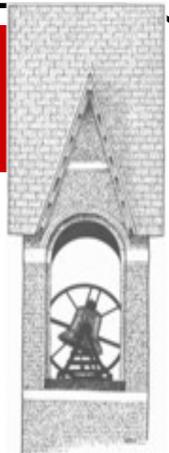


NOVEMBER 2020

THE BELLTOWER

1ST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KANKAKEE

Karen's Korner



November is already upon us. It sure seems like the months are just flying by. Even with the Pandemic and being pretty much stuck at home, time sure has been flying by.

Thanksgiving isn't going to be the normal scene for many of us. With the state and counties being high for the Covid-19, we are being asked to only gather in a group of no more than 6. Usually this is the time of year that my family celebrates Thanksmas. It is a combination of Thanksgiving and Christmas that we have been doing for many years. My twin lives

in Ohio, and when she was working it was hard for her to get time off for both holidays. It was easier for her to take a long weekend around Thanksgiving. This year we won't be able to celebrate our Thanksmas. I am thankful to God that my family has remained safe and healthy, so if celebrating the holidays without the large family gather keeps us healthy, this is what we will do.

I know that this is the time for celebrating family and friends that are in our lives, but we need to remain vigilante on social distancing, gathering in groups no larger than 6 people and wearing our masks wherever and whenever we are in public. Please stay safe this Thanksgiving.

On Tuesday November 24 we will be celebrating Thanksgiving with a Thanksgiving Service; "THANK YOU, Lord, For People, Places, and Things." Service will begin at 4:00 pm. Please join me in this celebration service.

God Bless,
Pastor Karen

Staff

Karen Williams, CP,
Interim Pastor &
Moderator

Paul Johnson,
Director of Music,
Office and Building
Manager

Luis Aguilar
Maintenance



New Landscape Feature Nears Completion!



As of Saturday Oct. 31st, the new landscape feature separating our parking lot from the alley is 90% completed..

September 24th **Work began** on removing the old landscape feature separat-

ing the west side of our parking lot from the alley. The existing structure of rotting railroad timbers was literally falling apart. A few years ago, the middle of the feature had small trees, but they were in really bad shape so they were removed. All that remained were unattractive bushes that were not in the best of health.

So rather than keep the bushes, the decision was made to completely gut the area and create something fresh and new.

The concept was a combination of ideas from Bernadette, Paul, and Paul's cousin who is a professional landscape designer. We decided to replace the 28 ft. by 4 ft. area with black plastic landscape timbers. The black color would look good next to the parking lot, and the timbers, which are made of 97% recycled materials, will never rot like a wood timber will.



Pastor Luis struggles to pry railroad tie loose

...New Landscape Feature continued..



Bonaficio rests a minute before tackling the other ewe.

were removed several year ago (They were very sickly).

Between the railroad ties and bushes, there was a great deal of debris to be picked up. Pastor Luis suggested I call the city and ask them if they would do it. I had not been able to get a waste disposal company to do this because of the creosote in the ties. The city saved us \$350, which we were able to use to purchase additional timbers that were needed. What was left was a large pile of dirt. Now the real fun began!

We were VERY fortunate to have Pastor Luis and Bonaficio of Juan 3:16 provide the manual labor as a mission of their church. It was a LOT of work!

They viewed the work as a service to both of our churches. The members of Juan 3:16 weren't exactly thrilled with the state of the structure either.

First, the timbers needed to be removed. Using a crowbar and a lot of force, they eventually gave way.

The next task was to remove the existing ewe bushes. This proved to be far more difficult than they had anticipated. The root structures were embedded deep into the ground. There were also some tree roots left over from the trees that



You can see how big the root system was on this ewe

The biggest issue, was making the feature level both horizontally, and vertically.

After blocking out the area with sticks and string, they prepared the dirt. The big problem was that they feature was not level on any of the sides. The north end of the area was 8 inches higher than the south end, and the alley side was deeper than the parking lot side. This presented quite a challenge. It meant that on the alley side 11 rows of timbers would be needed (2 are hidden in the dirt) and 7 rows on the parking lot side (1 row hidden). This was the only way the feature would be level. Their extra care paid off! When they finished, the structure, it was completely level all the way around,



Pastor Luis & Bonaficio get ready to dig up remaining dirt

...New Landscape Feature continued..



Pastor Luis carries away a railroad tie.

Before they started laying the new timbers, they noticed that none of the timbers were exactly 8 ft, and the ends were not level. So in order to have the timbers lay properly and connect to each other evenly, they shaved off an inch or two off every timber.

With a length of 28 ft, 3 & 1/2 timbers were used on each row on both sides of the feature.

The sides are 4 ft. long. This means that the feature is composed of



Bonaficio works on a tree root

91 timbers, which adds up to 728 ft. The timbers are held together with a metal plate 6 in. long, and rust proof screws. The corners are

held together with brackets placed on the inside of the feature.

The timbers were also not straight horizontally.

To fix this wood sticks were driven deep into the ground on the inside of the feature, and long rust proof screws were used to pull in the uneven areas. There are slight variations in the finished design, but that was intentional to give it more of a 3D effect.

The last thing to do on the inside was to put down landscaping mesh all around the sides inside the feature. This will prevent dirt or water from seeping through the sides.



There was a great deal of debris from the old feature.

...New Landscape Feature continued..

Page 5

Next the bushes were planted. The existing dirt was very tired looking, and most likely not full of many nutrients, so special tree and shrub soil was put in below and all the way around each bush to help ensure their growth.

The last thing to do, with an expected completion date of Oct. 8th, is to install charcoal grey tiles in the space between the timbers and the parking lot. Along with some concrete, this will serve three purposes. First it will look nice; the tiles will compliment the timbers color wise.



The area is plotted out and ready to lay timbers

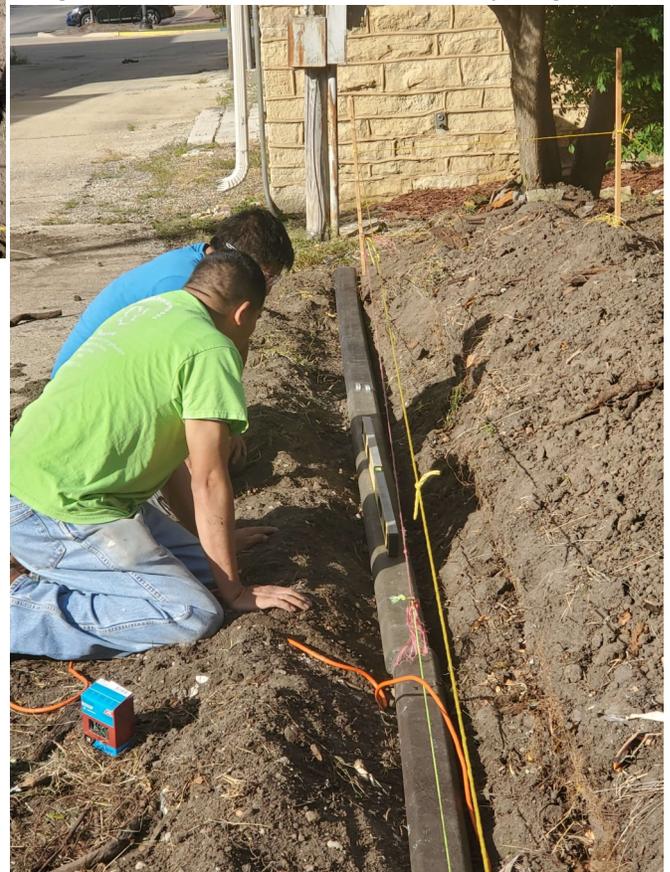
Secondly, the tiles will give people a clean (as opposed to dirt) space to walk in. Thirdly by using concrete, weeds are far less likely to grow.



Bonafcio and Luis carefully lay and connect a timber

We as a church owe a great debt of gratitude to Pastor Luis and Bonafcio. Bonafcio gave up his day off for four weeks in a row to work on the project, and both he and Pastor Luis were there other times during the week as they were able to. All together, I figured they each put in about 40 hours of work.

Because of this, and the great job they did, Session gave them an honorarium as a way of saying thank you in a tangible manner. Although they both had agreed to volunteer their time, and were happy to do so, they were grateful for the gift. If we would have had an outside contractor do the job it would have been cost prohibitive.



Bonafcio and Luis double check to make sure it's level

...New Landscape Feature continued..



Half of the timbers are laid...looking good so far

Although the bushes look kind of scraggly at the present time, (they looked SO much bigger in the pots), in about two years they should look



You can see the corner brackets and the landscape mesh



The completed feature!

I was able to spend some time with both of these men over a couple of meals and their passion for ministry and love of God was abundant. Hearing some of their stories left me with no words to say. Thank you so much Luis and Bonaficio for doing all of the manual labor to create the new feature!!!!

Perhaps we will have them come one Sunday to a service and thank them in person as a congregation.

much better and fuller, like the pictures on the next page.

The concept for the design is a shorter height on the sides, and taller height in the middle. On the outside on each end, is a PYGMY CRIMSON, or Japanes Barberry bush. These grow in a mounding pattern (see next page) and will give the feature a kind of bookend look. Next to those, on either side, are ROYAL BURGUNDY Barberry's. that also grow in a mounding pattern. Finally, in the middle are five TOSCANA Barberry's. These grow upwards, in the form of the letter V. These are the same variety that are planted under the church sign along the alley. Those were planted about two years ago and are looking great, as you can see from the picture on the next page.

So all of the bushes are varieties of red. However, depending on the season, the leaves change color.

...New Landscape Feature continued..

The outsides are crimson, next to those burgundy, and the inside Toscana are red wine in color.

To the right is a full grown PYGMY CRIMSON Barberry bush. They are dark red foliage in prime form , along with a profusion of small yellow flowers in the spring. Purple berries follow the flowers, turning red in the winter.

Below is a full grown ROYAL BURGUNDY Barberry bush. They are a mounded bush 2 to 3 feet tall and almost 4 feet across. The small, rounded leaves begin the year a rich burgundy color, and hold it all summer, gradually becoming red-black by fall. Yellow spring flowers and red winter berries on the bare branches



Above: A picture of a full grown PYGMY CRIMSON



A full grown ROYAL BURGUNDY

Finally, in the middle, are five TOSCANA Barberry bushes. They have a large showy foliage that emerges red in spring with a fine, bright yellow margin. The margin eventually fades through summer, but the foliage remains red. The red color darkens in autumn, taking on burgundy tones. This barberry forms an upright shrub with arching branches. The picture below is two of the three Toscana Barberry's planted below the church sign by the alley.

So the new landscape feature will provide a variety of colors throughout the seasons with its three varieties of Barberry bushes.

To top off the feature, red mulch was applied. This helps keep moisture in the soil, and just looks nice. It also adds another shade of red to the feature.

Within a few years, the feature should provide a full, soft barrier between the parking lot and the alley, and provide color to the parking lot area.

Paul



Full grown TOSCANA bushes

Like us on Facebook



First Presbyterian Church, Kankakee

First Presbyterian Church
371 E. Court St
Kankakee IL 60901

E-mail: office@firstpreskankakee.org

WWW.FIRSTPRESKANKAKEE.ORG

November Birthdays

4th—Evan Kosyla

5th—Alexis Young

**Adult Bible Study with
David Ferguson at
9:45am. Every Sunday**

**Thanksgiving service
November 24th at 4 pm**

