



1st Quarter of 2024



FWC Family Connection

Building Up

“So, then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (Rom 14:19 NASB).

Of Cruise Ships and Aircraft Carriers

My Calling as a Christian is to get to heaven with as many people as possible (I believe that is everyone's calling). My calling as a Pastor is to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we reach unity in the faith..." to shepherd the flock God has placed under my care while continuing to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. To that end I teach and preach the Truth to the best of my ability while leaning heavily on God's grace and mercy. And, I believe we should, and are, to be sharing our faith as a part of His Church with anyone we can!

We, as we work our way thru James, have been looking at “Being a Christian” in our Sunday morning services. As Christian we are to be obedient to the Word of Christ, God's Word, The Bible. As we have seen; we are to be faithful when we meet trials of various kinds, knowing that the testing of our faith produces steadfastness. And we are to let, or allow, steadfastness to have its full effect, that we may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (James 1:3-4).

Being a Christian requires us to remain steadfast and faithful and in being those things we must also fulfill our part in the Great Commission. The Great commission, commands us as Christians, to go out into the World and make disciples, we are to disciple people **to** Christ, to led them to Him: and then it is up to them to follow Him or go their own way.

I Would invite you *all* to join me in fulfilling our calling as a congregation to the communities we are living in. *To Move Up* in our relationship with God and one another and to *Move Out* into our communities as witness of the Gospel and the goodness of God. We do this as individual parts of the body of Christ and as a congregation of God's Church. Each of us is to be involved with, and as a part of, a/this congregation. As a Believer you are a part of the body of Christ. You receive the Grace you need to fulfill your calling/mission as a part of His Church. (see 1 Cor 12:12-13)

We as a part of the body need to understand that the enemy will come against us, that disagreements will come, that we are different from one another, and yet we called to be one body. It is together that we can overcome all those things as we walk in obedience to His Word and build our relationships with God and one another. This is true not only amongst ourselves, but also between the different congregations, fellowships, and traditions of our Faith. We will just have to agree to disagree on the peripherals and move forward practicing the one anothers Of God's Word. Look at it this way; Souls hang in the balance, while we refuse to do or be a part of a local congregation of God's Church or with the rest of the Church. Sitting in a pew on Sunday does not make you a part of what we are supposed to be doing. And each of us is going to be held accountable for what we did and also for what we didn't do. (James 4:17, James 2:10, Hebrews 10:24-25, Romans 14:12, Matthew 12:36)

Let me give you an analogy: Did you know that 3 the biggest types of ships are oil tankers, cargo ships, and Cruise ships—in that order, with Aircraft carriers coming in as the fourth? Each type of ship has a specific mission. To carry oil or cargo, or to entertain and keep happy those individuals who are on vacation. Or as an Aircraft Carrier, to carry

out a mission to protect and serve while also sending others out to do the same. And as I said some cruise ships are much bigger than Aircraft carriers.

The analogy of a cruise ship fits a lot of congregations today. Many are along for the ride, relaxing while others are working to keep the ship afloat, on course, and also serving those that come there to be entertained. You see them; huge and full of people that are there to be entertained and served. The cruise ship analogy works fine if that is their purpose (To entertain – keep amused and distracted – and serve others) until there are more to be served than there are servers. But we are not here to be served. Jesus said “*As the father sent me so I send you*” (John 20:21) He also said “*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*” (Matthew 10:45, see also Matt 20:28)

God’s Church is not a cruise ship; we are supposed to be more along the lines of an Aircraft carrier. Each and every person on an aircraft carrier has a position to fill, a place where they serve to fulfill the mission, which is to send aircraft out into the surrounding area to help, protect, and rescue. It is always an “all-hands-on deck” situation. When sailors don’t do their part on an aircraft carrier the whole ship suffers and the mission is not fulfilled and people perish. (Think eternal damnation, and Hell fire)

It is the same within and for the local congregation of God’s Church. We are in a battle and the enemy is coming after us hard. Fill the ship with water (the world) and we sink, take out a few of the “sailors” and weaken the mission, take out a few more, and the mission is impossible to accomplish, take out a few more and we are dead in the water; and then the current of the world pushes and pulls it where it wants. And there are many congregations that are “dead in the water”; small and large ones that are not fulfilling their mission; stagnant, not growing; no longer trying to fulfill the mission just trying to stay “afloat” while taking on water. And then there are the Cruise Ships, both big and small, that seem to be accomplishing the mission, but are entertaining the masses, baby sitting, and not accomplishing the mission.

I do not want either of those things for us, but it takes all of us together, pulling together and putting aside our differences to fulfill the mission all the. Are you willing to work alongside someone you find offensive, the spiritually immature, those with an attitude, someone who thinks differently than you, has different taste in music, different beliefs, or is hurting? You, and that person, are not perfect, none of us are, but **together** we are being perfected, **together** we are *Moving Up* and growing, and **together** we can *Move Out* to accomplish our God given purpose! But we must remain true to the faith, growing, maturing, and gaining knowledge.

A few years ago, I attended a church down in Ohio, on their wall was the attendance for service and for their Sunday morning discipleship classes (Sunday School.) To this day I am amazed at those numbers. 146 for service, 142 for Classes... They were growing together, seeking God together, being disciples, and making disciples together as a congregation of His Church, they were fulfilling their mission, providing a base of operation, a place of learning, a place growth, as together, they were moving out into their communities and at the same time welcoming of those **not** like them who were coming to their services.

Where is it that you see us? Are you doing your part, in fulfilling your calling within the mission of the Church? Active with the congregation and within the community as a Christian? Our mission is to Make disciples (Matthew 28:19) as Jesus said in John 20:21 “*As the Father sent Me so I send you.*” As a believer and a part of His Church you are Sent. We are to be on mission and that mission cannot be accomplished without You doing your part! Is it easy? No! The mission requires sacrifice. But when we are of one mind, focused on the mission, *Moving Up* and *Moving Out* together, setting aside our agendas, our wants – ourselves, we overcome the obstacles the enemy hurls at us. We fulfill the mission, the purpose, that God has called us to.

If you are looking to be a part of what we are doing to Grow, to be *Moving Up* in your relationship with God and with others while also *Moving Out* into our communities then please let me know! It is up to you to fulfill your purpose as a Christian and a believer who is a part of the body of Christ! Don’t think someone else can do your part, the congregation along with God’s Church suffers without you.

As an individual your calling is different than mine, but we are all called to be a part of a local congregation of His Church. Each of us is gifted for the common good (1 Cor 12:7). Each of us has a place and is to be a part of God's Church right where He has placed you; where He want you to be (1 Cor 12:18). And the Church has a Mission! How each congregation fulfills that mission may differ, but we are all called to make disciples while being disciples, to be ministers of reconciliation, ambassadors for Christ! (See Matt 28:19-20, 2 Cor 5:11-6:2). It is time to Move up! To Be what you were created to be and to do what you were created to do as a part of His Church! Don't let the enemy get you or keep you down! *Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world* (1 Peter 5:9). Don't let the trails, tribulations, and temptations of life keep you from being a part of God's Church. Stay steadfast and joyful!

2 Corinthians 6:1-2; *"Working together with Him, ("As God's co-workers" NIV)) then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."*

After Thoughts: What happens to sailors/soldiers who don't do their part? What did Jesus say in John 15:1-17 and Matthew 7:15-27? What eventually happens to a ship that is "Dead in the water"?

Shalom

PK

But if we are the body
Why aren't his arms reaching?
Why aren't his hands healing?
Why aren't his words teaching?

And if we are the body
Why aren't his feet going?
Why is his love not showing them
There is a way, there is a way

From "If we are the body" by Casting Crowns

Update:

In the last quarters Newsletter, I told you we would be starting another round of classes to cover or explore Grace, The Kingdom, Spiritual Gifts, Discipleship, and Christian Eschatology. My apologies as I didn't realize that we would be doing Experiencing God during the same time. So, look forward to those classes in September!

Governance Board

Traci Spring

Since our last newsletter update, the board has met four times in 2024. We start each meeting with a devotional led by Kenny and prayer. He asked that we read the book *Relationships 101* by John C. Maxwell.

We are so happy that Laurene Sharkey is now a member of the governing board! She has an accounting background that is very valuable to us along with her servant's heart.

I'm thrilled with the number of people that:

- Went to the 360 Conference in March

- Are taking *Experiencing God*
- Volunteered to help pull off our very first Easter Egg Hunt!

Kenny talks about all the “one anothers” in the Bible and we are doing it together!

A few of you have asked for a list of who’s responsible for different areas in the church. Here’s an initial list of areas and names. If you see gaps, contact someone on the board.

Spring Cleanup	Jessica Rutz	Adult Ministries	Pastor Kenny
Fall Cleanup	Jessica Rutz	Childrens Ministries	Bonnie Beeman
Lawn and snow removal	Vern Buchbinder	Cleaning Supplies	Jan Sorenson
General Supplies	Brock Tousley	Building Reservations	Brock Tousley
Kitchen and Potlucks	Linda Lape	Meal Coordinator	Jessica Rutz
Missions	Dawn Buchbinder	Church History	Dawn Buchbinder
Visitation	Pastor Kenny and Care Team	IT and Technology	Brock Tousley
Landscaping	Renelle Brickner	Greeting	Mark Carmoney

Academy of Servant Leadership

Jan Sorenson, Laurene Sharkey, Bonnie Beeman, Brock Tousley and Pastor Kenny attended the Academy of Servant Leadership webinar on February 3rd. The subject was “*Managing Expectations*” and it discussed the expectations we have of the pastor, leaders, and each other. We have more work to do here and will spend time discussing expectations at future board meetings.

Stewardship

Each week, we hear Steve Rutz share God’s word on stewardship. And the Governance Board wants to be good stewards of what God has provided. We recently met with a couple investment advisors to see if we could safely earn more returns on the money in our Building Fund. We selected an investment advisor from Edward Jones who is a former pastor. He has a passion for churches and non-profits.

As our existing CDs come to maturity, we will evaluate who has a better rate: our existing bank or Edward Jones.

Kudos:

- We are proud of Nathan Rutz for attending the Youth Servant Leadership classes!
- Thank you to Jessican for giving the Sanctuary a fresh coat of paint. Thanks to Vern for putting up a new chair rail on the back wall of the sanctuary. This will help prevent the newly painted back wall from getting scraped up when we set up the tables.
- Bonnie for organizing and leading our 1st Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Thanks to all the volunteers – we could not have done this without you!
- Thanks to all our other volunteers! We need each of you!

Finances

For the first quarter of 2024, here's the financial results:

Actual Spending	Total Income	Gap
\$35,816.02	\$26,295.21	\$9,520.90

1st Quarter Budget Highlights:

- Giving is down from what was in the budget for this year
- Per the approved budget, we expected to have a gap of about \$5,400 at this point
- A new camera was purchased for livestreaming. This was an approved budget item.
- The Easter Egg Hunt required funds. This was an approved budget item as part of Outreach.
- Snowplowing was less than budgeted.
- Fees for those that attended the 360 conference – this was an approved budget item.

JR. Church and Preschool

Bonnie Beeman

Children's Ministry

What makes a children's ministry awesome? Our amazing volunteers! Each week you'll find our volunteers serving our families by providing a safe, loving environment for our kids to learn about Jesus. Here's what's been happening this quarter.

Nursery

In our nursery, our toddlers are getting to know our wonderful volunteers. A quick peek into the nursery on a Sunday morning will bring a smile to your face as you see the fun that is being had by all. You might witness the building of an epic block tower or a floor mat tent. You will be drawn into the story being read in a comfy chair.

The laughter is contagious and the baby snuggles are the best! Even better, our mothers have been able to enjoy a sermon or two!

I'd like to invite YOU to become a part of our nursery team. We have two openings that need to be filled. We need a volunteer to serve the second Sunday of every month. We also need a volunteer for the 5th Sunday of September and December. If you are interested in more information about these serving opportunities, please see Bonnie Beeman.

Preschool

Each month in our preschool class we focus on one of three basic truths- God made me, God loves me, and Jesus wants to be my friend forever. We use one of the nine core insights to look at how our Bible story relates to us. In January we learned that Jesus teaches us important things. Our

preschoolers are learning a lot of important things. But learning important things doesn't stop after preschool. It never stops! That's why we want to make sure preschoolers know that they have the BEST Teacher teaching them important things—the MOST important things—for the rest of their lives. And He wants to be their friend forever! Yes, it's Jesus!

February's food truck theme used our core insight of compassion to teach us that just like each food truck has different types of food, people come in all kinds of flavors too! Next time you see a row of food trucks look around at all the people in line. Take time to thank Jesus because Jesus loves everyone. Jesus loves the sour as well as the sweet; the spicy as well as the mild; the simple as well as the complicated; your favorites and your not-so-favorites. Jesus loves everyone!

In March we learned that Jesus wants everyone everywhere to follow Him and be His friend forever. Using a team theme, we learned it doesn't matter what we can or can't do, what we have done, what we look like, or where we live, Jesus is alive and He wants to be our friend...forever! And that kind of Good News makes us all want to say, "GO TEAM!"

Jr. Church

Our Jr. Church class continues to learn new memory verses and grow in understanding of God's character as seen through the God's Big Story. Each month we focus on a different God view and core insight. In January we saw the connection between responsibility and God's character. In Psalm 24: 1, David wrote, "The earth belongs to the Lord. And so does everything in it." (NIRV) God is the author of creation and God has entrusted us to care for and cultivate the world we see around us. We do that by taking responsibility. When we act responsibly, we reflect God's character and can point others to Jesus, the One who took the ultimate responsibility for us and made it possible for us to be with God forever.

In February's view, we saw the connection between kindness and God's character. God showed kindness to us by sending Jesus for us- even when we didn't deserve it. Because of God's love for us we can be kind to everyone. Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit. When we show kindness to others we give them a glimpse into the heart of God, and how much God loves them. Kindness should be a characteristic of people who follow Jesus.

Our view in March showed the connection between peace and God's character. Throughout Scripture, we can see how peace is something near to God's heart. Even though people chose to break their relationship with God, God made a way to fix that relationship through Jesus. And because we reflect God's image, making peace with others should be a priority for us as well.

In the coming months we will continue to study God's Big Story to learn more about God's character and how we are to adjust our lives to live for Him.
Easter Outreach

On March 23rd, we held our 1st Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt, aka our Easter Outreach event. Our many weeks of planning materialized into a wonderfully fun, action-packed day! Many thanks to all who helped to make this event possible.

Our church family, with a little help from businesses in the community, donated enough candy to fill all 2500 eggs. The Chelsea Retirement Center also donated 500 filled eggs for us to hide. Our church family donated \$180 to help supplement our budget to pay for the snacks and drinks, the rental of the

building and playground at Faholo, the signage, and eggs we filled. In addition to candy donations, we received three gift certificates from Marcos Pizza for free large pizzas. Those were given away as prizes for those who found golden eggs.

Using the Churchteams software, we were able to quickly and easily register each family, monitor the registration of the children, and divide them into 3 similar sized groups for the egg hunt.

The building became a huge blessing, as we gathered after the hunt to transfer our candy from our eggs to our buckets or bags and warm up from the cold weather. We had totes available to collect the empty eggs to use again next year.

We had 30 families join us for the event with 50 kids participating in the Easter egg hunt. All in all, it was a great day and a huge success!

DAY OF HOPE AND FRESH FOOD

Jan Otto/Laurene Sharkey

Hope Ministries provides 2 different services on the 3rd Monday of each month.

Within the church building the program is to meet the everyday needs of those who struggle with the purchase of items that the individuals are not allowed to purchase on their EBT cards, or they simply can't afford them. Once the individual comes into the building, we have someone sit down and talk with them and we offer prayer if they want it. Many do share trials and tribulations they may be experiencing in their lives. We serve around 25-30 families on an average. We offer 14 different items of their choosing.

Outside the church building the program distributes boxes of food provided by the South Michigan Food Bank to nearly 75 families. Almost every month we also receive bakery items and occasionally milk. This year we have had lots of apples, oranges, nuts, potatoes, beans and occasionally grapefruit, cheese and cottage cheese. We've been told that we will have more fresh produce this summer than we had last year.

Hope Ministries is funded by a grant from the Coppernail.

We are always looking for additional help, so please come out and join us on the 3rd Monday. Distribution is to begin at 2pm so we ask that help arrive by 1:45.

Thank you!

Missionary Minutiae

Dawn Buchbinder

From Lisa and Moses Ndjomou in Togo, Africa:

Hello, friends!

The school of biblical studies is going well and we have 12 students right now. We almost had only 4 students 2 weeks ago because most of them couldn't pay their school fees but God provided for them to continue for a few more weeks and then we will look to Him to provide again. Pray for provision for the students and also for

the Word to be not just understood with their minds but also their hearts. We love watching what God is doing in their lives.

Healthwise our family has had the usual challenges and a few new ones but God is helping us through it all. Pray for protection.

I started taking care of a boy's wound from the secondary school we have and now I have a second boy whose wound I am treating. Both boys have given their lives to the Lord this last week as we have been sharing the good news of Jesus with them! Now we pray for chances to disciple them in their faith and relationship with God. Boris, the first boy, has had his wound for 4 years. He was visiting the witch doctor every three days to have his bandage changed before I offered for him to come to me instead. His wound is mostly healed now with a small amount still needing skin. Please pray for his healing and for any grip witchcraft has had on his life to be broken as he is now a child of God.

Pray for things to move forward with building the schools as we are running low on time but ironically waiting for the government's approval to start building.

We have suffered a lot of loss and grief as a base and as YWAM Africa this last month. A bus accident killed 11 YWAMers at a conference in Tanzania, most of them from Africa, and most of them we know and have worked with. Now someone who used to be a part of our base who is somewhat newly married just lost their first baby right after it was born due to medical negligence. Our hearts feel heavy these days, yet the Lord is carrying us.

Thank you for praying for us and laboring with us to see His kingdom come!
Lisa and Moses Ndjomou

From Drew and Christine VanTiem in Scotland:

Christine is deeply passionate about seeing Third Culture Kid (TCK) families thrive and succeed. In her role with New International (NI), she gets the privilege of leading a team of NI staff to provide support and care to NI parents and children to navigate the complexities of cross-cultural living in childhood.

This team of 7 (including Christine) has been building over the last couple of years and they recently got together in person for the first time. They had a few days together to get to know each other better, to build trust and a strong sense of team, to hone their vision, and to map out the work ahead of them as they seek to build a robust system of support and care for NI's families.

This was a crucial week for them and for the future care of TCK families within NI! Please pray for them!

Please also continue to pray for Christine's health and for the church in Edinburgh.

Blessings,
Drew and Christine

Children of Promise

Please continue to prayerfully consider sponsoring a child through Church of God's Children of Promise. A representative from CoP will be visiting sometime this year and many children still need sponsorship.

ONLINE PRESENCE

We have been doing our best to be out on the world wide web for everyone. FWC has lots of ways to stay connected.

Facebook- www.facebook.com/GrassLakeFWC

We have a Facebook Group as well [Grass Lake Family Worship Center Prayer and Announcements](#)

YouTube- Grass Lake FWC

Website- www.grasslakefwc.Org

Email- A weekly email is sent out to everyone in our directory on Thursday's. Check your Inboxes and Spam folders for it, if you're not, please let Brock know so we can get that worked out.

You of course are always welcome to visit 1901 Mt. Hope Rd, Grass Lake MI 49202 Sunday Mornings at 10am to see us live and in person.

Upcoming Events:

· April 15, Monday

· Day of Hope/ Fresh Food, 2pm, FWC

· April 16, Tuesday

· Prayer Meeting, 6:30pm, FWC

· Buchbinder small group, their home 6-8pm every other week, news members always welcome

· April 19, Friday

· Romans Bible Study, 6pm, FWC

· April 20, Saturday

· Church cleanup day, 10am, FWC

· April, 28 , Sunday

· Seder Dinner, 10am, FWC

· May 2, Thursday

· National Day of Prayer, 7pm, Pavilion downtown Grass Lake

· May 11, Saturday

· FWC Car Wash, 12pm-4pm

· Ladies Breakfast , 9am, FWC

· June 4, Tuesday

• Pastor Kenny will be leading the Prayer with specific topics, 6:30pm, FWC.

We would love to have as many as possible here.