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A NOTE FROM PASTOR DAVE

Is this Coronavirus a sign of the Apocalypse? YES

“Apocalypse” means the final destruction of the world.

What will be the signs?

Being able to read the signs is a helpful skill. Over the years, I have learned to read some signs, like: The dark clouds proclaim that rain is coming. The non-verbal signs from my wife that this isn't the time to mess with her. The economical sign that this is or is not a good time to expand. The signs that a person is too angry to reason with. Or the sign that I am running from God. I could go on, but what about the signs that the end is at hand? That the Apocalypse is approaching?

Matthew 24:3-8

As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, **“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”**

And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is

not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.”

The signs are increased wars, famines, earthquakes, and, Luke adds, pestilence (plagues). Let's start with plagues. Nothing was worse than the “Black Plague” which claimed 200 million lives. The Spanish Flu took 50 million. Corona ranks 6 or 7 right now, not counting the long-running smallpox, cholera, etc. Since 1980, the volume of new viruses has tripled (SARS, Ebola, HIV, Swine flu, Corona).

The whole point of a birth pain is to warn you that something is coming. These birth pains/signs are a gift to the world from God. They shout out, “GET READY! PREPARE FOR THE END!”

Think about the things that are lining up. We know that there will be a one world government. Think about it. The US is a great picture of a country so polarized, so staunchly set against the other side that it is ripe for a savior to step in – a world leader bringing peace. We are not the only country in this kind of situation.

There will be a sweeping movement of peace. Not real peace, because people will be made to comply. But global peace brought in with a strong hand. Some think President Trump will not relinquish the office if he loses and he'll have to be removed militarily. Others suggest that if President Trump is re-elected, some on the other side would encourage rioting that could become so severe that the UN could be called to restore order. Could these things really happen?

Earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados... global warming. Has there ever been a time when the nations were so divided, so ripe for a savior with a lower-case "s"? **Corona is one of the birth pains of the coming apocalypse.**

A secular person I was talking to about the end times said he didn't understand why Christians get so worried about the end times. "Shouldn't they be excited?" he asked. The text says, "Do not be alarmed". The only reason to be alarmed is because you are not ready. The person who doesn't know Christ should be alarmed, even frightened, because the apocalypse is what brings judgment. The believer who lives their life as if the Lord could return today has nothing to change.

That's the problem, isn't it? Many Christians are living for themselves. They actually want to know when the end is coming so they can get ready for it just before it happens. Biblically, that's poor planning.

Let me use a Foxworthy pattern to help you evaluate whether or not you are ready:

- You might not be ready if...you are more worried about the economic impact than you are about lost people.
- You might not be ready if...you are hoping to live for your own pleasures instead of God's glory a little longer.
- You might not be ready if...you are more worried about your rights than you are about Christ's name.
- You might not be ready if...you identify with a political party more than with brothers and sisters in Christ.
- You might not be ready if...you spend more time playing video games than serving the Lord.
- You might not be ready if...the last time you surrendered anything to Jesus was at your conversion.

These things are signs that warn us to be ready.

ARE YOU READY?

VOTING

This week Pastor Dave posted an old clip about politics by Tony Evans on our FB account. Check it out. It reminds us that we trust in God alone. Navigating the voting issues and misinformation is really difficult for all of us. We know that you want to be informed and vote in a God honoring way. Dr. Evans is doing a 10-week sermon series on voting as a Christian. That should be very interesting. Dr. Evans is a faithful gospel preacher and may offer a different perspective than you are used to. Pastor Dave will also be watching.

Absentee ballots are available now if you can't make it in person. We encourage you to vote and welcome you to pray with us for our nation.

SAFE DISTANCING AT CHURCH

With the number of people returning to church growing, our Worship Center is becoming crowded. More and more people who know each other are sitting together in the same row. We know that many of you are friends and don't mind the proximity or have been spending time with each other elsewhere and are comfortable sitting right next to each other.

Some of you may be uncomfortable with that. Starting Sunday, you can grab a spacer from the bookcase in the back of the narthex. Spacers are 8 ½" x 11" pieces of paper that say, "Space Please". That will enable you to put space between you and the next person. If you don't care, don't take one. If you do want space, take one or two and put them on the seats next to you.

The 8:00 a.m. service hasn't been full, but the 10:00 a.m. one has been packed. You will have more space in the 8:00 a.m. service if you want it. The Café and Library are still open for the overflow.

The mask mandate is still in effect, and we ask that you think of others and not your preference as you decide whether or not to comply. If you have a hard time breathing while wearing a mask, then pull it off for a while or don't wear one. We are not going to police it. We just ask that, as much as is possible, try to think of others as more important than yourself (Philippians 2:3).

RVC | kids

The passing on of faith is not just the parents' responsibility, it is also the Church's responsibility. Deuteronomy 6:4 says, "Hear, O Israel", not "Hear, O parents". Parents are the child's first spiritual influencers, but we as the Church are called to pass on faith to the next generation. Are you willing to commit ninety minutes or more a month to partnering with parents in the nurturing of a young child's spiritual formation? If this is something you might be interested in, please reach out and connect with Tracy Fettner.

Email: Tracy.fettner@rvcoshkosh.com

Number: (920) 231-9690

Text: (317) 289-4394

A few changes this Sunday:

- No need to sign up your child for RVC | kids; we are completely open and have volunteers ready to greet your child.
- After receiving your check-in badge, there will be volunteers to guide you and your child to the designated classroom.
- You can also download the church center app. This will allow you to view your pick-up badge (in case you misplace your sticker badge). This is also helpful for both mom and dad to have access to the pick-up badge.



Church Center App

Opportunity to Serve Families

There is a need for babysitters for Bible studies and LifeGroups. The times and days may vary. If you want to be added to the list of sitters, please contact the church office at (920) 231-9690 or email at info@rvcoshkosh.com.

RVC | MEN

All men are welcome to join us each month starting tomorrow, September 12th, at 8:00 a.m. We will have breakfast at 8:00 a.m. followed by a lesson and some discussion. Most mornings we have a testimony from one of our guys.

We are using Men's Fraternity material. We stopped in the middle of a book in March, so we will begin

with a review in September to get us back on track. We'd love to have you join us.

GIVING UPDATE

YTD Giving 5/1/20 - 8/31/20

Actual: \$259,364.39

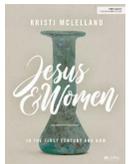
Budgeted: \$240,552.00

Weekly Giving: 8/31/20 - 9/6/20

\$10,159.92

LADIES BIBLE STUDIES THIS FALL**Thursday Morning Bible Study**

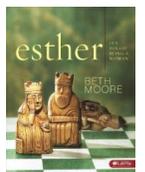
All women welcome! Ladies Bible Study will begin this Thursday, September 17, from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. If you are interested or would like more information, contact: Laura Ehrlich at lauralevlove@yahoo.com.

**Tuesday Evening Zoom Study**

We have a Tuesday Night Ladies' Study on Zoom underway from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. We are studying Jackie Hill Perry's Jude: Contending for Faith in Today's Culture. You can still join. If you're interested, contact Amanda Heise via email at heise.amanda.m@gmail.com

**Study of Esther - a Beth Moore Study**

The Esther study kicks off this Wednesday, September 16, from 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. at church. Bring a chair as we hope to sit outside. We will also be offering the study online with one-to-one fellowship for those who want to do the study but cannot participate in person (but hope to see most of you in person). Please RSVP to Nicole at nicmac525@me.com if you are planning to be part of the study. In addition, if you are planning to attend Wednesday mornings and need childcare, space will be limited, so your RSVP is necessary. This time is planned especially for YOU. Specific study details were sent to your email (check your spam if you did not receive it or reach out to Nicole for details). See you soon!



Thursday Evening Bible Study

Ladies, we began our study on 1 and 2 Timothy, an In and Out Precept Study, on September 10th. We meet Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at church. If you would still like to join us, contact: Debbie Hoff - bluwnab@hotmail.com or Tracy Fettner - tracy.fettner@rvcoshkosh.com

**THINKING AHEAD TO CHRISTMAS**

Now is the time to start packing shoebox gifts! These shoeboxes can be a great blessing for you/your family, as well as a powerful way to demonstrate God's love to hurting children around the world.

This might be the most important year ever to reach children with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the midst of a pandemic, children are frightened, families are struggling, and people don't know what hope they have for the future. We want children around the world to know that God loves them, He has not forgotten them, and that He cares for them very much.

We'll keep you posted as to when the empty boxes will become available for pickup. In the meantime, you can begin gathering your shoebox gifts. If shopping for gifts is not practical for you right now, you may want to Build a Shoebox Online at <https://samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/>. Most importantly, pray for the children who will receive your gifts. What better way to make sure the Gospel message continues to be proclaimed "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8)?

Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. Matthew 24:45-47 (NIV)

COMMUNITY EVENTS

You may want to participate in these events/opportunities. It is up to you to decide what is safe based on your comfort level.



What: Exalt Women's Conference,
Speaker: Laura Sandretti
When: Saturday, October 17,
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Where: New Life Community Church, 3250 W 9th Ave, Oshkosh

Cost: Registration includes a continental breakfast \$20 (\$15 before October 1).
<https://exaltconference.com>

Our mission is to gather women from Oshkosh and the surrounding area to exalt Jesus Christ.

Our purpose is to worship Jesus Christ, study God's Word, build unity among believers, reach out to the community, and encourage one another to walk in faith.

We believe:

...the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died in our place and rose again to give us new life.

... the Bible, God's Holy Word, is our source for wisdom and power.

... the indwelling Holy Spirit is the teacher and guide for all who trust in Christ as their Savior.



What: Mark Schultz in concert
When: Friday, November 13, 7:00 p.m.
Where: Dwelling 222, 222 Church Avenue

Cost: General admission \$15, Gold seating \$25, Meet and Greet \$35 (includes early entrance at 5:30 p.m.)

More Info: Mark Schultz is a contemporary Christian music artist who has sold over 1.3 million albums and has 10 no. 1 singles to date. Listeners have come to expect inspiring and remarkable stories in song from Mark Schultz, a 14-time Dove Award nominee and platinum-selling artist. With his latest effort, All Things Possible, Schultz continues to tackle matters of the heart and spirit with uncommon craftsmanship.