



New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor 5:17

Sunday, February 22, 2026

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Pastoral Ponderings

Living in a World with Artificial Intelligence

These days it seems impossible to avoid Artificial Intelligence (AI). Every time you use a computer and every time you call a company for information or help, you encounter some form of AI seeking to make life "easier." The reality is not always what we perceive as "easier."

I received a 1099-R form reporting some income. I could not find any record that it was deposited into our checking account, so I called the company. I had to deal with AI. I had to tell it my birthdate four times. After some "help" that was not so helpful, the AI started all over and I had to repeat everything. When I was asked how they could help me, I said, "I want to talk to a person." Then we started all over again with another request for my birthdate and how they could help me. I said, "I *need* to talk to a person." A few seconds later I was actually talking with a real person with GGI (God Given Intelligence). Within minutes he clarified the matter and I was able to find the deposit in our checking account. AI was not needed for this. It was not "easier." It did not seem their AI actually had much "intelligence."

It is not hard to find articles that discuss the "evils" of AI. Most of us innocently and safely use AI to look-up things on the Internet. What we find may or may not be really what we were hoping to learn, but it does not seem that AI is evil. It is evident that AI is doing things humans used to do—with various levels of success. Some warn that AI will end up taking over the world.

In our Immerse study of the Book of Proverbs, we found a proverbial gem in Proverbs 16:4:

*The Lord has made everything for its purpose,
even the wicked for the day of trouble.*

"*Its* purpose," can be translated, "*His* purpose." Both are legitimate translations of the Hebrew and a few translations render it this way. The Lord made everything for His purpose. "His purpose" and "its purpose" are the exact same thing. This should not be surprising to us since we understand the Lord is the Sovereign Ruler of all things.

Of course, God did not make *everything*, but that is not what the proverb is saying. For an obvious example, He did not create anything evil. We might rearrange the words of the proverb to express this more clearly: "Everything the Lord made is for His purpose."

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Pastoral Ponderings cont.

The proverb includes the surprising words, “even the wicked.” It would be easy to think the world would be a better place if there were no wicked people. Wicked people seem to be among the worst things on Earth. God didn’t create any wicked people, but He created people who chose to sin. The Lord’s plan, which surpasses man’s thoughts, includes the wicked. He even uses the wicked for his purposes. He used Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar to punish Israel and Judah for refusing to worship Him. He used some jealous men to put Daniel into the lion’s den to prove Daniel’s innocence and God’s power. It is harder for us to see that God used Hitler for some useful purpose that still escapes us. We may someday find out how Hitler fit into God’s plan. God even uses the devil to accomplish His purposes. This will be most evident in the Last Days.

Since our God is all-powerful and sovereign, He is able *to use everything that exists*—even what He did not create and those who reject Him—for His purpose.

There is absolutely nothing in all creation that is outside the realm of the Lord’s purpose. The Lord will use *all things*—whether created by Him or not—for *His glory*. God even used the sin of man and its impact on the world to do something that was for His purpose and glory: He provided a perfect salvation.

The proverb we have been considering leaves one important matter unstated: what is God’s purpose? Obviously, He has many purposes that fit into many circumstances, needs, and situations. But there is one overriding cosmic purpose. It is found in Numbers 14:21:

But truly, as I live... all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

Now, *that* is quite a purpose! It gives us something important to meditate on, and that meditation gives us great joy. It is impossible for us to grasp what it will be like when God’s cosmic purpose is fulfilled. One biblical hint that teases us is the description of the New Jerusalem where the tree of life on the banks of a river produces twelve different fruits every month. This does not fit with what we know about fruit-bearing trees. But “the tree of life” is different from the trees we know. In addition, what we know is obviously before the earth being filled with the glory of the Lord. What a day that will be!

Jay Swisher

Ministry Directory

Building & Grounds Ministry
Jim Judkins, 715.338.8837
oldoutboardjim@hotmail.com

Coffee Ministry
Ana Smith, 715.566.3740
ajoysmith05@gmail.com

Finance Administration
Colleen Firkus (Treasurer),
612-889-7581
c.a.firkus@gmail.com

Greeting Card Ministry
Lynn Nelson, 651.373.1426
lynnjimmnelson@gmail.com

GriefShare Ministry
Robin Mattson, 715.566.1945
robinmattson27@gmail.com

Immerse Ministry
Paul Linzmeier
320.226.5581
pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com

Meal Relief Ministry
Kristin Stephan, 651.235-1681
kristin@kageinnovation.com

Missions Outreach
Ben Wilson, 651-497-7136
benwilson246@gmail.com

Music Ministry
Jeff Warren, 715-553-2405
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com

Newsletter Administration
Dawn Holm, 715.472.8453
djhholm@lakeland.ws

Resource Center
Cory Mattson, 715.417.0945
cory79mattson@hotmail.com

Sunday Meal Services
Barbara Judkins,
309.269.0556
bjdarnell@hotmail.com

Video Ministry
Jim Mabee, 651.470.4172
jmabee@centurytel.net

Check out New Life Online newlifechristiancommunity.org

This Sunday's Worship Songs:

The goodness of Jesus
God of Creation, All-Powerful, All-wise
Jesus paid it all • Help us see Christ
Across the Lands

This Week's Schedule of Events

Tues Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Tues Young Ladies Study– 7:15 pm
Wed Immerse– 6:15 pm
Thurs Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs Ladies Bible Study– 10:30 am
Thurs Ladies Bible Study– Noon
Thurs GriefShare– 6:30 pm
Thurs Women's Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs Men's Bible Study– 6:30 pm

Meal Teams

Feb. 22 Meal Team 7 - Sloppy Joes
March 1 Meal Team 8 - Soup
*Contact Barbara Judkins if interested
in being on a meal team or a helper.*

Fellowship Tip for February

Did anyone say Chicken Soup? Cold and flu season is upon us and it doesn't have to be all negative. It provides the body of Christ more opportunities to care for one another in love, even simply through a pot of warm chicken soup and a short prayer at the door reminding one another our Lord is good to us.

February Memory Verse

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:2-3"

Pastoral Eldership Team

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| Pastor Tony Minell | 715.417.1982 galatiansii20@yahoo.com |
| Pastor Paul Linzmeier | 320.226.5581 pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com |
| Pastor Jeff Warren | 715-553-2405 pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com |
| Cory Mattson, Secretary | 715.417.0945 |
| Todd Asmus | 612.695.4849 |
| Zachary Fugate | 715.379.2918 |
| Brian Gates | 651.230.6554 |
| Dale Mattson | 715.566.2302 |
| Greg Mattson | 715.417.2444 |
| Rene Milner | 715.557.0185 |
| Jim Nelson | 651.283.2132 |
| Jay Swisher | 763.587.3472 |
| Sam Umlauf | 612.791.2132 |

Announcements

Men's Retreat: Lets talk about spring! The 2026 Men's retreat is now on the calendar for Friday and Saturday April 10th and 11th. We will be continuing our journey through Ephesians diving into Chapter 4 this year.

2 Easy ways to register! Take a picture of the QR Code on the welcome counter to lead you to the registration website or open our New Life App and click the registration menu option. Just fill out your information and either pay online or select "I'll pay by check" under the "Men's retreat Payment" dropdown menu and you can pay at the retreat.

Registration deadline is Sunday March 22nd! Once registered you should be getting a follow-up email with more information about your stay at Oak Forest. If you have any questions about registration or scholarship funds to attend just reach out to Pastor Paul.

Hall of Men this Sunday! All ages encouraged to come. We're reaching back into the annals of history to blow the dust off the writings and work of faithful men of old. For our encouragement, we will listen to a presentation on the life of one of these men, celebrating the grace of God through Christ in him and how by faith he was able to stand firm in the Gospel in the midst of the trials and temptations of his own generation.

Walk for Life: Today there is local Walk for Life sponsored by Options on 8 (our local pregnancy resource center) talking place this afternoon from 3-5pm. In joining the walk, we can publicly highlight the sanctity of every human life, that the taking these lives is murder, that there is forgiveness in Christ for the sinner, that there is true hope for the hurting, and displays there is a local community of support dedicated to help. The walk starts and ends at St Joseph's in Osceola with a free chili dinner following.

Today's Passage



Jesus

Proclaimed
to the
Colossians

Pastor Tony will be teaching from
the book of Colossians.
Our passage for today is Colossians 4:5-6.

715-201-2295 • 201 State Road 35 N, Dresser, WI

newlifechristiancommunity.org

Sunday service starts at 9:30 am • nlcc.dresser@gmail.com

Join New Life Connect by emailing Pastor Paul at pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com