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ARTICLES

King of the Hill

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

Do you remember climbing up a huge pile of snow and shoving your friends and



siblings off? It was great fun! Even getting pushed off was fun as you landed in the snow and slid down. There are some great hills right now just off the church parking lot... maybe I should challenge the deacons tonight at their meeting :-)

Speaking of hills, I was recently reminded I'm on top of the hill and turning 50. I was so grateful to receive an early birthday card from Agnesian Healthcare! What a wonderful healthcare system to send a card. Then I read the inside and thought, "the gift of a colonoscopy was not what I was looking for."

Thanks for the hard truth. I've peaked. I'm over the hill. I'm halfway to 100, as my

daughter likes to put it.

God reminds me...*“Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.”* (Isaiah 46:4) What a great promise from God. He will carry me when I can't go on. He will sustain me when I lack nourishment. He will rescue me from my sin and this world of sin.

Not only do we have these promises, but we have this challenge... *“Now that I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O God. Let me proclaim your power to this new generation, your mighty miracles to all who come after me.”* (Psalm 71:18 NLT) The psalmist Asaph is not done, retired, and useless. He has a purpose, a calling he cannot ignore.

I have no desire to be a king of some man-made hill. I want to serve the King of kings and see the next generation stop pushing each other off the hill and start putting Jesus on the hill. **May the last half of my life not be about what I like, what I want, or what I think I deserve.** May it be about giving my all for the sake of the next generation, that they might know the grace and truth of God.

If you have some gray hairs, or maybe no hairs like me, will you join me in giving all you have to the mission of Jesus, in letting go of the pursuit of comfort and

happiness; crushing the “me first” mentality of our culture, and living like Jesus really is your Lord?

Here's my hope...

- Too many youth coaches
- One gray-hair for every youth at the bridge dinners
- A gray-hair assistant in every Sunday school class and Bible Class
- Generosity that ends any need for youth fundraising
- Estate gifts that enable us to fund church plants without denominational grants and to fund students going into ministry

Will Jesus be King of your hill?

Building Christian Character

By Adrea Daane

Walk out Worship has begun a study on what it takes to build Christian character. We will be continuing this study into the end of May. We've begun with concepts of what it means to honor God, respect others, tell the truth, be thankful, and have self-control. As we move on into the upcoming months things such as being kind, obeying rules, forgiveness, being responsible and patient, loving one another, sharing, and saying I'm sorry will be other concepts we will be looking into.

It has been exciting to work through some of these basic characteristics we want to exemplify in our daily lives. As one of the teachers, it has been a challenge to take these big idea concepts and bring them down to a level where the littlest of the kiddos can take something away from each lesson.

Last week I had the challenge of teaching the 3, 4, & 5 year-olds what it meant to have self-control. I started out the lesson with 2 examples...birthday candles and presents. I went on to tell them stories of my dad's 60th birthday party we had had just nights before. We lit his candles and started singing, only to have multiple kids blowing out his candles before it was time, leaving him sitting with no candles to blow out himself. The looks on their faces when asked how that would make them feel if it happened to them was priceless. They all yelled and talked at the same time, saying they wouldn't have liked that and they should have waited. Then, we got to the second example, where I described Christmas time and being given my presents, only to have the wrapping paper ripped off before I even had a chance to open it myself. Again, the huge eyes of shock that I witnessed when asking them how they would have felt made the lesson that much more memorable for me. They needed those examples to make the concepts more real for them. They saw how

some people in the stories used self control and others did not. We then looked at Jesus and how he showed self-control when being arrested. They could then see how he was the perfect example of self-control. We talked about examples in our lives and how we need to act, using Jesus as our guide.

These concepts from the lessons are not just meant for kids, but something we all want to exemplify as Christians. Having Jesus and the Bible as a guide for us...what could be better? As we take these next few months to challenge the kids to lead a life of Christian character, I challenge each one of you as well to take some of these concepts listed above and reflect on how you're doing with them. Have discussions with your kids. They want to hear how you are challenged as well and how you go continue to grow in your faith and character.

Youth Ministry Celebrations

By Jessa Ter Beest

- Elsie Levey (8th grade) and Grant Braskamp (7th grade) both made the decision to give their lives to Christ during January!
- Middle School Students that hit their goal of 10 times of Bible Reading this semester: Rylan Bruins, Ashlan Bruins, Blayne Kloosterboer, Lucas Bresser, Leah Buwalda, Stella

Harmsen, Hannah Derksen, Elsie Levey, Sawyer Bruins, Winton Glewen, Lily DeVries, and Oliver Glewen. They have all earned a snow tubing trip at Sunburst in February! If you'd like to sponsor a student's trip, each ticket costs \$15. Checks can be written to Alto Reformed Church and put in the Youth Director Mailbox.

- Our High School students have been more active in their Bibles, Devotions, and Bible Apps during the Fall semester than ever before!
- A handful of our high school students are meeting outside of church and youth group time to do RightNow Media video studies ON THEIR OWN! Discipleship among peers is such a great win!
- Another small group of high school students have been meeting on Monday nights to learn how to articulate the story of the Bible and how to share the gospel in a more natural way with their peers.

Women's Ministry Update

By Tiffany Arndt

Many great events and donations completed in 2019, and now onto 2020 to do the same! We have an amazing group of women who have a mission to keep these events/organizations Christ-centered and that the salvation plan is shared with the women

at the ARC and the spiritual growth is encouraged.

December wrap up - We had a huge success by giving a Waupun family through the food pantry a Christmas to remember.

What's to come? Stephanie VanWyk will be continuing the Bible study, "The Gospel of Mark" by Frances Chan. This will start up Tuesday, February 25th at 6:30pm with 6 sessions. Contact Stephanie to join, or just show up!

Adrea and Lynnae plan to do a few nursery updates with the organization. We look forward to this much needed system.

Stay tuned for this year's Spring Event!

Golden Lifers Update

By Julie Medema

February is Valentine's month, or could be called the "love month". We give our sweetheart cards, flowers, candy, hugs. What God gave us is so much more!

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

That's real love, not a Valentine's Day kind of love - God's love is unbelievable,

unfathomable, unconditional, and beautiful!

Our Heidelberg Catechism asks, "What is your only comfort in life and in death?" Here's the beautiful answer:

"That I am not my own, but belong - body and soul, in life and in death - to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to Him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him."

Love never fails! Our bodies fail, insurance systems fail, doctors fail, treatment plans fail, friends fail. I fail. Love, God's love, never fails!

There are so many hymns which sing of God's love. Some time, when you're feeling alone, neglected, unloved, take a hymnal and read some of the songs that speak of His love. It will refresh your soul and make you love Him more.

With all my heart, Lord, thank you for love. Just as you love me, Lord, help me to

love others. Thank you for Your continued unbelievable, unfathomable, unconditional, Your beautiful gift of love!

MESSAGES

Many thanks for your recent donations of \$500 and \$1500. We truly appreciate the generosity of people like you. Your help enables us to help those in our community who are struggling to make ends meet.
-Waupun Area Food Pantry

Thank you for your recent donation to REACH! We are blessed to have your faithful support allowing us to continue our work in the community!
-REACH board

Acts 2 Crew-

Thank you for thinking of REACH and blessing our organization with your recent donation! As always, we appreciate the support that allows us to continue serving our community's youth!
-Ellie Tenpas

The Kaylee Van Buren family would like to thank your church family who prayed for our five year old, Kaylee, during her recent brain surgery on December 10, 2019. We are so grateful for all the kind words, phone calls, and prayers that were extended on behalf of your church. God has been so good as

Kaylee is recovering and doing very well. We are thankful to God that we have seen her regain strength and is now pain free. We want to thank your prayer chain for the love and support you showed our families during this difficult time. We truly feel blessed.

Sincerely,

Matthew & Paula, Lydia, Timothy, Kaylee, & Kinley Van Buren

Jared & Andrea & Everly Van Buren

Sam & Melissa Phelps

Ronald & Pat Van Buren

Thank you so much for allowing Marty & Lora to come and represent Alto Reformed at CCCD again this year. They have blessed both our family and the ministry immensely. Together, they were able to redo much of the wiring for our building modification as well as work on a number of other miscellaneous projects. As a family, we really enjoyed having them stay with us in our home - more as extended family than as guests.

I also want to say thank you to everyone at the church for the overwhelming generosity you have shown us in sending funds to cover costs of materials, maintenance and repair issues. The \$7,354.00 has already helped to meet a number of needs and will continue to be a blessing for months to come as I know that there will continue to be expenses that arise (primarily in the building that is being modified to house future LIFE teams) that are outside of our normal budget and would not

otherwise be able to be finished.

Finally, thank you for allowing Jessa and the young adults to come and serve with us earlier this month. It is always great to be able to host a team from one of our supporting churches, but to be able to start the year in that manner just feels extra special. Our family has been able to establish some wonderful relationships with members from Alto, and we hope and trust that those relationships will continue to grow and that we will have opportunity to begin even more in the future.

Peace & grace-

Christopher Briggs

EVENTS



Ash Wednesday Service - February 27 at 7pm

NEWS

Births

1/14/20 - Gentry Owen, son of Chris & Kerry Quade

The Hospitality Team is excited to have the

new coffee brewer installed! Thanks to the deacons for helping get this set-up.

