



Christ • Communion • Community

CASCADIAN WEEKLY

October 8, 2021

Week 82

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Colossians 3: 1-4

Therefore, since you have been raised with Christ, strive for the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Dear Cascade Christian Church,

I hope you are enjoying the lovely fall weather - October can be beautiful! I had the joy of spending a night at Crystal Conference Center last week, taking in the glories of autumn as the trees are changing color. One of the many wonderful things about Camp Crystal is the night sky. With so little light pollution, the stars and the Milky Way are incredibly visible over the lake. Being at camp and looking at the night sky made me think of Colossians 3:2 - *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.* The things of the earth are difficult right now, and as you read through our prayer list you can see how many people are challenged with illness, grief, and pain. The Apostle Paul's reminder to strive for things above might be a good scripture to meditate on as you pray about the problems in your own life.

One of you recently gave me a book about remembering God's goodness and God's immense power. God created everything- and did so just by speaking. God's words made it all. And then God keeps the universe in perfect order, again, just by God's words. You probably knew that already, but can you grasp how incredible these statements are about our God? Think about the night sky with me, it takes eight minutes for the light of the sun to reach the earth - and that light is traveling at 186,000 miles per second. It takes five more hours for that light to reach the edge of our solar system, to reach Pluto. The light of the sun then takes four years and four months to reach the next star in the universe. Our sun is part of the Milky Way Galaxy, that ribbon of cloudiness you can see at Crystal Lake. To get a sense of the vastness of just the Milky Way, think of our solar system as one inch across. To get from our sun to the center of the Milky Way would be 379 miles. And yet our galaxy is but one of one trillion galaxies in the universe. The immensity of all of this is so incredible, and all of this, every part of this, came into being by the spoken Word of God.

This is the same God who knows you, knows your troubles, knows the number of hairs on your head. This is the same God who wants a relationship with you, to be as a Heavenly Father to you, to call you His child. In all of the troubles, divisions, desperation that many feel, might we set our minds on things above? Maybe it is time to set aside earthly things and strive for the things above, to make time to grow in our relationship with God, to simply think about our incredible, powerful, unlimited God.

No matter how tough today has been, no matter how many challenges you face this week, your life is with Jesus Christ. Stick with Him, and you will know peace, and eventually you will share in His glory. Set your mind on things above as you serve Jesus and one another.

Keep the faith, Jill

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>Sunday_(10/10).</u>	Sunday School - 9:30 AM Crib Room - 9:30 AM Worship - 9:30, 11:00 AM Family Promise Drive Begins
<u>Monday_(10/11).</u>	Book Club Advocates - 11:30 AM (Coffee House) Soul Warmers - 2:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Tuesday_(10/12).</u>	Men's Group - 6:30 AM (Coffee House) Women's Bible Study - 9:00 AM (Centennial Hall) Cub Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall) Young Adult Small Group 7:00 PM
<u>Wednesday_(10/13).</u>	Wednesday Night Classes 6:30 PM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Bible Study "The Chosen" • Wednesday Jubilee - Elementary School • Youth Group - Middle & High School Scouts - 7:00 PM (Centennial Hall) Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Thursday_(10/14).</u>	Grief Share - 10:00AM (Coffee House) Administration Committee - 4:30 PM (Zoom) Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Friday_(10/15).</u>	Church Office Closed Open Talk Group - 7:30 AM (Coffee House)
<u>Saturday_(10/16).</u>	Days For Girls 1:00 PM (Centennial Hall)

Financial giving for
the week ending in
10/3/2021:
Budgeted: \$10,652
Given: \$13,063

MEALS MINISTRY

All who would like to help with meals for the Zeeryp family, please contact the church office or call Darcy Hartley. Scott is back home, being cared for Melissa, and meals are to be dropped off in a cooler on the porch of the Zeeryp home, or we can arrange for them to be delivered.

Casseroles, lasagna, and anything chocolate are appreciated.

Thank you for caring for this beloved family.

MASKING AT CHURCH

At the September 16 Board meeting, the Church Board voted to change our policy from requiring masks for our indoor gatherings to highly recommending that everyone wear a mask.

Thank you for your patience as we continue to follow the CDC recommendations to keep the church family safe.

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

ROBINETTES

On October 31st after Sunday School we will be going to Robinettes apple orchard. We will be doing the corn maze, eating doughnuts, and having a fun filled fall day. Meet at the church at 12:00pm and we will be back at church by 3:00pm. Bring some spending money for snacks or other things you may want at Robinettes.

EVENT SIGN UP

We are so excited to get youth group underway. We will be going to Spring Hill for a winter retreat, Mackinac Island, on a mission trip, and doing some fundraisers to help pay for these events as well. If you'd like to help out or you know that your child would like to participate, please fill out the form. Let Michael know if you have any questions.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

This year we are doing Sunday School at 11:00 AM. We are working our way through the whole bible. Come right up to the youth room at 11:00 AM (we will not be dismissing from Church). We hope to see you there!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

Our Wednesday Night Youth Group is up and running again. We are following the lessons in Sunday School and learning more about what we learned that week in Sunday School. Our first week was a huge success. We hope to see you here each week!

MIDDLE SCHOOL MADNESS

On Friday, October 15th, we will be having our first monthly Middle School Madness from 7-9:00pm! This event is a chance for Middle School students to bring friends to church for a night of pizza, fun, and fellowship. High Schoolers and parents are encouraged to volunteer at the event. Contact the church office for more information.

CHILDRENS MINISTRIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The 9:30 Children's Service started smoothly this week. Children are encouraged to bring money for an offering each week. Near Christmastime, we will use the money we've collected to buy toys and books for kids at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. Talk with your children about tithing and what it means to be generous.

BE BOLD

We are beginning a new class for 5th-7th graders on Thursday afternoons from 4:00 - 5:30. Each week we'll be wrestling with questions about the faith. If your child needs a ride from school, please contact the church office.

ADULT MINISTRIES

GAYLORD COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

The application is online and available in the church office. Applications are due November 1st, and the scholarship is open to all active church members

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The young adult Bible study is meeting on Tuesday nights from 7:00-8:30 at Michael Dirksen's house. If you would like to participate, please contact Michael at 616.283.9744

GENERAL NEWS

A MESSAGE FROM CARIBBEAN CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

"PLEASE CONVEY TO THE CONGREGATION OUR THANKS...

We are deeply touched by the special offering for Emergency Relief. The funds will be used for feeding people in the months to come and at some point, for construction, when the rubble has been cleared away and people are able to start rebuilding. Shown below is one of the camps where we are feeding 27 families. They are SO SO grateful, as no one else has come to help them.

The people of CCC have been so faithful in supporting the work that we do. We cannot do it without people like you. The prayers being offered sustain through the difficult times. THANK YOU!"



SOCIAL ACTION/MISSION OUTREACH

Thank you to the crew who went to Rippling Hope in Detroit on October 2: Diane Phelps, Debbie Jones, Pam Dykhuizen, Kathy Bird and Mark DeYoung, Mike and Jill Forton. Several work projects were tackled, including sorting donations at the Rippling Hope Center, working with library books for the Little Library boxes, clearing an overgrown backyard of brush, vines, and weeds, and visiting with a family in need of basic supplies.

If you are interested in helping the work of Rippling Hope, please be in touch with the church office or Diane Phelps, the chairperson of the SAMO committee.



FAMILY PROMISE DRIVE BY SAMO

The Social Action and Outreach committee is holding a Family Promise Donation drive October 10-31. The following items were selected as most needed; Pam Cooking Spray, Peanut Butter, Pasta Sauce, Popcorn, and Pillows (new). Collection boxes will be in the church narthex and the church office. Contact Diane Phelps with questions.

TRUNK OR TREAT - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, FROM 1:00-3:00PM

Join us for Trunk or Treat in the church parking lot, a long time tradition at Cascade Christian Church. Please sign up at the church office if you can bring your car and hand out candy to the children of our church and community. We appreciate donations of wrapped candy, and cannot accept any homemade baked goods or fruit. Participants can decorate their car and wear a costume if they wish, but keep it child friendly (nothing scary).

Please invite the children in your life to join in the fun, and in addition this year we will have a pumpkin carving contest. You can pick up a pumpkin from the church on Sunday, October 17 and bring it back carved on the 24th. A prize and bragging rights will be awarded to the winner. Plan on joining the church for this afternoon of family fun.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE - THANKSGIVING DINNER - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Many thanks to the Congregational Care Committee under the direction of Susan Strobel and John Duchon for the work on the annual Thanksgiving Dinner for Senior Citizens. Due to precautions issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the church will be hosting a drive through- take out dinner again this year. We simply do not have enough space to safely distance and host this as a sit-down dinner. Last year many chose to eat their dinners together with friends off campus, and we encourage all who are comfortable to do the same this year. The invitation for the dinner will be coming out in a few weeks. If you are a senior citizen (over 70 years of age) and are unsure if you are on the invitation list, please call the church office. If you would like to serve on the committee who will prepare for this dinner, please be in touch as well.

OPERATION SANTA CLAUS

Plans are again underway to help families in the coming holiday months as it has for the last 60 years. Last year, we made a plan to safely care for the families in need with gifts of toys and clothes in the pandemic. It worked so well! We are still fighting this virus battle, so we want to continue the processes we tried last year with a few additions.

Our "callers" will again be asked to call the families, gather gift wishes as well as shop, and then deliver the gifts. (We can arrange to have the gifts wrapped if preferred.) Last year, this allowed our callers to 'connect' more with the families and purchase gifts for them, knowing exactly what the parent/guardian shared with them. It was safe as well! We will need many callers, so please consider 'calling' on a family for us. If interested, please contact Peggy Boelkins at 616.889.4431 or email her at pjboelkins@gmail.com

We will be offering wrapping service to all of our callers this year and will be providing a food box for each family. If you would like to wrap on December 10, let Peggy know as well.

DAYS FOR GIRLS WORKSHOP

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

October 16, 1-4

November 20, 1-4

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

10.3.2021 SERMON: IT TAKES COURAGE TO ADMIT YOU'RE WRONG

So how many of you like to admit it when you're wrong? None of us do! We all enjoy being right, and sometimes will go to great length to prove we are right. It is ok if someone else is wrong, we're Christians, we'll forgive them, but us being wrong? You or me having to admit we made a mistake? No way! It takes courage and maturity to admit you're wrong.

Some of the major incidents that come to my mind when someone got it wrong, that someone made a mistake are these:

- The person who declared the Titanic was unsinkable
- Decca Records who signed on Brian Poole and the Tremeloes and rejected a band from Liverpool. Not sure how Brian Poole and the Tremeloes did - but EMI did quite well signing on the rejected band - the Beatles.
- More recently France got it wrong making some railroad upgrades, ordering high speed trains costing billions of dollars, only to realize later that the trains were too wide for the stations.
- And then there is a someone's copy error in the Bible that is very wrong. In a 1631 reprinting of the King James Bible, one word was omitted, and instead of reading "Thou shalt not commit adultery" the seventh commandment read "Thou shalt commit adultery.

We all make mistakes; we all get some things wrong. It is embarrassing make mistakes, but it takes courage, humility, and strength to admit you're wrong, and then to try and set things right. I think these are days where we need courage - and a reminder again, that courage comes from our hearts - it is a choice we make, out of love or obedience. We are in the fourth chapter of the book of Daniel, looking at his courage in a time of captivity in Babylon. Years have passed, Daniel and his friends have been advisors to King Nebuchadnezzar since they were young men taken from their homes in Israel. We've seen their courage as they remember who they are, letting God use them as they are, and they have courageously stood up for God.

Today we see another kind of courage, the courage it took King Nebuchadnezzar to admit he was wrong. Nebuchadnezzar was ruler of Babylon, the mighty empire, and he was not a humble man, not a man to be trifled with. He threatened to chop people into pieces for the slightest offence or lack of immediate obedience. But the King recognized that there was something different about Daniel and his friends - they are faithful to their God, they depend on their God, and this is seen in their wisdom, integrity, counsel, and honesty. Nebuchadnezzar looks to Daniel to interpret his dreams, and the account in Daniel 4 is King Nebuchadnezzar's humble confession of how he was wrong about God, he speaks directly to us:

King Nebuchadnezzar, To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth: May you prosper greatly! It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation.

The king continues describing how he was content and prosperous, but then he had another bad dream - a dream that terrified him. He called together all of the magicians, enchanter, astrologers, and wise men, and they couldn't tell him what the dream meant, until finally Daniel entered the room and listened to the King's dream. Nebuchadnezzar continued in Daniel 4:10

These are the visions I saw while lying in bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. 11 The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth. 12 Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the wild animals found shelter, and the birds lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed.

10.3.2021 SERMON: IT TAKES COURAGE TO ADMIT YOU'RE WRONG

13 "In the visions I saw while lying in bed, I looked, and there before me was a holy one, a messenger, coming down from heaven. 14 He called in a loud voice: 'Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches. 15 But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field.

"Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth. 16 Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by for him.

Daniel had to explain another strange dream to the king, and it was not something he wanted to do. He told the king he wished the dream applied to Nebuchadnezzar's enemies, and not to the King himself. The tree, full of life, birds, animals, the tree, so tall, straight, majestic, the tree, visible to the ends of the earth - the tree is Nebuchadnezzar. The king was a source of abundance and blessing for many, but not for long. Daniel said - "You, Oh King, are that tree". One of God's holy ones, either an angel or the Lord himself, had been watching Nebuchadnezzar and saw his pride, came from heaven, and said to destroy the tree, cut it down, but leave the stump, protect the roots.

So God had decreed that Nebuchadnezzar would be cut down, but not uprooted. The stump remained, to grow suckers, small trees, new growth, that would eventually rise to be a new tree, one as grand as before. The kingdom would be restored to Nebuchadnezzar, but in the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar would be afflicted - he would be driven away by his people, and he would live outdoors, drenched with dew, eating grass like a cow, for seven years. This affliction, when a person acts like an animal, is called boanthropy. It is a disease chronicled in medical literature and in other historic accounts. Daniel reported that this disease, this madness would come upon Nebuchadnezzar, unless the king changed his ways. A grace period would be given to Nebuchadnezzar, a year to turn from sin, a year to do what was good and right, to be kind to the oppressed, there was this chance Nebuchadnezzar's prosperity could continue.

And I believe we are all given that chance. The grace period given to us is as long as we are alive. We have the chance to admit we are wrong, that we need a Savior, that we can't go it alone. There is so much that is wrong in the world that we may not be able to fix, but there is something each of us can do- we can begin by recognizing our own brokenness, admitting we are wrong, that we need God. How else could we escape the cycle of wrongdoing? Sin is so pervasive - preachers don't often preach about sin these days for the fear of offending someone. Well not, today, sin is sin. Sin is anything, any time, any action that puts us first. Sin is when we have the delusion that we are in control, when we choose to be our own little god, and sit in judgment of others as we make our own rules.

I think most of the time we want to avoid sin, we don't really want to be sinful, but it is so tempting, it is so easy to do. We may not consciously think we are prideful, but we do this all of the time. How do we make things right? How do we avoid the trap of sin and wrongdoing? It takes courage, humility, and strength to admit you're wrong, and here are five ways to have courage and choose in your heart to make things right, to stay with God as you follow God's will, and to avoid making mistakes.

10.3.2021 SERMON: IT TAKES COURAGE TO ADMIT YOU'RE WRONG

First - be mindful. Sin will stalk you - the evil one will try and get in your head and convince you to do what is wrong by making it seem so right. Be mindful, be aware of this - watch out, especially if everything is going well for you and you are at ease. You are very vulnerable then - and the evil one can convince you that all of this abundance is your own doing, all of these blessings are your own creation. Be mindful - and remember where your blessings come from.

Second - be honest. To avoid wrongdoing, simply be honest. Tell the truth. Don't exaggerate your importance or minimize your problems. Don't lie, don't hide the truth. Live in the light, not hidden in the shadows. You'll never get it right if you're dishonest, and God, being God, knows the lies, the façade, the masks. To avoid wrongdoing - live in the truth.

The third way to avoid doing wrong is to be generous, just as God has been generous to you. If you done something wrong, be generous in making it right. If someone did something wrong towards you, be generous in forgiveness. Generosity puts you back to rights, and will do the same for those around you.

Fourth, be thankful - gratitude is a cure for so much of what ails us, stresses us, defeats us. Be thankful to God for all of the blessings, no matter how small. Being thankful will settle things in your heart, and it is hard to sin or do wrong when you are feeling grateful to God.

And finally when you've done wrong, admit your mistake, and ask for forgiveness. It is the most freeing thing you can do. It takes courage to admit you're wrong, it takes courage to ask for forgiveness. It will humble you, but humility makes us strong. Try confessing your sin, and asking for forgiveness, find the courage in your heart to humble yourself to do this, and see how that makes you feel. There is freedom and strength in confession and forgiveness.

This was the lesson Nebuchadnezzar had to learn. He seems to have disregarded his dream, he seemed to have forgotten Daniel's warning. In verse Daniel 4:28 we read of how he was out walking at his palace, and he said, **"Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty? 31 Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. 32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes."**

The dream became reality, the tree has been cut down. Nebuchadnezzar's pride is his fall. How many times had God shown him grace? Interpreting the dreams, seeing the Son of God in the fiery furnace, being blessed by God with abundance, with wise men like Daniel and his friends, and yet Nebuchadnezzar thinks it is all his own doing. His power, his might, his glory. Even as God has been revealed to Nebuchadnezzar many times, Nebuchadnezzar's filled with self-importance and pride. Not heeding Daniel's warning, he falls.

The description of his fall is in chapter 4 - he is driven away, he eats grass like a cow, his body becomes so hairy it looks like he has feathers, his fingernails become like the claws of a bird. He is like this for seven years. But as the dream told him, the stump of the tree was not removed, the tree had not been uprooted. After these seasons to repent, to be humbled, he has changed. Nebuchadnezzar continues his narrative, his confession.

10.3.2021 SERMON: IT TAKES COURAGE TO ADMIT YOU'RE WRONG

Daniel 4:34 - At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. 35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" 36 At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

The great prideful Nebuchadnezzar is humbled. He glorifies God, and God allows him to become greater than he was before. This chapter is his confession, his record of what it is like to be arrogant before God, what it is like to be cut down, what it is like to be humbled, what it is like to be restored. This chapter is the admission from a great and powerful King, that he was wrong, wrong about God, wrong about God's power, wrong as he made himself higher in his mind than God. It took courage to do that, it takes courage to admit you're wrong and to take responsibility.

So how about you? Do you have the courage to admit it when you're wrong? I fear we spend too much time looking for and at the wrongs of others, when maybe this is a season to look within and doing some soul searching. King Nebuchadnezzar had a beastly seven year season to figure out that God is God. How about you? What do you need to confess to God? What do you need to make right with someone you've wronged? If the king of the empire of Babylon could do this, I think we, as followers of Jesus can do this too. All of your sins can be forgiven if you confess them to your Lord and Savior. Be humble, courageously take the step, admit your mistakes, ask for His forgiveness, and you will have it.

Nebuchadnezzar changed, he learned from his fall, he admitted he was wrong. and I think that is remarkable. How many rulers, leaders, kings, queens, have been humble enough to do that in history? This king is quite a character, but he was teachable, he could grow, he could admit his pride and his mistakes. So God restored Nebuchadnezzar, his tree, his kingdom grew again. How about you? This might be a season where you need to courageously admit your own wrongs, prune your tree, and cut back or cut out what is sinful or tempting in your life. God wants you to grow, and I can't help but end this sermon with one last tree reference.

Our first parents Adam and Eve ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they introduced their descendants, us, to sin. But our Lord Jesus took our sins, and died on a tree to clean us up and restore us to God. And Jesus has gone ahead, making a place for us in the new heaven and the new earth, where we'll find growing the tree of life. Life, life abundant is what Jesus offers us, not life weighed down with wrongdoing. It takes courage to be a Nebuchadnezzar, to admit you're wrong, and then to praise the God who was, and is, and is to come. May you find that courage, and make things right where you have been wrong. And then someday, let's stand together under the tree of life and marvel at our great Savior. Amen and amen.