

Good News from Good Hope!



Day after day... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. ❖ Acts 5:42
Good Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church ❖ The Presbyterian Church in America ❖ July 2003

Do You Understand the Times in Which We Are Living?

Do you understand the times in which we are living? More than this, do you know what you should do during these times? In I Chronicles 12:32, the men of Issachar are described as men “who understood the times and knew what Israel should do.” These men of Issachar are among a list of other “men armed for battle who came to David at Hebron to turn Saul’s kingdom over to him, as the Lord had said.” (I Chronicles 12:23) The men of Issachar evidently knew that change was at hand. Saul had passed from the scene, and God’s appointed replacement was David. The men of Issachar recognized this fact and were “determined to make David king over all Israel.” (I Chronicles 12:38) This transition might have seemed apparent to them, but understanding the times and knowing God’s will for the times are not always so obvious.

Who were the men of Issachar? Issachar was one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The 12 sons of Jacob became the 12 tribes of Israel. Issachar was born approximately 900 years before his descendants who lived during David’s day. When Jacob died, he gave a prophetic statement about each of his sons. Concerning Issachar he said, “Issachar is a rawboned donkey lying down between two saddlebags. When he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land, he will bend his shoulder to the burden and submit to forced labor.” (Genesis 49:14-15) In other words, Issachar and his descendants would be lazy. They would rather be dominated by others than fight for their God-ordained parcel of property. Evidently, this attitude did not fall over every descendant of Issachar, for during David’s generation there were those men of Issachar who were willing to put forth the effort to do what they knew needed to be done. It is a good thing that we are not robotically and genetically predisposed to act as our weaker forefathers have. We may yet be faithful and consider what are our present times. And we may yet act in a manner that suits the times by His Word and the wisdom that His Spirit imparts.

When I think of the concept of the times, I interpret it to mean the popular behavior and thought patterns of the broader culture. We need to understand our culture. We need also to understand when to swim with it and when to swim against it.

We also need to understand the times of our own individual lives. Do you understand what is personally transpiring in your life and why? Do you understand what you should do in relation to your present situation? You might say, “Tell me what to do, and I will do it.” I might reply, “If it were that easy, I would!”

Vacation Bible School

This year’s VBS is approaching rapidly! Please pray daily for those who will attend and also for those who will serve during **July 14-18**. Pray for open hearts, discerning teachers, and smooth operation. Thank you to the willing workers! If you find you can join us too, we will be at Cloverly Elementary School from 9-11:30am every day. Most of all, **please pray!**

Congregational Dinner

All are invited to a congregational dinner on **Sunday, July 20th** after worship. We will be inviting our VBS children and their families also. All families need to bring a main dish to serve 8-10 people and a side dish in the following categories: A-G, salads; H-M, potato or side dish; N-Z, desserts. Please bring serving spoons!

I suspect that the men of Issachar in David’s day ran against the grain of most of their tribal ancestors. They contemplated their times and their individual responsibilities in light of the times. They discarded the family mantle of laziness.

If we would understand our times and the times of our personal life, we must contemplate our circumstances. We must think and, at times, painstakingly meditate over the contemporary events of our lives in the light of God’s Word. We must, as it were, sit in a chair, reach back over our heads to the pole lamp behind us, and turn it on. We must seek the wisdom found in the Bible. We must use the principles, specific commands, and narrative examples laying over our lives as the paradigm for living.

The Bible is full of wisdom. A few suggestions on where to look for wisdom would be in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the life and words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels, and the Epistles.

These are the times in which we live. As those redeemed by Christ, may we be able to understand them and know what to do. ❖



Focus on Our Missionaries: *Linda Karner in Chiba, Japan*

Recently, there was a disturbing report about use of the Internet in Japan—not for pornography, but for suicide. Apparently, there are now a number of Japanese websites where people can meet for the purpose of supporting each other in their desire to commit suicide. They can place an “ad” for a suicide partner on these sites. Explaining this mindset, one minister who founded a suicide-prevention line said, “One single suicide seems quite awful and wrong. But a double suicide has, in a sense, affection and peace, solace.” Suicide, which was often glorified in the samurai tradition as a way to avoid either disgrace or death at the hands of an enemy, is often seen today as the only way out of pain and isolation in this society where mental health care still carries a deep stigma.

As I read this article, I was powerfully reminded of the lostness of people without the Gospel. At the same time, I was struck by the monumental forces arrayed against the growing church in Japan. Statistically, there are 400 unbelievers for every Christian in Japan—what general would go out against odds like that? But, “our God is in the heavens; He does whatever pleases Him.” The church that we labor to build is Christ’s, and He has “overcome the world.”



Good Hope was blessed to receive a missions report in person from Linda Karner in May of this year.

I continue to plan to return to Japan on August 13th, and I expect to be teaching 7th grade to missionary children this year. I still have three supporting churches left to visit, as well as attending Mission to the World’s summer conference for missionaries. Please pray for safety in travel and that God will do a work of grace in my heart. Pray that I will be able to return on schedule. Also pray that God would strengthen our team and guide us in His work. Thank you so much for your prayers and support and for your kind attention on that Sunday when I was able to visit. It was a great blessing for me to worship with you!

God bless you,
Linda Karner

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 (301) 236-4151
 Current Meeting Location:
 Briggs Chaney Middle School
 1901 Rainbow Drive
 Silver Spring, MD 20905

Join us for Worship at 9:25am and Sunday School at 11:00am each Sunday.
 www.goodhopepca.com

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July 2003						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Worship Service - 9:25am Sunday School - 11:00am Evening Service at the Macdonalds' - 6:00pm	30	1 Youth Group Trip to Ocean City	2	3	4	5 Baby Shower for Kate Haber at Amy Higgins' House 1-3pm
6 Worship Service - 9:25am Sunday School - 11:00am Youth Group GG - 6:00pm	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Worship Service - 9:25am Communion To Be Served Sunday School - 11:00am Evening Service at the Macdonalds' - 6:00pm	14 Vacation Bible School at Cloverly Elementary 9:00-11:30am daily	15	16	17 Session Meeting at Waller's House 7:30pm	18	19
20 Worship Service - 9:25am Congregational Dinner 11:00am	21	22	23	24	25	26 Building Committee at Jim Haber's House - 7:30am
27 Worship Service - 9:25am Sunday School - 11:00am	28 Info for August newsletter due to Kate Haber today!	29	30	31	1	2

Latest Building Committee News
 by Ian Macdonald, Building Committee Chairman

The long-awaited site development plan was finally filed on June 5th. Anticipated wait time for a response from Howard County is 4 weeks (around July 3rd). The expectation is that they will ask for minor revisions. Then it is back to Rob Vogel to get those done. Please pray for him!

A revised commitment letter was filed with the Sandy Spring Bank on June 25th and should go to closure in 60 days. Thanks to Bill Davis for his work on that front, and please pray for closure.

Karl Riedel's work schedule has grown tremendously, and he has asked if he may shift our work to another architect of his choice. Jim Haber has received a contract from that architect, Jim Palmer, AIA, and it was presented to the building committee for processing on Saturday, June 28th. Please pray for Jim.

The congregation has been very generous in their commitment to this project but needs to continue with the generous giving. Please pray for us all! ❖

All ladies are invited to a baby shower for Kate Haber at the home of Amy Higgins on Saturday, July 5th from 1-3pm. Joseph and Kate are expecting a baby boy, so think blue! Kate is also registered at Target and Babies 'R Us. For more information, please call Amy at (410) 531-9843.

Everyone is invited to join together for worship and fellowship at 6pm on Sundays, July 13th and August 24th at the Macdonalds' house.

We thank God for His continued faithfulness to the children of Good Hope. Edward Chandler, Daniel Hegerle, Maggie Gerwin, Katherine Malanoski, Paige Davis, and Benjamin Lyon received Bibles on Promotion Sunday, June 1st, as they moved up to the Junior Sunday School class.