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East Martin Christian Reformed Church



A View from the Pew

Saying Goodbye *a blessing in disguise*

The Echoes

Life is filled with goodbyes, some heartfelt and full of emotion, some gut-wrenching, some carried out with a minimum of effort or reflection, others even snarky or funny. In the Bible we find examples of necessary goodbyes, as when Abraham, upon the Lord's direction, leaves the Ur of the Chaldees, to travel to a land unknown; David moves away from home and the fields and sheep to play the harp for Saul; many of the prophets abandon the comforts of home to tell God's people to shape up, with hardship generally accompanying the move; an Israelite maiden (Esther), removed from her Jewish way of life, enters the pagan harem of King Xerxes. The list goes on and on, and each of these involves a goodbye.

In the New Testament, in the 14th-17th chapters, John records the farewell discourse of Jesus, when He tells His disciples (*goodbye*) that He will be going to the Father but will send the Holy Spirit to guide them. He commands them to love one another and informs them that the world will hate them.

When Paul sets sail for Jerusalem, in Acts 20 Dr. Luke records the occasion. In a hurry to reach the "holy city," the apostle decides to sail on past Ephesus, but he nevertheless wants to meet with the elders from the Ephesian church. So he asks them to come and meet him in Miletus. After exhorting them to preach boldly and hold fast to the truth, Paul "[kneels] and [prays] with them. They all [cry] as they [embrace] and [kiss] him *good-bye*. They [are] sad most of all because he had said that they [will] never see him again" (36-38a).

So we can affirm, then, that saying goodbye really is commonplace. In our lives it may indicate a simple "See you later," a farewell when we leave work or school for the day, hang up from a phone call, set off on a vacation, a job change requires relocation, or, well—any parting. Even the time of death means a goodbye. As Solomon records in Ecclesiastes 3:1, "There's a time for everything, and a season for every action under heaven..."

Since we often speak the word "goodbye," a brief history lesson here might prove beneficial. The word traces its origin back to the late 16th century, except then it was spelled *godbwye*. What does this interesting and seemingly unpronounceable combination of letters mean? It's the shortened version of *God be with ye* (now written *goodbye*). Stare at it a bit, (*godbwye*), and you can maybe see *good* is *God*, *ye* (*you*) is at the end, and the rest appears scrambled in between.

Sometimes people who speak other languages find fault with our *goodbye*, because to them the word seems so terminal (when actually, it pronounces a blessing: **God be with you**). Sounding not so final, for example, in German, *auf wiedersehen* expresses *until we see each other again*. Likewise, *hasta la vista* in Spanish basically indicates *see you around*. On the other hand, the Spanish, well-known *adios* literally means *go to God, and the French adieu I commend you to God*.

Moreover, our church services conclude with a goodbye, a departing blessing, often the very familiar Aaronic benediction (Numbers 6:24), "The Lord bless you and keep you..." Or, as found in II Corinthians 13:14, the Trinitarian "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Interestingly, the Bible specifically closes with this one: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen" (Revelation 22:21).

From the epistles, a modern translation specifically includes our standard "dismissal" word: "Finally, brothers, *good-by*. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11).

What if the thought of "**God be with you**" is really what our souls need as we face our heart-breaking goodbyes? Even if we can't say it to that person, we certainly can *pray* it in our hearts. And...

The next time we bid someone farewell, let's consider sincerely voicing, "God be with you." Or at least think about the fact that we're not indicating a permanent separation but rather commending the other person to the Lord.

Dear reader and friend,

GODBWYE

In Contact With Council



- ◆ The Council meeting of August 12 was opened with devotions by Don Wubben. Don read from the book of John and opened with prayer.
- ◆ The minutes of the July 9 and July 14 meetings were read and approved.
- ◆ Don revised and distributed the visitation list.
- ◆ There was discussion on Joel's financial package.
- ◆ Correspondence was received from International Campus Ministry.
- ◆ Tom and Rena are filling in for Les at SON-Life Camp.
- ◆ Deacons' report: The offering schedule was reviewed and a motion of support was made and passed.
- ◆ Evangelism/outreach: Scott reported.
- ◆ A motion was made, supported and passed to purchase books as needed for Monday Night Bible Study.
- ◆ Five Council visits were made.
- ◆ Discussed visitation with the Trinidads.
- ◆ A motion to adjourn was made, supported and passed.
- ◆ Dave Misner closed with prayer and has devotions next month.

Sunday School and Catechism

The Sunday School/Catechism teachers for 2024-2025 year are:

- ◆ Pre-K thru 1st grade: Amy Kalkman
- ◆ 2nd through 4th grade: Libby Dendel
- ◆ 5th through 8th grade: Bruce Tiemeyer
- ◆ High School: Jonathan Kalkman

The Sunday School and Catechism season will begin on September 15 and continue until December 8 at which time The Lord's Supper will be celebrated. There will be no classes that week. The Christmas program is scheduled for December 22.

The second half of the season begins on January 5 and continues until March 9 when The Lord's Supper will be celebrated. There will be no classes that week. Classes will resume on March 16. There will be no classes on April 6 (spring break) and April 20 (Easter). The last classes will be held on April 27. Bible Sunday will be May 4.



The Grace Course is a Bible-based discipleship course designed to help you understand God's grace and be motivated by God's love alone, so that you can go on to bear much fruit. It provides powerful, practical ways to submit to God, identify faulty thinking, and renew your mind. Prepare yourself for a life-transforming journey into the heart of the God of grace through this course. You won't be the same!

Some of the areas covered in the course include:

- ◆ Grasp hold of your forgiveness in Christ and stop guilt trips!
- ◆ Leave behind a shame-based identity
- ◆ Find freedom from fearful living into a new walk of faith and courage
- ◆ Discover the keys to get rid of pride
- ◆ Enter into the "grace-rest" life of abiding in Christ

The course will be led by Josh Shaarda at our church. We look forward to this opportunity to be renewed, motivated and transformed by our God of Grace. The first session begins October 6.

Bible Study Opportunities

Youth Group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Sunday evenings each month. Their next meeting is September 8 at 7:30 pm at The Anchor.

Ladies' Evening Bible Study will be meet the 2nd and 4th Mondays this fall starting September 9 at 6:30 pm. They will study "Ephesians" by Jackie Hill Perry, Jasmine Holmes, and Melissa Kruger. There are seven sessions on: Who is God? and then Who am I in light of who He is?

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes God as a merciful and forgiving Father who unites us in Christ and empowers us to live by the Spirit. We're adopted children and fellow citizens with the saints because of God's loving pursuit on our behalf. There is a sign up sheet in the narthex if you would like to study Ephesians with us this fall.

Contact Sue Tiemeyer at 616-291-2006 if you have any questions.

Men's Bible Study continues to meet the first and third Wednesday evenings at 7pm. See Keith Smit if you have any questions.

The **Coffee Break Bible Study** will begin it's new season on September 11. We will be studying from "*Proverbs 31 — A Woman that Fears the Lord*".

We meet every Wednesday morning in church beginning at 9:45 am with a short coffee time and fellowship, and then start the Bible study and prayer time at 10.

If you need a book, or have any questions, please see Deb Smit or Denise Leep. We would love to have you join us.

The 2024-2025 **GEMS** season will kick-off on Wednesday, September 18, from 6-8 pm. The GEMS theme this year will be Clothes Designed by Jesus. The girls will learn about godly characteristics outlined in Colossians 3. They will look at what it means to take off old habits and ways and let Jesus clothe us with things like kindness and compassion.

If you have or know girls going into 1st-8th grade, please have them contact Amy Kalkman for more information about joining GEMS this fall.

The **Cadet** season will begin on Wednesday, September 18, at 6 pm also. Please watch the bulletin for further details.

Information on the Trinidads

Pastor Joel, JC and their children will be here next week. Below is a little information about them.

Joel and JC were married on December 18, 2011. They have three children. Their oldest daughter was born on February 14, 2015. Her name is loelle (pronounced you well), their second daughter was born on May 18, 2016. Her name is loanne (pronounced you one) and their youngest, a son, was born on May 18, 2019. His name is loenne (pronounced you when).

Please take an opportunity to welcome them to East Martin.



Check out the New Books for August

UP FROM DUST — HEATHY KAUFMAN
(Martha's Story) Very interesting book—Worth reading
LIAR'S WINTER — CINDY K. SPROLES
An Appalachia Novel

COAL BLACK LIES — CINDY K. SPROLES
An Appalachian Novel
WHAT WE HIDE — COLLEEN COBLE & RICK ACKER (TUPELO GROVE #1)
INTO THE FIRE — IRENE HANNON
(UNDAUNTED COURAGE #1) Suspense
A LINEAGE OF GRACE — FRANCINE RIVERS
THE PROPOSAL PLOT — KATHLEEN FULLER (Amish of Marygold #1)
SECONDARY TARGET — ANGELA CARLISLE (Secrets of Kincaid #1)
AHOTI (My sister) (A Story of Tamar) MIRIAM FEINBERG VAMOSH & EVA MARIE EVERTON



Martin Area Resource Center

When grocery shopping please remember Martin Area Resource Center. In September they need Back to School "stuff".

Peanut butter and jelly; mac and cheese; tuna, healthy snacks, graham crackers, cracker packs, puddings and jello, juice boxes.

Thanks in advance for helping those in our community who are in need.

Bible League Volunteers present The Helmsmen in Concert

The Bible League Volunteers present The Helmsmen in concert at Westwood Christian Reformed Church on Thursday, September 19, at 7 p.m. They will perform a variety of gospel music.

Come at 6:30 pm to enjoy refreshments and fellowship prior to the concert. An offering will be taken, all of it used to provide the hope of salvation in Jesus Christ through Bible League's ministry of engaging people worldwide in God's Word.

Please join in this uplifting and entertaining evening.



Tithes and Offerings for July

General Fund	\$9,784.00
Ministry Shares	1,649.00
Faith Promise:	
East Martin Missions	500.00
Shaarda	655.00
Smit	1,755.00
Tiemeyer	150.00
Walker	245.00
Guatemala Orphanage	55.00
Benevolence	200.00
GEMS	100.00
Cadets	70.00
East Martin Christian School	3,138.00
Barry County Christian School	70.00
Heritage Christian School	150.00
Tri-Unity Christian School	200.00
Zion Christian School	70.00
ReFrame Ministries	250.00
Resonate Global Missions	256.00
Gideons	441.00
SON-Life Camp	70.00
Martin Resource Center	394.00
Project Hope	100.00
Wycliffe Bible Translators	70.00
Total	\$20,372.00

General Fund 41% behind
 Ministry Shares 28% behind

Offerings for September

September 1: AM—General Fund and Ministry Shares; PM—Christian Neighbors
 September 8: AM—East Martin Christian School; PM—Martin Resource Center
 September 15: General Fund and Ministry Shares; PM—International Campus Ministries
 September 22: AM—East Martin Christian Tuition Assistance; PM—Luke Society
 September 29: AM—Benevolence; PM—Kalamazoo Christian High School

Nursery

September 1: Jen, Violet and Willow Tuinstra
 September 8: Laura DeMaagd
 September 15: Riley and Addison Tuinstra
 September 22: Mary Bouman
 September 29: Rebekah Westendorp

Library

September 1: Carolyn VanderMeulen
 September 8: Linda DeYoung
 September 15: Ida Westendorp
 September 22: Rena Lynema
 September 29: Nancy Tuinstra

Raspberry Fluff

Ingredients

2 small boxes instant cheesecake pudding mix (or white chocolate pudding mix) 3-4 ounces each
 32 ounces of strawberry yogurt
 16 ounces of whipped topping (Cool Whip)
 16 ounces of frozen raspberries or any frozen fruit

Instructions

In a large bowl beat together the dry pudding mix and yogurt. I prefer using an electric mixer for this.
 Then fold in the Cool Whip whipped topping. (The lumps go away as you keep folding.)
 Fold in the frozen raspberries (any frozen fruit will work).

Keep refrigerated.

