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From the Pastor's Desk , , ,

Koinonia *Fellowship*

Acts 2:42 *"They (believers) continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."*

Acts 2:46 *"They (believers), continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*



Koinonia is a Greek word we translate as fellowship. It has a much broader sense than just gathering together on the Lord's Day. It is an every day word. It is a word that describes relationships outside the church meeting place. It is what believers do together (or should do together). It is what the early church in the book of Acts demonstrated spontaneously, even when they numbered more than 3,000.

Koinonia means to partner, associate, befriend, walk with, companion together, or share in anything (food, coffee/tea, friendship, work, worship, prayer, bible study, projects, etc.) The key ingredient that made the church attractive was *"how they loved one another"* outside their own familiar family circles.

In a small church often fellowship is limited to family circles,

relatives you know, fathers and mothers, children and grandchildren, aunts and uncles, cousins nephews, and grandparents, even in-laws.

As Ebenezer church grows with new people and families it will be important that we open our hearts and homes to people outside our family groups. The problem for most small churches is that we don't know how to do that. Oh, we can have banquets, potluck dinners and official events, but that is not really what *Koinonia* means. *Koinonia* is not an officially organized gathering of the whole church. It is people gathering with other people for the purpose of getting to know one another more intimately. It is for establishing new acquaintances and new friendships. So, how to we start doing that?

Summer is a great time to practice hospitality, which is an important part of *Koinonia*, or fellowship. It is casual, informal, in-home gatherings to eat a meal, share a dessert, play a game or two, have a barbeque, a bonfire, or just sit on the back porch and chat about each other's lives.

I have pastored several churches that had good habits of fellowship, and others who were strangers to fellowship outside the church. In those family-circle churches that only fellowshiped with their own relatives we had to encourage adventures in fellowship. It required individuals and couples to get out of their comfort zone and to invite people they did not know well to do something together. We began by encouraging summer backyard events. Keep it simple.



Here's how it works . . .

Once a month from June to September choose a family, couple or individuals you don't know well to do something "fellowshipy" together.

- Ask another couple to go out to dinner together after church (3 couples works well. Dutch treat – each pay for their own meal)
- Meet with people before church for coffee and donuts.

- Have them over Sunday evening for dessert and conversation.
- Do a bonfire/campfire hotdogs and marshmallows. (Keep it simple.)
- Once-a-month home bible study or fellowship gathering.
- Once-a-month home sing along with guitars or CD music.
- Have a game night at your house with popcorn and soft drinks.
- Have a “corn-hole” competition in your back yard.
- Play a round of golf with others you’ve never played with.
- Go kayaking on a lake or river and have a picnic afterward.
- Go on a bike outing on rails-to-trails.
- Rent a pontoon boat for a Sunday evening on the water.
- Have a motorcycles ride together.
- Invite a few people to share in a work project like cleaning up the cemetery.
- Go to a Pirates game with a couple of others.

I’m sure you can think of things we have not suggested. It takes a little effort, a willingness to plan an event, and a desire to be friendly. **Keep it simple.** If it is labor intense or complicated you may not want to do it again.

Plan ahead – July, August, and September. Do something for fellowship each month. If you cannot plan something yourself at least say, “Yes!” when someone invites you to fellowship with them.



Clerk's Corner—Session Report from June 21, 2021

TREASURER'S REPORT MAY 2021

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| BEGINNING BALANCE | \$29,599.70 |
| RECEIPTS | \$6077.95 |
| BEGINNING BALANCE PLUS RECEIPTS | \$35,677.78 |
| EXPENSES | \$11,778.87 |
| Balance 5-31-2021 | \$23,898.87 |
| TRUSTEE FUND | \$2,817.90 |
| MISSION FUND | \$2825.73 |
| GOOD NEWS SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS | \$369.49 |
| MISSIONS: DESIGNATED: | |
| LOCAL | \$105.00 |
| HELPING HANDS | \$5.00 |
| FOOD PANTRY | \$5.00 |
| AVAILABLE FUND FOR GENERA USE | \$17,770.75 |

Joan Coulter, Treasurer



John Adams wasn't happy about the choice of dates. On July 3, 1776, John Adams, who went on to become our second president, wrote a letter to his wife, Abigail, to tell her how excited he was that Congress had voted in favor of independence. "The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America," he declared. Adams so firmly believed that July 2 was the correct day on which to celebrate American

independence that he refused to appear at July 4th events as a matter of principle.

And about Jefferson being the author...

Thomas Jefferson is known as the author of the Declaration of Independence, but while he was the man officially responsible for drafting a formal statement of why the 13 colonies should break from Britain, the document was written by a five-man committee made up of Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston. Jefferson was not recognized as its principal author until the 1790s.

Joys and Concerns

Shut-ins and those in Adult Care

Homes: Eleanor Sigut

Long Term Prayers: Artie Minor,
Denny Root

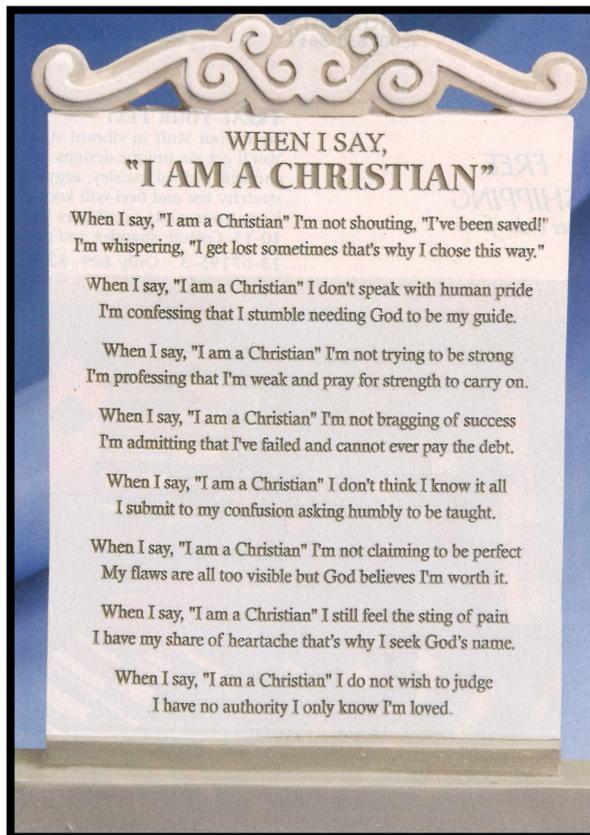
Short Term Prayer List: Dick
Bicehouse, Tom Clyde, Gay Griffin,
Will Hoffman, Evelyn Jones, Artie
Minor, Denny Root. Remember our
shut-in: Eleanor Sigut

Congratulations to Brenda Bengs
who received a service award for her
25 years working at George Junior.



**Our Ebenezer
Church family
extends our
sympathy to the
family and
friends of Joan
Shawgo, who
passed away on**

Monday, June 14. A visitation was held on Wednesday, June 16, and the funeral service was on Thursday at Cunningham's Funeral Home in Grove City. Joan was a dedicated and active member of the church and loved being in worship when she could make it. She did not let her physical limitations keep her from being connected to the congregation she loved. She will be missed.



“Heavenly Awe”

A Devotional by Cathy Donaldson

Rev 22:3-4 *“No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.”*



The prelude to services one morning at church was the song, ‘I Can Only Imagine’. I honestly did listen to the sermon but my mind kept returning to the words of that song. The images of what the author of the lyrics was describing enveloped me and drew me into the scene described.

After I returned home, I continued to think about how I will feel and how I will possibly respond to being in the presence of the One Who created and redeemed me. As the song says, “will I be so overwhelmed by His presence I can’t even stand? Will I fall to my knees in awe?” I can only imagine the love that I will feel from the throne of God.

Isaiah 6:1-3: *“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him were seraphs, each with six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, the whole earth is full of His Glory.’”*

Their eyes were covered because of His glory. Their feet were covered because of the holiness of the temple. We, however, will see Him face to face. We will see the holiness that we have only read and heard about. The image is overwhelming. The privilege of being in His presence is completely undeserved and yet we who are called by His name will be welcomed with great joy.

I can only imagine!



July 2021

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-------------------------|-----|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| | | | | 1 | 2 <i>Scott Duncan</i> | 3 <i>Jason & Amanda McGhee</i> |
| 4 10am: Worship Service  | 5 <i>Norm Straub</i> | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 10am: Worship Service | 12 1pm: Session | 13 | 14 <i>Lee McCoy</i> | 15 7pm: Deacons & Trustees | 16 <i>Kent Bicehouse</i> | 17  |
| 18 10am: Worship Service | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 <i>Steve Minor</i> | 23 <i>Norm & Nancy Straub</i> | 24 |
| 25 10am: Worship Service Newsletter Due | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 <i>Bill Jenkins</i> | 30 | 31 <i>Pete & Marcie Treese</i> |

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**We support the Grove City Food Bank
& Helping Hands Food Donations**

For July (we alternate the recipient each month): Sugar, flour, kid snacks (fruit roll-ups, raisins, etc.) canned sloppy-joe sauce, peanut butter, jelly, oatmeal, spaghetti & sauce, mayonnaise/Miracle Whip, paper towels, bar soap. Garden Produce Greatly Appreciated.

Sundays

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Rev. Dick LaFountain

CONTACT US

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