

California Road Missionary Church Newsletter

February 2018

By now, most have recovered from the peak season of gatherings when one celebration seems to flow into another, culminating with reflection on the last twelve months (plus) while also looking to those ahead. Let's pause to see God's handiwork. Perhaps the Lord's fingerprints are all over big events that are evident to many. On the flip-side, let's also be careful to recognize the less obvious . . . the subtle ways God has woven together people and places to accomplish His good and redemptive work.

My mind was drawn to such reflection after a recent pastor's meeting with other E3 group leaders. These E3 groups are small groups of pastors in our district that meet each month to encourage and pray for one another. One of the other leaders meets with a group of retired pastors, and he shared about the incredible wealth of wisdom and knowledge that's present in his monthly gatherings. As he sets about building connections between these heroes of the faith and ministry students from Bethel, I couldn't help but be reminded of similar role models in my life.

Among my personal heroes of the faith are my parents who faithfully took me to church to help me understand the importance that a church family has in our walk with the Lord. God doesn't intend us to walk alone in our journey with Him, and I'm so grateful for His gracious provision of our spiritual brothers and sisters who encourage and challenge us. My parents also modeled what it means to be involved in ministry, to love people wherever they are in life and to show them the hope of Jesus Christ. Their ministry of God's Word and their lifestyle did so much to shape my personal relationship with the Lord. I'm so grateful for their gift.

People like Dora Lombard, Pleasant Hill's church pianist, probably never realized how the smile on her face, while doing her part to lead our church family in worship, effectively pointed people in the pews to Jesus Christ. I'm so grateful for Dora's gift of servanthood through her music ministry.

Leon Graham, a farmer who was also part of our Pleasant Hill Missionary Church family, was another personal hero of the faith. Leon was the Sunday school teacher for the boy's Jr. High class. We met in a small room upstairs, and even though I can't tell you the content of any of his lessons, I do know that he loved us and showed us Jesus in his life. When Leon passed away, I remember counting it a privilege to help my dad manage the burial process since he not only officiated Leon's funeral, but he also dug the grave and filled it in afterwards. I'm thankful for the gift of Leon's example of Jesus Christ.

While at our last District Prayer Retreat at Camp Amigo, I was in a small group praying when Paul Metzger prayed, I was moved to tears, because he sounded just like his dear little mother, Lola. I know that memory came from times when the kids would be with the adults for Wednesday night prayer meeting. I never thought about how someone like that had an influence on my spiritual formation, but I'm so grateful for that gift.

So, we've come through the season of gift-giving, reflection, and now we're looking ahead. As we're still at the beginning of this new year, and especially as we begin the Lenten season on February 14th, let's consider disciplines we might embrace that will move us towards maturity in our relationship with Jesus Christ. This might include ministry of prayer, shared time with a friend, offering a word of encouragement or a note of thanks. The possibilities are endless, so let's seek the Lord's direction, allowing Him to shape mind and moments, weaving together a testimony of His goodness, faithfulness, and redemptive power in our lives.

In His service,
Pastor Bud

Let's Learn...

In October of 2017, we began focusing our attention on “spiritual gifts” in this portion of the newsletter. We plan to resume that in coming months, but we’re pausing that exploration this month to draw your attention to the coming Lenten Season which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and ends on Easter. During the Lenten Season, we like to encourage our church family to join other followers of Christ around the world for a 40-day period of fasting (breaking from the fast on Sundays). This represents the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness just before beginning his ministry of sharing the good news of the kingdom of heaven.

The purpose of fasting is to have more time and “focus-ability” as we seek the heart of God. Removing distractions helps us listen to the Holy Spirit’s prompt, making this a time to recognize that God is enough to meet each of our needs.

David Nasser wrote the book *A Call to Die*. He outlines a 40-day journey of fasting from the world and feasting on God. It’s not an easy read, but it’s definitely a useful tool for anyone that’s interested in yielding unreservedly to the will and voice of God.

We’d like to encourage you to consider working through this book on your own. Here’s a bit from the introduction of the book: “*A Call to Die* is designed to help us find the consistency to explore God’s Word daily and find out what he is specifically calling us to do. For forty days we will memorize scripture and marinate our minds with God’s Word. We will write down what God is saying to us, and we will spend time reflecting on who God is and how he wants to transform our lives.”



Of course, there are many other tools and disciplines available to make Lent an intentional season of spiritual growth. This book is just one tool. If it doesn’t seem to fit your need, but you’d like some help, we’re happy to connect and help you get what you need.

Lenten Season Highlights:

- **Lenten Devotionals will be sent to anyone on our Prayer Chain.**
- ***A Call to Die* by David Nasser can be ordered through Amazon. If you’re unable to get this on your own, but you’d appreciate having this tool, please contact any of our staff.**
- **We’re planning to hold an Ash Wednesday service for everyone on February 14th at 7pm. Nursery care will be provided.**
- **“Stations of the Cross” color sheets will be available in the office foyer for you to take home or to color during available time at church. We began this last year, but since the project wasn’t completed, we plan to pick up where we left off. We’ll plan to use them at some point this Lenten Season**
- **Maundy Thursday is on March 29**
- **Good Friday is on March 30**
- **Easter celebration is April 1**
- **Order forms for Spring flowers will be available soon. This is a wonderful addition to our Easter morning celebration.**

Young Adult Fellowship

Young adults are invited to enjoy lunch and fellowship together **each Sunday afternoon** following the worship service. This month’s schedule:

- **February 4:** All young adults are invited to Pastor Bud & Cris’ house for pizza.
- **February 11, 18, 25:** Tim and Sue are hosting the younger group (college students and graduates), and PB&C are hosting the older group (college graduates and young couples and families).

Please remember that young adults are welcome to join either gathering.

Euchre Night

Join us at Dennis and Penny Schmucker’s house on **Friday, February 2** at 6:30pm for an evening of Euchre fun. *Please note that the new start time is 6:30 pm to allow people time to get snacks before the games begin at 7.* Please bring a snack to share and let Schmuckers know if you plan attend. New players are always welcome!



JOY Group

JOY Group will meet on **Wednesday, February 21** at noon for food and a time of fellowship. Please bring a dish to share, and come enjoy the time together!



Thank You . . . What a blessing to receive your Christmas gift to us! We sincerely thank you for your thoughtful generosity and for your help as we begin saving for our next travel opportunity to see our Kiwis. It’s always

intimidating to collect the chunk of change required to get there, so we want you to understand how helpful you are in this saving stage. Thank you! We love and appreciate you very much, and we are so very grateful for the privilege of serving the Lord with each of you. May the Lord bless you for your kindness to us. Lovingly, PB&C

Directory Updates

A couple reminders . . . 1) IF you do not yet have your own directory, please contact Cris to receive yours; 2) If you haven't filled out your red information (half) sheet to have a directory page created, we're hoping you'll do so. This is an extremely valuable tool for matching faces to names and keeping up-to-date

Youth Events

Check out the activities that the youth are hosting this month:

- **Discover Conference:** February 9-11
- **Youth Valentine's Banquet:** Tickets for the February 17th 6:30pm banquet can be purchased at a table in the foyer. Youth should be aware of the rehearsal schedule.

Feel free to ask Aaron Grosse if you have any questions or would like more information about youth ministry.



Ladies Winter Retreat

The Missionary Church North Central District presents "Be a Light" Ladies Winter Retreat, February 23-25, with 1, 2 or 3-day options. This is at the Farmstead Inn & Conference Center in Shipshewana. Registration forms are available at the Welcome Center, but here's a bit of information you might find helpful:

- It's up to you to make your own room reservation and payment for lodging by calling: Farmstead Inn & Conf. Center: 260.768.4595. when making your reservation, let them know you are with North Central District Women.
- **Room reservations must be made by February 9th to guarantee the group rate.**
- A classic room is \$99 plus tax per night for two adults.
- There's also a cost for the Retreat ranging from \$10 to \$50, determined by the length of time you stay.
- Speakers are some of NCD Pastor's wives: Christine Dickinson, Cris Walterhouse, Johanna Flemming, Lynne Andrews, Missy Bayer
- Workshops: Try your hand at making . . . Clay Beads, Bead Bracelets, Lotion & Sugar Scrub; Tutus for Kids, Doodle Art/Adult Coloring; Smartphone tips & tricks; Manicures
- Book Table: You can donate books to be sold for missions. You can also donate Christian DVDs and CDs.
- If you have any questions, speak to Ann Werner.



Weekly Resources

We're so thankful for the provision of **resources** to share with you each week. Chuck & Sue Books do the hauling . . . THANK YOU! The tables in the foyer provide a sampling of what's available with more in our "DC" (Deacon Closet). Please visit that room (last on the left before entering the gym) to get more of what you can use! Recently, we've become aware that a truck driver with a CDL is needed to help move even more abundance from South Bend to "God's Closet" in Wakarusa. A truck is available, but another driver is a must. If you have questions or a driver-source, see Sue Books.



RETA Fundraiser

Tickets are available for RETA's March 8th fund raiser. The cost is \$30/each and will, again, be held at Northern IN Event Center beginning at 5:30pm. The latest update is that the only seating left will have video feed. Davey Blackburn is the keynote speaker.



Volunteer Opportunities & Descriptions

There are many opportunities for you, our church family, to serve that can lighten the load for the too few in our midst that have shouldered various responsibilities. There's more than listed on the form available at the Welcome Center, but the list is a good place to start. Please consider ways you might come along-side by helping with any of the noted tasks. Please fill out the form by checking areas of interest (including preference by number, if it matters) and return it to the church office (in the offering plate, put it in Cris' Office Mailbox, or hand it to any staff). Our team of Volunteer Coordinators (Janice Bridges, Linda Hatfield, and Cris Walterhouse) will follow through to match volunteers with needs. Thank you for your partnership in ministry! You're needed, and you're a great blessing!