



Prayer of Thanksgiving: that God and is our life with whom we can have an intimate relationship. **“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.” (Joh 15:1 ESV)**

Please do not forget to pray for all the shut-ins and isolated brothers and sisters in our congregations Mrs. Jack and Clem Campbell (Fredericton) and John Steffes (Caribou, Me), Mr. Ross Bathurst, Phil Ward (Saint John) and others.

Open Hand Food Bank – Moncton - is in need of grocery plastic bags to give out food to those in need. If you are interested in donating your unused grocery bags, you can bring them to church and someone will collect them and bring them over. Those who want to bring food to give to the **Open Food Bank** may do so by bringing to church and giving it to **Michael M.** of the Moncton congregation.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF May 2018

Times of worship services: **Moncton** – 10:30 AM every Sunday.

In Saint John, worship services will be May 13 and 27 at 2:30 PM

Communion- on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

Address: Moncton—70 King St. —Sage building;

Saint John—50 Newport Cres., Portland United church.

Discipleship group Moncton— May 23 in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Vautour. **Topics: Galatians 5 –**

Up coming events: May 6 – potluck at the Vautours – after services;

Potluck in Saint John after services May 27

Prayer update from Rheal H. of the Moncton GCI congregation whose battle with a very aggressive cancer continues.

Prayer update for Gideon Mann K. and his family. This is a pastor from Africa who is associated with GCI. He lives in Northwestern New Brunswick. He has some undiagnosed health problem related to his heart. He went for a blood test and his to receive the results next Monday. They are the parents of four children. His wife is also incapacitated with her back problems and is presently unable to work. His unemployment insurance is terminating at the end of the month. Please pray for their healing and for God's continued provision for them.

Prayer update regarding Josephine and James, a pastor and his wife from Kenya with whom we have been associated for many years is continuing to face challenges feeding the orphans that they look after. They appreciate all the spiritual help, literature and sermons regularly sent to them and your prayers.

Update regarding Bibles: the Bibles that were sent to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya have been delivered. 200 Bibles in their native language were sent to them with contributions from the Surrey GCI head office, the Edmonton GCI congregation and the GCI congregations in New Brunswick.

Please pray also for all those affected by the recent flooding in parts New Brunswick as well as in part of the British Columbia.

Pray that we will see the good works that God has prepared for us in advance so that we can enthusiastically participate in the on-going work He is doing now on this earth in bringing people in relationship with him in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

Please pray, as per Jesus instructions, the disciples prayer, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:9-10) as our world is suffering so much and in need of complete restoration by the King of kings, Jesus. As we are his royal priesthood, let us proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, as we are instructed in 1 Peter 2.

Pray for the world and for all people: we live in a world that does not know the way to peace. Important to pray as we are instructed by the apostle Paul — **“1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,” (1Ti 2:1–3 ESV)**

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ARE WE "EVANGELICALS"?

Posted by GCI Weekly Update on April 25, 2018 under From the President |

Dear Brothers and Sisters,



Joseph and Tammy Tkach

I was talking recently with a member who was wondering where Grace Communion International fits within the larger body of Christ. Noting that GCI is not Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox, they asked, "Does that mean we're Protestant?" I answered yes, and they continued: "Since we're not liberal or fundamentalist Christians, does that mean GCI is evangelical?" Again, my answer was yes, though as I'll point out in this letter, the term "evangelical" is widely misunderstood and misrepresented. Note this comment from Christian scholar and professor Mark Noll:

In the rough and tumble world of American politics, the label [evangelical] is now often used simply for the most active religious supporters of President Donald Trump. By contrast, in the rarified world of professional scholarship, academics now sometimes treat it as a term with so much

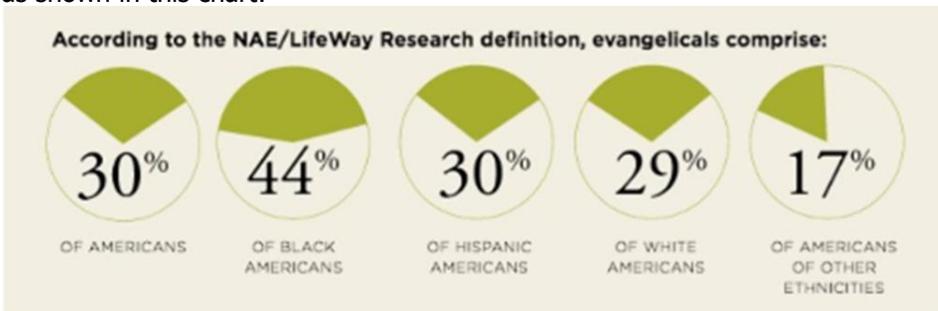
ambiguity, fluidity and imprecision that it cannot meaningfully designate any single group of Christians.

(<https://www.nae.net/evangelical-whats-name/>)

Despite the ambiguity and controversy swirling around the term evangelical, Professor Noll believes that it does have continuing value and should not be abandoned. He concludes: "When used with responsible attention to history and careful focus on generally accepted norms of... definition, [it] can still communicate reality and not just confusion." A related question is this: Who gets to define who and what an evangelical is? Often overlooked in answering that question is that, first and foremost, evangelical is a *theological identifier*. Before it identifies a group of people, it identifies the gospel (the *evangel*) of Jesus. It is first Jesus' gospel, not ours—it is first about him, not about us. Those who rightly call themselves evangelicals are careful to point first to Jesus and his gospel, and then to what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Faithfulness to the gospel is measured by faithfulness to the Bible, whose authors were appointed by Jesus. Central to the Scriptures are the four Gospels authored by the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. As these authors show, Jesus is the gospel—he is the true evangelical!

Sadly, for many in North American society, the term evangelical is defined not by Jesus and his gospel, but by the media and entertainment industry, along with politicians, psychologists, sociologists and historians—people often with little or no understanding of the biblical and theological roots and meaning of the term evangelical. The result is the confusion, controversy and outright misrepresentations that swirl around the term in our culture today.

To add to the problem, there are religious leaders who call themselves evangelicals but, at best, are on the extreme edges of what theologically can rightly be called evangelical. Some of these leaders are hypocrites who, wanting to justify themselves or cover up their unfaithful ways, co-opt the label evangelical. Though these pretenders are rightly criticized, the media often portray evangelicals as a monolithic group that is largely white, privileged, ultra-right-wing, racist and homophobic. The unfortunate result is that all who call themselves evangelical are tarred with the same brush by the media, casting a spell of guilt-by-association on those who, in actuality, rightly bear the name evangelical. The reality is that evangelicals are not a monolithic group—in fact, they are quite diverse, including racially and ethnically, as shown in this chart:



In an article published by the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), Ed Stetzer notes that research on evangelical identity has tended to focus on three measures: behavior, belonging and belief. The article quotes NAE President Leith Anderson who, in weighing up the research, notes that "evangelicals must be defined primarily by their beliefs rather than politics or race." Stetzer then offers this:



Dr. Ed Stetzer

In the hopes of crafting a consensus definition of core evangelical beliefs, we evaluated the statements of a diverse group of sociologists, theologians and evangelical leaders. In weighing the insights of these leaders, LifeWay Research developed a definition of evangelical belief around strong agreement with these four statements:

The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.

It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.

Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

(<https://www.nae.net/defining-evangelicals-research/>)

GCI agrees with these statements, though we would locate them within the larger theological context of our whole Statement of Beliefs. Our agreement is reflected by our membership in the National Association of Evangelicals (in the U.S.), the World Evangelical Alliance, the Evangelical Alliance (in the UK and Philippines) and similar organizations elsewhere.

The beliefs and ideals that characterize these evangelical organizations are addressed in *The Capetown Commitment*, (http://www.worldevangelicals.org/pdf/2011_THE_CAPE_TOWN_COMMITMENT.pdf) an 80-page document that resulted from deliberations at the Third Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization (<https://www.lausanne.org/gatherings/congress/cape-town-2010-3>). If you'd like to learn more about what it means to be evangelical, I highly recommend that you read this document.



Sue and Don Lawson

As a denomination, churches and individuals, we are healthy when we are living out our biblically based, evangelical beliefs. With that in mind, I close with the admirable example of one of our retired pastors, Don Lawson. For many years Don served GCI-USA as a pastor then as a district superintendent. Following retirement, Don experienced severe health problems, had to be hospitalized, then spent time rehabilitating in an assisted-care facility. Don sent me a note recently, letting me know he had returned home. His note included this:

About a month ago, the nurse in charge of memory care, where [my wife] Sue lives, asked if I would do a church service each Sunday for the Alzheimer's patients in her ward. I agreed, and have spoken to them for the last three weeks. What a challenge for an 81-year-old, but I enjoyed it. We have had

an average of 15 attending and I will continue to help them as long as I am able. My purpose is to try to find a level of teaching they might understand. I begin with *He knows my name*. Second: *Jesus loves me this I know* (and some sang along with me). Third: *What is Jesus doing now?* (I talked about a place of eternal joy and happiness, with no sorrow or tears).

That's what being an evangelical looks like, and that's the gospel evangelicals love to share!

Gospel blessings to you all,

Joseph Tkach

PS: Is the evangelical movement in the U.S. and elsewhere perfect? Of course not, and its leaders know that. On Monday and Tuesday of this week, a denominationally, racially, ethnically and politically diverse group of 50 prominent evangelical leaders met at Wheaton College, west of Chicago. Their purpose was to discuss the current condition of the evangelical movement in the U.S. According to Skye Jethani, a meeting participant,

We gathered to have an honest, and at times uncomfortable, conversation about the current state of American evangelicalism. The focus of the dialogue was not the [U.S.] President or any current policy matters. The focus was how to have a consistent Christian public witness that affirms the dignity of all people as created in the image of God. We explored our history and affirmed when evangelicals did this well, and when necessary we lamented when we have not. There were extended times of prayer, confession, repentance and open discussion. (From a post on Skye Jethani's Facebook page, 4/20/2018)

For an additional report on this meeting, <https://www.christianpost.com/news/evangelical-leaders-wheaton-college-meeting-was-not-anti-trump-organizer-clarifies-223070/>

GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—www.gci.org, www.worshiphim.ca,

www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton; <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKazyWhmKMDZy69vJcFfPg>. For a wealth of

helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. *Contact Information:*

Pastor's contact information: email—evautour47@outlook.com