

MVCC Voices

The Monthly Newsletter Of
Moraine Valley Community Church

For the Month of October 2015

From The Pastor's Desk

By Pastor Derek
MASON



The world can deal out some pretty devastating blows to each of us at different times in our lives. They can be places of great darkness and unimaginable pain. However, it is in these places of emptiness that the voice of God can be often heard most clearly. Because there are little or no distractions, the LORD can have our undivided attention.

“*Compassion*” is a powerful theme in the Bible. Psalm 103:13 says, “As a father shows *compassion to his children*, so the LORD shows *compassion to those who fear Him*.” We must have an accurate understanding of the “fear of the LORD” in order to truly embrace the intimacy of the relationship He desires with us. This is something which needs to be taught – hopefully in a church family. We could also say that as a good father loves and yet disciplines his children, so the LORD embraces His own. His work in us is for our own good, however, this is not always easy to see. A church family can help to process this. And Psalm 135:14 says, “For the LORD will vindicate His people and have *compassion on His servants*.” Those who follow (submit) to the LORD are His servants and He honors those who honor

Him. The LORD sees all things and He provides for those who are in need, are humble and reach out to Him for help (Isa 57:15). Pride and arrogance are me-centered and are completely opposite of who God is. These qualities identify and expose the enemies of God. Therefore, it is in our devastation that we are stripped of arrogance, pride, envy, greed, and fighting with others. Instead, great

humility overwhelms us and we recognize our need for help. Our eyes, ears and heart seek for a Savior. Just like in the Exodus, the LORD frees us from the worldly powers (Egypt) and brings us out into the wilderness to reveal Himself to us - in truth.

Those whom Jesus has already brought out into the wilderness and revealed Himself (and who now serve Him), are expected to recognize those recently brought out, and have *compassion* on them. The wilderness can be a dark place but the LORD has shown us the way out. We are not given this knowledge to keep it a secret (and only benefit ourselves) but to guide others as God brings them to us. In the Law of Moses, the LORD continually commands Israel to remember where you came from and have *compassion* on others whom share your path. When we are saved by Jesus and filled with the Holy Spirit, our eyes should see this world and others in a totally different light. And we should be able to clearly recognize those who are wandering in the wilderness. The LORD has been doing a work in them, and they are struggling to find answers. We (the church) have those answers! We are to have *compassion* on these people and direct them to the Good Shepherd. For in Matthew 9:36

it says, "When He saw the crowds, He had *compassion* for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." We are to be light in this world (guide) and salt (preservation and purity) so that others are pulled in closer to Jesus (Matt 5:13-16).

Each year many churches celebrate, "National Back to Church Sunday" in which Christians commit to inviting neighbors, friends and loved ones to a Sunday Worship Service designed for them. In 2014 over 26,400 churches participated in this strong and growing movement. Unfortunately, we missed the September 20th date this year but would like to dedicate **October 18th** for 2015. Therefore, please be praying for the LORD to illuminate to you who He wants you to reach out to and invite to church. We are all prone to wander from our God and that is why it is important for us to plug into a church family which will come around us and love us in the likeness and image of our LORD. Apart from Jesus we are all lost. May the *compassion* of our LORD radiate within us and may we extend an invitation to those around us. We might be surprised at which ones the LORD has already brought out into the wilderness and wishes to reveal Himself to more!

Many Blessings,

Pastor Derek Mason

Have you ever
wondered

Why a woman needs to have her mouth open while applying mascara.

Why you have to press the "Start" button to stop Windows

Church Signs

Those little pearls of wisdom
found in front of America's
Churches

Always remember that Hell is un-cool.

Can't sleep? Come hear a sermon.

Down in the mouth? It's time for a faith lift

Firefighters can rescue you, but only Jesus saves.

For heavens sake! What on earth are you doing?

Birthdays Etc.

Bill Curtis

Oct. 5

Pat Pepe

Oct. 15

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THIS GUY NEEDED THE MAXIMUM BAPTISM
PACKAGE

From the Elders Table

I have to admit that I have spent many years examining numerous denominations but previously found none that really fit me well. This was very frustrating. However, one of my ordination requirements has been to take an American Baptist Church (ABC) 16 week polity course. This has been extremely helpful for me to understand the ABC: history, polity and theological identity markers which it holds most dear. It has been truly amazing for me to experience the realization of how well I fit with the heart of the ABC denomination. I am continually in awe of the magnificent work of God and His plans in all things and I am often reminded by Him that we are truly not in control. Thankfully, He is. I am very grateful that the LORD has brought me to Moraine Valley Community Church and am proud to be in the ordination process of becoming an ABC pastor.

For almost 2 years now, it has been incredible to witness how far our church has come. And again, I am amazed at God's work among us, in us and through us. But He has also revealed to me that we still have a lot of work in front of us and we are going to need significant help going forward. Otherwise, we are going to have a very long and unnecessarily difficult road ahead. Therefore, the elders and I have often reached out to our ABC - Chicago Metro (our local affiliation) leadership team, only to find an extreme lack of interest and ability to help. For an example, despite our elders' continual plea for assistance in MVCC's pastoral search (before me), in two years, not one pastoral application was forwarded to us! Unfortunately, there are many other stories like this. It has been extremely frustrating and disappointing, to say the least. Our current local ABC leadership has

brought us to realize that we are on our own. If we cannot rely on the support within our denomination, then we must look for this assistance externally. I am not saying that we need to leave the ABC but rather simply find an organization which specializes in assisting and supporting churches. After much investigation and discussion, we came across "Converge." "Converge MidAmerica" is their local division. They are not a denomination but rather an organization with roots in the Baptist arena (General Conference – Swedish Pietism, since 1852). They exist to help churches and church plants to build and flourish so to actively participate in the advancement of God's Kingdom (missions/outreach/evangelism/discipleship). Converge is well known for being a strong leader in assisting churches for growth and development. I assure you that nothing in their theological viewpoints conflict with ours in any way and all of their assistance is merely advisory and not mandatory for application. Converge has a highly experienced and dedicated team of leaders committed to the success of all our ministries. They are a worldwide movement (reaching 24 nations) that was born out of mission, for mission. They are culturally diverse and ethnically sensitive. They have: coaching programs for all ministries within our church, a pastoral counseling and support program, assistance for personal leadership emergencies, assistance in conflict resolution, loans available for churches, assistance with pastoral searches and succession planning, assistance for capital campaigns, and systems to analyze church health and development. All churches that are currently growing in any way are plugged into an organization like Converge or have a denomination which strongly provides all these services. Again, currently, ABC is not able to help us in these areas. The ABC does not have any issues with us partnering with Converge and clearly Converge is happy to partner with an

ABC church. There are other ABC churches which have also partnered with Converge and found this to be a very wise addition and partnership. Converge will simply be one of our organizations which we will include to support in our missionary fund. They do not require any amount of money to be paid to them. They only ask for our support – if we have found them to be helpful in our growth and development. That is about as fair as you can get! Therefore, you will soon be seeing some representatives of Converge MidAmerica visiting from time to time and there will be seminars and other events offered and advertised which will continually help our development as a church. I greatly encourage everyone to participate in these programs as you are able. If you would like to find out more about Converge MidAmerica online, you can find them at:

<https://www.convergemidamerica.org/>.
 Their website is packed with more details about their organization and other tools to assist churches. I have had experience working with Converge previously in other churches in the past and they are a wonderful organization. I am very excited about our future and look forward to our partnership with Converge!

Blessings,

Pastor Derek

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OH NO, IT'S NOT A HALLOWEEN THING ...
 I'M JUST TRYING TO BE MORE CHRISTLIKE

Remember in Prayer...

- Elsie's Food Pantry: provisions/wisdom/protection
- MVCC: wisdom/guidance/protection
- Hearts to serve – to build our church (formation of ministries)
- Discipleship/transformation/leadership development
- Youth and Children's Ministry growth and development
- Tony Zappa – knees/back
- Emmitt Hayes – heart/health/ condo restoration and living arrangements
- daughter (Jerri) – cancer healing/colon
- Pete Delgado – dementia (Sarah – strength)
- Vi Wagner – hip/eyes/strength
- Mark DeBauche: cancer healing / strength /endurance
- Edith Martinez – Sister for healing
- Dorothy Martin's brother-in-law (Jeff) – cancer
- Roy Beehn – recovery from his open heart surgery
- Dennis and Pat Pepe as they mourn the loss of their Grandson
- Edna Miller – permanent employment
- Tony Juarez – new job closer to his home
- Joyce Skowronski – knee pain/healing
- Beth and her family as they mourn the passing of her mother
- Russ McGurdy – job & insurance situation, surgery and pain relief

Food For Thought

Juggle Balls

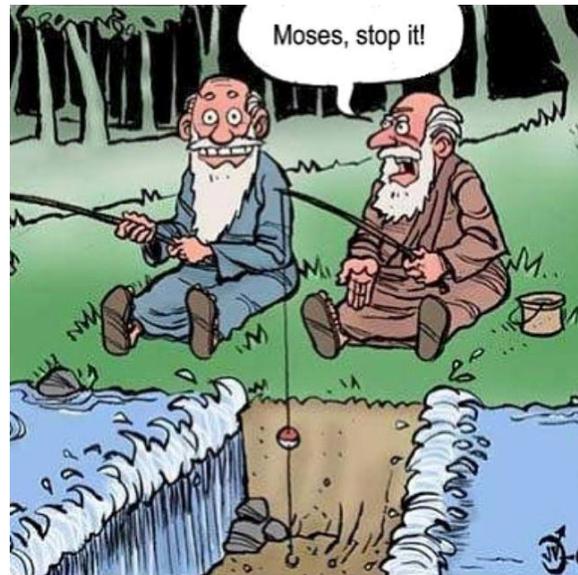
Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them – work, family, health, friends and spirit and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls – family, health, friends and spirit are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life. How?

- Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others. It is because we are different that each of us is special.
- Don't set your goals by what other people deem important. Only you know what is best for you.
- Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart. Cling to them as you would your life, for without them, life is meaningless.
- Don't let your life slip through your fingers by living in the past or for the future. By living your life one day at a time, you live ALL the days of your life.
- Don't give up when you still have something to give. Nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying.
- Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect. It is this fragile thread that binds us each together.
- Don't be afraid to encounter risks. It is by taking chances that we learn how to be brave.
- Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find. The quickest way to receive love is to give; the fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly; and the best way to keep love is to give it wings.
- Don't run through life so fast that you forget not only where you've been, but also where

you are going.

- Don't forget that a person's greatest emotional need is to feel appreciated.
- Don't be afraid to learn. Knowledge is weightless, a treasure you can always carry easily.
- Don't use time or words carelessly. Neither can be retrieved. Life is not a race, but a journey to be savored each step of the way.

By Coca Cola CEO Brian Dyson



Church Bulletin Boo boos

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM . Please use the back door.

Moraine Valley Community Church
10040 S. 88th Ave. Palos Hills, IL 60465

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10040 S. 88th Ave. Palos Hills, IL 60465 708-598-4434