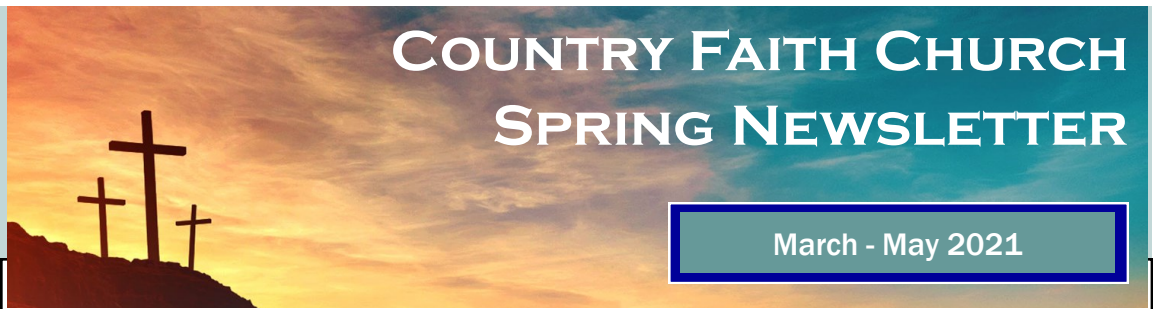


“Growing & working together to love God, love each other and spread the Gospel.”



# COUNTRY FAITH CHURCH

## SPRING NEWSLETTER

March - May 2021

### Inside this issue:

- Pastor's Heart cont	2
- Prophetic Gathering	
Good Friday	3
Easter Sunday	
Sunday School Schedule	4
Sunday, May 23rd	5-6
TB Spring Conference	6
My Story/His Story	7
- Hendricksons	
Baptism - Lift Night	8
Men's Ministry	
- Conference & Men's Prayer	
Children's Ministry	9-12
- Curriculum	
- Easter Make & Take	
- Day Camp	
- Kids Camp	
- Sponsor Child Update	
- 6th Grade Retreat	
Elevate Youth	13
Hearing God's Voice	14-15
- Adele Graser (WM)	
Missionary Update	16-17
- Paul & Michele Straubel	
CWLC	18-20

### Pastor's Heart - Pastor Brad Binder

What's wrong Red Sea, that made you hurry out of their way? What happened, Jordan River, that you turned away? Why, mountains did you skip like rams? Why, hills like lambs?

Psalms 114:5&6.

The Red Sea had no choice, the Jordan River could not ignore the instruction of the Lord. The question the Psalmist is asking is rhetorical. The next couple verses speaks to the point. Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. He turned the rock into a pool of water; yes, a spring of water flowed from solid rock.

I love these verses, they speak of the power and the authority of the God I worship and serve. They make me feel secure and they remind me I'm on the winning side. However a couple verses earlier in this text something catches my attention. In verse 3, it says the Red Sea saw them coming and hurried out of their way. Hmmm, that's not exactly how I remember it in scripture. I read in Exodus 14 the Israelites were seemingly backed up against the Red Sea with the pharaoh bearing down on them eager to destroy them. I read the Israelites lost faith and were even crying out that it would have been better for them to stay in Egypt rather than to die by the hand of pharaoh in the wilderness. I read they wished they were still slaves of Egypt. It doesn't exactly appear the Red Sea hurried out of their way, at least not to me it doesn't.

It looks to me like Moses had to calm the Israelites down, point them towards God, and then move forward with boldness and confidence before the sea would part.

But wait...isn't that the point. What should we do in those moments when the enemy is bearing down and we feel trapped. 1.Calm yourself before the Lord. 2. Fix your eyes on Him and look for His perspective not your own. 3. Move forward with God's confidence. Then watch God do what only He can do.

### Sunday Service Times:

Sunday School: 9:00am  
Worship Service: 10:00am  
Youth: 7:00pm (check website, facebook or the youth page for a detailed schedule)

**218-776-3367**

**office@countryfaith.org**

**www.countryfaith.org**

**(see what's happening at CFC & listen to sermons)**

**Find us on Facebook & YouTube as well**

# Pastor's Heart - Pastor Brad Binder

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So the Psalmist did not stretch the truth to make Psalms 114 more exciting to read, like some people I know do when telling stories, I won't name names. God is in the business of making plans that display His glory. The Red Sea had no choice, the Jordan River could not ignore His instruction. God can spring water from solid rock.

Be encouraged today. No matter the circumstances God is in control. He has a plan. He is moving. His Kingdom is advancing. Sure pharaoh's army is getting closer, you can see them and hear their intentions to destroy. But God's not worrying so why should you. Truth is, God lured pharaoh to that place. It was a set up. Egypt was the world power at that point, but never again. But God did not simply destroy the enemy. He also taught Israel something that day. Exodus 14:31 says, When the people saw the mighty power that the Lord had unleashed on the Egyptians they were filled with awe before Him. They put their faith in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

What is God trying to teach or stir up in you in this season of your life? More faith maybe? More trust? Maybe He is calling you to move forward in confidence because the sea in front of you is already destined to hurry out of the way for His glory to be revealed in your life. So what are you waiting for?

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## Prophetic Gathering

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### Prophetic Gathering with Ben Goodman Sunday, April 18th & Monday, April 19th

We are looking forward to hosting Ben Goodman here for our upcoming prophetic gatherings in April. Ben serves as part of the apostolic oversight team of TrueBridge, functioning primarily in the areas of teaching and prophecy. Ben ministers extensively to a wide variety of churches, both nationally and internationally, strengthening and equipping them through a combination of teaching, prophetic ministry, and demonstrations of God's power. Ben, his wife Becky, and their girls call Fayetteville, NC home. Country Faith Church and the TrueBridge Network have been blessed to have a longstanding relationship with Ben.



Prophetic ministry has been an important and effective part of our church development for many years. We have consistently seen God confirm His heart and mission for us as a church through prophetic ministry. We are confident that He will continue to do so. This year's prophetic gathering will be structured a bit differently. We will not be having a signup for candidates, instead, Ben will primarily pick the candidates for the evening. We anticipate there to be a combination of worship, teaching, and prophetic ministry that will encourage our whole church family.

Ben will begin his time with us by exhorting us from God's word during the sermon time on Sunday morning, April 18<sup>th</sup>. He will then lead our prophetic gatherings starting at 7:00 p.m. Sunday and Monday evenings. Again, we hope to see our entire church family participate in these meetings. This time really is about seeking and pressing into God for His heart for our church. You will be strengthened in your faith, encouraged to advance spiritually, and blessed by the love of our great Heavenly Father through this ministry!

# Easter Weekend Celebrations!



## Good Friday Service

**Friday, April 2nd**

7:00pm here at Country Faith Church

Pastor Adam Krog from Elim Lutheran in Clearbrook will be sharing the message

## Easter Sunday - April 4th

Join us on Easter Sunday, April 4th to celebrate our Risen Lord! We will start the morning with an Easter Brunch. Brunch will be served from 8:45am to 9:45am.

After the brunch, worship service starts at 10:00am in the sanctuary. The service will last about an hour, so there will only be nursery provided during sermon time.

\*\*\*Please, only nursery age kids in nursery. (babies to age 3)\*\*\*

There will be NO JR. CHURCH this morning so the preschool and elementary kids can be with their families during the service.

Come join us, & invite your friends and family as we join together to celebrate & praise our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ! Any questions, please call or e-mail the church.

# Sunday School Schedule

We are excited to be offering multiple classes again for Sunday School. Join us Sunday mornings before our worship service from 9:00am to 9:45am for all ages nursery on up.

## Current & Upcoming Adult Classes

### **“Easter”**

#### **March 7th - 28th**

Author: J.D. Greear - 4 Week Video Series

The resurrection is the most important moment in history, but it is more than an event we remember on Easter Sunday. Join pastor J.D. Greear as he takes a deeper look at Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection in the Gospel of Matthew, revealing the ways we should see ourselves in Jesus’s story. Jesus died for us so that he could be alive in us today. Easter changes everything .



## **NO SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sunday, April 4th (due to Easter)**

### **“The Book of James”**

#### **April 11th - May 16th**

Author: Francis Chan - 6 Week Video Series (2 sessions a week)

True faith produces fruit. A faith without action and without life change is ultimately a dead faith. The book of James speaks to the realities of a living faith in Jesus—the kind of roll-up-your-sleeves and get-your-hands-dirty discipleship that is borne out of an authentic relationship with the risen Lord. James writes to believers who know suffering, who've faced trials, and who ultimately desire a deep relationship with God.

Francis Chan unpacks the dense truth contained in the book of James in front of the iconic backdrop of San Francisco, the city where he lives and ministers. Through 12 sessions, Francis works through James verse-by-verse, challenging followers of Christ to move beyond a private, intellectual knowledge of God and His Word, to a vibrant faith that impacts every square inch of life.

## **LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sunday, May 23rd with a time to share testimonies**

*(Sunday School breaks for the summer, and will start again September 12th, the Sunday after Labor Day)*

If you haven’t been attending Sunday School, I highly encourage you to consider coming these last few weeks. The teachings are challenging, and the teachers are awesome...no matter what age you are!

## **Summer Church Service Schedule – Starts May 30<sup>th</sup>**

With summer just around the corner, we wanted to give you the schedule now as you are planning ahead.

- **Church service will start at 10:00am, NO Sunday school during the summer months.**
- **Jr Church classes & Nursery** are offered every Sunday through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 5 & 6 grades have Jr church on the second Sunday of the month. They will be released to attend their classes after worship in the Sanctuary.

Mark your calendars with these dates...summer will be here before we know it!



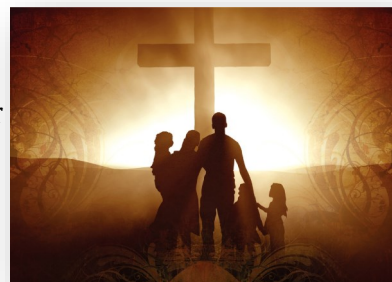
# Sunday, May 23rd Happenings

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## A day filled with Important Milestones and fun for people of all ages!

Sunday, May 23rd will be a day filled with some very special milestones and fun for people of all ages. On this day, there will be:

- The last day of Sunday School (until next fall)
- A recognition of all teachers who've helped teach God's Word this year
- "New" 1<sup>st</sup> graders will receive their own Bible
- "New" 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be welcomed into the youth ministry
- Graduating 12<sup>th</sup> graders/seniors will be recognized
- AND...we end our morning together with an All Church Picnic!



### **THE LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL (UNTIL NEXT FALL)**

Our Sunday school classes offered from 9:00-9:45am for nursery age kids through adults will have their final class this morning.



### **A RECOGNITION OF ALL TEACHERS WHO'VE HELPED TEACH GOD'S WORD THIS YEAR**

From serving in the nursery to teaching adult Sunday School, it takes MANY who are willing to be used by God to share His truths, empowering & teaching all us. We appreciate each person's willingness to use their gifts, and want to acknowledge the great job they've done this year.

### **"NEW" 1<sup>ST</sup> GRADERS WILL RECEIVE THEIR OWN BIBLE**

As the current Kindergarteners are continuing to learn how to read & getting ready to move into 1<sup>st</sup> grade next fall, the Children's Ministry wants to give them each their own Bible~ the *best* book they will ever read!

### **"NEW" 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS WILL BE WELCOMED INTO THE YOUTH MINISTRY**

We will present the new 7<sup>th</sup> graders bibles! We also will be praying over them and officially welcoming them into youth.

### **GRADUATING 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS/SENIORS WILL BE RECOGNIZED**

We want to recognize the seniors as they enter into a new season of life! There will be a slideshow honoring them followed by a time of prayer over them.



## Sunday, May 23rd Happenings

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### ALL CHURCH PICNIC

As a way to celebrate the arrival of summer & the closing of the Sunday School year together, we will have an all church picnic immediately after the church service this day. Food will be provided.

This will take place outside on the church lawn (weather permitting) so families should also bring their favorite lawn chairs or blanket to use for the meal! (we will be

inside if weather doesn't cooperate!) If you have any favorite lawn games to share, please consider bringing them as well~ the volleyball & basketball courts will be available, and playground for the youngest kids. It's a great time to enjoy some fun & fellowship together as a church family, celebrating God's goodness together!

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## TrueBridge Spring Conference

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**Thursday, April 15th - Saturday, April 17th**

**Grace Life Church, Marshall MN**

Anyone is welcome to attend the TB Spring Conference in Marshall, MN. Cost is \$30 per person (CFC will pay \$50 of the \$80 registration cost) if paid and registered by Thursday, April 1st. This year's guest speaker is Kendrick Vinar from Chapel Hill, NC. Cover letter & brochures can be found at the information center with more details as well as a registration form. Please turn filled out registration forms as well as payment to Lisa in the church office by Thursday, April 1st.

There are blocks of hotel rooms set aside at 3 different hotels within Marshall. Please contact the hotel you wish to stay at prior to the cut off date specified (March 14th - April 1st depending on the hotel) to guarantee the rate.

Registrations are still accepted after April 1st, however cost increases \$15 per person to \$45 (with CFC covering \$50 of the \$95).

# My Story / His Story

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WARM Greetings from Norman and Jill Hendrickson and thank you for allowing us to introduce ourselves. We began attending CFC in 1998 and live just outside of Clearbrook. We have been married for 36 years and have two children. Our oldest son Adam and his wife Kayla live in Otsego, MN with their children Myles (8), Lydia (5) and Everly (3). Our son Jake and his wife Jenn live in East Grand Forks, MN with their children Navy (3) and Raven (1). On Sunday mornings you might find us greeting you as you come to CFC or making coffee. You might also see children (and sometimes adults) trying to find the “Candy Man” who has his pockets filled with sweet treats. Jill retired in March of 2020 which has allowed time for Friday morning Ladies Bible Studies, crocheting prayer shawls and volunteering at Shop at the Top. You will find Norm at Tuesday morning Men’s Prayer or perhaps plowing the CFC parking lot. Wednesday night care group is also a huge part of our week. We are so thankful for CFC and our wonderful church family and the community we live in.



When God planted us in Weme and Clearbrook, we knew we were where He wanted us to be. We came with broken hearts, hurts, fears and regrets; feeling as though we had been defeated after selling what we thought was our forever home and farm. Our plans to purchase property in another area fell through because of probate issues. We found ourselves scrambling to find a house to rent and the Lord led us to a home in Weme. He provided a plan and home for a time that would allow us to breathe and heal. The Lord gave us dear friends and a care group that wrapped us in love. Our boys would be attending a new school and the Lord intervened in that area as well, giving them great friends before school even started! This allowed a great transition for them.

During our time of renting we knew God had guided us here so we began looking for a house to buy but nothing seemed right. We prayed about it and after searching and searching we gave it ALL to God and rested. He answered and provided our beautiful home. We are reminded of one of our favorite verses: Proverbs 3:5,6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path.” We are thankful for all the Lord has provided and continue to trust in His plans. It is so easy to try and do things on our own through our human nature. Without going into a lot of detail, God met us where we were at and healed our brokenness, gave us a spirit of forgiveness and healed relationships. When faced with trials, we are reminded that He remains faithful and that we must first turn to Him. Our Heavenly Father only wants the BEST for His children.



# Baptism Night - March 17th Lift Night

Come join us Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> for our next Lift Night! We have been enjoying sweet times with the Lord in prayer, worship, and testimonies. These nights will take place on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (for now), and will kick off with about 30 minutes of prayer starting at 6:30 p.m. followed by an hour of praise and worship.

Our next Lift Night on March 17<sup>th</sup> will also include a baptism service. We are excited to join with some of our church family as they declare their belief in Christ through baptism. If you are interested in being baptized or learning more about baptism, please let one of the pastors or our Children's Minister Nicky Ubert know.

These evenings are a great time of connection with the Lord and as a church family. We hope that you will come and join us as we seek God together!



## Men's Ministry

### Lift Night & Men's Conference

Friday, April 30th & Saturday, May 1st

Men,

We are going to **try something a little different this year** for our men's conference. Instead of a Truebridge event, this will just be a CFC and friends event. This will only work if, when we put out a sign up sheet, that you sign up. Cost is only \$10.00 this year to help cover the single meal. What our men's ministry team vision for this year is this:



A Friday, April 30th, evening lift-night open to the entire church with an emphasis on men leading their families to the event. There will be no sleeping plans or arrangements as historically people choose to sleep in their own beds during a local event.

Saturday, May 1st, morning will be a time of open prayer, similar to a Tuesday morning men's prayer, but followed by coffee and a light catered breakfast.

After food and fellowship you will leave the church with a small group of guys (led by previously identified group leaders) to an outing of their choosing. Some examples suggested have been things like: Fire and lunch in the woods followed by a hike, helping someone in need put up firewood, traveling to Bemidji or other City to do an outreach, tripping to Itasca for fellowship in the Forest etc. The goal is stimulating conversation, and iron sharpening iron.

The event will conclude Saturday afternoon as we re-gather at the church for a time of testimony or story-telling of any highlights of your event!

A group of faithful men meet EVERY Tuesday morning throughout the year at 6:30am for prayer. All men are welcome to attend for as long as you're able that day before heading to work or wherever you need to go.





# Children's Ministry Current Curriculum

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SUNDAY SCHOOL

REGATHERS SUNDAY,  
**MARCH 7TH**  
9:00AM-9:45AM  
NURSERY PROVIDED

3YR'S-2ND GRADE  
COMBINED IN ROOM #2

3RD-6TH GRADE  
COMBINED IN ROOM #4

Spring Semester  
March 7th - May 23rd 2021

### Sunday School

9:00-9:45am

#### 3's-4's thru 2nd Grade

One Accord Heart Shaper  
Curriculum

Jesus God's Son  
Jesus is Powerful  
The Church Follows Jesus

#### 3rd grade - 6th Grade

One Accord/Heart Shaper  
Curriculum

Celebrate Jesus' Resurrection  
Prayer  
Basic Christian Beliefs  
Celebrate Jesus  
Accepting God's Gift  
Where is God when it Hurts?

### Junior Church

#### 3's-4's

Hand's on Bible Curriculum

Jesus' Death and Resurrection  
Jesus Appears to His Followers  
The Church

#### 5K

Hand's on Bible Curriculum

Easter Story  
Jesus helps us Follow Him  
Peter Serves

#### 1st - 2nd Grades

Buck Denver: Why do we Celebrate Easter  
Clive & Ian's WonderBlimp of Knowledge:  
Studying the Character of God

#### 3rd - 4th Grades

Gospel Project

The life of Jesus & the Chronological  
Journey through the life of Jesus in the  
Gospel, the formation of the church in Acts  
& the promised return of Christ in  
Revelations

#### 5th & 6th Grades

13 Lessons for kids about living for Jesus

## Easter Make & Take Event

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Children's Ministry will be having an Easter Make & Take event on Sunday, March 14th after church for 3yr's-2<sup>nd</sup> grade in the children's wing! **This is for the children and their parents/guardian.** Come make a resurrection garden like the image on the right. Each child will receive an Easter take home bag including crafts and activities for at home connection along with a snack for the ride home! We anticipate this activity to take about 30-45 minutes.

**Please register for this event by Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup> so we can plan accordingly for supplies needed.** Registration is available at the Information center in the foyer.

*"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."  
Matthew 28:6 (NIV)*



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## Knights of North Castle: K-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Day camp

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Mark your calendar now!! We are excited to offer a K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade day camp again. This year's theme is "Nights of North Castle"! Learn to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His Power! We will explore Old & New Testament stories and discover different pieces of the protective armor of God. Let's "armor up" and be strong by remaining with God and sharing God's love to the world".

Our day camp will be held Tuesday, July 27th at Country Faith Church. The day will be filled with truth filled sessions, awesome worship, fun games, creative crafts, tasty food, and outdoor play.

Detailed Information will come out early June and any changes to the plan will be communicated as needed! It takes a lot of hands to coordinate this event and many ways to help so if interested in being involved please get in touch with Nicky Ubert or Leah Watne.



# LIGHT IT UP!!! Kids' Camp 2021 July 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>



It's time to talk camp and I'm already super excited about Kids' Camp 2021 and for the Kid's and volunteers that will be joining me!! The process of planning and preparing for camp takes months and it will be here before we know it- so time to share the basics of camp. Please keep in mind, if there is a need to change any of these details it will be communicated with as much notice as possible.

**What is Kids Camp?** A 3 day, 2 night stay at Camp Dellwater (20 miles NE of Clearbrook) - where kids get to, most importantly, focus on the Lord while forging unforgettable memories and hopefully lifelong friendships.

**Who is it for?** Kids going into 4-6 grade. *Please note if you are a new 7<sup>th</sup> grader you may still attend Kids Camp but you also have the option to attend Youth camp- choose one or both, it's your call! Don't forget to invite a FRIEND!*

**Registrations forms** will be out mid- April and will be placed in your church mailbox. We will have extras available at the information center for the friend you invite! Registration forms will include information on cost and deadlines to register your child.

## Camp Scholarships:

**CFC Member Scholarship** (*applies to those **who attend CFC** who have more than 1 camper*):

- Receive \$30 off camper registration cost for a 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>... camper after **1 full paying camper registration received. THIS APPLIES TO KIDS CAMP ONLY!**
- **This applies to immediate family members attending CFC** (not cousins, grandkids...).

**Individual Full or Partial Scholarships:** (*available to any camper*)

- We want EVERY child to be able to attend camp, so if you are in need of help or know of someone who does, please talk with me now. Also, if someone feels led to scholarship a child or give towards kid's camp please talk with me- there is always a need and it is such an important event for the kids.

## Adult & Teen Volunteers:

It takes many willing hands and hearts to pull together a camp for these amazing kids! If you at all feel called to serve at Kid's Camp 2021 and wonder where and how I can best serve them; *talk with someone from the camp planning team- Cindy Wishard, Dacia Olson, or Nicky Ubert* and we can help you find a way to plug in!

**Everyone- please join us in praying for this event!**

- Specific needs to pray for: the dates of our camp July 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, the campers that will be attending and the adults/teens that will be serving. Also, for the planning and preparing process as we are in that stage specifically for God's purposes and direction to be heard and followed above all.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 776-3367 or [childrensministry@countryfaith.org](mailto:childrensministry@countryfaith.org)



# CM - Compassion Sponsor Update

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## The most recent picture we have received of Mordi!

Mordi has been in our program since August of 2007 which means the kids of Country Faith have been sponsoring him with their tithes for about 14 years! The monthly requirement is \$38.00 dollars and twice a year we try to bless Mordi and his family with an extra contribution. The sponsorship and blessings help to cover schooling, medical, personal care items, and food expenses. Mordi can continue to be part of the program likely until his 23rd birthday. He has a birthday coming up in July and will be 20.

In his letters he continues to ask for prayers for his school exams and that he can achieve the goals he has for his life. He is very grateful for the constant show of love, care, and support. He prays blessings on those that are sponsoring him.

If all the Kids in the Children's Ministry program contributed \$1.00 a month we would be able to bless Mordi above and beyond AND/OR we could consider adding a second child to sponsor! It doesn't take much to make a HUGE difference. **IF we meet our goal we will send Mordi an extra blessing for his birthday!**



*Please help us by reminding your kids to bring their tithes to class!*

If you have any additional questions please feel free to ask! Thanks, Nicky Ubert

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## 6th Grade “Retreat” - Sun, May 2nd

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Save the Date Current 6th Graders – May 2nd

Celebrate finishing your last year in elementary school and join us for a night of fun & building connections!

What's the Plan?!?!?

The tentative plan is to start the afternoon with bowling and pizza with your peers in Bemidji. We will head back to Country Faith Church to Join a Youth Night experience with our Elevate Youth Group at 7:00pm. There will be worship, a message, games, and a small group experience, with your 6th grade peers, where you can ask questions and learn more about what to expect and how to get involved in Elevate Youth.

More information including time and release form coming early April. Please note our “new” 7th graders will be given a bible and prayed over during the church service on May 23rd - please plan to be there! If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask!

~Nicky Ubert



# ELEVATE YOUTH

## Youth Focused Prophetic Night

On Thursday, April 22 from 7pm-9pm we are excited to have Ben Goodman join the youth group for a time of prophetic ministry. Ben serves as part of the apostolic oversight team of TrueBridge, functioning primarily in the areas of teaching and prophecy.

There is no sign up for this event. Ministry will be focused towards the youth but parents and others are invited and encouraged to come. This time is about seeking and listening for God's heart for our youth as a group and as individuals. The youth will be strengthened in their faith, and encouraged to advance spiritually.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me.

Pastor Brad Binder

## Youth - Sunday Nights & Events coming up

**March 7th** - 7pm Youth Night

**March 14th** - 7pm Youth Night

**Sat, March 20th** - Northern Air Fun Trip

**March 21st** - No Youth Night

**March 28th** - 7pm Youth Night

**April 4th** - No Youth

**April 11th** - 7pm Youth Night

**April 18th** - No Youth Night (Prophetic Gatherings)

**Thurs. April 22nd** - Youth Prophetic Night

**April 25th** - 7pm Youth Night

**May 2nd** - 7pm Youth Night - 6th Graders Join

**May 9th** - No Youth

**May 16th** - 7pm Youth Night

**May 23rd** - Celebration Sunday / No Youth Night

**May 30th** - No Youth Night (Grad weekend)

**As always: Invite your friends, All are welcome!**  
Check the Facebook page (Elevate Youth Group) or  
the church website for up to date youth nights.  
**For Teens 7th - 12th Grade**

# Hearing God's Voice - Adele Graser

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Growing up in the church, I was always hearing people say, “God told me...” or “I heard God say...” and I wondered what it was like to actually hear God. I thought it was amazing how many people in the Bible heard God and I thought it must’ve been so nice to clearly hear God and know what they were supposed to do. As I got older and started building my own relationship with God, I began to realize that hearing His voice took practice. I realized that everyone’s experiences were slightly different but that most commonly God’s voice is a quiet thought or a little nudge that requires we are purposefully listening for it.

Recently the Women’s Ministry team hosted a “Time with God” event where we spent time worshipping God, praying together, and then praying on our own and listening for God’s voice. It was such a refreshing time and so neat to hear how God revealed himself to different women in different ways. For some it was a verse that stood out, for others it was words of a song that tugged at their heart, still others heard His voice through the prayers of others over them, and some got words spoken to their hearts while journaling.

I know that there are many who are struggling right now and maybe even feeling like God is distant and not speaking. It can be hard to hear His voice amid confusion, pain, anxiety, depression, loneliness, or any other battle you’re fighting, but it is in those moments that God desperately wants us to be listening for Him. We serve a God who wants an intimate relationship with us and who has specific words for us to help us not only survive those battles but to be victorious.

Priscilla Shirer wrote a bible study called “Discerning the Voice of God” that provides some good direction on how to hear God’s voice. One of the first things she says is “Hearing Him starts with our commitment to humble obedience. We won’t do it perfectly – we can’t always obey flawlessly – but we must do it purposefully.” That is a critical part of hearing Him. If you are scared of what He might tell you or don’t know that you’ll be willing to follow through, it is going to be a lot harder to hear Him. You have to be willing to trust Him and to obey.

One of the first times I remember specifically hearing from God was after I admitted to Him that I was scared to let go of my dreams and give Him full control to do as he wanted with my life. He first reminded me who He was: all powerful, all knowing, creator and God. Then He reminded me what He had done for me: sent His son to die for me even when I was unwilling to give Him my all and then poured many other blessings over me. Finally, He said “Knowing this, don’t you think my plans for you will be so much better than any you can come up with yourself?” It was in that moment that I realized how much I was hurting myself when I didn’t fully trust God and give Him control. While I haven’t always obeyed or always let go since then, I have learned to trust Him even when my expectations of how my life should go haven’t always been met.

(cont. next page)

DISCERNING THE  
*Voice  
of God*



BY PRISCILLA  
SHIRER



# Hearing God's Voice - Adele Graser

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Once you're ready to start trusting Him and trying to obey, you are ready to start practicing hearing His voice. Priscilla Shirer gives some good advice on how to do this:

1. Intentionally listen – take time to be still and consciously turn your attention inward to see if what you're sensing carries the weight of God. Discernment takes time, patience, and practice.
2. Don't talk to others about anything more than you talk to God about it. If there is something you think you may have heard from Him, submit it back to Him in prayer instead of worrying over it or trying to overanalyze it.
3. Carefully consider what the Bible says. Does what you think you're hearing contradict the character of God or His word in any way?
4. Seek the counsel of a wise, more mature believer who is practiced in discerning God's voice.
5. Ask the Lord to confirm His internal word with external evidence. He wants you to know His will and won't be hiding it from you. He will graciously verify His message through His word, circumstances, or another person.
6. Don't be afraid of making mistakes. These are often the greatest teachers to help us learn to discern Him more clearly in the future.

Being a perfectionist, that last point has been one of the hardest for me. However, I can speak from experience that God is faithful to redeem those mistakes when they are done with a heart of trying to obey Him.

If you are earnestly seeking His voice and feel that you aren't hearing anything, I would encourage you to spend some time studying His character. Learn who He is and trusting Him and hearing Him will become easier. Also, don't hesitate to reach out to a pastor, elder, or one of us on the Women's Ministry leadership team. We would love to help you!

# from every tribe

The ministry update of Paul & Michele Straubel · Oak Hills Center for Indian Ministries

December 2020

## See what God is doing

When Jesus came to earth the first Christmas—when, as 1 Timothy 3:16 puts it, “God was manifest in the flesh”—He came to oppressed people under military rule by a foreign empire. He came in the midst of a forced census that was at best an inconvenience and at worst a terrible hardship. He arrived during the reign of a paranoid and bloody king who would soon order a massacre of infant boys, forcing Jesus’ parents to flee to Egypt.

2020 has been a historic year. There have been both inconveniences and terrible hardships. We have seen a pandemic, political turmoil, violence, and death. In the midst of these things, let us affirm that our loving God is in control of our present circumstances no less



than He was in control of every detail of the circumstances of Jesus’ birth. And He is here—*God with us*. This Christmas, let’s open our eyes to what God is doing, and our hearts to the comfort of His presence.



### Mokahum update

Fall 2020 at Mokahum Ministry Center looked quite a bit different than usual.

The Canadian border closure kept some students from returning, and recruitment

opportunities for new students were limited. But we did have one student who needed to finish a few classes to graduate from our two-year program. So Josephine returned to campus by herself and spent the fall completing her studies and being mentored by our student life directors Les and Yvonne Parr. We were also able to help her with practical things like getting her driver’s license and buying a car. She graduated before Thanksgiving and has gone home to get a job and serve in her local church. We’re proud of her perseverance!

*continued on page 2*

*We must not forget that the church is the custodian of a truth so grave and urgent that its importance cannot be overemphasized, and so vast and incomprehensible that even an apostle did not try to explain it ... ‘And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...’*

—A.W. Tozer in *From Heaven*, quoting 1 Tim. 3:16

### Contact us

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From top: Paul introducing the first BUILD class in Rosebud, and Josephine, our latest Mokahum graduate.



# Missionary Update - Paul & Michele Straubel (cont)

## How to pray

**Praise God** for a good start to the BUILD program in Rosebud, SD, in spite of the pandemic. **Pray** for the class scheduled to be held the week before Christmas.

**Pray** for God's provision of a new Mokahum director, for guidance as our staff plans and recruits for next year, and for God's leading in the life-skills building project.

**Praise God** for new opportunities to extend the ministry of Mokahum and BUILD through technology. **Pray** for wisdom and creativity as we discern the best ways to do this.

**Pray** for Josephine and our two other 2020 Mokahum graduates. Mark is now a student at Oak Hills Christian College, and Octavius is serving in a Christian Missionary Alliance church plant.

**Pray** for God's blessing on our marriage, and for His ongoing work in the lives of our children: Evan (17), Olivia (15), Isabelle (13), and Emma (10).

In other Mokahum news, director Bill Haas stepped down from our staff this past summer when his family's needs required a move to Colorado. We will miss him, but are in the process of finding a new director and currently have a good prospect.

Having no students on campus for the upcoming spring semester is a great opportunity to give focused time and effort to working on future plans. An important addition we'd like to make to our campus is a life-skills building that would include a wood shop, computer lab, crafting space, kitchen, etc. We have a rough plan and budget and are ready to begin raising the needed funds. Please pray for God's will to be done in this exciting project!

## BUILD update

In September, we began our two-year BUILD program in a new location on the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota. Although the October class had to be cancelled because the reservation went into lockdown for a few weeks, we praise God that we've been able to hold two classes so far. Another module is scheduled for the week before Christmas, Lord willing.

## Open doors through tech

The COVID-19 pandemic has opened exciting doors for both BUILD and Mokahum by forcing us to think creatively: *How can we build the church among more Native American people, even if we're not able to be physically present with them?* Our experiences during the shutdown last spring, when we had to move all of our Mokahum

classes online, led to a new idea: opening an extension of Mokahum at Hands of Faith, a ministry near Pine Ridge, South Dakota. (Hands of Faith is a discipleship ministry where we held our previous series of BUILD classes.) We envision Hands of Faith residents auditing Mokahum classes live via Zoom. We hope to try this next fall when we're back in session.

Meanwhile, through the generosity of a donor, we recently purchased video equipment and have started recording all of the BUILD classes now being held in Rosebud. In the end, we will have a set of professionally produced teaching videos that can be used for BUILD training by qualified facilitators on other reservations, thus multiplying the future reach of the ministry.

## United in Christ reboot

The United in Christ conference planned for this past summer has been rescheduled to

July 15-17, 2021. Our current plan is to hold an outdoor conference at Oak Hills Christian College. In the meantime, we're hosting monthly online mini-conferences in partnership with CHIEF to provide encouragement for Native believers and those in Native ministry.

## Thank you

We are nearing the end of 17 years of ministry here in northern Minnesota. We praise God for His faithfulness, and we want you to know how much we appreciate your partnership with us over the years—some of you from the very beginning. Thank you, and Merry Christmas! ❄️

Paul & Michele  
Evan, Olivia, Isabelle & Emma



Above: Paul giving Josephine her graduation certificate before she heads home to South Dakota; students of BUILD.





# Clear Waters Life Center

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## *THANK YOU—Your support makes a difference!*

It has been a difficult year and an amazing year! Church and community donations has enabled us grow and reach populations we felt were particularly suffering during this year of restrictions. Two focused goals and it has been awesome to see the impact. (See updates below) We are able to offer both of the following programs free of charge!



### **Our goal: to help the seniors in our community live well at home.**

Our Home Care and Chore services offered to seniors 60+ has provided amazing opportunities for connections. We have 38 different clients.

*Comments from our Home Care providers:*

- *“I LOVE my job and my people. They are so eager for someone to talk to since they have to isolate from their usual gatherings. The program makes them feel special as they have someone coming just to see them!”*
- *“I enjoy listening to the stories and I knowing that I am reaching someone that is alone, becoming part of their “family” as I am welcomed in.”*
- *“I am able to build relationships while doing something that truly matters.”*

**Our goal: being a support to  
parents and teachers and help  
bridge the learning gap while  
giving kids engagement with  
peers, hands on classes and  
generally an enjoyable day!**



Our Supervised Distance Learning Day offered on Fridays from 8am-3pm for K-8th grade has 28 participants and is full of life and activity!

*Comments from parents and grandparents:*

- *“It was good to hear the enthusiastic comments from the kids! School work got done but the best part was the opportunity for them to socialize.”*
- *“My kids are counting the days before they can come back again!”*
- *From a teacher: “It was nice getting to know the kids, allowing bridges to be built.”*

***Building Lives, Growing Relationships, Imparting Hope***

# Clear Waters Life Center

PASS IT ON!

*If YOU know of anyone who could use these free services please pass this on or if YOU would like to be part of keeping this service going, free of charge, donations can be made out to CWLC, noted Senior Services!*

## Homemaker & Chore Services

Free for Clearwater County residents, 60 & over

### Homemaking services:

General housework - washing dishes, vacuuming  
Laundry  
Sorting/organizing  
Preparing meals  
Shopping or taking you shopping  
Managing money  
Answering or making telephone calls

### Outdoor maintenance:

Winterization projects, small outdoor repair  
Furniture/Appliance removal- Landfill run  
Snow removal and Spring yard cleanup and maintenance.

**Call with questions or to schedule a visit. Donations of any size would be accepted from clients but are not required.**

Phone: 218-776-2789



### Clear Waters Life Center

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**Building Lives, Growing Relationships, Imparting Hope**



Smells of spring will be coming SOON

## Grow It! Greenhouse and Garden Center



The growing season will kick off with a build  
your own

**Basket Party**  
**Saturday March 27th**  
**9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.**

Please call Clear Waters Life Center in  
Clearbrook at 776-2789 to reserve your spot.  
The Garden Center will be open for all your  
garden needs April 5th.

We look forward to hearing from you!

All sales support the programming of Clear Waters Life Center

