



new life news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST SEPTEMBER 2017

Steve Says . . .

That coming up this month we have some important happenings in our steps toward living out our mission statement: **Following Jesus, by loving God, loving people, and making disciples.** The first of these will be installing and ordaining four men in the role of elder. Elders have spiritual authority over the church and are given by God the task of shepherding (1 Peter 5:1-2) the church. Shepherding means being responsible for the spiritual welfare of the people and helping us to grow in our understanding of the truth and our obedience to God. It is a type of authority that works itself out in relationships and is expressed through life influence more than direct commands. Elders also carry responsibility for the doctrine of the church. (Titus 1:9) They need to be able to articulate what we believe and help others to learn to both teach the truth and live it out in daily lives. Doctrine is supremely important, because at a very basic level what we believe to be true will direct how we act and what we do. As a church we have a responsibility to these men; to listen to them, to follow them and to encourage them in what can at times be a most difficult task.

Also coming this month is the beginning of **Discipleship U**. This training is intended to help us as a church build the skills that are required to flesh out in our daily life the concept of loving God, loving people, and making disciples. The church has always been involved in teaching people the contents of the Bible and rightfully so as it is the Word of God. However, sometimes we focus too much on head knowledge and we neglect the training of life skills that go along with that knowledge. Discipleship U is intended to focus on those skills. It is more a hands on training than it is a class. It will focus on developing skills more than gaining more knowledge. Who should join Discipleship U? Everyone who is past High School. Men and Women are both welcome. You are not too old, nor are you too new in the faith. We named it **Discipleship U**, but really it is **Discipleship YOU**. Come and develop new skills in loving God, loving people, and making disciples!

Finally, I will be teaching this month on some foundational truths. We will be completing our series on Our Identity in Christ. This set of truths is key to our understanding of ourselves and where we fit into God's kingdom and in the world at large. Holding tightly to these truths will help us to navigate the maze of our culture in dealing with things like human sexuality, life purpose, life value, temptation to pride and jealousy, and on and on the list goes. I will be following up that teaching by looking at God's design for both the church and family. I am calling the series SPHERES because these are two key social spheres that God created. We will look at why they have the form and structure that they do and the roles within them. How the brokenness of sin affects them and what Christ did to redeem them.

So enjoy the fall weather, have fun at the fair, but make sure to invest in Jesus and his church this month!

September Church Calendar

- **September 6**
Comfort & Joy Sewing @ 9:00am
- **September 10**
Ordination Sunday
- **September 10, 17 & 24**
Sonshine Singers Practice @ 4:00pm
- **September 13 & 27**
Beveridge Discussion Group @7:00pm
- **September 17 & 24**
Discipleship U @ 10:00am
- **September 20**
Comfort & Joy Sewing @ 5:30pm
- **September 21**
Drama Meeting @ 7:00pm

The Battle of Idolatry

In his book entitled, "God's at War," Kyle Idleman shares an illustration about a man who is coughing constantly. His cough is so bad that it keeps the man up all night. Any conversation beyond that of two minutes is out of the question. Finally, the man goes to see a doctor about the unrelenting cough. Idleman goes on to say that the doctor runs tests and finds that the man has lung cancer. Knowing how tough this news would be to handle, the doctor does not tell the man about the cancer. Instead, he writes a prescription for some strong cough medicine and tells the man that he should be feeling better soon. The man is delighted to hear the prognosis. Sure enough, the man sleeps much better and the cough syrup seems to have solved the problem. Meanwhile the cancer is eating away at his body. People often point to the symptom believing that it is the actual problem, like the man in this story who thought that the problem was solved because his cough improved. You can imagine any number of issues where one might confuse the symptoms with the problem.

My wife, Mary, gave me tickets to see Pentatonix at the Ohio State Fair this last summer. Just us and a couple thousand of our closest friends found our seats in the arena and settled in for the show. As Pentatonix took the stage, everyone on the floor stood in front of us and blocked our view of the concert (insert short joke here). Undauntedly I watched the large screen and enjoyed hearing the music even if I could not see its source. What I could see were three young girls standing right in front of me. Being an avid people-watcher, I noticed that they seemed overly excited about each song before even a note was sung. They jumped, giggled, shouted, covered their mouths, and even came close to fainting a couple of times. They hung on every word and note as if they were written just for them. Please don't misunderstand me, I enjoy my music as well, but there was something different about these three girls and their zealous fandom. The encore song was sung by Avi Kaplan, the bass of the group, who is leaving Pentatonix after the current tour is over. I watched as the girls standing in front of me, full of life for over an hour, collapse under the weight of sadness. Once they were jumping energetically, but could now hardly find the strength to stand. They giggled and shouted with delight, but now tried to hold back the tears. They stood on their feet the whole time, but now held one another in support. To be fair, I cannot say for sure if these young girls were followers of Christ, but as I watched them throughout the night I realized that what I was seeing were the symptoms of idolatry.



Matthew 18:1-5

There are many false gods at war within each of us, and they battle for the place of glory and control in our lives. Idleman reminds us that what keeps us from truly following Jesus is that our hearts are pursuing something or someone else. We are all wired for worship and in fact, engage in worship continuously. The choice of whether or not to worship is not really a choice at all. The only true decision we have to make is whom or what we will worship. What do you sacrifice for? What makes you mad? What do you worry about? Whose applause do you long for? Questions like these help us to discover who or what is winning on the battlefield of our hearts. The real issue of idolatry is not so much about the little god sitting on the mantle of our heart as much as it is about the God we replaced with the idol.

The good news is that Christ is able to defeat the idols that battle for our hearts, minds, and lives. A true and authentic worship lifestyle draws us closer to God's love and strengthens our relationship with Christ. Worship helps us to align our lives to the truth of God's Word with the guidance of God's Spirit. When faced with the choice in worship, choose Jesus. Place your faith, hope, and love in Christ and respond with praise, surrender, and commitment. Make your relationship with the Lord and Savior a priority and guard against anyone or anything that would seek to distract you from it. Christ has won the war on idolatry and with Him we can win the battle. Fight on!

~Ryan



The changing of seasons always provides us with a reminder of the transitions in life. Seasons like Fall, when the change comes around so rapidly with change in temperature and color around us, provide the best opportunity to remember the standard ebb and flow of life. As the Teacher reminds us in Ecclesiastes: There is a time for everything; a season for every activity under heaven: A time to be born, a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot... a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance... a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away... (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2a, 4, 6) The universe God has made is not a static place. It changes with seasons, and in these changes God continues to work. It is His hand that is guiding it all to an end that He has appointed, and that end is a wonderful thing. We may have trouble grasping the big picture, but God wants us to be reminded that He is always in control and that: He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Ecclesiastes 3:11) There is always a bigger purpose and work that God is seeing through from beginning to end, and in its own time it is beautiful. This is true not only of the natural world around us and the normal transitory seasons of lives, but in our own spiritual growth as followers of Christ. In our Milestones Celebration in August we were reminded of the many seasons of life and how God is working in all those things. In the times of birth and death, planting and uprooting, weeping and laughing, He is God and He is working in us, setting the wonder of eternity with Him in our hearts. Sometimes life, depending on the situation, does not appear or feel beautiful. But in God's time everything will be made beautiful. We remember that there is Someone bigger involved in everything, One with a greater plan that will pull it all together in a way that we can't begin to understand yet. So when the seasons come and go, when the milestones come and go, there is God, always working, never changing, doing a miracle in our lives that conforms us into the image of His Son, and: ... [Everything God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing can be taken from it. God does this so that people will fear Him. (Ecclesiastes 3:14) We behold our God in reverent awe because when all around us cycles through seasons and milestones come and go, He and His work endure forever. We thank Him for the transitions, but thank Him more for remaining the same and for never departing from His work for our sake.

~Kyle

September Birthdays

- 1 – David Roseberry
- 2 – Sherry Noe
- 6 – Tom Carroll, Emily Leedy
- 8 – Michelle Fluty, Bob McConkie
- 10 – Pat Frontz
- 11 – Jacob Hamilton, Beverly Thompson
- 15 – Jessica Brown
- 16 – Anneliese Litt
- 17 – Rachel Maglott
- 19 – Stella Slone
- 20 – John Masters
- 22 – Scott Shaffer
- 23 – Morgan Armstrong
- 24 – Ben Starling, James Twedt,
- 25 – Mahala Brown, Brenda Johnson,
Steve Liming,
- 26 – Alec & Mason Armstrong
- 27 – Amber Litt
- 28 – Hunter Benick, Carolyn McGugin
- 30 – Cole Fletcher

Jason's Jam

The leaves are starting to change, there is a crisp in the air, football is on TV, it's beginning to look like fall. Time for sweaters, pumpkin flavored everything, and The Bellville Street Fair! As we start to get back into the routine of school, make sure to include the options we have for your kids here at New Life. Just a reminder of what we have, Nursery (1st service and Sunday School), toddlers (1st service and Sunday School), pre-school (1st service and Sunday School). We have K-1st, 2nd-3rd, and 4th-5th Sunday School classes. We have Jr church (K-3rd) during 1st service and a mixed age class 2nd Service. We also have a Sunday evening program (C.I.A) at 6 p.m. at the church. If you have any questions about anything we offer here at New Life, please see me! Enjoy fall and I look forward to seeing your kiddos around the church.