



From the Pastor's Desk...

June 2023

Dear Cup family and friends,

It has been a joy getting to know CUP over the past several months. As a part of my work as your transitional pastor, I have been completing an assessment called a SWOT analysis. What is a SWOT analysis? SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (or challenges/barriers). Therefore, I decided to share with you this month a summary of what you have told me in the SWOT conversations. After that, we will discuss the path moving forward.

First, what do you think are CUP's strengths? The primary response here was the people of CUP. The people of CUP are friendly, welcoming, hospitable, generous, committed, and caring. The Christlike love and character of CUP's members and regular attenders was evident. Another strength of CUP is the SHINE program. SHINE is a strong outreach to the kids of our community. Not only does it connect our congregation with our community, it also builds relationships between church members and community families. Another strength is the passion and generosity of the church for missions. This can be seen in support for missions such as Tiger Pause, Sierra Leone/Eduations, and Crossroads. The final strength for this summary is CUP's location and building. The facilities are adequate for the needs of the congregation, and the building has been well maintained. The proximity to the high school is a great reminder of the need for our congregation to reach out to the youth and young families of our community.

Second, what do you think are CUP's weaknesses? CUP has a rich history of ministry, but it is currently an aging congregation. The good news is that this weakness is common for many churches, and many churches have effectively addressed this age disparity. The next weakness is the declining attendance and membership. Remember the "good ole days" of Curtis Brown, the Women's Association, and SHINE programs with over 40 kids? Many CUP members too. Remembering the past can be discouraging as congregational life looks different and the numbers aren't what they once were. Along with a declining attendance and membership is a decrease in volunteers. No congregation can keep the same level of programming and events running when there is a significantly smaller group of people to run them. The final weakness relates to church branding/marketing/advertising in the community. The perception is that the community views CUP as the "old" church, as compared to other churches that have younger people or a good mix of ages.

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The third question is, what do you think are CUP's opportunities? This question had a wide range of answers with lots of great ideas. One of the most common answers was outreach to (fill in the blank). The most common area of outreach discussed was Blackhawk High School. Other opportunities included outreach to the neighborhood, young families, and youth. The next opportunity is SHINE, specifically continuing to rebuild the program and connecting SHINE families to the church. If you have ideas for this or would like to volunteer to be a part of SHINE, please talk with Joel. The last opportunity for this summary was increased involvement. Is the church a building that we go to on Sunday mornings, or is the church who we are? The opportunity here is for members to go from church being a place to worship on Sunday mornings to being a people who disciple, fellowship, and serve.

The final question is, what do you think are CUP's threats/barriers/challenges moving forward? As referenced above, one of the primary challenges CUP faces is the ongoing decline that has occurred. Worship services are smaller. There are less resources for programming. Church decline is discouraging and disappointing, but it can also be a source of motivation and holy discontent. The next threat would be cultural factors. Politics, religious views, and other cultural factors have impacted the way the church is viewed by the community and removed the old "if you build it, he will come" approach to church growth. Next, the effects of Covid have been significant across the board. Outreach has been reduced. Some people have become more comfortable staying home on Sundays than going to church. Other people used covid as an excuse to stop attending. The final threat would be an aversion to change. One person described it as "change" rather than change. In other words, it's easier to rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic, calling it change, than to move forward with a more difficult change that makes people uncomfortable.

The final item to discuss when it comes to the SWOT is what was rarely discussed. Out of the four questions, only one person mentioned the word, evangelism. While outreach is emphasized and desired, the next missional step of evangelism seems to not be on the radar. Moving forward, the Vision Team will be reviewing the SWOT to look at ways to move forward in mission as a congregation in light of who we are and who we are trying to reach. As the Vision team completes its work, a pastoral search committee will be formed. This will hopefully occur sometime late this year. Please continue to pray for our congregation and our community as we seek the face of God in how he desires us to move forward.

Blessings,
Pastor Marc

*Pastor Marc will be out of the office on vacation
June 12-18 and away at General Assembly June 19-24.*

June/July Calendar

June 6	6:30p DEACONS 7:00p Vision Team & Worship Com. 7:30p TRUSTEES
June 7	6:00p Family Min Potluck & Praise
June 14	1:00p Game Day Lunch @GVI
June 15	6:00p Thirsty Thursday
June 19	Hall Reserved—Graduation Party
June 22	6:00p Thirsty Thursday
June 26-30	VBS Twists & Turns
June 27	7:00p SESSION
June 29	6:00p Thirsty Thursday
June 30	6:00p VBS Dinner & Movie
July 4	Happy 4th of July
July 6	6:00p Thirsty Thursday
July 12	1:00p Game Day Lunch @GVI
July 13	6:00p Thirsty Thursday
July 20	6:00p Thirsty Thursday
July 27	6:00p Thirsty Thursday



May 24th the Blackhawk High School sponsored their 50th Baccalaureate Service. CUP Church was honored to be represented with Pastor Marc doing the Call to Worship and several youth on the Praise Team. We had two of our Youth participate in the service. It was a special time shared in worship and encouragement.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 26th—June 30th

9am—12pm

PreK—5th Grade Graduates

Register online at

www.cupepc.org

There will be an ALL CHURCH Dinner and Dessert Potluck on Friday, June 30th at 6:00p. Dinner is provided, please bring a dessert to share.

Following dinner there will be a VBS Presentation and a movie to celebrate the week.

Cup Library News

Paula Keefer-Herter, Librarian

We have recently been given a couple of book series' by Christian novelist Dee Henderson, as well as a few other donations that are now processed and added to our shelves.

Here are the titles. By Dee Henderson we have the following: True Devotion, True Valor, True Honor, True Courage, Danger in the Shadows, The Negotiator, The Guardian, The Truth Seeker, The Protector, The Healer, The Rescuer, Unspoken and Jennifer.

We also now have:

The Generosity Ladder by Nelson Searcy

Frequency by Robert Morris

The Explicit Gospel by Matt Chandler

These and many others selections for all ages are available to anyone interested in checking them out. Our library is open to you anytime the church doors are open (unless a meeting is scheduled for the room). If you are interested just remove the card from the back pocket, sign your name and place in the small basket next to the card files on the table against the left wall. Enjoy!

Honoring our High School Grads



BLACKHAWK HIGH SCHOOL

BENJAMIN COX is a 2023 graduate of Blackhawk High School. During his time at Blackhawk, he participated in the Marching Band for three years, Concert Band for four years and Jazz Band for four years. Under the direction of Band Director David Zaccari, Ben participated in Competition Band his 8th grade year, where they were the 2018 PIMBA Champions. Ben enjoyed many of the agriculture classes at Blackhawk, and worked for several years in the Greenhouse. His future plans remain undecided.



REBEKAH MCCANDLESS is a 2023 graduate of Blackhawk High School. While at Blackhawk, Bekah participated in Marching Band for three years, Concert Choir for two years, participated with the stage crew in the Musical Cinderella and was a member of the ensemble in Annie. She was also a member of Fellowship of Christian Students. She attended the BCCTC her Junior & Senior years and graduated with a certificate in Culinary Arts. During her time at the BCCTC, she was a member of the ProStart, Skills USA, and FCCLA teams competing for baking and cake decorating across the State. Bekah entered into full time Mission work for the summer at Big Creek Missions in Kentucky. In the Fall, she plans to return to the area and work in the galleys of the tug boats in Pittsburgh.

KENT RIDER is a 2023 graduate of Blackhawk High School. While at Blackhawk, Kent helped with set production in the school's production of Roger and Hammerstein's Cinderella his Freshman year. He also enjoyed agriculture classes. During his Senior year, he worked in the greenhouse while taking Plant Science. Kent will attend the Community College of Beaver County this Fall where he will major in General Studies.



JOSHUA ZIEGLER is a 2023 graduate of Blackhawk High School. He is a talented musician and vocalist, participating in Marching Band for four years, concert band for four years, jazz band for four years, and concert choir for four years. Josh was a founding member of the Blackhawk Show Choir, participating for two years, where he got to perform at Universal Studios his Senior year. He was also a member of the Tri-M Music Honor Society, where he held leadership positions. Josh participated in the High School Musicals all four years, landing many lead roles. He performed as 'Dmitry' in the school's production of Anastasia his Junior year and as 'Patrick' in Spongebob The Musical his Senior year. Josh will attend Wright State University in the Fall majoring in Musical Theatre.

Honoring our College Grads

PENN WEST CLARION



KATIE SOSNOWSKI is a 2023 of Penn West Clarion University with a Bachelor's in Arts and Entertainment. Katie will be working for Diamond Dance Academy and helping to manage dance competitions.

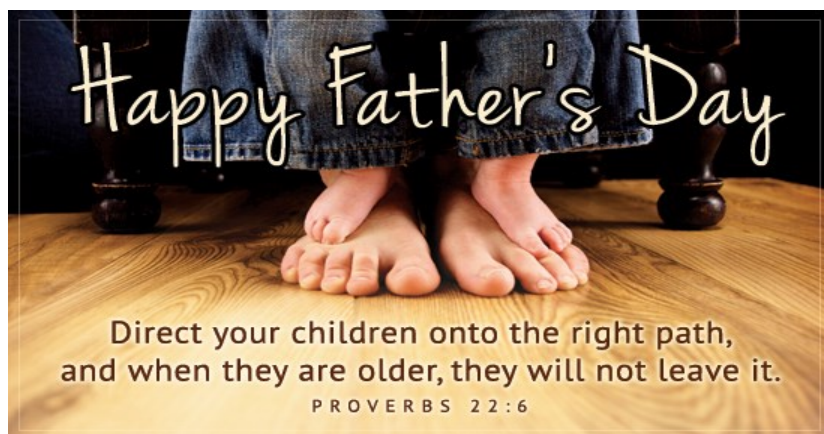
GENEVA COLLEGE



EMMA RIDER is a 2023 graduate of Geneva College with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a minor in Philosophy. She is employed by the New Brighton Public Library as the Special Events Coordinator.



The CUP Church Outreach Team had the wonderful opportunity to participate in Blackhawk High School's Senior Parade Night. Our volunteers handed out free hot dogs, chips and water to the Seniors and their family members after the parade. It was a lovely evening of fun, music, food and encouragement. We even got to cheer on some of our own!



The Family Ministries Committee cordially invites you to a

POTLUCK & PRAISE NIGHT

Wednesday, June 7th at 6:00 pm

Join us for a Potluck Style dinner in fellowship hall followed by an evening of Praise and Prayer in the Sanctuary!!

Please bring a potluck style dish to share!

Schools out for SUMMER!!!

“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever had ears, let them hear.”
Matthew 13:43

Crosscurrent Youth Group Time is ticking quickly! Last month we had our Youth Sunday where the youth lead us in worship. It was yet another amazing spirit filled Sunday. We even got to hear from Bekah who is working at Big Creek Missions this summer! What an exciting time! After youth Sunday came Baccalaureate at Blackhawk High School. This was the 50th year! God is so good!! Now as graduation approached we can't wait to celebrate our graduates! Congrats to Bekah McCandless, Ben Cox, Kent Rider and Josh Ziegler on their graduation from Blackhawk High School.

SHINE See you in the Fall!

Family Ministry Potluck and Praise Night! Join us for dinner and fellowship at 6:00. After which we will join in Worship as we invite the Holy Spirit to work on our hearts and in our community. We will have worship and prayer time. Kids welcome to join us! “A Family that Prays together can watch the Lord move Mountains!”

Mini's Youth Group We will have pop up events through out the summer. Keep an eye out!! Our first Pop up is planned for June 14th. More details coming!

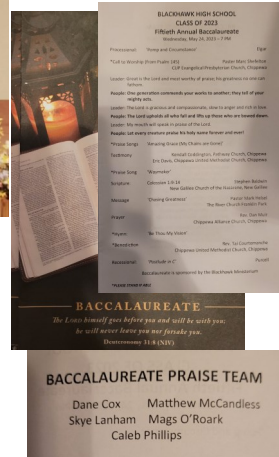
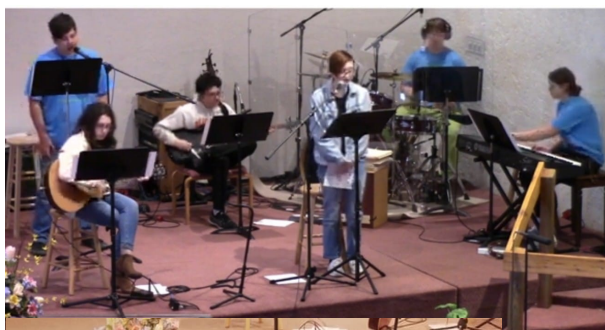
VBS Registration is OPEN!! Seeking helpers, see Ms. Joel for details! We can't wait to share the gospel as we Twist and Turn!! Loads of fun ahead. Please keep VBS and all those who sign up in your prayers!

As always I ask you to please keep all the children and youth in our community and beyond in prayer.

Your sister in Christ,

Joel Cunniff

Director of Children and Youth Ministries



VBS

June 26-30th

