



new life *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST

JUNE 2019

Summer Reading: Hebrews

Recently my **son Drew and I took a 10 day bike touring trip together.** We carried all the stuff we needed on our bikes and rode all the way to the Atlantic Ocean. I spent the majority of that trip riding behind Drew. (Yes he is the stronger rider; and the younger rider; and in better shape; and . . . well you get the point) Anyway, because he was going first, he had the route on his phone and (for the most part) he kept us on our route. I just concentrated on following him. **All I had to do was make sure I kept my eyes on him and I knew I was going the right way. The problem was that I kept getting distracted.** I would be fiddling with something on my bike or trying to take a picture as we rode along and I would fall far behind and force Drew to slow down or stop altogether.

This reminded me of the passage in Hebrews that says, “. . . and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1b-2)

Our job as Christians is to “fix our eyes on Jesus” and then “run with perseverance.” That is what we are called to, but it is very easy for us to get distracted. We take our eyes off of Jesus for a second and the next thing you know we have gotten ourselves into a mess. We have lost contact with our guide and our direction in life. Usually we end up hurting others or ourselves through our failures. And it can all be so discouraging.

The book of Hebrews was written to a group of Christians who had lost sight of Jesus and their calling to follow Him. They were considering abandoning their faith to go back to what they knew and were comfortable with. They were discouraged and perhaps didn't see why things weren't going the way they thought they should. And they had stopped listening to His voice.

Many Christians today are discouraged and considering abandoning their faith to go back to a culture that seems comfortable.

Church Events

- June 12th
Sr. Moments Event
@ 12:00p
- June 19th
Comfort & Joy
Sewing @ 9:00am
- June 21st -30th
Diamond Willow
Mission Trip

The church to them seems to have lost its voice and its way. And so this is an especially meaningful time to examine the message of the book of Hebrews.

This summer we will do exactly that. **All summer I (Steve) will be preaching from Hebrews** and together we will learn what God has to say to those who are considering walking away. We will find new hope in Christ and we will rediscover our calling to fix our eyes on Jesus as we persevere in this life.

I will start June 9th and encourage all of you to join me in reading and studying Hebrews in preparation to hear from God. Read chapter 1 for the 9th and then continue to read each week in preparation for the next week's message. I will give you what to read each week in preparation for the week to come. Together we will be blessed and encouraged by God's word to us!

~Steve



Finally summer is here!

Don't look now, but it's June; hot summer days are upon us. **School is out, and it's time to celebrate dads.** Now, being a dad of four, it is easy to say, it's the greatest job and I could tell so many stories. But, this year, I thought it would be fun to share a story about my dad from my childhood. At the Sharp house, we had a whiffle ball field in the side yard we called Baby Jake (Jacob's Field). Every day after school and during the summer, epic games amongst the Sharp siblings, babysitting kids, and neighbors took place on that field. The strikeouts, the homers, the double plays made you feel like you belonged in the majors. These games were so much fun, especially when we got dad to join. Now, the garage served as the centerfield wall, and we decided one day to surprise dad and "decorate" the centerfield wall with the field name, and feet from home plate, and scoreboard with.....paint. I remember being so excited to show dad when he got home, but needless to say, we didn't get the reaction we thought we were going to get. I remember sitting on home plate watching for dad, and as we saw his little blue Festiva come down the road and then suddenly peel into drive and, I'm pretty sure, fly up it. Thinking back, I know he was mad and I know it wasn't a smart thing to do, but our aim was to please dad and we were pretty excited (until he got home). This is the same attitude I strive to have with my heavenly dad! I want to please him, honor him, worship him, and be with him. I want to be excited about doing things for him. I know I make and will make mistakes, but I know he will continue to love me through it all. He is a good good father!!!

~Jason

Round Lake's Mission

When I found out that Round Lake was the focus of a mission emphasis newsletter this month I thought I'd like to write a little about the camp also. My perspective comes as one who has spent a few weeks at the camp with students and have seen first-hand some of the wonderful opportunities that Round Lake's ministries provide for students, to have meaningful encounters with God, develop deeper friendships with other students and to have some time just to get away from all the distractions that life brings with it.

As far as meaningful encounters with God go, the weeks I have attended at Round Lake have put this at the top of their priority list. **Everything is designed to get students to take focus off of everything else and to see God at work in the world around them.** Even the next two things I will talk about (developing deeper relationships and getting away from the noise of the world) fall under the umbrella of experiencing life through God and being aware of His presence. Sure, there are times of just fun. But everything, even the fun things, are done in such a way to point back to the overarching theme of giving opportunities to encounter God in fresh ways. The worship is geared toward the younger mind. It speaks their language and engages them in a place where they are ready to see what God has to say. The speakers do the same. As do the times set apart for devotion and reflection. At the weeks I attended there were also electives ranging from hiking to bible classes to sports. All these activities, whether studying the scriptures specifically or using object lessons through sports, pointed back to the fact that God is present everywhere and that every occasion in life is a chance to be aware of His presence and to live in a way that focuses on and glorifies Him. The weeks I have attended have been for high school students. But I have spoken with kids from the younger ages and have a certainty that my experience in this area is the same regardless of age. It is the same because Round Lake makes it a priority and selects leaders who share this same priority. Round Lake is a great place for students to encounter God in contexts where they never may have thought to be looking for Him before.

Then there is the development of deeper relationships. This is two-fold. There is the enrichment or relationships already had. Youth group kids go together with kids from their own group and get to know them better. A stockpile of shared experiences are gathered together that bind a group closer together and help them to trust each other and to grab hold of something deeply important that seems to have faded to the background over the years: Christianity is meant to be experienced in community. It is richer that way. It is also more fun that way. A group that worships together, serves together, has shared experience together grows together. The other side of the coin is that these experiences spill over into relationships with kids outside of the youth group. Kids from other churches now are friends. There are shared experiences from years past and the feel of something bigger that all Christians, regardless of where they live, work and play, have in common. It feels almost like a family reunion and is a powerful reminder that God isn't restrained to our congregation. Our experiences are only a little piece of a much bigger picture. The reason that these things can happen, as was mentioned above, is because they are done under the greater umbrella of seeking God's presence. Campers are pushed to see God's presence everywhere, and they begin to see it in one another.

The last thing I'm going to talk about is how **Round Lake gives a chance for students to distance themselves from the constant, nagging, numbing noise of the world around them.** We have become a culture that feels it can't survive without background noise and electrical hums. We are distracted. It seems we are distracted because we choose to be because our distractions keep us from asking the questions that are difficult or frightening to ask: Is there a God and does He care about me? Why am I here? What happens when I die? Who is Jesus and how does He fit into these questions? These questions need to be asked, but they are usually drowned out in Netflix binging or social media updates. At Round Lake students walk away briefly from the greatest distractions. They are encouraged to encounter God so they can work through these questions. While I can't exactly say that the weeks of camp I have been to could be defined by their "quiet" space, these times of reflection and introspection are given. They worship times flow into these times where students can have quiet space to think and feel through what they are being challenged with. They are given space to "be still" and know that God is God.

Round Lake is a great place. It is a powerful ministry with wonderful people dedicated to glorify God by bringing students to places where they can encounter their Creator. It is a fun place. But it is **fun with a purpose.** Supporting Round Lake is supporting a ministry that reaches hundreds of kids in a year, thousands over the course of years. Our youth group has been blessed by the camp and it is encouraging to know that our congregation can return the blessing through our support.

ROUND LAKE CHRISTIAN CHURCH CAMP

Most of us know something about Round Lake Christian Camp. Based upon what you know, how would you describe it? Would you say:

- it has been around since **1949**?
- New Life Church of Christ is **one of roughly 172** supporting churches?
- that we have been supporting it for the better part of **six decades**?
- that campers and volunteers have contributed over **one million dollars to mission organizations** since 1949?
- that in each of the last six years, they have averaged **more than \$32,000** a year in missions giving?
- that **in 2018 alone**, RLCC had 2,071 campers, 829 volunteers and 41 paid staff, that there were 126 baptisms and 35 rededications there?

All those facts are true. However, it requires more than raw data to tell the RLCC story. Those of you who have been there, many since you were children, know that well.

The Camp has pictures since 1949 of all the campers who have attended there. You look at those camp pictures and people you have known for years look back at you and flood you with memories. As with most organizations, RLCC is actually the people who served there, the people who attended there, and the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit they served there. ...and today, they are still serving.

How long has it been for you? last year, one of your high school years, or farther back than that? Is it time for you to support RLCC in some way; or time to go back for a visit?

Go online and check out the 2019 opportunities at Round Lake Christian Camp. Plan to attend a Family Camp, a retreat, a concert, or a camp itself; for old-time's sake or for a new experience, attend or volunteer. It will be fun, it will be an experience, and you will be "transformed by the renewing of your mind"!

~ Linda Ellis

June Birthdays

- 1 – Shirleen Gordon
- 4 – Kay Buxton, Scott Cromer
- 5 – Jamie Ward, Emily Ziegler
- 9 – Jennifer Greer
- 11 – Mary Crawford
- 12 – Loretta Ernsberger, Anna Kindt
- 13 – Ruth Manning
- 14 – Grace Johnson
- 15 – Logan Roseberry
- 17 – Larry Greer, Jan Snavely
- 18 – Josh Johnson
- 19 – Larry Awwiller
- 20 – Don Basye
- 23 – Ashley Bowers, Sadie Thompson
- 25 – Briar Ward
- 29 – Eric Ellis