

May 2024

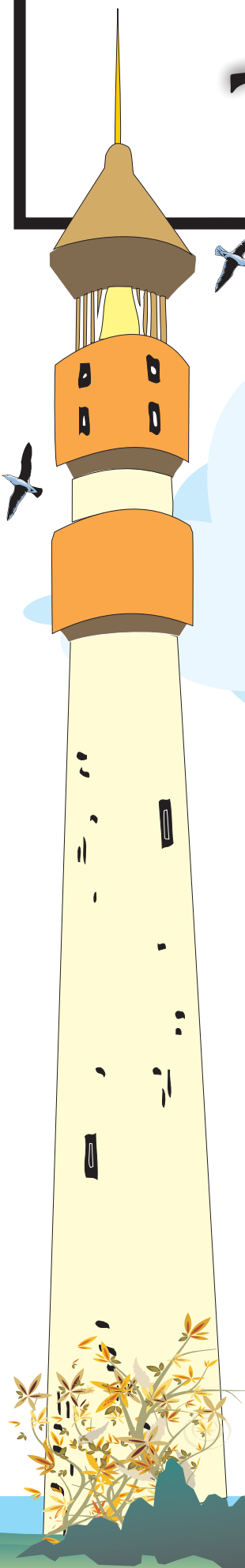
The Lighthouse

May: A Time to Celebrate, a Time to Remember

Rev. Shannon Philio, Assistant Pastor

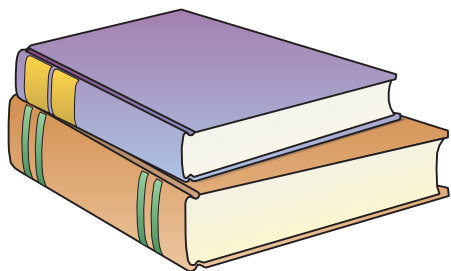
Gathering – Growing – Going

We celebrate two major holidays in May, and no, I am not referring to “May the 4th Be with You” holiday for Star Wars fans. One is Mother's Day on the 12th; the other, Memorial Day on the 27th. President Abraham Lincoln once wrote, “All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.” Honoring our mothers, past and present, is important to God, so much so that He made it the 5th commandment in Exodus 20:12. At a time of intense suffering on the Cross, Jesus took time to honor His mother when He told the apostle John to take care of her in John 19:27, “Behold, your mother.” Jesus wanted to ensure His earthly mother was taken care of after He died, resurrected, and ascended into Heaven. The Westminster Larger Catechism question 124 asks, “Who is meant by mother in the fifth commandment?” Answer: “By mother is meant, not only natural parent, but all superiors in age and gifts, and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.” In Isaiah 66:13, the Lord says, “As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.” Mothers comfort. Mothers care. Mothers show God's steadfast love. So, on May 12th, let us take some time to reflect upon, thank, and honor all those mothers the Lord has placed in our lives, past and present,



biological or other, in the home or in the church. American author Washington Irving once wrote, "A mother is the truest friend we have."

Memorial Day is a day to honor those who have died while serving in our nation's military, particularly during times of war. We live in a free country with religious liberty because brave men and women sacrificed their lives for such freedom. Of course the greatest war that was ever fought was not on a battlefield in East Asia or in Iraq or Afghanistan or even across continental Europe. The greatest war that was ever fought was on a hill called Calvary, on an old rugged Cross, by Jesus Christ, a war between good and evil, light and darkness, life and death. And the good news, you may ask? The good news? He won! Jesus Christ won! He sacrificed His life that we might have true spiritual freedom from the power and penalty of sin and be given eternal life by trusting upon Him as Lord and Savior. Jesus took the punishment we should have received for our sins, and when we believe in His name and receive Him, His perfect righteousness is imputed to our accounts so that our Heavenly Father now no longer views us as dead in our sins and trespasses but forgiven and alive in His Son Jesus Christ. And so, as we pause on May 27th to remember and to thank our nation's fallen heroes who died while serving in uniform, let us also pause to remember, thank, and praise Jesus Christ for laying down His life that we might receive salvation and eternal life.



Book Report

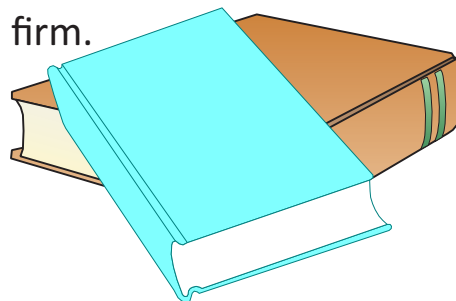
Taking God at His Word by Kevin DeYoung, Senior Pastor at University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan, is an outstanding work addressing the significance and the relevance of Scripture, God's Word, in the lives of the followers of Jesus Christ in today's culture.

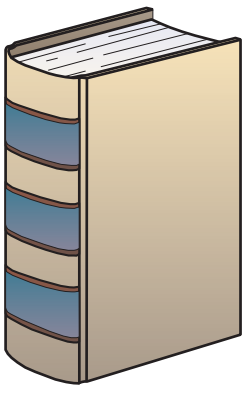
The Bible stands at the heart of the Christian faith. It is the very foundation upon which our faith stands and upon which we live our lives. It is God's word – inspired, infallible, and inerrant! Reverend DeYoung provides the answers to the significant questions being asked in today's culture.

Questions such as “Can I trust the Bible completely?” “Is it sufficient for our complicated daily lives?” “Can we know what it teaches?” “Isn't it more important to focus on Jesus instead of the Bible?”.

The proper understanding of Scripture is of critical importance for it is the foundation of the church, even the faith we hold dear. It is the instruction manual for the living out of our daily lives (24/7) as followers of Jesus Christ. What we believe about the Bible, the Word of God, is absolutely crucial, if for no other reason that we should know what we believe and feel about Jesus (page 19).

If the foundation is not secure, the church will crumble. Consider the foundation of a building. No matter how solid the building is, if the foundation begins to weaken and crumble, the building will collapse. Isn't that the emphasis of Jesus' illustration to build a house? The house built on the "sand" will collapse. The house on the "rock" stood firm.



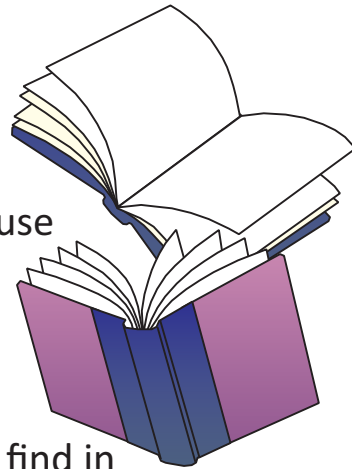


It is the same with our "house". Scripture, God's Word, inspired, infallible, and inerrant, the only rule of faith and practice, provides the secure foundation upon which to build.

Reverend DeYoung relates the significance of scripture to the Health and Welfare of the Christian church and family, as he says, "Well, the good news is that every single one of us can hear God today, right now at this very moment. God still appears and he has a word for us that is sure, sticky, and messy." (page 26).

Reverend DeYoung establishes three vital principles:

- First, scripture is the word of God.
- Second, the word of God is no less divine because it is given through human instrumentality.
- Third, the Bible is without error.

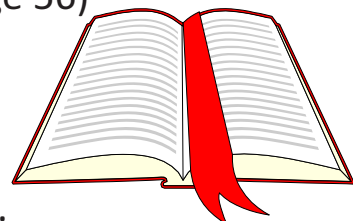


"There is no more authoritative declaration than what we find in the Word of God, no firmer ground on which to stand, no "more final" argument that can be spoken after Scripture has spoken." (page 39)

It is the same with our house. Scripture, the Only Rule of faith and practice, provides the secure foundation.

Chapters that further explained this statement are:

- God's word is **enough** (page 42)
- God's word is **clear** (can be understood) (page 56)
- God's word is **necessary** (page 83)
- God's word is **final** (page 91)



Dr. DeYoung describes these four as the "Fantastic Four".

He ended this book with the following challenge: "So let us not weaken in our commitment to our unbreakable Bible. Let us not wander from these divinely exhaled truths. God has spoken and through that explanation he still speaks. Ultimately we can believe the Bible because we believe in the power and wisdom and goodness and trustworthiness of God. We trust in the Bible because it is God's Bible. And God being God, we have every reason to take him at his Word (pages 121-122).

The appendix alone is worth the price of the book! He lists and briefly discusses 30 of the best books as the Gold Books (pages 123-127).

Great read!

This article also challenged me with the following issues:

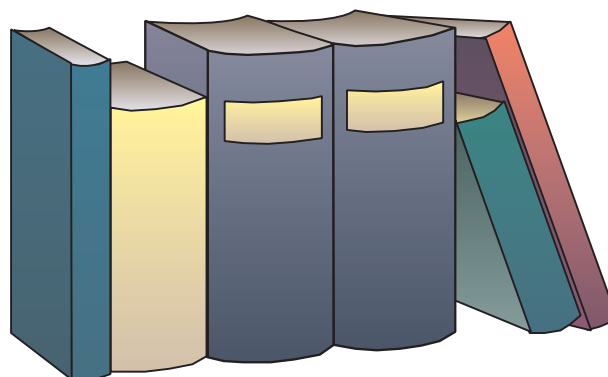
- How is my personal devotional life?
- How is our devotional time with Janet and me?
- How did I do, when my children were at home, in catechism study and Scripture reading as a family?



Tragically we all fall short, but by God's grace we will become more and more of what Christ desires us to be. In order for this to happen, we must dive deep into the depths of Scripture. We must allow God's Word to saturate our lives, and, as a result, live out the remainder of our days in the service of our great king whose name is Jesus!

Coram Deo,

Jim Misner



April 22, 2024

Dear friends and supporters of Ministry to State North Carolina:

In October 2018, I was privileged to have been called to serve as the first North Carolina State Capitol Minister with [Ministry to State](#). Serving as a minister and missionary to our state government leaders over these past five-and-a-half years has been one of the great joys of my life. It has been such an honor to pray with and for our elected leaders and staff, to counsel and disciple them, to listen and to love them as image bearers of God, and ultimately to point them to Jesus.



However, **the Lord in his providence has called me to a different ministry position.** As I shared last summer, I have been serving in a dual role as both an MTS Minister and as the Associate Pastor of [Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church](#) in Clayton, North Carolina. In early January, our pastor took another ministry call out of state. A pastoral search committee was established and as candidates were explored and interviewed, the committee selected me as their recommended candidate. And **on Sunday, April 7, the congregation voted to elect me as the next Pastor of Grace Reformed.**

Melanie and I couldn't be more thrilled than to serve in this wonderful congregation. We have a strong sense that the Lord has called us to Grace Reformed and we look forward to the work he will do in our midst. But it is also a **bittersweet change because we know that this will significantly reduce my work with Ministry to State.**

With this in view, **I wanted to share a few details about my plans and what that may mean for you as prayer and financial supporters:**

- The short legislative session begins next week (April 24) and is tentatively scheduled to continue through July 31. My plan is to visit the capitol one day per week during this session wherein I will continue to meet with legislators and staff.
- I am also in the early planning stages of a Friday-Saturday political theology conference that I plan to hold in the fall. This would be an MTS sponsored

event with speakers, likely to be held at a local church wherein church members and guests would be invited.

- In my conversations with MTS leadership, I have assured them that I will do all I can to help find a new MTS Minister for North Carolina.

Financially, my only needs going forward include the hourly wage for the time I work in ministry at the capitol and for ministry expenses. I don't expect this to amount to more than a few hundred dollars per month.

However, I would ask you to prayerfully consider continuing to give to Ministry to State North Carolina. When I started this ministry, I had no "seed" funds from which to launch. Thus, the first year of my work with MTS was spent almost strictly raising the necessary financial support. For a new minister to take this position with at least some financial padding would be a tremendous blessing to him and his family, reduce the amount of work he will have to do to raise support, and get him ministering in the capitol much more quickly. **All additional funds which are given to the account beyond my personal wages and ministry expenses will be transferred to the new minister, not to me.**

If you would be so kind as to share with me whether or not you intend to continue supporting Ministry to State North Carolina, either by phone (336.482.6989) or email (darin@ministrytostate.org), that would be greatly appreciated.

Of course, I am pleased to discuss this further and answer any questions you may have regarding this transition. Do not hesitate to reach out to me anytime.

I am genuinely grateful for you, your prayers, encouragement, networking help, and financial support. Launching this ministry was a team effort which God orchestrated at just the right time. Thank you again for your kindness and support of me and the work of Ministry to State North Carolina. I couldn't be more thankful.

For the sake of the gospel,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darin". The letter "D" is large and loops around the first part of the name.

Darin

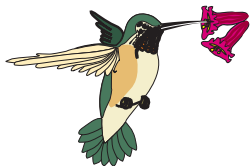
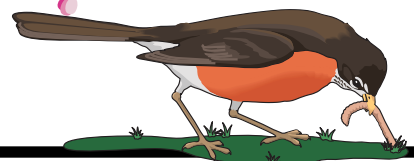
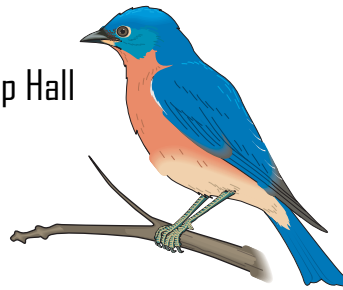
BIRTHDAYS for MAY

Dean Rydbeck 7th Jeff Harrison 10th
Scott Malthaner 12th Evelyn Smith 13th
Eli Venning 26th



Dates to Remember for May

- May 1 Ladies Circle at 9:30am in the parlor
- May 4 Men's Breakfast at 8:00am in the Fellowship Hall
- May 5 Communion
- May 6 Men's Bible Study at 6:30pm
- May 12 Mother's Day
- May 19 Monthly Luncheon after the worship service. Please bring a dish to share
- May 20 Men's Bible Study at 6:30pm at the church
- May 20 Deacon's Meeting at 5:30pm
- May 27 Memorial Day holiday, the Church office will be closed
- May 28 Session Meeting at 6:00pm in the church



We will be hosting the Grace Presbytery Meeting here on Tuesday, May 14th at 9:00am.

