

THE BELL

news from fellowship church

— BETWEEN —

— THE —

— LINES —

where stories meet

Our Mission...
 is to love **GOD** and others
 as an accepting community,
CENTERED IN CHRIST,
 focused on developing faithful
 FOLLOWERS OF **JESUS.**

FELLOWSHIP STAFF

Church Office number: 616.399.9280

(Phone extensions given)

Ross Dieleman - Pastor of Congregational Life, 112
Tierra Marshall - Pastor of Formation & Strategic Leadership, 114
Nate Schipper - Pastor of Engagement & Mission, 117
Jim Baar - Minister of Seniors & Visitation, Pastor Emeritus
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Diana Fonseca-Peña - Office Manager, 110
Jessica Mix - Minister of Creative Arts & Worship, 127
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BETWEEN

THE

LINES

where stories meet

Questions & Conversations: Jesus in the Old Testament

Join us as we engage the Scripture text each week! We will focus on the same passage the pastor will preach on the following Sunday. A conversation guide will be given in each week's bulletin and a more in-depth guide will be available at the Welcome Center. We will discuss questions you will want to talk about, such as, "What does the account of Noah have to do with Jesus?" "When Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, how did they enslave themselves?" You can feel free to add your own questions to the conversation, too. Contact Carol Washburn (carolwashburn@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in participating. This group has three meeting options to fit your schedule:

- OPTION 1 Wednesdays at Community Nights | 6:30-7:30pm
- OPTION 2 Thursdays on Zoom | 10-11am
- OPTION 3 Thursdays in the Atrium | 1:30-2:30pm

This is just one of many opportunities to engage with scripture and "belong" at Fellowship this fall - check out the Ministry Guide to learn other ways to belong, grow, and serve!

Every summer we watch the sunset; every Christmas we put lights on trees; in the Springtime we celebrate our mothers, and in September we take up the Narrative Lectionary. I suspect that at least the first three of those are familiar - the fourth, maybe not. The Narrative Lectionary is a prescribed way to engage Scripture without an agenda. Sometimes in worship, churches gather for a sermon series that has been carefully crafted around a specific topic with texts that seem most poised to advance the cause of something discerned to be most fitting for "such a time as this." At Fellowship, we typically do that in the summertime (2021 - Reconnecting & Rising Strong; 2022 - A Questionable Life). *But in September, we put our best plans aside and take up the Good Book as assigned by the lectionary, and trust it to be "the Word of God for the people of God."* Some folks avoid the lectionary, assuming it is too irrelevant. Others embrace it, trusting that God will bring forth something more than merely what we think is most important. In the Fall at Fellowship Church, we take this second route.

"Between the lines" is a common phrase. By it we mean that sometimes there is more being communicated than strictly what is being read or spoken. When your loved one says "thanks" with a chipper voice and a twinkle in their eye, it means something very different than when they say the same thing flatly while turning away in a huff. To know the difference between the one and the other is to read "between the lines." In the Fall of 2022, the Narrative Lectionary is going to take us into a smattering of Old Testament texts that are often classified as historical narratives. This means that the stories are more descriptive than prescriptive - and a proper reading of the text is not that we would go out and try to re-create and re-live the old stories - building an ark like Noah, or crossing the Red Sea on dry ground like the Israelites. We are invited instead to read the stories and to read "between the lines," particularly with our ears tuned and our eyes searching for timeless truths gleaned from the annals of Salvation History. For each text, we'll ask, *"What does it reveal about God? What does it say about me? And what does it teach us about life in the world?"* Remember, the Bible is easily - far and away - the world's best selling book, and for good reason! As we read the old stories, it's a great opportunity to share our own and to hear others'. So please join us - and invite a friend - as we joyfully set out to read the text and also read "Between the Lines."

**- Ross Dieleman
Pastor of Congregational Life**



Annual Flu Clinic

Wednesday, September 21, 2022 | 5:30-7:30pm

The Flu shot, also known as the influenza vaccine, is recommended annually for individuals 6 months and older. Those up to 64 years of age are eligible for the regular dose vaccine, while those 65 and older are eligible for the high dose influenza vaccine. Please pre-register to ensure availability of the correct dose by calling the church office: 616.399.9280, ext 130.

For questions, please contact Pat Vorpagel: pvorpagel@fellowshipreformed.com

CARE

ministry

Meal Ministry

The Meal Ministry is a vital ministry at Fellowship. Our church is a place that strives to feed its members spiritually and, when needed, physically. During times of significant events, illness, injury, or new additions to the family (see the photo to the left), this ministry brings meals to individuals and families. But in order to do this well, we need people to share their gifts.

If you enjoy cooking and would like to nurture our Fellowship family, please consider joining this important ministry. Kristi Rosendahl facilitates the group by sending emails to the group when a meal is needed. When you are available to make a meal, you simply respond as prompted in the email. You control when and how frequently you participate, and each time you share a meal, you can be certain your efforts are appreciated.

For more information or to join, please contact Kristi Rosendahl kristi.rosendahl@gmail.com



Abbey and Nathan Price enjoyed several meals provided by Fellowship members as they settled into life with their newborn, Hadessah.

COMMUNITY

nights

Wednesday nights, 5:45-7:30pm
September - March

Join us every Wednesday evening for community activities including dinner, children & youth ministries, worship rehearsal, and adult ministries.

Adult options include:

- An interactive book study of Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work by Tim Keller and Katherine Leary-Alsdorf, led by Pastor Tierra Marshall, Professor Suzanne McDonald, and Scott Patchin.
- Questions & Conversations: Jesus in the Old Testament (see page 3).
- An open Fellowship Group led by Burt & Marlene Braunius.
- Worship rehearsal led by Jess Mix

Kids are invited to participate in BLAST (see page 6).

Middle Schoolers are invited to join the Elevate gathering in the Youth Center each Wednesday night: games, Mystery Trips, service projects, movie nights, and much more.

Mark your calendars for our monthly intergenerational events:

- October 26 - Fall Fest & Chili Night
- November 23 - Thanksgiving Eve Service
- December 14 - Children's Impromptu Christmas Pageant





I have always heard of Meet Up and Eat Up, but never really understood what it was all about. On June 23, I got the chance to see just that when I brought a firetruck over to share with the kids. I watched all the kids come with wide eyes and great enthusiasm, the smiles and laughter were so uplifting and instantly sent warmth to my heart.

Looking at the kids, I found that they reminded me of me when I was a kid. My grandma often helped the seasonal workers try and establish themselves in Holland. She was their voice and always went out of her way to make them feel welcomed, and pushed them to excel in all aspects of life. After all, that's how my family came to Holland - driving in on a whim and a prayer in the same way as many of these families. My grandma was freshly widowed when she left Laredo, Texas with seven kids and a car packed with as much as they could fit, not knowing where she would end up. She landed here in Holland, Michigan.

I greeted all the kids and parents. I could see how grateful and excited they were for the day's activities. I met so many kids; so many I can only recall some of their names...Giovanni, Annabelle, Mateo, Maverick, and of course, Jayden.

I never knew what God had planned for Jayden and I. We met on June 23 with the understanding that we probably wouldn't interact again, or at least not for a long time. We were wrong. Not more than a week and a half later, my fire station received an emergency call to the address of the association where our Meet Up and Eat Up fun took place.

I recall very clearly telling my partner that I was there a week and a half ago for the Meet Up and Eat Up event sponsored by Fellowship. Radio traffic was buzzing with business that night since it was the Fourth of July. As I tried to hear the narrative of the call, I gathered that a young male 10-12 years old suffered an injury to the chest from a direct impact and burns from a firework mortar. The narrative also advised that the mother of this injured child was also requiring medical treatment for unknown reasons.

I approached the location of the incident hearing calls from other kids..."Firefighter Dave, Firefighter Dave"...and that's when I saw Jayden laying on the ground with a fair amount of difficulty to breathe, clutching his chest. As I knelt down beside him, I was told that he lit the fuse of one of those big fireworks, dropped the lighter on the ground, and bent over the tube to grab it. The fuse must have burnt quickly given that this tennis ball-sized projectile that launches a few hundred feet in the air launched about a foot into this boy's chest. I asked him if he could move and he nodded yes. I helped him up and we made our way to the ambulance. We could see the paramedics helping his mom, so I sat him in the ambulance to calm him down, putting him in a blanket and telling him that his mom would be alright.

As anyone could imagine, it took awhile for Jayden to collect himself and have the ability to speak. He said that his chest hurt really badly and, given the impact and burns, I felt terrible that I couldn't take away his pain. We sat and talked for what seemed like hours, but in reality it was only ten minutes. His mom had fainted when she saw him hurt and when she fell she hit her head. She was okay, but nonetheless, both she and Jayden were heading to the hospital.

My time on scene was cut short from being dispatched to a building fire, so I gave Jayden a hug, told him to be strong, and left the scene. That was the first of twelve calls for the night, but I can assure you that in the forefront of my mind was this kid... Jayden. I'm sure he will be okay and heal without complications, but had I not met him at Meet Up and Eat Up, that experience would have been scary for the both of us - he helped me as much as I helped him. All paths were set by God to have this happen.

Being a firefighter for 8 years, this has to be one of the brightest moments to date!

- Dave Garcia (Fireman Dave)

MEET
up
and
EAT
up





Pizza by the Bowl

Kids in Kindergarten through 5th grade came to have some fun with friends at our summertime pizza party, just before the rain fell down. We changed our outside water game plans to playing in the gym and Youth Center, but it was still a wonderful time for kids to have some fellowship here at church with friends and food!

CHILDREN & families



VBS 2022

There were 92 kids and 63 volunteers who had a “monumental” week learning about God’s greatness through the story of Joseph. We learned seven awesome songs and rocked with the motions! Kids brought in over \$1600 for Empowering Youth Global Connection, which allows them to give students in Africa scholarships for going to school. EYGC is one of our mission partners and it was a great joy to see kids get excited about giving to others! Thank you so much, kids and families. What a blessing! God is indeed monumental.



BLAST

Last year we started a brand new children’s ministry called BLAST. It stands for Bible Learning and Sharing Together. Kids age four by September 1 through 5th grade are invited every Wednesday during Community Nights to join us as we learn more about God together and enjoy a time of fun with each other, building friendships with leaders and other kids. This year in the fall we are using a curriculum called “Rocky Road...Life on the Straight and Narrow.” This is an ice-cream themed series of lessons where our kids will discover that the going may be a bit challenging at times, but the reward is sweet. Some of the lessons include The Wide and Narrow Gates (Matthew 7) and Jesus Heals a Sick Woman (Luke 8).

Each night we start in a large group, learning the lesson for the week. We then break off into two smaller groups and enjoy games (outside or in the gym) and crafts/activities. Some weeks we separate into boy/girl groupings, and some weeks we break out into PreK-2nd and 3rd-5th graders. At the end, we have a time of small groups and prayer. And of course, we will be enjoying a variety of ice cream treats this fall as well! We would love to see your child starting Wednesday, September 14. It will be a BLAST!

- Betsy Bruins
Minister of Children & Families



West Virginia Summer Serve team

— HSM —
 — high —
 — school —
 — ministry —

It's been a great summer with our high school students! In June, we welcomed our new freshmen with a trip to Grand Haven for ice cream, and we took our summer serve trip to West Virginia. July brought a movie night at the Dykema's, time playing disc golf and other games at Winstrom Park, as well as boating on Lake Mac. It's sad that our summer days are almost gone.

But don't worry, because this fall, *HSM is ready to kick things off on September 11 from 6-8pm.* We can't wait to get this year started, and we are looking forward to all of the Sunday nights, lock-ins, retreats, and exciting events that the year will bring.

- Bryce Vander Stelt
 Minister of Youth & Young Adults



West Virginia Summer Serve

Lake Mac Boating Day



Ice cream outing with new freshmen



HSM and Elevate leaders with the new freshmen



-ELEVATE-
 — middle —
 — school —
 — ministry —



2nd Annual Elevate Summer Olympics

It has been an awesome summer for Elevate! We started out by going to St Thomas, USVI with a group of our 8th graders. Though the trip had it's ups and downs (Covid, cancelled flights, etc.), God showed His faithfulness and our students had a wonderful experience. We also enjoyed pool parties, a Harry Potter themed night, Summer Olympics, bonfires, and mini golfing throughout the summer. Along with these one-night events, we went on our Elevate Summer Trip to the New Wilmington Mission Conference where our students engaged with missionaries from around the globe. In August, many of our middle schoolers served with Meet Up & Eat Up. It was so encouraging to see these students serve selflessly and connect with the migrant kids that attended.

We are eager for Sunday, September 11 to kick-off our fall ministry - Youth Group, Sunday School, Community Nights, and more! We hope you can join us!

- Hannah Cochrane
 Minister of Middle School & Communications



Mini Golfing & Ice Cream



Elevate Summer Trip:
 New Wilmington
 Mission Conference



8th Grade Trip: St Thomas, USVI



Serving with Meet Up & Eat Up





— WORSHIP —

— ministry —

I've been thinking lately about the character of God – the parts that we participate in as image-bearers (God's love, justice, holiness, etc.) and the parts that are so "other" that we cannot participate in (God's all-knowing, all-powerful, or ever-present attributes, for example). Our fragile humanity limits how much of God we can absorb in one moment. In ancient times, when Moses encountered God, God hid him in a cleft of a rock and passed by so that Moses would only see God's back – he would have died otherwise.

And yet, in our times of gathered worship we create space for intentional *encounter and experience* of God and each other. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 3 that it is the Spirit of God indwelling us who reveals God's essence to us; and this "unveiled faces" encounter increasingly transforms us into Christ's image. How incredible! I wonder what aspect(s) of God's essence, glory, or character has the Spirit been revealing to you, inside or outside our times of gathered worship? Another way of asking this might be, **"What three aspects of God's character mean the most to you, in this moment, this day, this particular span of time?"** Is it God's power, mercy, and always-and-everywhere presence? Is it God's eternal nature, wisdom, or beauty? Are you currently more drawn to God's "otherness" or God's "communicable" attributes (the ones we get to participate in)? Or a mixture of both?

Our order of worship each week includes a **Prelude** and a **Postlude**. They are musical selections, yes; but perhaps more than that, they can be a space for noticing the God we're seeking (prelude) and the God who is finding us (postlude). I'd like to suggest a practice of intentionally using those times – perhaps even extending them to getting ready on Sunday morning and to a shared afternoon meal – to engage these questions in the quiet of our own hearts and in conversation with others. How might our experience of God be richer for it, and what might we learn about others around us and how God is at work?

- Jess Mix
Minister of Creative Arts & Worship

Reflective "Taizé" Worship Service

Sunday, October 16 @ 6:30pm

This fall, amidst our often busy schedules, we invite you to join us in pausing to simply "be with" God. On Sunday evening, October 16, we will come together for a unique service of prayer, art, Scripture, music, candles, and silence. In the spirit and style of Taizé, an ecumenical monastic community in France, we will "sit with" the elements of the service, and engage in the practice of allowing God's Word and loving presence to take deep root in our hearts.

Worship Choir

Sunday, September 18

Singers (middle school through adult) are invited to join in a "laid back" (limited direction) vocal choir that will lead our worship songs and hymns in both services (9am & 10:30am). There will be one rehearsal with the full band on Wednesday, September 14, 6:30-8:30pm, with a 7:30am call time on Sunday. Email Jess if you're interested: jmix@fellowshipreformed.org



— FAITHFUL GIVING —

At Fellowship, our desire is that everyone would **belong**, **grow**, and **serve**. It is so much a part of us that you will even see it in the three dots that are integrated into our logo. For me, personally, there have been times where all I felt I could do was belong by being in worship on a Sunday. At other times, I have experienced joy, connection, and relationships through engaging in all three. One of the ways to support Fellowship and all three of these goals is by financially supporting what God is doing in and through Fellowship.

This past fiscal year, July 2021 through June 2022, we celebrate that we received just enough gifts to pay our budgeted expenses. This included things like:

- Helping refugee families settle in the Holland area
- Mission trips for adults and youth
- Mentoring students in West Ottawa Schools
- Improving our online worship technologies to help connect those worshipping with us remotely
- Community Nights, where adults and kids grew in relationship with Christ and one another
- Connecting with our local migrant communities through Meet Up and Eat Up
- Maintaining our facilities and grounds
- Supporting online discipleship opportunities through technology like Zoom
- Providing food for students in need
- Weekly mailings to shut-ins and those without technology
- VBS for Fellowship kids and the surrounding community
- Supporting our local and global mission partners



Thank you for being a part of **belonging**, **growing**, and **servicing** through your financial gifts to Fellowship. We are seeing the Spirit move as we welcome many new faces on Sunday mornings, experience new ways of growing as faithful followers of Jesus, and lean into being a place of peace in an ever divisive world.

- Nate Schipper
Pastor of Engagement & Mission

online giving

Did you know that 38.8% of the money given in 2022 was given online? Perhaps even more interesting is that half of all gifts (about 100 processed each week) are given online, which means more than one-third of people at Fellowship rarely put a donation in the physical offering bowl! While the transition to online giving has been rapid in the past couple of years (disruptions like COVID have that effect!), the change has both positive and negative consequences.

One positive consequence is that our monthly offerings as a congregation are much more consistent and provide us with a high level of confidence as we plan ministry for the coming months. However, as a Consistory member

pointed out, one challenge with setting repeating online offerings is that you can “set it and forget it.” This deacon mentioned how he hadn’t changed his monthly gift for the past couple of years, even as their family saw their income grow. Soon after this realization, their family made the decision to edit the monthly gift.

Might it be time to review your monthly giving?

We give God thanks for the multiple ways in which we get to participate in God’s ministry in and through Fellowship Church. Monthly online giving is just one way we get to do that!



— CONSISTORY —

— r e t r e a t —



Over the weekend of August 26, Fellowship hosted its annual consistory retreat, a time of fellowship, food, fun, equipping, prayer, and thinking towards this next season of ministry at Fellowship. Pastor Tierra and President of the Congregation, Linda Milanowski-Westdorp led the team in considering the "why" of their leadership as elders and deacons for this season of ministry. Pastor Ross taught on the ideas in Colossian Way and the team role-played scenarios that will help them to lead and listen well. Pastor Nate equipped the team to consider and practice how they connect with and care for the congregation. The focus passage was **Ephesians 4:1-16** (read it - you will be encouraged and challenged!). May God grant wisdom to our pastors, elders, and deacons as they continue to lean into Fellowship's mission **to love God and others as an accepting community, centered in Christ, focused on developing faithful followers of Jesus.**



Ministry Leadership Council

The mission of the Ministry Leadership Council is to empower the congregation to ensure the realization and development of Fellowship's overall mission; and further, to allow the gifts of the church to be discovered and used to their fullest.

What are MLC and CLC?

Care Leadership Council

To provide an environment where people belong to God and belong to each other, encouraging and sharing with each other the joys and struggles of the Christian journey. "We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God, but our lives as well." (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

FISCAL YEAR	2021-2022	2020-2021
Gifts Received	\$1,545,936	\$1,631,929
Expenses	\$1,526,356	\$1,520,465
Balance	\$ 19,580	\$ 111,464
Building Debt	\$2,255,860	\$2,473,346

— FAITHFUL —

— g i v i n g —





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— **Financial Update** —

...and **MORE**

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