



RVF FAMILY NEWSLETTER

2nd Quarter · 2021

RVF

FAMILY NEWS

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INTRODUCTION

At RVF we're always looking for ways to effectively communicate to the congregation what God is doing in our church. Currently we do that through our website, the church app, email lists, announcements, and social media. Sometimes, however, a short announcement or Facebook post isn't sufficient. In light of this, we have compiled a family newsletter to give our ministry leaders a little more space to share what God is doing at RVF.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a fellowship of believers whose desire is to be a Faithful Presence and a Prophetic Witness to Jesus and His kingdom in our neighborhoods and the world.

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Times of Waiting



Pastor Kenner Gotzman

Growing up I can remember my parents instilling in me that, “good things come to those who wait.” No one likes waiting, waiting is difficult. Culturally we are accustomed to instant gratification. We live in a culture supplied by Amazon delivery, entertained on Netflix, and fed by fast food. There are few situations in our culture where waiting is valued or seen as a virtue. Times of waiting often entail silence, uncertainty, and an overall uneasiness. Often times we are awaiting the end of difficult time, such as the end of a pandemic. Other times, we are awaiting the arrival of something joyful, such as the birth of a child. Either way, waiting is common to the human experience, it is a reality that we must come to accept and allow to shape us into the image of Jesus.

For those of us learning the value and difficulty of this lesson, we are in good company. The Scriptures are filled with stories of saints who learned similar lessons through various situations. The Israelites waited in Egypt for 400 years for YHWH to deliver them from the oppression of Pharaoh. Then upon their release, they wandered in the desert for 40 years waiting to enter the Promised Land. The prophets in exile, waited 70 years to be released from captivity in Babylon and Persia to return to the land to rebuild the Temple. God’s people waited for 400 years in silence, waiting for the arrival of the Messiah. The disciples waited for 10 days for the Spirit to descend at Pentecost after the ascension of Jesus. Two-Thousand years later, as followers of Jesus, we are still waiting his return and the consumation of the Kingdom. Needless to say, waiting is not abnormal for God’s people.

Our waiting is not in vain, it is not purposeless. Rather, in our waiting the Holy Spirit produces in us patience, faith, and hope. The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:25 that, “if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” Through our study in Ephesians on Sunday morning we have learned that patience is necessary in community, as we wait for the Holy Spirit to do his work in each of our lives (Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 3:12-14). The book of Hebrews tells us through times of waiting, we learn to exercise not only patience, but faith as well. The author of Hebrews desired that, “... each one of [us would] show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that [we] may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:11-12). Do not give up, do not shrink back! Continue to wait on the Lord, and lean into the lessons he may be teaching you through times of silence or seasons of uncertainty.

My prayer for us pastorally is that we would come to appreciate the value of times of waiting. May we allow these seasons to instill in us patience, faith, and hope. Whether we are waiting for the arrival of something grand or the end to something difficult may we experience the presence of Jesus with us in and through it. In our times of waiting may “may the Lord direct [our] hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ” 2 Thessalonians 3:5).

Grace and Peace,

GIVING & GRATITUDE



Michael Combs

2021 - YTD through 2nd Quarter
Budgeted Offerings: \$309,000
Actual Offerings: **\$416,857**
Budgeted Expenses: \$309,000
Actual Expenses: **\$297,931**
Net: \$118,926

Our board Treasurer, Larry Anderson, and I really don't have words to adequately respond to the giving from the congregation of RVF other than to praise God for the spirit of generosity he has instilled in all of you. The surplus funds have allowed us to be more than prepared to purchase the Ivy Street chapel, and we are eternally grateful for that.

Speaking of Ivy Street, a few of you have been asking how to give towards any remodeling/

repairs/or items needed for our new building. We have created a fund in our online giving dashboard labeled "Ivy Street" that you can direct any giving over your normal offerings to, and that will go specifically to this new project. If you are giving via cash or check, simply put "Ivy Street" in the memo line or on the giving envelope, and we will take care of it from there.

We praise God for your continued generosity to this ministry and ask that you continue to pray for wisdom to steward these resources well. The Lord has provided exceedingly for our ministry and beyond.



RETREAT & RECOVER



Jen Platt

Women's Council Member

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Mathew 11:28-30 NLT

Greetings Church Family!

We're excited to update you on some of the events taking place this summer for our ladies, particularly after such a challenging year of being able to connect. June 23rd we hosted an evening of worship and prayer outdoors in the courtyard. This is something we've done in the past and plan to offer again in the future. It was especially sweet to gather with those who came and offer a sacrifice of praise to our gracious God. Even as we sang to him in the heat of the summer evening, a refreshing breeze stirred and His presence ministered to us.

Continuing on the theme of being refreshed in His presence, we hope you'll mark your calendars to join us (and/or encourage the women in your life to attend) **Saturday, August 7th**. We are shifting gears from our traditional annual retreat at the coast, and this year we're holding a day retreat at the church. The plan includes time to fellowship and connect over great food, worship, teaching from some of our own gals, as well as time set

aside to keep company with Jesus. Watch for more details and sign-ups coming out soon.

Our Spiritual Formation Groups are wrapping up their most recent book study on *Surrender to Love by David Benner*. We'll be changing content for these groups in the fall, but for now ladies are continuing to meet and connect through the summer. If you aren't part of a group, but would like to be, please reach out to Stephanie Gotzman, or anyone on the Women's Council.

Finally, please know we think of you often and pray for you. Our hearts are knit together with yours. Don't hesitate to reach out with specific prayer requests or needs. We look forward to continuing to build connections together as one body in Christ as we grow into His likeness walking together in discipleship.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."



EXCITING FUTURE



Billy Hague

It seems a little unreal that we are already halfway through 2021. It is an exciting time for the youth group as summer begins and Covid restrictions lift. For so long we had to be creative in how we met and spent time together but now we can re-engage things that are helpful to building relationship with one another and creating an atmosphere where teens can explore relationship with Jesus with a bit more freedom and camaraderie.

We graduated 7 seniors from the high school youth group this year and while it is sad to see them go, we look forward to spending the rest of the summer with them and seeing where God takes them next in life. We have a few fun things planned this summer including the return of summer camp at the end of July! We also have added several incoming freshman to the group that I am excited to get to know and get plugged into the group. Camp will be a great way for them connect as we go rafting, spend some time at the lake, and explore what it means and looks like to have a vibrant prayer life. Be praying for us as we go July 23-26th.

Jr. High youth group is also doing well and we are in the process of planning some fun things for summer for this crew. It has been a good transition for them to have their own meeting time outside of Sunday morning. It gives them the opportunity to build more of an identity as

their own group, while also encouraging them to begin to assimilate into the rest of church life as they sit in service with their parents on Sunday morning. I am grateful for faithful volunteers and leaders who do the heavy lifting of Jr High youth group. Jordan Hamasu, Jess Combs, and Richard Bokish are the kind of people we want influencing our youth and pointing them to Jesus.

Outside of youth ministry, missional communities are also getting back to some normal rhythms this summer and we are seeing more and more people join groups. One of the things I appreciate most about our MCs is how willing they are to jump in and serve. The last Sunday of June we had our first family bbq of the summer and it was great fun. It would not have been possible without several groups jumping in to help set-up, serve food, and tear down.

As always, I am grateful to get to be a part of this community as we learn to walk with Jesus together.

Grace and Peace,
Billy

ROOTED & GROUNDED



Courtney Zimmerman

June was a big month for Kids Ministry!

Many kids moved up to new classes, we split the K-5th class into a K-1st and 2nd-5th class, and we began new curricula in preschool and 2nd-5th! So far all of these transitions seem to be going smoothly, but I didn't expect anything different from our incredible RVF Kids.

I have truly enjoyed diving into the New City Catechism curriculum with the 2nd-5th graders! They are capable of grappling with big topics and having deep faith. We are currently working our way through Volume 1, which covers topics under the themes of God, Creation & Fall, and Law. So far we have learned about the following questions (and their answers):

- What is our only hope in life and death?
- What is God?
- How many persons are there in God?
- How and why did God create us?

Talking about the trinity with the kids was a highlight! They asked thoughtful questions, expressed deep desire to understand, and had space to accept the reality that though God is knowable and wants to be known by us, there are certain things about Him that we cannot fully understand.

Please continue to pray Ephesians 3:16-19 for our kids, that they would be rooted and grounded in the love of the Father and have the strength to understand and know Christ's love so that they can be filled with the fullness of God. May they believe the truth that they are a blessing to our church family and that they belong.



EASY & LIGHT



Jeremy Olivera

Matthew 28-30 [msg] “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

At the core of the church, the Bible, and our kingdom mission is this paradigm-shattering concept of abundant rest rooted in walking with Jesus. Our culture rewards stress and overcrowding our schedules. It usually goes hand in hand with our idea of success, or put another way, the means of providing for ourselves. It quite often becomes the most important thing in our life based on priority.

I’m definitely talking to myself here. I am known as a busy person (I’m lost without my iPhone calendar). All the things I’m involved in are usually good things in and of themselves, though

they may not be what Jesus expects of me. Here’s the question Jesus has been walking me through these last months: At the end of the day am I missing out on something? Not that God is angry with me or disappointed, but is there an invitation to a new way of living, one that isn’t defined by stress or worry?

Jesus tells us his burden is easy and light. There is a burden to following Jesus, but one that isn’t rooted in constant activity and obligations. It’s easy and light because it’s rooted in rest, a simple knowing that God has finished the work and our lives are lived in freedom from slavery to death and earning our identity or status.

My invitation to you this week is to meditate on these specific verses and ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Father’s invitation into abundant life.

V E R S E

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe..."
May the Lord bless you and keep you in 2021.