

Family Information

Holiday Schedules

Sunday Morning Bible Class in E44 - The class is taking a break for the holiday on December 25, and will resume meeting on January 1.

Sunday Morning Bible Class in the Auditorium - The class is taking a break for the holiday on December 25, and will resume meeting on January 1.

Sunday Afternoon Worship (4 PM) - The class is taking the rest of December off, and will resume in January.

Monday Women's Prayer Group - The prayer group is meeting tomorrow. It will take a break on December 19, and is tentatively scheduled to resume meeting on December 26.

Tuesday Women's Bible Study - The Bible study is taking a break on December 27 and January 3, and will resume meeting on January 10.

Wednesday Outreach Meetings - The group won't be meeting for the rest of December, and it will resume in January.

Friday TGIF Bible Study - The group won't have regular meetings for the rest of December, and it will resume in January. For special events this month, see Leisha or Mike Evans for updates.

Children's Classes

We currently have children's classes for ages 2-10 during worship (each of them begins after the Lord's Supper). See Mike Evans for further details. The children's education program needs helpers for all age groups. See Lynn Paden or Emily Graham if you can help.

On Line Bible Studies

New Small Groups - Sign-Up Sheets Available

Sign-up sheets have been posted in the foyer for anyone interested in joining a new small group sometime this winter. These will help in setting up the new group(s). There is one sheet for anyone interested in joining a group that would meet every 2 weeks, and there is another sheet for anyone interested in joining a group that would meet once per month. If you have any questions, please see Caleb or one of the elders.

Current On-Line Studies

Every other Friday at 7:00 PM - TGIF Bible Study led by Mike Evans. Contact him for details and the current schedule.

Mondays at 7:00 PM - Women's prayer group, hosted by Peggy Kaiser. Contact her for details. If you aren't able to join, you can e-mail prayer requests to Peggy.

Tuesdays at 7:00 PM - Women's Bible study "Abide In Christ", led by Karen Susenna. The current study is in Acts. Contact Karen for more details.

Update On New Web Site

Until the end of this year, both of Northland's web sites will be continually updated by Jack Evans and Becca Strawser. After January 1 the new site, ncofamily.com, will replace the current site, ncofamily.org, and after that if you enter the old site address you will be automatically redirected to the new one.

Contribution

	Last Week	Average YTD
General:	\$4368	\$4267
Designated:		\$69

Minister: Caleb Dillinger
Elders: Mike Evans, Jeff McVicker, Jim Robbins
Deacons: Lynn Champney, Perry Coate, Glenn Culler, Darrell Estep, Jack Evans, John Lindsay, Don Milnor, Art Silva
Spanish Ministry: Luis Valdez

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:00 AM
 Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 AM
 Sunday Spanish Worship 10:00 AM
 Sunday Ghana Worship 12:00 PM
 Sunday Evening Worship 4:00 PM

For sessions that are currently meeting on-line, see the announcements above.

Because The Sovereign Lord Helps Us

Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced . . . He who vindicates me is near. - Isaiah 50:7-8

Because the Sovereign Lord helps us, we can have a peace and hope that goes beyond this world's temporary events and conditions. Because our Heavenly Father cares for each of us, we know that he is always near and he always listens when we call on him in truth. Because God's compassion endures forever, he gives salvation and redemption to those who walk by faith in Jesus—*It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me. Who will condemn me? - Isaiah 50:9*

Owls spend most of their time at night when there is little light, so God gives them especially keen senses to help them live. They are especially known for their hearing, since their ears can pick up sounds at frequencies that humans and most other animals cannot hear. Moreover, God constructs their ears to give them also pinpoint hearing; their ear openings are arranged slightly asymmetrically, enabling owls to locate precisely and quickly the source of a sound.

Similarly, when we trust in our Heavenly Father instead of in human thinking and worldly philosophies, the Sovereign Lord will open our ears to his words, so that we can focus on his teachings instead of on all of this world's noise and distractions; and he gives us his Spirit who helps us understand God's truths—*He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed. The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears. - Isaiah 50:4-5*

Owls' eyes are especially large so as to maximize the light they can take in, and they have eye tubes instead of eyeballs, so their eyes act like binoculars to allow them to magnify what they see at considerable distances. Since their eyes thus remain fixed, God enables owls to turn their necks up to 135 degrees to each side, and some owls can also rotate their heads over 90 degrees to each side (so their faces look 'sideways').

Since this puts a strain on the blood vessels in their necks and heads (and would cause severe damage to most animals), God gives them a set of small secondary arteries that open when the main ones are blocked. The walls of their blood vessels can also enlarge to gather blood safely when they are blocked. Just as our Creator gives owls remarkable vision in the night, he also gives us light and guidance amidst this world's darkness and confusion—*Let the one who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on their God. - Isaiah 50:10*

The Lord's words and his promises are trustworthy, and we can rely on the good news of Jesus.

- Mark Garner



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MYSTERY VERSE WORD SEARCH #2

The words in the following list come from a certain book of the Bible, and they are all hidden in the diagram below. The words can be forwards, backwards, up, down, or diagonally. As you find them, shade in the letters that you use. There will be 22 unused letters, and reading from left to right beginning at the top of the diagram, they will spell out the mystery verse from this week's mystery book.

ANIMALS	GRASSHOPPER	MEANINGLESS	RIGHTS
CONTROL	GREATER	MORNING	SHOUTS
DAYS OF DARKNESS	HARD APPEARANCE	PONDERED	SLEEP
DECLARED	HUGE SIEGEWORKS	PRINCES	STREETS
DELIGHTS	INHERITANCE	PROVERBS	STRONG
DESTINY	LISTEN	REMEMBRANCE	TOILS
GENERATIONS	LONGER		

S K R O W E G E I S E G U H
 S S B R E V O R P C O E G A
 E N E S I D E R A L C E D R
 N G D L L I S T E N N E E D
 K R N D G R E T A E R G W A
 R H A I E N S T R E E T S P
 A S T G N S I A D O G R T P
 D S T L O R T N O C N I H E
 F E O U E I O I A D O G G A
 O C H H O P I M N E L H I R
 S N N N A H L A S Y M T L A
 Y I S D O N S L E E P S E N
 A R E P P O H S S A R G D C
 D P E R E M E M B R A N C E

The answer, and another puzzle, will be in the bulletin next week. Last week's mystery verse answer: *Let us acknowledge the Lord.* - HOSEA 6:3

- Mark Garner

An Anchor For The Soul

Jesus and his message of salvation and redemption give us an anchor for our souls as we endure this world's uncertainties and fears. This week, Karen Susenna writes about the ways that God can get us through the most difficult of times in this world.

Loss In Him

I have experienced loss in my life, just as everyone else has – loss of a parent, a child, a sibling, a spouse. Loss is part of life. As we lose those close to us, we're shocked to see how short and uncertain life is.

Thru the brokenness that comes from loss, we start to wrestle with God, asking Him hard questions, searching for answers that may never come. At these times, I search my memory (and my journals) for God's past faithfulness and love. I look for "memorial stones" from my past where God was faithful and purposeful (Joshua 4:1-7). This assures me that He will be faithful and purposeful in my present distress.

Thru loss and suffering we can sympathize with our Jesus who also suffered and endured loss. His heart broke in the same way ours does. God has a longer, eternal plan and purpose and we begin our eternal life the moment we commit to Christ (John 17:3). This doesn't erase or change any of my current circumstances, but it gives me new perspective to see God's eternal plan and my role in it.

I've realized that the only thing a person is able to leave behind when they pass into eternity is the love they've shown on this earth. The love of the one that we have lost is left behind with us. And, our love, will be left behind when it is our time to pass into eternity. In loss, I've found it helpful to lean on the Body of Christ, even when I don't know what I need. To stay connected to my inner circle, who know me best, and can help minister to me in my loss.

I've found it helpful to express all that I'm feeling, all that I don't understand, all the unfairness, regret, and anger to the Father thru the Spirit with groans for which I don't have words. The Spirit prays according to the will of the Father, so I don't have to get it all right. (Romans 8:26-27) Speaking of "right", we can sometimes blame ourselves during times of loss – what I did, what I didn't do, "if only". I remind myself of the glorious promise of Romans 8:1: there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. There are no right or wrong ways to move thru loss. Give yourself time and grace.

In the end, we'll see this world for what it is – just a short span that God has given us, to do something for Him, on His timetable, and to be grateful for the time we have to live and to love. God will explain it in the end. Or maybe when we see him face to face...we won't have a need for him to explain a thing.

God will strengthen you with his own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient. And you will joyfully give thanks to the Father who has made you able to have a share in all that he has prepared for his people in the kingdom of light. (Colossians 1:11-12)

- Karen Susenna