



Christ • Communion • Community

# CASCADIAN WEEKLY

May 21, 2021

Week 63

## A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Cascade Christian Church,

The next two Sundays at Cascade Christian Church celebrate the future and honor the past.

### Graduation Sunday, May 23:

On May 23 we will recognize our high school and college graduates in our worship services. The class of 2021 has withstood 15 months of the pandemic, had classes meet, then go virtual or hybrid, and have had to forgo many of the traditions that would have marked their junior and senior years of high school and college. For their perseverance, endurance, and resilience, we honor them and celebrate this milestone in their lives.

### At the 9:30 service on May 23 we will honor our High School Graduates:

**Ashley Anderson** - Forest Hills Central High School

**Jeremy James** - Forest Hills Central High School

**Sebastian Daughty** - City High School

### And will also remember our College Graduates:

**Emma Bacle**- Bachelor's degree from Grand Valley State University

**Adam Carlson** - Bachelor's degree from Cornerstone University

**Jack Duiven** - Master's degree from Moody Bible Institute

**Dylan Mackey**- Bachelor's degree from Michigan State University

**Ryley Olson** - Bachelor's degree from Central Michigan University

**Lauryn Stasiak** - Bachelor's degree from Michigan Sate University



### Memorial Day Sunday, May 30:

On May 30 we will have one worship service at 10:30 where we will honor all who have passed from this life to the nearer Presence of God since last Memorial Day. Veterans Bob Van Strien and Fay Johnson will help lead the service, and a candle will be lit as we read the names of those who have died this last year. We would love to have photographs of all of our veterans, and please bring them to the church office to be scanned or email them to Jill. This is a special worship service, and we hope you will be able to join us.

God bless you and keep the faith,

Jill



## WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <u>Sunday (5/23).</u>    | Sunday School - 9:30 AM<br>Worship - 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM   |
| <u>Monday (5/24).</u>    | Soul Warmers - 2:00 PM (Narthex)  |
| <u>Tuesday (5/25).</u>   | Women's Bible Study - 9:00 AM (Centennial Hall)   |
| <u>Wednesday (5/26).</u> | Middle/High School Wednesday Night - 6:30 PM<br>(High School Room)<br><br>Troop 334 Boy Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall)<br>Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House) |
| <u>Thursday (5/27).</u>  | Griefshare - 10:30 AM (Zoom)  |
| <u>Friday (5/28).</u>    | Church Office Closed  |
| <u>Saturday (5/29).</u>  |   |

Financial giving  
for the week  
ending in  
5/2/2021:  
Budgeted: \$8,432  
Given:  
\$12,643.40

## THE CHURCH OFFICE

You may have noticed last week and now this week the Cascadian is coming from a new email - that's because Keely is officially on maternity leave! Michael Dirksen and Adam Carlson will be filling in for her while she is on maternity leave, so if you have anything you want added to the newsletter, prayer requests, or general info regarding programming here at Cascade Christian Church -- **email your submission** to the church office ([office@cascadechristian.com](mailto:office@cascadechristian.com)) no later than **Tuesday at 12:00 PM**.

## CHAPEL UPDATE

Stay tuned! The chapel will be ready to livestream shortly. We will not be moving into the chapel before Memorial Day, but keep an eye on the Cascadian as we are nearly ready to make the transition. Thank you so much for your patience throughout this process. We are just as excited as you are to worship in that beautiful building once again.

# CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

## DAY CAMP AT CRYSTAL CONFERENCE CENTER

If you're unsure about camp this summer, this is an option to consider. Day Camp will have a morning program, lunch, and a swim time on Tuesday-Friday, July 6-9. Those attending can stay off site from camp or stay in one of the camp cabins and have their meals in the dining hall. This is a GREAT opportunity to introduce a child or your family to camp, or to go to camp with your grandchildren. We have scholarships to help pay the way. Call Michael or Jill at the church office at 949.1360 or email [jforton@cascadechristian.com](mailto:jforton@cascadechristian.com) for more information.

## INTERESTED IN BEING A COUNSELOR?

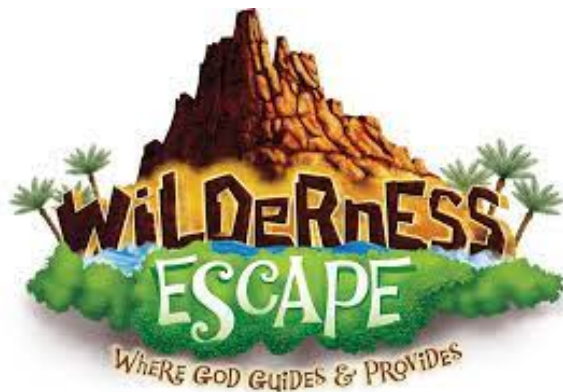
Are you or someone you know interested in being a counselor or counselor in training for Camp Crystal this summer? We are looking for counselors! If you are interested in counseling for Elementary Camp please email Jill at [jforton@cascadechristian.com](mailto:jforton@cascadechristian.com). If you are interested in counseling for Middle School or High School camp, please email Michael [mdirksen@cascadechristian.com](mailto:mdirksen@cascadechristian.com).

## ELEMENTARY CAMP

We are so pleased that many children have signed up for Camp Crystal this summer. Our camp site director, Eric Strommer, is leading our camp deans in best practices to keep campers safe with Crystal's COVID-19 protocols. Due to the need to keep social distancing in cabins, we need to limit the number of campers attending this year. If you have not yet registered, we urge you to do so soon as elementary camp is filling up fast! If you would like to volunteer as a camp counselor, we need 2 more women (over age 18) to accommodate the girl campers who plan to attend. Call Michael or Jill at the church office at 949.1360 or email [jforton@cascadechristian.com](mailto:jforton@cascadechristian.com) for more information.

## 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 9:00AM-11:30AM. We'll be studying the life of Moses and the Exodus with "Wilderness Escape." Sign ups for kids and volunteers will begin in June.

## 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.

# MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

**IF YOU WOULD STILL LIKE TO GO TO MACKINAC OR CAMP -- 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 (last Wednesday night is May 26th), 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!

## END OF THE YEAR PARTY!

Please join us after Graduation Sunday for an end of the year celebration in the High School Youth Room. We will be having pizza, playing games, and more fun as we kick off our summer programming here with the High School and Middle School Youth Groups.

## GRADUATION SUNDAY

This Sunday is graduation Sunday. Come to the 9:30 service to see all of our high school graduates, watch a slideshow of our high school and college graduates, and help us send them off to the next phase in their lives.



## MEMORIAL DAY SUNDAY

Memorial Day Sunday we will have Sunday School available at the 10:30 service for all ages. Please meet in the sanctuary and we will go up after the first songs.





# ADULT MINISTRIES



**Memorial Day  
Sunday  
May 30, 2021**

**One worship service at 10:30  
in the sanctuary**

Veterans and current military, if you would like, please send us a photo of your time in service to be shown at the service.

Veterans Fay Johnson and Bob VanStrien will be speaking at this service

All veterans are invited to process in as you remember and honor those who died in service to our country. Meet in the coffee house at 10:15

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Call the church office if you would like to take part in women's activities this summer. Diane Van Leeuwen and Jill Forton are looking for safe activities for women to participate in, and are hoping to have a painting class on Thursday, May 27 from 1:30-3:30. This class will be led by our neighbors at Sweet Peony - and will be held at Tassel Park. The cost is \$35.00.

## 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.

## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Thank you to all who participated in our Wednesday night classes this school year. We have concluded our study of "You'll Get Through This" and will resume our Wednesday night classes again in September. The women's Tuesday bible study continues for one more week.

## YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The young adult group is starting to form! We are going to launch a weekly study that will begin **June 7th**. We will meet at Michael Dirksen's house (739 College Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503) where we will discuss faith and action. Please let the young adults in your life know about this study and pray for the study as well as we launch this new and exciting part of the ministry at Cascade Christian Church.

## 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 [midirksen@cascadechristian.com](mailto:midirksen@cascadechristian.com). No need to have kids in the program! All volunteers need to be screened before they are able to help.

# OUR PRAYER LIST FOR THIS WEEK INCLUDES:

## Prayer Concerns:

- **Holly Brandsma** recovering from knee surgery on May 13.
- **Rebecca Warner** recovering from hip surgery on May 12.
- **Joanne Crawford** - hospitalized last week and undergoing tests.
- **Aleck**, Lois Slack's grandson, had an accident last week on his dirt bike. He had neck surgery this past week, and will have ankle surgery this week. This was a severe injury, please pray for the return of full mobility and complete healing.
- 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.
- And for our **stewardship campaign**, that we stay strong and do the work of the Lord in this place and time.
- Please pray for **Barb Dykhuizen** as she had shoulder surgery and is still experiencing a lot of pain.
- **Barb Coger** has been hospitalized, and is now back at Porter Hills.
- **Joyce Kingsland** who 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.
- **Punk Pollock** Debbie Jones nephew very much appreciates the prayers and asks that we continue to pray for strength in his legs.
- **Paul (stepson of Susan Mozley)** is battling pancreatic and stage 4 liver cancer. Please pray that the chemotherapy he is receiving works and for a lessening of his pain.
- **Those battling cancer:** John Goodrich, Leslie, Bill Richardson, Linsey and Sandee (friends of Marsha and John Steensma), and Mike Forton.
- **Virgil Westdale, Joann Crawford, George VanZwalenberg, and Lila Venneman** and all others who are in health care facilities.
- **And those in hospice care:** Bev Ferwerda.

## Prayer Joys

- **Andy, Amber, Grace, and Lexie Elliott** joined Cascade Christian Church on Sunday, May 16. They join us from their Disciples of Christ Church in Iowa, and are a most welcomed addition to our congregation. Andy is in seminary at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

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](mailto:office@cascadechristian.com), or call our church office at 949-1360.**

## 5.16.2021 SERMON – GOD DOESN'T LEAVE WHEN YOUR DREAMS CHANGE

So last week we started a series of sermons looking at the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. This is a well-known story, many of you have seen the musical Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat. Joseph's story is the story of a dreamer. We all have dreams, some come at night as we work out something in our subconscious, but we also have dreams and hopes for what might be. Think back over your life - what did you dream of becoming when you were a child? I dreamed I would be an archaeologist, studying ancient humankind. Did your dream materialize? Mine didn't - I never dreamed of being a pastor, and God gave my dream to my son who is an archaeologist in Tucson. How about you and your aspirations? Have your dreams of a career, relationships, or maybe parenting and owning a home come to pass? I hope your dreams have come true, but my guess is some of them have not happened the way you thought.

## 5.16.2021 SERMON – GOD DOESN'T LEAVE WHEN YOUR DREAMS CHANGE

There are those nights that are sleepless, when you can't dream at all: when your job disappears, when you get the cancer diagnosis, when someone you love walks out of your life, when the pregnancy test said no baby for you, when you stood in the cemetery in grief. It's hard to see dreams die, to feel hope has ended, but God doesn't leave when that happens. God is right there with you in that pit of despair and anguish, and with God's help, you'll get through this and will dream again.

Some of us are studying this amazing little book - Max Lucado's "You'll Get Through This", a look at the ancient story of Joseph where we find hope and help for challenging times. In every chapter Max reminds us that we will get through this, and I invite you to read with me this short statement of confidence in our God: Let's read together, whether you're here or online:

**With God's help, I'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. In the meantime, I won't be foolish or naïve. But I won't despair either. With God's help I will get through this.**

When dreams die, when hope can't be found, God is still there, taking the mess, and making something better. We've left our friend Joseph at the bottom of a pit. The dreamer who visioned his brothers, mother, and father all bowing to him was thrown in there by his brothers. His father, Jacob, had asked him to go and check on his 10 older brothers, to see if they were doing their job, and then come back and report to Dad. Joseph had already been asked to do this before, and came back with a bad report, so you can imagine how unwelcomed another visit would be. His brothers hated him, attacked him in their anger and threw him in a dry well. Joseph's bright and dreamy life bottomed out in this pit.

He had been Daddy's boy, the favored son of the favored wife. He had been given privileges that should have gone to Reuben, the oldest son. The other brothers worked far from home in the rugged conditions of the sheep camp, while Joseph was a home boy, pampered, dressed in finery. His life had been colorful, and easy, until his dad asked his 17 year old to do what a father should have done. "Go check on your brothers." With that request, Jacob set in motion a series of events that would break his heart, would haunt his ten older sons, and would place Joseph on a pathway that would save a nation and glorify God. God didn't leave when Joseph's dreams crashed. God saw something special in this messed up family, in these 10 vengeful brothers, in this spoiled boy, and God looked at them and said "yes!". Let's see what happens in **Gen.37:14-24**

**When Joseph arrived at Shechem, a man found him wandering around in the fields and asked him, "What are you looking for?" He replied, "I'm looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks?" "They have moved on from here," the man answered. "I heard them say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. "Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other. "Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams."**

**When Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue him from their hands. "Let's not take his life," he said. "Don't shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don't lay a hand on him." Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe—the ornate robe he was wearing - and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it.**

Imagine a moment the violence of this act. Joseph approaching his brothers, waving, maybe bringing them lunch or hoping they would share theirs. A smile on his face, his colorful robe glinting in the sun. The Bible describes Joseph as well built and handsome, but still with that youthfulness of a seventeen year old. A spring in his step, hair bowing in the breeze, a bit of a beard on his chin and cheeks. Then picture the faces of his brothers, older, stronger, hardened by outdoor living and hard work. Feel their anger and resentment rising as the snitch who'd ratted them out came back. They saw a dreamer of absurd dreams, as if they would ever bow to this pompous pain of a little brother. Imagine their discussion as they watched Joseph approach. I wonder who voiced the idea first? Who put into words what was in most of their hearts? They agreed to kill him, dispose of his body, and lie to Jacob. Imagine how it felt to be manhandled, to have your robe torn away, to be pushed, shoved, heaved into a dry well, to fall, to hit the ground. Joseph's dreams became a nightmare.

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But not for his brothers. Anger and violence must have been hungry work, after this terrible act, they sat down and ate lunch. Genesis continues: **As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers:**

**“What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed.**

The fourth son of Jacob’s first wife, the unloved Leah, was Judah. When he was born, Leah said “Now I will praise the Lord.” But Judah didn’t live up to this. While the evil one, Satan, is not mentioned in Joseph’s story, he is on the move in these brothers. Reuben had stopped the murder, but Judah listened to the evil whisper and he goes mercenary - “Let’s make some money here.” A dead brother doesn’t profit anybody, but an enslaved brother would accomplish all that was needed. Judah reasoned that slaves die off young, so mission accomplished and there’d be no body to dispose of. And Judah could have some cash in his pocket- a win-win.

The brothers got up from their meal, flag down the Ishmaelites, and made a trade to send Joseph down to Egypt. It is interesting that the traders were carrying myrrh, a burial spice, the death spice. Could Joseph smell it down in the cistern? Could he hear his brothers discussing his sale and their profit? Maybe Joseph thought his death was approaching. It must have felt like his destiny, his dreams were dying. seeing the end of his dreamed of destiny. Could this dreamer have imagined what would happen down in Egypt? Genesis continues:

**So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt. When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not there, he tore his clothes. He went back to his brothers and said, “The boy isn’t there! Where can I turn now?”**

Joseph was pulled to the surface. Some haggling probably took place, each side naming a price, until they agreed on 20 shekels of silver. A shekel of silver was worth about \$20 in today’s money – so 20x20 equals 400, divided by 10 brothers, each man gets \$40. Jesus was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver in Judas’s pocket. In the Bible, the future prince of Egypt and the Prince of Peace didn’t fetch much of a price, but their deaths pretty much guaranteed, so the buyers and the sellers both got what they desired. But as we know, when it looked like the end for Joseph and Jesus, God was just getting started on a new beginning.

Joseph was taken down to Egypt, bound like a captive, hands tied so he couldn’t escape, roped to a camel carrying a load of spice. As Joseph smelled the myrrh, the burial spice, did he bury some of his dreams? As he smelled the balm, did it calm him and give him hope? We don’t know if he called out to his brothers or begged for mercy. As the caravan of Midianites headed out, I wonder if Joseph kept looking over his shoulder, hoping for rescue – surely Reuben wouldn’t let this happen – but the camel moved on, and so did Joseph.

The brothers had to come up with an excuse, they had to tell Jacob something, so they united in a cruel lie. Genesis continues: **Then they got Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. They took the ornate robe back to their father and said, “We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son’s robe.” He recognized it and said, “It is my son’s robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces.”**

**Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. “No,” he said, “I will continue to mourn until I join my son in the grave.” So his father wept for him.**

Joseph was out of the way, on his way to a foreign country, a 35-40 day trip, with people he didn’t know, with no robe, no favored status, and no one cared, no one knew his name. He arrived in Egypt and was auctioned off; he was sold again. To unknowing Father Jacob, his son, his favored son, was dead. Genesis continues:



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36 Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard. The dreamer became a nobody. He went from first place in his father's heart to the slave markets of Egypt, from the bottom of the pit to Potiphar's household. Has this happened to you? Have your dreams ended? Have you seen your hopes fade and the color drain from your life? A silly question, isn't it? Everyone person you know has had grief and loss in the last 15 months. Some of you know the gray days of mourning, someone you love died this year, and you were not able to even have a funeral. Some of you delayed much anticipated vacations or cancelled what was to be a joyful celebration. You've seen businesses close, health care delayed. You've been isolated and the colors of life have faded.

You may ask where is God in all of this? You didn't cause or anticipate this, maybe you did everything right, and still despair came, and stayed. Where is God when our dreams change? Why, O God, would you let our dreams die? It's okay to ask those kinds of question of God, scripture is full of angry Psalms and there is a whole book in the Old Testament called Lamentations, only five chapters long – but a tough read, it's a cry of deepest, gruesome pain and lament.

Lamentations 5:15 says- **Joy is gone from our hearts; our dancing has turned to mourning. This book ends with a confession and a sign of hope: You, Lord, reign forever; your throne endures from generation to generation. Why do you always forget us? Why do you forsake us so long?**

**Restore us to yourself, Lord, that we may return; renew our days as of old unless you have utterly rejected us and are angry with us beyond measure.**

God can seem absent. But God is holding you close, so very close, you can't even see Him or sense Him. God has not left you. God can use this tragedy, this mess, this gray and colorless time in your life to change you, and God will get you through this.

Other times when dreams die, we ask, "where are you God?" When that happens, look within, and see that God didn't leave, but part of us did. We chose someone over and above God. We made something an idol, we profaned God, we side stepped faith and now think God has been faithless. We sinned, God didn't. Maybe we chased a dream that was not meant for us, or we got ahead of God in pursuing that dream. God didn't leave, and God is still there to help you, to welcome you back, to get you through this.

**So how do you do it?** How do you, with God's help, get through the tough times. When you feel like Joseph, tied up in hurt, pulled into a situation that you didn't chose, when the scent of death is around you, and those you trusted profited by betraying you – what are you supposed to do besides lament? Here's what I would suggest: **remember everything you know about the sovereignty and goodness of God. Start by trusting in the real God.** Here is my short list on the nature of God:

- God never leaves us or forsakes us
- God is still on the move, creating and recreating
- Jesus died for the sins of all humankind, rose, and lives, and has gone ahead to prepare a place for each one of us
- The Holy Spirit of God is within all who believe, prompting God's people to acts of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- God is a God of justice and mercy
- Thanks to Jesus - eternity is on the way, this life is not all there is, the grave is temporary –
- God is still in the hearts of His people, and there is beauty, goodness, kindness, and love all around us.

So, meditate on what you know about the real God, trust in God, the Lord of all creation, and then

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**Be real with God** – lament, cry out, get angry, be grateful, bring God your hopes and your shattered dreams, get beyond rote prayer and be real with God. If you're angry, let Him have it, He can take it. If you're joyful, get Him have that too- and join God in the dance of rejoicing. If you're lonely- be with Him. If you're confused, ask him to help you sort it out. If you're fighting with someone, ask for His peace. If you're afraid, grieving, worried, ask Him to walk with you, guide you, and help you. Be real with our real God, you don't have to fake it or pretend, God cares about you just as you are.

**And then be real with your church family.** When you accept Christ, you get a family with a perfect Brother Savior and a heavenly Father. We are not a perfect church, there are disagreements and words we wish that had not been said, but there is also compassion and deep love in church family. So let's keep it real. If you're hurting, don't fake it. If you're in need, speak up. If you need prayer, say so. Be in the fellowship of others who, like you, are not perfect, but love and serve a perfect God. Let the church be family for you. Things are reopening, we can see the beginning of the end of the pandemic, friends, come back to church, join your family, and be genuine in your joy and sorrow, especially when your dreams have changed or died.

**And when your dreams fade, remember this** - you do matter to God. God has a plan for your life, and God's plans are always good. Goodness and mercy are God's nature. Not sure what God's got for you as your dreams have changed, as you have been led off, down to Egypt? Well, be alert, look around you, and get ready. God might be using this journey, your trip to your Egypt, to prepare you for what's next. My dream changed, and I thank God, I am so grateful to be your pastor, and I delight how God gave my dream to my son. You can be sure God is doing the same for you in your dreams, and knows what is happening, and has a plan to give you hope and a future, and this God journeys at your side.

**Friends, it's good to dream,** so hold on to dreams and don't be afraid to dream new dreams and seek new visions. Joel 2:28-29 says "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." Joel includes all of us – young, old, women, men – God's Spirit is within us, and we can dream again.

**Praise be to God, the giver of dreams,** praise be to God, the bringer of visions. Change is in the air; a fresh wind is blowing. It is time to open the windows, clear the air, clean out our heads and hearts, and seek God's face. God doesn't leave when our dreams change, He brings us a fresh vision. As you journey down to your Egypt - keep your eyes open, dreamer, God is with you. You'll get through this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good. In the meantime, don't be foolish or naïve. But don't despair either. With God's help, you will get through this. Amen and amen.

