for in our ARC library: Terri Blackstock, Janice Cantore, Coleen Noble, Lynette Eason, Kathy Herman, and Di Ann Mills. If you need any help finding them there is always someone in the library to help you on Sunday mornings before the service.

MESSAGES

My heart felt thanks to all of you who remembered me in so many ways with your cards, visits, food, and gifts, but most of all your prayers. A thank you to the Women's Ministry for the beautiful lavender shawl (my favorite color). I use it every day. God is so good.

Blessings to you all-
Marilyn Westerveld

Dave Rumley Update

6/28/19 - visit to Dr. Raizen in Chicago
His report - healthy again, stable disease
"God has me. God has my family. God has all who follow Him through Jesus Christ. It doesn't mean everything will be fine. It doesn't mean it always works out

the way we want. It means God is God, regardless of outcomes. We learn from suffering at least as much as when everything is ok. God's speed is the path and the timing to walk, in Jesus name." Dave and his family will be leaving Normal, IL to go to Dallas, TX where his mother lives and he feels led to pursue teaching possibly in colleges or universities. He thanks everyone for their continued prayers for good health and God's direction in his life.

Baptisms

7/14/19 - Vada Lou, daughter of Micah & Laura Douma

7/21/19 - Beckett Floyd & Grayson Richard, sons of Chris & Julia Meinke

New Member

7/14/19 - Micah Douma

Contact Info for Doug & Marlaina

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EVENTS

Alto 4-H and Farm
Bureau Fair



Alto Fair - August 7-8

Sign-up at the info desk to sit at our booth for an hour during the fair.

NEWS

Births

7/29/19 - Joseph Scott, son of Aaron & Brianna Legate