



Christ • Communion • Community

CASCADIAN WEEKLY

August 5, 2022

Week 125

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Hebrew 6:19

"We have this hope as an anchor for our souls, a hope both sure and steadfast."

Dear Cascade Christian Church,

As we think this summer about Jesus being the anchor for our souls, we have also looked at how we can share that hope and stability that we have found in Christ. In our ever changing world we need some solid ground, we need Someone to believe in, and we have found that Person in Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. One of our responsibilities as disciples of Christ is to share the Good News of Jesus with others. That is evangelism, and sadly "evangelism" has become an uncomfortable word, even among Christians. I wonder why we are reluctant to share our faith when we are so ready to share the other good news in our lives?

The quote "Evangelism is just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." is attributed to several people, and the first person I heard this from was my mentor, Reverend Raymond Gaylord. Rather than use the typical means of evangelism in his day (sharing a tract, for example), Ray went about sharing bread, starting Operation Santa Claus, Gaylord House, Second Mile House, and our jail ministry. He met people where they were, and as they were, and shared the good news of Jesus through service, providing for needs, and being there for the broken and broken hearted. That genuine caring brought a lot of people to the Lord.

Brennan Manning, a priest, author, and public speaker, shared many viewpoints that Ray did - and Manning's quotes on evangelism are worth sharing:

"The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians: who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, walk out the door, and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable."

"The story goes that a public sinner was excommunicated and forbidden entry to the church. He took his woes to God. 'They won't let me in, Lord, because I am a sinner.'

"'What are you complaining about?' said God. 'They won't let Me in either.'"

From *The Ragamuffin Gospel, Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up and Burnt Out*

Times might be different now from Ray Gaylord's day, but the good news of the Gospel has not changed, and people are still hungry for what is real, life affirming, and positive. People still search for hope and purpose, and can find what they need in Jesus. I am so thankful that the church is reaching out in some new ways this summer and fall to open our campus and our hearts to increase the Kingdom of God.

Please mark your calendars for these events - times to be united in Christ and to share bread with those who come to this campus. We cast the Kingdom net as one people, God's people, and let's do this with our sisters and brothers in Christ and with our Cascade community:

- August 22: Meet and Greet Regional Minister Teresa Dulyea Parker at Cascade Christian Church from 6:00-8:00PM in Centennial Hall.
- September 10: Cascade Heritage Festival on the campus of Cascade Christian Church from 5:00-9:00PM.
- September 11: Unity service at 10:30AM and church picnic at 12 noon
- October 14-15: Disciples of Christ Regional Assembly at Cascade Christian Church, details to be announced.

Thank you for being a church with an open door, an open heart, and an open mind where beggars like you, me, and everyone else can come and find the Bread of Life.

Keep the faith and share the faith,

Jill

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>Sunday</u> _(8/7).	Pre K-5th grade Sunday School and Crib Room- 9:30 AM 6th-12th grade Sunday School - 11:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous - 7:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Monday</u> _(8/8).	Soul Warmers - 2-4 PM Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Tuesday</u> _(8/9).	Senior Exercise Class - 1:00 PM
<u>Wednesday</u> _(8/10).	Men's Bible Study - 6:30 AM (Coffee House) Overeaters Anonymous 3:30 PM Women's Night Out Saugatuck Cruise - 4:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Thursday</u> _(8/11).	Grief Share Brunch - 10 AM (Gathering Place) Senior Exercise Class - 1:00 PM Al-Anon - 8:00 PM (Coffee House)
<u>Friday</u> _(8/12).	Church Office Closed Open Talk Group - 7:30 AM
<u>Saturday</u> _(8/13).	

**Financial giving for
the week ending in
7/31/2022:
Budgeted: \$10,652
Given: \$7,137**

GENERAL NEWS

SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

Open doors, open hearts, and open minds are foundational to who we are as Cascade Christian Church. All are welcomed here, and the physical safety and security of all people who worship and take part in activities here matters to us. The church Board is instituting some new safety measures around the church campus, and we appreciate your feedback. If you have any questions, please ask a Board member or Pastor Jill.

MEL TROTTER BOX

The mission committee at Cascade Christian Church is excited to announce a partnership with Mel Trotter Ministries in the "Corners of your field" program. This program places donation bins in various locations throughout West Michigan for donations of new or gently-used clothing and household items. The process is simple! Just bring your donated items to the bin (located in the parking lot nearest to the playground at Cascade Christian Church) and place your items inside.

WOMEN'S NIGHT OUT - SAUGATUCK

Wednesday, August 10 - Saugatuck lake and river cruise.

We will meet at church at 4:30PM, and the evening will include dinner and the cruise. The cruise cost is \$20-\$30, and bring \$ for dinner. Call the church office to sign up. Sign up by August 7.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We want to use your gifts and skills in worship! If you play an instrument or sing and would be interested in doing so as a part of our worship team, contact Liisa Erskine. We also have a great need for volunteers for our tech team. If you like to serve behind the scenes and have a good attention to detail, this would be a great place to serve. No experience or specific skills required, we can train you! Contact Liisa Erskine (lerskine@cascadechristian.com / 989-225-3697) to get plugged in.

GENERAL NEWS

MEET AND GREET WITH REGIONAL MINISTER TERESA

DULYEA-PARKER

Join us on Monday, August 22, for an open house/meet and greet with our new Regional Minister, Teresa Dulyea-Parker. Teresa is a native of Muskegon and is now the Regional Minister of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan. The West Michigan Disciples of Christ Churches are all invited to Cascade Christian for a reception for Teresa in Centennial Hall from 6:00-8:00PM. We hope you'll come meet Teresa and join in fellowship with our sister churches.

RETREATS AT CRYSTAL CONFERENCE CENTER

Sign up online at www.crystalconferencecenter.org. Call the church office for more information and to sign up to carpool.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

AUGUST 19-21, 2022

Registration: \$155

Commuting (includes meals): \$85

Registration Deadline: August 5

Register by going to the camp website www.campcrystal.org - go to registration and scroll down to find the women's retreat.

Join with others from the Michigan Region as we unite in fellowship and friendship and learn to develop as Women of Faith. Enjoy bonfires, vespers, spiritual sessions, worship, and free time. Bring a friend or family member! Our new Regional Minister, Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea-Parker will be the keynote speaker.

The theme is "Where I'm From" - Psalm 139.

MEN'S RETREAT

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2022

Registration: \$155.00 on campus

Commuting (includes meals): \$85.00

Registration Deadline: September 2

A weekend retreat for men across the state to be engaged in worship, reflection, and leisure with other men. The weekend retreat will provide time for work projects (optional) at Crystal, bonfires, vespers, spiritual sessions, and worship; plus individual reflection and free time. Retreat Facilitators are Bob Cornwall, recently retired pastor of Central Christian Church, Troy; and Ron Allan, retired professor at Christian Theological Seminary. The focus will be on helping participants understand better New Testament theme of the second coming of Jesus and life after death.

CASCADE HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 10, 2022, from 5:00-9:00PM

Join the larger Cascade community as we open our church lawns to the second annual Cascade Heritage festival, sponsored by Cascade Township. This will be a family friendly afternoon of games and activities for the kids, food trucks, a music and beverage tent, and a corn hole tournament. Cascade Historical Society will have Cascade Museum opened, and our Chapel will be open as well for tours. We hope the church will come and enjoy this time of fun and fellowship as we welcome all kinds of people to our campus. Please call the church office if you would like to volunteer as a host in the chapel or volunteer to help with the games and fun.

UNITY SERVICE AND CHURCH PICNIC

Sunday, September 11, 2022

Our annual Unity service will be on September 11 at 10:30AM, followed by a church picnic. Cascade fire Department will stop by, and there will be food and fun for all ages. We need a lot of volunteers to make this happen, so watch for ways to sign up to help. We are grateful to Cascade Township for the use of the tent, tables, and chairs from the Heritage Festival.

SUMMER YOUTH UPDATE

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

It has been a great summer here at Cascade Christian Church for the youth programs. Pastor Jilll, Adam, and Michael were able to put on 3 camps, a Vacation Bible School, the hot dog sale, a lock-in, pool party, and many more events as well (and still a few on the horizon!). We could not have done any of it without the support of this Church. Through these events, we were able to help spread the word to over 150 youth and young adults. Here are just a few snapshots from this past summer.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School for Elementary Students (Pre-K - 5th Grade) continues at our 9:30 service. Join us in learning about God's love for His People.

CRIB ROOM

The Crib Room is open for kids who aren't yet old enough to join the fun in the Elementary Sunday School. Children will be well-cared for in a safe environment with our amazing staff.



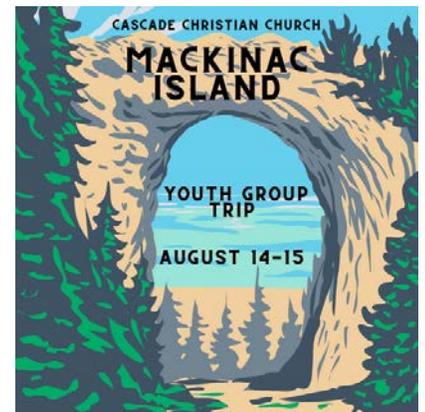
MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

MACKINAC ISLAND

We have rescheduled the Mackinac Island trip. We will be leaving after church on Sunday, August 14th and returning to Cascade the evening of Monday, August 15th. If you would like to sign up, please contact Michael Dirksen in the church office.

MICHIGAN'S ADVENTURE

We will be going to Michigan's Adventure on Monday, August 8th. We will be meeting at 9:00am in the church parking lot, and returning around 9:00pm. The cost of the trip is \$40. Please pack a lunch and money for games and snacks. We will provide dinner. If you have any questions or would like to sign up, please contact Michael Dirksen



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School meets regularly during the 11:00am Service in the High School Youth Room. We will be starting a new series in the fall, but until then we will be mirroring the lessons done in the 9:30 Sunday School Class. We would love for everyone to join us!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

Wednesday night youth group will be returning on September 14th. Youth Group goes from 6:30pm-8:00pm and is open to everyone 6th grade and beyond. Please mark your calendars and we hope to see you there this fall!

MIDDLE SCHOOL MADNESS

Middle School Madness is returning on August 26th from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM. (high schoolers are welcome to help!) Join us for games, food, and a fun Friday evening!

7.31.2022 SERMON: TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

This summer I have been preaching that Jesus is the anchor of our souls in troubled times, and that we can find reassurance in these difficult days as we rely on the promises of God. We have been invited to serve in His Kingdom and have talked the last few weeks about the Kingdom net. This net represent the gospel, the good news of Jesus, and that all are gathered into hear this good news. As fishers of people, as followers of Christ, we want to share the joy and stability we have, and invite others to get hooked by Jesus. As the Apostle Paul said to his young apprentice Timothy, **"God wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."** 1 Timothy 2:4

And if God wants all people to be saved - what does this mean for us as disciples of Christ? How far will the journey take us, and how committed do we need to be as we spread the Kingdom net to the furthest reaches of humanity?

Our summer Bible verse is so simple and short, but so profound in its meaning - **"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast."** If our hope is not in Jesus, we don't have a future, we don't have a foundation to build on. This week I have had the joy of working with first and second graders at Vacation Bible School - and I have had a glimpse of the future - and it is incredibly good. I have also been with friends, church members in hospice care who are nearing the ends of their lives. These are people who have shared the faith, they are the backbone of the church, they have given us so much joy and have been steadfast in serving God's Kingdom. Their faith has given the rest of us a solid footing. I feel like I have seen both the foundation and the future of the church, being with people who have their hope in Jesus, both young children learning to follow and older saints who have made the way for others. What a blessing!

And we are to be like them, that's what Jesus calls us to do - to have faith, to share the faith, to spread the Kingdom net so others can have an eternal future. We are to share this foundation of faith with every tribe, nation, and language, with people like us and not like us. We are to embrace new ways of reaching and teaching, while holding fast to the unchanging, amazing truth of who Jesus is, the Son of God and our Savior. We are to share with the same zeal, compassion, and kindness of those who first shared Jesus with us. We are to go to the ends of the earth, Jesus says, and friends, what a privilege to do this! Let's consider what the ends of the earth are to you and me.

We receive our call to action from Jesus in Acts 1:8: **"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."**

So one of the final instructions that Jesus gave to His disciples was to receive the Holy Spirit and to allow that power to help them witness to God's people worldwide. Jesus calls this "fishing for people." And when we fish for people, we don't just fish in our neighborhood. Think about it- if you enjoy fishing, don't you like visiting a new trout stream, a different lake, going out on the ocean, not just freshwater fishing? You probably have your favorite fishing spot, but there is something exciting about expanding your nets. When it comes to sharing the good news, God's Spirit empowers us to go to the ends of the earth with a deep desire to make sure others have the chance to know Jesus.

In Acts 1:8 we read some of the final instructions from Jesus before He ascended to heaven. Go, he says, fish, witness, share. And this amazes me: He told His disciples that it was better for Him to leave them than to stay and minister with them. In the gospel of John, John 16:7 - Jesus says: **"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."**

Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit, as we see in our main passage in Acts 1:8. **"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."** Jesus elaborates further about this Divine Helper the disciples were to receive - He says the Spirit will empower them to be witnesses, to share their testimony of Jesus to others. They will tell the truth of what they saw, heard, witnessed, experienced, and not just to a few folks, but to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

They will minister to others close to them, near them, known to them, and to strangers, people totally unlike them, distant people in faraway places. The Kingdom net is to stretch to the very ends of the earth because every single person needs to hear the gospel invitation.

I have invited you to share your fishing pictures this summer, and please keep them coming. I have invited you to share your

7.31.2022 SERMON: TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

fishing pictures this summer, and please keep them coming. Chuck Snow shared this one of his son catching a flounder – and it is HUGE!! I believe this photo was taken this summer in Alaska. And do you know why Chuck shared this? He is proud of his son and the fish he caught. The other fisherman is Austin VanVeghel – and his bluegill is just as exciting a catch to him as the flounder is to Chuck's son. Friends, the size or the quality of the catch doesn't matter to God.



God just wants you to fish and bring people in. When Paula VanVeghel shared this photo of Austin, she included this other photo of Jim Early teaching Austin how to fish. Little Austin lost both of his grandfathers at a very young age, and Jim Early is gifting this little boy with the joy of fishing with a grandpa like guy. When fishing for people, you might be the one to reach the next generation. Paula describes this better than I can, she wrote:

“We've been watching church from afar this summer as we haven't been home most weekends. I missed your ask for fishing pictures and thought you'd enjoy these anyway. A few weeks ago we were visiting with Kenny and Becky and Mr. Early was teaching Austin how to fish. He loved every minute of it. It was so heartwarming because my dad loved to fish, but never had a chance to teach Austin. True Cascade Christian Church fishing right here - members teaching and bringing up the little ones on how to fish.”

This is going to the ends of the earth – one generation telling the next that God is good, God is strong, God thinks you are a great catch. Big fish, little fish, significant people, people who might think they are a nobody, children, teenagers, older adults, everyone in between, all are to be caught. Jesus will sort it all out, but let's bring them in!

And church you're doing that! You support your Jerusalem, meaning our neighborhood, you're supporting our state and national missions, meaning our Judea and Samaria, and you're reaching to the ends of the earth – caring that all people have the chance to know Jesus. You do these things, and many more, because you know you can't just stay at your old fishing spot.

For those first disciples, Jerusalem would have been their city, and it included their neighbors, their local baker, butcher, banker, social groups, and temple. This was a more personal call to witness about Christ and share the good news with those immediately around them. So think of your local neighborhood, your coffee shop, grocer, hardware store, mechanic, book club, golf league, classmates – think about those who are close to you. They are in your immediate sphere of influence. These are the first places you can share, your place to cast the Gospel net. And you do – I think of our support groups, AA and Grief share, Operation Santa Claus. You support VBS and camps at Crystal so children will know Jesus, you support our Child Development Center, an awesome branch of Christian Education and great childcare. There are so many ways to have doors open and the lights on to welcome all people to check out God's Kingdom.

Judea and Samaria were neighboring cities and groups of people. People a day or more's journey away – people a little different, having different viewpoints, languages, customs, styles. This is another level of gospel invitation – the places you travel, your friends and family far away, the means we as a church use to share the good news beyond Cascade – Days for Girls, Weeks of Compassion, mission trips, Church World service blankets, an offering for the disciples Church flooded in Kentucky, our workdays and support for Rippling Hope in Detroit.

And finally, the ends of the earth – and that represents the people who are far out of your reach. Different countries, ethnic groups, languages – people distant from you, but who also need the Gospel invitation. We are empowered to witness to them too. Our witness might not be face to face, but we bring the gospel through Esther's Hope in Kenya through Reverend Joan Cornelison, through Nora Leon and her work in Haiti the Caribbean Children's Foundation, our New American's Congolese family living in the Orange street house, and through our disciples' missionaries and global missions.

We have a light to shine, we are a city set on a hill, we are to be a beacon of hope. Sure, it would be easier to stay in Grand Rapids, but that is not what we are called to do. So we reach out, we take risks, we jump in because we have heard the call to spread the Kingdom net to share this good thing we have found – our faith in Jesus Christ. And I can hardly wait to see what causes our teenagers will bring to our attention – their passion for Jesus, their concern for all people, and their care for

7.31.2022 SERMON: TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

creation all run deep. Get ready, and let's work with them to bring Jesus to the ends of the earth.

So close to home, nearby, or far from us, we have opportunities, and let's recognize that we can be different in our passions for Christ, and we differ in the causes that move us to action. And that is beautiful, and God ordained as we move together towards the goal of sharing Jesus with the world. And I know it can be contentious - even within a church, as we sometimes wish everyone was just like us - we think it might be easier. But whatever we think or whatever discomfort it gives us, diversity is a reality. Look around - diversity seems to delight God. Think of the variety of trees, flowers, animals, think of the differences between the people right next to you. Diversity is a fact that is to be a blessing, not a curse. You look different from others, you think differently, feel differently, respond differently - you are immersed in diversity every day of your life. And God uses that for His glory. Listen to what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

How is that for an idea- working together for the common good. Tim Murtaugh, one of our awesome former pastors, used to remind us to do what was good for the whole church. We each have our own passions, skill levels, interests, and can use them for the glory of God. And this passage makes it clear that God's Spirit gives us these different skills and abilities - and all of this is because God is at work.

I had a firsthand experience working for the good of the whole church for the glory of God two weeks ago. I got an email from Ron Cole who was up at Crystal, attending family camp. Ron is a board member, a third generation member of Cascade Christian Church. I had the joy of having him in Sunday School back in the day and presided at his wedding to Reba. Ron emailed me from camp to ask if he could be baptized in Crystal Lake. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change, signifying your death to self and your new life in Jesus. I was thrilled to read this and wrote back - YES - be blessed and be baptized. Then Ron wrote me, that he needed my permission, and I admit I was confused, this step was between him and God. But the wonderful pastor baptizing him, Bob Larimer of Blaine Christian Church, did not want to step on my pastoral toes by baptizing one of our members. I wrote back to rejoice and be baptized - Pastor Bob and I serve the same Lord, and every baptism is a push back at the darkness, every baptism makes the world brighter as God shines in our lives and churches for our common good.

Friends, what can we do for the common good? This quote is attributed to Harry Truman: **"There is no limit to what can be accomplished if it doesn't matter who gets the credit."** This applies to church, evangelism, to spreading the Kingdom net, to sharing Jesus. There is no limit to what we can do if we work together and don't care who gets the credit **if God gets the glory.**

We are one people, God's people. When I think of my highest hopes for the church one of them has to be unity in Christ. That doesn't mean we have uniformity - no. God has clearly made a variety of people who are free thinkers and doers. And an important part of our diversity is that God has given us unique gifts and abilities to further God's plans for this earth and His people. Here's the Apostle Paul again, and here is how he describes the power of God in our unity- in **Romans 12:5-8 So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.**

Whatever your gifting is - do it to the best of your ability. It's all needed and necessary in the kingdom... And frankly, if we are going to spread the kingdom net to the furthest reaches of humanity, we're going to need everyone, with all their diverse gifts and abilities involved. We need you - we cannot spread the Kingdom net without you. The job is too big and too difficult for any one of us to try and accomplish alone. In fact, without each other we really don't stand a chance. The good news is, we have each other and Christ. And He isn't going anywhere. And He isn't going anywhere. He is with you.

7.31.2022 SERMON: TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

As the gospel of Matthew comes to a close, Jesus gives the disciples some very specific instructions. Throughout history, the section I'm referring to has come to be known as *the great commission*. And in it, Jesus gives the disciples some parting instructions, which interestingly sound a lot like much of what we've been talking about for the past few weeks. Here is what Jesus said:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus tells the group of disciples, many of whom are the very same fishermen he turned into fishers of people, to spread the kingdom net, to extend the gospel invitation, to make disciples of all nations, to the very ends of the earth. This has been and continues to be the message of Christ to His gathered people, His church. And what I love how Jesus ends this passage from Matthew 28 **"And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

Instead of kicking us out of the proverbial nest and hoping we survive, Jesus commits to traveling with us. He had been with people on earth, walking with them, teaching, fishing, and now, by the power of God, Jesus is with everyone, with all of us. And not just for a moment, a week, a month, or a year, He is with us always. He's going to see us through to the very end of this age, and we will walk together, and work at His side.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 reminds us how we work and walk, and pray together, where Paul write to Timothy saying - **I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.**

God wants all people to be saved, those who are like you, those who are not, and all need to be brought in - from the ends of the earth. People can go to great depths to save someone - and as God sees everyone as a great catch, shouldn't we give our best efforts to save another? This passage tells us to pray and be thankful for all people - and God wants all people to be saved.

This is a good story of how some Michiganders went to lengths to save someone, told by a Kalkaska fire fighter: Once we went to help someone who had fallen through the ice. When we got there, he had already been rescued by some bystanders. What happened was he wandered too far out on unsafe ice, not knowing that there was an underground spring feeding the lake, making the water there warmer than the rest of the lake. This made the ice thinner. The man thought he was safe, but he wasn't. Sometimes ignorance is not bliss. The neighbors heard his calls for help and first they tried a rope, but it was too short, and some people gave up saying nothing could be done. A neighbor brought a ladder, but it was too short as well and others gave up as nothing was working. They thought the man was destined to die. But a stranger whose name was never told or found out came up with an idea of tying one end of the rope to his waist the other end to the ladder and he crawled out to the man, after falling in the icy cold water a few times he made it to the man, grabbed him and they were pulled to safety.

This fire fighter's story is such a good example of going to extremes to save someone, and we, like the unknown person in this story, need to act, not wait. You see, sometimes it takes thought and new ideas to save someone who is perishing, and there is no time to wait or give up trying because we are tired, discouraged, out of ideas, or the things we try don't work. The idea is to keep at it - keep fishing for Jesus- leave the results to God, and just keep at it.

Friends, let's keep working for the good. Let's keep reaching to the ends of the earth. Have you noticed that good feeling you get when you give of yourself? Maybe you helped someone with directions, of helped with a flat tire, maybe you helped a child this week or encouraged a teenager. You know the feeling of being a helper, an encourager, and it feels good- doesn't it? So many of us got that feeling at Vacation Bible School this week. That good feeling is a small sample of the way you can feel about your whole life. The way God intends for you to feel - like a person who fishes for people - like part of the crew of Jesus, the crew that goes to the ends of the earth. Keep the faith, and share the faith - amen and amen.