

We connect people to Jesus and help God change their lives.



Gospel Learning Communities

by Pastor Nate Crandall

My faithful family in Christ,

During Heritage Sabbath on October 31st I shared with you a vision for Gospel Learning Communities which we will begin in February 2021. We will be piloting these community groups once a month for three months in order to seek the Lord for his direction

together as a body. Here is the reason why we are taking this step.

The Christian life cannot be lived in isolation. It is meant to be lived in community with other believers.

We are simply taking a step in obedience for the ongoing development of community through small groups. The Spirit has been leading us in this direction for several years, and now is the time to move together. Starting in January we will be communicating on a weekly basis and encouraging you to join in a group.

What will take place during these community groups?

Below you will find the description of GLCs which includes the three guiding questions which will be a part of each of our monthly gatherings. This description can also be found on the church website, <u>www.theconnecting.church/</u> <u>glc</u>, as well as in the brochure, *Why Gospel Learning Communities*, which can be found in the Welcome Center at the church.

The Lord gathered his disciples into a small learning community. As those who are his disciples



ho are his disciples today, we learn by following his example. Gospel Learning Communities (GLCs) are small gatherings of Christ-followers which exist to encourage one another in faithfulness to the Lord. Groups of about 8-12 people

meet together regularly to point each other to Jesus (UP), to share life in Christ and to care for one another (IN), and together to show the love of Jesus and share the gospel of Jesus to anyone who does not know the Lord (OUT).

<u>UP</u>

GLCs are grounded in the gospel, so they focus on God and worship Him together. Jesus is the reason we gather, and our fellowship as a group centers upward on him. The question that we use to guide our worship of God is:

• How are you experiencing the goodness of God?

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Gospel Learning Communities, continued

IN

GLCs live out the gospel through sharing life in Jesus with one another which includes loving and caring for each other. This inward focus flows out of the knowledge that as believers in Jesus, we all belong to God's family. The question that we use to guide our sharing of life in Jesus is:

• What does the Holy Spirit have burning on your heart?

<u>OUT</u>

GLCs express the gospel by showing the love of Jesus and sharing the message of Jesus. This outward focus comes from the knowledge that every believer is called to show Jesus to the world around them. We desire to welcome friends and neighbors who don't know the Lord into our community so that they too can know and love and follow Jesus. The question that we use to guide our expression of the gospel is: • How is it going with loving those Jesus has given you to love?

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions you may have. The Lord is moving among us, and I believe that these community groups will be a powerful means of connecting us to the Lord, to one another and to those who need Jesus.

Christian: It's not what you think

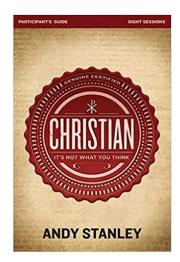
by Pastor Liz Green

Join us beginning January 9 through February 27, 2021 for a new video study during our Sabbath School hour from 9-10 AM on Zoom facilitated by Pastor Liz. According to Andy Stanley, the words used to describe Christians today often bear no resemblance to what Jesus wanted his followers to be known for.

In *Christian*, participants will learn:
What one word should be descriptive of every Christian
How Jesus followers should treat those who are outside the faith
Why people love Jesus but can't stand his followers

Anne Rice stated: "Following Christ does not mean following his followers. Christ is infinitely more important than Christianity and always will be, no matter what Christianity is, has been, or might become. Join us to explore what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Study guides are available online at Amazon or Christian Book Distributors if you wish to have it delivered directly to your home, or please contact the church office if you wish us to order one for you.



We will be using some Sabbath School hours for **9** Arts Revisited. Our first session will be Sabbath, January 2 from 9-10 via Zoom.

This will be an opportunity to review what we learned and to share our successes, ask questions, and talk about what isn't going so well. Hope to see you there.

Daily Prayer Focus for January - The Kingdom of God

by Renee Sanford, Prayer Coordinator



A new year is coming! Starting with the new year, we'll focus our prayers on God's kingdom. What are the principles of His kingdom? How do we live them out? How do we share them? What do we mean when we pray "Your kingdom come?" How can we participate in advancing God's kingdom?

As we did with Colossians and Proverbs, we'll share a daily scripture and prayer on Facebook and email to encourage each other in understanding and celebrating God's truth. To God be the glory! Great things He has done!

A Christmas Prayer For Our Community

written by Pastor Chuck Graffius for the Fairhaven Community



Pastor Chuck was promoted to glory on Dec. 3rd at the age of 92. He had been a member of our church since 2004 when he moved to Fairhaven in Whitewater. He served as the Pastor of SDB churches in Pennsylvania, California and Colorado. His heart was in serving others in the name of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His full obituary can be found at:

https://www.weaversfh.com/obituary/RevCharl es-Graffius?fbclid=IwAR2WymxsS9nMWNjjIRRLoqENh6YFef1q5mdXK8J9R riA_4ay1XcdhcLfg Dear Lord and Father of all mankind, as we look around us, we see a world at war while we have peace through your Son Jesus Christ. It is the season in your world when peace is on our lips, but there is no peace. We thank you for your peace that calms our spirit.

We thank you for the birds outside the window and for the silent snow which displays your beauty all around us this time of year. We look up into your beautiful sky and enjoy the sun, moon and billions of stars that you have created.

May we, each one, feel the real joy and the real reason for the season and may the love of God gently fill our hearts this holiday season. May blessings fall like snowflakes and blanket every corner of this wonderful Fairhaven.

May we, like you, our Father, learn to love all of your peoples while we dislike the deeds of some. We look forward to your arrival here on earth and will welcome you at any moment. For thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen

Our Awana Missionary – Tim Thomas

2020 has undoubtedly been a challenging year. According to Lifeway



Research, COVID-19 has shut down children's and youth ministry in 75% of America's churches. Half of the churches that ran Awana one year ago are not running Awana today.

Here in Wisconsin, about 70 percent of Awana churches are meeting online or inperson or have plans to do so soon. Only about 25% of churches are on hold and not meeting. Regrettably, a few have decided to discontinue using Awana. That does not mean that COVID hasn't seriously affected churches. Many churches have had outbreaks among their staff and congregations, and sadly, one senior pastor has passed away from the virus.

We know that God is in control and that He has a plan. It is our prayer that God would use us to be part of His plan.

Over the last several months...

We have been converting much of our traditional in-person training events to virtual events. We started with Awana BA-SICS and then quickly moved to transition our annual Awana Ministry Conference online. Most recently, we have moved our On-Target Sessions to Zoom, with our next meeting in January. Dr. Ed Gossien, Awana Vice President of US Field Operations and Partner Solutions, will be our special guest.

Awana missionaries have created many resources for churches to use to continue child discipleship during this pandemic. Some of these include www.awanaplus.com, the

Awana Covid-19 Playbook, and several webinars. We have contacted each

of our



Wisconsin churches to see how we can best serve them during these challenging days. We have also made some in-person club visits, pastor meetings, and church updates.

- Earlier this year, Awana published a new book, Resilient. Resilient was written and printed before anyone had heard of COVID-19, and God has used this book to encourage many churches and individuals that we cannot afford to take a year off of child discipleship.
- In November, Awana hosted an online seminar, New Year New Start: Beginning Awana Clubs, in January.

We will begin following up with those who attended the seminar and those churches who are on hold, hoping to help them relaunch their ministries.

We are encouraged by the resilience and resourcefulness of disciple-makers from all around Wisconsin, America, and the world, as they have not let the coronavirus keep them from fulfilling God's calling on their life – that children and youth throughout the world would come to know,

love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Like many, our family Christmas will be unusually small as we are not traveling or having any family come to

visit. We will be celebrating with our son Kyle, his wife, Lenie, and granddaughter Kayla and Kelsey, who live in Watertown. We will be connecting with our other children and grandchildren in Florida by Facetime.

We are thankful for your partnership in 2020 and covet your ongoing prayer and financial support in 2021,

Tim & Sherry Thomas

January 2021		
6	Club	
13	Club	
20	Club	
27	Club	

2021 Operation Christmas Child January and February Items

Here is a list of items to donate for Operation Christmas Child for the "item of the month." However, if you see an item at a bargain price, grab it. Place items in the trunk in the back stairway.

January & February:

Winter Items: hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, socks Homemade kits: fishing or sewing kits, clotheslines Non-Liquid Hygiene Items: toothbrushes, small tissues, mild bar soap, wash clothes, brushes/combs, fun Band-Aids, lip balms

Where did the boxes go this year that we packed at the packing party?

Our church's 281 boxes were shipped to Georgia, a former Soviet republic in Eastern Europe! It's on the Black Sea, borders Turkey, Russia and Armenia.

Pray for Your Shoebox Recipient

"Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Matthew 21:22 Please don't stop praying for the boy or girl that you first lifted up when you packed your shoebox. Continue to ask God to soften his or her heart to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so that he or she will follow Him all the days of their life. Pray also for families and entire communities to be transformed as God's love is share through your simple gift.

Free Medication Lock Boxes Available by Jon Cruzan

The Milton Youth Coalition is happy to provide free home medication lock boxes for residents to keep medications secure. These lock boxes are used to ensure that only those who are prescribed medications have access to and are using them. Families can join the fight against prescription drug abuse and help to keep our Milton area youth safe by using one of these lock boxes in their homes. Other great uses of these lock boxes are for college students to take to school, and for possible use with adults with memory problems in your home. Research indicates that 1 of 4 teens admitted to misusing a prescription drug not given to them by a doctor. Most teens have medications

in their homes that are easily accessible. 70% of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family or friends. If you

or someone you know needs a medication lock box, please contact Ashlee Kunkel at the Milton Public Library (MPL) at 868-7462. You will be able to pick-up your box through the library's curbside service.

The Milton Youth Coalition is "working together to make a positive difference in the lives of Milton's youth". The group reorganized in May 2019 and is composed of more than 20 youth and adults from the Milton area. Our congregation



is represented by Angie Mullen and Jon Cruzan. The current areas of focus are improving the mental health & wellness of youth, increasing the number of youth who avoid the use of

illegal substances, and promoting the appropriate, safe use of social media as it relates to cyberbullying and sending/ receiving sexually explicit photos.

Contact Angie or Jon if you would like more information. You can follow MYC on Social Media at: Facebook: @MiltonWIYouthCoalition Instagram: @miltonyouthcoalition Twitter: @YouthMilton



The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations

Give the Gospels a fresh look and notice how intentional Jesus was with individuals he encountered. In fact, he developed a reputation for spending time with outsiders. Preaching and proclamation were significant in his ministry, yet he spent the vast majority of his time on the road with twelve men who were slowly coming to understand who Jesus was.

They were taught, but they also caught how Jesus made disciples.

They learned from him how to engage spiritual seekers and walk with them on the discipleship journey. So can Christians in the 21st century. So can churches. So can we!

THE 9 ARTS OF SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS You can think of the nine arts in groups of three: Getting Ready: Noticing, Praying, Listening* Getting Started: Asking Questions, Loving, Welcoming Keeping It Going: Facilitating, Serving Together, Sharing



*Featured Art: The Art of Listening by Linda Lyke

People often equate listening with being loved. Recent studies confirm that unbelievers WANT to have a nonjudgmental conversation with believers. When we listen well, we surrender our desire to be heard and understood in the interest of the other person being heard and understood.

One woman who came to our Spiritual Conversations group had past hurts and shared a lot of anger too. Our role as facilitators was to listen and simply to love her.

Some of the hindrances to listening well are being distracted, not concentrating on the person talking (thinking of what I want to say next or the appointment I have to go to), and interrupting the person to share my side. What can we do to listen well? Listening without an agenda is important, not looking at them as a "project to complete" but as a person with infinite value, made in God's image. Be present with that person, saying a quick prayer for them, for God to guide you. After all, God is the one who opens spiritual doors and he is the one who changes hearts! Also, summarize what they have said so you know you have understood them. We share these 9 Arts each month, not to flood ourselves with guilt and shame that we are falling short of where we should be in "looking like Jesus." After all, there is NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. But the point is to take small steps forward in this, asking God "what is a simple way I can be more like you in these Arts?" One step at a time, one foot in front of the other with God leading.



World on Mission

by Linda Lyke, Outreach Coordinator

In "World on Mission" each month I share a bit about what we learned in the Perspectives on the World Christian Movement class – because God calls ALL of us to have a part in his mission. What is his mission?

> "God is on mission to be loved, served and worshiped by people from all humanity." (Perspectives Study Guide - PSG, pg 4)

We can learn from Karen O'Toole's Perspectives Story... (excerpt from 10/15/20 Perspectives newsletter) *Karen's name has been changed to protect her identity since she works in a sensitive area of the world.

Karen O'Toole was given a heart and passion to reach the unreached with the Gospel when she took Perspectives. Following Perspectives, she took Encountering the World of Islam. During this time the Lord began developing in her a heart for Muslims and specifically Arab Muslims. Now, Karen is a missionary in the Middle East with #NoPlaceLeft, which is a network of networks with a vision for there to be no place left where people have not heard about the Gospel.

Could you describe your class experience and can you share a memorable Perspectives

lesson or concept and what made it memorable?

We were looking at the biblical basis of missions and the Father's heart, like the story from Genesis to Revelation. I don't think I'd ever seen the big picture of the whole Bible like that before. It was a story for His glory throughout the earth, with a common thread woven throughout Genesis to Revelation that points to Jesus.

It was like lightbulbs going off for me. 'This is the heart of the Father and this is what is in me.' I was filled with joy and broken at the lostness of the world. I was also in awe of God, that that was His plan and that He wants to use me and us to accomplish that. I remember going back to my dorm room and literally getting on my knees to pray, I think almost after every Perspectives



class, because I was like, 'oh my gosh, Lord, I don't know what to do other than pray.'

Karen's story is a reminder of God's plan since the beginning of time for all to know him, for him to be glorified among the nations!

Never cease to pray about your role in the Great Commission:

Matt 28:19-20a Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Online Worship

Our Sabbath morning worship service is available **live** on our YouTube channel. Go to <u>http://TheConnecting.Church/WorshipOnline</u> for the link.

We are also posting links to the sermon notes on that same page.

If you prefer, you can go directly to https://www.youtube.com/theconnectingchurch

A Word from the SDB Executive Director

F: 608.752.7711



Rev. Carl P. Greene SDB Executive Director LIVE FOR GOD'S GLONT, GONNEET RESPLE TO JEJUS, Seventh Day Baptist General Conference of USA & Canada

AND SHALE LEFE TOGETHER IN THE SADET.

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Resilience by Barb Green, Parish Nurse

Some people cope with adversity more easily than others. They maintain a positive outlook and resilience seems to come naturally. Resilience, the ability to adapt to difficult situations and bounce back from them is something anyone can develop. 2020 has certainly given us plenty of opportunity to develop this characteristic. Resilient people tend to have external and internal resources they can call on to deal with adversity. Instead of not having challenges, they know wat to do when they do have them. For those who live with chronic illness, resilience helps buffer the effects of pain, help them understand their disease better and stick with treatment. Fostering positive emotions helps ward off depression and can be protective.

Cultivating resilience is something we all can do. We just need to figure out what aspects of it we need to build. The first step is believing in yourself. To help try out these behavioral techniques and emotional management strategies:

- Set goals and visualize success. Figuring out how to achieve this goal can give you a sense of direction and accomplishment.
- Change your perspective. View challenges you face as opportunities. Finding something that you want to get up in the morning for is important.
- Find humor in your situation. Humor helps us look

at our own situation in a different way and helps to build relationships with others.

- Practice gratitude.
 Being grateful for what you have instead of dwelling on what you have lost can promote healing. Have a gratitude journal and make a note each day of 3 things you are grateful for.
- Pursue joy. Focusing on your challenges may cause you to set aside activities that make life worth living. Schedule time every week to do something you love.
- Give back. Doing for others helps reduce pain, stress, depression and anxiety.
 Pick a day, plan ahead and do four kind acts for others and one for you. It can be as simple as telling someone you like their shirt.
- Emphasize your strengths. Write down a list of the best things about you- your intelligence, loyalty to friends, ability to adapt. Writing them down reminds you how special you are. Reread and add to it often.
- Adopt coping skills. Learn all you can about your specific challenges and have faith in your ability to problem-solve and succeed.
- Expect the unexpected. Think ahead to what might happen and adapt your environment to be prepared when it does. For example, keep pain meds handy if a migraine or arthritis fare

may happen. Have a support person you can call.



- Gather a support team. Have social contacts across a wide variety of settings.
- Learn how to communicate effectively. Practice saying no to things that you cannot do.
- Last but certainly, not least, use this time of difficulty to develop a deeper relationship with your heavenly Father. This may be your most effective strategy in becoming resilient.

Experiment with different strategies until you find what works for you. People are different; what works for one person may not work for you. Although 2020 has brought a lot of adversity and you may think you cannot take another bad event, you can develop resilience and bounce back. Better days are coming.

Adapted from Fall/Winter issue Arthritis Today

Bulletin Board

Restored for a Purpose

SDB Conference Theme 2020-2021 Scripture Memory Verse

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Psalm 51:12



- 1 Pat Hamm
- 1 Mary Scholl
- 1 Ron Ochs
- 2 Mark & Faith Green
- 4 Ryan Holbrook
- 6 Sophia Kersten
- 6 Jeremy Lade
- 6 Jared Osborn
- 8 Doneta Osborn
- 8 Nate Crandall
- 8 David St. Clair
- 8 Amanda Sykora
- 8 Elijah Geske
- 17 Sondra Muench
- 23 Katie Lubke
- 23 Kathleen & Ryan Holbrook
- 24 Josiah Lubke
- 25 Lillian Holbrook
- 26 Jim Lyke
- 30 Verne Wright

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 24th, 9:00 a.m.

on zoom

Meeting ID 894 1708 1517, Password 763120 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89417081517?pwd=V1pPS0 <u>RMODJZeHlwM0YxOEQwRHordz09</u>

We will be voting on the 2021 Goals, Budget and Ballot. **We need your participation.** Watch for an agenda and handouts at the Welcome Center in mid-January.



Group	Group Meetings via zoom 💦 💦 🦳			
Event	Day	Time	Host zoom	
Men's Study	Mon.	7:30 p.m.	Pastor Nate	
Ladies Sit 'n Sip	Tues.	9:00 a.m.	Janet Butler	
Men's Study	Weds.	6:30 a.m.	Pastor Nate	
		(meeting a	t Sharla's)	
Ladies Study	Weds.	9:30 a.m.	Renee Sanford	
Ladies Study	Thurs.	9:30 a.m.	Pastor Liz	

Contact the event host listed or the church office for information on how to connect.

Focus on Funds

as of Nov. 30, 2020		
General Fund Balance	\$16,703.91	
Cash at Mem. Fund	\$67,099.18	
Nov. Undesignated Income	\$14,831.54	
Nov. Total Income	\$18,790.84	
Nov. Expenses	\$18,365.83 j	
Denomination Giving YTD	\$10,080.00	

Capital Campaign Update

As of Nov.	30, 2020
Starting Balance	\$ 2,505.00
Total Income	\$67,221.74
Total Expenses	\$60,655.42
Fund Balance	\$ 9,071.32

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			*			**
January 22	Sabbath Sunset Tim 4:33 p.m. January 4:40 p.m. January 4:48 p.m. January 4:57 p.m. January 5:06 p.m. January	 4:34 p.m. 4:41 p.m. 4:49 p.m. 4:58 p.m. 			1 2021 NEW YEAR	2 9:00 Sabbath School – zoom 10:30 Worship – Sanctuary and Livestream
3	4 8:00 TOPS – Library 7:30 Men's Bible Study – zoom	5 9:00 Ladies Sit 'n Sip - zoom	6 6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's & zoom 9:30 Women's Bible Study - zoom 6:25 Awana 6:36 Collision - Camp Wakonda	7 9:30 Women's Bible Study – zoom	8	9 9:00 Sabbath School – zoom 10:30 Worship – Sanctuary and Livestream
10	11 8:00 TOPS – Library 7:30 Men's Bible Study – zoom	12 9:00 Ladies Sit 'n Sip – zoom	13 6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's & zoom 9:30 Women's Bible Study - zoom 6:25 Awana 6:36 Collision - Camp Wakonda	14 9:30 Women's Bible Study – zoom	15	16 9:00 Sabbath School – zoom 10:30 Worship – Sanctuary and Livestream
17	18 8:00 TOPS – Library 7:30 Men's Bible Study – zoom	19 9:00 Ladies Sit 'n Sip – zoom	20 6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's & zoom 9:30 Women's Bible Study - zoom 6:25 Awana 6:36 Collision - Camp Wakonda	21 9:30 Women's Bible Study – zoom	22	23 9:00 Sabbath School – zoom 10:30 Worship – Sanctuary and Livestream
24 9:00 Annual Meeting on Zoom	25 8:00 TOPS – Library	26 9:00 Ladies Sit 'n Sip - zoom	27 6:30 Men's Bible Study - Sharla's & zoom 9:30 Women's Bible Study - zoom	28 9:30 Women's Bible Study – zoom	29	30 9:00 Sabbath School – zoom 10:30 Worship – Sanctuary and Livestream
31	7:30 Men's Bible Study – zoom		6:25 Awana 6:36 Collision – Camp Wakonda			



January 2021

Milton SDB Church 720 E. Madison Ave. Milton, WI 53563 Church Phone: 608-868-2741

Pastor Nate Crandall Cell Phone: 608-322-8824 Email: pastornate@miltonsdb.org

Pastor Liz Green Cell Phone: 608-289-3029 Email: pastorliz@miltonsdb.org

Administrator: Janet Butler E-mail: churchoffice@miltonsdb.org

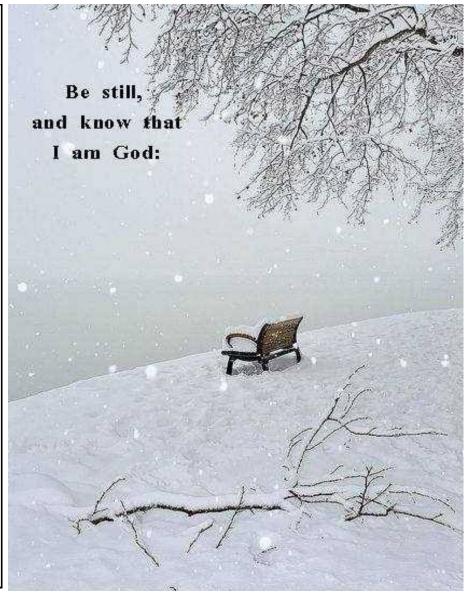
Director of Children's Ministry: Angie Mullen

> **Prayer Coordinator:** Renee Sanford

Outreach Coordinator: Linda Lyke

> Parish Nurse: Barb Green

Communications Coordinator: Joel Osborn



Online Worship

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