

March 2010 Newsletter

A Letter from the Pastor.

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

We are Marching towards the first day of spring, but a while back, on a snowy, blustery morning, I was meeting with a group of RCA pastors downstate. Some had traveled from out of state, the others were from churches in southern and eastern Michigan. Such get-togethers can be a lot of fun as we share and eat, and pray, and eat, and lift each other up in the love of Christ. Well, as often happens in such meetings, conversation got going around the circle and we shared about our churches, experiences, challenges, and triumphs. I listened attentively as my colleagues in ministry talked about their trials and struggles – they truly had much to be in prayer about because things were very challenging in those church families. As I listened, thinking of what I could offer, the only real issue I could come up with was *something of my own creation*, a crazy schedule! On the bright side, to serve in this church is such a blessing and privilege and I praise God for his glorious provision in leading Polly and me here. The point is, my heart went out to many of my Brothers in ministry as I sensed real discouragement in their spirits. Unfortunately, discouragement is not uncommon in the Church today. It exists in churches across denominations, across this nation. Too many pastors leave the ministry after just a few years in service to their churches. Too many churches are closing their doors forever. Too many churches are having heated arguments over the color of the new carpet or the kind of sound system the church has or does not have. Some churches start drawing lines in the sand over wearing jeans verses suits and ties and, in the process of taking sides, everyone loses, hearts get broken, and the name of Christ is dragged through that sand.

I listened. I sorrowed.

Truly, how beautiful it would be if those pastors *were as blessed as me*. To walk into this church each day and know the wonder and majesty of serving the Risen Lord in a church of love, prayer, compassion, and hope. To know beyond all doubt that our Consistory wants to walk with integrity, wants to continually grow in service and its knowledge of leadership and theology. To laugh and kid around with our youth on Wednesday evenings. To work with terrific, faith-filled staff and committees. To treasure making visits to the hospital, care facilities, and homes. To rejoice each Sunday morning when I experience the greatness of each heart present in these pews, each heart that beats for the glory and honor of Jesus. Oh, how I wish such wonder could exist in the life of every pastor in this country! Maybe that is what revivals are like – flying in faith through the power of the Holy Spirit. Or feeling flames of faith bursting forth each morning as Followers of Jesus head off to work or to school or church or to

whatever tasks they have been given for that day in time. If so, let us pray for revival in the Church of America!!

Well, we ended that get together with a time of prayer, intercessions sent out on behalf of all pastors who were carrying heavy burdens...except for one. Those guys prayed for me, for my schedule dilemma, and I sincerely appreciated their concerns. But my bountiful blessings, compared to my insignificant dilemma, were like comparing a breathtaking sunrise to a bug splotch on the windshield of our Subaru.

And so thank you, my precious, gracious church family, for giving Polly and me a blessed gift beyond measure and explanation: unconditional love.

Captured by His holy calling,

Pastor Mik