



The West Hampden Baptist Church

MESSENGER

"Behold, I will send my messenger..." Malachi 3:1

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Volume 19, Issue 4

FALL MESSENGER

Fall 2023

Thanksgiving Proclamation

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

We know that by his divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishment and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God Who made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwelleth in the heavens.

Abraham Lincoln, 1863

Schedule

October

TBA Deacon's Meeting 6:30 PM
 4 Missions Committee Meeting 6:00 PM
 9 Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day
 15 Stillwater HC Service 2:30 PM
 26 Service at Westgate 9:45 AM

November

TBA Deacon's Meeting 6:30 PM
 5 Daylight Savings Time ends
 7 Election Day
 8 Missions Committee Meeting 6:00 PM
 11 Veterans Day (Saturday)
 11 Fall Church Cleanup
 16 Services at Westgate 9:45 AM
 19 Stillwater HC Service 2:30 PM

23 Thanksgiving Day (Thursday)

December

TBA Deacon's Meeting 6:30 PM
 13 Missions Committee Meeting 6:00 PM
 17 Stillwater HC Service 2:30 PM
 24 Christmas Eve Service (Sun) 6:00 PM
 25 Christmas Day (Monday)
 28 Service at Westgate TBA
 31 New Years Eve Service (Sun.) 6:00 PM

Missions Conference, 2023

By Hattie Stickney

"The Harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

Matthew 9:37-38

It is hard to believe that we have just completed the 2023 Missions Conference. We need to keep before us each of the missionaries that we support in our prayers daily. They are all doing a great job with the work that God has called them to do. The guiding Bible verses the Missions Committee uses is found in Matthew 9:37-38; *"Then saith he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."*

This year, we were blessed to have seven missionaries that we currently support give us an update on their ministries. We had one missionary who presented us with another opportunity in the medical and dental arena, and two of our own members who have traveled this year with a medical missions team.

Our conference started with Cathy Hodsdon with Bibles International. Cathy and her late husband, Ross, were called by God to do translations to get the Word of God in foreign languages. When God called Ross home to be with him, Cathy has carried on with the translation work. This translation work included checking that all of the words were correct, something that has to be checked several times before it can be printed. She has hosted workshops held with folks helping to get the translation work done. Additionally, Cathy has done a lot of traveling to get the work done. Most recently she held a workshop at her home for translations to make sure spelling and wording is correct before it can be printed. Cathy said "there is a lot of checking and rechecking before anything can be printed." Please continue to pray for Cathy, as she is retiring in November 2023. However, she will continue to be of assistance, if needed.

Our one missionary that we do not support was Jared Bell and his wife, Faith. They represent Grace Dental and Medical Missions serving worldwide. While many see this group as a Medical team, GDMM's other mission is to share the Gospel wherever they go. Jared shared with us the ministry is tied to local works, and consists of Christian doctors, dentists and staff, where evangelism is as important as the medical work. Currently, the Mission is focused in West Africa, but they travel worldwide. They asked for prayer for

the work. When asked, Jared and Faith are at 45% of their support.

Another of our local missionaries that we support is Kathryn Johnston, the Director of Camp Jireh in Hermon, Maine. She is also helping to manage the local branch of Child Evangelism Fellowship. Kathryn shared with us the current status of Camp Jireh. The camp ministry went well this summer, even though there are still some outstanding issues with the facility. They continue to have a need to upgrade the facilities to meet code, and they are doing a reset to make sure that there is a coordinated project to meet those needs. Kathryn also shared that the office at CEF needs repairs but plans for 2024 Camp Season include 4 weeks for children from 4 to 13. Kathryn had some prayer requests: the building projects and the funds to pay for the work; the Good News Club ministry for the next year; fundraising; Church partnerships in the Camp Ministry; Staffing to include a Director for CEF, Central Maine.

Through the technology of Zoom, we were able to spend a Sunday morning with Don and Lorraine Nickerson in Japan. The Nickersons began by sharing an update on the family and their sons, Michael and Scott. Scott is currently studying on line with Pensacola, as he can't work in Japan because of the work visa issues. Michael graduated high school last year and is helping his parents with the ministry. Lorraine is very active in the ministry, serving the members of the local church. Don's message to us began with his community being blinded from the truth, something that has hindered the ministry. But, the work continues to grow, and that is one of the concerns that Don has as both he and Lorraine are nearing retirement age. His message to us was that the next generation needs to step up and continue the work. If he chose to retire, would there be someone to take over. Both Don and Lorraine are looking forward to a furlough in 2024.

As a member of our church and a nurse, Nancy Frost was part of a medical team that did a short-term medical missions trip to Guyana. In her presentation, Nancy focused on the ministry of Dr. Waller and his eye clinic. Additionally, she shared the other medical situations that the team dealt with while they were there. The final focus of the trip was to deal with the spiritual needs of the people that came to be treated. Working with a local church, the team was able to reach out and share the Word while they were there. There were some professions of faith and that is good news. We were challenged to continue to pray for the those who made professions

of faith.

Karen Hall shared a Wednesday evening with us. Her presentation started with a heartfelt thanks for the continued support from the West Hampden Baptist Church. She hasn't been home since 2019, so the update was very interesting. She mentioned the fact that the work has grown and is doing well. Karen's translation work is also flourishing. Many of the people in her community cannot read or write, and part of her translation work is literacy training. She teaches adults as well as children in small groups how to read and understand the translated work. Karen shared several prayer requests: for the Owens and Dion families as well as short-termer Cherith Hamilton; for Silas and Alice as they continue to help lead the Kiari Baptist Church; for Sunday school teachers as they take more responsibility in her absence; for Wiwi and Gohenare, who are chronically ill and have not made a clear decision for Christ; and for safety in travel this fall.

Home on furlough, Jon Mahar was able to come and spend a weekend with us. Mitsy was unable to join us due to visa problems. Travelling with Jon is an intern, Robert Martin. Robert is in a two year program with FIM and his desire is to work with Jon and Mitsy in Japan. He is a graduate of NBBI, and he's looking forward to his training with Jon when they get back to Japan in December 2023. Both men did double duty sharing the ministry of Jon and Mitsy Mahar. As part of the presentation, Jon explained to us that the Japanese people are very sensitive folks. Jon also shared with us the many materials that he has developed over the years that has been translated to share with the Japanese to help them to understand the gospel of the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.. Please continue to pray Jon and Robert for their upcoming meetings before going back to Japan.

While many of us look at Sharon Pedersen as a missionary to local youth, she spent many years as a single missionary and then with her husband, Ed Pedersen, working in Brazil. We were blessed to hear her speak of this experience. We were her sending church when she began her deputation in 1970 and then traveling to Brazil in 1971 with South America Mission. Initially, she worked with the Brazilian people to establish a Christian camp. When she saw a need to help the deaf in the community, she began a ministry just for them. The pictures that Sharon shared with the church family of the years she served in Brazil were eye-opening. She was able to share photos of her entire ministry time in Brazil, including her time with Ed and the

This Memorial to his mother is reprinted by permission of the author



My Mother's Busy Hands

by Mark Frost



My Mother sought no great applause She yearned for no acclaim The spotlight never was her goal And no desire for fame.	Mom darned the socks, mended clothes She kept the books for Dad She played piano for the church She spanked when I was bad.
As a laborer and servant She lived out all her days She craved no recognition Or widespread laud and praise.	A crafter, too, we shan't forget Artex and macrame She knitted many an afghan But not so much crochet.
Reflecting on her chosen path Its rewards and its demands Remember with me all the ways She chose to use her hands.	One thing that never troubled her Was building every fire Dad made sure to keep it warm And more than Mom required.
Ere first light the cock awaked To crow at close of nap She opened up her Bible Splayed out upon her lap.	No stranger to the mill was she Or storing firewood Truly said of my sweet mom- She hath done what she could.
Then while her family stirred to rise And horizon welcomed sun She folded hands in fervent prayer Until her list was done.	I suspect that now, again She's adding to her callous Having Peter raise his feet While she sweeps through the palace.
Dad had a special diet And those pills he had to take Mother's hands prepared it all And it took a while to make.	Her life of service to us all Would further be complete If those she loved while here below She'll meet on Golden Street.
We raised our beef and chicken To put upon the table Rhubarb, apple and blueberries To make us strong and able.	If you've not trusted her dear King Please honor her today By asking Him to save your soul And find in Him the Way.
She canned tomatoes, pickled beets And picked bags and bags of beans She tagged the fish, counted votes She baked and cooked and cleaned.	



autumn

Faith Promise Giving

By Pastor Michael Lynn

In October, I shared a message with you on the principles of and the purposes for faith promise giving. Our Bible text was II Cor. 8:1-15, and I asked you to consider "Gracious, generous giving is the result of genuine, grateful surrender".

When we looked at the principles of faith promise giving (:1-5), we determined that giving is enabled by grace and exercised (even) in poverty. Giving is evidenced through fellowship and is expected after dedication. We know that the Macedonian believers were rich in their single-minded, selfless generosity to God & others. When talking on this topic, we looked at the three elements of freewill giving; 1) proportionate giving, "*For to their power* (ability)"; 2) sacrificial giving, "*Beyond their power*"; and finally 3) voluntary giving, "*Willing of themselves*". We know now that they gave "By the will of God". "In spite of their own desperate circumstances, these saints exhibited faith in God to care for them while they attempted to care for the brethren" (Nutz).

When we look at the purpose for faith promise giving, four things come to mind. First, we give because of our maturity in faith. Much like the Corinthians, we are exhorted to abound (exhibit) the "grace" (gift) of giving. "The ability to give is also a gift, but, unlike the other gifts, it is an act that demonstrates all the other intangible gifts of faith, utterance, knowledge, diligence, and love" (Nutz). The grace (or gift) of giving is an indication of one's spiritual maturity.

Second, we are to give because of our sincerity of love. Giving should not be legalistic, but voluntary and

spontaneous.. We need to remember that giving is to originate out of a heart of love.

Third, we are to give because of our conformity to Christ. This becomes our declaration of Christ's grace. Our demonstration of this is the basis of Christian giving. "We do it for the Lord and the brethren because of the love of God within us. To give in this manner is to be like God who gave everything in Christ" (Nutz).

Finally, we are to give because of our generosity for others. Our motive for giving is "we obey God and believe that He will meet our needs as we help meet the needs of others" (Wiersbe). The measure of our giving is "According to that a man hath..."

So as we wrap up the 2023 Missions Conference, please consider what would the Lord would lay upon you to give to our Missions Program? We formalize this commitment through the use of Faith Promise Card. The amount is whatever the Lord leads you to give, and this can be one-time, weekly, monthly or quarterly. The other thing to remember, this is a commitment between you and the Lord, not the Church. It is my role to tell you that giving is Biblical, the amount is not.

So, as we begin another year of Missions Giving, won't you consider the Faith Promise Program? As we have heard this year, the need is out there, and we can do our part to meet it.

**Missions Conference, 2023,
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natives that he was ministering to in the jungles of Brazil. Even though they retired from the mission field, they remained involved in many ministries in Pennsylvania until Ed went home to be with the Lord. Sharon has been involved in CEF since returning to Maine and now is retired from CEF to care for her mother.

What a joy to have Tim and Kathy Heijermans join us via Zoom this year. They have been missionaries to Spain since 2020. Since moving to Spain, they have taken on more responsibilities for their local church. Kathy has taken on the role of the church pianist and she works with the ladies ministry. They both have a great deal of visitation together, as well as entertaining in their home. Tim and Kathy are delighted that daughter Karrie and her family are living near them in Spain. Tim is praising God for the progress in Spanish over the summer months, when speaking skills solidified a bit without classes. He asked that we pray for the spiritual growth and dis-

cernment for their children and grandchildren in these turbulent times. While they are no longer in Luxembourg, they ask that we pray for the church. Specifically, the prayer is that the church will be able to secure rented meeting room adequate for Sunday services instead of their present facility. Their final request was for continued health and strength to serve in the coming months. Tim closed his comments by reminding us of Matt. 28, and that we need to stay involved in spreading the Good News to the world.

Our conference was closed by our own Alma Rickards, who did a short-term medical missions trip to Guyana this year. She participated in the same group with Nancy Frost, sharing the gospel, as well as medical help, to folks in Guyana. Alma also took used glasses with her so they could be cleaned up and re-issued to people with vision issues. While the medical work took center stage, Alma shared many photos of people whom she was able to share the Word, and to show them that Christ was the way.



**Happy Fall
Y'all!**

Holiday Events

Fall Family Festival

October 28th, 2 PM to 6 pm—Come celebrate the fall season with us; crafts, games, outdoor events, food and fellowship. .

Thanksgiving

Church Thanksgiving Dinner—November 12th after the Morning Service. Please join us as we share a traditional Thanksgiving meal in the Fellowship Hall after the morning services.

Fruit and Food Baskets—more details to come, but please consider contributing food to both

Christmas:

Ladies Christmas Party—December 9th at 6 pm. Won't you join us. If you would like, please bring a gift of nominal value for the gift exchange or your Secret Sister's Christmas gift. More details to come as we get closer to the date.

Social Calendar

October

- 3 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
- 9 Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day
- 14 Ladies Fellowship
- 15 Services at Stillwater Nursing Home 2:30 PM
- 26 Services at Westgate Nursing Home 9:45 AM
- 28 Men's Prayer Breakfast 7:30 AM
- 28 Fall Family Festival 2:00 to 6:00 PM
- 29 Fifth Sunday Singspiration Eve. Service

November

- 4 Hodsdon Retirement Party 2 —4 PM
- 5 Daylight Savings Time ends
- 7 Election Day
- 10 Ladies Fellowship

- 11 Veterans Day (Saturday)
- 11 Fall Church Cleanup
- 13 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
- 16 Services at Westgate Nursing Home 9:45 AM
- 18 Distribute Food and Fruit Baskets
- 19 Church Thanksgiving Dinner After AM Service
- 19 Services at Stillwater Nursing Home 2:30 PM
- 23 Thanksgiving Day (Thursday)

December

- 9 Ladies Christmas Party 6:00 PM
- 11 Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
- 17 Services at Stillwater Nursing Home 2:30 PM
- 24 Christmas Eve Service 6:00 PM
- 25 Christmas Day (Monday)
- 28 Services at Westgate Nursing Home 9:45 AM
- 31 New Year's Eve Service 6:00 PM