

# Westwood

March / April 2011

## Church of God

### A Way to Ignite Passion



Beginning March 13<sup>th</sup> (the first Sunday of Lent), we will focus on “Igniting Passion” during our worship gatherings each Sunday. This sermon series is based in the words of the Apostle Paul, **“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”** (Philippians 3:10)”



I truly believe that as we come to know more fully the passionate love that led our Lord to the cross and the power that raised him from the dead, our Christian experience is deepened and our passion to live for Him and love like Him is ignited. I can't wait to see how God will use this time to deepen our lives in Christ and fuel our passion for the life He wants to give us! I want to challenge each one of you who is connected with our community of faith to join me (youth and adults) during this season for a “Passion Fast.” This is a commitment to set aside one moment each week (a day, a meal or a familiar activity), to fast from something that will catch your attention (like food, TV, texting, reading time) and cause you to focus on Jesus Christ, who can turn your appetite for the thing you set aside, toward developing hunger (passion) to grow deeper in a relationship with Him and His love for the world in which we live.



Why fast? Fasting is a time-tested, spiritual practice that refocuses our lives on our source and strength in Christ. Too often, we choose things that distract us from the help and strength of Christ, in an attempt to fill the void (hunger) we experience when life gets tough. These distractions keep us from seeing the purpose for which we were created and the abundance that is ours in Christ every day! Fasting helps us to break from the modern addictions that can disrupt and even destroy our lives. Fasting can open us to God's presence and guidance to bring balance to our hectic scattered lives.



**Will you join me in a season of fasting to ignite your passion for Christ?** Look inside for tips on fasting and various ways to fast. I've included some modern options to participate in this ancient discipline of Christian faith.



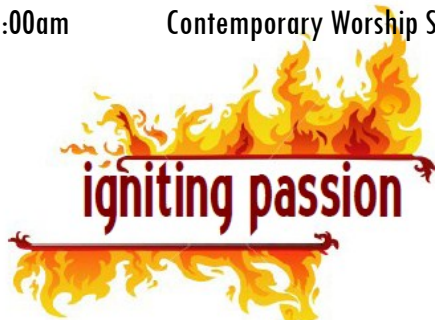
That we might know Him ... passionately!

*Pastor Bill*

# Gather

## Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00am	Traditional Worship Service
9:30am	Hospitality & Fellowship
10:45am	Kids Connection!
11:00am	Contemporary Worship Service



## March & April Sermon Series: "Igniting Passion"

March 13:	The Power of Passion
March 20:	Stepping Up
March 27:	Mending What's Broken
April 3:	Giving Up
April 10:	Slowing Down
April 17:	<i>Palm Sunday:</i> Sacrifice and Healing
April 24:	<i>Easter Sunday:</i> Fired Up!

## Maundy Thursday—April 21st @ 6pm

### *Service of Communion, Servanthood & Sending*

Join others for a unique experience with Jesus, as we rehearse the Last Supper and are sent into Good Friday. Hear Him give you a "new command" to live by as His follower, sing, share in communion others, and follow Him by expressing your love for others through acts of service. Join us as we experience the darkness of Good Friday and are sent out into the world with His love and grace. You will be changed by participating in this ancient, yet modern, experience with our Lord and His disciples. Invite a friend or family member to come with you. Children and youth are welcome!

## Invitations

Printed Invitations for the Igniting Passion Series and Easter will be available at the Information Center. Be on the look out for email versions of these invites to forward to friends and family!

# Connect

## Senior Adult Ministry Happenings

**Friday Morning' Breakfast:** An informal gathering for fun, food and fellowship

- ⇒ Fri., March 11 @ Perkins
- ⇒ Fri., March 25 @ LaRue's
- ⇒ Fri., April 8 @ Liz's Restaurant in Richland
- ⇒ Sat., April 30 @ Old Country Buffet

**Potluck & Program:** Bring a dish or two, and a friend or two and join us for a relaxing lunch and program in the Fellowship Hall.

- ⇒ Wed., April 20 @ Noon

**Hymn Sing:** Join us as we sing the classics of our faith. Light refreshments following, so bring a treat to share!

- ⇒ Sun., April 17 @ 6:00pm

**Park Village Pines Ministry:** Join us once a month at Park Village Pines for a time of encouragement through Fellowship, Prayer & Bible Study.

- ⇒ Tues., March 1, 1:30pm in the Fish Room @ PVP
- ⇒ Tues., April 5, 1:30pm in the Fish Room @ PVP

## Senior Adult Ministry Events & Excursions

**Avoiding Legal Pitfalls in the 21st Century:** Join Attorney Catherine Metzler, J.D., B.S. as she guides participants through a discussion on Medicaid, disability issues, estate planning, probate guardianship, and community resources for seniors. Don't miss this excellent opportunity for adult children and their aging parents to communicate about these vital issues.

- ⇒ Sat., March 5 @ 9:00am

**Essenhaus Trip & Lunch Buffet:** Special Buffet Lunch, self-pay. Deadline to sign-up is Sun., March 13

- ⇒ Thurs., March 17
- ⇒ Vans depart from church @ 9:45am

**Tulip Time Event:** Lights! Camera! Action!

- ⇒ Tickets for lunch & show are \$22
- ⇒ Deadline for PAID registration: Sun., March 20
- ⇒ Payment is required at time of registration
- ⇒ Vans depart from church @ 9:00am
- ⇒ Make checks payable to Westwood COG—50 Plus

# Grow

## Nursery

Sundays from 8:50-10:15am and  
10:45am to 12:15pm

## Kid's Connection!

Sundays @ 10:45 am

### Preschool—5th Grade

Gather for a time of supervised play and organized praise & worship. At 11:15am, you will head to your classrooms for "Connect Class" for a time of hands-on Bible truths.

## VBS—"Pandamania" June 13-17 @ Agape Church

As we begin to prepare for VBS the Children's Ministry Team is asking you to keep your eyes out for stuffed panda bears, paper lanterns (no dragons please), parasols, fans, and lotus flowers. These props (and volunteers) will be needed for this fun week of Bible learning! Mark your calendars now!

## CONNECT Youth Ministry — every Sunday night 4-6 pm

**Thank you,** Pastor Tim and Sherry Tufts for 3 1/2 years of leadership in youth ministry! You have planted many seeds of God's grace and love for Jesus in our students. May God bless you as you prepare for a new season of ministry and service to the Lord. We're glad you are staying around for awhile!!!!

**Youth Ministry Plans :** Pastor Bill and the Youth Ministry Team will be planning youth ministry themes, activities, and events in April for the remainder of the year, in light of the input received at the February "Freeze" retreat. A parents' meeting will be held in early May to share where the ministry will go and the plans for Youth Ministry leadership in the future. We need "all hands on deck" during this interim to assist Pastor Bill and the Youth Ministry Team to provide excellent ministry and outreach opportunities for our youth!

## Michigan Singers: March 6 @ 6pm

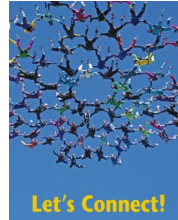
Youth Connect will suspend our normal schedule to support the young people who will come lead us in worship! Bring your parents for this night in the Sanctuary.

## CROSSTraining: March & April Youth Series

CROSSTraining is a learning series for Middle and High School students to stretch and be challenged to follow Christ by walking with Him to the Cross, as we prepare for the celebration of Easter. Sunday nights will be highly energetic, relevant, informative, and very practical. Bring a friend each Sunday night for this series! Dr. Gary Hurt will be a featured leader in March to help us look at several aspects of Jesus' journey to the cross. Various youth ministry team members will share in the teaching, learning, and fun! Don't miss it.

## State Youth Convention May 20-22 @ WMU

\$40 Non-Refundable Deposit Due by March 20th



## Newcomer's Luncheon

Sunday, March 13 @ 12:30pm  
Fellowship Hall

Finding a church home can be like jumping from a plane. If you've taken that initial leap and joined us for worship, we would like to invite you to take the next step. Join us for the Newcomer's Luncheon! Pastors Bill and Diane will help you to connect with our staff and give you some information on our ministries and programs. They'll share with you about who we are, what we believe, and how to become a member. You can call the office to register or leave us a note on your Connection Card during Sunday Worship!  
(Lunch & Childcare provided)

## Baptismal Orientation

Sunday April 10 @ 10:15am

### Pastor Bill's Office

We will baptize those who wish to express their faith in Christ through baptism in worship on Palm Sunday, April 17th. Contact the office to indicate your desire to be baptized.

## Small Group Sign Up April

*Outflow* is a 5-week church-wide growth initiative that incorporates corporate worship and small group experiences, youth and children's ministry, and personal devotional time. Each experience and activity is designed to lead us to embrace God's love deeply and allow that love to



flow out to bless others.

## How You Can Get Involved:

1. **Sign up in April** to be a part of an Outflow group and/or be a part of an Outflow group leader training.
2. **Order your Outflow devotional book in April.** It's a great read!!
3. **Plan now to attend** worship, children and/or youth ministry each weekend in May.
4. **Begin praying** for God to use this series to change hearts, families, our church and community through Outflow at Westwood Church of God.

## Wednesday Night Group Study

7:00 p.m

Pastor Bill continues to lead this study to help participants discover new ways to connect with God in prayer. He is using as an additional resource: "Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home", by Richard Foster. Foster's book adds insight to the scripture by looking at how the ancient church practiced prayer. We will consider new expressions of these ancient ways of prayer for our lives today. Join us for this relevant and interactive study!

## Tips for Fasting

The purpose of fasting is to help the believers focus on their relationship with Christ. Here are some practical things to consider as you take on a fast during Lent:

1. Choose the type of fast that is right for you and your health.
  - A. Fast for one meal each week, if you are a beginner.
  - B. Fast with fluids only for one day a week. Avoid sodas and other caffeinated drinks.
  - C. A full fast is limited to water only. Only those advanced in this spiritual discipline and in good health should take on this fast.
  - D. Persons with medical conditions need to consult a medical professional before choosing to take on a spiritual fast involving food. Everyone who fasts from food should:
    - i. Drink lots of water to stay hydrated.
    - ii. Begin a food fast after breakfast.
    - iii. Minimize caffeine. If you are addicted, don't go "cold turkey!"
    - iv. Don't gorge yourself after a food fast. Re-start with light foods.
    - v. Children younger than 13 yrs. should not be expected to fast from food for an entire day.
  - E. Fast from technology for a day (tv, facebook, texting, email) and let your urge for technology prompt you to focus on Christ!
2. During your fast, read scripture, pray, think about your life in light of God's love and calling in Christ.
3. For more information on fasting, contact Pastor Bill Ferguson

## Ministry Needs

### Music Notes

The CHOIR needs YOU! We are preparing a 30-minute Easter cantata to be given during the 9am service on Easter Sunday. If you could commit to only 7, 1 hour practices, we would love to have you join us for this presentation! Practice CD's and books are available—see Jean Tufts if you have any questions, or contact her at [jeanotuf@juno.com](mailto:jeanotuf@juno.com).

### PJ's Closet Needs

Household Items (dishes, bed linens, towels, kitchen utensil, etc.)  
Toddler and Infant Clothes

## Contact

#### Lead Pastor

Bill Ferguson      207-8472      [bill@wwcog.com](mailto:bill@wwcog.com)

#### Senior Adult Ministries:

Tom Tufts, Sr.      353-0843      [tom@wwcog.com](mailto:tom@wwcog.com)

#### Children's Ministry:

Katie Call      760-1504      [callkatie1@yahoo.com](mailto:callkatie1@yahoo.com)

#### Connections and Involvement:

Diane Tultz      321-1706      [dianetultz@yahoo.com](mailto:dianetultz@yahoo.com)

#### Office Administrator:

Elise Ripmaster      344-0985      [elise@wwcog.com](mailto:elise@wwcog.com)

# Serve

## Kalamazoo Communities in Schools

**MLK:** Thanks to all of you who are so willingly giving of your time to benefit MLK school. We have taken cookies for the staff 3 times so far this year. There are 24 of you who are participating in a pen-pal project with a 3rd grade class. Four people are helping to distribute food packs with two more who are serving as alternates. Two are tutoring individual students once a week. You are a wonderful, loving, caring congregation.

Tutors are still needed. It would involve one hour per week at the school. If you have questions or want to sign up, contact Pastor Diane at [dianetultz@yahoo.com](mailto:dianetultz@yahoo.com) or 321-1706.



**Easter Carnival**  
Saturday, April 23rd  
10am—Noon

On April 23rd, we will reach out to our Westwood neighbors by hosting an Easter Carnival of fun activities for our community.

- ~Bouncers
- ~Face-Painting
- ~Magic
- ~Easter Egg Hunt
- ~Food
- ~And More!!!

**Have you ever egged a house?** We're giving you the opportunity to do this on April 17th!!! In preparation for this all-church outreach event, we need you to "egg" (carry a plastic egg invitation to) the homes in the community around our church. Bring a brown-bag lunch.

There will be many other ways you can help us prepare and facilitate this means of sharing the love of Christ with children and families in our Westwood community. Call the office to get involved, or contact Katie Call ([callkatie1@yahoo.com](mailto:callkatie1@yahoo.com)) to lend a hand. Here are just a few of the many ways to help:

1. **Contribute** plastic eggs (for the invitations AND the egg hunt), individually wrapped pieces of candy and small toys (for the egg hunt) or monetary donations to purchase supplies.
2. Help **Egg Our Neighborhood** on April 17th after the 11am service—plastic egg invitations delivered to every home in the Westwood neighborhood.
3. Help **stuff** invitation eggs and egg-hunt eggs.
4. **Volunteer** to help on the day of the event.
5. **Follow-up Gift Delivery:** Go back out into the neighborhood to make another connection with families that attended our event.

## Upcoming Events

2011 Girlfriends Spring Break Retreat @ Warner Camp      April 29-30  
For More Info: [www.warnercamp.com](http://www.warnercamp.com)

2011 North American Convention in Anderson, IN      June 24-29  
For More Info: [www.chog.org/nac](http://www.chog.org/nac)

**Information Deadline for the May / June Promotional Publication is Wed., April 13**