



Christ • Communion • Community

CASCADIAN WEEKLY

September 10, 2021

Week 78

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Psalm 133:1 "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!"

Dear Cascade Christian Church,

It is a wonderful time of year!! The beginning of the school year means we start gathering again, for classes, for worship, for social events, for service and mission projects. After the break of summer and with the care we have taken as a church to keep each other safe in a pandemic, it is wonderful to gather again! Thank you for your faithfulness in attending worship this summer – both in person and online. Thank you to all who made the summer events happen: the camps at Crystal, Vacation Bible School, Brown Bag Diversity lunches, Soul Warmers, men's groups, the family potluck and pool party, the Women's retreat, youth road trips, care of the church's grounds and buildings, Sunday School, and Worship Jams. We now move into our school year schedule, and that includes programs for children, youth, college students, young adults, families, and adults.

How good and pleasant it is when we can put aside differences, gather in God's house to worship and serve, how good and pleasant it is when we gather to learn again from scripture, how good and pleasant it is when our foundation, our oneness is in Christ and in Christ alone. There's so much hurt and distrust in our nation and community, but not when it comes to gathering before the Lord. The Psalmist wrote of the joy of being as one in God, and ultimately that is where we are headed. Revelation 5:9 speaks that people of all nations, tribes, languages are bought by the sacrifice of Jesus, and will be a kingdom of priests who will serve our God. As our congregation celebrates our unity in Jesus this Sunday, may it be a fresh beginning of trust, grace, and zeal for Christ and the building of His Kingdom.

As this wonderful time of year kicks off, here are some of the dates and events to take note of:

September 11/Saturday: Regional Assembly

September 12/Sunday: Unity Worship service at 10:30 followed by the church picnic

September 15/Wednesday: Evening classes begin for children, middle school, and high school

September 17-19- Men's Retreat at Camp Crystal

September 19/Sunday: Sunday school resumes

September 20/Monday: Study of the book "Advocates" begins

September 21/Tuesday: Workday at Camp Crystal

September 22/ Wednesday: Adult study of "The Chosen" begins at 6:30PM

September 23/Thursday: First Soup and Sandwich lunch at 12 noon

September 24-26: work weekend at Camp Crystal

September 25/Saturday: chapel open house and 5K aid station for Cascade Heritage Day

So, welcome back to church, welcome back to worship, welcome and come and get to know Jesus as Lord. After time apart, it is good, pleasant, and beautiful to be together as God's people.

I hope to see you Sunday.

Keep the faith!

Jill

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>Sunday_(9/12).</u>	Sunday School - 10:30 AM Crib Room - 10:30 AM Worship - 10:30 AM Unity Church Picnic
<u>Monday_(9/13).</u>	Soul Warmers - 2-4 Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Tuesday_(9/14).</u>	Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House) SAMO Meeting - 6:30
<u>Wednesday_(9/15).</u>	Wednesday Night Kick-Off Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall) Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Thursday_(9/16).</u>	Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Friday_(9/17).</u>	Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House) Church Office Closed
<u>Saturday_(9/18).</u>	Days For Girls 1-4

Financial giving for
the week ending in
9/5/2021:
Budgeted: \$10,652
Given: \$11,610.61

UNITY SERVICE AND PICNIC THIS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Join us for a combined worship service on Sunday, September 12 at 10:30 in the sanctuary. We will honor our local fire department and law enforcement in gratitude for their service to our community. We will also remember the twentieth anniversary of the 9-11 attacks, focusing on God's grace during tragedies. Our September sermon series will be based on grace and courage from the book of Daniel. Please join us next week as well when we will go back to our traditional service at 11AM in the chapel, and contemporary service at 9:30 in the sanctuary.

We will have boxed lunches for those who ordered them ahead - with sandwiches from Capriotti's. If you didn't order a lunch, bring your own and join us for an outdoor picnic, music from a four piece band, visiting with the fire department staff, and fellowship with the church.

CHILDRENS MINISTRIES

Parents and Families,

Fall programs are almost here! As your Christian Education staff members, Michael and I have been working hard to design some great opportunities for kids of every age to learn about God. Spaces where they'll be met where they're at by Jesus Christ and a caring community of believers. We ask that you join us in faithful prayer for the work God will do in our programs this Fall.

Part of my Fall prep has been engrossing myself in the tradition of prayer throughout the history of the Church (via Michael Counsell's "2000 Years of Prayer"). I find it so uplifting to see the concerns some truly great Church leaders laid before God; they look so much like some of my own. I'm particularly encouraged by leaders who allowed simple things to hold great meaning - such as the desert father Macarius of Egypt (300-391), who, when he was asked, "How should we pray?" responded:

There is no need to speak much in prayer; often stretch out your hands and say, "Lord, as you will and as you know, have mercy on me.' But if there is war in your soul, add, 'Help me!" and because He knows what we need, he shows mercy on us.

Our younger groups are embracing simplicity this Fall. Our Wednesday night classes are resuming for our Elementary kids, and to celebrate, we've decided to rename that class 'Wednesday Jubilee'. We'll be diving into the simple truth of God's love for us and for the world He created, and we'll have fun doing it.

Some important notes concerning Fall Programs:

- Middle/High Sunday School is being moved to the 11:00 service to allow students to sit in the 9:30 service.
- The crib room will be open every Sunday. On Wednesdays, it will be open as requested.
- Even if your child has attended our programs in the past, we are asking everyone to register so we know we have up-to-date information.

Last but not least: There is so much to be excited for this Fall, but we cannot do it without volunteers.

We strongly urge parents and other adults to get involved with Sunday School, Youth Group, or Wednesday Jubilee. There will be a registration table up in the Narthex a few weeks before our programming begins so parents can sign their family up to participate.

Grace and Peace,

Adam Carlson

Children and Middle School Christian Education
Director

Elementary Programs (Pre-K - 5th)	
Sunday School	Wednesday Jubilee
Sundays 9:30 AM	Wednesdays 6:30 PM
Middle/High Programs (6th - 12th)	
Sunday School	Youth Group
Sundays 11:00 AM	Wednesdays 6:30 PM

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

MISSION TRIP 2022

We are going to have a meeting about Mission Trip 2022 on *SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH* in High School Room immediately following the Unity Service. Bring your questions, comments, and get excited for a lifechanging trip!

FALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

We are splitting up Sunday School in the fall! Starting on **September 19th** come and worship with everyone at 9:30 and then join us for Sunday School at 11:00 AM (come right to the youth room!) We will be going through the whole bible this year in Sunday School. We hope to see you there!

GENERAL NEWS

CRYSTAL CAMP WORKDAYS

All are invited to help close the camp for the winter season at these workdays and times.

- Tuesday, September 21, meet at the church van at 7:30AM to drive to camp for a workday. We'll return by 8:00PM. Lunch will be provided. Drive with the group or on your own. Contact Jill Forton at jforton@cascadecatholic.com if you plan to attend.
- Friday, Saturday, Sunday, September 24-26. Lodging and meals are included for this long weekend. Come for a day, an overnight, or all three days. Volunteers are needed for all levels of work. Contact Camp Manager Eric Strommer at estrommer@uccr.org or Tim Murtaugh at timothydmurtaugh@gmail.com so they can prepare enough food.

CASCADE HERITAGE DAY

Join Cascade Township for a fun filled day on Saturday, September 25. Many events will be held near the Township Library. Cascade Christian will host an aid station at the 5K race and will have a chapel open house from 10:00AM-2:00PM. To sign up to volunteer, please call the church office.

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY THIS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, FROM 9:00AM-4:00PM.

Thank you to all who signed up to represent Cascade Christian Church at the Michigan Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (DOC). We will report in the next Cascadian about the proposed partnership with Wisconsin and Illinois, and our next Regional Minister.

SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCHES RETURN!

Join us for our first Soup and Sandwich lunch on Thursday, September 23 at 12 noon in Centennial Hall. Our speaker will be Bob Dresinga from Gaylord House. Many thanks to all who are making these lunches return after a year off. No reservation is needed, just come and join us for great food and fellowship. Volunteers are always needed to help with clean-up, stay and help if you can. Looking forward to seeing you!

RIPPLING HOPE

We would like to include Middle and High school students, parents, and other adult volunteers to represent Cascade Christian in this outreach event. Volunteers will help with yard clean-up, small painting tasks, and other jobs for residents of Detroit. There are also indoor tasks like organization at Rippling Hope's warehouse in the office and storage areas.

October 2nd, Leave from church in early in the morning, work from about 9:30-4:00, then return home by 6:30-7.

Bring; water bottle, bag lunch, and work gloves. If working outside wear closed toe shoes and dress for the weather. Tools will be supplied however you can bring your own yard tools if you prefer.

Contact: Diane Phelps at dianephelps2010@gmail.com, Michael Dirksen at mdirksen@cascadechristian.com, or the church office if you have questions and to RSVP.

ADULT MINISTRIES

MEN'S RETREAT AT CAMP CRYSTAL

Men can still register for the September 17-19 Men's retreat at Crystal. Please go to campcrystal.org to register, and church has scholarships for those who would like to attend. The deadline to sign up is September 12.

ADULT CLASSES

- **Grief Share:**

The Grief Share support group will resume on Thursday, October 7 from 10:00-11:30AM. The support group will meet in person in the Coffee House for 13 sessions, covering all aspects of grieving, using the excellent materials provided by Grief Share. To register contact Jill at jforton@cascadechristian.com or call the church office for more information.

- **Wednesday Night Adult Class: "The Chosen": Begins September 22 at 6:30PM**

Join us for an 8 week session watching the acclaimed series "The Chosen". This amazing series has grasped people's hearts and attention as they see Jesus through the eyes of those who met Him. This series covers the early life of Jesus, his first miracles, and the recruitment of the twelve disciples. This is a fresh look at how Jesus embarks to change the world.

Join us in the adult classroom on the second floor of the Education Building from 6:30-8:00PM. Bring a Bible as we will look at the book of Luke each night to read and study the passages from the movie. Infant and toddler care are available upon request, and children and youth programs are provided.

- **Book Club:**

Our fall book club will be doing a short study of the book "Advocates" by Pastor Dhati Lewis. The book is available at Baker Bookhouse, and the study will be four weeks long. Plan to meet in person, in the coffee house from 11:30AM-12:30PM on Mondays, including September 20, and 27, and October 11 and 18. All are welcomed to join in, and bring your lunch if you're on your noon hour.

DAYS FOR GIRLS WORKSHOP

Assembling, ironing, cutting, and stitching sustainable menstrual kits for young women.

September 18, 1-4

October 16, 1-4

November 20, 1-4

Centennial Hall.

All skill levels, sewers and non-sewers alike. Contact Diane Phelps email dianephelps2010@gmail.com, or call the church office.

9.5.2021 SERMON: READY OR NOT, A NEW YEAR IS COMING!

Ready or Not, a new year is coming! Thanks to Jan Schichtel for most of the title and to Nicky Gumble's meditations #226 & 228 of "The Bible in One Year" for lots of content, on YouVersion, Bible.com.

Isaiah 43:16-19 NIV

16 This is what the Lord says—

he who made a way through the sea,

a path through the mighty waters,

17 who drew out the chariots and horses,

the army and reinforcements together,

and they lay there, never to rise again,

extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

18 "forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past.

19 See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland."

First a few details on the context of the text:

Isaiah 43:16-19 NIV

"16 This is what the Lord says— "

Isaiah says this is from God!

Then Isaiah reminds us of God's power in the Exodus...

"he who made a way through the sea,

a path through the mighty waters,

17 who drew out the chariots and horses,

the army and reinforcements together,

and they lay there, never to rise again,

extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:"

Then Isaiah's message from God:

18 "Forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past."

OKAY, why:

19 See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland."

Yeah, well, the next year starts next week. That's the beginning of the Cascade Christian calendar. It coincides in general with the school year. It starts with a unity service and a picnic this year. Unity means we try to remember that we are one big family of God, even though we have different preferences for music and time of service and Chapel vs Sanctuary environment... we all love our God and our Pastor Jill and her clear messages about and from our God.

But this last year, or year and a half, has been a challenge. The past has just been coming at us like a freight train. One thing after another has dumped worry, fear, sadness, discomfort, unhappiness, even anger. I don't want to do the whole litany of challenges because I know that part of the challenge was our different perceptions of the challenges. Like the pandemic...

Was it increasing or decreasing? Was the problem not enough vaccine or too much pressure to get a shot we didn't want? Some thought it a hoax and others lost loved ones. Some people must have been lying to us about it but which ones?

Related to that are the issues of masks, and schools and distances, and businesses open vs closed, which is related to jobs, losses, evictions and prices and government spending and national debt.

And what about regulations about who can get together in church and who can sing or not? And Zoom for church, for school, for meetings. Not the same. Lots of learning curve... which almost always means some frustration.

9.5.2021 SERMON: READY OR NOT, A NEW YEAR IS COMING!

We've had some of the most contentious politics. So far, it's a bit short of the civil war depending on how you think of things, but it is often disheartening to think of our potential and realize we use so much effort fighting each other. I wanted to say we waste so much effort fighting, but one of the principles of our democracy is to fight it out with our words, and eventually make better decisions, because we had the discussions. Our attorneys have been trained to be adversarial. Fight, fight, fight.

We fight about climate change. Is it happening? Or are these seemingly intense storms and fires just a random fluctuation in the weather of the world. When I see those weather maps for the hurricanes, it almost looks like New Orleans is on the top of an arc between Texas and Florida that could have been carved by a million years of hurricanes. Then they go right up the Mississippi River to the Ohio River valley and dump flood waters and wash the land into the sea. ...I digress, maybe it's both. But the weather does seem challenging these days, on top of sickness that's challenging hospitals, and politics that makes me wonder what else might be out there.

Then there is Isaiah's message from God:

18 "Forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past.

He was talking about the hundreds of years the Israelites spent as slaves in Egypt.

Hundreds of years... with all the same kinds of challenges of weather and diseases we had last year... plus, they were slaves. They did all the planting and harvesting of farming and making bricks and hauling the bricks to make buildings.

Forget it? Forget it? Not just last year, Forget the last 20 generations under the whip, no matter the weather, the sickness, the politics, the war.

Forget it? With all those plagues, with all that death and destruction.

No way! Clearly, they haven't forgotten it yet. They still celebrate the Passover every year. Forget it; I don't think so. But, don't dwell on it... that's different than forgetting it.

We don't have to dwell on it. Some of it may be helpful to keep in memory. But we don't have to dwell on it.

Next, Isaiah, still quoting God says,

19 See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland."

God is doing a new thing!

Heads up, God is doing a new thing!

Look for it, perceive it.

Where? Where? Reminds me of a song...

Where? Down in my heart, Where? Down in my heart!

What does Isaiah say? IN the WILDERNESS

I just watched a David Attenborough special called "The Year the Earth Changed," ... Yes, 2020! But not what I thought. David Attenborough is the 95-year-old Englishman that narrates all those nature documentaries. That voice... telling us gently that nature is beautiful, but people are ruining it. Things like: "The lumbering manatees are not fast enough to get out of the way, so their backs are scarred by propeller slashes."

But in March of 2020 people got off the streets all around the world, and all of a sudden, he had lots of examples of animals thriving in the absence of our noise, our presence, our propellers. Air quality improved in Los Angeles, India, and China in 12 days after lockdowns. White Crown Sparrows can hear each other's mating calls under the Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco again because the traffic noise is down 70%. Deer that were suffering in Japan because they were surviving on tourist rice cakes found real green forage. Female humpback whales in Alaskan feeding grounds could hunt in groups again because they could hear their calves from a greater distance without all the cruise boats. Loggerhead turtles' nests on Juno beach were down to 40% of their numbers 10 years ago. But with people off the beach, the nests increased to 61% of what they were 10 years ago. And because they made more nests on beaches in Florida there was a much larger hatch than usual. Jackass Penguins have nested on Capetown, South Africa beaches way before Capetown existed. But their numbers have been declining. Again as people gave them space on the beach they could get out of the water in daylight and feed their chicks twice a day instead of once when people held the beach. That resulted in more twins, more growth per chick, better health, and more second clutches of eggs after the first group were grown. The Ganges River in India had 18% more oxygen than the year(s) before. The list went on: monkeys, cheetahs, antelope, leopards, gorillas, seahorses, elephants all had stories of improvements. A hippo even walked into a gas station. ... Fill 'er up. ...again, that was from "The Year the Earth Changed," by David Attenborough.

Yeah, this last year was bad for so many people, all around the world, but there was a new thing for lots of animals in the wilderness. God is making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

9.5.2021 SERMON: READY OR NOT, A NEW YEAR IS COMING!

A way in the wilderness.

Streams in the wasteland.

"Streams in the wasteland" refers to Isaiah's earlier prophecy from Chapter 35. Again, we're in 43 and this next passage is from 35 about those streams in the wasteland.

35 The desert and the parched land will be glad;

the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom;

it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,

the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;

they will see the glory of the Lord,

the splendor of our God.

3 Strengthen the feeble hands,

steady the knees that give way;

4 say to those with fearful hearts,

"Be strong, do not fear;

your God will come,

he will come with vengeance;

with divine retribution

he will come to save you."

5 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened

and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

6 Then will the lame leap like a deer,

and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness

and streams in the desert.

7 The burning sand will become a pool,

the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

In the haunts where jackals once lay,

grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

8 And a highway will be there;

it will be called the Way of Holiness;

it will be for those who walk on that Way.

The unclean will not journey on it;

wicked fools will not go about on it.

9 No lion will be there,

nor any ravenous beast;

they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,

10 and those the Lord has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing;

everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them,

and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Better days are coming my friends. Everlasting joy is coming. Improbable and seemingly impossible things will happen between now and then. God, the same God who created everything will make all things new.

2 Cor 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

9.5.2021 SERMON: READY OR NOT, A NEW YEAR IS COMING!

Okay, get ready... hold your breath... You are the new thing! We are the new thing, the new Creation in Christ, the streams in the desert. What?

Yes.

No Way!

WAY!

Well, you in Christ, you in Community, you in Communion!

If you're like me, you might think, how could little ol' me make any difference in the problems of this world.

There's an African proverb:

If you think you are too small to make a difference, spend the night with a mosquito. -African proverb

You can be a mosquito, too.

But a good kind of mosquito.

Okay, what can a good mosquito do to prepare for this new year that's coming whether we are ready or not?

Buzz in God's ear.

Ps 102: 1-2

"Hear my prayer, Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn our ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly."

What might we say? Here are 8 things... then an 8 word summary of them all.

I'll ask, "AMEN?" Please respond with an AMEN IF you agree with each one.

1.God, I want to do your will. - AMEN?...AMEN!

2.Please use me as a stream in desert. - AMEN? ...AMEN!

3.Help me put the past into your long-term perspective. - AMEN? ...AMEN!

4.Thank you for forgiving my past transgressions - AMEN? ...AMEN!

5.Remove from me the notion that it might be possible to go back to the old normal, the good old days, the way things were. - AMEN? ...AMEN!

6.Give me openness to change because I know you want to make things better. - AMEN? ...AMEN!

7.Help me discern the new things you put in front of me. - AMEN? ...AMEN!

8.Help me make lists of actions I can do to live in Christ, in Community in Communion with you and my family in Christ. - AMEN?...AMEN!

2 Chron 32:7 paraphrase

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged.... For there is a greater power with us. With the world... an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.

Or, the summary in 9 words:

Lord show me the next right thing to do.

Pray this often:

Lord show me the next right thing to do.

You will be ready.

There was an old saying, "today is the first day of the rest of your life."

Next year is coming. But you could say that every day. Next year is coming. The rest of your life is coming.

Just keep looking with openness for that next place that you can be the stream in the desert and you are ready for whatever comes, to do then next right thing.

1 Cor 15:57

...thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He will hear. He will answer in his own good time.

Amen