



September 2024

A monthly publication of the
East Martin Christian Reformed Church



A View from the Pew

Weapons of Mass Destruction T.H.I.N.K.

In school, a class (or an activity within a class) often dreaded by students is public speaking. That's very interesting, actually, because daily, for most of us, our tongues easily and effortlessly spew forth words. In another arena (that of warfare), biological, chemical, radiological, nuclear or any other weapon (that can kill or significantly harm many people) constitutes a Weapon of Mass Destruction or WMD. Similarly, however, "The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Proverbs 12:18). Moreover, "The tongue has the power of life and death... and those who love to talk will reap the consequences" (Proverbs 18:21 NLT). Just what might this power of life and death look like, and how should we manage it?

When motivated by Satan, we may become full of bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, earthly concerns and desires, unspiritual thoughts and ideas, disorder, and evil. And certain sins of the tongue manifest themselves. These can include both familiar and common ones: character assassination, harsh words, backbiting, cursing, gossiping, grumbling, slander, and lying. Ouch!

In his epistle, James emphatically describes the tongue as "restless and evil, full of deadly poison" (3:8). Continuing, he states, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness" (3:9). Then he quickly admonishes (3:10), "This should not be!"

Rather, we must watch our words earnestly and assiduously (assidu—what?! Yes, that's a big word, but it really fits here. It means "with great care and perseverance."). After all, words have tremendous power to bless or to wound. When we speak carelessly or negatively, we damage not only others but also ourselves.

Conversely, when motivated by God and His wisdom, for starters, we become full of these qualities: mercy; love and consideration for others; peace; submission; sincerity; impartiality; and righteousness.

Therefore, let's curb weapons of mass destruction in our lives through taking some action steps and instead employ our tongues in honoring the Lord. Bottom line, we must commit to radical surgery from the hand of the Great Physician and Shepherd of our hearts and rid ourselves "completely of all these things: anger, rage, malice, slander, and obscene (abusive,

The Echoes

filthy, vulgar) language” from [our] mouth[s] (Colossians 3:8). This will enable us to talk less and listen more. After all, in life there’s “A time to be quiet and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7b). Let’s choose to THINK: Is it True? Is it Helpful? Is it Inspiring? Is it Necessary? Is it Kind?

When we communicate with the Lord, certainly we lay aside WMD’s. It behooves us to take the same approach in our interactions with and when speaking to others. Charles Spurgeon notes

Our tongue is the glory of our frame, and it is given us that we may give glory to Him Who framed it. Articulate speech, which is denied to birds and beasts, is given to us for the major reason that we may articulately and distinctively praise and magnify the name of the Most High.

Ultimately, to be kinder in our words, we must first be kinder in our thoughts. Jesus cautions, “What you say flows from what is in your heart” (Luke 6:45 NLT). Paul, discusses this idea, writing, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen (Ephesians 4:29).

Henceforth, may our “public speaking” reflect (1) lives transformed by the “renewing of [our] minds” (Romans 12:2) as well as (2) hearts aligned with His—thus blessing, with deep respect and love, those within range of our voices.

In Contact With Council



- ◆ The Council meeting of September 10 was opened by Wayne Leep reading from Acts 4:8-22 and a devotion dealing with spending time with Jesus. Wayne opened with prayer.
- ◆ All Council members were present.
- ◆ The minutes of the August 12 meeting were read. A motion to accept was supported and passed.
- ◆ Communications: Josh Shaarda will be leading the Grace Course coming this fall.
- ◆ Don Wubben is checking out Internet service with 123 net and possible new phone service.
- ◆ A visitation schedule was updated for Pastor Joel and the congregation so he and JC can meet everyone.
- ◆ Pulpit supply is covered until Thanksgiving.
- ◆ Deacons’ report: The offering schedule was presented. A motion of support was made and passed. General fund is 53% behind; ministry shares is 35% behind.
- ◆ There was discussion on remuneration for Pastor Joel. Don will follow up with him.
- ◆ A motion was made, supported and passed to install a handrail on the west side of the entry doors coming up the cement walk. Cameron will make it; Building and Grounds will install.
- ◆ Worship committee—met
- ◆ Evangelism outreach—no meeting
- ◆ Building and Grounds—changed filter on AC unit, washer and dryer purchased for parsonage.
- ◆ Finance committee—no meeting
- ◆ Church security—put new batteries in A.D. machines.
- ◆ Seven Council visits were made.
- ◆ Letter from the Health Department outlined a couple of water issues Tom Rook will handle.
- ◆ Melodie Norris is no longer interested in the church secretary position. Libby Dendel has expressed interest.

- ◆ Rozalyn Denzel is interested in the janitor position.
- ◆ There was discussion of moving the evening service to an earlier time.
- ◆ A motion to adjourn was supported and passed.
- ◆ Bruce Tiemeyer closed with prayer and has devotions next month.



Check Out What's New in Our Library

ONE LAST PROMISE—
SUSAN MAY WARREN
(Alaska Air One Rescue #3)

MATTERS OF THE HEART—KELLY IRVIN
(An Amish Calling #2)

BY EVENINGS LIGHT—LESLIE GOULD
(Amish Memories #3) Set in cold war
Germany and present-day Lancaster County
Very historical – Good book

SAVED BY THE MATCHMAKER—JODY
HEDLUND (A Shanahan Match #2)

THE VANISHED—CARA PUTMAN (Secrets
To Keep #1)

A MATCH IN THE MAKING—JEN TURANO
(The Matchmakers #1)

This author is known for writing quirky
historical romances set in the high society of
the 1880's. Good book.

TO SPARK A MATCH—JEN JURANO
(The Matchmakers #2)

MEETING HER MATCH—JEN TURANO (The
Matchmakers #3)

What are our Graduates Doing?

I graduated from Lake Michigan College in the spring of 2024 with an Associates in Arts (AA) degree. I work at a non-profit called Community Action of Allegan County. I am a program assistant, and help with the diaper program and commodities.

I praise God for this opportunity for work because I love to help my community, and He is helping me do so!

Rozalyn Denzel

The Three G's: Grip, Grit, and the Gospel

In the world of insurance, it's Triple A (AAA). In basketball, we hear about the trey (the three-point shot). But for the 190 attendees of this year's Bible League Conference, the theme was triple G, based on I Corinthians 16:13: **Be careful. Hold firmly to your faith. Have courage and be strong.**

Annually, the program includes meeting Bible League personnel from the Illinois office such as CEO Jos Snoep, who led opening devotions; John Scafe reporting on Legacy Thrift; representatives from the field like Santosh Chandran who provided the Asia Pacific Inside-Scoop; a team of individuals singing an especially moving "How Great Is Our God" in various Indian dialects/languages; and vibrant, in-person worship and praise led again by Elisabeth and Mark Sooy. And, what gathering would be complete without delicious food?

A tasty and colorful lunch, however, wasn't the only food enjoyed at Friendship Christian Reformed Church on Friday, September 6, 2024. Engaging keynote speakers Craig and Molly Sanborn served up spiritual nourishment as they (often humorously) took us through **Grip, Grit, and the Gospel.**

Let's consider the "menu" for the day. Our "meal" began with **Grip (Be careful.)**. After emphasizing the truth that God will use anyone and anything to talk about Jesus—yes, even something as mundane as cheeseballs! —Craig and Molly Sanborn highlighted present day threats to the Gospel, and thus our need to *be careful*. First, the **invisible threat**, those forces of darkness (powers of the air and principalities of this world) against which we need to "Control yourselves and be careful! (I Peter 5:8) by "staying with the pack." This means close and constant communing/fellowshipping with other believers.

Second, there's the **internal threat**. More accurately, this might be called a "sinternal" threat, that of selfish, fleshly desires. Psalm 139:23-24 expresses this: "God, examine me and know my mind. Test me and know all my worries. Make sure that I am not going the wrong way. Lead me on the path that has

always been right.” I need to recognize where I’m vulnerable as well as recognize that if I fail to do what is right, I’m sinning (James 4:7). Craig and Molly urged us not to miss out on what God’s calling us to do.

Third, there is the **external threat**. We live in a post-Christian culture. Whether we like it or not, Christianity is no longer a dominant force. In fact, anything remotely offending gets attacked or even squashed, cancelled. This requires that believers stand out against the culture. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13).

So, yes, “get a **GRIP**”!

The “bill of fare” now directed us to **Grit (Hold firmly to your faith.)** We accomplish this by remembering. First, we must not forget the Lord. The husband and wife duo called this **God’s record**, and they provided practical ways of noting His track record of faithfulness. For example, put post-it praises on a wall; create a jar of smooth stones with a place or date; make a tee shirt blanket/quilt; in a large picture frame, display multiple photos. Each of these, when seen by others, becomes a natural segue into telling our God-story.

What else should we remember? **God’s Word**, which guides, guards, and grows us. “Your word is like a lamp that guides my steps, a light that shows the path I should take” (Psalm 119:105).

Third, we should remember **God’s people**. “We should think about each other to see how we can encourage each other to show love and do good works. We must not quit meeting together, as some are doing. No, we need to keep on encouraging each other. This becomes more and more important as we see the Day getting closer” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Finally, let us remember **our purpose**: Love God, love others. Know Christ and make Him known. Make a dent where you are sent. Or, in order to bless, use the acronym **Be** in prayer; **L**isten to the Spirit; **E**at together; **S**erve in love; and **S**hare your story. How is God calling me to BLESS? And, Lord, in what ways can I make a dent where I’m sent?

It’s important to operate with “true **GRIT**”!

So, we’re now two-thirds of the way through our verse and will move on with the “carte du

jour,” the third G, “**GOSPEL**” (**Have courage and be strong.**) This involves three steps of seeking.

Seek

1. **hope** from the heroes of the faith. We have all the great people around us as examples. Their lives tell us what faith means. So, we, too, should run the race that is before us and never quit. (See Hebrews 11 for a biblical list.) Pay attention to the exhortation in Hebrews 12:2a, “We must never stop looking to Jesus. He is the leader of our faith, and he is the one who makes our faith complete.”
2. **comfort** from Christ. We can feel free to come before the throne of God where there is grace. We *can* have courage and strength.
3. **power** from the Holy Spirit. “I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy and peace as you trust in Him” (Romans 15:13.) Happiness will flow out of you by the power of the Holy Spirit.

To conclude, you’ve just nibbled on a meaty and nourishing “meal.” Savor the tasty/ appetizing/ scrumptious offering. Actually, develop a hunger for the Word, as it offers a full “spread” or feast which Americans tend to take for granted, while at the same time untold numbers of people worldwide long to have a Bible in their hands.

Perhaps you missed this year’s conference. Next year’s event will include a first-time fundraiser—selling gently used purses and jewelry. So, sort through your possessions and select items to donate. These monies will be added to the anticipated five million raised through the thrift stores in 2024 and the offering of \$8700 taken this year’s Michigan conference, which provide Bible distribution worldwide. Plus, you won’t want to miss the fellowship with other men and women of faith.

Determine now that in 2025, you will attend the Bible League Conference. A dynamic keynote speaker will encourage you in your walk. Until then, let your soul eat well at the Lord’s banquet table. And **Be careful. Hold firmly to your faith. Have courage and be strong.**



Thank You for joining with friends of Bible League to provide God's Word! We appreciate the generous contributions raised. Together, our church was able to provide \$575 for ministry.

Continue to pray with us for the provision of God's Word to a lost and needy world. Thank you for serving the under-resourced church.



Harvest Sale

East Martin Christian School will hold its 81st annual Harvest Sale on Saturday, October 12, at 4 pm.

If you would like to donate or sponsor this event, please contact Jessica Tucker at 269.998.2960 with items/description to be included in the Harvest Sale booklet. Please be sure to turn in all donations (excluding perishable items) and auction items to the school office by October 4th.

Thank you so much for your support of the Harvest Sale and of Christian education at East Martin Christian School.



Martin Area Resource Center

When grocery shopping in October, please remember the needs of those less fortunate.

Martin Resource Center needs the following:

Toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, paper plates, female sanitary napkins/tampons, wraps, baggies, foil.

Library

October 6: Carolyn VanderMeulen
 October 13: Linda DeYoung
 October 20: Ida Westendorp
 October 27: Rena Lynema

Nursery

October 6: Jen, Violet and Willow Tuinstra
 October 13: Laura DeMaagd
 October 20: Riley and Addison Tuinstra
 October 27: Mary Bouman

Greeters

October 6: AM—Doug & Mary VanDerMeulen, Bruce Tiemeyer; PM—Earl Wykstra
 October 13: AM—Bruce & Renee Aukema, Vern Klaasen; PM—Marcia Bouman
 October 20: AM—Randy & Mary Bouman, Scott Tuinstra; PM—Chase & Laura DeMaagd
 October 27: AM—Joe DeKoekkoek and Harold Wykstra, Tim Westendorp; PM—Merrie Beth DenBoer

Ushers

October 6: Ryan Tucker, Caleb Tuinstra, Cameron Tuinstra
 October 13: Henry Tuinstra, Henry M. Tuinstra, Scott Tuinstra
 October 20: Trayton Tuinstra, Dean VanderMeulen, Tim Westendorp
 October 27: Tom Westendorp, Dean Wubben, Don Wubben

Tithes and Offerings for August

General Fund	\$7,285.80
Ministry Shares	1,358.00
Faith Promise	
Shaarda	245.00
Smit	145.00
Tiemeyer	75.00
Walker	115.00
Guatemala Orphanage	30.00
East Martin Christian School	2,655.00
Church Library	500.00
Martin Resource Center	380.00
SON-Life Camp	334.00
Bible League Intl	180.00
Wycliffe Bible Translators	274.00
Total	\$13,576.80

General Fund—behind 53%
 Ministry Shares—behind 35%

Offering Schedule for October

October 6: AM—General Fund/Ministry Shares; PM—World Renew—DRS
October 13: AM—East Martin Christian School; PM—Tri-Unity Christian School
October 20: AM—General Fund/Ministry Shares; PM—Pine Rest Christian Hospital
October 27: AM—General Fund/Ministry Shares; PM—Growing Hope Globally

Almond Butter Zucchini Brownies (gluten-free)



Ingredients:

1 cup finely grated zucchini
1 cup creamy almond butter
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
1 large egg
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1/3 cup cacao powder (or unsweetened cocoa powder)
1/4 cup almond flour
1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp kosher salt
1/3 cup dark chocolate chips plus more for sprinkling on top

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease an 8x8 inch baking dish.
Use a clean towel to squeeze out as much moisture as possible from shredded zucchini.
Whisk together almond butter, maple syrup, egg and vanilla extract in a medium bowl.
Mix together cacao powder, almond flour, baking powder and salt in a separate bowl.
Pour wet ingredients into dry and stir to combine.
Fold in shredded zucchini, then chocolate chips.
Pour batter into prepared baking pan and top with extra chocolate chips as desired.
Bake for 20-25 minutes until brownies are glossy and a toothpick comes out mostly clean. (If you prefer cakey brownies, bake until toothpick comes out completely clean.)

Cucumbers

I read a mystery novel last week in which a profound question was asked by one of the main characters. “When does a cucumber become a pickle?” I had never really thought about it before, so I paused and began thinking. When does a sinner become a saint? I hope you can see the parallelism in my thought process.

The life of a pickle begins in the mind of the cucumber picker. From the moment of selection until consummation, the transformation is in the hands of the maker. The cucumber is taken from the field, cleansed of its filth, placed in a salty brine, and sealed in a jar. On the day of the maker’s choosing, he will open the jar, take out a cucumber, bite it, and say, “Now that’s a pickle.” From picker to pickle, the cucumber is the beneficiary of perseverance. Similarly, we have been selected, cleansed, infused with the Spirit, sealed and preserved until that Day.

I John 3:2 “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”

Rom 8:29-30 “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.” It’s a process.

Hope to see you tomorrow or soon at PCC.
Once a pickle, always a pickle.

Jim Jent
Providence Christian Church, Cape Coral,
Florida
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Would you like a deeper connection with God's Grace?

Join us for:

The Grace Course

led by Josh Shaarda

Learn how God's grace helps us...

Live free and fruitful lives in Christ

Overcome shame in the presence of God and people

Walk free from nagging guilt

Experience victory over sinful habits

Replace fear with daily courage

Enjoy peace instead of anxiety

Bear fruit for eternity as peacemakers

East Martin Christian Reformed Church

1782 5th Street Martin, MI

Sunday Evenings 6:00 pm

October 6 & 20

November 3, 17, & 24

December 1, 8, & 15