



The Bible: God's Amazing Word

The Bible is an amazing book. Above all the other books produced in the history of humankind, it stands alone as the one inspired by God as his revealed Word to us. Written through approximately **40 human authors** over a period of approximately **1500 years**, from beginning to end its **66 books** work together in perfect harmony to tell about God's wonderful love, holiness, grace, and plan to redeem people for himself.

Psalm 119 is known as the longest chapter in the Bible with 176 verses and over 2500 words (New International Version). Almost every one of the 176 verses mentions the Word of God in some form (word, laws, decrees, precepts, commands, promises, statutes). This psalm is composed in 22 stanzas or sections of eight verses each. It is an acrostic psalm: Each stanza represents a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet in order from **aleph** to **taw** and, in the Hebrew Bible, the first word of all eight verses in each stanza begins with the same corresponding letter from the Hebrew alphabet.

Some well-known verses from Psalm 119:

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to **your word**. (v9)

I have hidden **your word** in my heart that I might not sin against you. (v11)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (v105)

The Bible tells history. The Bible contains the commandments that God gave through Moses for how humans should behave toward God and toward each other (including the Ten Commandments). The Bible contains songs of praise and worship and words of wisdom for everyday life. The Bible contains messages that God sent through His prophets to the people of Israel—messages that concerned them and all the nations of the world. The Bible includes the story of God's sending of His Son (Jesus Christ) into the world to be a savior for all people everywhere, so that those who look to Him and walk with Him in faith might enjoy abundant life in this world and eternal life with God in heaven in the world to come.

Yes, the Bible is an amazing book. I have been reading and studying it for more than 50 years and I am still learning new things from it and my life is still being shaped and guided by it. I want to invite you to join me and others from our church family who are going to read through the Bible during 2012 in a *chronological* fashion. That means we're not going to read it through in order from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22. Rather, we are going to read passages in the order in which they were written or the events they tell about happened. This will help us see how all the books of the Bible flow together to tell the story of God, his love, and his salvation. The passages are organized into 365 daily readings.

You can use one of the New Living Translation chronological Bibles we ordered this year or any other Bible you prefer, because we will list the daily passages to read from week to week in the Sunday bulletin and on the WLFMC website (www.wlfmc.org). I hope you will join in this adventure of seeking God through his Word.

*May we each enjoy a year of spiritual growth, blessed Kingdom ministry,
and abundant fruitfulness for the glory of God in 2012!*

Pastor Roland & Elaine Kramer

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



The children have been learning how high, wide, deep and long the love of Christ is this School Year. This month we celebrate how God loved us so much by sending His Son. Be sure to keep praying for the children we impact each and every week.

Theme: Life of Love

January 4 Wednesday Night Live!
 January 11 kidZone Discipleship Groups
 January 18 Service Night
 January 25 Creative Kids!

Would you like to work with children? We have areas that are need in of more help. If you are interested, see Pastor Rick today, or call him at 267-7260.



Growing Deeper Bible Studies

Sundays 9:15-10:15am

Dose of Reality

Sundays 6-7:30pm

Bible Quiz Practice

Wednesdays 4:45pm

Middle School Church

Wednesdays 6:30-7:45pm

This Month's Teaching Theme

New Divide. We'll be poring over Paul's letter to the Colossians this month. This is a small, yet powerful, book which contains our ministry verse. Does anyone know what that verse is? * Don't miss a night as we discover how the truth in this book has instant value for our lives today.

Winter Retreat

Pray for our teens as they venture out to Camp Michindoh January 20-22. This retreat, run by Spring Arbor University, will challenge our teens deeper into God's Word and lead them to life lived with purpose.

Calendar Anomalies

There will be no *Dose of Reality* on Sunday, January 15 or 22, due to the Society Meeting and the Winter Retreat.

Teen Connection Groups

Senior Teen Connection groups will be returning in February. Sign up now.

Bible Quizzing

It's 2012 and the Word of God still reigns supreme. Good luck with the second half of the Quiz Season.

Looking Ahead

Keep Sunday, February 26 on your calendar open. That is when the *Pure Life Event* will be happening at Christ's Covenant Church from 3-6pm. This event will be for teens and parents as we investigate the kind of purity God is really after. No cost plus free food plus great teaching equals a night you don't want to miss.

Need information?

You can receive weekly updates and announcements by subscribing to the *Virtual Reality*. Simply email Rick to sign up or join our Facebook group (Look for The Reality).

You can also view our website (www.wlfmc.org) and check out the youth ministry page for all the latest.

* Colossians 2:17



Winter Jam – Sunday, January 22

Featuring Skillet, Sanctus Real, Peter Furler, Kari Jobe, Building 429, Newsong, Group 1 Crew, Dara Maclean, We as Human, & For King and Country! It's all for only \$10. Sign up with Rick or Martha and prepare for a great night of powerful music.

Bible Study – Sunday, January 29

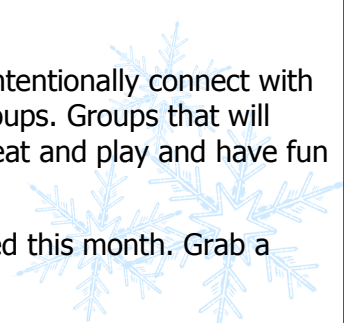
We begin a new semester and a new series in YOUturn Bible studies. This time we're talking about shame and guilt. Everybody has it. How do you get rid of it? Come tonight and we will explore the only effective stain remover.

If you are a Facebook user, search YOUturn Ministries and connect with us there. You will receive weekly updates and invites to every activity we plan

The Adult Connection Groups

With holiday parties in our rearview mirrors, what will we do to intentionally connect with others? Everyone has a need to connect. That's why we have groups. Groups that will grow together. Groups that will study together. Groups that will eat and play and have fun together. We are meant to do life...together.

Look for the new semester of Connection Groups to be announced this month. Grab a copy of the booklet and then find one to join.



Rick's Dimwit

Do you ever spend time thinking ahead? I don't mean in the sense of merely looking forward to dessert, although I do that a lot. I'm talking about the kind of thinking that is especially popular at this time of year. You start thinking about what your last year was like and what you want your next year to be like. Perhaps you think about relationships that need to be repaired. In your home, you may ponder the next big home project. In your work, you may scheme on how to attain more paid sick days.

Whatever kind of thinking it is, we're given some guidelines in God's Word.

Hakuna Matata

We're told not to worry about the future. In fact, Jesus compares us to birds and flowers and assures us that we're worth more to God than those things (Matthew 5:25-34). Whew! In case you become concerned that God might be ok with us being hungry and naked, rest assured, He is not. Jesus tells us that our Father knows we need them. But God also knows that "life is more important than food, and the body more important than clothes" (Matthew 5:25b).

So while Timon and Pumba, of Lion King fame, may have sung Hakuna Matata in an attempt to do as little as possible, we can sing it as praise to God. No worries may not mean problem-free living, but it does mean that God has our back.

Don't Worship the Plans

Have you ever had a near-death experience? I've had a couple. When I realize how close I was, it makes me pause and think about my plans for that day. I'm all for planning, but James was correct when he said that we "are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14). So we should plan with open hands.

You never know what God has in mind. If we did, it would likely change all our plans. So would the knowledge of how many close calls we've actually had. Not every close call is one we will see. Consider all the delays and distractions that come your way. Yeah, they may mess with your plans. But they may be in God's plans.

If we're to really look ahead, I think we may need to do some more thinking.

**To see more of what is going through Rick's head, or to continue this discussion, follow him at www.ricknierwoo.blogspot.com*

If you would like to be on the **Anniversary and Birthday list**, please contact the office at 267-7260 or lynette@wlfmc.org. *Please note;* if you contact us, you give us permission to announce these special dates on the appropriate Sunday morning.



Library News

Some exciting new items are being added regularly to your WLFMC library—check them out to add to your pleasure during these wintry days when staying indoors where it's warm and cozy is very appealing.

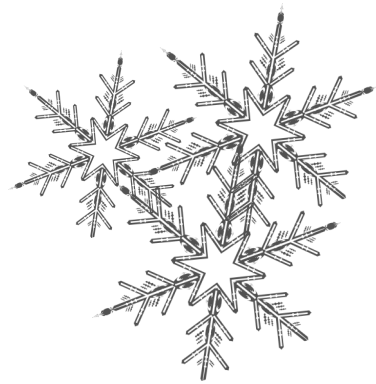
A powerful new memoir by Ira Wagler, [Growing Up Amish](#), recounts how he left his Old Order Amish community, eventually experiencing conversion to Christianity. Chuck Colson offers insights and balance to help you live fearlessly in a godless culture in his newest publication, [The Sky is Not Falling](#). And one of the greatest quarterbacks in college football, Tim Tebow, presents [Through My Eyes](#), an inspirational memoir where he shares his faith, values and determination in a challenging read for football fans. Visit your church library to take advantage of



January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sunday Evening Bible Study, 6:00 p.m. in Room 5. Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.	2	3	4 kidZone Middle School Church and Wednesday Night Prayer service at 6:30 p.m.	5	6	7 Quiz Team at Vincennes. Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.
8 Sunday Evening Bible Study, 6:00 p.m. in Room 5. Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.	9	10	11 kidZone Middle School Church and Wednesday Night Prayer service at 6:30 p.m.	12	13	14 Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.
15 Annual Society Meeting 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.	16	17	18 kidZone Middle School Church and Wednesday Night Prayer service at 6:30 p.m.	19	20 Winter Blast (Youth Retreat) Camp Michindoh Hillsdale, MI	21 Winter Blast Camp Michindoh Hillsdale, MI Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.
22 Sunday Evening Bible Study, 6:00 p.m. in Room 5. Winter Blast Camp Michindoh Hillsdale, MI	23	24	25 kidZone Middle School Church and Wednesday Night Prayer service at 6:30 p.m.	26	27	28 ManHands 8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.
29 Sunday Evening Bible Study, 6:00 p.m. in Room 5. Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.	30	31				

Missions Update



Jitesh, Krushil,
Jitesh's dad, mom and wife Bhanna.

Krushil is the guy who manages
the video rental place.



Most of our stories involve our work with National leaders, or church members...but this story involves a VISA team that recently came to Kenya.

The team from one of our FM churches in Iowa had been in Kenya less than 24 hours when we realized God had set up a divine appointment for them!

All but one piece of their luggage had arrived with them...and the piece that was missing contained all the clothing for Dr. Al and his wife Deloris. So, on their first full day in Nairobi, we added clothes shopping to our list of things that needed to be done. The first stop on our agenda though, was to exchange money at a local Forex where I have struck up a friendship with the Manager, Asif. Asif is Muslim, but very supportive of our mission work and generally gives me a good exchange rate--even better than what is posted.

Before we could go to the Forex though, we had to wait for the rental van to arrive. I had booked it well in advance and made the arrangements for it to be at our apartment the previous night. But, for reasons beyond my control (not unusual here!), the van didn't arrive the night before...and we waited several hours the next day for it to show up at our place. By mid afternoon when it still hadn't arrived, we went to plan B and arranged for other transport.

Off we went to exchange money, do some shopping, including buying clothes, and grab a bite to eat. At the Forex, I introduced Asif to Dr. Al and briefly explained why he and his team were here. The Forex is in a mall and we were able to go to the local "Wal-Mart" to get some basic supplies. By then we were ready to grab a bite to eat at the food court. After eating it was time to do some clothes shopping for Dr. Al and his wife. By the way, did I mention that it was raining the entire time? It was...and this isn't even rainy season! We didn't mind too much though--because we were sticking within the mall and the rain wasn't bothering us at all!

We were successful in purchasing a few clothing items ...though Al's pants were too long and would need some alterations...hemming! The team decided that before heading back to the guest house, a trip back to the food court for ice cream was in order.

When we arrived at the food court, there was Asif....along with another person I knew, Krushil who managed the video rental store at the mall. We greeted them and then they introduced us to Jitesh, (JR) who is the owner of the mall where we were shopping. They were just finishing their evening meal and invited us to sit with them. So we ordered up ice cream and sat down to get to know these new friends better.

We were there for over two hours sharing the Gospel with them. All three of them! As I mentioned, Asif is a Muslim, Krushil is a Hindu, and JR is a believer in God, but we weren't quite sure he had a relationship with Jesus. But JR was the one who was seeking most after God. As we were sharing about the FM church and the reasons we're called Free Methodist...the issue of secret societies came up and it was obvious that God has been talking to JR about his involvement in the Masons. Dr. Al was able to share many things with JR and the others and spoke truth into their lives.

We all sensed that this was no accidental meeting. There were too many "ifs"....if the van had come on time...we wouldn't have been at the mall at that time. If the Taylors had received their suitcase, we wouldn't have been shopping for clothes; For Asif, Krushil and JR...this was the first time they had shared a meal together at the food court. Both Asif and JR had actually left the mall--tried to go home, but because of the torrential rain and the chaotic traffic jam that was created by the rain...they both turned their cars around and came back to the Mall. Just the way things unfolded convinced us all that this meeting was ordained by the Lord.

On Sunday, JR and his father and daughter attended our service where Dr. Al preached and had a time of prayer for healing. JR's mom has cancer and he was very interested in having her prayed for. After service, he invited us to come to his home the following night to meet his family and pray for his mom. We gladly accepted the invitation and had a time of sharing more from the Word and praying for his mother, who by the way, according to the reports we've heard, has had improved health since then!

The team has left to return to Waterloo, but JR, Asif and Krushil are still here. And they all still need to know more about the Lord and His word. We would so appreciate you praying for us as we allow God to use us in ministering to these men. We trust HE will provide more Divine appointments for the Glory of His Kingdom!

By the way---JR had a tailor at his disposal. And he quickly arranged for Al's way-too-long pants to be hemmed! God even takes care of the little things! AND, the suitcase was delivered to our apartment on Sunday during church!

Thanks so much!
Vickie Reynen
Missionary to Africa

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ANNUAL SOCIETY MEETING

January 15 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.
Please bring a finger food to share.

Society Booklets will be available to pick up on the Information Desk that morning to allow time for contemplation and prayer before the ballot is cast that evening.

It is an opportunity to hear where the church has gone in 2011 and what direction it hopes to take in 2012.

We encourage all to attend.
Childcare will be provided.