



**The Evangelical Protestant**  
**The Magazine of the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church**  
“His message, His ministry, to His world”

**BREAKING NEWS!**  
**THE SAVIOR IS BORN!**  
**HE IS BORN IN A MANGER!**



Who We Are

2



Bishops Desk

3



Do You Want To Be Healed?

5



Fully Present

11



Bishop Church Ministries

10



Clarendon Pub Church

12



Venture International

14



It Is Not Well With My Soul

15



The Remarkable Billy Graham 16



No, Christmas Did Not take  
the Place of a Pagan Holiday 19



News From the Front 21



Chaplains 25



Bad News 26



Good News 27



A Teaching Job 29



The Back Page 30





Evangelical Protestant Church (GCEPC)® Inc.,

Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church (LEPC)®,

# We Believe

**1. The Holy Scriptures**, in the original tongues, is the inspired and inerrant word of God. (Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16,17)

**2. There is one God**, eternal and self-existent, Creator and Ruler of the universe, and manifested through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (John 1:18, Matthew 3:16-17) We are Trinitarian.

**3. Jesus Christ** is truly divine and truly human having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. (Matt.1: 18)

**4. Jesus Christ** died on the cross and shed His blood as a Sacrifice

for our sins; He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. (1 John 2:2)

**5. Humankind** was created in the image of God, but fell into sin causing separation from God. (Gen. 3:1-24)

**6. Salvation** has been provided through Jesus Christ for all; and those who repent and believe on Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life and become the children of God. (John 1:10)

**7. Water baptism** identifies us with the death and burial of Christ and that we should arise to

walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19-20)

**8. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit** to glorify Christ, to convict of sin, to enable the believer to live a godly life, and to empower the Church to carry the gospel into all the world. (Matthew 12:31, Acts 1:8.)

**9. In the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ** for His Church. (Matthew 24:30, Rev 1:7)

**10. In the bodily resurrection** of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and everlasting separation from God of all those who reject Jesus Christ. (John 1:10-13, Rev 20:11-15)

*GCEPC "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2: 8*

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## The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

AMEN.

The Evangelical Protestant Journal "Kirchenbote" (Church Messenger) was established in 1885,

Gustav Schmidt became editor. In 1917, the German Evangelical churches in the Pittsburgh area began publication of a monthly entitled The Evangelical Protestant. (Archives Smithfield UCC)

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Editor Rev. Steve Bacon

# Bishop's Desk



Hello Everyone!

Can you believe it? The year 2017 is creeping slowly up on us. I'm looking out of my office window at the multicolored tree leaves that go up and down the street. It's fall. The sky is a clear, pristine blue. The sun is shining. I am glad fall is here but too quickly we will have winter. Next week is Thanksgiving. I did not realize that until I looked at a calendar last night. Like most of you, I have been busy. I want to suggest for all of us that we be sure to stop

long enough to appreciate the people who we love and hold so dear as well as the beauty of God's nature around us as well. I hope that you are checking in with Facebook to see what is going on in the EPC GCEPC/LEPC and also to read the short teachings and commentaries that I post regularly if not daily. We have a Facebook page for the faith community of the EPC GCEPC/LEPC. We also have a page for our Chaplaincy and I have my own page as well.

*My greatest desire for all of our ministers is that they would have a close walk with Our Lord, learning His ways, hearing His voice, knowing Him.*

From my Facebook page "If you kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, when you need some eggs, you won't have any. Take care of, value, relationships that are golden." This is a reminder to take care of the relationships that are highly valued and important to you. Relationships have to be cared for and maintained. If they are not when a day comes that they are needed they may not be there for you. Don't make the mistake of taking people for granted. Show appreciation and care in a way that will be meaningful to them. Time goes by very fast and slips away before we know it.



In this issue of the Evangelical Protestant we are featuring web pages and Facebook pages of some of our ministers. If you do not have a web page, Facebook page or blog, you are missing an opportunity to minister to the world from the comfort of your own office or home. I have made friends with people and learned about ministers and established prayer relationships with people from all over the world through social media. Social media is not going away. There will be new and better means of communicating being developed. You Tube is another means of getting the gospel out then there is Periscope and the teaching tools of Facebook. Many ministries still use TV and radio for ministry "People in the know are telling us that there will soon be a means of communicating that will allow the gospel to go around the world in seconds without television even into the deepest villages of remote countries." God will provide whatever is needed to make the gospel accessible for all to hear of His Son, Jesus and His Kingdom.

*God desires his people the called out ones, the church, to recover the lost art of hearing*

I pray that as we move once again toward the holidays and the Holy Days that we will renew our commitment to Christ and the spreading of His Gospel as well as to one another as co-laborers in the fields of the Lord. Enjoy this issue of our magazine. A big thank you to our Editor, Pastor Steve Bacon, for a job well done as always. Help make this magazine even more interesting by being in it yourself next issue! God's peace.

*Bishop Nancy Drew*

## Social Media and The Church



# DO YOU WANT TO BE HEALED?

Bishop David Church

Taken from a sermon I preached at Victory Outreach Church in Cleveland, OH



Bishop Dr. David A. Church  
Director of Missions

To reach the lost and bring them into the Kingdom of God requires that we return to *God's way* of building the Church, discarding man's methods with those given us by Jesus Christ who said "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

John 5:2-9

“Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. 3In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. 4For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. 5One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” 7The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” 8Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” 9And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath.”

Bethesda, the name of the pool, is derived from the Aramaic language according to the passage, meaning either house of mercy or house of grace. However, in both Hebrew and Aramaic the word could also mean 'shame, disgrace' since the pool was seen as a place of disgrace due to the presence of so many invalids, and as a place of grace because of the granting of healings. Bethesda is akin to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, in southern France, and to the shrine at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, having many thousands of crutches laying along its walls where people have been healed. Many thousands make the pilgrimage annually in order to receive the blessing of healing by the Blessed Virgin whose apparition was previously seen at these two locations. At the Pool of Bethesda it was widely believed that once a year an angel came and stirred up the waters, and whoever entered the pool first was allegedly healed.

In the story, John describes for us the busy scene. In the five colonnades (or porches in some translations) surrounding the pool lay a great multitude of invalids. The word multitude described very large numbers of people, as it was the same word the Gospels used to describe the five thousand men fed by Jesus miraculously. Imagine wall to wall people lying there, all suffering from some malady, injury, or birth defect and unable to rise from their beds without help in order to live a normal life. They had no hope, except that perhaps they could reach the water first when the angel stirred the water as was the common belief. There must have been much conflict and cursing as each attempted to gain the advantage in order to be first. The best place was the water's edge, allowing them to simply roll into it. But space was limited. John picked just one man out in his story. A man whom he described as being an invalid for thirty eight years lay there, hopelessly watching the scene, already resigned to knowing it would not be him entering the pool ahead of everyone else. This is the scene where we see the Lord Jesus stepping into in the story, and this man is the only one John records of Jesus confronting personally out of them all. Jesus was led there by the Holy Spirit for the sole purpose of healing this man. This meeting was to be “one on one” as was His meeting with the woman at the well in Samaria.

We all are, or were, a part of this great multitude of the invalids, the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed people that Jesus now desires to confront. We were each born already dying from the fatal heart disease which we all have suffered since our conception, SIN. Apart from the grace of God we are blind to our situations, to our conditions, to our sin, and also to our need for deliverance and salvation from the chains binding us. The Devil blinds us from seeing the Truth and keeps us in the state of blindness continuously. We are all also lame, being emotionally and mentally crippled, possibly by our upbringing, or by addictions and our insecurities, our mind being completely unable to function as God had originally designed it. We were unable to understand the things of the Spirit because of sin, or to walk on the path that God has set before mankind in His Word. Some may find they are paralyzed by the fear of withdrawing from a drug habit, or alcoholism, fearful of looking weak to our friends because of our pride, fearing to let others see the real us hiding under the façades we project. We find ourselves too paralyzed to act, unable to do the very things we want or ought to do. We are also too afraid of accepting responsibility for our actions and our lives, some because if we are healed we will be expected to work for our own living instead of having others care for us and supply our needs. All of this is rooted in our terminal heart disease that strikes all humanity, our sin natures. Our hearts are idol factories churning out substitutes for the Living God, we're self-willed, selfish, hardened, and full of unbelief and we are completely closed to the things of God unless He performs a heart

# DO YOU WANT TO BE HEALED?

Bishop David Church

*(Continued from page 5)*

transplant as prophesied in by the prophet in Ezekiel 36:26.

*"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them."*

*"Do you want to be healed?"* Jesus asks, of the invalid first but also of us, asking for a truthful answer from the core of our being instead of just telling Him what we think He wants to hear.

There are many people today who do not really want to be healed. They do not want to receive God's help for their problems. They do not desire to be helped up or relieved of their weaknesses. They love their weaknesses, their helplessness. They are always craving attention from others, wallowing in their helplessness, their supposed inability to do the anything. They always refuse to take responsibility for their own lives, justifying themselves because they have anxieties in life or an inability to focus. People will turn their backs on the only way of deliverance that they know would work because they did not really want to be healed. They would lose their comfortable position near "the pool" where they can lay and have people take care of them. Friends may not want to hang out with us if we are delivered by Jesus, they themselves also loving to wallow in the misery of their addictions and pretending to have a good time. That's the deceptive nature of drug and alcohol abuse. If we get saved our families will want nothing to do with us, especially if they too are bound by the same chains of drug addiction and shame. When Jesus asks you *"Do you want to be healed?"* you will have to respond to Him. If you answer Him "Not yet, I'm not ready" or with "No, I don't want to be healed" you are honest, but then there is nothing more for you from God. You may as well turn off your mind and not consider this any longer. You must first turn to Jesus, to repent, before He heals.

In John 5:7 the sick man answered him saying *"Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me."*

In other words he says "Yes, I want to be healed, but I cannot. I've tried, I've done everything I know how to but I'm far too crippled. I want to get into that water, I want to be healed, but I lack the strength to enter the water myself, and I've no one here to help me. I've given up. I have no hope. So I'm forced to remain in my condition." An excuse, a justification to stay where you are. Many people hearing or reading this are possibly like that. They may be Christians who have become backslidden. They have given up on their situation, refusing to believe that there is any hope that their conditions and situations can change. They may be a drug addict living without any hope of being free of their addiction. They may be an alcoholic that cannot face the day without drinking several drinks first, constantly feeling remorse for their drinking because they know they are in sin. They are trapped in a perpetual cycle of sinning and repenting over and over, coming to the altar weekly or more often, asking God's forgiveness for the same sin they cannot or will not shake. They can visualize no way out from a human viewpoint, so they have resigned themselves to being weak, failing and impotent Christians for the rest of their lives. Settling for less than even second best or worse. They are exactly where the Devil wants them to be, without any spiritual power or having a testimony of God's healing grace upon their lives. Broken lives, broken families, and dreams.

It is amazing to me just how many people casually feel they are in control of their drinking without realizing that it really has control of them. Recreational drug users behave in the same manner, realizing too late that they are hooked on the drug they were having so much fun with. We have all heard of the person who jokes, "It's easy to stop smoking. I've done it hundreds of times!" That is a sad revelation, of course, of just how much it controls him.

When a person does respond positively to Jesus' question "Yes, I want to be healed", Jesus tells him precisely what to do. He told the man at the pool to *"Get up, take up your bed, and walk."*

Notice carefully Christ's method of dealing with the man and with us.

1. He commands us to perform an impossible thing in our own strength.
2. He commands us to remove all the items that would tempt us to returning to where we were.
3. He expects continued success from us, without seeing us returning to the spot where He first found us and spoke *"Do you want to be healed?"*

All these are involved in the words, *"Get up, take up your bed, and walk."*

That is a critical requirement many miss when they are looking for help from God. There is always something God will tell them to believe, and to do, and to continue to act on. Obeying His command is paramount to a permanent healing, and He commands us to do what we see as an impossibility for us in our own power so that all the glory goes to Him alone.

In those words he is saying something very important to people who need to be healed: do not make any provision to go

*(Continued on page 7)*

# DO YOU WANT TO BE HEALED?

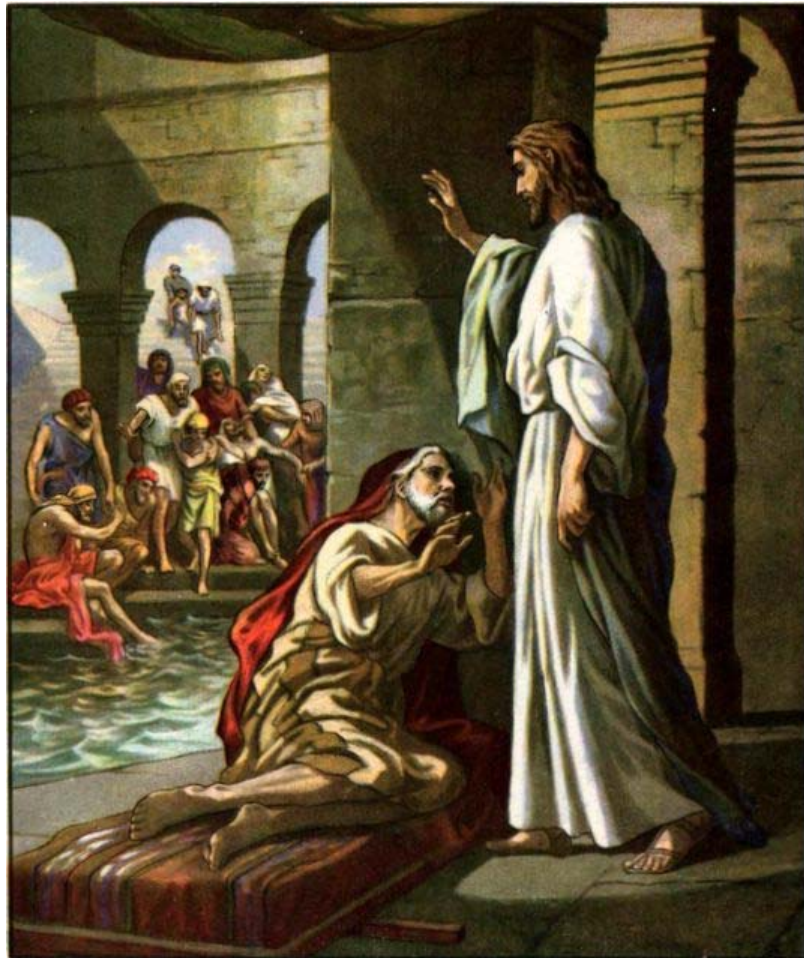
Bishop David Church



Bishop Dr. David A. Church  
Director of Missions

To reach the lost and bring them into the Kingdom of God requires that we return to *God's way* of building the Church, discarding man's methods with those given us by Jesus Christ who said "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

back to what you have done in the past. Many people fail right at this point. I say "Go home and pour out the alcohol and get rid of the drugs you have stashed away! Burn all of your bridges to the old life. Cut off and avoid all of the friends who have been luring you on into partaking of their evil. Burn your bridges to cut off any possibility of going back. Let somebody, or better yet everyone, know the new stand you have taken for Jesus Christ and righteousness so that He will help hold you fast to it. "Burn your bridges" is what Jesus is saying by the Holy Spirit. That is so important. Many a person has really been touched by God, delivered from an addiction, or from some inner attitude, or from a bitter spirit from a previous hurt caused by a loved one or friend, but then he allows the past to come back in to possess him again, and he finds himself back where he started or even worse. Our Lord knows what He is talking about when He commands "take up your bed and walk." We are to make no provision for the flesh. We must not yield to the temptation to sin, to return to that by which we were bound. One whom Jesus sets free is free indeed. Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.





*Be Fully Present  
The Kingdom of  
Heaven is at Hand*



By Bishop  
Jessica Johnston

*My prayer and blessing for you is that you will discover and uncover the mysteries of God in His ways and His word. I pray for you a revelation of His grace in your life and that all lessons imparted to you through your message will become revelatory teaching for the flock of God.*

Recently the Lord told me to take a week off from work. I had just received word that I would be changing bosses and I was being promoted. The news was bitter and sweet for many reasons I will not go into, but I understood and was grateful the Lord called this time. It was a time of healing, restoration, renewed commitment and revelation. The condition was that I go “off the grid”. No Facebook, email, etc. This in itself allowed me to hear deeper, rest better and find a deep peace about the changes to come. There is one thing that came out of this time I would like to share with you.

During this time the Lord revealed to me that part of the reason that I was struggling, tired and feeling so stretched thin, detached and weak was that I was not “fully present” at work, at home, even with Him. It was a relief to hear the answer, but I also wept that I had taken anything away from my Lord. First I repented to the Lord then I asked Holy Spirit to help me to change.

In my time of prayer and seeking I did some digging. I wanted to know what was keeping me from being fully present and how to change that. I goggled what it meant to be fully present and not to my surprise my industry of health and wellbeing has captured it as the practice of “mindfulness”. Even some ministries now call it Christian Mindfulness or simply put meditation. Here is what I read:

Whatever you do:

Do it slowly and deliberately. ...

Do less. ...

Put space between things. ...

Spend at least 5 minutes each day doing nothing. ...

Stop worrying about the future -- focus on the present. ...

When you're talking to someone, be present. ...

Eat slowly and savor your food. ...

Live slowly and savor your life.

Do physical activities that absorb your attention.

This was practical advice and with everything there is convergence of natural and spiritual. So I kept searching.

In the world we live in today we are over stimulated, over informed and many times by hype and mistruths leading to anxiety and fear. We are constantly multi-tasking which has now been proven to be unproductive and negatively affects the brain (Research Dr. Caroline Leaf).

We must “renew our minds” (Romans 12:2) daily, “set our mind on things above” (Colossians 3:2) in order “take every thought captive” and submit it to God and his word to bring order and healing to our life.

*(Continued on page 9)*



# Fully Present

As I reflected on my thoughts I found myself thinking a lot about the future. I could be walking a beautiful outdoor trail and my mind was racing to what did I need to do when I got home, what events were coming up, etc. As I researched this topic more I found a term used to describe those who speculate about the future, or rest their happiness on the achievement of some future event or state. They call this “future tripping”.

James addresses this when he wrote, “Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit’ — yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes” (James 4:13-14, ESV).

We don’t know what the future holds but we know who holds the future. We spend a great deal of time worrying about it and leading to anxiety which steals from the moment, the now.

Jesus said himself, “Don’t worry about your life, what you’ll eat or what you’ll drink, or about your body, what you’ll wear.... Who among you by worrying can add a single moment to your life?” (Matthew 6:24, 27). And in Luke 12: 27-28, “Consider how the lilies grow: **They do not labor or spin. (Selah)** Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith!”

What we need now more than ever is to practice His presence. Yes have intentional time each day with Him, but be intentional in every moment or each part of your day stopping to acknowledge He is with you, talk to Him, bring your cares to Him, enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise throughout the day.

The goal of this article is to remind you as He reminded me to be “fully present”. Focus on him and remember the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. We do not wait for Kingdom living in the future. We live it now before the world. I leave you with this scripture and ask you to remember that the Holy Spirit is your counsel, your guide. He works with you and for you in this transformative process. The goal is to fix your thoughts on Jesus. As you do Holy Spirit will reveal the pathway to being fully present.

**Hebrews 3:1-6** “Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, **fix your thoughts on Jesus**, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. <sup>2</sup> He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house. <sup>3</sup> Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. <sup>4</sup> For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. <sup>5</sup> “Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house, bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. <sup>6</sup> But Christ is faithful as the Son over God’s house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.”

## Spirit Soul and Body

A Ministry of Wholeness



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### About



All of us are on a journey. A journey to wholeness. Traveling a path to be who God truly designed us to be. God is the master artist, the weaver who is designing a tapestry of your life integrating in every experience and heartache you have had to make a beautiful illustration of His love, grace and mercy. The heart of God is for you to be complete, whole transformed from glory to glory.

*Spirit, Soul and Body* is a ministry of wholeness with a message of hope to the world that Christ came not only to save but to heal the broken hearted. Isaiah 53:1:4-5 "Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed." Our focus is those in need of

healing and transformation.

Our desire is to fulfill God's word in Isaiah 61:3 - "To grant [consolation and joy] to those who mourn in Zion—to give them an ornament (a garland or diadem) of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, the garment [expressive] of praise instead of a heavy, burdened, and failing spirit—that they may be called oaks of righteousness [lofty, strong, and magnificent, distinguished for uprightness, justice, and right standing with God], the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."

We are a ministry to women, families, the orphan and the widow.

### Members Area

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by [Jessica Johnston](#) | 0 comments
- [Letting Go](#)  
by [Jessica Johnston](#) | 0 comments
- [God will bring the increase.](#)  
by [Jessica Johnston](#) | 2 comments

# Bishop Dr. David A Church ministries:



I am involved mainly with recovery and rehabilitation ministries these days. I am Vice President of Operations for Freedom Re-entry Center in Whittier, CA. We operate a men's sober living facility called F.R.E.S.H. which stands for Freedom Re-Entry Sober House. We disciple men in the home with several Bible Studies weekly, provide counseling, and help point them to resources. Instead of being a Twelve Step program, we use the Bible and prayer to transform them "by the renewing of the mind" as stated in Romans 12:2. Our website URL is <http://freedomreentrycenter.org/>

[freedomreentrycenter.ORG](http://freedomreentrycenter.org)

Welcome to the Freedom Re-Entry Center's Website



[Home](#) [About](#) [Testimonials](#) [Resources](#) [Photos](#) [Video Testimonials](#) [News](#) [Questions](#)

## Home

Thank you for Visiting FreedomReEntryCenter.ORG We are a non-profit organization that hosts a sober living home called... **Freedom Re-Entry Sober House or FRESH Are You...**

- Looking for Freedom from addiction to drugs and alcohol ?
- Looking for a supportive sober Christian living environment ?
- Needing to get away from destructive friends and lifestyles ?

## December 2016

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

[Resumes](#)

I am also involved with The Kings Table Christian Training Center run by Pastor Joey Alvarado, a good friend here. Collectively here in Whittier, CA there is a network of churches, homes, and homeless shelters called the Whittier Area Recovery Network, or W.A.R.N..

Other ministry I am doing is evangelism and missions, and fill pulpits when asked. I still have some ties with Gospel for Asia, although my health has slowed me down considerably and I can't always handle the cases of books at events.



# Bishop Dr. David A Church ministries



At First Love Calvary Chapel Whittier, <http://ccwhittier.org/>, I began a unique ministry called Crossfire Fellowship where we go sport shooting at local ranges, plus I teach firearms safety, handling, and use for sport and defense. I post our outings on my company Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/EschatonDefenseTraining/>.



# Clarendon Hills Pub Church offers a different experience



Christ Lutheran Church in Clarendon Hills holds monthly music-filled services in a local tavern.

(Jon Langham / Pioneer Press)

Chuck FieldmanContact ReporterPioneer Press

It wasn't business as usual for a couple of hours Sunday afternoon at Tracy's Tavern, 401 55th St., in Clarendon Hills. The parking lot continued to get more crowded, and the band set up to play while patrons entered and found a place to sit down.

Some ordered a beer or a different type of drink, alcohol or of the soft drink variety; others added for a burger or something else off the food menu.

The TV screens inside Tracy's were showing a couple of different sporting events, but the sound was turned off, as most everyone inside wasn't there to watch a game. Tracy's was open for anyone wanting to come in, but the gathering of about 50 people had a purpose: attending a church service.

Pub Church was started in July 2015 by the Rev. Craig Felde as an affiliated mission of Christ Lutheran Church in Clarendon Hills, on a suggestion from tavern owner Hunt Tracy. Pub Church usually has its services at 12:30 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month. The schedule does change to avoid competing with Chicago Bears games on TV, Felde said.

"This is an opportunity for people who may not be comfortable going to a church to still come for a service that is in an informal environment," Felde said. "It's more free flowing and organic, and the formality of the church isn't there. It's still a Christian service, but in a setting that may be more comfortable for some people."

Bringing religion to Tracy's Tavern isn't new for Felde and Christ Lutheran Church.

Theology on Tap has offered monthly sessions at Tracy's with discussions about faith since 2013.

"Pub Church is very different than Theology on Tap because we have a full church service during Pub Church," Felde said. "It just happens that we do both in the community, away from the church."

Felde said he has been pleased by the expressed support of those who regularly attend Christ Lutheran Church.

"I haven't had any negative feedback on Pub Church, and it's not necessarily for our church, but rather to bring people back to church," he said. "I've been pleasantly surprised that our fellowship of seniors has been supportive."

Going to church isn't new for Darien resident Karen Alberts, but the Pub Church experience is a new twist she is enjoying. Alberts still often attends Saturday night services at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Downers Grove. But she said the Pub Church

# Clarendon Hills Pub Church offers a different experience

services she's been attending since the start of the year once have a very different look and feel. Alberts has now become a regular at Pub Church, an ecumenical gathering and music-filled service.

"It's a lot different than a regular church service," Alberts said. "The atmosphere is very different; it's more relaxed. You don't have a choir and organ at these services. I first came because I thought it was a different idea, and I wanted to see what it was like. I keep coming back because I do like it. Everyone who comes always comes back."

Brad Lucas of Warrenville said he first came because it sounded interesting.

"I like the music and the message, and Pastor Craig is wonderful," Lucas said. "This is different than going to a regular church, and it's fun."

Anna Wentling, 10, of Hinsdale is drawn to Pub Church because her mother, Roberta, is in the band, Everyday Grace, which plays at the monthly services. But Anna said she enjoys the services.

"I like it better than regular church because it's more relaxed," she said.

Jeff Allen, 30, of La Grange, said he doesn't consider himself a religious person, but enjoys the services.

"I think it's a great idea," he said. "It's about the community; bars can still be part of something like this, and this service kind of fits with the place. I definitely get the sense of it."

Felde said Pub Church services last 45 to 60 minutes and include a welcome, time of reflection, Bible lesson and plenty of music.

"We started this with about 25 to 30 people coming, and it's grown to over 40 now," Felde said. "I think we're gaining some traction. This is a great way to bring people here and get them back into a relationship with God."

Felde said he is considering discussing Pub Church mission ideas soon with those who attend the services.

"We'll see if there is interest in doing something like helping with rehab for those who need it," he said.

For more information about Pub Church or Theology on Tap, call Christ Lutheran Church, 630-325-2220.

cfieldman@pioneerlocal.com

Twitter: @chuckwriting

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We as a congregation need to find ways to connect with people in our modern, always buzzing world. A new way to connect is really an old concept, dating from the time of the Apostles, to meet where the people are and proclaim the Gospel to the community as it is shown in its modern context. It really is about taking the time to build personal relationships, something that we at Christ are very comfortable with, around each other. We need to take that comfort out to the streets. This can take many forms, from a group of people meeting on the train on the way to or from work, to a group of disenfranchised musicians searching for a way to continue their music ministry, or a new small group of those studying scripture in a library room for the first time.

The most important thing to remember is that people need Christ in their lives, and that a community of some kind is the best way to let Him enter in, as Matthew says Ch. 18:20, "For where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them."

Rev. Craig Felde



## Our History

Venture International was founded in 1986 by Leonard and Pauline Rodgers, then known as Venture Middle East. Their goal was to establish a small, yet effective, Christian agency to provide humanitarian relief and development to the poorest of the poor.

Cherrie Dickerson began her tenure with Venture International in 2003, having served bi-vocationally in business management and her local church as a youth and family director. Cherrie has a genuine passion for continuing the great work that Leonard and Pauline began nearly 30 years ago.

*Venture International is an international Christian relief and development agency that serves as a bridge between those in need and those who want to help God's people*

**Leonard Rodgers, President Emeritus, Venture International**

## Our Mission

Venture International is an international Christian relief and development agency that serves as a bridge between those in need and those who want to help God's people through:

- Strategic Partnerships
- Special Projects
- Emergency Relief
- People Development

## Our Staff, Coordinators & Volunteers

Mrs. Cherrie Dickerson, President/CEO  
Mrs. Ragaa Abdallah, Language Specialist  
Ms. Fadila Abdelnour, FTF Project Coordinator: Egypt  
Ms. Nora Kort, FTF Project Coordinator: Jerusalem  
Mr. Karim Anayssi, FTF Project Coordinator: Lebanon  
Mr. Tom Dickerson, Communications  
Mr. Jim Mullins, Direct Mailing  
Ms. Betty Sloan, Direct Mailing



Rev's. Tom & Cherrie Dickerson

Please visit Venture International on-line at [VentureInt.org](http://VentureInt.org)  
and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/VentureInt.org/>

## THRIVING PASTOR™



“What’s missing in the church today?” That question was posed to a well-known megachurch pastor. His one-word answer was “vision.” I couldn’t disagree more!

We are intoxicated with vision and obsessed with leadership. There’s more big talk, more big ideas, more big dreams than ever before. “Bigger and more” has been the rallying cry of the church in the last generation.

Over the last twenty-five years, vision and leadership and growth have become the topics of choice for pastors. In some ministry circles, CEOs and business entrepreneurs are

quoted as frequently as the writers of Scripture. Enormous energy and resources have been thrown at helping us become more effective leaders ... and for good reason.

A generation ago, pastors were equipped to exegete scripture, understand church history, and craft sermons, but were ill-equipped to provide organizational leadership to the churches they were called to pastor. As churches grew and the culture changed, pastors had to learn about the world of creating budgets, managing staff, casting vision, constructing buildings, raising money, worship programming, and managing change.

So the inundation of leadership and church growth resources met a definite need. The focus on leadership and vision filled a massive void, and we have all been the beneficiaries.

But not all of the impact has been positive. We have pushed the priority of a pastor’s interior life to the fringes. As we have sought to fill the gap with leadership resources we have inadvertently marginalized the soul-side of leadership. The result is a crisis, a crisis of spiritual health among pastors. The statistics these days on pastors are troubling and paint a bleak picture.

Pastors are leaving the ministry in record numbers. Discouragement and disillusionment are epidemic among those who lead in ministry. And many are choosing to fire themselves rather than fight any longer.

A *New York Times* article presented a dismal report card on the state of pastors:

“Members of the clergy now suffer from obesity, hypertension, and depression at rates higher than most Americans. In the last decade, their use of antidepressants has risen, while their life expectancy has fallen. Many would change jobs if they could.”

It doesn’t sound like we are doing a very good job of modeling how to live well. We may sing “it is well with our soul”, but there isn’t much evidence to confirm it.

Burnout, scandal, depression, immorality, loneliness – they are all words commonly associated with people in ministry.

The logo for 'Thrivng Pastor' features the word 'THRIVING' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font above the word 'PASTOR' in a larger, white, serif font. A small trademark symbol (TM) is located at the end of 'PASTOR'. The text is set against a dark brown background with a teal wavy border at the bottom.

Many of my pastor friends and your pastor friends stand up Sunday after Sunday and faithfully preach the truth. They unselfishly minister to others and do the very best they can to lead their church. They feel incredible pressure to inspire their congregation, grow their churches, and impact their communities. I have pastor friends who are constantly looking for the “secret sauce” of church growth. They are better-than-average leaders and communicators, but their churches haven’t experienced much growth. They struggle with feelings of inadequacy and live with this nagging doubt that they are failures as leaders. They are secretly dying a slow death and many want to give up. After thirty-five years in ministry I do understand how people get to this point. But it doesn’t have to be that way. There is a better way forward.

We don’t need to abandon our discussion of leadership in the kingdom, but we do need to include a question that doesn’t get enough airtime. What does “spiritual” leadership look like? What does healthy leadership look like? What does a healthy team look like? We have neglected the fact that a pastor’s greatest leadership tool is a healthy soul. Our concentration on skill and technique and strategy has not served us well. The outcome is an increasing number of men and women leading our churches who are emotionally empty and spiritually dry. Parker Palmer said, “A leader is a person who must take special responsibility for what’s going on inside of himself or herself ... lest the act of leadership create more harm than good.”

Let those words soak in. They are especially profound when you realize they were written a generation ago. We have ample evidence of Palmer’s insight. When leaders neglect their interior life they run the risk of prostituting the sacred gift of leadership. And they run the risk of being destructive instead of productive. As pastors we regularly preach that the Christian life is “inside out”. It starts with the heart. The root determines the fruit. Life flows from the vine (internal) to the branches (external). The same is true for our ministries. True, lasting, Christ-honoring fruit starts by paying attention to our interior life. What ballast is to a boat, a healthy soul is to a leader.

[thrivingpastor.com](http://thrivingpastor.com)

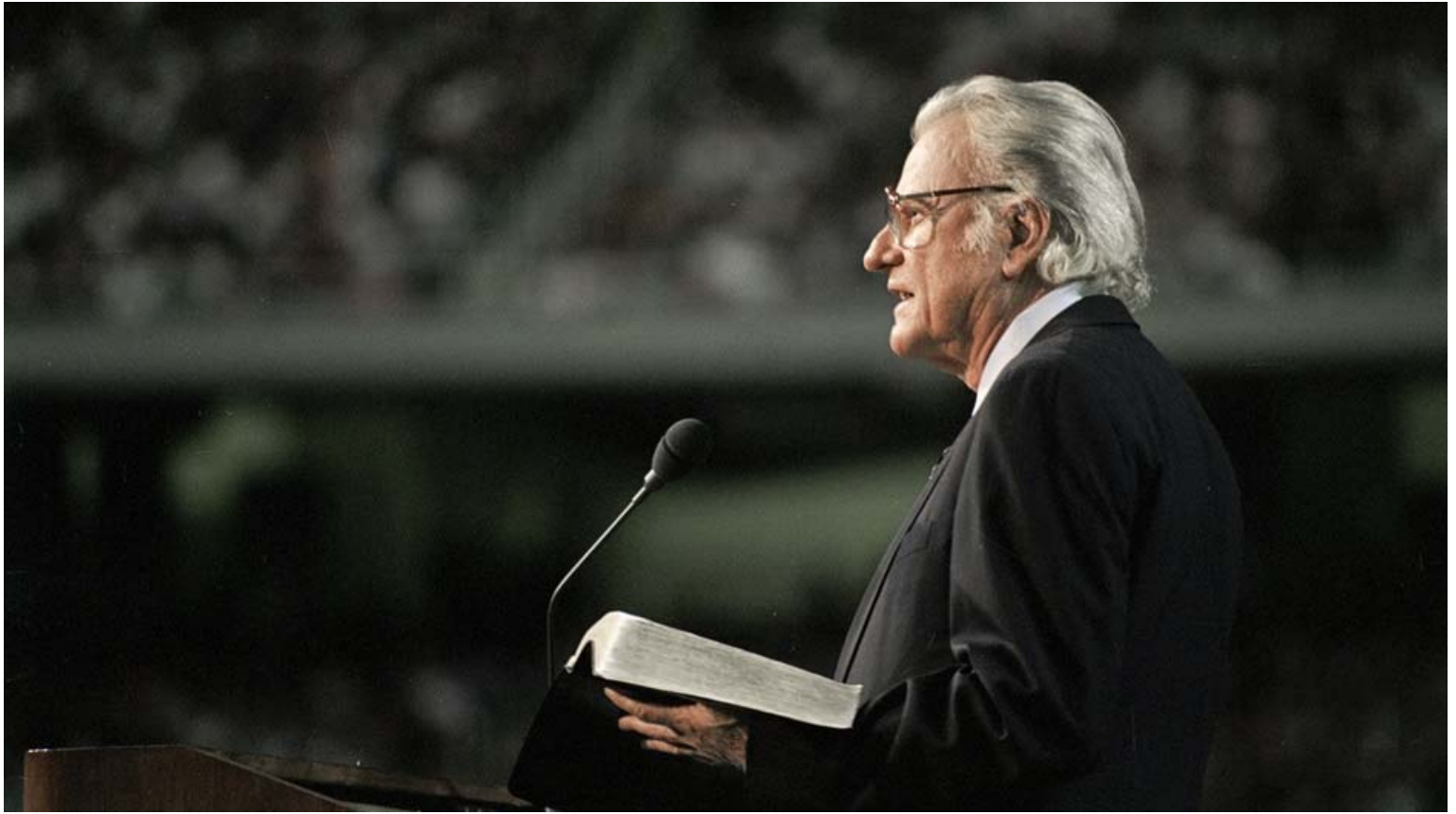
A ministry site helping pastors and churches thrive

Copyright © 2014 by Lance Witt.

The logo for 'Focus on the Family' features the words 'FOCUS ON THE FAMILY' in a white, serif font. The words 'ON THE' are smaller and positioned between 'FOCUS' and 'FAMILY'. The text is set against a teal background with a wavy border at the top.



# The Remarkable Billy Graham



The Remarkable Mr. Graham  
Billy Graham Evangelistic Association  
The Remarkable Mr. Graham

The evangelist (and CT founder) is 98 today. An historian examines the way he shaped the church and the world.  
Grant Wacker/ November 7, 2016

The preacher's long life started on a dairy farm near Charlotte, North Carolina, on November 7, 1918. The Great War in Europe ended on November 11, 1918. He liked to joke that it took the world only four days to hear that he had arrived.

Billy Graham's 98th birthday, today, seems a good time to pause and think about the impact of his work.

Most evident are the numerical records. Graham probably spoke to more people face-to-face than any other person in history, 215 million at last count. Additional hundreds of millions encountered him via electronic and print media. In 1956, he founded Christianity Today, which soon ranked as the most widely read Christian periodical in the world. Graham organized international conferences in Europe that helped galvanize the global evangelical movement. He nabbed a spot on Gallup's list of "Most Admired Man in the World" 59 times, nearly twice as often as runner-up Ronald Reagan.

Graham's most obvious legacy is the three million men and women who registered commitments for Christ at his crusades. Beyond that figure stand the numberless souls who made decisions in the quiet spaces of their lives.

Yet these data tell only part of the story. Graham's legacy has taken forms that are hard to measure but important to remember. We see them especially in the realms of evangelical beliefs, everyday life, American politics, and Christian hope.

Beliefs, Changing and Unchanged

Many of Graham's beliefs stayed exactly the same decade after decade—and if they sound like the heartbeat of evangelicalism, that is partly because he made them so. They included the Bible's authority, God's sovereignty, humans' sin, Christ's saving death, resurrection, and return, the necessity of new birth, spiritual and moral growth, mission to others, and a final destiny.

But if those claims remained fixed, others changed, and the changes form a large part of the preacher's legacy.

First of all, Graham moved from biblical inerrancy and literalism to a more dynamic sense of biblical infallibility. The Bible was authoritative

# The Remarkable Billy Graham

not because it was historically or scientifically accurate in every detail, but because it did what it promised to do: infallibly bring people to faith in Christ. Graham believed in the Bible's factual accuracy, but that was not the main point. The Bible held authority because it worked.

The second change focused on the new birth. In the early days Graham called for something like a "ready-set-go" conversion experience. Stand up, walk to the front, sign a decision card, join a church, and then witness to your new-found faith. But over time Graham saw that people could show their commitment in other ways. He allowed that many people, including his wife, Ruth, never experienced a single moment of decision. They just grew up "saved" and never saw themselves otherwise. And he knew too that many inquirers were coming back to Christ after their first love had grown cold.

[Prepare Your Heart for Thanksgiving - Download Now!](#)

Graham's notion of the spiritual and moral results that should be the fruit of new birth also evolved. His primary emphasis always fell on individual conversion. But he also came to see the need for intentionally working for social reform, sometimes through legislation. Converted hearts did not automatically produce converted hands.

Graham's understanding of hell also shifted with time. He never denied it but he did redefine it. In the early days, Graham portrayed hell in lurid terms of fire, brimstone, and everlasting torment. But he soon felt that this evangelical chestnut simply was not biblical. Hell was separation from God's love. And what could be worse than separation from God's love?

Graham's notion of mission broadened into an inclusive effort to bring as many people as possible into hearing range of the gospel.

Graham's notion of mission broadened into an inclusive effort to bring as many people as possible into hearing range of the gospel. This meant reaching out to fundamentalists on his right, mainline Protestants on his left, and Catholics and Pentecostals everywhere. Except for fundamentalists, who remained wary, Graham won supporters in most quarters. His principle was: "I'll work with anyone who will work with me if they don't ask me to change my message."

Most controversially, Graham refused to speculate about the ultimate fate of nonbelievers. He never trimmed his insistence that Christ was the only way to heaven. But he saw no point hazarding guesses. To reporters who asked, he invariably said, "All that is up to God and I'm not going to play God."

In sum, one of Graham's key legacies to evangelicals was his ability to combine a fixed core—a still point in a turning world—with fresh thinking about how that core should be expressed and applied.

Evangelicalism with a Necktie

Graham helped teach evangelicals the importance of a practical approach to Christianity. We see it especially in "My Answer," a daily Q & A column that appeared in newspapers across the country. Most answers came with a heavy dose of conventional evangelical theology, but the theology included common-sense guidelines based on biblical precepts.

Graham served as a badge of credibility for evangelicals. He helped teach them how to take a seat at the table in the public square. One of the most astute historians of American religion, Samuel S. Hill, once said, tongue-in-cheek but aptly, "Billy taught evangelicals when to wear a necktie."

Graham's ministry also defined the center of the evangelical landscape. He helped the movement maintain its centrist appeal by establishing a sense of scale. Some things were more important than others. Christ did not die on the cross to save folks from cigarettes or dancing or playing cards. He died to save people from their sinful hearts and offer everlasting life.

500+ Training Tools for Churches

Decade after decade, Graham embodied a pole-star of decency. Biographer William Martin said it best: Graham represented Americans' "best selves." Topping the list was the preacher's commitment to marital fidelity, without compromises of any sort. That included acts that might raise suspicions, such as traveling or dining alone with a woman outside the family. He was equally committed to financial transparency, again, without fudging. And absolute honesty. When reporters asked about the number of converts he had won, Graham responded, "I have no idea. I can count inquirers but only God knows who the converts are." And finally, a reticence about criticizing others. Graham targeted broad trends he found destructive, but rarely specific individuals or denominations or religious traditions.

Three Conversions

We can't say that Graham changed US political history as Lyndon Johnson or Martin Luther King Jr., did. But he did change Americans' lives in important ways. On most things political, he pointed in a progressive direction.

On the landmark issue of civil rights, for example, Graham showed uneven but unmistakable progress. The youthful Graham—reared in the

# The Remarkable Billy Graham

South—accepted segregation. But in the late 1940s, his conscience awakened. In the early 1950s, he took a succession of bold stands, despite withering attacks. In the early 1960s, unsettled by Black Power and disorder in the streets, he backed off. Temperamentally, he always preferred orderly process. But by the mid-1970s, he would embrace—or re-embrace—the goals, if not always the tactics, of the civil rights movement.

In 1982, in the patriarchal cathedral in Moscow, Graham said that he had undergone three conversions in his life: to Christ, to racial justice, and to nuclear disarmament. It was a long journey. Once a strident Cold War hawk, the mature Graham carried the torch for demilitarization on both sides of the Iron Curtain. He preached that civilization was on the brink of destroying itself. This move took enormous courage in an age when most Americans, not to mention most evangelicals, remained fearful of Soviet intentions. Graham insisted that there was a difference between partisan politics and moral politics.

When the culture wars arrived in the late 1970s, Graham resisted. He agreed with some of the Christian Right's positions, but he also said its leaders didn't talk enough about poverty and hunger. Besides, the pulpit should not become a soapbox. Graham insisted that there was a difference between partisan politics, which served the interests of the Democratic or the Republican Parties, and moral politics, which served the interests of the nation and of the world.

Graham's mistakes in the political realm remind evangelicals that they dare not place anyone on a pedestal. He fell into dogged support for particular presidents, especially Nixon. Graham defended the president's stand on the Vietnam War and on Watergate long after most Americans had given up on both causes. The press called him the "White House Chaplain."  
Advent Devotions for Your Church!

One of Graham's most grievous blunders took place in 1972, when he made scandalous remarks about Jews and the media in the privacy of Nixon's office. When his words surfaced 30 years later, he was mortified. Graham apologized repeatedly and profusely, in print and face-to-face with Jewish leaders. But the episode tarnished his legacy.  
A Second Chance

Without question, Graham's most important legacy lay in his preaching about Christian hope. Over the years, millions of letters flowed into his Minneapolis office. Often calling him just Billy, writers described lives twisted by sin, marriages on the rocks, kids gone astray, fears of death, and loneliness. No matter how badly you have messed up your life, he urged, Christ offers forgiveness and a new start.

Though Graham regularly preached about Christ's Second Coming (albeit with few specific details), his main contribution to Christian hope lay exactly there, in the promise of a second chance, not only for individuals but also for the nation and the world of nations.

Will these legacies continue in a successor? People with his unique combination of "gifts and graces"—the looks, voice, accent, humor, poise, timing, sincerity, humility, and ambition, both for himself and for God—come along rarely.

But even if a person of Graham's talents should appear, the social context has changed dramatically. Was communism then the same as terrorism today? How do changes in the family, once a nuclear unit huddled around a flickering television screen, now dispersed and glued to cell phones, alter the picture? Would huge stadium crusades still work in an age of social media?

The historian Margaret Bendroth perceptively predicts that successors won't look like Graham. They will not be white, let alone white Americans. They will appeal to multiethnic audiences. Yet like Graham, they will project chastity, integrity, sincerity, ambition, humility, and, above all, hope. And they will not pin their ministries on doctrinal arguments. The tempestuous issues that tend to divide Christians will take second, third, or even tenth place behind a call for a life changing experience with God in Christ, one that transforms the rest of their lives.

This much we can say for sure: Whoever Graham's successors may be, heralded or unheralded, they will owe an enduring debt to a farm boy from North Carolina.

Grant Wacker is author of *America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation* (2014). This essay is adapted from "Billy Graham and the Shaping of American Evangelicalism: Legacies," in *Great Awakenings: Historical Perspectives* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2016), 86-99.

# No, Christmas Didn't Replace a Pagan Holiday

ANOTHER VIEW

In the endless back-and-forth about the true meaning of Christmas or the War on Christmas or whatever we're calling it this year, one of the most persistent and pernicious myths is the idea that Christians stole the holiday from the pagans.



## No, Christmas didn't replace a pagan holiday

Jeremy Lott, Rare Contributor

In the endless back-and-forth about the true meaning of Christmas or the War on Christmas or whatever we're calling it this year, one of the most persistent and pernicious myths is the idea that Christians stole the holiday from the pagans.

**Chastising conservative Christians** in the Sacramento Bee, former talk show host Bruce Maiman cited the “fact” that “Christmas occurs on a pagan feast day, Saturnalia,” and alleges that “the earliest Christians deliberately moved the birth of Jesus to December 25, making it easier to sell Christianity to the Romans.” The only problem with this criticism is that it doesn't make one lick of historical sense.

Saturnalia was celebrated not on December 25 but on December 17 through 23. December 25 was during the throbbing “Oh please kill me” dry-out period between Saturnalia and New Year's. It was thus a horrible time for sermons or celebrations – and Christmas was always a mix of both.

If you want to understand the calendaring of Christmas, look not to Rome but to Bethlehem – or, more broadly, to Judaism. The Talmud records a tradition that all especially righteous men die on the day of their conception. This figured greatly in how the church father Hippolytus figured Christ's birth. The accepted day of Jesus death was March 25 and so, writes religion know-it-all Michael Voll in *Cracked*, “Jesus's conception must have also taken place on March 25th. Then basic biology tells us that

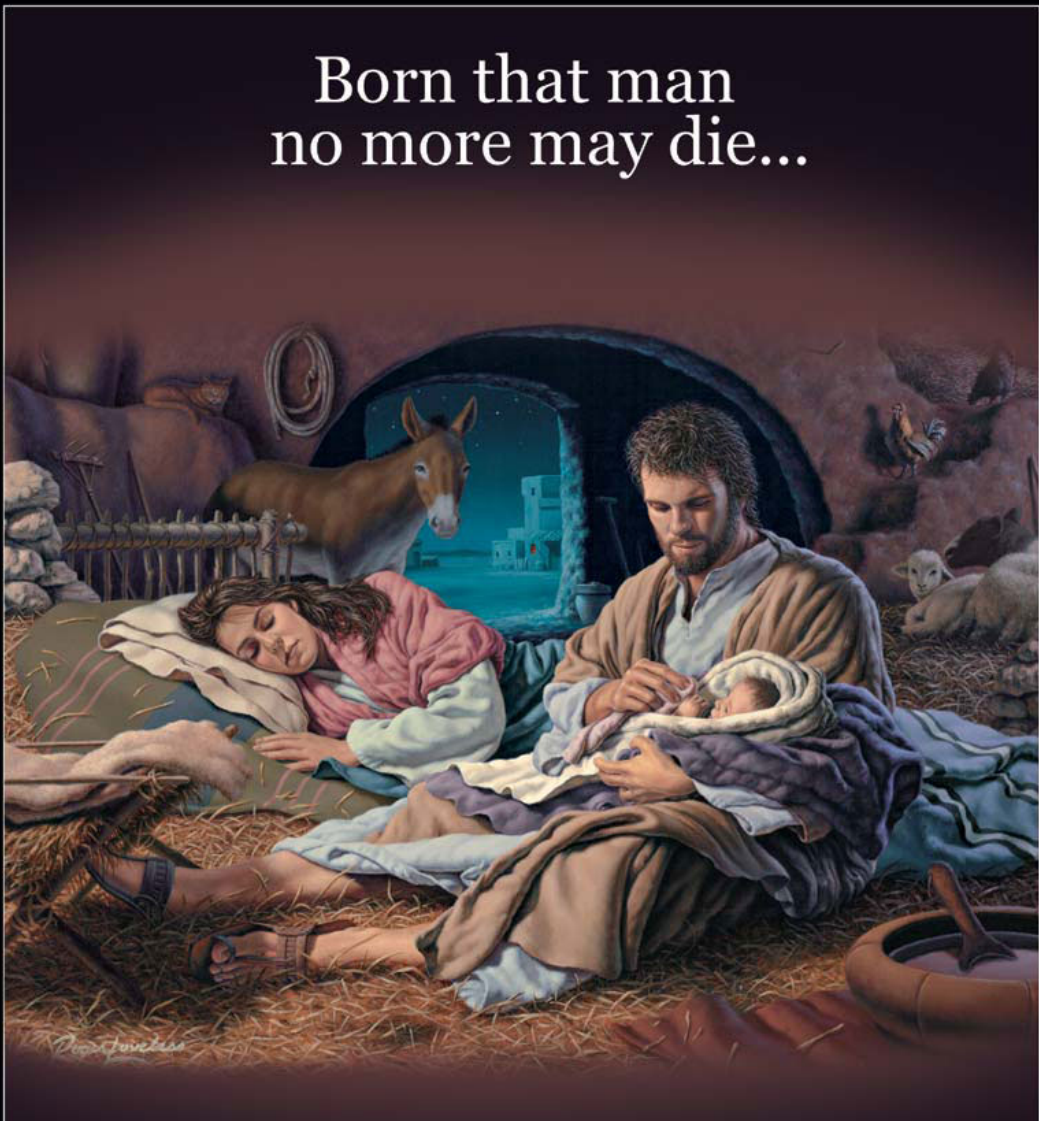
# No, Christmas Didn't Replace a Pagan Holiday

nine months after conception comes the birth: December 25th."

As for the very minor pagan festival of Sol Invictus, which people sometimes throw out when you shoot Saturnalia down, Cracked concedes that it did take place on December 25, but there's an embarrassing rub. Turns out it "wasn't created in until A.D. 274 (well after Hippolytus did his hump-math) by the Roman Emperor Aurelian."

According to Voll, this late date for the smallish festival in fact raises the "good possibility that Sol Invictus was created to provide a pagan alternative to the Christian celebration, rather than the other way around. So hey, there you go, Christians: Go find that hippie neighbor and give him a nice, long lecture about stealing your dang holiday." Or perhaps, in the spirit of the day, you could just say "Merry Christmas" – and forward him this article.

(Jeremy Lott, is an American writer, editor, and pundit. Lott was the editor of Real Clear Religion)



Born that man  
no more may die...

...For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Isaiah 9:6 NIV

If you would like to know Jesus as Saviour and Lord, call the Need Him Ministry at 1-888-NEED HIM

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It is not when, but who!



A Service of Ordination and Consecration was held for The Very Reverend Ron Davis on October 15, 2016 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Waupun, Wisconsin. Bishop Pat Pierce did a wonderful job of coordinating the service with Bishop Dennis Overlien officiating. Family and friends were present to witness this momentous time in Reverend Davis' life and Ministry. God's blessings and anointing be with you, Reverend Davis.

## SHARING GOD'S WORD AS A CHAPLAIN

We can learn much about God's word by using the Greek and Hebrew Lexicons to discover the true meaning of words as they have been translated from the ancient languages to English.

Using these valuable reference resources when teaching God's Word keeps us from losing the meaning of the words as they were originally intended.

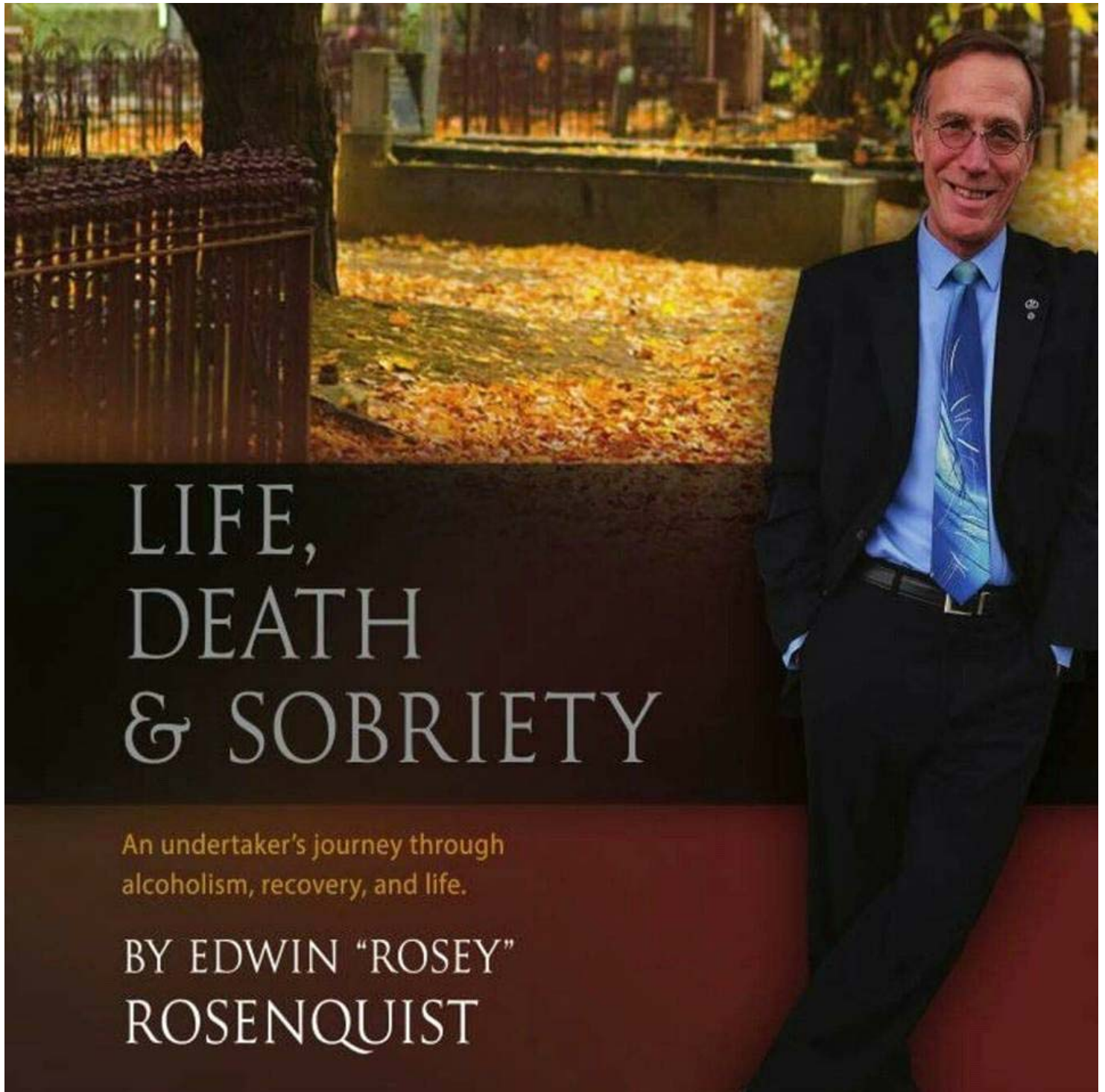
In the final book of the New Testament, we find heaven described as a place where the righteous "eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7). What exactly is meant by paradise? It is not a region of fluffy clouds; but rather, it is a lush garden full of well-watered trees. How can we know that? We take a look at the word "Paradise" in the Hebrew. The word "paradise" derives from the Biblical Hebrew word "pardes" פַּרְדֵּי used to describe a walled-in garden: We can see the true meaning of paradise in the Song of Solomon 4:13: "Your channel is an orchard (pardes = פַּרְדֵּי) of pomegranates with all choicest fruits." The Hebrew word pardes is the crucial link connecting the former Garden of Eden with the future heavenly garden. Next time when you say paradise, remember the Hebrew, beautiful and fruitful garden!

Chaplain Deborah Mejchar

Rev Deborah Mejchar is a Chaplain with Fox Lake Correctional Institution in Wisconsin.

# News from the front...

Congratulations to Rev. Edwin "Rosey" Rosenquist in the publishing of his new book, *Life, Death & Sobriety*. After serving as an Associate Pastor for a number of years, God called Pastor Rosey to a different kind of ministry, one where he reaches many more people on a daily basis. When he set up his ministry Facebook page of the same name and hung up his writer's shingle, he did not know how quickly the likes on his ministry page would multiply. He daily rejoiced and us with him as his page grew to 4500 and still growing. Pastor Rosey writes from his own life experience and shares the goodness and grace of God daily with those who visit and write him of their appreciation in the manner that their lives are being touched.



From the Facebook page *Life, Death & Sobriety*:

"Hi everyone, my name is Edwin "Rosey" Rosenquist and I have been a licensed funeral director and embalmer for over 25 years. I'm also an ordained minister with the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church and I have been in the business of keeping sober

# News from the front...

"one day at a time" since January of 1989. My page is here to help inspire and encourage others, it's also here to share my stories and thoughts as an undertaker through the years and to show the grace, love and mercy that God has shown this Undertaker."

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him." When I came to step 3, I did not really have a problem turning my will and my life over to the Creator. The alternative was bleak, either I was going to be dead, or the only existence that I would have would be in a Sanitarium.

Step 3 reminds me of a passage in the big big book; "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." When I turned my will and my life over to the Creator, little did I realize how much of that "rest" I needed. It was that rest that gave me sanity again and turned me back into a human being.

Now, after almost 28 years, one day at a time, I still need that rest each and every day of my life. It's that rest, that allows me to stay sober and help others each and every day."

Life, Death & Sobriety by Edwin "Rosey" Rosenquist can be found on Amazon.com

Visit the Life, Death & Sobriety Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/LifeDeathandSobriety/>

The image is a screenshot of a Facebook page for 'Life, Death and Sobriety'. The page header shows the name and a search bar. Below the header, there are navigation options: 'Like', 'Follow', 'Message', and 'More'. The main content area features a post from 'Life, Death and Sobriety' posted 4 minutes ago, which includes a large black graphic with the white text: "Decide that you want it more than you are afraid of it." To the right of the post, there is a bio for Edwin "Rosey" Rosenquist, a licensed funeral director and embalmer for over 25 years, with 5,243 likes and 5,203 followers. Below the bio is an 'About' section stating 'Typically replies within a day' and a 'Message Now' button. The 'VISITOR POSTS' section shows two recent posts: one by Jamie Lea Calentine from November 16 at 5:22pm, and another by Drakken Malford from October 29 at 12:22am.



# News from the front...

LEPC Minister Reverend Bill Sirginson of Greenville, North Carolina officiating the wedding ceremony of Josh and Casey Setzer. Congratulations and best wishes to the bride and groom!!



# Chaplains Offer Ministry of Presence During Charlotte Protest

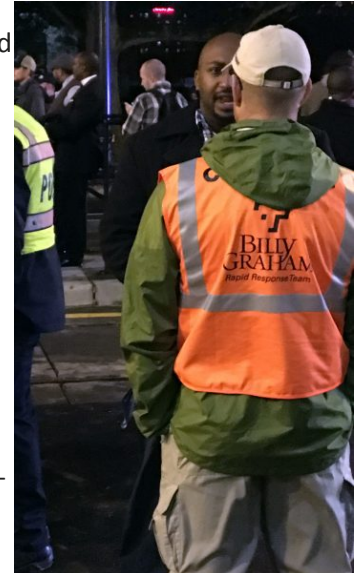
By Kellie Van Gilder • December 1, 2016

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name -Philippians 2:9 (NKJV)

Crisis-trained chaplains with the [Billy Graham Rapid Response Team](#) maintained a ministry of presence on Wednesday night in Charlotte, North Carolina, where as many as 300 demonstrators gathered to protest the decision not to indict officer Brentley Vinson in the [shooting death of Keith Lamont Scott](#).

Protesters chanted, some through bullhorns, as they peacefully marched. The scene was much calmer than last time when the demonstrations escalated to civil unrest in the wake of Scott's death on Sept. 20.

On Wednesday, though, protesters focused on their words. They shared their anger, their frustration and their pain. The Rapid Response Team chaplains listened and even had the chance to pray with some.



[Billy Graham Rapid Response Team](#) chaplains deployed to Charlotte, North Carolina, for the second time in two months on Wednesday. The chaplains talked and prayed with people during a demonstration, which is what they also did in late September (pictured above). Please continue to pray for peace in this city that the [Billy Graham Evangelistic Association](#) calls home.

Crisis-trained chaplains wore orange vests and talked with people during a demonstration on Wednesday in Charlotte, North Carolina.

“We were just listening as people were expressing their emotions and anger, their shock at the decision not to charge the officer,” said Jeff Naber, manager of chaplain development and ministry relations for the Rapid Response Team.

Many chaplains prayer-walked with the demonstrators as they made their way from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department headquarters down to the Omni Hotel and back again. Along the way, the group stopped for a moment of silence for Justin Carr, a protester who was fatally shot during the September civil unrest.

Other chaplains stood shoulder-to-shoulder with local preacher Sam Bethea. For the duration of the three-hour demonstration, Bethea proclaimed four words:

“The [blood of Jesus](#),” Bethea boomed.

He didn't have a bullhorn, but his voice enabled him to lift the Savior's name above all others. The nearby chaplains chimed in.

“God gifted that man,” Naber said. “His voice never wavered. He never tired. He was just relentless in repeating just those four words. Everyone there knew he was there. He kept up his [cry to God](#).” “There were bullhorns, but the name of Jesus overrode anything people were saying,” Naber added. “His name was spoken on the streets of Charlotte more than any other name.”

Please continue to pray that the peace of Jesus Christ will reign in Charlotte, North Carolina.

See what our Chaplains are doing at:

<https://www.facebook.com/Evangelical-ProtestantLutheran-Evangelical-Protestant-Chaplaincy-169711399827947/>



by Thomas D. Williams, Ph.D. 8 Sep 2016 791



According to the former head of the Vatican's highest court, Cardinal Raymond Burke (pictured), Muslims and Christians do not worship the same God, since Allah is a "governor," whereas Christianity was "founded on love."

The modern belief that Islam and Christianity are fundamentally the same "is very much influenced by a relativism of a religious order," the Cardinal said at a recent press conference.

"I hear people saying to me, well, we're all worshipping the same God. We all believe in love. But I say stop a minute, and let's examine carefully what Islam is, and what our Christian faith teaches us."

"I don't believe it's true that we're all worshipping the same God, because the God of Islam is a governor," Burke said. "Sharia is their law, and that law, which comes from Allah, must dominate every man eventually."

The Cardinal said that unlike Christianity, sharia is "not a law that's founded on love. To say that we all believe in love is simply not correct."

Not only do Christianity and Islam differ in the nature of their laws, Burke proposed, but also in their approach to proselytism and winning over converts.

In the end, he said, we have to understand that "what they believe most deeply, that to which they ascribe in their hearts, demands that they govern the world."

The Cardinal's words echoed recent remarks by a senior Catholic prelate in Hungary, who warned that the enormous waves of migrants rolling into Europe are due in no small part to a Muslim "will to conquer."

"Jihad is a principle for Muslims that means they must expand," said Archbishop Gyula Marfi in an August interview. "The earth must become dar al-Islam, that is, Islamic territory, by introducing Sharia—Islamic law."

Both prelates' words, in fact, find confirmation in recent assertions by the Islamic State itself in the latest issue of its propaganda magazine, Dabiq.

"Indeed, waging jihad – spreading the rule of Allah by the sword – is an obligation found in the Quran, the word of our Lord," the text reads.

The Islamic State was specifically reacting to Pope Francis' claims that the war being waged by Islamic terrorists is not religious in nature, assuring the pontiff that their sole motivation is religious and sanctioned by Allah in the Qur'an.

"This is a divinely-warranted war between the Muslim nation and the nations of disbelief," the authors state in an article titled "By the Sword."

ISIS attacked Francis for his claim that "authentic Islam and the proper reading of the Quran are opposed to every form of violence."

Pope Francis "has struggled against reality" in his efforts to portray Islam as a religion of peace, the article insists, before going on to urge all Muslims to take up the sword of jihad, the "greatest obligation" of a true Muslim.

In a July press conference, Pope Francis told journalists that the world is at war, but that is not a religious war.

"Every religion wants peace," he said.

In his press conference, Cardinal Burke insisted that "what's most important for us today is to understand Islam from its own documents and not to presume that we know already what we're talking about."

Follow Thomas D. Williams on Twitter

With so much bad news coming out of the Muslim world, it is important that we know and understand that there is also "Good News" that is not being reported in the mainstream media.

## WHY THERE'S AN UNQUENCHABLE REVIVAL RAGING THROUGH IRAN: NOW OVER 300,000 CONVERTS TO CHRIST

News Staff : Nov 14, 2016 : CBN News

"The Lord is really doing something. The Iranians are a spiritual people ... every day we have many coming to the Lord." -Mark Howard

(Iran)—[CBN News] Hundreds of Iranian and Afghan Muslims are coming to Christ despite the very real threat of violent persecution or death. (Photo: via CNS News)



The baptism service | photo: Elam Ministries

The service took place in a swimming pool at a secret location in a country bordering Iran to avoid interference from the Iranian authorities.

Elam Ministries reported that more than 200 Iranians and Afghans were baptized just outside Iran. Doing so inside the country could mean death. "I never thought I would find freedom from my past, but Jesus has set me free," one newly baptized Christian told Elam Ministries.

Despite the dangers of converting to Christianity, revival is breaking out in Iran—one of the most dangerous places to be a Christian. "Twenty years ago, everyone thought there were 2,000-5,000 Believers in Iran," says Elam Ministries' Mark Howard. Today that number has grown more than ten-fold. Howard says a "conservative estimate" is 300,000 - 400,000 Muslim converts to Christianity are now living in Iran.

"The Lord is really doing something," Howard said. "Every day we have many coming to the Lord. If you give a starving person food and water they will want to share it. That's what they find in Jesus. They are so hungry and thirsty for the truth. They are experiencing it in a powerful way. When they do they want to share it with others,"

He says so many people are tired of Iran's iron-fist government and are ready to find the truth. "The Iranians are spiritual people. As many search for truth and hunger for the truth, it is natural to look for that in Jesus. When someone tells them about Jesus they are eager," Howard said.

Source:

<http://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/cwn/2016/november/ministry-in-iran-seeing-revival-converts>

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## Thousands Of British School Children Benefit From 'Game-Changing' Teaching On Christianity



[Harry Farley](#), Journalist 25 November 2016

Thousands of children in more than 2,000 schools have benefited from 'Understanding Christianity' since it was launched six months ago. The aid focuses on key theological concepts like salvation to help pupils get to grips with what Christians believe.

One RE advisor said: "I have never had such a positive response to one initiative."Pixabay

Derek Holloway, school character and SIAMS development manager at the CofE, hailed the uptake from hundreds of teachers as a "genuine step forward" for religious education.

"The resource helps develop greater theological literacy and a deep understanding of the Christian narrative in pupils," wrote Holloway on a [CofE blog](#). "This in turn helps young people to make sense of the world and their experience within it as well as helping to give young people confidence to have informed conversations about belief and faith."

It comes after a 2014 report called for a more challenging approach to teaching Christianity in schools.

The large-scale resource is aimed at pupils aged between four and 14 and has led to calls for similar resources for different religions.

Launching the tool in May, Nigel Genders, chief education officer for the Church, said: "RE is primarily about teaching religious literacy. The ability for young people to have informed conversation and dialogue about belief and faith is key to building a peaceful society and helps combat ignorance and extremism.

"We recognize that within the rich Christian heritage of Britain, a particular responsibility of the Church of England is to ensure Christianity is well taught in our schools. This large-scale resource promotes theological literacy and a deep understanding of the whole Christian narrative for children and young people."

Six month on it has been used in more than 2,000 schools and hailed as the "best set of teaching and learning resources" in RE.

David Ford, regius professor of Divinity Emeritus at Cambridge University and consultant on the project said: "This resource manages to interconnect the text of the Bible, the beliefs and practices of Christians, and the world of the pupils – a remarkable achievement.

"It is demanding on teachers and pupils, yet both are also given rich materials to resource them, with pointers to much more. The promise is of a richer, deeper, wiser understanding of Christianity for both Christians and non-Christians, and an attractive mode of exploration and learning for both pupils and teachers."

<http://www.understandingchristianity.org.uk/>

# “A Teaching Job”

Posted November 19, 2016

*You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. Deuteronomy 11:19-21*

A new study coming out of the United Kingdom has shared some interesting stuff.

For example, the study, done by ComRes, and paid for by Theos, a religious think tank, has discovered that

1. 34 percent of parents thought social media has more influence on their children than they do.
2. A little over 50 percent said they feel uncomfortable talking with their kids about their faith.
3. In England and Wales for the first time there are more unbelievers than believers.

Those figures are shocking, but there was one which, I think, guarantees the decline of the church for the foreseeable future: 23 percent of Christian parents are worried their little ones might be rejected by their classmates if their faith becomes a public thing.

The really scary part is how those parents plan to deal with the problem. These parents are *not*

- \* developing a confirmation program to help the kids stand up for their beliefs;
- \* teaching the children about their legal rights;
- \* educating them on how to withstand or avoid a religious bully.

Nope, a fair percentage of these parents have decided the best way they can help their children of faith avoid being persecuted -- *are you ready* -- is not tell them anything.

The rather long passage up above, the one from Deuteronomy, which outlines God's plan of education for parents and their children, has been put up on a high shelf where it can't be reached and it won't be remembered.

Instead of God's plan, the parents have agreed with this idea: if kids don't know anything about their faith, they won't say anything about that faith, and if they don't say anything about their faith, no one will pick on them.

Nobody can question the logic of these parents. Their logic is flawless if the greatest duty of a Christian parent is to assure their offspring have playmates.

On the other hand, if you, as a parent, are more concerned about seeing your children in heaven, you might want to share Jesus' salvation story when you are sitting at home or when you're walking by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise.

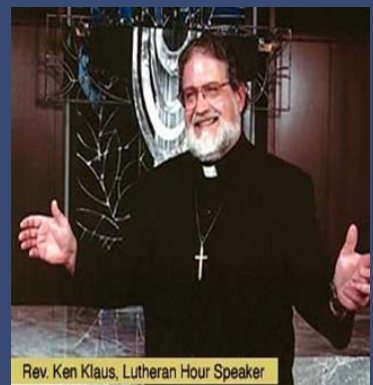
In short -- 24/7 -- tell your kids that Jesus gave His life so they could have life eternal.

**THE PRAYER:** Dear Lord, grant that parents everywhere may realize that You have entrusted them with helping a child's body, mind and *soul* grow strong. Most of all, let parents teach of Jesus, who is our Savior and the only path to heaven. In His Name we pray. Amen.

In Christ I remain His servant and yours,



Pastor Ken Klaus  
Speaker Emeritus of [The Lutheran Hour](#)®  
Lutheran Hour Ministries



# The “Back Page” More Musings...

Web Site, Facebook, Blog, IM, Tweet, Snapchat and Text, we stay connected to the world and our friends so that every waking moment we know and let other people know what we are thinking.

These are my personal comments and do not reflect the opinions/views of the EPC, GCEPC/LEPC.

I don't want to know what you are thinking every waking moment and you certainly don't want to know what I am thinking. The very technology that has enable us to get instant information has also become the best way to get misinformation. The fact that An angry remark, once only heard by a few can be immortalized and spread around the world is scary at best, stupid to say the least.

Blogging has taken away the insightful, thoughtful writings that we would occasionally see because something must be turned out every day if you are to stay on top. The Facebook ads and pop-ups slant the news give their ideas to people looking at your page and the shaping of thought is funneled into one big idea. George Orwell never dreamt of this, 1984 on steroids.

Don't get me wrong, a web presence is necessary. I create and manage Web Sites as well as Networks. I make sure that the Doctors and Chiropractor office has IM so each person can communicate from their computer without leaving their desk or shouting a cross the room. My wife likes talking and seeing her Brother in Peru from time to time via Messenger on Facebook and when I want information I Google it and expect the information I need to be there.

What I don't like is the amount of misinformation and slanted views that permeate the Web and the gullibility of people getting that information. CNN reports that teens spend 9 hours a day using media. Anything over 30 seconds is too long for the average attention span, the reason you hear two 15 second ads back to back is you will tune in to some of both and get the idea. Make your presence count but keep it fresh. The people who come across your presence are on the move and will not stop unless something catches their eye. Your word of mouth is the best way to get people on your sites, expecting a following just because you are on the Web doesn't work.

Jesus would not be tweeting, texting, on Facebook or have a Web Page because Jesus communicated one on one, face to face, with real people. He directed his communication to the people around him and it was recorded by his Disciples and followers. God directed what would be written and we have it in a timeless book that isn't updated every 30 days and does not change with every new administration. I imagine Peter however would be Texting, Tweeting, IM'ing and posting everything going on.

My Ministry involves people, not technology. I have a website [www.MtCalvaryMission.com](http://www.MtCalvaryMission.com), a Blog <http://mtcalvarymission.blogspot.com/> and I am on Facebook. I keep information on my Web-page I sometime add thoughts to my Blog and I never check Facebook, my wife looks at stuff posted by her Sister and Nieces. I can be found and information is posted but my Ministry is not in the Cloud.

I deal with people everyday and I minister to people daily and weekly. Everything I say and do does not need to be shared, the little that does, is. I urge you to take advantage of and have a Web presence but just as with the Savior the Real Presence is what counts. Put relevant information and current information on your pages, stay up to date and use the available platform to fit your Ministry. You can offer Bible Studies, Prayer Requests and the opportunity to answer questions and concerns on your sites. Search for the information you want to give people and then check out the sites that come up, yours needs to be like them.

I Love to Tell the Story!

## From the Editor

Deadline for Spring magazine is February 15, 2017. I want to hear about YOUR ministries. Send info and pictures, links to your websites if any.

May the blessings of Christ be with you all. ED.



Is he done yet?



Steve & Teddy 9/28/1951

*Pastor Steve*

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