

Through Change - Broader Community - “It’s About Christ’s Body”



Sermon slides are available [HERE](#).

Slides in PDF form are available [HERE](#).

Video of the sermon is available [HERE](#).

1 Corinthians 10

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers,^a that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,³ and all ate the same spiritual food,⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.⁵ Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown^b in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.” ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ^c to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents,¹⁰ nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. ¹¹Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹²Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

¹⁴Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all

partake of the one bread. ¹⁸ Consider the people of Israel: ¹⁹ are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? ¹⁹ What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? ²⁰ No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. ²² Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

Do All to the Glory of God

²³ “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. ²⁴ Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. ²⁵ Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. ²⁶ For “the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.” ²⁷ If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. ²⁸ But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— ²⁹ I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? ³⁰ If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

³¹ So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³² Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, ³³ just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

Sermon Transcription:

Pastor Thom Rittichier

Well, I'm going to express to you that I've really not much looked for it to this day, as we come to our last time of worshiping together as Heartland Bible Chapel. But it needs to be. To everything there is a time and a season for every purpose under heaven. Amen. That's the truth.

Now this week, there has been some buzz on a big scale. Have you heard it? It was global, in regards to the expression that was made, the Academy Awards, The Oscars, the 94th Ceremony of the Academy of Motion Picture Art and Science. That's the proper name for it. And this buzz of global scale, Will Smith smacks Chris Rock. "Everybody Hates Chris", right? That's the show that he has. Hey, you know, these guys are showman. Interesting. But Will Smith smacks Chris Rock across the face, and it's buzzed, it's buzzed, it's buzzed all over. I usually don't pay much attention. And on the 94th Ceremony of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science, it really wasn't much different until this happened. And then Facebook and The New York Times and The Washington Post and everybody was carrying this, this buzz, and the fallout of this thing, the relationship between Will Smith and Chris Rock. What will happen to them? And on a broader scale, a corporate scale, there is the whole Academy, are they going to

ban him? And that question kind of goes on. Like I said, I don't pay much attention to this. But it was hard not to with the buzz that was going on.

So this morning, I want to use this offense and damaged relationships, that followed all of that and is still being talked about, and I want to use that as a springboard to create a buzz, a discussion, a conversation, if you would, about how offense, damaged relationships, in person to person or personal ways, and on a corporate scale, a grand scale, have all been resolved by God. Because that is what the Lord's table celebrates to us. I want you to see this as the Apostle Paul talks about it, by going with me to 1 Corinthians, chapter 10. As you're turning there, let me tell you a little bit about our plan this morning. Our plan this morning is to take some time to discuss, there's a couple questions that we're going to bring up around the Lord's table. And then Dr. Stewart is going to be sharing some thoughts that he has on the subject, that the Lord's table brings to us and the future. And then we're going to express a lot of heartfelt thanks and appreciation. And then we're going to close our time together, for the last time, after 18 years together.

So 1 Corinthians, chapter 10 is where I'm having you look. Our observance of the Lord's table this morning, well, to tell us what this is, it's probably best to let God do it through the Apostle Paul. What is the Lord's table? The Apostle Paul tells us in a way that is very, very fitted to this week's buzz, damaged relationships, corporate impact, global reporting, concerning a relationship that matters forever, a relationship with God. The Lord's table, the way the Apostle Paul talks to us, gives us insight on this. Let's hear what he tells us the Lord's table is. If you're with me in 1 Corinthians 10, slide to verse number 16, where the Apostle says this, "The cup of blessing", and what he's talking about is, the cup that we have an appreciation for, that we express appreciation to God for, an admiration for, the cup of blessing, this one that causes us to praise, "that we bless", he says, "is it not a participation", a fellowship, a community and association, "in the blood of Christ?" The blood of Christ, without the shedding of blood, the apostles tell us there is no remission of sin, as was built from the Old Testament. Christ said, on the night he was betrayed, This cup is the new covenant, is the new agreement concerning the relationship. It is the new covenant in my blood, it is shed for you, for many, that sin may be forgiven. Do this to remember me. This cup of blessing, that has that admiration and that praise that we carry, is it not a fellowship? An association, a community, in the blood of Christ, which cleanses us from all sin, is it not that? Isn't it not about this relationship that we share? Is it not that? It's what he asks.

And going on in verse 16, he says, "The bread that we break, is it not a participation", a fellowship, an association, a community, "in the body of Christ?" It was on his body, that He bore our sin on that tree, Peter tells us, that we, in being dead to sin, should live to God's call for what's right. By his wounds, we are healed. There is offence, there is damaged personal relationship, for everybody, individually, and corporately, for all of mankind. For through one man, sin entered into the world. And death, through sin, spread to everybody because all have sinned. Is not this Lord's Table, a community, an association, a participation, and a fellowship in the body of Christ? Is it not that? His answer is this is yes, it's true.

"Because", verse 17, "there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake", we all have our participation, are being involved, "of the one bread". Now you see, we as people have this bend, propensity in our hearts, to put other things in the place of God. It can be a variety of things. Sometimes there's a relationship that we prize, sometimes there's a position that we hold, sometimes there is a desire that we have. Sometimes it's just a material thing. Sometimes it's a mental thing. All of these, the Bible calls idols, there are idols of the heart, Ezekiel 14. There are idols of desire, Colossians. The Apostle Paul, when he's talking to us about the Lord's table, he talks about these idols. Look at what he says in verses 14-17, "Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.", flee from this, that you're putting in front of in the place of God, "I speak to you as sensible people. Judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless", that we appreciate what God has done, that we celebrate, that we praise God for, "is it not a participation", a fellowship, "in the blood of Christ. The bread that we break, is it not a participation", a fellowship, "in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of this one bread."

We're going to use this passage as a springboard to talk about community. And we're going to be talking about moving through change, because Heartland is going to go through a big change. And we're going to be talking about this moving into a change of a broader community. A broader participation and fellowship. A broader one, where there'll be many, many different perspectives than what we've had. And what shall we react to? How shall we react to this? We're gonna be talking about going through change into a broader community. I hope that's the way you're thinking, that's the aim for this morning celebration, because this celebration is a fellowship, it's a community, in the forgiving blood of Christ, in the body of Christ that was broken, and now is a group of people in community. It's about Christ's body. That's what we're going to talk about. That's what we're going to use. And we're going to do it this way. I want to bring up these two questions that we are going to talk about. This is all planned around you participating, because this is a fellowship, we need to participate in this. The first question, what has the community of believers brought into your life? What has this community of believers, over 18 years, what has been the impact of this community of believers for you, during your entire journey through life, journey of coming to Christ? What has that been? What has been a joy, a benefit, that you have derived? And this is for you to be thinking about? What has it been for you? And then we've got a second question, which I'm just going to flash up here for a moment, because I don't want to get sidetracked from the first question. So here it is. What would you like to see moved towards, as we go through change, as we go forward in the body of Christ, what would you like to see moved towards? So first question, what has been a joy? What has been a benefit, a challenge?

(Congregant shares) The iron sharpening iron that the Bible talks about. There has been great joy and benefit from not just the accountability, but the support. This fellowship has been huge support system in hard times, you all have been there for us. And when we needed it, you loved us enough to correct us. That has been a joy.

(Another congregant shares) There's a ton of things that I could say, but what I will say is that I was gone for a while from Heartland. And when I came back, it was easy to

notice that some things maybe a little bit different. But it was very encouraging to see the people that trained me and spent time with me before I left, to see how much you continued to grow and love Jesus. And it was very encouraging that you were still here.

The D-bands have been a tremendous source of encouragement to me, the way that the group's:Bob's group, Josh's group, Nate's group, Doc and Doug's group, Linda's group, Aleta's group. The interaction there in those groups. You know, we saw my son in law saved through one of those groups. He walked around thinking that he was a Christian yet not knowing what the new birth really was till he got plugged into one of those B-bands. Josh and I were having a great time of fellowship recently. And he talked about that event. And him coming to know Christ. It's been a great encouragement to see ministry picked up. And people who've carried the ministry into new locations, the ministry of touching people's lives to build up the body, until we all get to Christ's likeness. By the way, who's gotten there? No one yet. So I guess we've still got some things to do. Amen.

(Another congregant shares) For me, personally, being apart of this fellowship meant I was accepted, lovingly so, no matter what, didn't matter who I was or what I did. And I was accepted. And that meant a whole lot to me. Because I know what I did, and I know who I am. And then on a bigger scale. I will be eternally grateful for you, pastor, and the other people in the church here. You didn't give up on me or my family. And they are a work in progress and you didn't give up and because of that, Lyle, a few months before he died, finally came to know the saving grace, he's no longer work in process. He's there!

(Another congregant shares) So for me, growing up in the church, I've seen my dad pastor quite a bit. But the biggest thing that stands out is the life dedication to Christ. So much self sacrifice here at Heartland, through time, money, spiritual gifts that people have just dedicated over the past 18 years here, so much of their life, for this body, and for the unbelievers, and for Hartford City itself. And it is a testimony to me on how I want to live, and how I want to raise my children to serve Christ with everything I have. And that's been the biggest impact. Even when times don't appear the best. The fellowship is dwindling, but the hope, the excitement, the encouragement of sharing the gospel, I mean, we all know Brad, and to see Brad here today, it makes my heart sing. And that's what it's about. If only one person in the past 18 years came to Christ, it's worth it. And that's the biggest testimony of Heartland, to my heart, is the love of Christ, the fellowship of the believers to further the Kingdom of Heaven

I had somebody who was interacting with me the other day, and they have going on to serve in another church. We were talking about their choice in doing that. And they said, You know, I look at Heartland like a boot camp, it trains you to minister and to serve. I thought, But a boot camp? I went back to work and carried that around for a while. Okay, boot camp. And then I thought, Our mission is to make disciples. And that means growing and changing into Christ's likeness. So I guess I'll take that. It's been a fun boot camp.

(Another congregant shares) We have a lot to be thankful for. And as Dorothy shared, my dad came to Christ because of the ministry of Heartland. He'd been resisting God for many years and he came to the knowledge of the truth because Lord's sponsor was not quarrelsome, but was able to teach, was patient and with gentleness, correcting those who are in opposition. And one thing I've learned from being here is to love the Word of God. And when it's hidden in your heart, the spirit can pull it out at the right moment to share and encourage people where you don't expect somebody would need encouragement, suddenly God puts them in your path. And it can be at a factory or a co worker you didn't even know had any concerns. And then all of a sudden, they're baring their heart and you can share a scripture with that person that fits the circumstances. So the one thing I will be grateful for, as I traveled around with you, early on, you went to visit some folks after church on Sunday. And you were just wielding that sword of the Spirit, in correction and encouragement to these people. And I was just amazed by that. And I thought, Wow, you can use the Bible that way. It was so neat. It's not really just a textbook. It's not a chore to read God's word. It's actually useful. And it's profitable. I think I read that somewhere. And you can apply it so many ways, in so many places and to see it bear fruit. And that's one thing I've taken away from Heartlands influence in my life is that I've grown to love the Word of God, I've grown to appreciate it and grown to use it and rely on it. Especially in times like right now, so many people are on cruise control, they don't realize that the ship is already hit the iceberg and is gonna sink very quickly. If we don't have the word in our hearts, we're not gonna be able to minister to people as they're in the icy water.

That's an encouragement. Very good. Okay. I'm gonna move on to the next question in a vision for the future here. Unless someone else has a thing that is burning in your heart to share. Okay, so what would you like to see move towards as we go forward in Christ body? Because it is going forward. It is a movement forward. The Apostle Paul says, The things that have happened unto me have really turned out for the furtherance of the gospel. So that what I'm going through, these bonds, are in Christ. What do you see? What's hoped for or prayed for as you look forward?

(Congregant shares) It's the continued opportunity to serve, in the church and in the community.

What Skip shared there, about using the Word in new areas for all of us. That's what I pray for. That's what I hope for. I also want to see, hope for, a continuation of mutually encouraging of one another. In a broader community where there's going to be some differences, where there's going to be some real needs, where there will be some times that I really needed this body in that way to help me on somethings where I've been very short sighted. And there have been, as I shared with you the last two weeks, there have been some helpful things that I've been short sighted on.

In case you couldn't hear that, Nate shared he would like to see the fostering of spiritual gifts, advancing community.

(Congregant shares) So I was hearing the story of our friend, Josh, the other day, and he was laying out the process in which they were finding places to do worship services as

Three Trees Church. They started off at their house, kind of like Heartland did. And they followed an eerie path along the same trail as Heartland in a way. They ended up at the Senior Center. And then they asked if they could use the Heartland Chapel building. And he talked about how you guys were willing to give them the Heartland building, rent free, to use on a weekly basis, on Sunday evenings. And I was just thinking about how that's how we ended up meeting them, because they started coming to Heartland on Sunday mornings and as opportunity arised and we started going there on Sunday evenings, I was able to start leading a men's group that was community focused. It was multi church. Doc's been coming for months and months now. But it's also been other churches that have been involved. And it's just been really encouraging to see an opportunity within the community. And we wouldn't have met Josh without Heartland's generosity to them in the first place. And we might have met them later on, like it might have happened. But it was really a blessing to see a generous gift that Heartland gave to them, to start using their building when they needed it and was really a blessing from the Lord because they didn't have anywhere else to go. And an opportunity for them to grow. It was just a blessing to see other churches blessing each other and then the opportunites that arrived from that. That community focus, which is what Nate was talking about, I think fits right into that concept. And there wasn't enough men outside of the D-bands here for me to start something. But I saw an opportunity there with people that couldn't be at church on Sundays, and giving them an opportunity to do a men's group on a Thursday night. And so that's really where that all stemmed from So, it just, it's cool to see the trail of churches blessing other churches, ultimately, a blessing from the Lord.

Dr. Stewart

It is a body that is His body. It is a body, it's His body. It's not ours. Matter of fact, what we put in the place sometimes can be an idol for what His body is, and what He's doing. So we participate. Broadening fellowship, using the Word, by the Spirit, to accomplish God's work.

One body, unity in Christ. The verses we've already read, 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. We've just taken the cup and the bread, communion, the Greek word is Koinonia. You know that word, I think it was Doug that first told me about Koinonia. It's fellowship, common unity around the Lord's table. This is a sacrament, sacred, His body, His blood. 1 Corinthians 11:26, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes". How can we be unified through the Lord's death? Death is so final, for us it ends relationship. But do it? We know the rest of the story, don't we? He was and is God, His death unites us. First with him. Before we were believers, we were lost in our sins, we were dead to God in our own transgressions. We were enemies of the King. We came to understand, by the Spirit of God, that we were sinners, separated from God, our sins would condemn us to hell forever, to suffer alone, for eternity because of our rebellion. There's no unity there. Each of us would suffer alone apart from God if we chose our way and not his but... I'm so thankful for the but in the Bible. In Ephesians 2:4-5, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ." He took away the hatred in our hearts for God. He took away the stony, cold heart, the dark heart and he put in a new heart, a heart of flesh, a heart that

beats for him, a heart that loves him. He placed his Spirit within us that he causes us to walk in his statutes, Ezekiel 36:26-27. Not that we don't choose badly because we do, on a daily basis. Jesus is our head. What does that mean that Jesus is our head? He's our leader, our authority, our boss. What about our faith? Hebrews tells us, start to finish, that he gives us faith. We exercise it but from start to finish, he's our head. We are his body, united with Him, unified with each other.

So we see that in the bread, we who were many are one body. One body, many members. We, as Heartland, have a variety of members. Those who are the big toe and the index finger and the eye of the body. Many but one, many with various personalities and gifts, but they're one, one body under one head with one message. The glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. We've had the privilege to preach the gospel. We try to do that every time that we speak, we try to preach the gospel. It's the message that unites us. Heartland as a part of the universal body of Christ. Just made of all believers, every local body and Hartford City and in Blackford County and throughout Indiana, United States and North America and the Western Hemisphere, churches all over the globe, in every remote and prominent corner of the earth. All believers who have trusted Christ and they submit their hearts to obey Him. We can come together as one because of one blood sacrifice. The blood that we've remembered and we said this blood is a blessing to us, 1 Corinthians 10:16, "the cup of blessing".

How are we blessed by His blood? How are we blessed by His blood? We have forgiveness of sins, first and foremost, that starts the relationship with God. He also took our punishment. There's happiness, joy in knowing God, right. We're back where we need to be. His blood atone for our sins. He's redeemed us, he's bought us out of the slave market of sin. We were owned by Satan. And we followed him. And God the Father bought us back. 1 Peter 1:18-19 says, "For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from an empty life. The ransom he paid was not mere gold and silver. He paid for you with the precious blood of Christ, the sinless spotless Lamb of God." We had all gone our own way, every one of us, lost and wandering, when Jesus found us and drew us and preach truth to us, through someone. Our sinful hearts were regenerated as we trusted in his death on the cross for us, his blood which does not potentially save the whole world, but actually saved completely, us and every one of his elect, forever. "As a lamb slain before the foundation of the world", Revelation 13:8, "that we might be made clean and righteous", Isaiah 53:11-12. And by the infinite power of His blood, it can save anyone and everyone who comes to Christ and repents and believes in him. And there's forgiveness of sins that's complete in Him.

They not only have their sins forgiven, we've had the privilege to teach this glorious doctrine of justification which means we not only have our sins forgiven, but what else do we have? We have positive righteousness that Jesus gave us. His complete goodness and righteousness. He attributed it to our account. What an amazing thing. I try to think of that, it's just hard to make that sink in completely. That He gives us His righteousness, His perfect righteousness, by His grace, we are saved. At the moment we believe, we receive the one and the only Holy Spirit of God, who baptizes us, each and every one into one body, the church. We're in this church, universal, throughout the

world. But he brought each of us, each of us here, as members of Heartland. He put us together to make up this local body.

And this is our salvation, but Jesus death for us is at work daily, to grow us and change us, to make us to become conformed to the image of Christ, to make us a little bit more like Jesus as we walk with Him each day. Calvin says, Believers are united together by Christ's blood to become one body. A unity of this kind, called communion, that we all become one body, because we are together partakers of the same bread...communion between us. But from this, that we are united to Christ in such a way that we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones, Ephesians 5:30. We must first trust Christ as our Savior, that we may be united to each other. Communion is the connection which we have with the blood of Christ, when He ingrafts all of us together into his body, that he may live in us and we in him. MacArthur says this, When believers participate, they're sharing in the blood of Christ and sharing in the body of Christ. It's communing with the Lord and with His people, celebrating our common salvation and eternal life. It's the ultimate fellowship of believers while we're on earth. And it reflects the perfect fellowship we have in heaven. There's a reality, where we get to meet with Lyle and Tom and Sis and Calvin and Joan.

When we properly shared in communion, we spiritually participate in fellowship with Jesus Christ and with believers, it is more than a symbol, it is a profound unity of common spiritual experience. You know, the picture of someone we love is not the same as that person. I have a picture. Do you recognize that guy? He can't be with us today. But this is a picture of Johnny. And a picture is a reminder, right? But it isn't quite the same as the person. It only represents the person, the feeling of love, care, desire to be with them, or remembering experiences we've had with them. They're totally real. Like fishing in Minnesota or spending time throwing the ball. We have an experience of real fellowship and kinship with that person whenever we see the picture. Our minds are flooded with reality. While we are thinking of them, our earthly loved ones are seldom aware of it, but our Lord is intensely aware of it when we think of him. And that's what we've done this morning isn't it? We've remembered the Lord in His death for us, becoming sin for us, His taking our penalty upon Himself, His redeeming of us, all of us, which are represented by His shed blood. We participate in the most intimate real communion with Him and with all others that are in Him, believers together.

So we have this unity with God and our fellow believers. Ephesians 5:8 says, "For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." Each of us carries a light and together we are, Jesus said, the light of the world. And what's light meant to do? Do you put it under a basket? No. You do what with it? You lift it up and let it shine, carry the light. And we were given a lampstand, as Heartland, we've been able to elevate the light together to this community. But as we close the doors today, what will happen to that light, will it be extinguished? No, because we each carry our light to another body to hopefully contribute there for Christ. We were given light inside of us, in our heart, to shine for him. And we're going to carry that light to another body and we're going to contribute to help them burn even brighter. As we go to a new body, our gifts or abilities, each of us, whether we are fingers or big toes or eyes or

some other part, will become an active part of another new body. New to us. People with whom we will share unity and purpose to carry the gospel to this community.

We were never meant to fly solo, right? No man is meant to be an island. God meant for us to be in community. I beg of all of you to become a vital part of a local church that preaches the word of God, a true church which loves God and people. And so I ask the question, what would you want for everyone here at Heartland? I thought about this myself. And I would want for each of us to be in a place where we are growing in love for God, a more intense, stronger, better, truer relationship with God, each and every one of us. And through that, that we would love others well around us. Hopefully this will be for us. We've chosen to attend The Lighthouse Church. We know that not everyone may choose that. But we pray that it's a church that will magnify Jesus Christ and His Father.

So let's pray. Lord, thank you for the privilege of being able to bring your Word this last 18 years, we thank you. For each one that's here, we thank you that we've been able to experience life together, difficulty and suffering, joy, rejoicing, pulling along in the mundane minutes and days and hours, together. We thank you, it's all been for your grace, your glory. And we pray that you'd help us, that we would shine, we would shine together for you. We thank you for this privilege and for your grace that comes through Jesus and His sacrifice. Amen.

Pastor Thom Rittichier

We would like to express some thank you's here to the Lord. So I think we need to name some names here, of folks who have sacrificed. We so appreciate Karen for making a lot of effort with the music. You know, music is often an area where there's difference of opinion. Do you believe that? And she has managed that well. Amen. Also to Matt and Johnny and Nick and others, who have served us in the music ministry, thank you very much, we appreciate. It takes our hearts to worship, sing unto the Lord a new song, a new song, I want to thank you for that. Thank you to my wife, Aleta for all she does with the ladies bible studies and the childrens ministries. Also, we have some media people who have done a great deal for us. And in more than just sound, like audio and video. Can I tell you folks, one of the things that has been a blessing to me is just the nature of our website, and the communication that goes on with that. And the manner of it, it has been great. So Nate and Thomas and Matt, thank you, I know that you've rallied from time to time, different people to do. Thank you. Thank you very much. I want to thank Doug and Linda and Bob and Sandy. They have done various responsibilities. As a matter of fact, go in and enjoy the fellowship hall today, because it is by deacon ministry that it looks the way it does. So we appreciate that and the work they've done. I'd like to thank this guy right here, Tom. I don't want this day to end. But to everything there is a time. I've been saying that a lot to myself lately. To everything there is a time and a season for every purpose under heaven. So I want to thank you all for being involved here, for carrying this light into the world. And like Tom said, We just are taking it to a different place, where there is need. And this is to advance the Kingdom of God. It's to broaden community. It's to do what we have been trained to do, that is go make disciples.

Dr. Stewart

And I just wanted to say one thing. How could we express words to say, what our pastor means to us. All that he's been through with us, in the dysfunctional nature of our own family, and many others here and through the counseling ministry. We are thankful for his faithfulness to the Word of God. And I just want to say I love you. I love all of you, from Karen and my family. We love you, we've been privileged to serve here. Thanks for your service, and your love shown to us in so many ways. Thank you.

Pastor Thom Rittichier

So we come to this, and I carry you in my heart and that never ends. By the grace of God, we are a forever family. That's a great, great thing. Now, I commend you to God, to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all of those who have been rescued, set apart to God, sanctified through Jesus Christ and Him alone. I want you to join with me in this, to him. Say this with me now. Now to Him, who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you faultless before the presence of His Glory, with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all the time, now and forever. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.