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Stanley Mirek called it a “murdercycle.” He had been a policeman in Chicago for years before moving to Chatham, and had seen a lot of bad motorcycle accidents. He couldn’t believe I actually rode a “murdercycle” with “Eliminator” emblazoned on the faring. But I did.

That bike was eliminated in a serious accident, but I wasn’t on it at the time. My next bike had to be replaced due to crash in the neighborhood on my way to a Bible study that resulted in a few stitches on my chin, and I broke five ribs on my way to Tennessee on my Harley after someone pulled out in front of me.

So why do I still ride? Especially at my age! I ride because I still enjoy it. I’ve assessed the risks and determined it’s worth it.

There was a time when I didn’t think it was. I had two small kids at home, and the thought of taking an unnecessary risk that might leave them fatherless made me stay off a bike for a number of years. Now that I’m just a grandpa, I feel I’m free to take the risk. But I do moderate the risk. I always wear a helmet.

It’s not a full-face helmet, and I don’t wear all the gear all the time (ATGATT) which is no doubt the safest way to ride, but I do wear a helmet. Those who don’t probably think I’m doing something that’s unnecessary, and those who go ATGATT no doubt think I’m taking unnecessary risks.

I’m not offended if someone expresses concern about my safety, and I may do the same for someone else. But I don’t believe anyone should force someone to do what they do just because they think they should. I think you can see where this is going.

Some of us have determined that the risk in coming to church is too great at this time. Others have decided it’s worth the risk. I don’t feel it’s my place to try to convince anyone one way or another. But I do think we should all continually assess the ever-changing risks, and do what we feel God would have us do.

And as soon as possible, we all do need to be back together in worship.

God Bless, Rick



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A VALENTINE’S DAY MEDITATION

By Paul Hunley

So as I was preparing for this year’s Valentine’s Day in which I shower Nikki with all kinds of gifts and all of my love, I thought I would go back and take an inventory of how God expects us to love. And there is no better place to look than I Corinthians 13:4-7...

Love is patient. ✓

Love is kind. ✓

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. Little ✓

It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ✓
(Baby ✓ on the easily angered, depending on the kids’ behavior).

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ✓

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres ✓✓✓✓

But in all seriousness, what a great place to start your Valentine’s Day.

As you scroll down and study this list, you quickly realize that love is not a feeling, it is an action. Love is what we do for our significant other or how we act, and treat them at all times, not just when everything is going smooth. Love is work, not bad work, but work.

Verse 8 states, Love never fails...which is so true of Christ’s love for us, but we tend to fail all of the time. This is why we gather around this table once a week.

And the big verse that we tend to gravitate towards that contains the word love, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him will never perish, but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.”

Jesus’ love started and ended with some serious action. Action One—Jesus left heaven. Action Two—He died on the cross for us.

So as we sit here on this Valentine’s Day and we are thinking about love, may we realize that we are holding in our hands the ultimate act of love brought about by the ultimate action to free us.

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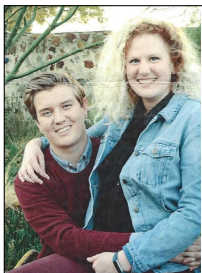
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Sunday Worship Service 9:15 AM
Bible School 10:45 AM

STATISTICS		
	1/31	
Worship		56
Offering		\$5,035.07
	2/7	
Worship		60
Offering		\$8,462.00
	2/14	
Worship		49
Offering		\$13,692.44



ANDREW'S FINAL NEWSLETTER

2020 has been quite the year for everyone. It has deeply affected my work at Casas and Lacy's education in nursing school. It has cancelled plans, altered celebrations, impacted moments of loss and grief, and has ultimately set our course in a different direction.

The years came and went and we were both happy, feeling like we were still exactly where we wanted to be. We agreed we'd evaluate around the 10 year mark. After that, Lacy would have a few years experience of being a registered nurse and I would have a decade at the ministry. But 2020 had others plans.

I celebrate 7 years of being a staff missionary with Casas in 2021 and the time to reevaluate came sooner than we thought. We decided together that this sunny El Paso chapter of our lives felt like it was coming to an end. It feels like a natural ending with Lacy graduating this past December. 2020 has felt isolating for most around the world, and we are not an exception. We moved to El Paso 1 week after getting married and it was the best decision we could have even made.

NEWSLETTER CONTINUED

The end of the summer and fall we talked about the potential of moving and starting a new chapter in Kansas City. We would be closer to both of our families, dear friends, and have a fresh start with Lacy starting a new job. Starting a career as a nurse is already challenging and starting it in the midst of a global pandemic is even more daunting. We both want Lacy to have as much support as possible to start this new career she has worked so hard for the past few years. After much thinking, praying, and talking, we decided to pursue moving to Kansas City and see what doors opened or closed.

Lacy applied and interviewed this past fall at hospitals in Kansas City and landed her dream job as a Labor & Delivery nurse at a downtown hospital working with a high-risk and undeserved population. In the span of a month she applied, was contacted for interviews, and extended a job offer. We are both so excited about this opportunity for Lacy to start her career as a nurse.

While Lacy is stepping toward something new and exciting, I have stepped away from a beloved position. Casa has been such a foundational place for me and our marriage. Casas brought us to El Paso and laid the foundation for all the joyful and challenging growth we've experienced here. I have absolutely loved my role as Senior Designer at Casas and it has grown me so much professionally and personally. I have met and worked with some of the best people with teams across the country as well as other missionaries at the ministry. I have built homes for numerous families in Mexico, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic. It's been such an honor to get to do this full time for the past 7 years.

This year will be one to remember, full of a lot of ups and downs. One thing has held true—God still sits on his throne and provides. As always, 'thank you', is never enough. But we will continue to say it year after year for the rest of our lives.

We love you.

Andrew and Lacy Sexton



High School Students CIY MOVE Conference

Based on last year, it is hard to predict what rules and regulations will be in effect this summer. With that in mind, I do know some of us are starting to fill in summer calendars anticipating life getting back to a semi-state of normalcy this year. So, I wanted to get some early information to you regarding potential dates and locations for the week long summer High School conference called MOVE. This year the focus will be on the Gospel stressing that no matter who you are or where you are from, or how good or bad you think you are, the Gospel is for you, for all and forever.

Here are some initial dates to consider:

- The closest conference will be held in Wheaton, Illinois on July 12-16. Ironically, we have never attended that conference but this might be a good year to try it out!
- The next closest is Anderson, Indiana which we attended in 2019. That was a little smaller group than we were used to, but we all still had an awesome experience. This year, the Anderson conference will be held on June 14 -18.
- Finally, we have been a handful of times to the conference located in Warrensburg, Mo. Although it usually seems to be the hottest week of the year, we have always had a great time at the University of Central Missouri. This is one of our later options with the dates being July 19 - 23.

As always, we will pick the date that best works for everyone. Please take a look at these potentials and let me know if there is a firm conflict with any conference listed. I am hoping things stay on track to have a great MOVE conference this summer!



Jr. High and High School

Saturday night is going to be fun! I am looking forward to meeting here at the church at 4:15 to carpool over to Jacksonville. Please be sure to text me this week if you are coming and if you are bringing a friend or multiple friends. As the group grows, I will need to coordinate transportation for the group so I appreciate the heads up.

Once we leave the church, our first stop will be Leo's Pizza. It has been a Jacksonville favorite for pizza since 1978. Over my lifetime, I wouldn't be surprised if I have eaten their pizza over 500 times. I love it! Afterwards, we will head over to the movie theatre for our show.

One neat little feature about renting out this movie theatre is that we get to pick the movie to watch. Feel free to text me a suggestion if there is a show you have been wanting to see. I will tally the results and hope to pick a movie everyone will enjoy. You will need money for dinner and \$10 for the movie which includes unlimited popcorn and soda (\$1 refill). We will be returning to the church around 10:00pm. See you on Saturday!

10 Kids Came Out for our Bowling Outing Last Sunday. Everyone Had a Great Time!!!

