

This Summer - Keep Your Soul Refreshed!

Leaving the house for the office, I stood in our driveway and surveyed the lawn. It's brown ... very brown. According to the Weather Channel, this is one of the driest starts to summer in 15 years for our region. This dry spell is not only turning lawns brown, but it's also stunting gardens and inflaming allergies! The last time I checked, no end in sight! We are living in a "dry and thirsty land!"

This reminds me of the spiritual drought we all experience, at one time or another. Like a weather pattern that keeps the temperatures up and the moisture, down - It's not that we desire the dryness – it sneaks up on us and leaves us in a lurch! We don't want it. Nevertheless, we are plagued with a spiritual drought, and that dryness threatens our walk with Christ. What to do?

- First, we assess our relationship with Jesus Christ. Are we putting Him first in all that we do? Are we sharing our love for the Savior and living a life that speaks Christianity? Are we reading God's Word; attending worship and meeting on a regular basis with our Christian family; praying and singing praise to The Lord? If we discover, there is something standing between Jesus and me, we need to act accordingly.
- Second, we remind ourselves that "*this too shall pass.*" The tendency is that when we find ourselves "trapped" in a desert-like event, we think it will last indefinitely. I can't begin to count the number of times I've whispered: "*this too shall pass*" ... my comforting reminder that with Jesus, I can weather life's drought (or storm). With Jesus, the adversity will pass, and you will once again enjoy showers of blessings!
- Third, we pray. We pray even though we don't feel like it. We pray even if it feels like God is a million miles away. We pray when it seems like our words are hitting a ceiling and bouncing back to challenge our faith. Prayer is our lifeline to God. It's the one thing we can do – we communicate with our Creator and let him know that we are dry and thirsty! He understands.

In Psalm 63 King David is going through a "drought" in his life. He is somewhere in the wilderness of Judah and in desperate need of a thirst-quenching moment. And so he prays:

"O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water."

Rather than succumbing to the drought and perishing, King David boldly proclaims:

"Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips."

It's easy to pray and praise God when things are going well. It's when I'm in the midst of a spiritual drought that you must keep on keeping on! Don't lose the spiritual battle. Your grass may be brown ... but you can keep your soul refreshed and be spiritually quenched!

Have a safe and blessed summer!

Pastor Bill

Messages from the Diaconate

Singing Sermon Sunday – July 17:

Join us on Sunday, July 17 for a special worship service. It will be like our regular service except instead of Rev. Kren delivering his sermon, the congregation will be singing it! We will fill the time normally allotted for the sermon with our favorite hymns. All you have to do is fill out the enclosed form and put it in the offering plate or mail it to the church. We welcome those of you who might like to perform your favorite as a vocal or instrumental solo or duet. This is your opportunity to select the hymns(s) that we may not do very often. We hope to have a nice selection for all of us to sing and will do our best to use all your requests. So plan to be with us for this very special Singing Sermon Sunday.

Volunteers for Sundays in July:

Your help is always needed on Sunday mornings. Don't wait to be asked. Please see Cheryl Brown and let her know when you can serve as usher, liturgist, or fellowship host or just add your name to the sign-up sheet in the Mayflower Room. Thank you for your support! Your Diaconate appreciates it.

Thank you!

Thank you for your contributions to the Strengthen the Church offering that we had in May. We collected \$220.

Detroit Area Churches Tour: On Friday, July 8, we embark on our 5th annual tour of churches. This year, we're heading to Oakland County rather than Detroit for two 1-hour tours of two exquisite

churches: Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church in Bloomfield Hills and National Shrine of the Little Flower Catholic Church in Royal Oak. We will meet as a group in the parking lot of our church at 9 am on Friday, the 8th.

You may carpool with another driver or drive on your own as we head to our first destination. The Kirk in the Hills tour starts at 10am and the second tour is at 11:30am. If you wish to donate to the churches on our tour, it is entirely up to you how much to give. Afterwards, we will eat lunch at O'Mara's Restaurant on 12 Mile Rd. in Berkley. If interested in going, please add your name and the number in your party on a sign-up sheet in the church or e-mail John Peters at joopett13@hotmail.com. We hope you'll join us!



Treasurer's Report for May 2016

Income- \$6,166.00

Expenses- \$9,791.01

Capital Improvement Fund - \$ 13,049.45

Investments with UBS valued at \$184,417.01

Matthew Haling, Treasurer

OUR CHURCH AT WORK In JULY



Helpers for Sunday Services

Greeters:

July 3 – Ian Haas
July 10 – Ian Haas
July 17 – Ian Haas
July 24 – Ian Haas
July 31 – Ian Haas

Ushers:

July 3 – Tom Brown & Jay Carter
July 10 – Available
July 17 – Available
July 24 – Available
July 31 – Available

Liturgists:

July 3 – Irene Moxon
July 10 – Available
July 17 – Available
July 24 – Available
July 31 – Available

JULY BIRTHDAYS

1 Teresa Munson
4 Elaine Stacho
7 Valerie Haas
10 Connie Kruper
11 Betty Mawhinney
24 Colleen Grozdanoff
25 Brian Sampson
31 Irene Moxon

Dedication of Flowers - July

July 3 – The Schilbe Family
July 10 – Sue MacKenzie
July 17 – Teresa Curless
July 24 – Available
July 31 – Available

Fellowship Hour – July

July 3 – Available
July 10 – Available
July 17 – Available
July 24 – Available
July 31 – Available

PRAYER LIST



Bernice Hartling	Medical Concerns
Shirley Fedraw	Medical Concerns
Geri Sampson	Medical Concerns
Suzanne Van Ranst	Medical Concerns
Dotty Klein	Medical Concerns
R. Ferguson Family	Healing, spiritual guidance
Gordon Grozdanoff	Medical Concerns
Arline Prois	Medical Concerns
Pauline Gourlay	Medical Concerns
Colleen Grozdanoff	Medical Concerns
Annika Koch	Medical Concerns
John Langley	Medical Concerns
Kathy Gideon	Medical Concerns
Cathy MacKenzie	Medical Concerns
Family of Rick Stacho	Bereavement

Dates to Remember:

July 8	Churches Tour and Lunch
July 13	Trustees Meeting 7pm
July 14	Diaconate Meeting 7pm
July 17	Singing Sermon Sunday

I'M JUST SAYIN' ...

...with Pat Stacho

LOSS....I looked that up in the dictionary. Loss /failure to keep....money spent that is more than earned....failure to win, obtain or utilize. That's it. Nowhere did I find words to define "the loss of a child."

I lost a child, in the early morning of July 21st. The pain is also not possible to define. The helplessness, the feeling of failure; mothers are supposed to be able to fix everything. Not this time.

My oldest son, Richard William Stacho, was born on September 12, 1965. He was premature, weighed just 2 pounds, 3 ounces. Just as he left this earth too early, he arrived on this earth too early. At 12 hours old, he was given last rites by the hospital chaplain. But my Rick was a fighter. He defied the odds and he made it.

They said he may be blind...nope! Rick had perfect beautiful blue eyes. He saw the goodness in people, the importance of good work ethic, humor when there should've been screaming, and the joy of bring a parent, a grandfather.

Doctors warned me he may be 'slow' That kid was reading before he went to kindergarten. There were times, throughout his life, when I worried about his health. He had pneumonia 12 times by the time he was 10. He had skin cancer when he was 11, And on and on, but he made it, defying all odds. My son was a fighter!

Rick started having serious health issues about 12 years ago. He was on oxygen, wore a brace to help him walk, eventually having to use a wheelchair...actually a scooter, much cooler than a wheelchair. Especially if you are

a Harley rider. Rick had to sell his beloved bike several years ago. But I believe when he got his wings, they gave him Harley wings. The next time you hear thunder, that'll be Rick, rolling through heaven.

My son had a sense of humor, a sunny outlook, and was loved by many. The outpouring of memories posted on Facebook has been overwhelming. He touched so many lives. One person wrote how she remembered how Rick would stop to visit with her father, when he delivered his paper! She remembered him playing his harmonica for him. That was over 40 years ago, and she remembered his kindness to her dad. I cannot tell you the pride that instilled in my heart. I liked that kid; all moms love their kids...I do too, but I liked him.

As my son is laid to rest, there will be a full military service, a flyover from Moody air force base, and patriot guard, on motorcycles, will escort his remains to his final resting place.

Rick spent 20 years in the Air Force. Pretty good for a little 2 pounder!

Pete and I want to thank everyone for all their prayers, kind acts and love. Our prayers were answered, but not as we expected. I prayed he would be pain free...he is. I pray now for acceptance. I have faith my son is not a "loss" but is found, safe in the loving arms of my Lord. I love you Richard William Stacho, more. You will always live in my heart, always be my SONshine. Ride on...



SPECIAL FUNDRAISER FOR THE CHURCH PARKING LOT UPDATE

As most of you know, a large area of the parking lot is full of holes and needs repair. Removing bad asphalt and repaving the lot is our top priority, but the project isn't cheap. We need your help! Will you pitch in and help us reach our goal? From now thru August, we're collecting donations just for the parking lot. We hope you'll prayerfully consider a gift above and beyond your regular support of the church and let God speak through you. Please use the "Improvement Fund" envelopes in the pews and either donate in increments or one lump sum. Our goal is to raise \$10,000. Thus far, we've raised \$2,485 and we're tracking our progress on a chart in the sanctuary. The repair of the lot is expected to take place before the end of summer, in advance of the church Rummage Sale. Thank you for your contribution!



Book Club

The Book Club is currently reading *The Language of Flowers*, by Vanessa Diffenbaugh. Books are available in the church office.



Lennon Pregnancy Center

Dearborn Congregational Church is now partnering with the Lennon Pregnancy Center, 24275 Ann Arbor Trail, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127.

The Lennon Pregnancy Center is a non-profit organization that is offering parents of unborn children, enrichment, advice, education, material assistance, non-judgmental counseling and support during and after pregnancy. They feel an obligation to women who chose to continue their pregnancy and provide supportive services for up to five years following the birth of the baby. Their goal is to break the negative cycle that often is passed down from generation to generation and to assist women in becoming the best mothers they can be

The Center accepts gently used baby clothing, baby furniture and baby items, as well as, new items. All donations directly benefit the Lennon Pregnancy Center's clients. If you would like to make a donation directly to the Center, contact the Office at (313) 277-5637 if you have any baby clothing, cribs, bouncers, walkers, strollers or other baby items. The Center can also arrange pick-ups.

Astounding Freedom: A Reflection for Independence Day

By Mark D. Roberts

Independence Day. On this day, commonly called The Fourth of July, we Americans celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence. On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration, thus affirming the independence of the United States from Great Britain.

For over two hundred years, citizens of the U.S. have celebrated our independence on The Fourth of July. We fly the flag, put up red, white, and blue decorations, march in parades, and enjoy picnics. Throughout all of our celebrations, we are reminded of the gift of our freedom as a nation. Indeed, we are blessed in the United States with exceptional liberty, for which we ought to thank the Lord. Other countries around the world have similar national celebrations of freedom. July 1 is Canada Day. January 26 is Australia Day. September 16 is *Grito de Dolores* in Mexico.

Ephesians 3:12 celebrates another kind of freedom, a freedom that is even more amazing than the freedoms guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. This verse reads: "In [Christ] and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence." The Greek word translated here as "freedom" refers specifically to "freedom of speech" (*parresia*, with a literal meaning of "all speech"). The

word rendered as "approach" suggests one's authorization to draw near to a king. The Greek original of Ephesians 3:12 says that we can be confident in our "freedom of speech" and "authorization to approach" God.

Let me put this plainly. In Christ, you have the freedom to draw near to God, to tell God anything you wish, without holding back. You can express to God not only your joys but also your sorrows, not only your assurance but also your doubt, not only your pleasure but also your anger. This is an amazing freedom.

Of course it's a freedom that we Christians can easily take for granted, even as citizens of various countries can hold their political freedom too lightly. When we're used to praying to God at any time, in any place, with any words, we can forget the stunning nature of our access to God. Think about it. The God who created the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the God of all wisdom and justice, this God invites you to speak your mind, to share with him your thoughts, your feelings, your fears, and your dreams. The more you reflect on this invitation, the more you'll come to realize just how amazing it is.

So, if, like me, you're an American, by all means take time today to thank God for the freedom we have in this country. But, whether you live in the U.S. or not, I encourage you to step back and consider the freedom Christ has given you to approach God with deep confidence. Let's thank God together for this amazing freedom he has given us.