



The Sower

“Planting seeds of faith and fellowship in East Cocalico Township and beyond.”

The SOWER is a ministry of the East Cocalico Church of the Brethren
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From the Pastor's Desk

This has been a year I will never forget. We probably will never live another year quite like this. One thing we do notice is that God's promise of seedtime and harvest will continue until he returns for our glorious homecoming. It is amazing how much we gave up this year and how fine we still are.

Are you ready for Autumn? I love this season of the year. This season seems to go by the fastest for me. I don't look forward to the darker days that will follow. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Did you know that more than any other season, people feel a spiritual connection to autumn? This season is about endings. Every journey must come to an end. Endings are very natural and important. There are many things in life that we are grateful to see come to an end. Endings make the way for new beginnings. We all have leaves that must drop off from our lives. They gathered energy for us for a time. Now they no longer serve us. Are you letting go of some old hurts and wounds? Have you decided to let go of what is dead inside of you?

It is easy to forget that autumn is a time of gathering and bounty. At this time of year we reap the results of the spiritual good we have done for the past nine months. We see that some of our dreams have been steadily growing through our consistent efforts. We realize that now we are in a different place. James 5:7 says be patient until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth.

How can we get closer to God in autumn? You probably do have more time. This is an intense political time. There is a lot of pent up anger going around. Turn off your devices and take a walk. Notice and thank God for the bounty of autumn. Watch the falling leaves and think God for his help to enable you to let hurtful things go. Ask God what burdens you need to release. As you hear the leaves rustle in the wind, remember to listen to the Holy Spirit to hear what God wants to tell you.

Have a beautiful autumn.



Communion

Sunday, October 4 is World Church Communion Sunday. We will be observing Pew Communion during the morning service.



Fall Congregational Forum

Our Fall Congregational Forum is scheduled for Sunday, October 25 at 9:30 a.m. in the sanctuary and will be replacing Sunday School for this one Sunday. We encourage all members to be present because we have some important decisions to make.

The agenda includes approving the proposed budget for 2021. We will also be calling new chairpersons for the Christian Education and Stewardship and Finance Teams and new deacons. Brett Swailes has expressed a calling into the ministry, so the congregation will be voting to present his name to the district for licensing. The ministerial licenses need to be renewed every year, so we will also be voting on renewing Cyndy Wright's license.

We ask that during the next few weeks you spend time in prayer for our congregation, the decisions we will be making, and the individuals who will be called into leadership positions.

Audio Worship Streaming at East Cocalico Church of the Brethren

WHAT: You can now dial a number on your phone and hear the worship service live at 10:30 am on Sunday mornings.

HOW: You simply dial 717-863-9595 and you will hear the worship service live. You hang up when the service is over. If you have a speaker option, you can turn it on and set the phone down, and listen to the service this way.

WHO: Anyone can listen in. Invite friends to listen!

WHY: Anyone who cannot come to church for health reasons or the Covid shutdown can be a part of the live worship again.

WELCOME! You can now experience the worship on a personal level again. You are missed and are valuable to all of us!

TEAM NEWS

MISSIONS

We made \$450.00 from the flea market/yard sale, which will be donated to Blessings of Hope to help them build a larger warehouse.

We will be doing Christmas boxes for Samaritan's Purse again this year but we will be doing it a little differently because of the virus. We will have boxes which you can fill and instructions on what to put in the boxes (and what not to put in the boxes). You can then bring them in for us to take to the distribution center. We will not be able to check the boxes so PLEASE follow the directions. You may also use your own shoebox or plastic box.

Bj Stoltzfus

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Greetings to everyone from the Christian Education Team. I realize that you have not heard from our team in a while, but unfortunately we couldn't hold the Family Fun Day in the Grove for the community, or the All Church Breakfast as planned. At our meeting on September 10 our Team decided we would like to start Sunday School again in a safe way. Pastor Steve convened a Board meeting on September 27, and it was decided to start an all Adult Sunday School upstairs in the sanctuary beginning Sunday, October 4 at 9:30 am, so we can socially distance, and everyone will be able to hear through the AV system. (See the article on Page 5.) Because the Children and Youth classes are small, they will meet in their regular classrooms downstairs from 9:30-10:25 am. We are asking the parents to please come downstairs to the classrooms at 10:25 to escort the children to the sanctuary at that time. We have decided to keep the nursery available for use, but it will be unstaffed until further notice. Looking forward, we are also planning a Christmas Program in December.

I would like to thank Rachel Lutz for taking over as Youth Group Advisor. Rachel has a true love for the Lord, and children. We are very fortunate to have her working with the Youth.

It has been five years since many church members applied for PA State Clearances to volunteer. It is time to renew those clearances. Because we are a small church, it would be really advantageous for everyone to have their clearances. When we have a big event like Bible School, a Family Fun Day or Family Game Night, we need a lot of volunteers to make these events a success, and everyone that works there needs to have these clearances. I will be contacting people to update or apply for the clearances. It is very easy to do online, and I am willing to meet and help anyone that needs it. I would like to thank all of the people that have been helping out with the children over the last Five years. You are responsible for making our church a success. A special thanks to the Christian Education Team for all of their help and ideas during this time of many changes.

Kim Brown

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

As most of you know, we had a major break-in this past spring, resulting in a loss of over \$24,000 for loss of equipment and damage to the interior of the building. At the time, both the police department and our Brethren insurance carrier expressed extreme surprise at our lack of security coverage. Both entities strongly encouraged us to explore and install a comprehensive system to protect both our building, our congregation, and others.

The Stewardship and Finance Team has researched security systems from various vendors and has recommended a system that will be installed in the church very shortly. The system will primarily consist of several cameras that will monitor activity both inside and outside the church. The Team feels this system will protect us from potential future break-ins as well as liability should something occur in the parking lot or in the building. Failing to implement a system could also put our insurance coverage at risk.

Thank you to the Stewardship and Finance team for their recommendation.

If you wish to contribute to the cost of this system, you can reach out to Tad Brown, Connie Moyer, Steve Hess or Maria Mitton. You also can put your contribution in the offering plate and mark it "Security System".

Tad Brown

Camp Swatara News

FALL FEST is scheduled at Camp Swatara on Saturday, October 10 from 2:00 pm until 6:00 pm. It will be an afternoon of fun activities for all ages. Activities include a scavenger hunt, fall crafts, games and nature activities. There will also be hiking, canoeing, horseback riding, and a campfire.

You are invited to join other Camp Swatara supporters at the ANNUAL CONTRIBUTOR'S DINNER on Friday, October 30. This year there will be two seatings, one at noon and the other at 5:00 pm. The cost is \$50 per person, or if you are willing to contribute more, they are suggesting \$77 per person, which is a dollar for each year that Camp Swatara is in existence.

Set aside your to-do lists and immerse yourself in the peace that comes while we wait for Immanuel, God-with-us. On Saturday, December 5 from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm there will be a spiritual retreat at camp, which will include time for group and personal reflection as we move into the season of holy waiting. Karen Haldeman will be the leader. The cost is \$30 per person, and there will be optional overnight accommodations.

For more information or to RSVP for any of these Camp Swatara events go to www.campswatara.org or call 717-933-8510.

Ravi Zacharias Video Series (to be used at East Cocalico Church of the Brethren combined Sunday School classes held in the sanctuary)

Ravi Zacharias (March 26, 1946-May 19, 2020) was an Indian-born, Canadian-American Christian leader and teacher. He was the author of more than 30 books on Christianity. He was born in Madras India, and his family moved to Delhi when he was quite young. He grew up there. His family was Anglican, but he was a skeptic. At age 17 Ravi attempted suicide by taking poison. While in the hospital a Christian told his mother to read John chapter 14, and when he heard John 14:19 "Because I live you shall live also", Ravi took courage and found his hope in Jesus. Ravi prayed, "Jesus, you are the one who gives life as it is meant to be, and I want it. If you get me home, I will leave no stone uncovered in the pursuit of truth.

In 1966 Ravi moved his family to Canada and received two theological degrees. He also studied at Cambridge University in England. He traveled and taught all around the world. His focus was on those who are intellectually resistant to Christianity.

Ravi would explain the faith on the three levels. He would begin to explain a topic from logic to make it understandable. He would next explain the topic from feelings, to make it livable. Finally, Ravi would explain the topic from the question of whether a person has the right to make that moral judgement.

Ravi basically focused on the great difficult questions of life, and how you can believe in God alongside of these painful issues. His great challenge was for persons to develop their abstract reasoning on matters of faith. His warning for today's world is that we are so focused on the visual media, that we tend to let go of our God-given abstract reasoning.

THIS DVD SERIES: QUESTION FROM TOP UNIVERSITIES

Here Ravi travels to America's top universities, and answers live questions from the students. On your study page the university is named, the question is quoted, and Ravi's answer is given. Our discussion will be your answer!

October and November Birthdays and Anniversaries

October Birthdays

6 Ron Whitekettle
8 Michael Kunkle
9 Robert Kreider
9 Matthew Ream
18 Robin Fisher
18 Lynne Keller
21 Kate Mitton
23 Eugene Stoltzfus
25 Jacon Kohl
25 Katelyn Hartl
28 Taya Polynone
28 Roy Kunkle
29 Haylan Fisher
30 Ann Good
31 Leanna Kreider

November Birthdays

3 Doug Enck
13 Cindy Bollinger
13 Edith Keith
17 Bob Zimmerman
18 Abram Shrom, III
27 Bethany Shrom
30 Elizabeth Mitton
30 Wendy Hartl

November Anniversaries

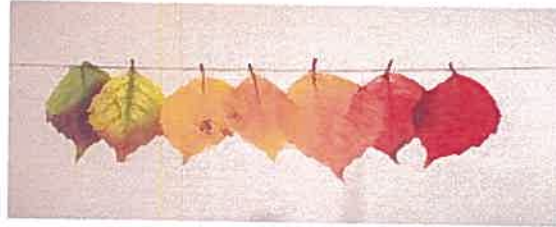
15 Jay & Deb Good





Vision statement vision.

We are told to be Christ-centered servants. We seek to share God's love by creating a caring atmosphere that reaches into our community. We are committed to extend the saving grace of Jesus Christ by providing Biblically-based experiences and fellowship opportunities for families and individuals of all ages. We endeavor to equip believers for ministry, mission and evangelism.



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