



Christ • Communion • Community

CASCADIAN WEEKLY

August 13, 2021

Week 74

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Cascade Christian Church

These are trying times, and we are asking everyone to mask again and to sign in for worship. We do this to protect one another and to be able to alert you of any covid transmission that might occur in the congregation. I know that this is something we had hoped to leave behind, but it appears that covid is rising in our state and we ask this of you as we try to protect one another and the children of the church and community. This variant is extremely contagious, and our church board is urging all of you to be cautious. Thank you for your understanding and patience in this difficult time.

And this is a wonderful time - we are so pleased to announce the hiring of our new Office Administrator, Caitlin Oke. Caitlin will be trained by Keely Guikema, and you will see her smiling face in the office soon. Caitlin is going to fit in well with our current staff, and we are all delighted to welcome her to Cascade Christian. I want to thank Michael Dirksen, Adam Carlson, Mark Langenbach, Lois Slack, Carol Tiemeyer, and Jane Wood for all picking up parts of the office administration tasks this spring and summer. Having volunteers and staff who are willing to go above and beyond has been a real joy and blessing.

And these are wonderful days as we see summer coming to a close with events like the pool party this weekend, the trip to Michigan's Adventure, and the women's retreat at Crystal. The church staff and committees are working to plan for the fall classes and activities, and we look forward to a wonderful school year ahead.

These are unique days that we are living in - but God has us and we will meet the challenges as they come and we will embrace every joy with gratitude. Romans 12:12 has eleven words that you might want to hang on to, as the Apostle Paul wrote: **"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer."**

God be with you, and keep the faith, Jill

LOCKING & UNLOCKING DOORS AT CASCADE

We have a new key system! There are a few things that you need to know about the new key system so we can be sure we are all safe and the buildings are secure:

- The traditional keys are no longer going to work for entering buildings.
- Make sure the door is shut tightly behind you. (important for the sanctuary!)
- Please **DO NOT** open buildings with traditional keys because if the doors are not relocked with those keys, the doors will remain open and not secure.
- Please **DO NOT** keep doors from locking by using special keys, fallen wrenches, or hex keys on the interior handles.
- If you need to schedule doors to be locked and unlocked, please contact the church office, and speak with Mark Langenbach, our Business Manager.

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday (8/15).

Sunday School - 9:30 AM
Crib Room - 9:30 AM
Worship - 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM
Young Families Pool Party - 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
John and Gail Duchon's Home

Monday (8/16).

Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)

Tuesday (8/17).

Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House)
Soup & Sandwich Meeting - 9:00 AM (Library)

Wednesday (8/18).

Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall)
Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)

Thursday (8/19).

MS/HS Michigan's Adventure - 10:00 AM
Church Board Meeting - 7:00 PM (Zoom)
Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)

Friday (8/20).

Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House)
Women's Retreat at Camp Crystal
Church Office Closed

Saturday (8/21).

Women's Retreat at Camp Crystal

Financial giving for
the week ending in
8/8/2021:

Budgeted: \$10,652

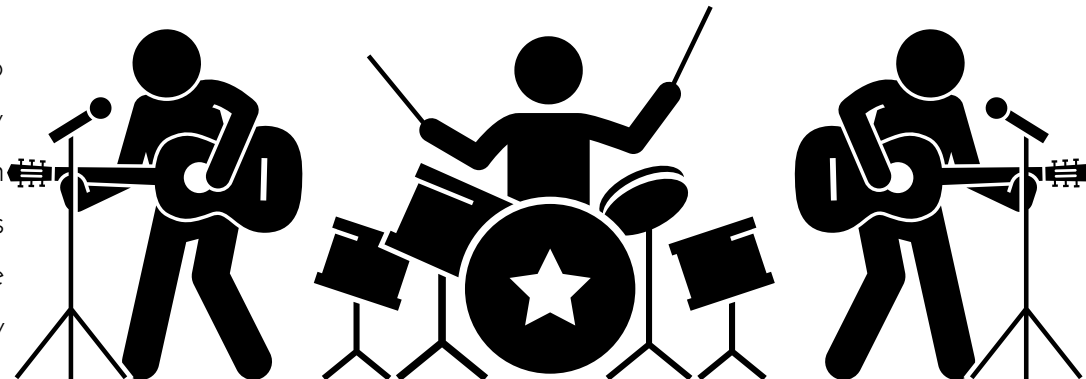
Given: \$12,706.87

COVID-19 PROCEDURES AT CASCADE CHRISTIAN

Following the recommendations of both the local and national CDC as well as our Board, we are recommending that all persons, vaccinated and unvaccinated, return to masking at all indoor church functions. This includes worship, in the office, and all indoor events. We will also continue to take attendance at all events so that in the event of a positive case we can effectively contact trace. We thank you in advance for your compliance on this matter.

WORSHIP JAM

We will have another worship jam after church in the next few weeks. If you are interested in coming or being involved in this extra time of worship, please contact Jacob and let him know how you'd like to participate.



CHILDRENS MINISTRIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Every week at the **9:30 service** we have in-person Sunday School for children ages 4 and 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. **Next month** -- our Sunday School program will be kicking off for the Fall on **September 19th** and our midweek program will begin later that week. Stay tuned for more details!

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.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING - FALL 2021

We are in full preparation mode for the Fall! We have been cleaning, decorating, and updating classrooms over the summer, and we're looking into a few great curriculum programs. Our aim is to maintain a Biblically-based, Community-aided, Missional, and Christ-centered program for both Sunday School and our midweek program. We want kids to be engaged with fun activities, crafts, and community - all while digging into God's Word and learning about who He is and how to live as believers. Please continue to pray for God's continued work in the lives of our children and leaders.

VOLUNTEERING WITH YOUTH

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.



MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

FALL YOUTH GROUP BONFIRE

We are going to have a bonfire at Michael's house (739 College Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503) on September 20th. Come over from 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM. We will have pizza, games, and you'll get to help us plan for the upcoming school year. If you would like a ride, please meet at the church at 5:30 PM (and we will be back at the church by 8:30 PM.)

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!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

Wednesday Night Youth Group will be starting up once again on September 15th. Come ready to learn more about God, play some wacky games, and have a good time with all the people here in youth group!



MICHIGAN'S ADVENTURE

MS & HS Michigan's Adventure

Thursday, August 19th

Meet by the Shuttle at 10am

Bring a swimsuit, \$40, & spending money

RSVP to Michael Dirksen by Tuesday August 17th

ADULT MINISTRIES

LABOR DAY & UNITY SERVICE

Worship on both Sunday, September 5th (Labor Day) and Sunday, September 12th (Unity Service) will be held at 10:30 AM both in the Sanctuary. Please mark your calendars for these dates and we hope to see you there!

FAMILY POOL PARTY

We have a family pool party on *Sunday, August 15th at 1:00 PM* at the Duchon's house. Please come and enjoy the last bits of summer before the kids go back to school and enjoy the pool, patio, and large backyard space before summer ends. Pizza will be served at 3:00 PM.

COLLEGE BOX MINISTRY

For those of you who have participated in the College Mail ministry in the past, expect a letter from Marsha Steensma here shortly seeing if you would like to participate once again this year! For those of you who are new and would like to sponsor a child, grandchild, relative or friend who is in college, please contact the Church office or Marsha Steensma to get your name added to the list. This ministry will start up once again in September. Thanks for all your support!

SOUP & SANDWICH LUNCH PLANNING

The group that meets to plan Soup & Sandwich lunch would like to invite you to come to the next planning meeting on Tuesday, August 17th at 9:00 AM in the library. We are looking forward to our upcoming Soup & Sandwiches' and welcome any and all ideas you may have for topics, speakers, and food too! We hope to see you there!

RETREATS AT CAMP CRYSTAL



WOMEN'S RETREAT - AUG 20-22

Join the women of the Michigan Region in a three day retreat called "I Have Called You By Name" based on Isaiah 43:1. Keynote speakers are the Reverends Brenda Etheridge and Shirley Martinson. Opportunities for sightseeing, golf, or shopping will be part of the fun. Please contact Jill at the church office for more information or if you would like to go to this retreat.

MEN'S RETREAT - SEPT. 17-19

Join the men of the Michigan Region for three days of camp with keynote speaker Alex Ruth on "Beyond Brotherhood: Developing Life-giving Relationships with Men." Opportunities for fishing, golf, and a camp work project are also part of the weekend. There is still time to sign up! Call the church office for more information.

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (ZOOM)

Registrations are now open to all Michigan Disciples local church members and clergy to attend the 2021 Regional Assembly September 11, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. It will be held once again virtually, as was the case last year. Go to the regional website (<https://www.michigandisciples.org/>) to register.

WORSHIP, BUSINESS, SMALL GROUPS

The Assembly is built around the theme, "For the Love of God," and scripture, John 13:34-35. It will be much like our live gatherings, only shortened somewhat. It will include an opening devotion, business of the Region, break-out groups, and closing worship with communion. Highlights include special music provided by the praise chorus of Triumphant Temple of Praise Church in Flint, and closing worship with our Regional Minister Eugene James preaching the Word. This will be Eugene's last Assembly as our regional pastor before retiring in December. Business action includes us calling a new Regional Minister, launching new Districts with Regional Associate Ministers providing care and support of churches and clergy, and entering a Partner Covenant ministry with the Illinois/Wisconsin Region.



Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea-Parker

BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH

Business items before the Assembly are being forwarded from the March 27 Regional Board Meeting. Included will be calling Teresa Dulyea-Parker to become Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Michigan Region, beginning January 1, 2022. She will serve our region on a part-time basis while also serving the Illinois/Wisconsin Region where she currently is Regional Minister. A companion business item will be approval of a Partner Covenant with the Illinois/Wisconsin Region to develop partner relationships and ministries across our regions even as each of us remains legally separate Regions. The business session will be recorded for archival purposes and votes will be recorded, using the Zoom participant polling function. Reports by our Regional Minister, Commissions on Ministry, Ecumenism, Personnel, Crystal, Church Growth and Vitality, and Stewardship & Finance will be shared.



8.8.2021 SERMON: SURVIVE THE CRISIS

So we are coming to the end of our sermon series on Joseph of Genesis. We have walked with him through his being thrown in a pit, sold as a slave, being in prison, and then rising to be the Prince of Egypt. We've seen him weep many times over the ways his brothers have mistreated him, and he has shown us how hard it can be to forgive. Joseph also has shown us the freedom and release that forgiveness brings. Joseph faced many times of crisis and survived every crisis – he is a role model for us as we continue to live during our global disaster of COVID 19.

Every week I have given you a synopsis of Joseph's story – that's the Sunday School teacher in me- to remind you of what you already know and then build a little more on that knowledge. You might feel like you've heard Joseph's backstory enough – but if you haven't been here in a while or need a refresher, I am going to share his story in a contemporary version, written by the four Thompson brothers.

Rather than calling their story Joseph and the colorful coat the Thompson family called their version "Cooper and the colorful crocs". Here is their interpretation of Joseph's story: There once was a boy named Cooper whose father loved him very much. One day Dad gave Cooper a pair of colorful crocs. Cooper's brothers did not like Cooper, or his crocs very much. They took his crocs, pushed him through a trap door, and sent him to do chores at a neighbor's house. The brothers told their dad "Here are Cooper's crocs, but we can't find Cooper." Cooper's dad was distraught.

Cooper worked hard at the neighbor's house, but God was with him. One of Cooper's jobs was to organize the neighbor's pantry. He knew where all of the food went.

His brothers were hungry and didn't have any food, so their father sent them to the neighbors to get some food. Cooper recognized his brothers, but they didn't recognize him. Cooper asked if they had another brother, and sent them to go get him. The brothers asked their father if their little brother could go to the neighbor's house. First dad said no, then he said yes. The brothers brought their little brother to Cooper, and Cooper was overcome with joy. He told them who he was. He hugged his brothers, and they ate some snacks. Cooper told his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." The Thompson boys know Genesis 50, verse 20. Isn't that a great recap of the story?

Even children figure out how to survive a crisis. So many of the best stories we love are about overcoming – working through a problem, a situation, a challenge. The majority of the Bible has this same theme – there is a crisis, the people turn to God, God intervenes, God brings about something good. We see this theme in the stories of Moses, Noah, Esther, Daniel, Nehemiah, and Ruth – there is a crisis, people look to God and they see how God intercedes, and brings about resolution. Those who don't look to God usually perish or come to a bad end. The same choice is before us – to turn to God in our crisis or try to resolve it on our own. Max Lucado's affirmation of hope and confidence in God is worth repeating one more time – this is a reminder that you will get through this, you will survive your crisis, you'll make it. Please read this aloud with me:

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.

Friends, don't think the presence of pain means the absence of God. There are so many crises right now. What is yours? It sure seems like there are plenty to choose from. Has sickness or covid hit you or your family? Have you had a hard time finding work, or childcare, or going back to work? There's the question of school this fall; I pray that they can safely be open. Maybe you're lonely and tired of feeling isolated. We have all had to face the crisis of this pandemic – and can understand how devastating a global disaster can be, and can better grasp the crisis Joseph faced with the famine. And so, so many of you are grieving now- we have seldom had more funerals in 2 weeks' time – there are many hurting hearts out there. How do you survive your crisis? It can be easy to get discouraged these days, and maybe even fearful.

8.8.2021 SERMON: SURVIVE THE CRISIS

As we conclude the story of the 12 sons of Jacob, we see that even with the famine over, even with all of the family settled in the region of Goshen in northern Egypt, even as they begin to thrive, there is still some fear, some distrust. Genesis 48 and 49 detail the end of the famine, and the blessings Jacob gives to his family. Then, after a long and full life, Jacob dies. We pick up the story in chapter 50- after the family has grieved and buried their Father Jacob.

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" 16 So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: 17 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

So the ten oldest sons of Jacob have not yet shed their guilt over what they had done to Joseph all of those years back when they sold him into slavery. Guilt can do that – it can creep back in. Something we had pushed to the back of our mind or thought we had released from our heart, comes back. The brothers had been treated so well by Joseph, he had saved their lives and their families, and they flourished in Egypt, growing to be the mighty nation that God had promised to their Great Grandfather Abraham. God had set this family aside, protected them, provided for them, kept them safe, but now, they aren't feeling so safe and mighty. Father Jacob was dead. Was Dad the reason that Joseph had been nice to them for the last seventeen years?

One would hope the brothers had learned their lessons about grace and forgiveness, about God's purpose and plans, but like us sometimes, they decide to trust themselves and not God. So they come up with another whopper of a lie.

"Your father left these instructions before he died: 17 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father."

Who among us has not tried something like this? When you were a child, did you try this with your siblings? But Dad said, but Mom said.... And I fear that we don't leave this behind in childhood. In work, school, friendships, teams – we can lie about what someone "said" to cover ourselves – even when those words were never spoken. Jacob didn't say this – this is a lie, an attempt to gain some assurance, a request, yet again, to be forgiven. Do you understand the brothers? Have you ever done something so hurtful to someone, that you need reassurances again and again that you were forgiven? This need for additional reassurance made Joseph weep, yet again. These brothers have caused so much heartache for Joseph, and here they are, lying to cover themselves. What does Joseph need to do to assure them? continuing in Genesis 50:18

18 His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said.

19 But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21 So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

Joseph has never lost his foundation, he has not faltered, living in a foreign land of many gods, Joseph still knows the One True God. He knows who he is and Who he belongs to. In all of this crisis, he looked to God, and followed God's plan. He doesn't stop now- if anything, he seems even closer to God. His brothers are still clearly in fear of him, and he answers them with kindness, with reassurances. He says they have nothing to fear from him- and that he is not God. He tells them again, don't be afraid, and that he will provide for them and their families, just as he has done for the last 17 years. And in between these reassurances and kind words, Joseph gives all of us who face a crisis, this affirmation of the grace and goodness of God.

8.8.2021 SERMON: SURVIVE THE CRISIS

20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Have you seen this in your life? Someone hurt you – broke up with you, fired you, lied about you, was cruel to you, threw you in your pit, locked you in your prison – they meant to harm you. But God didn't forget you. That foundation you have in God remained stable, even as your life was shaken. God is able to take what has wounded and broken us, and bring about good. We could have a testimony Sunday of how some of you have seen this in your lives – how just when things looked so bad, God brought about good. You have seen that the presence of pain did not mean that God was absent. After even years of hurt, forgiveness, and healing are possible. Think of how God healed your heart from a breakup or betrayal, and placed you on a better path, how the job that didn't work out as you hoped, brought you to a better place, how the parting or goodbye with someone lead to hello with another. In the hurt, God showed up, and blessed you.

Throughout scripture and throughout life you are going to see that these words are true HARM/GOD/GOOD – harm comes your way – the crisis comes, maybe through a person or through life circumstances, a natural disaster, or a foolish choice you made- the hurt, the harm, is there. But then God gets in, gets between you and the bad situation, and brings about good. As Max Lucado reminds us, it isn't always easy, or quick, but in God's good and perfect time, the good is seen.

Jodi and Bill Schafer, our former excellent youth leaders, have wisely told our teenagers to leave room for Jesus when they dated or had a mission trip romance. Leave room in there for Jesus – meaning leave some space in the embrace. For you, now, when harm and hurt come your way, leave room for Jesus, let Jesus get between you and the hurt, and see the good he will bring about.

Joseph showed his brothers, that the hurt they intended was used for God's good plans. We know Joseph's life was not easy, and we have heard about this man's life from when he was 17 years old to age 54. He lived to be 110, and had many opportunities to show grace, forgiveness, and kindness. And when he did, he himself was healed from the harm and hurt. God can do the same for you. As we conclude this beautiful Biblical narrative, where do you find yourself? Are you a groveling brother – full of guilt, or are you a Joseph – ready to live a life that is free of guilt and shame, free of anger and bitterness? God sent Jesus that we might have life and have it to the full, to be free and live a full of love and color and hope and kindness, because our foundation is in the Lord God, Creator of the Universe.

Because Joseph was faithful, God took him higher and exceeded any expectations Joseph ever could have had. Joseph never settled for anger, bitterness, or a small god. He didn't give up, and he did not let his heart be hardened, and here we are 3600 years later – learning from his example. God sees a Joseph in you – you have a lot in common with Joseph. You might be in the pit today. What God did for Joseph, God will do for you- God can take evil or harm – and make something good.

Consider this one last thought – who do you need to be a Joseph to? Will you be the Joseph in your family? It took one person to stay faithful, and change the destiny for a whole family, for an entire nation. Can you be a Joseph, and be faithful and forgiving in this strange and divisive time? Can you be the Joseph for your descendants – will they look back at you and see that you were a doorway to God for them?

Friends, the only way we can do this is to trust God. Listen to him, lean on him, believe Him. You'll get through this – God can take your crisis and make something of it, something good. He has proven that time and again. So trust God, really trust Him. You'll get through this. Amen and amen.

OUR PRAYER LIST FOR THIS WEEK INCLUDES:

Sympathy

- Our sympathy to the family of Doris Dosenberry who died last week. Pastor Jill lead a private family service on Monday, August 9. Expressions of sympathy can be sent to Mel Dosenberry at 2429 Linda Ave SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546.
- Guy Chandler's funeral service was in the chapel on Tuesday, August 10. Our continued sympathy to Katie Chandler and family.
- Beverley Ferwerda died late Saturday night. Arrangements have not yet been made for her funeral.
- Our sympathy to the family of Phyllis Hendricks - her memorial service was in the chapel on Friday, August 6

Prayer Concerns:

- **Chuck Bacle's** cancer surgery is scheduled for Thursday, August 11. Please pray for good results and complete healing.
- Prayers for **Laura**, a former lifeguard at Camp Crystal, to gain strength to have surgery.
- Prayers for **Ardith Schroeder** as she faces some surgery
- And for **Ron Waterfield** who has been ill
- Prayers for **Sharon Sleeman** as she has just had recent outpatient surgery
- Prayers for **Phil**, a friend of Rob Beahan's who is dealing with Parkinson's disease, a stroke, and pneumonia
- Prayers for the family of **Clifford Benson**, a 15 year old who died last month in a car accident. Please keep his parents, Brian and Lynne, and Grandparents - Irv and Carol, in your prayers.
- Please keep the western United States in prayer in this fire season, and we pray with Europe as the flooding there has claimed so many lives.
- 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.
- 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.
- **Barb Coger** is doing well and appreciates your visits. She is at Porter Hills, 3600 Fulton St., 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: Chuck Bacle, John Goodrich, Bill Richardson, and Leslie (friend of Marsha and John Steensma).**
- **Virgil Westdale and Lila Venneman** and all others who are in health care facilities.

Prayer Joys

- Fred Vander Ploeg and his family wish to Thank the Church Family for all the prayers and well wishes for their daughter, Vicki. She is in a trial at the UofM Hospital and doing well. God is Good!

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.