

Open Door Update

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3420 County Road LL
Port Washington, WI (262-284-0711)

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How are we to know the “WILL OF GOD”?

Through the years this question has come up for me personally and many others that I know have asked this question as well. Particularly when it comes as we are trying to make specific decisions in life – What career should I train for? Should I take this job or not? Should I marry this person or not? Should I buy this house, car, or something else or not? Should I retire now? The last question has been more on the fore front in my life over the last year or so. So how do we know what to do?

I would like to share some of the principles that I have learned over the years, not that I know all the answers as I am still learning. This is not to give you advice for making the decisions before you, but as a testimony of God’s faithfulness to Nora and me over the years. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 comes to mind: “For **this is the will of God**, your sanctification...” Verse 1 and the context are for us as believers in Christ to live our lives pleasing to the Lord. If it is not pleasing to the Lord, it is clearly not His will for us. The application Paul is talking about is sexual purity, so any thoughts or plans we may have which violates God’s standards of purity or holiness in regard to moral values is obviously not God’s will. I am so thankful I was taught by godly parents regarding this, to choose a godly woman for a life partner and to wait until marriage for having sex. I have never regretted following God’s will in my life in that area.

Psalms 37:4 says: “Delight yourself in the Lord: And He will give you the desires of your heart.” I have found that verse very encouraging and helpful in decision making regarding the desires of my heart. There is definitely a qualifier as to what desires we are to pursue – it must be pleasing to the Lord. Psalm 106:15 has helped me see the other side of just wanting my own way: “So He gave them their request, but sent a wasting disease among them” or leanness into their soul. This was about Israel in the wilderness craving meat and complaining about the manna day in and day out.

Another verse that has encouraged me when I don’t think everything is the way I want it is 1 Thessalonians 5:18 “In everything give thanks; for this is **God’s will** for you in Christ Jesus.” Now that one is hard to really live. In everything? Yes, He really does mean everything, not because everything that happens in our lives is pleasant and enjoyable, but because God is more concerned about my holiness than my happiness. He wants me to grow as His child, not as a self-centered, spoiled brat that always gets his way.

Now about the retirement decision. Many have told me something to the effect that Christians aren’t to retire – implying I shouldn’t retire. And I understand that too. Yet some times we can be so busy serving Jesus that we don’t take time to enjoy our relationship with Him. Yet service for the Lord is all a part of our worship as well – Hebrews 12:28; 13:15-16, 20-21. Proverbs 16:9 is my encouragement in this: “The mind of the man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.” We plan what we think is the right thing to do, but if we are sensitive to the Lord, He will often redirect our steps in something different than our plans. Praise God! He cares about us, so let us find His will by desiring to please Him in all we do and say.

Pastor Jim

You Can Tell It!

A Seminar in Personal Evangelism

Hear ye! Hear ye!

Have you doubted you could share the gospel clearly? Do you want to be better equipped and more confident to share? Open Door is hosting a special event entitled, *You can tell it!* Reserve Saturday morning, October 7, 8-12 noon for this seminar led by Duane Wessels, a master trainer with Evantell ministries. Duane is coming to us from Iowa to lead this seminar that will teach us a simple and clear message of the gospel called, *Bad news, Good news*. The seminar will also include encouragement about key issues of prayer and overcoming fear in evangelism. Brochures Please sign up if you want to attend. Workbooks for the seminar are \$12.50 for those who would like to contribute to the costs.



Operation Christmas Child

A PROJECT of SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Please visit the tree in the foyer and take a few ornaments to find out what you can donate to Operation Christmas Child this month. Drop all donations off by the collection box at the church. You can also make this a family project and fill a shoe box at home together.

We also need \$9 per box which includes shipping and *The Greatest Journey*, a booklet explaining the gospel message. Please use envelopes marked Operation Christmas Child and place in the offering plate. Or donate online through our new fundraiser page (<https://www.classy.org/fundraise?fcid=1016186>) or see ODBC Facebook for details. All monies need to be in to the church office no later than November 12.

Plan to join us for our Shoebbox Packing Party on Saturday, November 11. **Our goal as a church is to REACH 250 children around the world with the gospel!** If you have any question or would like to be more involved, contact Amanda Kunz or Beth Grady.

Congregational Meeting
October 29
6:00pm



All middle school and high school students are welcome to join us for Youth Group on Wednesday evenings, 7:00-8:30pm. Bring your friends and come for Bible study, games, snacks and just hanging out.

One Life - Middle School (grades 5-8)

Leaders: Reid & Jennifer Bretz
Nekoda & Mary Hoke

Reach - High School

Leader: Pastor Nate Meeks

Contact Pastor Nate for more information.
(815-878-5335 or skeem77@hotmail.com)

2017 GENERAL FUND REPORT as Sept. 27

Giving this year –	\$ 347,975.00
Expenses this year –	\$ <u>350,096.00</u>
This year's giving deficit –	\$ 2,121.00

BUILDING FUND REPORT

Giving this year –	\$118,514.00
Expenses this year –	\$130,302.00
Current Building Fund Balance:	\$435,715.00

MISSIONARY UPDATE
Luke & Mikaela Hatfield
His House Christian Fellowship

The fall semester is in full swing! Kicking off our 6th year in ministry at Ripon College brings so much joy to our hearts. We are humbled by the privilege God has provided for us to live with, love and point students to Jesus whether they are in a season of excitement and celebration or settling into the reality that life isn't always what we want, expect, or dreamed it would be.

God tells us in Psalm 46:1 that "[He] is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." One of the most important parts of our ministry is demonstrating God's love and help to students through our presence and pointing them to Him in their times of need.

A few recent examples:

- One of our students is processing his grandfather's diagnosis of cancer and now his death. We're thankful to be a present help to him as he grieves. His grandpa had walked away from an upbringing of faith, but as he was faced with his own mortality, he repented and came to faith, which is exactly what the student and I had prayed for.
- Another student who owns his own house near campus had an incident near his property. He called me for advice, and I was able to go over to be a present help in his time of need as he dealt with the incident with the police.
- Another student taking a religion class this semester felt the authority and inerrancy of Scripture being challenged in class and asked to meet. As we talked over dinner, I was able to reaffirm that his trust in God's word is well-founded!
- A sophomore who had walked away from faith his freshman year showed up on campus this year with a rekindled desire to follow Jesus and asked if he and I could meet weekly for Bible study. Praise God that he knew I was here for him no matter what.
- Ali, a freshman Muslim student from Pakistan who wants to learn more about Christianity, joined us this past Sunday for our church crawl. It was the first church service he had ever attended, and getting to talk with him about what we believe and what he believes was a great start to showing him God's love and pointing him to Jesus.

Please pray for the new series we'll be starting at our Thursday night meetings and for our Fall Retreat coming up October 7-9. This year's retreat is all about exhorting and equipping students to be on mission on campus. Also pray for our family to continually recognize and run to God as our ever present help as we minister to others.

