Ethiopia—May 2017

I am very excited to be teaching pastors at a Bible College in Aira, Ethiopia! I am teaching a two-week course on youth and family ministry at a rural school, and am looking forward to teaching and worshiping with Ethiopian brothers and sisters in Christ (and eating Ethiopian food!). I would appreciate your prayers for clear language with students (English is a 2nd or 3rd language there), and that I would stay healthy. Pastor Leighton will be leading Sr. High while I am gone (May 8-30).

Pastor Amy

Service Team
If you have some skills and talents that you would like to use to bless others, we are creating a database to be able to help respond to those in need. You can sign-up in Fellowship Hall or online. See Pastor Leighton or Shirley Dahl for more information.

Are You my Neighbor?
It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood, A beautiful day for a neighbor, Would you be mine? Could you be mine? ...

Perhaps you remember those words first sung in Feb. 1968. But beyond the TV show have you ever really sat and thought about the questions: Would you be mine? Could you be mine? Won't you be my neighbor? And if you have, who came to mind? Those who lived next door? Those you work with? Or perhaps, those you go to church with?

Hold that thought for a minute. Maybe you don't recall the surveys done to help the search team a while back, but I was flipping through some of the responses recently to help recall some of the things that had been shared. Over and over a few themes stood out. A desire to connect and grow in faith as a church family and a desire to reach out to bring that same love to those in the community. This wasn't about programs, but about people. It was in a way a desire to truly be neighbors to one another.

Now I know some of you are gracious caring people like Fred Rogers who can truly make anyone feel like a true neighbor and lifelong friend, but more of us are afraid in reality we are more like Dennis Mitchell going next door to see George Wilson. For those too young to know, that would be Dennis the Menace. We want to be a good neighbor, but worry we are invading peoples lives.
So, let’s pause for a moment. Let me ask you how you act towards your best friend (not including spouse). Do you share your cares with them as well as your dreams? Do you stop by unannounced? Do you quickly clean the house if they are coming over? If they show up dirty and smelly do you say anything? I mean really think, how do we treat our friends, and how do we treat others.

Well, I think we should treat our neighbors and fellow church attenders, like we treat our best friends. We love them for who they are and embrace them whenever we see them. I know, some of you aren't huggers. In that case, might I suggest we bring back greeting each other with a holy kiss. All kidding aside, what makes a church a great place that people want to be is not the programs, or the pastor's preaching, or the style of music, it's the people who are there.

So what do we do well and what do we build on?

We have some people that are great at meeting new people and welcoming them. I have seen and heard every month this year about a new visitor and someone who spoke to them. This is a great start.

I also see people spending time in fellowship with coffee and catching up with old friends. Makes it feel like you belong when people want to spend time with you. Keep it up.

How about the rest of the week. Do you get together with new people that you just met at church? Do you invite them out for coffee/tea? Are there old friends from church you haven't seen in a while? Do you call or stop to check on them? When do you decide they've found another church home and stop reaching out to them? When was the last time you asked a person to a Ferry event or Sunday Service? What if for every four you invited one

J.U.M.P. – Jesus Use Me Please

This summer we will be embarking on a summer offering for the kids and young people in our church and community. It is called JUMP or Jesus Use Me Please. It will encourage and allow our kids from age 3 (potty trained) through 5th grade an opportunity to learn about Biblical principles and then put those principles into practice in some way. The kids will be looking for service projects or opportunities to serve our church and community.

Our program will be on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. At this point, we are planning to start on Wednesday July 12, and run through August 2. We will be looking for volunteers to work with the preschool aged group and with the elementary aged group. Additionally, we would love to have our high school students help as well. If you are interested in working with the kids on a service project, teaching the kids a lesson, helping with the opening songs/skits, or helping to serve snacks, sign-up sheets will be coming soon. Sign-up sheets for the kids that want to attend will be available soon, along with the opportunity to sign up on-line. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact JUMP@ferrychurch.org
National Day of Prayer, May 4

Many Christians are unaware that they live in a nation that has a law in place requiring our President proclaim a National Day of Prayer each year on the first Thursday in May.

*The President shall issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a National Day of Prayer on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as individuals. (Public Law 105-225)*

As citizens and residents of the United States and as believers in Christ Jesus, we not only have a spiritual responsibility according to 1 Timothy 2:1-2 to pray, but a civic duty as well to heed our President’s call to stand in the gap for our nation. Who but God’s people have the ability to enter into the very throne room of Heaven with prayers and petitions!

The theme this year is *For Your Great Name’s Sake! Hear Us...Forgive Us...Heal Us!* Taken from Daniel 9:19, which says, “O Lord, Listen! O Lord, Forgive! O Lord, Hear and Act! For Your Sake, O My God...”. We have two ways you can participate. We will have a prayer relay and a prayer gathering. The relay will be prayer every half hour from 7am-7pm. You can sign up on line or in the narthex and be either on the at church or in community team. The Prayer gathering will be at Montague City Hall at 12 noon. We will have a time of prayer in the public square. We will have ad-

(Continued from page 2)

came? And what if for every five that came one found Jesus for the first time? (I'll encourage you to re-read this paragraph again after you read more about JUMP.)

I know some of you are thinking I've gone to meddlin' now. Some just thinking I'm pushy. I'm fine with that. It's my intention to help you reach up to God and reach out to others. But leaving you be is really just setting a standard or goal lower and doing so doesn't make it more achievable or more fulfilling when you do it. It just keeps you from reaching your full potential. And keeps you from reaching things only God could accomplish, since they weren't hard to do in the first place.

I'm gonna throw out a challenge. I know some will not even read this, some will simply nod in agreement or disdain, but some will rise to the occasion. To help remember it I'm calling it the "7-11 challenge." (It has nothing to do with Slurpees, sorry.) 1) Invite 7 non-Ferry people to an event with Ferry people. 2) Connect with 11 Ferry people outside of church and regular activities you participate in. That's it. In the next month invite 7 people, and connect with 11 people.

I'll even throw in one more thing. Since I want to meet and continue to get to know all of you as well. I'll be available at 7 & 11 every time I can fit it in my schedule, for all of May. (Even on my days off. And yes, both AM & PM. So four possible times a day, most days.) And if I'm out somewhere, I'll post the place so you can join whoever is there.

Jesus and Mr. Rogers both ask us about our Neighbor. Are you ready to answer the questions? 3...2...1....Go!

*Pastor Leighton*
I had a fellow pastor that would always reply to the good things happening in my life and church with Yeah God! So, I stole the phrase and used it for the annual Sunday each Spring when I would look back over the past year and reflect upon all God had done in and through us in the past year. So, I’m bringing that to add to the Sunday of the Spring Congregational Meeting.

One thing that I do, is invite everyone to write notes to others in the congregation that you have been blessed by or that you have seen God bless. We often overlook the small things we expect to happen, but this is a chance to intentionally praise God and thank others for what they have done in our lives. So, there will be time in the service to share some of the things God has done at Ferry this last year, so, come prepared to share them.

Come and see what God has done, his awesome deeds for mankind! Psalm 66:5

**FMRC Youth—May 2017**

“Fifty years ago, families worked together and ate together by [economic] necessity. Teenagers and parents spent hours and hours together; in the process, young people could not avoid observing and listening in on the adult world. These experiences laid a natural track for adolescents to enter adulthood”. *Family-Based Youth Ministry* by Mark DeVries.

Each generation has had its own challenges, and its own strengths. For instance, the Baby Boomers lived through great social change: space exploration, Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement and Women’s Movement. Though Christ remains the same, the church had to figure out how to preach the gospel in the social shifts of the 1950s and 60s.

One challenge for this generation of young people (as well as the past 20 years) is our tendency to segregate by age groups—in schools, clubs, and church. When kids only spend time with other kids, they perpetuate the “values” of adolescent culture. Mark DeVries, in *Family-Based Youth Ministry*, argues we have become good at helping our teens be teens and have a child’s faith, but have not equipped our kids with the skills to become adults with a mature faith.

As they grow and mature in life and faith, our kids need you, their church family, to share about life and faith! Our kids learn what it looks like to have a growing, lifelong faith by hearing from and watching the previous generations.

**Faith and Vocation:**

In April, journalist (and former FMRC member) Greg Means spoke to the sr. high kids about how his faith informs his job, and the way he honors God in his job as a writer. Chris Breuker, retired biology teacher and paramedic, spoke to the kids about science and her faith in God.

On May 10, we are inviting 3-4 scientists from FMRC to talk to the middle school and high school kids about their jobs, and how science fits with their Christian faith.

Faith maturity develops as young people are engaged with their faith—alongside mature Christian adults. Praise God that He has used communities to help us grow – faith families like Ferry Memorial Reformed Church!
Happy May Birthday!

02 Kaitlyn Hamann 18 Jim Franks
03 Carissa Biggs 19 Kyle Crow
04 Jack Houtteman 19 Bonnie Giddis
04 Stuart Jeffries 20 Dan Lownds
04 Emalee McGee 20 Kathryn Vriesman
05 Shelley Berson 21 Barb Poel
06 Angela Cole 22 Shayla Johnson
06 Ann Jeffries 23 Gwen DeRose
07 Jill Sikkenga 23 Michelle Hamann
15 Marie Hakken 24 Mary Smies
15 Amanda Holman 26 Kevin Ramthun
16 Cassidy Hamann 26 Lindsey Weesies
16 Anneke Vermeulen 29 Karen McClain
17 Linda Starring 29 Jim Morford
18 Brian Balon

May Wedding Anniversaries

04 Dave & Lyn Rypma
07 Ken & Bonnie Giddis
14 Lynn & Ike Nelson
15 Mike & Sue Joyce
16 Alan & Amy Weesies
18 Steve & Amanda Rudat
20 Kyle & Anje Crow
20 Jim & Ellen VanderMaas

May Volunteers!

NURSERY
07 Jeff & Renée Cherry family, Marion Jaunese
14 Matt & Lindsay DeRose family
21 Dawn & Isabelle Auch
28 Rich & Gina Houtteman family

SOUND BOARD
07 Jeff Auch
14 Roger Grasman
21 Mark Grotenhuis
28 Jeff Cherry

POWERPOINT
07 Ryan Springer
14 Ann Jeffries
21 Casey Lownds
28 Lizzy Cherry (if needed)

Children’s Church
07 Lynn & Kevin Ramthun family (lesson 18)
14 Gina, Rachel, Jac Houtteman, Braley Johnson (lesson 19)
21 No Children’s Church
28 No Children’s Church

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP TIME -
coffee preparers/servers
07 Dan & Janice Proctor
14 Gary & Sharon Ransom
21 Carol Witzke
28 Don & Barb Poel

cookies/snacks providers
07 Lynn Ramthun & Rachel Weesies
14 Gord & Chris Sikkenga
21 Renée Cherry & Chris DeRose
28 Brad & Susan Tate
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