

Chapel touchpoints

body life newsletter

“For the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”

Ephesians 4:12

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I was trying to think of the vast number of liberal arts courses available and the requirements and skills needed to pursue any type of career in them. Everything I came up with seemed to have at least a common thread of clarity and similarity. What I am saying is that in Mathematics, two plus two usually equals four. There are laws of Physics, recognized and accepted requirements in the fields of everything from Medicine to Architectural design, not to mention rules of grammar and syntax as well as the whole field of Literature, and the list goes on.

Why mention any of this? I wondered why this is so much more vague when looking at the study of Theology, which is simply the study of God. Pick any school that teaches the courses related to Theology, then look through their catalog of courses offered to complete your theological education. Go to enough schools, and look through enough catalogs, and the blur becomes clear. It would take too long and serve little purpose to get into all the specifics, but suffice it to say, there are literally a myriad of beliefs, interpretations, and rules of engagement to cause confusion to most thinking people, making the concept of unity and being of one mind a rather entangled concept. Everything from how one is saved and for how long to how many books constitute our Old and New testament, not to mention their veracity with all parts being just as God breathed as any other part, only touches the surface of the possible areas of confusion.

Why bring any of this up? Because now more than ever before we need discernment. Specifically, to think God's thoughts after Him. I believe it was Sinclair Ferguson who said that it means having a sense of how things look in God's eyes, and seeing them in some measure "uncovered and laid bare." 1Cor. 12:10 tells us that discernment is given to some as a special grace gift. But, we all need it in some measure, keeping it nourished and useful. Ps. 119:66 gives us the psalmist praying, "Teach me knowledge and good judgment." It follows that the psalmist needs this because he believes in the Lord's commands. In Prov. 14:6, we are told, "The mocker seeks wisdom and finds none, but knowledge comes easily to the discerning." Can you begin to sense the freeing

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Truth, Relativism, Narcissism

Steve Neatherton

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

(Continued from page 1)

power that comes from discernment? Instead of frustration with our increase in knowledge, we are now able to see the harmony in all of God's Word!

If discernment were not in dangerously short supply in the church of Jesus Christ, the issues, objections, and new perspectives and ideas would not be blowing into the church like an uncontrolled tornado scattering every wind of doctrine all over the place. There are so many frightening things being disguised in Christian garb, that many in the church don't know what to think. When the Lord said that wolves would enter the church in sheep's clothing, what does that mean? It means we will hear professing Christians speak authoritatively from within our ranks, claiming to be authentic, card carrying, Bible believing, evangelical, and even respected men in their field of expertise, possibly telling us either what we want to hear or have never heard before. I generally hold near and dear the phrase that in theology, if it's new, it probably isn't true. What is so cleverly dangerous is that many of these philosophies today are coming from teachers that promote these heresies from what used to be institutions and publishers once thought to stand for orthodoxy. What do we think when well known evangelical men claiming to be solidly orthodox and holding firmly to the claims of scripture, are asked the following question. On a nationally televised talk show, one of these men was asked if he believed it was necessary to embrace Jesus Christ, believing He died for their sins, and through Him and Him alone was it possible for one to enter heaven. This "evangelical" answered that he really would rather leave those things up to God because only He knows their hearts. When the host persisted in suggesting that if this man claimed to be an evangelical who believes the words of the Bible to be true, wouldn't an affirmative answer be more in line with what orthodox Christianity believes? To this he

replied that he personally subscribed to that teaching but had spent so much time in India and witnessed people who he knew deeply loved God (but how could they without ever hearing of the true God?) and he knew God would never turn them away. When another (a name everyone reading this would know) was asked essentially the same question, he answered that there were people all over the world who had never heard of Jesus Christ but he knows that Jesus loves them and would never convict them to an eternity in hell because the God he serves is one of love, compassion, and forgiveness.

While that tugs on all of our heartstrings in that we want all the people we can possibly reach with the gospel of Jesus Christ to hear and believe, the fact remains that we are told in scripture to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. In addition, we are told there is no other name under heaven able to save a soul from hell. Discernment, no doubt tells us what we are to believe in this matter, and thus we can, on the authority of Scripture, know what these men are saying does not square with what it teaches.

To further loosely quote Sinclair Ferguson, he goes on to say that most would naturally want to distance themselves from what might be regarded as the lunatic fringe of contemporary Christianity. But, discernment is much more than that. True discernment means not only distinguishing the right from the wrong; it means distinguishing the primary from the secondary, the essential from the indifferent, the permanent from the transient, the good and the better from the best. Given the examples above, we can see that discernment serves as a key to Christian freedom. Christians can be zealous but undiscerning, and thus enslaved—not only to others but to his own uneducated conscience and eventually to an unbiblical pattern of life.

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*From an
Elder's
Heart*

Community

Mark Schindler

I was born in Wisconsin on June 24, 1962. God graciously allowed me to grow up in a Christian home and attend solid Bible-teaching churches all my life. As a child I outwardly lived a good life, but did not finally turned my life over to Christ until the age of 20. After moving through several college choices, I ended up at the University of Wisconsin-Stout and graduated in 1985 with a degree in Applied Mathematics and a minor in Computer Science. It was there I met and married Sheila in my final year before moving to Dayton to work for NCR. I have worked in a variety of companies in the Information Technology (IT) and Software

fields, including starting two small businesses. I am currently the Director of IT for the Berry Company.

Sheila and I have four children and have attended Clearcreek since 1988. Our children are Laura (b. 1987), Paul (b. 1990), and twin boys Kyle and Kevin (b. 1994). I have been involved in a variety of leadership, teaching, and music ministries over his time at Clearcreek. I participate on the Adult Bible Education Team and Worship team. As an Elder at the Chapel my responsibilities include oversight of the worship and community ministries as well as the Finance Team.

If I were to focus on one area for Clearcreek to grow in, it would be to strengthen our sense of community. Clearcreek has traditionally been a strong Bible-teaching church that has rightly recognized that doctrine matters. This is Clearcreek's strength; and it has been, and continues to be, what attracts people to our gathering. Clearly, God has used this ministry to edify and encourage many through the teaching and preaching of the Word as it is delivered in various ways and forms to all who attend.

growth to bring along the body to that next step of maturity. Even if we grant some truth to the recent criticism that Clearcreek's teaching is to "difficult" for some, I believe that we provide those who are willing a breadth of opportunities to learn and be taught.

And while Clearcreek has been strong in developing our vertical relationship with God, I think there is more we can do in developing our horizontal relationships with one another. This is not to say that Clearcreek is not a loving body. Having been at Clearcreek nearly 19 years, I strongly affirm the depth of our mutual love to be true and have evidenced it both directly and indirectly. But as in so many modern churches, we are a terribly busy people; caught up in such a whirlwind of activities that we rarely have time for one another. Perhaps I am wrong, but I believe that this busyness diminishes both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of Godly relationships and constrains us from growing in knowledge and love for one another.

In the same way, I believe that we must provide a range of opportunities that allow people to go from anonymity to intimacy in our relationships with one another. While we have a number of ministries that allow strong relationships to be built, I think there is more we could provide in the way of introductory or initial means of fellowship. This would help newcomers to feel more comfortable joining flock groups and other organized ministries that require a greater commitment to fellowship and a stronger desire to know one another. As we progress upon a path of growth in fellowship, there is a comfort in sharing that allows for the day-to-day transparency and deeper love to which we are called as a body of believers.

In our teaching ministries we recognize that believers must go from the milk of the word to eating meat as they grow in the knowledge and love of our Lord. To this end we provide a variety of ministries that progress along a path of spiritual

I believe John Piper is right, in saying that a love for God will naturally overflow in a love for one another. And in a corresponding manner, our love for one another is a means of grace, enabling and encouraging us to a greater love for God. The natural effect of this ebb and flow is to draw people deeper into the church and into service for God and one another. Community and fellowship have a way of enabling our "one-anothering" and our spiritual growth that I hope will draw people to and into Clearcreek as we develop this ministry.

Ministry Spotlight

Facility Expansion

Russ Kennedy

Where Are We Now?

We have been pleased to announce the renewed facility expansion here at the Chapel. In our presentation, we laid out the mission, vision, purpose, history and present strategies for expanding the facilities here on our campus.

In our presentation, we outlined the shifted focus as a result of needs analysis and counsel. Therefore, we aim to expand by adding adult and youth classrooms and restrooms.

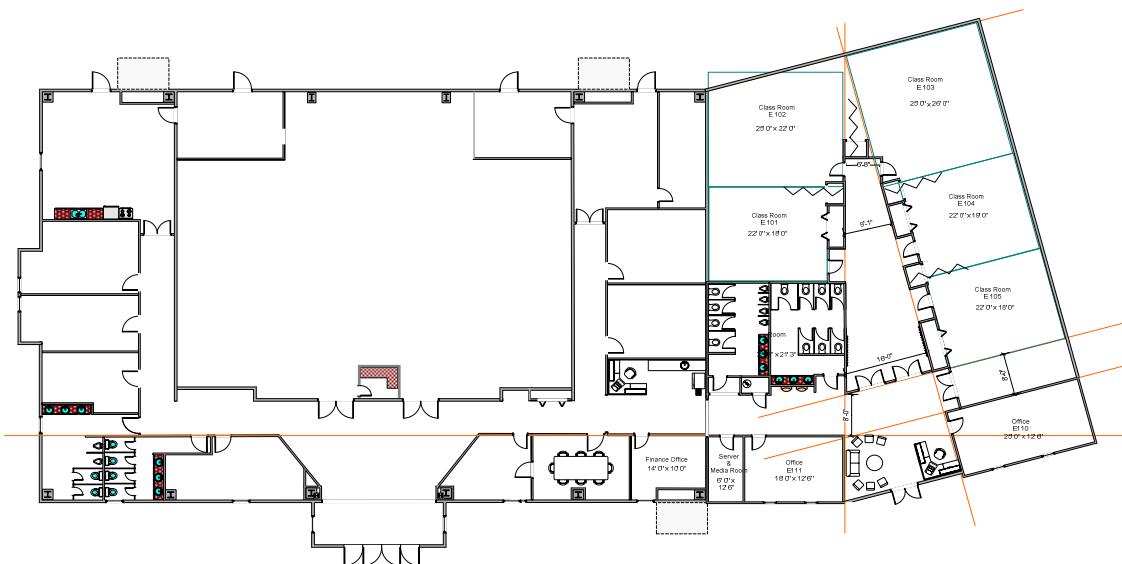
We also mentioned that our analysis established a space need but not a space shape. We were thinking along the lines of a square. After further counsel and consideration, we are moving towards the original wedge shape filled with classrooms, restrooms and possibly, additional office space. Our current thinking is represented in the drawing below.

We are working on the cost impact and will be sharing that with you in the near future.

How Can I Give?

Many have asked how they can participate in the giving for this project. Just write on your check that it is for Facility Expansion and the amount. If you are currently combining your General Fund and Expansion Fund giving, please separate them out so that we will be able to attribute them to the correct fund.

God is greatly blessing us here as many of you are sacrificially giving so that the Chapel ministries will be supplied with what is needed for the work.



Cary and Faith Cupka

MISSION SAFETY INTERNATIONAL



Missions Team

Cary and Faith were formerly candidates with The Master’s Mission where they were assigned to work with Africa Inland Mission’s aviation department, AIM AIR, in Nairobi, Kenya. The purpose of their ministry there was to serve and support mission aviation in Africa and to establish and equip church ministry in Kenya. In 2003, the Master’s Mission partnered with Clearcreek Chapel to facilitate oversight for the Cup-



sources.” Cary serves as Research and Development Coordinator; he is responsible for conducting research and reporting results of testing of new technologies that show promise of usefulness in missionary aviation.

Cary and Faith have two children, Stefan and Cherilyn. The family returned to their home in Greenville, South Carolina last year to attend to the needs of their parents and to begin repairs on a house that they own there. They serve in a local church. Faith home schools the children and helps to care for extended family members.

Pray for the Cupka family as they strive to serve the Lord in their community and within Cary’s sphere of ministry with MSI. Pray that Cary will see results in his research that may improve mission aviation safety. Pray that God will grace them with wisdom and stamina to care for Lousha, a boy from Russia who came to the US for surgery on his legs. He has significant physical challenges and does not speak English.

Finally, pray for the Lord’s continued financial provision. Those interested in partnering with the Cupkas may support their ministry financially through tax-deductible contributions to Chapel Ministries International. *See Anita Dieringer for more information.*

kas’ ministry through Chapel Ministries International. Several issues arose that prevented Cary and Faith from returning to Kenya. In God’s providence, another potential opportunity for ministry was brought to Cary’s attention by a former college professor. After much prayer, Cary severed ties with AIM AIR in 2004 to accept a position with Mission Safety International, MSI. MSI works to develop equipment and techniques to aid in mission aviation safety. “MSI’s goal is to see improvement in mission operational safety through improved strategies for accident prevention, security, and conservation of human and material re-

Quick Facts

149 Bradley Blvd Greenville, SC 29609
Email: thecupkas@hotmail.com
Anniversary: August 10
Birthdays:
 Cary – May 24 Faith - May 14 Stefan – Aug 26 Cherilyn – May 16
Mission Headquarters:
 Chapel Missions International
 P.O. Box 726
 Springboro, OH 45066



Brian and Tricia Jonson

Family Spotlight

Tricia and Brian Jonson are both from Preble County, Ohio and met in high school. He was a senior and she a sophomore when they went on their date. Tricia was the lead in a couple of musicals in school and Brian usually played trumpet for the pit orchestra. His love was trumpet, not singing. Tricia (I'm told) used singing to "bait" him to go on a date with her, inviting him to sing with her at her church. He had never sung in public so was very shy about it but wanted to go out with her so...it worked.

Tricia was saved at a puppet ministry at 9 years of age and Brian was saved at 15 in a church service. They currently live in Fairfield Township, near Hamilton.

Immediately after high school Brian joined the Continental Singers as a trumpeter and then attended Miami University. He toured most summers during college and earned a BA in English literature and Tricia an associates degree in nursing. Brian's tours with the Continentals were extremely impacting. He visited 10 countries and most of the US during those years. He was involved in a "Jesus Project" in the mountains of Colombia and worked with World Vision in the slums of Brazil. The ministry experience, although brief, changed him in many ways.

They were married in May of 1991 and Brian was working for a now defunct telecommunications company in downtown Dayton. That fall he was ordained as a music/youth pastor at Abundant Life Baptist Church in West Carrollton. In 1992 he accepted a job as a director of the Continentals and Tricia joined him on the road and they spent most of that year singing throughout Europe and North America.

In 1993 they decided against continued touring and Brian went back into telecommunica-

tions and Tricia started working for a hospital. Brian has been in telecommunications ever since and is now a senior sales engineer for Global Crossing and works from his home office. His job is to consult with customers on wide area network design needs and then implement those solutions. Tricia stopped working out of the home in



1999, when Nathan was born, and has been a homemaker ever since, and they now have three children.

Noah is 10, Nathan 7 and Natalie 4. People often ask if they intended to alliterate the "N" for each name and the answer is no. Those just happened to be the names they liked! Noah attends Summit Academy in Middletown, Nathan is in public school in Fairfield and Natalie is in preschool at a local YMCA.

Have someone you would like to see featured here in future editions? Please drop an email to TouchPoints@ClearcreekChapel.org.

We will be featuring Chapel families each edition. We will really appreciate your help when we approach you about being featured.

—The Editor

Brian and Tricia have both remained very involved in music ministry while rearing their children. Brian has led worship as a layman or asso-

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Help Needed

If you are in need of help with auto, home, computer, yard work—we want to minister to you. Please let contact the church office and we will place your need here for others to respond to.



Focus on
Ministry

Skills Available

Let us know if you have a skill you would like to make available to the Chapel family. You may contact TouchPoints or the Chapel office. Please be ready with the following:

Name: _____
 Contact: _____
 Skill(s): _____

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If we are honest, we live in a day that everything is about “me” i.e. what does it mean to me, how can it help me? Even truth has gone through so many transformations, it’s not funny. Truth has made its way from an absolute to becoming a relative term (which some would say is now out of fashion in that “fake” truth is no longer acknowledged). Truth has now become an “emotive” term, a word resurrected by a Scottish philosopher by the name of Alasdair MacIntyre in his book *After Virtue*, published in 1981. According to MacIntyre “Emotivism is the doctrine that all evaluative judgments and, more specifically, all moral judgments are nothing but expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling...”

Anyone who doubts this should be aware that the term “truthiness” which was simply a non-word coined by a comedian, has now been sanctioned with two definitions by Webster’s. “Truth that comes from the gut, not books” and “the quality

of preferring concepts or facts one wishes to be true, rather than concepts of facts known to be true.” This comes from an interesting article written by Dick Meyer’s commentary “The Truth Of Truthiness” at CBSNews.com. Mr. Meyer goes on to say that truth today is simply what you feel and for serious and deep truth-tellers, it is what you feel strongly.

In closing, I hope we can see the importance of real truth and real discernment that only comes packaged together in the Word of God. The truth most people are familiar with today is an ever changing “feeling”, not the absolute truth of a never changing Holy God. Years ago a famous quote by Edgar Sheffield Brightman stated that any universe in which Roman Catholicism and Unitarianism were considered true would become a cosmic madhouse! If there ever was a time that we as Christians need to be extremely careful as to what God has said, it’s now. Otherwise, we will be like so many others, even those who claim the name of Christ, always asking *has God said?*



Upcoming Events

3/9	CCYM In-Home Event
3/10	Cantata Rehearsal
3/11	Caring for the Christless Orientation
3/13	Elders' Meeting
3/17	SyM Share @ the Bailey's (waiting for confirmation)
3/18	Robert Zins
3/20	Grace Partners
3/25	CCYM Extended Sunday
3/27	Elders' Meeting
3/30-4/1	SyM Winter Retreat
4/7	Cantata Dress Rehearsal
4/8	AM- Resurrection Cantata PM- Praise & Worship Concert
4/10	Elders' Meeting
4/13	CCYM Dayton Dragons (not confirmed)
4/14	Shelly Merkh Shower
4/17	Grace Partners
4/21	SyM Share
4/24	Elders' Meeting
4/28	Women's Ministry Tea
4/29	CCYM Extended Sunday

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ciate staff person for most of the years since leaving the road. Most recently, he was the associate worship pastor/instrumental director for Liberty Heights Church in Liberty Township, near Cincinnati. That experience is what finally led the Jonsons to Clearcreek Chapel.

Brian and Tricia have a burden for the state of evangelicalism today. They have seen the ill-effects of many popular church growth programs and know first hand what happens to a body when Bible teaching and doctrine are relegated to a

"small group" study that never seems to organize and happen. They were drawn to Clearcreek for the simple reason that they wanted a church where the glory of God and the priority of expositional preaching were prominent. They hope to move closer to Springboro as soon as they can, and we are glad the Lord saw fit to bring them to us.



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touchpoints
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A bi-monthly publication of Clearcreek Chapel provided for its members and regular attenders.

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