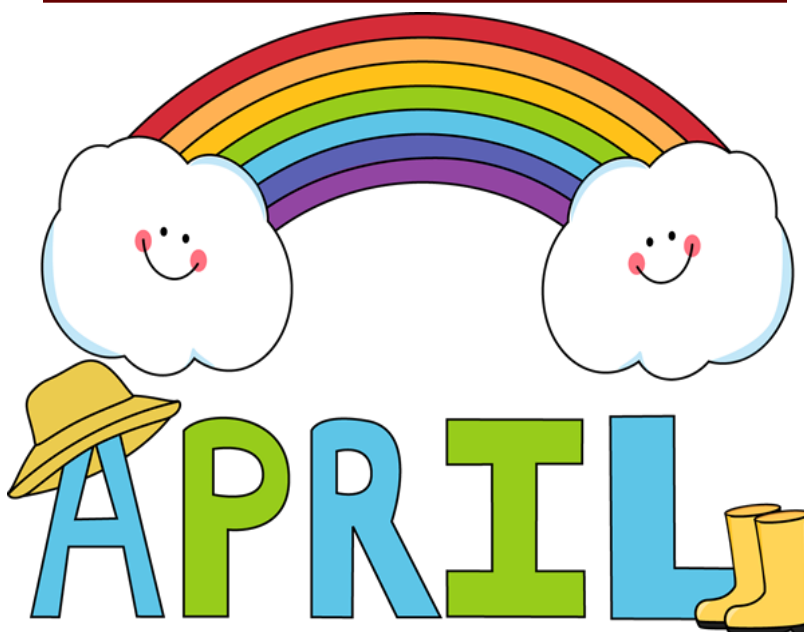


# **In Touch**

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## **Sharing Our Gifts Table of Contents:**

<b>A Note From Your Pastor</b>	<b>Page 2, 3</b>
<b>April Calendar</b>	<b>Page 4, 5</b>
<b>Concerns of the Church</b>	<b>Page 6, 7</b>
<b>Niger 2018 Trip</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>OGHS Offering/Lunch Bunch</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Witness News</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Bible Study/New Home needed</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>Frontier Fellowship News</b>	<b>Page 12, 13</b>
<b>Men's Conference</b>	<b>Page 14</b>
<b>April Birthdays</b>	<b>Page 15</b>

## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The famous mathematician, theoretical physicist, and cosmologist (a student of the cosmos) Stephen Hawking died last week (March 14). He is often mentioned alongside Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton as one of the greatest scientists ever. That he was also stricken with ALS is remarkable and poignant. Being imprisoned in his body he dedicated himself to thinking about the universe, its history, the way it works, and its future.

I read in the news that only days before his death he was collaborating on a paper that, among other things, said that there will come a time when the universe will lose its energy and the stars will go dim. This could be interpreted to be the end of the world as we know it. There is no form of life that can survive the loss of energy from the stars.

Scientists have a funny way of making predictions that make the rest of the world shudder with fear, or in some cases, leap right into denial. Personally I have wondered if our universe would continue to exist forever. This of course conflicts with the understanding we get from scripture. The writings of Daniel predict a heavenly court at the end of all days where God will sit and judge. Similar words come from the book of Revelation. But I don't think that the universe has to go dark in order for God to come and judge us. God is sovereign, after all. The physical end of the universe can happen when he comes, sometime later, or not at all.

Possibly realizing the distress his prediction would cause, Stephen Hawking tried to offer hope to humanity in his paper by saying that there is the possibility of other parallel universes where humanity could attempt to move, if they learned how. I believe he wanted to offer hope because, not being the most religious person, he thought hope would not come from any other quarter. But I want to offer that kind of hope is cold comfort.

I say so because even if we do manage to escape an imminent fate in this universe by the strength of scientific knowledge and know how. We still bring into that unsuspecting universe the same problems we have in this one.

## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

We would just be surviving instead of living. Far better in my mind is to learn how to live with each other. That kind of knowledge doesn't require scientific breakthroughs, it just takes a will to love and faith that you can make a difference.

Jesus talks about a faith the size of a mustard seed that can move mountains. Someday we may learn how to scientifically harness the type of energy that can move mountains or transport us to new universes. But the real mountain that needs moving is the mountain of disbelief, not disbelief in God so much as the disbelief that we can make life better by being better to each other. I think belief in God gets us to that place quicker and keeps us there better than other ways, but if we call the last half of God's Great Commandment the "Golden Rule," or the "Key to Life," or something else and people who know nothing about God believe they can truly change the world by loving each other, I think God will feel that something worthwhile will have been achieved. He can reveal himself to the new faithful in other, possibly more meaningful ways than through scripture, worship, and traditional church.

In 1948 the United Nations adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In the Declaration are words like "all human beings should act towards another in a spirit of brotherhood," "everyone has a right to life," and "no one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment." These words echo the Mosaic law and the gospel of Jesus Christ. They probably are greatly influenced by Judeo-Christian scriptures and traditions, even if there is no attribution to them.

Being a leader in the church it is a hard thing to accept that the church may not be the universal answer to humanity's problems. But it is an answer none the less - a good one, one that I have invested the last part of my life to. It may not have any meaning to atheists, agnostics, and some scientists like Stephen Hawking; for those people God will have to reveal himself in other ways. For all we know, he already is.

May God bless us all, all of humanity, in his own mysterious way.

-Joe

## **APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 1 - EASTER**

**9:45 am Sunday School**

**11:00 am Worship (Communion)**

**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING (FISH) OFFERING**



**MONDAY, APRIL 2**

**7:00 pm Witness Committee**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4**

**6:30 pm Choir**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 5**

**7:00 pm Evening Circle @ the home of Donna Medlin  
231 Old Farm Road, RR**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 8**

**9:45 am Sunday School**

**11:00 am Worship**

**MONDAY, APRIL 9**

**6:00 pm Worship Committee**

**7:00 pm Christian Ed**

**7:00 pm Witness Committee (in Choir Room)**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 10**

**9:45 am Morning Circle**

## **APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11**

**6:30 pm Choir**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 12**

**10:00 am Bible Study—Loy Bldg.**

**6:00 pm Finance & Personnel**

**7:00 pm Bible Study—Loy Bldg.**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 15**

**9:45 am Sunday School**

**11:00 am Worship**

**6:00 pm Session**

**MONDAY, APRIL 16**

**7:00 pm Live and Learn Class (Cooking)**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18**

**12 Noon Lunch Bunch at Oscar's**

**6:30 pm Choir**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 19**

**10:00 am Bible Study—Loy Bldg.**

**7:00 pm Bible—Loy Bldg.**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 22**

**9:45 am Sunday School**

**11:00 am Worship**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25**

**6:30 pm Choir**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 29**

**9:45 am Sunday School**

**11:00 am Worship**

# CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

## Worldwide Concerns



- \*SYRIA and YEMEN civil war
- \* SOMALIA, drought, famine, anarchy
- \* EGYPT and LIBYA political unrest
- \*ISRAEL,GAZA, PALESTINE, peaceful coexistence
- \* IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, security
- \*USA, war in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan
- \*NIGERIA the approximately 100 abducted Chibok school girls
- \*Syrian refugees
- \*Ukrainian people victimized by foreign aggression
- \*Fires in California
- \*Survivors, families and friends of all types of violence

## SPECIAL PRAYERS

We pray for the Children of Clara Hearne and Aurelian Spring Schools and our ministry to them.

We pray for Stanley White and Littleton Churches during their uncertain times of not having a pastor.

We pray that Carter Roux will be kept safe while teaching in South Korea.

## On-Going Care

Jim and Margo Allen  
Harry Bright  
Bobbie Bright  
Larry Avent

ALL people who provide  
on-going care



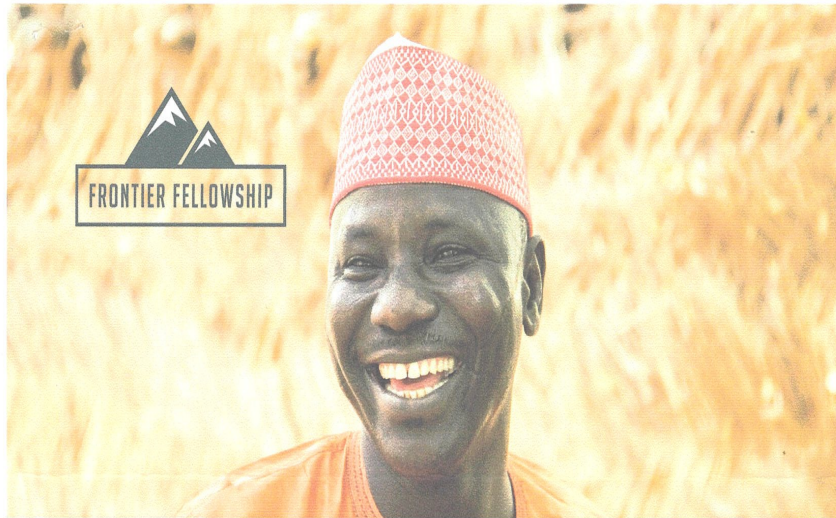
## Healing Friends & Families of the Church

Clark Chase, grandson of Bobbie Scott  
Patsy Rawlings  
Scott & Melanie Cranford  
Greg Shaffer  
Priscilla Ricks  
Bill Howell  
Glenn & Gayle Garner, @ Meals on Wheels  
Sally Ray Warren  
Sheryl and Wayne O'Neil  
Ken and Holly Phipps & family  
Kevin and Michael  
Greg Batchelor  
Doug Hayes  
Gilbert Portela  
Linda Ray, Pancreatic cancer  
David and LaNae Grimes  
Sandy Sandoval  
Ara Griffin  
Carolyn Crawford  
Mike Swartzell, heart transplant  
Saundra Arnold-Smith  
Ciera Bristol, surgery for thyroid  
Chris Dildy  
Sandra Stephenson  
Chad Keeter, automobile accident, friend of Mary Braswell Kiger  
Jane Love's sister, Quincy Warner and brother- in-law,  
Steve, surgery for Quincy and  
Kristin Warner, daughter in law, dealing with surgery and cancer  
with two kids  
Waylon Newsom, child of Marie & Ryan Newsom  
Lewis Bryant, Jimmy's dad

PRAYER  
*changes things*







# NIGER 2018



EXPLORE HOW GOD IS AT WORK IN WEST AFRICA + MEET MINISTRY PARTNERS WHO ARE SHARING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS IN NIGER.

WE'LL VISIT + SERVE ALONGSIDE OUR FRIENDS FROM THE EGLISE EVANGÉLIQUE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DU NIGER (EERN) AS WE LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR CHURCH PLANTING + DEVELOPMENT WORK AMONG RURAL COMMUNITIES.



## AUGUST 5-15

**COST: \$1,500 (EXCLUDING AIRFARE)**

PAYMENT MADE THROUGH FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE

TO LEARN MORE + BEGIN THE APPLICATION PROCESS, CONTACT TRIP LEADER **DONALD MARSDEN**, FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

**DMARSDEN@FRONTIERFELLOWSHIP.COM | 804.432.5654**

(APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 31)

FRONTIERFELLOWSHIP.COM | INFO@FRONTIERFELLOWSHIP.COM | 612.869.0062  
7132 PORTLAND AVE SUITE 136 | RICHFIELD, MN 55423-3264





## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING

will be received on Easter Sunday, April 1st

Bring your “fish boxes” or use the envelopes provided



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

You shall be called  
repairers of the breach

— ISAIAH 58

### WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN WITH PRESBYTERIANS WORLDWIDE

in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world  
by providing relief from natural and human-caused disasters,  
food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

By sharing our gifts, we are answering God's call  
to be repairers of the breach.



### IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

One Great Hour of Sharing currently supports programs in  
over 100 countries. With your help, we can do even more.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Presbyterian Mission  
To learn more, go to  
[presbyterianmission.org/give-oghs](http://presbyterianmission.org/give-oghs)

PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY/ISTOCK

## FPC Lunch Bunch at Oscar's on Wednesday, April 18th

Please join us for a Dutch  
treat lunch, at 12:00 Noon,  
each month as we fellowship  
together!

Everyone is welcome!



# WITNESS NEWS



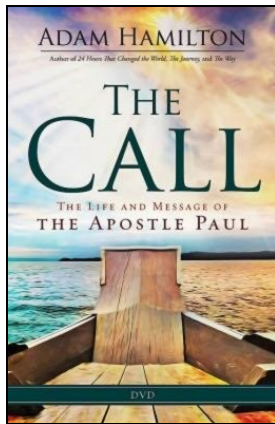
We are currently serving 97 children with our Book Bag Buddy program. Thanks to everyone who assists with this mission.

Marie Anderson, Faye Brown and Betty Keyes serve on the Guardian Ad Litem committee. They recently prepared 157 books, 8 suitcases and 10 tote bags which were delivered to the Guardian Ad Litem Director. Thanks, to these ladies and everyone who donated to the foster children in our area.

Our congregation will be receiving your One Great Hour of Sharing contributions during the worship service on Easter Sunday. Thank-you in advance for all gifts to this endeavor.

Happy Easter from the Witness Committee!  
Thanks be to God for our Lord and Savior,  
Jesus Christ.

*Christ  
is  
Risen!*



**Joe will be completing the six-week Bible Study on Adam Hamilton's "The Call" which is a study based on the travels of Paul.**

**Classes are held on Thursdays at 10:00 am or 7:00 pm in the Loy Building.**

**The classes will meet on April 12 and April 19.**

### **HOME NEEDED**

Dawn and Shane Arthur are looking for a new home for their cat, Kobe.

Kobe is 14 years old. He's a beautiful jet black and healthy cat but just a little too much for them to handle at this time in their lives with the two children. Kobe is gentle and sweet but is not a lap cat and is independent.

He's an indoor/outdoor cat but is currently indoors due to their proximity to Roanoke Avenue.

Can you help them out?

If interested please call Shane at

578-9210



## FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP NEWS

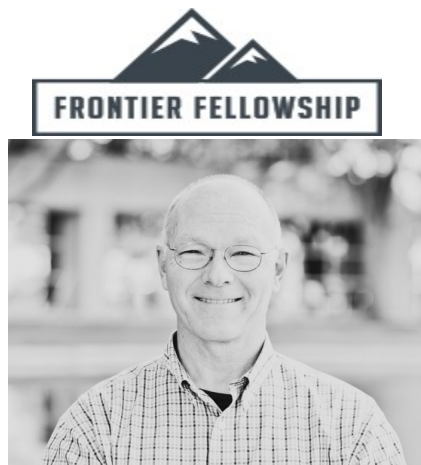
Recent mission news from  
Donald and Laurie Marsden

I chose this story to tell you so we would all be aware of need for prayer in this situation and others like it. We are so fortunate that we can worship freely in our country! Let's all remember the Marsdens and their Christian friends in countries like Kazakhstan.

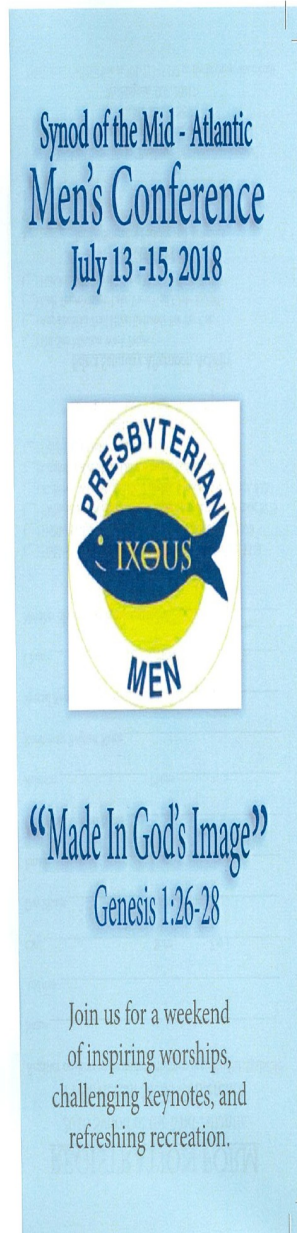
Donald recently wrote that he traveled to Kazakhstan twice in 2017. One incident he included in his letter involved a Kazakh pastor, Yurzham Ushanov and his wife, Zulfiya. It's important to note that Kazakh people are expected to practice the Muslim faith. Because this couple are Christians AND lead a Christian congregation, they are harassed by the secret police. Once a secret agent of the KGB attended a service at Yurzhan's church and stayed afterwards asking for prayer. He pretended to faint and reported to the police that he had been hypnotized and mentally abused. The secret police raided Yurzhan's home one morning at 7:00 when they planted a book about hypnotism and confiscated property. He and a fellow church leader were convicted of the

## FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP NEWS

trumped up charges of hypnotism and impairing the mental health of the secret agent involved. The conviction was appealed and their case went all the way to the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan. The opportunity to give testimony to their Christian faith to 43 judges thrilled the defendants. They were acquitted of all charges. Authorities continue to create barriers for Yurzhan and his congregation. He has been told that if he would move out of the country or stop his work as a pastor they would stop harassing him and leave him in peace. Yurzhan told the police that he would talk to God about it and if God told him to stop preaching he would do so, but until he received that message he would continue his work as a Christian leader.



## **ATTENTION ALL MEN!**



Are you interested in a  
Men's Conference?

Here's your opportunity  
at the Massanetta  
Springs Conference,  
July 13-15, 2018

Featuring

Key-Note Speaker,

Dr. Don Hudson,  
Associate Professor of  
Philosophy & Religion,  
at King University in  
Bristol, TN

Lots to enjoy from  
speakers, music, small  
group discussions,  
fellowship and even  
golf!

For more information go  
to [midatlanticmen.org](http://midatlanticmen.org)

Cost: varies from \$95 to  
\$370 not including golf  
activities



# **HAPPY APRIL BIRTHDAY TO:**

<b>Gisela Harris</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Gail Mederos</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>James Brewer</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Ed Burnett</b>	<b>7th</b>
<b>Danny Phipps</b>	<b>14th</b>
<b>Wally Spragins</b>	<b>16th</b>
<b>Jacob Hackenburg</b>	<b>17th</b>
<b>Becky Hux</b>	<b>17th</b>
<b>Alice Ricks</b>	<b>22nd</b>
<b>Margo Allen</b>	<b>26th</b>
<b>Diego Harris</b>	<b>27th</b>





**FIRST  
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ROANOKE RAPIDS,**

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**APRIL 2018**

**IN TOUCH**

