

### **CASCADIAN WEEKLY**

July 10, 2021 Week 69

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Cascade Christian Church,

How wonderful it has been to have the church reopening and resuming many of our pre-pandemic activities. July is always a full month at Cascade Christian, and there are some great activities coming up that I hope you can be part of: On July 11 at 11:00 we reopen the chapel. This will be the first chapel service we have had since March 15, 2020, so that means 68 Sundays ago! We welcome all who like traditional worship with hymns to join us. The service will be changed a bit from March of 2020 in that we will not be passing communion or offering trays and will not yet have bulletins, but the rest of the service will be as it was before. Please join us with glad hearts as we worship our Lord and God.

The 9:30 contemporary service will continue in the sanctuary, and many thanks to Jacob Relph and all of our worship techs and musicians who make worship services possible.

We have a number of social activities coming up, the details are in this mailing, and include:

- "A Conversation Between Two Friends" brown bag picnic lunch with John Duchon and his friend Lloyd on Thursday, July 22 at 11:30 in Centennial Hall.
- Adult Game Night, Thursday, July 22 at 7:00 in the chapel basement
- Family Potluck Picnic, Tuesday, July 27 at 6:00 PM in Centennial Hall
- Family Camp at Crystal will be July 18-24
- Vacation Bible School will be July 26-30 from 9:00 AM- 12 noon.

As we regroup and gather again, it is such a blessing to see your smiling faces and to be in the same room rather than meeting through Zoom. From the beginning, God designed us to be people in the community. After creating Adam, God said in Genesis 2:18 **The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."** God's people are meant to be with one another, to work together, to share with each other, to help each other, to have fun, and enjoy life together. For such a long time we have been apart, now, thanks be to God, it is safer to be together as a church family. I hope you will consider coming to some of our July events and seeing your church family again. We will continue to live stream our worship services, both the traditional chapel service and the contemporary sanctuary service, and we take great delight in knowing some of you are with us from afar.

July is the beginning of our church year, and it is off to a great start with a wonderful board, a balanced budget, a caring, and creative church staff, and a deep yearning to be with our church family and friends.

I hope to see you this month as we reengage as a church.

Keep the faith and God bless you, Jill

#### **NOW HIRING: WE ARE SEEKING AN OFFICE MANAGER**

Cascade Christian is hiring a new Office Manager. This job can be anywhere from 26-32 hours per week, and the responsibilities include: running the office and phones, welcoming visitors, church communications including the weekly mailings, bulletins, Constant Contact, the church website, and Facebook, managing the Prayer Updates, advertising church events, managing the church directory and membership lists.

If this is of interest, please contact Mark Langenbach, our Church Business Manager, and/or stop by the office for a complete job description and application.

WEEKLY CA	LENDAR OF EVENTS	
<u>Sunday (7/11)</u>	Sunday School - 9:30 AM Worship - 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM MS/HS Camp - 3:00 PM	F
<u> Monday (7/12)</u>	Soul Warmers - 2:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House) Worship Committee Meeting - 5:30 (Zoom)	1
<u>Tuesday (7/13)</u>	Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House)	
<u> Wednesday (7/14)</u>	Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)	F
<u>Thursday (7/15)</u>	Griefshare - 10:30 AM (Zoom) Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall) Board Meeting - 7:00 (Zoom) Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)	F
<u>Friday (7/16)</u>	Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House) Church Office Closed	1
<u>Saturday (7/17)</u>	MS/HS Camp - Closing - 11:00 AM	

Financial giving for the week ending in 6/20/2021:

Budgeted:\$8,432 Given: \$8,419.03

Financial giving for the week ending in 6/27/2021:

Budgeted: \$8,432

Given: \$6,441.45

Financial giving for the week ending in 7/4/2021:

Budgeted:\$8,432

Given: \$14,258.65

#### THANK YOU LOIS SLACK



The congregation of Cascade Christian Church has been blessed by for many years by Business Manager and Human Resources Coordinator Lois Slack. Lois is retiring from this position effective July 1, and will be volunteering to help Mark Langenbach with payroll. Lois has not only been a wonderful business manager but a great friend to all who come to the office with a need. The staff celebrated her ministry with lunch in her honor, and all who wish can contribute to a LOVE OFFERING FOR LOIS by marking Lois's name on your online giving or check. THANK YOU LOIS and GOD BLESS YOU!!

#### **CELEBRATION OF LIFE - RON STEVENS**

There will be a Celebration of Life service for Ron Stevens, who passed away on February 4 of this year. It will be held at Lowell Township Hall – 2910 Alden Nash Ave SE, Lowell – on Saturday, July 17 from 2 to 5 P.M. Bring your memories to share.

# WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND THANK YOU CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS :

Our 2021-2022 Board includes: Jeff VanStrien, chair; Dana Froumis, vice chair; Terri Wing, secretary; Ethan Anderson, treasurer; Gail Duchon, elders; Jim Koessel, deacons; Mark Hammonds, administration; Audrey Partak, worship; Ron Cole and Adam Homan, Christian Education; Austin Crandell and Steve Dirksen, Go-Team; Susan Strobel and John Duchon, congregational care; Diane Phelps, Social Action and Mission Outreach; Chris Noordyke, trustees.

We thank these volunteers for their leadership.

Please pray for them as they lead our church into the future.

#### **FAMILY POTLUCK TUESDAY. JULY 27 - 6:00PM**

Everyone is invited to a family potluck on Tuesday, July 27 at 6:00PM. This is a true potluck—whatever people bring will be the meal. Dinnerware and beverages will be provided. We will also use this time to begin planning some young family activities again, and Amber and Andy Elliott will coordinate the planning, there will also be some games to get to know one another after so many months apart.

Families come in all shapes, sizes, and numbers—bring yourself and those you love to join us for a fun evening together. More information will be shared next week.

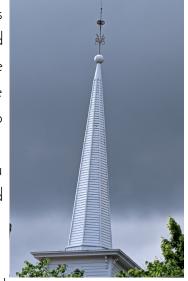
## **CHAPEL REOPENING SUNDAY, JULY 11**

Our traditional service will return to the chapel on July 11th. We look forward to welcoming everyone back into that sacred space. Thank you for your patience as we have made significant upgrades to the projecting and live streaming capabilities of the chapel. All are welcomed to return for worship, and we hope to see all of our traditional folks back in the pews.

#### THANK YOU KEELY GUIKEMA

Our Office Manager, Keely Guikema, and her husband Chris had a wonderful baby boy back in April. Keely has chosen to stay home with their son, Wesley, and not return to work as our Office Manager.

We thank Keely for her years of service and plan to have a baby shower for Keely later this summer.





## **CHILDRENS MINISTRIES**

#### **SUNDAY SCHOOL VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON**

Every week at the **9:30 service** we have in-person Sunday School for children ages 4 on up. The children begin the morning in the sanctuary with their families and then are dismissed to go to class. Students will be brought back down to church after the service. For elementary school, we are also offering a virtual Sunday School, which is mailed out with the Cascadian each week. If you would like your child added to this list, please call Adam or Michael in the church office.



#### **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS BACK!**

Mark your calendars as we look forward to a full Vacation Bible School over July 26-30 from 9:00-11:30 AM. We'll be studying the life of Moses and the Exodus with "Wilderness Escape." Sign-ups for everyone are in the back of the sanctuary. We have a spot for everyone to help out and will need all the help we can get to make sure that every kid has an amazing experience at VBS. Email acarlson@cascadechristian.com with any questions.

#### CRIB ROOM REOPENED

Our crib room has reopened for infants and toddlers through age 3 at the 9:30 service. Parents must make a reservation for this kind of childcare. Call the church office by Wednesday to make your reservation.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

WE ARE RETURNING TO OUR REGULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM. That means we need Sunday School teachers. Over the summer we are going to continue to do a combined class, but in the fall we will once again continue differentiated learning. Whether you have a kid in Sunday School or not, we need your help! Contact the church office for more details.



## **ADULT MINISTRIES**

#### **GRIEF SHARE**

Grief Share Support Group will continue through mid-summer, and all who are mourning a loss are invited to participate through Zoom on Thursdays at 10:30AM. Call Jill for more information.

#### **KEYS AT CASCADE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

You may have noticed we have a new way of locking and unlocking doors here at the church. Doors are now locked and unlocked with key fobs, as opposed to traditional keys that will no longer work in the door locks. To have access to buildings on the campus of the church, please call the church office and speak to our Business Manager, Mark Langenbach. Note that you must be present for the duration of the time the door(s) are unlocked as scheduled, making sure the doors are locked when you leave. The goal of this new way of locking and unlocking doors is to help keep everyone safe and the buildings secure. If you have any questions, please contact the church office during regular business hours. Thank you.

#### SENIOR NEIGHBORS EXERCISE CLASS

The Senior Neighbors Exercise Class is scheduled to resume July 6th in Centennial Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM. There is a suggested donation of \$3 per class, and are also covered by Silver Sneakers. The focus of the group is on gentle joint friendly stretching and strengthening, and a little cardio to get your heart rate up! It is safe and effective for older adults and a great way to make new friends! We know you all have been missing this and are so excited to bring it back!

#### ADULT GAME NIGHT

Adult Game Night resumes Thursday, July 22 from 7:00-9:00PM in the Chapel basement. Bring a snack if you wish and your own beverage. Some games will be provided, but feel free to bring any games if you would like. If you have any questions please contact Debbie Jones at debbiejones1018@gmail.com.



#### **BROWN BAG LUNCH**



Join us for "A Conversation with Two Friends" on July 22nd at 11:30 AM. We will have a bag lunch ready for you and then John Duchon and his friend Lloyd will share a conversation. We need to start earlier than normal to make sure John and Lloyd can get to work on time. Expand your thinking as you enjoy a meal among friends—hope you can join us! Reservations are a must! Call the church office at 949-1360 to sign up.

Also, save August 3rd for our third bag lunch event. Tamasha James from Forest Hills Public Schools will be joining us.

## MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

# IF YOU WOULD STILL LIKE TO GO ON THE MISSION TRIP -- PLEASE CONTACT MICHAEL DIRKSEN

#### **SUMMER AT CCC**

As we approach summer, I just wanted to give you all an update on what our plans are for the summer with youth group. Wednesday night programming will stop for the months of June, July, and August but we will still be doing a special event every other week or so with the middle and high school youth. We will also be taking them to Camp Crystal (a few times!), Mackinac Island, on a Mission Trip, and hopefully, at the end of the summer, to Michigan's Adventure! If you know anyone who would like to be involved in a youth group, we welcome any and all middle school and high school students to join us for any or all of these events! We hope to see you there!

#### **VOLUNTEERING WITH YOUTH**

As we begin to look at ministry here after COVID, we are really hoping to have an amazing VBS this summer, distinct middle school and high school youth groups, and differentiated learning at Sunday School in the fall. In order to do all of that, we are in **need** of some parent volunteers to help us out. If this is an area where you may have an interest in helping, please send an email to Michael Dirksen at mdirksen@cascadechristian.com. No need to have kids in the program! All volunteers need to be screened before they are able to help.

#### **MISSION TRIP**

The Middle School and High School Youth Groups will be going on a Mission Trip to Rippling Hope in Detroit from August 1st - August 5th. If you would like to donate or help out in any way, please contact Michael Dirksen at the Church Office. Also, there is still time to sign up! We cannot wait to partner with Rippling Hope and learn more about what God is doing in the city of Detroit

#### **MICHIGAN'S ADVENTURE**

The Middle School and High School Youth Groups will be going to Michigan's Adventure on Thursday, August 19th. We will meet in the Church parking lot at 10 AM and be back by 8 PM. Please contact Michael Dirksen if you wish to sign up and bring \$40 for your ticket and money for souvenirs and dinner. If money is an issue, please reach out to Michael Dirksen and we will make sure you can still go!



#### **7.4.2021 SERMON - FREEDOM**

It is good to worship with you today, and thank you for spending part of your Independence Day with the One who made you truly free. Today we celebrate the Lord Jesus Christ and the freedoms we have because He is Lord and God.

We have so many freedoms, and I would venture to say that in the United States we have more liberties than anywhere else in the world. God has blessed this country many times with strong and wise leaders, with people who sought the common good, with people who have always seen the United States as one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.

The quotes from the movie were powerful - those statements speak across the ages to us:

- Those who desire to give up freedom in order to gains security will not have, nor deserve, either one Ben Franklin
- Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Martin Luther King
- Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it. Thomas Paine
- Freedom is a package deal with it comes responsibilities and consequences. Unknown
- The cost of freedom is high. But Americans have always paid it John F Kennedy
- Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves. A. Lincoln
- We on this continent should never forget that men first crossed the Atlantic not to find soil for their plows, but to secure liberty for their souls Robert J McCracken

What is freedom to you? The last year has given us pause to reflect on freedom and independence. You may think of freedom as living without constraints – but that is not quite true. We have rules, laws, regulations in place that protect us and other people, rules for the common good that restrain our liberty to a degree. We obey stop signs, railroad crossing, and most of the time we watch the speed limit. We choose to obey these constraints out of safety and caring for one another.

We also have freedom to cross state lines and not produce any kind of identification. There are no "check points" here in the States as there are in many places of the world. But there are barriers you don't cross, you don't trespass, you don't go in someone else's home without an invitation. You are free to be on the move, but there are places you cannot go.

We have the freedom to choose where we live, how we vote, where we go to church or if we go to church. We are free to choose jobs, schools, life partners. Not all places in the world have these choices, your life partner might be chosen for you, your job might be assigned, you may be allowed to be schooled or your gender might make it so you are not allowed to learn to read and write. Yet even here in the United States, there are some curbs to your liberties, you cannot go to one of the major automakers and tell them you choose to be the new CEO, there are homes and neighborhoods you can't afford, there are places that would not welcome you, and someone you might choose for your life partner might not choose you. Not all choices, not all liberties, are available to you. So you are free, but as the unknown author of one quotation said: Freedom is a package deal – with it comes responsibilities and consequences.

#### **7.4.2021 SERMON - FREEDOM**

In Galatians 5:13 we read about responsibilities and consequences, You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to include the flesh, rather, serve one another humbly in love.

This might sound like an anti-freedom message from Paul. You're free, Paul tells us, but you're not free to do whatever you want. True freedom is found in serving others, as Jesus did. Freedom is not found in self, but in community, in serving others humbly, in being like Jesus, the Servant Leader, giving all, giving up self, out of love for another. Many of you have found that kind of freedom – as soon as you become a parent, or care for a parent, have a sibling, a partner, or a spouse, some of your freedom is gone. Things are planned around the baby, of family finances, or caring for your aging parent, or being part of a family. It is no longer just about you. You've lost some liberty – but you've gained life, being in a family, being part of a community, you lose individual freedom, but you gain a fuller, richer selfless life.

Many of you have found that selfless freedom – because you work in the giving professions – as counselors, teachers, doctors, nurses, social workers – you give so much, and are on call night and day – you've lost some liberty, but your life has gained meaning as you find your purpose in helping another.

Many of you have found that selfless freedom – you found freedom in Christ when you realized there is no way you can make it on your own – that the job, the relationships, the escape mechanisms, the addictions, the money – none of it satisfies, it is all fleeting. The pandemic has shown us how fragile life is, and how very much we need Jesus and one another. It is only when you throw your dependence on Christ, that real freedom, real independence, is yours.

2 Corinthians 3:17 puts it this way - Now the Lord is Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. This is a message we need to be better at communicating. Too many people think of Christians as being people who say no to fun, no to living, no to happiness, no to most everything. There is this idea that God limits enjoyment, and will strike you with a lightning bolt if you step out of line. Not so, where the Spirit is - it is spirited, there is living, there is life, there is freedom, there is joy, there is fun, there is love, there is happiness, there is contentment, there's an adventure, there is a challenge - there are all of the things that make life worth it. With the Spirit - there are all of the freedoms that are worthwhile.

Freedom has responsibilities, and freedom has consequences, the unknown author stated – so here are the responsibilities – I will walk in freedom, for I have devoted myself to your commands. Psalm 119:45. What commands does the Psalmist mean? The 10 Commandments? The law of God in the Torah? The commands or laws we have as citizens of the United States? Yes, but there is a law above all of these laws – In Matthew 22:34-40 some of the teachers of the law are trying to trap Jesus – here's what happened: Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 37 Jesus replied: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38This is the first and greatest commandment. 39And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Want true freedom? Walk with God, love the Lord your God with all that you are, and love your neighbor as you love yourself. Imagine what the world would be like if Christians really did this? Imagine how packed churches would be, how the government would change, how business and life would be so much better if all Christians followed the two commands of our Lord.

#### **7.4.2021 SERMON - FREEDOM**

The Apostle John says: Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. Here's the truth, God loves you, Jesus loves you, the Spirit loves you. You are free in that love to love God back, to love others, to love yourself. It seems to me that a major key to freedom is to love. We have seen that selfless love in the sacrifices of all who loved this country enough to fight for freedom, from tyranny, from slavery, from communism, from oppression. God sets you free – free to love, free to love like Jesus, free to be true, and free to be your best.

John continues: So if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed. Today we celebrate being free, but that is freedom with responsibilities and consequences. You are free, free in Christ. How will you live out that freedom? How can you thank God for this blessing that we so often take for granted?

You know, we are still a young country compared to the civilizations of Egypt, Rome, and China. We still have some growing pains, but we were founded by people who sought freedom for the common folks, people like us. Think about it: The United States is 245 years young. When our third President, Thomas Jefferson died, our 16th President Abraham Lincoln was just 17 years old. Then when Lincoln was assassinated, our 28th President, Woodrow Wilson was an 8-year-old. When Wilson died, our 40th President, Ronald Reagan, was a young lad of 12. When Reagan died, our 44th President, Barack Obama was a 27-year-old law student at Harvard. There you have it. The lives of five men can take you all the way back to the beginning of our country, 245 years ago.

We are a young free democratic country based on the following: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. This isn't political, this is a freedom given to us by a faithful God and bought by the lives of many. Freedom has costs: 56 men signed the Declaration of Independence, not knowing what the consequences would be. Five of the signers were captured by the British and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes destroyed. Two had members of their family captured. Nine died of battle wounds and other difficulties of the war. Their sacrifice makes me think of what God gave to save us – the life of His Son. Our freedom comes at a great cost – our Lord dies for us, our Lord takes our place of guilt, our Lord gives His all so we can have it all. Let's not forget the cost of our freedom.

God has been so faithful to us. We have gotten through a harrowing time of great loss, sorrow, curtailed freedoms. Many have sacrificed so much, you all have. Now, as freedoms and liberties return, thank God for His goodness and mercy. God has been faithful, and we are still here, still standing, free, and alive.

If you've been to Washington, D.C. you may have visited the Capitol Building. The cornerstone was laid in 1793, but the crowning touch is the statue on top of the rotunda known as the "Freedom Lady" that was placed there in 1863. The Freedom Lady stands nearly 20 feet tall, a crest of stars frames her face, and a shield of Stars and Stripes is in her left hand. She was sculpted in Rome and was brought to America aboard a sailing ship. During the trip across the Atlantic Ocean, a fierce storm developed. The Captain ordered cargo thrown overboard to lighten the load. The sailors wanted to throw the heavy statue overboard, but the captain refused, shouting over the wind, "No! Never! We'll flounder before we throw 'Freedom' away." And so, "Freedom" was saved, and the statue stands above the dome today because one man stood for "Freedom."

Be a follower of the One who stands up for your freedom. Jesus brings you liberty over sin and death, He brings you life – where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the freedom to love, to forgive, to live in joy, to find peace, to find yourself. Don't throw it overboard. Be blessed in your freedom.

#### **OUR PRAYER LIST FOR THIS WEEK INCLUDES:**

#### <u>Sympathy:</u>

- Sympathy to **Wendy and Dave Hazlett** in the passing of Wendy's mother—expressions of sympathy can be sent to: 8879 W Highland Park Ave., #1002, Franklin, WI 53132.
- Our sympathy to the family of **Sally Schalk**, who passed away at home on July 4 due to complications of cancer. Expressions of sympathy to Sally's family can be sent to 7385 Valhala, Alto, MI 49302.

#### Prayer Concerns:

- Dorothy Koessel is at home and dealing with a cancer diagnosis. Cards can be sent to Dorothy at 3967 Monte Carlo Ct, Grand Rapids, MI 49512. Please pray for treatments and wellbeing for Dorothy.
- Prayers for John Steensma, who is recovering from knee replacement surgery.
- Prayers for Kris Anderson as he recovers from surgery.
- Continued prayer for Vicki Gaviglio as she recovers from brain surgery and prepares for further treatment. Prayers as well for her parents Fred and Bea VanderPloeg, Vicki's husband Jim, and their daughters Jamie and Dana and their families.
- Continued prayers for Reid Klein as he works to regain health and strength after his construction accident last year.
- We received this prayer request: Will you please pray 2 Timothy 1:7 for my young adult son? He has such a spirit of fear that life is difficult for him. He can't get a job, live independently, attends church, or make friends. He is sad, lonely, poor, and abandoned by God. Your prayers mean so much to us! Thanks!
- Prayers for our own Child Development Center as they work to hire staff members in this challenging time.
- Joanne Crawford is back at Mission Point of Forest Hills and would love to hear from you: #48 1095 Medical Park Dr., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546.
- Aleck, Lois Slack's grandson. We thank you for your prayers. Aleck's surgeries seem to have been successful although he has some numbness in his arm. Aleck has a few more weeks to wear the cast on his ankle.
- Our prayers are with **Chuck and Heather Bacle** as Chuck has kidney cancer, and treatments are underway. Please keep all of the Bacles and Robertsons in your prayers.
- Barb Coger is doing well and appreciates your visits. She is at Porter Hills, 3600 Fulton St., 4550 Harmony House, Room 251, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.
- Joyce Kingsland has been ill with dehydration, and fluid in her lungs. If you would like to send her a card it can be sent to 1225 Spaulding Ave SE, Grand Rapids 49546.
- Dr. Brian Lane, a Spectrum doctor, and friend of Scott Robertson, has terminal cancer. Please pray for Dr. Lane and his family for peace and comfort.
- Marvin Potter, Doris Burgess's dad please pray for healing of his various health issues.
- Those battling cancer: John Goodrich, Bill Richardson, Linsey and Leslie (friends of Marsha and John Steensma), and Mike Forton.
- Virgil Westdale and Lila Venneman and all others who are in health care facilities.
- Please keep Bev Ferwerda in your prayers as she is in hospice care at home.

#### <u>Prayer Joys</u>

- We are thankful for the return of some of our summer events, and thank God for Ryan and Rebekah Condon and multiple volunteers for organizing our aid station at the Grand Rapids Triathlon. We are also grateful to all who have been and will be volunteer camp counselors at Crystal Conference Center this summer.
- Please pray for Middle and High School camp which begins this Sunday, July 11. Dean Michael Dirksen has the largest middle and high school camp that we have seen on over 20 years. Lease pray for Michael, Jacob Relph, and Adam Carlson as they all go and serve God and campers next week.

Current military and National Guard members in your prayers: Rachel Carlson, Andy Sullivan, Connor Schwinkendorf, Jason Tiedemann, and Steven M. King.

If you are in need of prayer and would like to be added to our prayer list, please email office@cascadechristian.com, or call our church office at 949-1360.