

# THE CROSS



“A CHURCH WHERE EVERYBODY IS SOMEBODY AND CHRIST IS LORD OF ALL”



## 2 CHRONICLES 7:14

IF MY PEOPLE, WHICH ARE CALLED BY MY NAME, SHALL HUMBLE THEMSELVES, AND PRAY, AND SEEK MY FACE, AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS, THEN WILL I HEAR FROM HEAVEN, AND WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN, AND WILL HEAL THEIR LAND.

## Memo From God

Effective immediately, please be aware that there are changes YOU need to make in YOUR life. These changes need to be completed in order that I may fulfill My promises to  
*(Memo From God on page 12)*

## Holy Week

Holy Week begins with  
**Palm Sunday** (Sunday, April 5) to  
**Easter Sunday** (Sunday, April 12)  
*(Holy Week on page 10)*

### The Mind Of Christ In These Times

When we look at the current events taking place around the world and in our nation with spiritual eyes we can see and hear the words of our savior whisper in our spirits.

We hear the sobering words which Jesus spoke to an innumerable number of people in Luke chapter 12:54-56; “And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a  
*(These Times on page 15)*

### Hardest Working Brother

The first time I met Norman Bishop, I thought to myself, “*men, here is one of those times when I can confidently predict the ethnic origins of an African American. This guy is a Nigerian; 99%, and precisely from the Yoruba ethnicity*”. The other percent, I would give comfortably to any of the adjoining nations, namely; Dahomey (currently, part of Benin) or the Cameroon. My assertion was, and still, derived from a knack I have developed over the years; whereby,  
*(Working Brother page 12)*

March / April 2020  
Volume 24 Issue 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Desk	2
Fruit of the Spirit	4
Lord Hear Our Prayer	5
The Armor of God	6
Daily Bible Reading	7
Christian Season	7
Name of God	7
Sunday Church School	8
Words To Live By	16
Daily Confession of Faith	17
Spirit Lifters	18
Barbara Perry Speaks	19
The Beauty of Holland	20
Joyce Meyer	21
Bible's Bird's Eye View	22
Our Daily Bread	24
Activities	25



Visit our Facebook page

### When Your Reputation Speaks For You

(This appeared first time in 2017 – but we need to be reminded of its gravity each February)

In any meaningful, matured discussion about the August 11 to 12 events in Charlottesville, Virginia, we have to start with some fundamental ground rules. First the Klan is not and has never been a charitable organization. Its basic principle is to use violence in any form necessary to intimidate and to eliminate their targets. Second, the Nazis; new or otherwise, have just one principle for

existing. That is to exterminate all people who don't look like they do. Third, the two organizations have nothing worthy of emulating when it comes to peace and kind-heartedness.

In all human history, the two organizations combined have murdered many more human beings than all other organizations combined. The numbers for the atrocities leading to the events of the second world war have been

*(Reputation on page 14)*



# From The Pastor's Desk

Dear Church Family,

As we shared previously, this COVID 19 virus is quite fluid, and we are trying our best to work on a plan as we move forward over the next days, weeks, or months?

While we could become distressed about what we are going through, we can also view it as an opportunity for God to show up powerfully through His people.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to you for your response in this challenging time in the life of our Nation and World. It is encouraging and heartening to see so many of you living out your faith in real-time!

As a result of the Corona virus, we as a church are experiencing issues we would never have anticipated only a few short weeks ago. The primary concern is safety. Please follow the guidelines: stay home when you are sick, cover your coughs, and wash your hands often with soap and water at least for 20 seconds. If soap and water not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, avoid touching your face, thoroughly and repeatedly clean high-contact surfaces and objects. The Federal Government (President) recommends gathering of no more than ten persons and social distancing 6 feet away. Call 211 for all concerns about the Corona Virus.

We have to all do our part to stop this virus from spreading. We are in the midst of a tremendous trial both as a Nation, as well as the World, as we seek answers for Corona virus. We continue in prayer for a quick, lasting resolution to the pandemic.

I'm reminded of a Scripture in Psalms 46:1-3 (NIV) God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging". With all my heart, I believe we continue to serve a good God who has already been to "tomorrow" and knows "the rest of the story". We still believe the best is yet to come! While we continue to have great faith in God, we also must use our God-given wisdom during these times.

Some may be wondering what we plan to do as a church, so we would like to outline the following,

realizing of course that the situation continues to be fluid and things could change.

On Sunday at 10:00 a.m. I will make a brief statement on Facebook Live Stream on Cross Street page. We will make every effort to stay in contact with all members through the Class Leader System, Facebook, email, voicemail, Zoom, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, postal mail, phone calls, visits, and the website.

For any concerns, call the church office (860) 344-9527, the Pastor (860) 262-1136, and your Class Leader. Please provide the office with all your contact information that we can keep you informed on critical matters. We are in touch with Federal, State, and Local officials on efforts that are in process to support our community in this crisis.

Let's love each other through this! Much Love from the Pastor and First Lady Eledia.

Christ Blessings,

Pastor Harvill

Note: Counting on you to join others to keep Christ Church going by the giving of your tithes, offerings, and Men's Day gifts.

You can give:

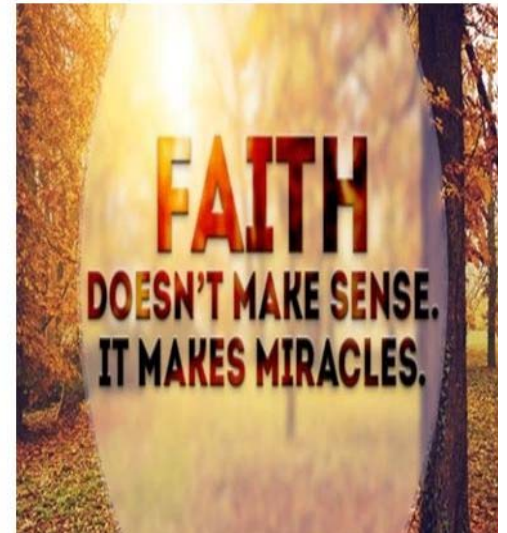
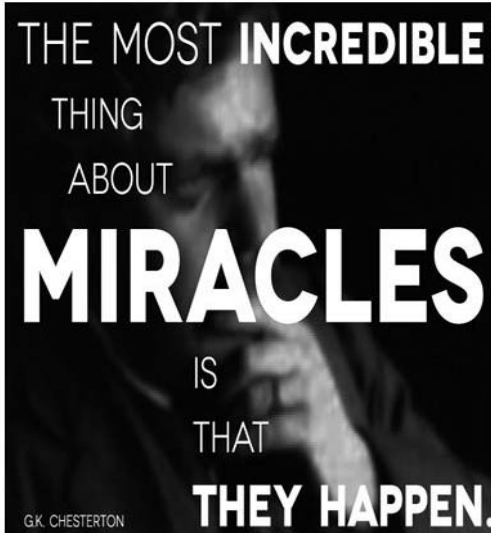
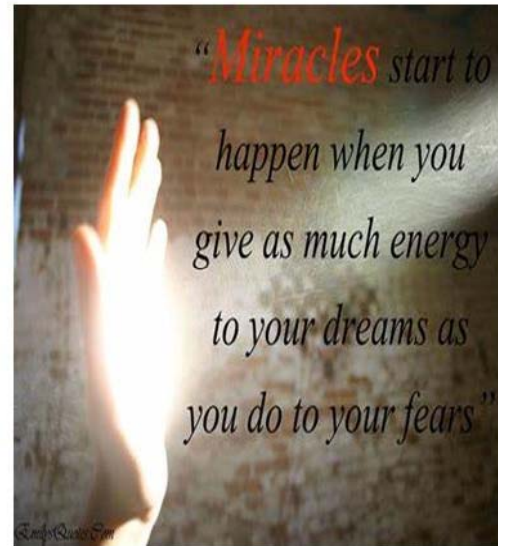
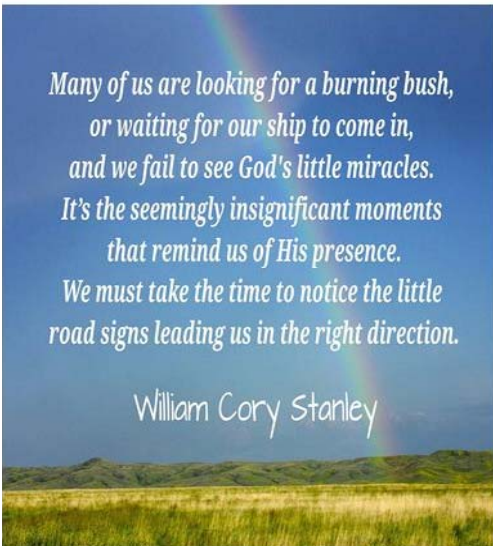
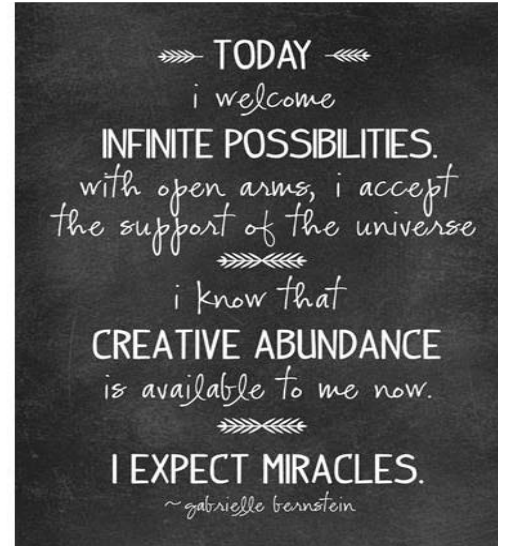
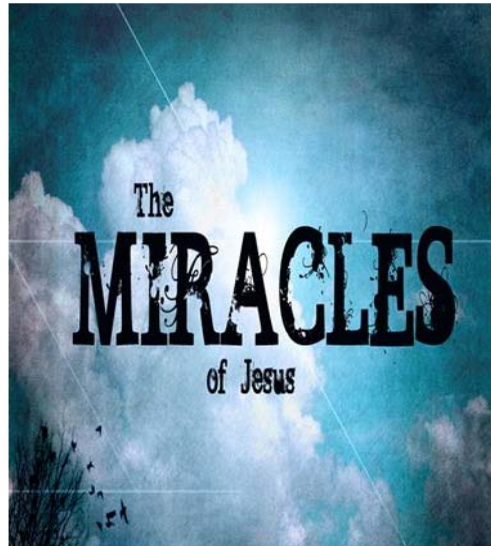
1. On-line: [crossstreetamezion.org Realm](https://crossstreetamezion.org/Realm), (Realm: <https://onrealm.org/TheCross/-/give/TJXKDEVIXE>)
2. Text: "Thecross \$(enter desired amount to give)" to 73256
3. PayPal,
4. Mail: P.O. Box 223 Middletown, Ct 06457,
5. Drop off on Sunday 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
6. Call the office for someone to pick up.

(Note: links can be found on website; [www.crossstreetamezion.org/Give](http://www.crossstreetamezion.org/Give))

**We are stronger together.**

# 2020 Vision

## The Year of Expected "Miracles"



**The fruit of the Spirit** abides in us and it is up to us to cultivate it so that we may experience the blessing and the fullness of the Spirit. God is the husbandman..."He prunes, nurtures, waters and protects His own. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit will energize and control every faculty of our nature when our will joins the will of God. Then the "beauty of the Lord will be upon us" (Psalm 90:17) and "we shall bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4)."

## FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

***"But the fruit of the Spirit is LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONGSUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE: against such there is no law."*** (Galatians 5:22, 23)

The fruit of the Spirit abides in us and it is up to us to cultivate it so that we may experience the blessing and the fullness of the Spirit. God is the husbandman..."He prunes, nurtures, waters and protects His own. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit will energize and control every faculty of our nature when our will joins the will of God. Then the "beauty of the Lord will be upon us" (Psalm 90:17) and "we shall bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4)."

The fruit of LOVE when properly motivated "is pure, far reaching, forgiving. There is no limit to the good that LOVE does. God is LOVE. (I John 4:7)

JOY never fades, it is never destroyed by circumstances, it is unaffected by wealth or poverty, sickness or health. It is found in the presence of God (Psalm 16:11)

PEACE "is a tranquility of mind as a result of a right relationship with God". The PEACE of God in our hearts challenges sin at every turn and deals with it immediately in order to maintain that right relationship. (Ephesians 2:14)

LONG-SUFFERING means steadfastness of the soul under provocation. It means forbearance and patient endurance of ill-treatment, without anger or thought of revenge. (Colossians 3:12, 13)

GENTLENESS is sweet reasonableness, calmness and graciousness. It calms troubled waters, settles turmoil and heals strife. (James 3:17)

GOODNESS does good to others. It is kindness of heart and good deeds. It may not always be a gentle word, but a stern rebuke done for the good of someone else. (Psalm 33:5)

MEEKNESS disarms the stormy, tempestuous person. The qualities of mildness and gentleness in dealing with others. It is not weak. It is a high quality of spiritual strength. (I Timothy 6:11)

FAITH means faithfulness to Christ and His cause. It manifests itself in being a trustworthy steward of God. It is trust and obedience, belief in God's word and promises. (Hebrews 11:1)

TEMPERANCE is power, it is strength, having self-control. It means discipline. It provides balance to the Christian's life. It enables him to praise Him whether in discipline or testing. (Proverbs 11:1) (Information taken in part from World-Wide Keswick publication and Holy Scriptures)

Satan tries to imitate the real thing with an artificial fruit. As you can see, the artificial fruit is very much like the real thing and if we are not careful, we can fall into the trap of expressing limited love, temporary joy, numbness, insensitivity, manipulation, hypocrisy, half-heartedness, false modesty and choosing lesser goals.

### THE FRUIT, *The Artificial Fruit,* **The Weed**

LOVE, *limited love*, **hatred**; JOY, *temporary JOY*, **sorrow**; PEACE, *numbness, carelessness*, **anxiety strife**;  
PATIENCE, *laziness, insensitivity*, **impatience**; KINDNESS, *manipulation by kindness*, **pride**;  
GOODNESS, *hypocrisy*, **evil**; FAITHFULNESS, *half-heartedness*, **infidelity**;  
MEEKNESS, *false modesty*, **self-seeking**; SELF-CONTROL, *choosing lesser goals*, **lack of control**  
(The Fruit of the Spirit, John W. Sanderson)

## Lord Hear Our Prayers

### HOW TO PRAY

Question: **How do I start?**

Answer: *Praying is not as hard as you might think. What is hard is getting into the habit of talking to God everyday. Maybe you could start by picking a time everyday. Think about things you want to say. "Thank you" or "I'm sorry" or "Please help me." You don't have to use fancy words. You can talk to God like you talk to your dad, mom or a friend.*

Question: **Can I tell God anything?**

Answer: Yes you can. There isn't a thing you could say to God that would make him stop loving you. You can tell him when you're sad or grumpy. You can thank him when everything is going your way. You can lean on God when you're having a bad day. You can talk to him just like you would talk to a friend. But you know what? Your friends might let you down. Sometimes you might not have someone to listen to you. But God will always listen and he'll understand.

Question: **How do I know God hears me?**

Answer: God promises to listen! God has promised in the Bible that he will listen to you. Look at **Psalm 66:17-19** and read **John 16:23**, where God promises to listen when you pray in Jesus' name. Most important of all, the Holy Spirit lives in your heart. He helps you know for sure that God listens when you talk to him.

Question: **Must I fold my hands and close my eyes when I pray?**

Answer: That 's one way to do it. Closing your eyes shows you don't want anything to get in the way of talking with God. But it's not the only way to pray. You can pray while on your knees or standing up. You can pray with toys in your hands or while your hugging your mom or dad. You can talk to God at anytime because he is always right there with you, and he wants you to be his friend.

\*\*\*\*\*

A prayer I have is for the welfare of families who live with abusive parents where the kids used to have a few hours of refuge in school but are now forced to face their tormentors all day. It is for women with abusive husbands where one or both used to spend separate hours at work, but are now forced to face the abuser all day. I am saddened to think of the rage in the eyes of several drug abusers in homes of growing families who now have to deal with the horrible effects of people who cannot meet their addicted habits and will now heave evil on their innocent family members. Who is looking out for these unfortunate members of our communities? - Kwame Ocansey

\*\*\*\*\*

Heavenly Father, I come to you knowing that you are able to answer the prayers of your children. I pray for those men, women, boys and girls who are in an abusive relationship, especially during this Corona Virus. I pray that you will keep them safe from all hurt harm, and danger. Let your will be done in Jesus name I pray. There is power in His name. The name that is above all names. Hallelujah, Amen!!! Thank you Father for hearing my prayer and answering it.—Ken Simmons

### When you Need Hope

**Key Scripture:** "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" (Psalm 42:11).

**Key Thought:** Which we have as an anchor of your soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; (Hebrews 6:19.)

**Prayer:** Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon me as I endeavor to experience the hope you promise to me. <sup>1</sup> You are my hiding place and my shield, and I find hope in your Word. <sup>2</sup>

Let my life be filled with your hope, joy, peace, and faith so that I will always continue to abound in hope through the power of your Holy Spirit. <sup>3</sup>

Thank you for equipping me with your protective armor, Father. <sup>4</sup> I put on the hope of salvation as my helmet. <sup>5</sup> thank you for giving me everlasting consolation and good hope through your grace. <sup>6</sup>

Even now, as I pray, I experience your hope as being the sure and steadfast anchor of my soul? <sup>7</sup> From now on, I will hope continually, and I will praise you more and more. <sup>8</sup> Christ in me is the hope of glory. <sup>9</sup>

Father, thank you for exchanging my sense of hopelessness with your abiding hope.

### References:

(1) Psalms 33:22; (2) Psalms 119:114; (3) Romans 15:13; (4) Ephesians 6:11; (5) Ephesians 6:17; (6) 2 Thessalonians 2:16; (7) Hebrews 6:19; (8) Psalms 71:14; (9) Colossians 1:27.

# THE ARMOR OF GOD

**EPHESIANS 6:10-18**  
"... Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." v. 10, 11

**The Shield of Faith** (Eph. 6:16)  
Faith is being sure that God will keep His promises. Faith in God protects you when you are tempted to doubt.

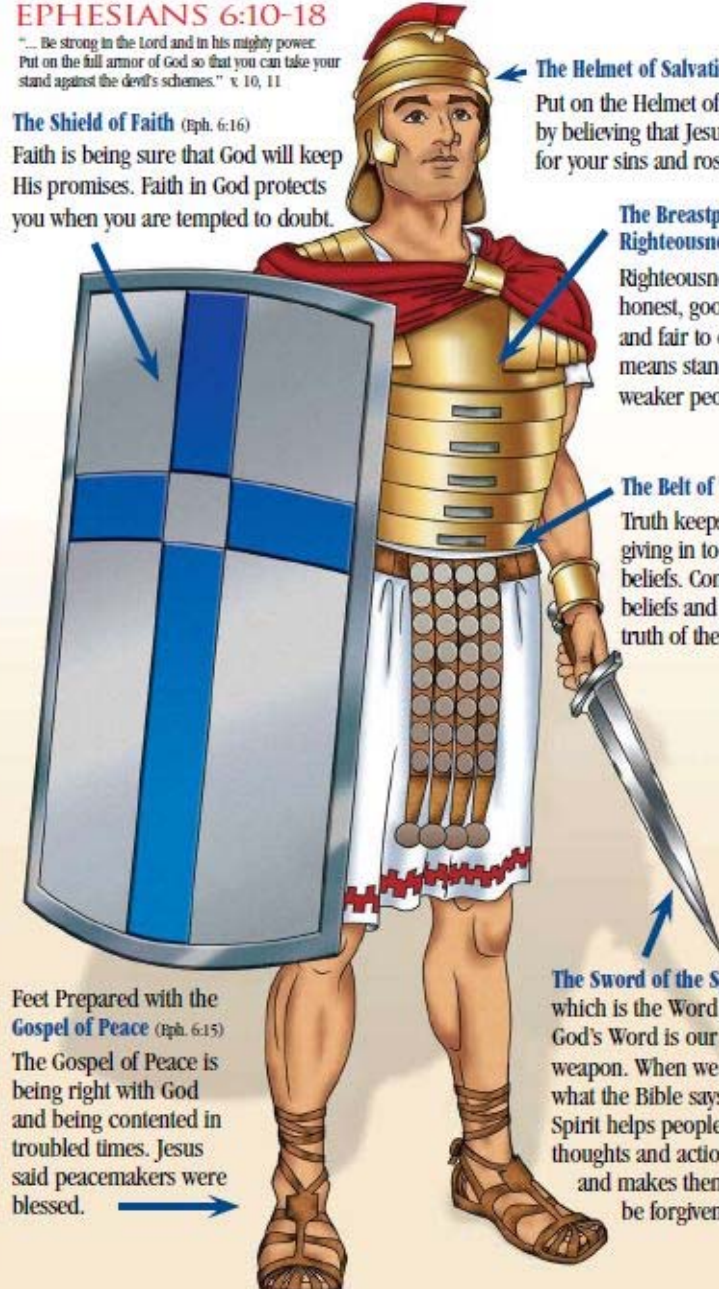
**The Helmet of Salvation** (Eph. 6:17)  
Put on the Helmet of Salvation by believing that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again.

**The Breastplate of Righteousness** (Eph. 6:14)  
Righteousness is being honest, good, humble, and fair to others. It means standing up for weaker people.

**The Belt of Truth** (Eph. 6:14)  
Truth keeps us from giving in to the world's beliefs. Compare your beliefs and actions to the truth of the Word of God.

**The Sword of the Spirit** (Eph. 6:17)  
which is the Word of God. God's Word is our offensive weapon. When we tell others what the Bible says, the Holy Spirit helps people see their bad thoughts and actions, and makes them want to be forgiven.

**Feet Prepared with the Gospel of Peace** (Eph. 6:15)  
The Gospel of Peace is being right with God and being contented in troubled times. Jesus said peacemakers were blessed.



## Ephesians 6:10-20 (New King James Version)

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,<sup>[a]</sup> against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak

## Read the BIBLE in ONE Year

### MARCH

1 Joshua 7-9	8 Judges 5-8	16 1 Samuel 8-10	24 2 Samuel 5-8
2 Joshua 10-12	9 Judges 9-12	17 1 Samuel 11-13	25 2 Samuel 9-12
3 Joshua 13-15	10 Judges 13-15	18 1 Samuel 14-16	26 2 Samuel 13-15
4 Joshua 16-18	11 Judges 16-18	19 1 Samuel 17-20	27 2 Samuel 16-18
5 Joshua 19-21	12 Judges 19-21	20 1 Samuel 21-24	28 2 Samuel 19-21
6 Joshua 22-24	13 Ruth 1-4	21 1 Samuel 25-28	29 Samuel 22-24
7 Judges 1-4	14 1 Sam. 1-3	22 1 Samuel 22-24	30 1 Kings 1-4
	15 1 Samuel 4-7	23 2 Samuel 1-4	31 1 Kings 5-7

### APRIL

1 1 Kings 8-10	8 2 Kings 7-10	16 1 Chronicles 7-9	24 2 Chronicles 4-6
2 1 Kings 11-13	9 2 Kings 11-14	17 1 Chronicles 10-13	25 2 Chronicles 7-9
3 1 Kings 14-16	10 2 Kings 15-17	18 1 Chronicles 14-16	26 2 Chronicles 10-13
4 1 Kings 17-19	11 2 Kings 18-20	19 1 Chronicles 17-19	27 2 Chronicles 14-16
5 1 Kings 20-22	12 2 Kings 21-22	20 1 Chronicles 20-23	28 2 Chronicles 17-19
6 2 Kings 1-3	13 2 Kings 23-25	21 1 Chronicles 24-26	29 2 Chronicles 20-22
7 2 Kings 4-6	14 1 Chronicles 1-3	22 1 Chronicles 27-28	30 2 Chronicles 23-25
	15 1 Chronicles 4-6	23 2 Chronicles 1-3	

### MAY

1 2 Chronicles 26-29	8 Nehemiah 4-6	16 Job 8-10	24 Job 35-37
2 2 Chronicles 30-32	9 Nehemiah 7-9	17 Job 11-13	25 Job 38-42
3 2 Chronicles 33-36	10 Nehemiah 10-13	18 Job 14-17	26 Psalms 1-4
4 Ezra 1-4	11 Esther 1-3	19 Job 18-20	27 Psalms 5-8
5 Ezra 5-7	12 Esther 4-7	20 Job 21-24	28 Psalms 9-12
6 Ezra 8-10	13 Esther 8-10	21 Job 25-27	29 Psalms 13-15
7 Nehemiah 1-3	14 Job 1-4	22 Job 28-31	30 Psalms 16-18
	15 Job 5-7	23 Job 32-34	31 Psalms 19-21

**Lent** is the period of time to reflect on the events that led Jesus to Calvary. Its begins with Ash Wednesday and covers a period of forty days (excluding Sundays) culminating with Holy Week (including Passion/Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday). Lent is a time of fasting, sacrifice, and preparation.

**Color:** Purple (violet or lilac) is the color used to denote royalty, praying, fasting, and penitence. It represents a symbol of the majesty of Christ, and Jesus' humanity, suffering, and fasting.

A guideline given by some money managers is as follows: Give 1/10 (tithe of your income to God). Put 1/10 in savings. Put 1/10 in an emergency account until three months of pay is set aside. Live on the remaining 7/10 with freedom to work towards giving as much as possible to God's work.

**Eastertide** covers a fifty-day period (six Sundays) that challenges persons to reflect on the resurrection of Jesus. Ascension Day is celebrated the sixth Thursday after Easter and commemorates the last manifestation of Jesus to His followers after the resurrection. (Luke 24:50-51 and Acts 1:2-11.) Ascension Sunday is the Sunday following Ascension Day. The season ends with the Day of Pentecost.

**Color:** White is the appropriate color for the season, with gold as an accent color. White is symbolic of light, joy, purity, glory, and the bright light of truth.

Name of God	Meaning	Application
<b>EL</b>	The Strong One	He is more powerful than any false god. God will overcome all obstacles. We can depend on God.
<b>EL ELOHE YISRAEL</b>	God, the God of Israel	The God of Israel is distinct and separate from all false gods of the world.
<b>EL ELYON</b>	The God Most High	He is the Sovereign God in whom we can put our trust. El Elyon has supremacy over all false gods.
<b>ELOHIM</b>	The All-powerful One	God is the all-powerful creator of the universe. God knows all, creates all, and is everywhere at all times. The plural of "EL".



## Sunday School is a Family Affair

8:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. We have classes for all ages – 3 to 103  
New Members Class meets at the same time.  
(For Transportation Needs Please call the Church 860-344-9527)

### Come Grow with US!

#### Hope for a Better Life

**Devotional Reading:**  
Isaiah 53:4-12

**Scripture:**  
1 Corinthians 15:1-8, 12-14, 20-23, 42-45.

#### DECLARATION:

##### *The Resurrection of Christ*

<sup>1</sup> Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, [a] of the good news [b] that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, <sup>2</sup> through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you-unless you have come to believe I vain.

<sup>3</sup> For I handed on to you as of first important what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters [c] at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. [d] <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> If there is no resurrection of the

*dead, then Christ has not been raised; <sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain.*

<sup>20</sup> *But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. [a]*

<sup>21</sup> *For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; <sup>22</sup> for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.*

<sup>42</sup> *So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, "Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*

**Affirmation:** We embrace the call to proclaim the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ despite ridicule or resistance!

#### ENGAGE

Many of us have hopes that life can be made better for us and our families. We strive in this life to live good and wholesome lives and build the foundation of a better

future for our children. Others who experience suffering and injustices in this present life do not put their trust in it but in their hopes for an afterlife where the hardships suffered in this present life will be reversed, and they will be rewarded with good for the endurance of previous suffering.

1. Discuss with one another how faith in the Resurrection figures in your daily life as a Christian. Discuss the significance you place on it as you labor in the church and the community For example, are you relying and depending on it, and does it have priority in your hope for the future?
2. List ways the Resurrection motivates us to work for justice with hope. Discuss with the group.
3. Discuss and share how each of your expectations of the form and nature of the resurrected life compare and contrast. How do our hymns and other spiritual songs influence our expectation regarding the nature of our resurrected life? Do we have a definite source that defines the nature of our resurrected life?

#### EDUCATE

People struggle with the concept of life after death. How can resurrection from death provide life that is different from what is experienced before death? In 1 Corinthians and Mark, only life through the resurrection of Christ engenders hope for authentic

*(Celebration on page 9)*

**Pray for all of our children, teens, young adults in this school years that God's hands will be upon them keeping them from all hurt, harm and danger. Also pray for all of our families, friends, and all of God's children.**



*(Celebration from page 8)*

justice. The church at Corinth, which Paul had established, was composed of diverse groups who had come into the faith from other religions where there were differences of beliefs concerning various issues. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul strongly addresses one of those issues, the belief in the resurrection from the dead. The Gnostic believers, for instance, believed in immortality of the soul but had problems with a resurrection of the body, which was considered an evil imprisonment of the soul. For the Christian, this belief was rooted in what Job means when he said, "After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God" (Job 19:26). Jesus' resurrection displays and confirms it, and Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 goes a long way in explaining it.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-8:** In explaining the nature of the Resurrection, Paul confronts the conflicting views among the Greeks, who readily embraced the immortality of the soul but had trouble with the notion of the body raised (Acts 17:32). To counter those who doubted it, he gives concrete proof of Jesus' resurrected body, witnessed first by the eleven disciples and later by hundreds of others. And he explains that the forgiveness of their sins and the assurance of their salvation depends on it. If they deny the truth of the Resurrection, then their faith is in vain.

**1 Corinthians 15:12-14:** The rhetorical questions Paul put to the Corinthians here reflects the usual method of argument typical of Greek rhetoric. It is thought-provoking. He invites them to reflect on what he had previously taught them and how central the Resurrection is to their faith. "Denying all resurrection logically denies Jesus' own resurrection. If we affirm his resurrection but deny the possibility of bodily resurrection for all people, then we are negating Jesus' humanity (contrast John 1:14). Such denial nullifies the sacrificial power of

Jesus' death that gives us new life... That would mean that we are still liable to the penalty for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:18). Without the possibility of the resurrection from the dead, the entire Christian message collapses; the Christian life becomes an exercise in futility..." (Standard Lesson Commentary, P.281).

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23:** Jesus did not elaborate on the theological meaning of His resurrection and connect it to Adam, but Paul extends his explanation of death to all as seen in the situation of Adam and the new resurrected life in Christ as the second Adam, through whom life eternal is restored to all.

**1 Corinthians 15:42-45:** Paul makes a logical point about the nature of the body of the resurrected person in contact to the old body, stating that there are many kinds of "bodies," in which case the resurrection body is a new, non-perishable body specially gifted from God (v. 45-48). "Paul uses the two-Adam analogy...to contrast sin and death versus eternal life. He reminds us that Adam's body was lifeless until God breathed life into it (Genesis 2:7). Only then did Adam become a living being. In the resurrection, our dead bodies will receive life again, given by the last Adam, who is Christ. The risen Christ participates as a life-giving spirit in our bodies' return to life from death... Christ is the one who has the power to recreate and restore life to our bodies. The new body in and of itself is not enough, even if it is imperishable, glorious, and powerful" (Ibid., p. 283).

**ELEVATE**

As Christians, we celebrate the resurrection of Christ as a sign of hope for justice. It is not a "pie-in-the-sky" type of hope, for we enjoy the rewards of new life in Christ right now in our daily living. Songs such as "Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine" express that present joy. Yet we look forward to a newly resurrected life different from the present one where all sorrow and suffering will be turned

into joy and celebration. While we experience joys and sorrows now, in the resurrection, as the hymn "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?" so poignantly phrases it, we will "taste unmingled love and joy without a tear."

Discuss further how Christians experience a sense of resurrection renewal and restoration in the present life due to their spiritual life in Christ. How does this take place and how might it be increased?

To what extent are Christians willing to bear courageously the sorrow and suffering in the present life as we look forward to the hope in the life to come? How does this belief square with our concept of justice?

**I THINK:**

1. Roleplay the scene of Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Saome coming to the tomb early and encountering the young man, and what follows (Mark 16:1-8). Discuss how the story of the Resurrection relates to Paul's teaching about the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.
2. Discuss the meaning of the Resurrection of Christ as a sign of hope for justice.
3. Research and discuss the differences between resurrection and reincarnation and the Christian belief regarding the two.

**VERSE OF THE WEEK:**

**If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. 1 Corinthians 15:19-20.**

From The Young People-Adult Quarterly (Ages 18 and up) International Sunday School Lessons for Christian Teaching

*(Holy Week from page 1)*

The key to many customs and traditions in Lent is what down through the ages has come to be known as Holy Week, the last week in Lent. It has become a tradition to trace the activities of Jesus that led to the cross of Calvary. Holy Week begins with **Palm Sunday** as a reminder of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The people along the roadside waved palms and shouted "Hosanna" the Hebrew word for "save now." (See Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-40, and John 12:12-19.) Many churches today bless the palms and distribute them in the form of crosses to be worn by the worshippers.



**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

Maundy Thursday lifts up the event of the Lord's Last Supper that was celebrated in the Upper Room at the time of the Jewish Passover. It is the basis for the establishment of sacrament of Holy Communion. Historically, the Passover marked the Israelites' departure from Egypt when the final plague was cast upon the Egyptians to smite the first born dead (Exodus). The Hebrews received special instruction to kill a lamb the or goat for each household and to sprinkle the blood on the doorpost and the life of the first born would be spared. Every Jew/Hebrew was required to celebrate the Passover, and the Lord's Last Supper was Jesus' observance of the Passover.

However, Jesus brought new meaning to this event as it commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage – all of humanity was delivered from sin.

The Lord's Supper was the last meal that Jesus shared with the disciples before going to Calvary. It occurred on what is called Maundy Thursday. "Maundy" is a variation of the Latin word "mandatum" meaning "commandment" (see John 13:34). The significance of God's love for humanity comes forth in this act because it was and is through Jesus' blood and body that persons are redeemed. Therefore, the new commandment requires persons to love one another just as God loves all persons. The Latin word "Mundo" means to wash, and some claim this is how Maundy Thursday came into being, since Jesus washed the disciples' feet on that day. Some denominations and congregations still carry out the practice of washing feet before Holy Communion, at least on Holy Thursday.

Yet another tradition credits the name to the word "maund" for basket and the practice of giving baskets of goodies to the poor. Whatever the source, Maundy Thursday is practiced in just about every Christian church with either a love feast or Holy Communion being participated in by all. One cannot but help call to mind the celebration of the feast of the Passover by Jews. Christians celebrate similarly, for this is in remembrance of the Lamb of God who willingly shed blood for the sins of the whole world.

**GOOD FRIDAY**

Most authors agree that the term "Good Friday" evolved from "God's Friday." It is one the three days that many persons make an effort to attend church, the other being Easter Sunday and Christmas Day. Services in most churches last about three hours since generally, the seven last words of Jesus are used.

The Seven Last Words are:

1. "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:34
2. "Today, you will be with me in Paradise." Luke 23:43
3. "Woman, here is your son, ... Son, Here is your Mother." John 19:26-27
4. "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Mark 15:34 and Matthew 27:46

5. "I am thirsty." John 19:28

6 "It is finished." John 19:30

7. "Father, into your hands I commend My Spirit." Luke 23:46

More and more today, however, times and length of services are being arranged to meet the working schedules of most parishioners. Good Friday represents the day of that dreadful crucifixion and is not just a day of mourning. It is a day of remembrance of the events of the day, especially the time Jesus hung on the cross. It is appropriate

*(Holy Week on page 11)*

(Holy Week from page 10)

to leave the altar bare and use no liturgical color. However, if desired, black may be used. In many countries, the old practice was (and in some instances still is) not to cook on Good Friday. Rather, one drinks some beverage and eat hot cross buns. Like most other customs and traditions, cross buns have pagan origins. According to Rudolph Brasch, it was part of a pagan festival of bread offered to idols at spring time. Horns were stamped on the buns. This, however became the mark of the cross. It not only was a symbol, but served a practical purpose. When these buns were used in love feasts, it was easier to divide one into four pieces.



## EASTER

Easter Sunday commemorates the glorious resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It is the other highest point of the Christian Year. Thus, joy and celebration engulfs the season as the Christian Church rejoices in the fact of the resurrection and its meaning to the Christian faith, hope, and life. Many wonder why Easter occurs on various Sundays from year to year? Easter does not occur on a set day like Christmas because it is determined by the moon and the seasons in nature. Thus, for most Protestants and Roman Catholics, Easter falls on the Sunday near the beginning of Spring, which is also after the first full moon. Because of the fluctuating cycle, Easter Sunday can occur anywhere between March 22 and April 25. Therefore, Easter is a

determining factor in the cycle that sets the beginning and end of some of the seasons. The number of days in the season of advent (four Sundays weeks prior to Christmas), Christmas / Christmastide (from Christmas day to the day before Epiphany-January 6, twelve days), Lent (forty days, excluding the Sundays), and Eastertide (fifty days), are constant seasons in terms of length. The Season After Epiphany, The Season After Pentecost, and Kingdomtide experience the variation from year to year.

Easter has been described as the oldest festival of the church. It truly is the key to Christianity, since it emphasizes the redemption of humans. Note that in the early Christian Church, the word used for Easter was *Pascha*. This is from the Hebrew word for Passover. The closeness and similarity between the Jewish Passover and the celebration of Lent and Easter should be recalled and remembered. The Jews observed the *Passing Over* of the houses of the Israelites who had the blood of the lamb smeared upon the posts of their houses, by the death angel during their sojourn in Egypt. This was the final plague before Pharaoh agreed to let God's people, the Israelites go. For Christians, the blood that saves persons from eternal damnation is the blood of Jesus, shed upon the cross at Calvary. Easter, like the word Lent, has nothing to do with the reason for celebrating these occasions. Rather, Easter comes from the name of an Anglo-Saxon spring goddess, *Easter*, whose festival was observed at the spring equinox. Easter is indeed THE DAY of the days in the church calendar. This is the day that celebrates Christ's resurrection from the grave. Without the resurrection, there would be no Christian Church. This is why many Christians moved their day of worship to Sunday. So, not only is it a day of worship, but a little Easter, when persons remember that Christ rose from the dead. (See Matthew 28:1-7, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:1-10.)

The observance of Lent would have no meaning if it were not for that victorious first Easter. The crucifixion without the resurrection would not be a victory and would destroy the essence of the Christian faith and God's redemptive act. To be resurrection signifies that something or someone who was dead has return to a living state. Christ's resurrection was a demonstration of that fact and a revelation of God's power over sin and death. Thus, the agony and tragedy of the cross was transformed into a joyous celebration and God's fulfillment of the covenantal promise was affirmed. ALLELUIA! Jesus arose as a "mighty triumph over His foes" and lives forever. The liturgical color for Easter/Eastertide is white, symbolizing purity. Along with white, gold is often used to give emphasis to this most holy day of the church year.



**ALLELUIA, HE IS RISEN, ALLELUIA, HE IS RISEN!**

*(Memo From God from page 1)*

you to grant you peace, joy and happiness in this life. I apologize for any inconvenience, but after all that I am doing, this seems very little to ask of you. I know, I already gave you the 10 Commandments. Keep them. But follow these guidelines, also.

1. **QUIT WORRYING.** Life has dealt you a blow and all you do is sit and worry. Have you forgotten that I am here to take all your burdens and carry them for you? Or do you just enjoy fretting over every little thing that comes your way?

2. **PUT IT ON THE LIST.** Something needs done or taken care of. Put it on the list. No, not YOUR list. Put it on MY to-do-list. Let ME be the one to take care of the problem. I can't help you until you turn it over to Me. And although My to-do-list is long, I am after all ... God. I can take care of anything you put into My hands. In fact, if the truth were ever really known, I take care of a lot of things for you that you never even realize.

3. **TRUST ME.** Once you've given your burdens to Me, quit trying to take them back. Trust in Me. Have the faith that I will take care of all your needs, your problems and your trials. Problems with the kids? Put them on My list. Problem with finances? Put it in My list. Problems with your emotional roller coaster? For My sake, put it on My list. I want to help you. All you have to do is ask.

4. **LEAVE IT ALONE.** Don't wake up one morning and say, "Well, I'm feeling much stronger now, I think I can handle it from here." Why do you think you are feeling stronger now? It's simple. You gave Me your burdens and I'm taking care of them.

I also renew your strength and cover you in my peace. Don't you know that if I give you these problems back, you will be right back where you started? Leave them with Me and forget about them. Just let Me do my job.

5. **TALK TO ME.** I want you to forget a lot of things. Forget what was making you crazy. Forget the worry and the fretting because you know I'm in control. But there's one thing I pray you never forget. Please, don't forget to talk to Me - OFTEN! I love YOU! I want to hear your voice. I want you to include Me in on the things going on in your life. I want to hear you talk about your friends and family. Prayer is simply you having a conversation with Me. I want to be your dearest friend.

6. **HAVE FAITH.** I see a lot of things from up here that you can't see from where you are. Have faith in Me that I know what I'm doing. Trust Me; you wouldn't want the view from My eyes. I will continue to care for you, watch over you, and meet your needs. You only have to trust Me. Although I have a much bigger task than you, it seems as if you have so much trouble just doing your simple part. How hard can trust be?

7. **SHARE.** You were taught to share when you were only two years old. When did you forget? That rule still applies. Share with those who are less fortunate than you. Share your joy with those who need encouragement. Share your laughter with those who haven't heard any in such a long time. Share your tears with those who have forgotten how to cry. Share your faith with those who have none.

8. **BE PATIENT.** I managed to fix it so in just one lifetime you could have so many diverse experiences. You grow from a child to an adult, have children, change jobs many times, learn many trades, travel to so many places, meet thousands of people, and experience so much. How can you be so impatient then when it takes Me a little longer than you expect to handle something on My to-do-list? Trust in My timing, for My timing is perfect. Just because I created the entire universe in only six days, everyone thinks I should always rush, rush, rush.

9. **BE KIND.** Be kind to others, for I love them just as much as I love you. They may not dress like you, or talk like you, or live the same way you do, but I still love you all. Please try to get along, for My sake. I created each of you different in some way. It would be too boring if you were all identical. Please, know I love each of your differences.

10. **LOVE YOURSELF.** As much as I love me for one reason of Love. Love Me. heart ache when I are very precious you, how can you not love yourself? You were only ... to be loved, and to love in return. Love your neighbors. But also love yourself. see you so angry with yourself when things go to me. Don't ever forget that! created by I am a God It makes My wrong. You

**With all My heart I love YOU ... God**

*(Working Brother from page 1)*

I can mentally predict the ancestral origins of many African Americans I meet day by day. Forget about the 'mythical and stereotypical' claims that all black people look alike. We do not. To me, that is akin to thinking that all tall people are good at the sport of basketball. Hogwash!

To me, the Norman Nigerian context was much more than mere conjecture. I detected what I thought, at the time, was a distinct tribal marking on his face. And, any student-observer of African tribal markings would agree with me that the Yoruba of the south western

Nigeria were most notable in that practice. Even though it is gradually becoming a dying practice, a few left over from the pre-colonial West Africa, are still around. So, it was kind of a let-down when over the years, it became apparent to me that Norman's mark was not a tribal

*(Working Brother on page 13)*

*(Working Brother from page 12)*  
anything, after all.

There were other personal traits that gave him away to my self-prescribed skill of predicting ancestral origins. Norman Leon Bishop had a special, unbridled affinity to commerce and trading. His impeccable love of the finest in clothing (outfits), be it formal, casual or business casual, was another. They all pointed to me, the Yoruba bloodline that ran in his veins. I wondered silently, if he ever thought about it. Or, even knew anything about the Yoruba. Unfortunately, of all the numerous discussions and prospective deals he and I concocted, the origins of his embryonic/underlying traits never came up for discussion.

So, here we go. Norm and I became very close associates within a few days of meeting one another. I became a board member of his popular non-profit organization, Positive Solutions, Inc. He in turn, became a mentor to me on the various aspects of forming and maintaining a 501c(3) organization. During the period around the turn of the millennium, Norm and I bonded so closely and deeply together, we were always in the company of each other.

He helped me create and then register my own non-profit, Leead International, Inc. From that moment on, we spent countless hours helping each other with numerous tasks and chores. We went to places, too. It was during those days when, with the Rites Of Passage group of children and adults from Cross Street, we visited the seaport in Mystic, Connecticut to volunteer our efforts in the recreation of the Amistad ship, that I met Pete Seeger and became a life-long associate of his. Following that, Norm and I frequented events by the folk music icon. And Pete constantly invited me to his appearances all over. Naturally, I would bring Norm along with me, and he never let me down. He accompanied me to New London a

couple of times to see Pete Seeger in concert at a Marina.

I wonder who still remembers when the entire board of Positive Solutions was invited as guests to New York, at a United Nations session on the Aids pandemic. It is hard to believe this, but at one time Wesleyan Professor Charles Lemert had proposed nominating Norm Bishop for the United Nations Nobel Price for Peace, on account of his relentless efforts and creative instincts with the Positive Solution organization.

It wasn't too long before I became a board member of East River Apprentice Shop, an extremely laudable non-profit organization created by Pete and other New Yorkers. They would grab wayward and troubled teenagers of the New York City school system and attempt to provide them with the necessary skills and fortitude to design and build small boats for sailing on the East River of New York. As a board member, I frequently visited New York for meetings and other businesses. More than once, I would invite Norm to come with me and we had great time hanging out with Pete Seeger.

At the peak of these events, just right before and around the so-called Y2K, millennium era, Norman Bishop and I came up with several ventures. He proposed to use untapped labor to do manual assembling work for a manufacturing company. We also proposed to import arts and craft ware from African countries which, by then, had been hit tremendously hard by the aids epidemic. The rational, mostly that of Norm's thinking, was to put such patients to do meaningful but easy crafting, with the intention that it would keep them busy, give them some sense of hope and aspiration, while earning them a few dollars to support their daily lives in their respective countries. Being originally a Ghanaian native, I took the role of visiting and trying to garner business in that venture. We even created a 'sister-city'

relationship between Middletown, Connecticut and my hometown, Kumasi, Ghana, with the sole purpose of giving people living with the aid virus a viable way to make a living. That never worked out, because back home in Ghana, most aid-victims, at that time, didn't want to be identified. There was such resistance to the entire concept that I couldn't find any single individual all over the places I visited who had tested positive for the disease.

The arts and crafts concept fared better when Norman connected with a local New London importer of East African artifacts, which led to the opening of the popular "Peoples Back Room Store" which started to trade in ethnic and other African American cultural wares, for a while. That's when the Nigerian-like commercial acumen in Norman Bishop essentially manifested itself. Those were the days. Within a few months of opening the store in the old Clock Tower Mall in down town Middletown, it became the one and only go-to place for all gift ideas when authentic, ethnicity was the theme. In this part of New England, you only see such a store and its offering largely in New Haven or mainly in parts of the 125<sup>th</sup> Street in Harlem, New York City.

Norman Bishop made a name for himself in the Middletown business community. He was equally found in the association of local clergy just as much as the city's chamber of commerce. He surrounded himself with the likes of Wesleyan University professionals as well as big names of the city hall. He was known to the local medical personnel as well as the safety and security professionals in the city. Even though he, like me, were members of the Cross Street, A.M.E. Zion church, he still successfully corroborated with various other churches in town for his organization. The most popular event of those years was Positive Solutions' annual fund-raising banquet which was very successful.

I will be remiss if I did not touch

on the one experience that tied him eternally to the community up to his private interment. Norm and I both signed up to become members of the local free masonry lodge, the George W. Crawford Lodge No 21 in town, something I think he must have convinced me to look into doing. We

both studied and attended classes until he eventually got inducted into the fraternity and I bailed out somehow. Any time I caught a glimpse of the emblem and evidence of his lodge membership on the bumper of his BMW, I was profoundly reminded of the one fellow American

who had made the most impact on my personal psyche than anyone individual. May he rest in the eternal peace in the bosom of his maker, for he lived a worthy life.

**To the memory of  
Norman Leon Bishop.**

*(Reputation from page 1)*

documented in numerous places for anyone's interest. You are going to have the opportunity to decide for yourself the depth of the ill-reputation of the Klan in the history of this country as you read the following speech by Ida B. Wells-Barnett, written in 1909. I sincerely forgive you, if you've never heard of this great, illustrious daughter of the Negro race.

Born to slaves, Ida B. Wells-Barnett was educated at Rust in Mississippi and Fisk in Tennessee. She wrote for several news papers, notably the Memphis Free Speech, the Chicago Conservator and the New York Age. She started and maintained a one-woman journalistic crusade against lynching. Read what she had to say in a speech to the NAACP's first annual conference in Atlanta, Georgia on May 8, 1909. From "Great Speeches by African Americans" edited by James Daley.

*"The lynching record for a quarter of a century merits the thoughtful study of the American people. It presents three salient facts: First, Lynching is color-line murder. Second, crimes against women is the excuse, not the cause. Third, it is a national crime and requires a national remedy.*

*Proof that lynching follows the color line is to be found in the statistics which have been kept for the past twenty-five years. During the few years preceding this period and while frontier law existed, the execution showed a majority of white victims. Later, however, as law courts and authorized judiciary extended into the far West, lynch law rapidly abated, and its white victims*

*became fewer and far between.*

*Just as the lynch-law regime came to a close in the West, a new mob movement started in the South. This was wholly political, its purpose being to suppress the colored vote by intimidation and murder. Thousands of assassins banded together under the name of the Ku Klux Klans, "Midnight Raiders," "Knights of the Golden Circle," etc., etc., spread a reign of terror, by beating, shooting and killing colored people by the thousands. In a few years, the purpose was accomplished, and the black vote was suppressed. But mob murder continued.*

*From 1882, in which year fifty-two were lynched, down to the present, lynching has been along the color line. Mob murder increased yearly until in 1892 more than two hundred victims were lynched and statistics show that 3,284 men, women and children have been put to death in this quarter of a century. During the last ten years from 1899 to 1908 inclusive, the number lynched was 959. Of this number 102 were white, while the colored victims numbered 857. No other nation, civilized or savage, burns its criminals; only under that Stars and Stripes is the human holocaust possible. Twenty-eight human beings burned at the stake, one of them a woman and two of them children, is the awful indictment against American civilization-the gruesome tribute which the nation pays to the color line.*

*Why is mob murder permitted by a Christian nation? What is the cause of this awful slaughter? This question is answered almost daily – always the same shameless falsehood that*

*"Negroes are lynched to protect womanhood." Standing before a Chautauqua assemblage, John Temple Graves, at once the champion of lynching and apologist for lynchers, said: "The mob stands today as the most potential bulwark between the women of the South and such a carnival of crime as would infuriate the world and precipitate the annihilation of the Negro race." This is the never-varying answer of lynchers and their apologists. All know that it is untrue. The cowardly lyncher revels in murder, and then seeks to shield himself from public execration by claiming devotion to women. But truth is mighty and lynching record discloses the hypocrisy of the lyncher as well as his crime.*

*The Springfield, Illinois, mob rioted for two days, the militia of the entire state was called out, two men were lynched, hundreds of people driven from their homes, all because a white woman said a Negro assaulted her. A mad mob went to the jail, tried to lynch the victim of her charge and, not being able to find him, proceeded to pillage and burn the town and to lynch two innocent men. Later, after the police had found the woman's charge was false, she published a retraction, the indictment was dismissed and intended victim discharged. But the lynched victims were dead. Hundreds were homeless and Illinois was disgraced.*

*As a final and complete refutation of the charge that lynching is occasioned by crimes against women, a partial record of lynchings is cited; 285 persons were lynched for cause as follows: Unknown cause, 92; no cause, 10; race*

*(Reputation on page 15)*

*(Reputation from page 14)*

prejudice, 49; miscegenation, 7; informing, 12; making threats, 11; keeping saloon, 3; practicing fraud, 5; practicing voodooism, 2; bad reputation, 8; unpopularity, 3; mistaken identity, 5; using improper language, 3; violation of contract, 1; writing insulting letter, 2; eloping, 2; poisoning horse, 1; poisoning well, 2; by white caps, 9; vigilantes, 14; Indians, 1; moon shining, 1; refusing evidence, 2; political causes, 5; disputing, 1; disobeying quarantine regulations, 2; slapping a child, 1; turning state's evidence, 3; protecting a Negro, 1; to prevent giving evidence, 1; knowledge of larceny, 1; writing a letter to white woman, 1; asking white woman to marry, 1; jilting girl, 1; having small pox, 1; concealing criminal, 2; threatening political exposure, 1; self defense, 6; cruelty, 1; insulting language to woman, 5; quarreling with white man, 2; colonizing Negroes, 1; throwing stones, 1; quarreling, 1; gambling, 1. Is there a remedy, or will the nation confess that it cannot protect its protectors at home as well as abroad? Various remedies have been suggested to abolish the lynching infamy, but year after year the butchery of men, women and children continues in spite of plea and protest. Education is suggested as a preventive, but it as grave a crime to murder an ignorant man as is scholar. True, few educated men have been lynched, but the hue and cry once started stops at no bounds, as was clearly shown by the

lynchings in Atlanta, and in Springfield, Illinois. Agitation, though helpful, will not, alone, stop the crime. Year after year lynchings go on. Public sentiment does measurably decrease the sway of mob law, but the irresponsible bloodthirsty criminals who swept through the streets of Springfield, beating inoffensive law-abiding citizen to death in one part of the town and in another, torturing and shooting to death a man who for threescore years had made a reputation for honesty, integrity and sobriety, had raised a family and accumulated property, were not deterred from the heinous crimes by either education or agitation. The only certain remedy is an appeal to law. Lawbreakers must be made to know that human life is sacred and that every citizen of this country is first a citizen of the United States, and secondly, a citizen of the state in which he belongs. This nation must assert itself and protect its federal citizenship at home as well as abroad. The strong arm of the government must reach across state lines whenever unbridled lawlessness defies state laws and must give to the individuals under the Stars and Stripes the same measure of protection it gives to him when he travels in foreign lands. Federal protection of American citizenship is the remedy for lynching. Foreigners are rarely lynched in America. If, by mistake one is lynched, the national government quickly pays the damages. The

recent agitation in California against the Japanese, compelled this nation to recognize that federal power must yet assert itself to protect the nation from the treason of sovereign states. Thousands of American citizens have been put to death and no President has yet raised his hand in effective protest, but a simple insult to a native Japan was quite sufficient to stir the government at Washington to prevent the threatened wrong. If the government has power to protect a foreigner from insult, certainly it has power to save a citizen's life. In a multitude of counsel there is wisdom. Upon the grave question presented by the slaughter of innocent men, women and children there should be an honest, courageous conference of patriotic, law-abiding citizens anxious to punish crime promptly, impartially and by due process of law, also to make life liberty and property secure against mob rule." This was over a hundred years ago, in 1909, when the klan was clearly known to have been behind most of the atrocities. Fast forward to 2017, now the hood is off, and they are emboldened by recent events and want to drag us all back to those days of mob rule, again. This is the background of the urgency with which the counter-protestors showed up in Charlottesville, Virginia. As if you never knew that – but just in case.

Kwame Ocansey – kwame6@att.net.

*(These Times from page 1)*

shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, there will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?"

We hear also the firm rebuke given to the Sadducees and Pharisees in Matthew 16:2-3; "He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today:

for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

Having discernment to know the time period we are living in and the signs of the times was evidently important to our savior.

Discernment gives us understanding and understanding gives us perspective and the ability to allow God to put us in our perfect place in these times.

Discernment and understanding also gives us a mind set which sets our topic for discussion.

Having the mind of Christ in these times means having control over our thoughts. For it is our thoughts which are the foundation of how we conduct ourselves from day to day.

So important are our thoughts that our brother Paul said they were part of our spiritual warfare in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; "(For the weapons of our warfare are not

*(These Times on page 16)*

*(These Times from page 15)*

carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

Our every thought must be brought under obedience to Christ. With that said, when we look at some of the things Jesus told us it's no wonder so many people today especially during these tumultuous times are finding it difficult to live in the moment and enjoy each precious moment God has given us.

We want perfect peace but how is this accomplished? We don't want to worry about tomorrow but find it harder than ever to live for today.

We get so busy in the hustle and bustle we wonder if we will ever have time for what's important and needful.

And yet, Christ gives us the answers to all of these most common anxieties that plague society and especially the good Christian.

First, let's look at perfect peace because it all begins in the mind and without peace our minds cannot be used by God to their fullest potential.

Isaiah 26:3-4 Tells us, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

Perfect peace comes to a person whose mind is stayed on Christ and Christ alone. Why? Because that mind is trusting Him for everything. Trusting Him for our very next breath even. When we trust Him peace always follows and because He is so good, He throws strength in as well to give us the ability to continue to trust.

When it comes to fear and anxiety Christ gives the remedy as

well and again it has to do with our mind and our thoughts Matthew 6:25,31,33-34 Jesus himself says to us. "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

It's pretty clear God doesn't want you and I to be thinking about tomorrow at all. That's Gods business not ours.

With the thoughts of tomorrow in the hands of God we are free to live for today and that is a thought which brings much peace and joy to the Christian.

Furthermore, Paul encouraged the Philippian brethren to; "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:6

The word careful here means anxious or nervous. God truly wants us in prayer. Our prayer life will certainly determine our mindset. There are days when we must fight to find that time to run into our prayer closets but it is absolutely necessary.

It was said to me many years ago that prayer is our direct line to God. Think of it as picking up the telephone and talking to God personally and intimately as you would in your most personal relationship on earth. He wants to hear it all

1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing" Paul tells us.

Finally, one of the most important and needful things we can do is spend time reading God's Holy Book, The Bible.

Remember Martha? She was very busy much like we can be. Jesus explained to her that only one thing was needful and Mary chose what was good .

When we look at how crazy things can be lately and how much our busy schedules try and dictate our course of action, we can take comfort in sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to His words.

Luke 10:41-42: "And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Having the mind of Christ in these times is trusting the Savior for everything. Having our mind on Him only. Having our thoughts on today and not tomorrow. Having a healthy prayer life. Taking the necessary time to listen as He speaks. Doing these things will keep us all in a spirit of peace, joy and stability in very uncertain times.

**"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?  
But we have the mind of Christ."**  
1 Corinthians 2:16

Greg Adamo



## The Power of Encouragement Peter Chin

**The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done. Acts 15:12**

Read: Acts 15:12–21 (NIV)

### Insight

A little detail mentioned in Acts 15:12—"the whole assembly became silent"—is significant. A "sharp dispute and debate" had arisen (v. 2), with Paul and Barnabas on one side and certain believers on the other. These believers insisted that non-Jewish Christians had to adhere to Jewish law and be circumcised. The text tells us, "After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them" (v. 7). We can imagine how heated that discussion must have been, but Peter outlined a rational defense of the gentiles' faith (v. 7). He noted how they too had the Holy Spirit, just as the Jewish believers did (v. 8). Peter added, "We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we [Jewish believers] are saved, just as they [gentile believers] are" (v. 11). Peter's calm response to the dispute, along with the testimony of Paul and Barnabas, preserved and enhanced unity in the church.

When he was a young boy, Benjamin West attempted to draw a picture of his sister, but he succeeded only in making a mess. His mother saw his creation, kissed him on the head, and remarked, "Why, it's Sally!" He would later say that it was that kiss that made him an artist—and the great American painter he would become.

Encouragement is a powerful thing!

Like a child learning to paint, Paul didn't have much credibility early on in his ministry, but Barnabas affirmed his calling. It was through Barnabas's encouragement that the church accepted Saul as a fellow believer (Acts 9:27). Barnabas would also encourage the fledgling church of Antioch, helping it to become one of the most influential in the book of Acts (11:22–23). And it was through Barnabas's encouragement, as well as Paul's, that the Jerusalem church embraced the gentile believers as Christians (15:19). So, in many ways, the story of the early church is really a story of encouragement.

The same should apply to our own lives. We might think encouragement is merely saying something nice to someone. But if we think that way, we fail to recognize the lasting power it possesses. It's one of the means by which God shapes our individual lives as well as the life of the church.

Let's thank God for the moments we receive encouragement and strive to pass it along to others.

### Reflect & Pray

**How has encouragement shaped your life story in some way? Who encouraged you, and how did they do it? How will you encourage someone in your life this week?**

*Father, help me encourage others as You have encouraged me.*

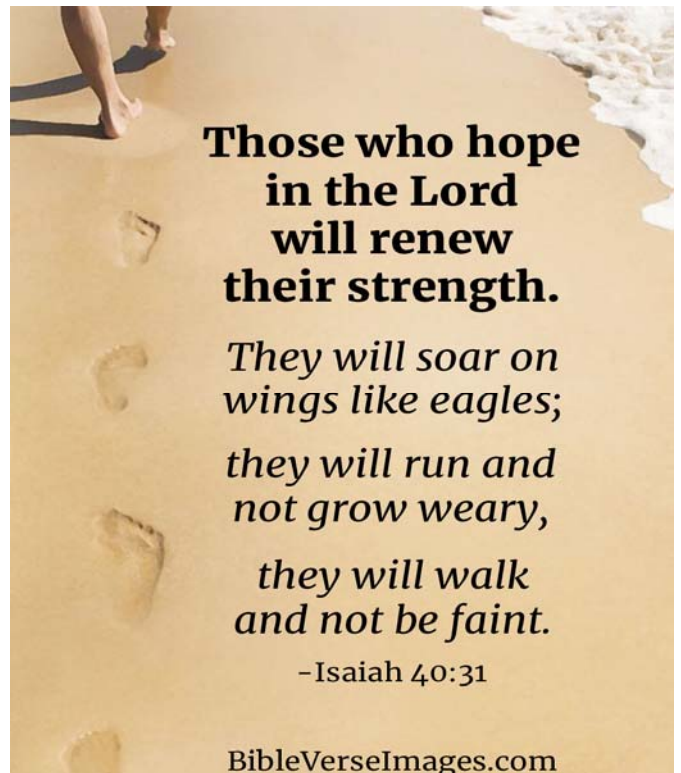
## LOCKDOWN

**L.O.C.K.D.O.W.N.** is a time to:

Listen to God's Voice and reflect. Let go and Let God.  
Obey His word and His teachings.  
Call on Jesus' name and be Clam.  
Know what is the purpose of all of this.  
Dwell in His presence. Do not panic.  
Offer a prayer for everyone's safety.  
Wait and be patient. This too, shall pass.  
Nurture our personal relationship with Him.

**Please Pass and Share to your families and friends.**

**GOD BLESS US ALL**



**Those who hope  
in the Lord  
will renew  
their strength.**

*They will soar on  
wings like eagles;  
they will run and  
not grow weary,  
they will walk  
and not be faint.*

– Isaiah 40:31

## *Words To Live By*

### **Why Do We Go To Church?**

#### **Use Of Spiritual Gifts**

1 Corinthians 12 makes it clear that God has given spiritual gifts to every Christian. Verse 7 states that these abilities are not provided to make you feel good; they are abilities to minister that should be used for the common good! 1 Peter 4:10 commands us to use spiritual gifts to help each other. The same passage makes it clear that we meet with other Christians so they can use their gifts to strengthen us. God's gift of a preacher or teacher is wasted if no one comes to hear him or her speak.

#### **Mutual Ministry**

The church is pictured as a body and in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul explains that each part of the body exists to meet the needs of other body parts. In the same way, God intends each of us to meet the needs of other believers, using our strengths to help in their areas of weakness. 1 Corinthians 12:21 expresses it this way: "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you". Neither can a Christian claim to be self-sufficient. The New Testament is full of "**one another**" commands. We are to comfort **one another** (1Thessalonians 4:18), build up **one another** (1Thessalonians 5:11), confess our sins to **one another** (James 5:16), pray for **one another** (James 5:16), and many more. How can we obey these directives if we stay away from the gathering of believers?

#### **Accountability**

God designed the church as a place where spiritual leaders could watch out for our welfare, as a shepherd guards the sheep (1 Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17). A Christian who answers only to himself can easily rationalize sinful attitudes or actions: regular contact with other Christians can keep us sharp.

***“Daily Confession of Faith”***

***In Christ I am anointed and a powerful person of God.***

***I am a joint-heir with Jesus and more than a conqueror.***

***I am a doer of the Word of God and a channel for His blessings.***

***If God be for me, who can be against me?***

***I am blessed coming in and I am blessed going out.***

***My enemies are fleeing before me.***

***God has commanded His blessing on my storehouses.***

***He has opened His Good treasures and I shall lend and not borrow.***

***I am the head and not the tail.***

***He has given me power to make wealth.***

***I dwell in the secret place.***

***I have His protection and provision.***

***God is my refuge, my fortress.***

***I am not afraid of the snare of the fowler.***

***No Evil shall befall me and no plague shall come nigh my dwelling.***

***God has given his angels charge over me and they are bearing me up in their hands***

***lest I dash my foot against a stone, as declared in Psalm 91.***

***1 Peter 2:9 establishes I am a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.***

***I am a peculiar person called out of darkness into His marvelous light.***

***1 Peter 2:24 states, I have been healed by the stripes of Jesus.***

***Cancer, sugar diabetes, heart disease, sickness, afflictions, infections,  
or any other disease cannot enter my body.***

***I am without spot or blemish, an intercessor,***

***the righteousness of God, saved, and washed in the Blood of Jesus.***

***“No weapon formed against me shall prosper, and every tongue which rise against me in judgement You shall condemn.***

***This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD,***

***and their righteousness is from Me,” Says the LORD.***

***I am saved from wrath by Him and justified by the blood of the Lamb.***

***Lord I pray that those may prosper that love Jerusalem and that peace will be within them  
and prosperity in their houses according to Psalms 122:6-9.***

***Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!***

# Spirit Lifters

By Norman Vincent Peale

## Realize the Power Within You

Realize the power that is within you, and you will no longer be the victim of a depressed spirit. And what is this inner power? Simply the God-given ability to believe.

To the extent to which you develop this faculty, you will master the defeats in your life. The great issue is to learn to believe.

This is stated in one of the most important of all Scripture passages:

**Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are**

**possible to him who believes." Mark 9:23**

Learn to believe. Learn to cast out doubt. This is done by the practice of affirmation.

Affirm faith, think positively, visualize achievement. Never think doubt. Always think faith.

This text affirms that when you learn to believe, the area of the impossible is vastly reduced and the area of the possible is greatly increased.

If you set this text firmly at the center of your thought patterns, you will never again be a victim of low spirits.

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## God Has His Eye on You

Let the following words sink deeply into your consciousness, and the experience of God's protection will be yours.

**For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. Psalm 91:11.**

How your spirit will rise as the amazing truth grips you that nothing in this world can hurt you! God is watching over you to keep you in all your ways. His amazing kindness surrounds you always. You go through life with a high-hearted spirit, know God watches over you.

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## Afraid of nothing

Fear haunts the minds of so many people. It is a paralyzing sickness. One verse that has helped many is this:

**The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1**

Fear always lurks among shadows. It thrives in darkness. A spiritually darkened mind is a breeding ground for terrifying fears. Flood the darkness with light and fear scurry away. Fill the mind with light, and fears are driven off.

Fears develop when you feel weak. But the Lord transmits strength. Result? You are afraid of nothing.

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## You Are Never Alone

**Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go... I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you. Genesis 28:15**

Uncertainties can be frightening, but these reassuring words show that God will be with you wherever you go on in whatever situation you find yourself. You are never alone. He will always see you through.

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## Faith, Hope and Love

The best three-point formula for living is in this immortal statement:

**And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13**

Here are three powerful Spirit Lifters: Faith, the greatest power in this world; Hope, the attitude of expectancy—the best is yet to be; and Love, one of the greatest qualities of all—a heart full of compassion and understanding. Christian love gives deep joy. Let these three shine like stars in your life, and your spirit will be uplifted always.

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## Cast Your Care on God

In maintaining a high spirit, it is important to cultivate the attitude of spiritual surrender. Place yourself, your interests, hopes and purposes completely in God's hands.

**Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7**

If we surrender ourselves to the direction of God, being guided by His hand, He will exalt us —He will help us attain our purposes and rise above all defeats. Cast all your care upon God; He cares for you. This is a supreme Spirit Lifter!

## Barbara Perry Speaks

### "A Prayer"

Let us pray, "Father, we thank You for Your protection that is found in our faith in Christ. We know that You are our protector, we know that You are shielding us from sickness of and disease. We know You are our provider, and our peace. Your word says that we don't have to fear the disease that stalks in the darkness because Your promises are true and

timeless. We thank You for Your strength and mercy in times of difficulty. Even thou we can't control what others say or do or control negative circumstances around us, but we can rule out spirit. We also believe that You will make a way for us and get us to where we supposed to be. So, today, we believe and declare that You are surrounding Your children with health, protection, favor and wisdom. We believe it and receive it today. In Jesus name. Amen."

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### "Another Prayer"

Let us pray, "Father, we thank You for Your protection that is found in our faith in Christ. You are our protector, shielding us from sickness and disease. You are our provider, and our peace. Your word says that we don't have to fear the disease that stalks in the darkness because Your promises are true and timeless. Today, we believe and declare that You are surrounding Your children with health, protection, favor and wisdom. We believe it and receive it today. We also thank You that we do not have to live according to what others have said we can and cannot become. Thank You that the negative labels they have placed on us hold no power over our destiny. We declare that You alone determine our destiny. We thank You for Your protection that is found in our faith in Christ. You are our protector, shielding us from sickness and disease. You are our provider, and our peace. And because Your word says that we don't have to fear the disease that stalks in the

darkness because Your promises are true and timeless.

So today, we believe and declare that You are surrounding Your children with health, protection, favor and wisdom. We believe it and receive it. We thank You for the blessings on our life, thank You for breathing in our direction, thank You for taking us where we couldn't go on our own. Thank You that You have levels that we've never fathomed. We believe we haven't touched the surface of what's in store that we can put away any worries and discouragements. Thank You that in Your perfect timing, when everything is ready, even what looks to be impossible will be possible with you. We believe that what You've started in our life You will finish. So thank You again that we will try to have a pure heart. That we can release any worries, any doubts, any guilt, and bitterness, and flush them out of our life. Thank You for helping us to forgive whatever needs forgiving and let go of the past. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

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### "From Patient To Physician"

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Corinthians 1:4.

Let us pray, "Father, thank You for the things that You've brought us through that we can now use to help others in their struggles. Thank You that we have something to give, some encouragement to share, some wisdom to impart. Help us to give away what You've given to us. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

In today's Scripture for today, the apostle Paul is saying, "You were comforted in the loss of your loved one; help somebody else through their loss. You've been healed; now go help somebody else get healed." God didn't heal us just so we could be well, but so we could become a healer.

See He favored us so we could show people favor. He gave us a new beginning so we could help others make it through their loss. We are no longer a patient needing help; because we have become a physician. Every one of us has had experiences that make us a physician. No matter what we've been through, we are uniquely qualified to help others in that situation, Amen.

Remember, we have been in someone shoes. We know the pain, the discouragement, the battles they are fighting in their mind and knowing their pain we can help them in a way that others who have not experienced.

So don't stay a grateful patient, become a physician, Amen.

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### "Don't Be Snared by Your Words"

"Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth." Proverbs 6:2

Let us pray, "Father, thank You that we do not have to keep being snared by the words of our month. Today we choose to not focus on or talk about negative circumstances and problems but on Your faithful promises. Help us to keep speaking the right things. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

In the tough times, it's very tempting to vent your frustrations. But when we continually talk about the problem,

we're making it bigger. Turn it around and talk about the promise. So today, let our report be: "God is supplying all our needs. It may look impossible on paper, but with God, all things are possible."

See to be snared means "to be trapped." Our words can trap us. What we say can cause us to stumble and keep us from our potential. Negative thoughts come to us all. But when we speak them out, we give them life. Remember we are setting the limits for our life. When negative thoughts come, the key is to never verbalize them. That thought will die stillborn if we don't speak it, Amen.

## THE BEAUTY OF HOLLAND

I AM OFTEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCE OF RASING A CHILD WITH DISABILITY - TO TRY TO HELP PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT SHARED THAT UNIQUE EXPERIENCE TO UNDERSTAND IT, TO IMAGINE HOW IT WOULD FEEL. IT'S LIKE THIS...

WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO HSEVE A BABY, IT'S LIKE PLANNING A FABULOUS TRIP TO ITALY. YOU BUY A BUNCH OF GUIDEBOOKS AND MAKE YOUR WONDERFUL PLANS. THE COLISEMUM, THE MICHELANGELO DAVID. THE GONDOLAS IN VENICE. YOU LEARN SOME HANDY PHRASES IN ITALLAN. IT'S ALL VERY, VERY EXCITING!

AFTER MONTHS OF EAGER ANTICIPATION, THE DAY FINALLY ARRIVES. YOU PACK YOUR BAGS AND OFF YOU GO. SERVAL HOURS LATER THE PLANE LANDS. THE FLIGHT ATTENDANT COMES IN AND SAYS, "WELCOME TO HOLLAND.

"HOLLAND!!!" YOU SAY, "WHAT DO YOU MEAN HOLLAND! I SIGNED UP FOR ITALY. I'M SUPPORT TO BE IN ITALY! ALL MY LIFE I'VE DREAMED OF GOING TO ITALY."

BUT THERE'S A CHANCE IN THE FLIGHT PLAN. THEY LANDED IN HOLLAND AND YOU MUST STAY. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THEY HAVEN'T TAKEN YOU TO A HORRIBLE, DISGUSTING, FILTHY PLACE, FULL OF PESTILENCE, FAMINE AND DISEASE. IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT PLANE.

SO YOU MUST GO OUT AND BUY NEW GUIDEBOOKS. AND YOU MUST LEARN A WHOLE NEW LANGUAGE. AND YOU WILL MEET A WHOLE NEW GROUP OF PEOPLE YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE MET.

IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT PLACE. IT'S SLOWER-PACED THAN ILTALY, LESS FLASHY THAN ITALY. BUT AFTER YOU'RE BEEN THERE AWHILE AND CATCH YOUR BREATH, YOU BEGIN TO LOOK AROUND, AND YOU BEGIN TO NOTICE THAT HOLLAND HAS WINDMILLS, HOLLAND HAS TULIPS. HOLLAND EVEN HAS REM-BRANDTS.

BUT EVERYONE YOU KNOW IS BUSY COMING AND GOING FROM ILTALY, AND THEY'RE BRAGGING ABOUT WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME THEY HAD THERE. AND FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE YOU WILL SAY, "YES, THAT'S WHERE I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO. THAT'S WHAT I HAD PLANNED."

AND THE PAIN WILL NEVER, EVER GO AWAY, BECAUSE THE LOSS OF THAT DREAM IS A VERY SIGNIFI-CANT LOSS.

BUT IF YOU SPEND YOUR LIFE MOURING THE FACT YOU DIDN'T GO TO ITALY, YOU MAY NEVER BE FREE TO ENJOY THE VERY SPECIAL, THE VERY LOVELY THINGS ABOUT HOLLAND.

SOURCE UNKNOWN

## Joyce Meyer: Promises for your Everyday Life - a Daily Devotional

### Are You Hopeful?

**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.** Hebrews 11:1 KJV

When you think about the future, are you hopeful? Or do you struggle with a sense of dread?

People who have seen God's faithfulness in the past tend to be very hopeful about the future. They know a bad situation can turn into a wonderful testimony in a matter of minutes.

On the other hand, people who have lost all hope view life from the perspective of dread. A close cousin to fear, dread steals the ability to enjoy ordinary life and makes people anxious about the future.

Hope is the opposite of dread, and a close relative of faith. When we have faith in God, it leads to hope, and our outlook on life and the future is positive

Hope allows us to leave our unanswered questions in God's hands; it empowers us to remain at peace, and it

enables us to believe the best about the days to come.

You can have hope when you trust in God's love. He has the power to provide for you and lead you through every situation.

**Prayer Starter:** God, I Choose to put my faith in You, knowing that it will turn into hope. I don't have to dread, because You have the ability to care for me, so I put my hope in You.

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### He Holds It All Together

**And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.** Colossians 1:17

Colossians 1:17 is a pretty awesome scripture. It tells us Jesus is holding EVERYTHING together. Wow! Even people who don't realize this are held together by Him.

Think about it. We can't have a good marriage if Jesus isn't holding it together. If Jesus isn't leading and guiding our personal relationships, then we aren't

going to have good ones. Our finances would be a mess without Jesus. Our minds and emotions would be wreck without Him. Everything would be a mess without Jesus.

If Jesus is not the most important thing in our life, then we need to rearrange our priorities. Matthew 6:33 tells us to seek God and His kingdom first because if we don't have first things first, then everything else will also be out of order and cause us problems. God's way of being, doing and seeking His kingdom, is to find out He wants things done-how to treat people,

how to act in situations, how to spend money, what kind of attitude to have, and what kind of entertainment He approves of.

Start today by giving Him first place in your life. He's holding you together...He created You to follow Him. Put Him first in your life.

**Prayer Starter:** God, I am nothing without You. You hold me together...in fact, You hold everything together. You are the most important thing in my life and I put You first.

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### What Is Faith?

**Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.** Habakkuk 2:4 KJV

Faith is a word that we use a lot, but sometimes we can make it too complicated. Faith simply means 'belief or absolute trust'; the word also implies loyalty and commitment.

Faith isn't a huge, complicated concept that we have to stress over.

Genuine faith in God simply acknowledges that the message of Jesus' death and resurrection is absolutely true. It happens when we say, "Not only does it make sense to me, but I'm willing to stake my life on it."

The Bible says that the uncompromisingly righteous is to think of those who are made right by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Through faith we are made right, and God treats us as His own beloved

children.

Today, I encourage you to get back to the basics of faith. Know that when you put your faith in Him, you are made right. Live by your trust in the God who reaches out to you with loving and open arms, ready to receive you and love you just as you are.

**Prayer Starter:** Lord, I am so thankful that I can put my faith in You and become 'uncompromisingly righteous.' Today, I live by You.

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### Making Tough Decisions

**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.** Hebrews 4:15

It's important to make the right choices, especially in the middle of hurt, discouragement, frustration and confusion when the right choice is the tough choice to make. When things are stressful, we naturally like to take the path of least resistance. But those are the very moments when you need to make the tougher choice. Because to

reap right results in life, you have to do right when you don't feel like it.

What's amazing to me is that Jesus knows what we feel like. When He became a human being, He struggled with all of the frustrations we struggle with. He felt like giving up and taking the easy way, but He overcame and made the tough choices.

When we grow weary and falter in our determination, we can know with confidence that we serve a God who knows what we're going through. And we don't have to make tough decisions on our own.

When you find yourself stressed-out and beat down, on the verge of giving up, remember that God is with you and he understands. Find the strength to make the tough choices in Him.

**Prayer Starter:** God, I'm so glad and so thankful that You understand everything I go through and struggle with. When I am tempted to take the path of least resistance, I will find my strength in You to make the tough choices.

# A Bird's Eye View Of The Bible

## Old Testament

There are 39 books in the Old Testament library.  
There are four types of writing in the Old Testament:  
Law, History, Poetry, Prophecy.

It is helpful to know which kind of literature you are reading before you start: is it poetry, or is it history?

### LAW

**Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.**

The first five books of the Bible are sometimes called the Law of Moses. They give many of God's laws about how to live.

### HISTORY

**Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.**

These 12 historical books cover the occupation of the Promised Land, the time of the Judges, Israel's kings, the fall of the two kingdoms and a return to Jerusalem.

### POETRY

**Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs.**

Nearly one third of the Old Testament is written in poetry. These five poetical books ask profound questions about evil, pain, love, wisdom and God.

### PROPHECY

**Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.**

The 17 prophetic books account for almost a quarter of the Bible. They are divided into "Major Prophets" (the first five books) and, "Minor Prophets" (the last 12). The "Minor" ones are shorter, not less important.

## New Testament

There are 27 books in the New Testament library.  
There are three types of writing in the New Testament:  
History, Letters, Prophecy.

Before you study a New Testament book it helps to consider what kind of literature you are reading: is it a letter or is it history?

### HISTORY

**Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts**

The first four books, called gospels, are not like our modern biographies. But they do give four portraits of Jesus. Acts is part two of Luke, about the early church.

### LETTERS

#### PAUL'S LETTERS

Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.

We have 13 of Paul's letters. Except for one personal one, Philemon, they were all written to groups of Christians.

#### OTHER LETTERS

**Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude.**

We don't know who wrote Hebrews. Tradition states that all the writers of the New Testament, except for John, were martyred.

### PROPHECY

#### Revelation

Written by the apostle John, this book has seven letters to churches and numerous visions about God.





# A Prayer for Our World

God, You alone are worthy of honor, glory, and praise. With You, we can overcome every storm—including the global impact COVID-19 is having on our world.

Right now, we are asking You to:

- Heal those who are sick and protect those who are not.
- Give our leaders extra wisdom as they navigate this pandemic and economic uncertainty.
- Strengthen Your global Church. Reveal to us how we can partner together to reach the needs of those around us.
- Calm our fears. Fill us with Your hope, joy, and peace as we continue to trust in You.
- Use this pandemic to pave the way for spiritual renewal. We want Your glory, power, and healing to be on display.

Come Lord Jesus, come.  
In Jesus' Name, Amen.

**YouVersion**

## GRIEF OVERTURED

*I have seen the Lord! John 20:18*

According to Jim and Jamie Dutcher, filmmakers known for their knowledge of wolves, when happy, wolves wag their tails and romp about. But after the death of a pack member, they grieve for weeks. They visit the place where the pack member died, showing grief by their drooping tails and mournful howls.

Grief is a powerful emotion we've all experienced, particularly at the death of a loved one or of a treasured hope. Mary Magdalene experienced it. She'd traveled with and helped support Jesus and His disciples (Luke 8:1-3). But His cruel death on a cross separated them. The only thing left for Mary to do for Jesus was to finish anointing His body for burial—a task the Sabbath had interrupted. But imagine how Mary felt when she found not a lifeless, broken body but a living Savior! Though she hadn't at first recognized the man standing before her, when He spoke her name, she knew who He was—Jesus! Instantly, grief turned to joy. Mary now had joyful news to share: "I have seen the Lord!" (John 20:18).

Jesus entered our dark world to bring freedom and life. His resurrection celebrates that He accomplished what He set out to do. See the link below to view the "In Pursuit of Jesus" video to learn more about the joy of a new life in

Christ. We too can celebrate His resurrection and share the good news: He's alive! —Linda Washington

**When have you experienced a time when your sadness turned to joy?  
How will you share the news of Christ's resurrection this week?**

Jesus, I celebrate Your resurrection and the new life I can experience in You.

**Odb.org/inpursuit8**

**Bible Reading:** John 20:11-18  
<sup>11</sup> **Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup> and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. <sup>13</sup> They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him," <sup>14</sup> At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for? Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). <sup>17</sup> Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet**

**ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.**

### Insight

The name Mary is the English rendering of the Greek Maria or Mariam (from the Hebrew Miriam) and was one of the most common female names in the New Testament times. The first Mary we meet is the mother of Jesus (Matthew 1:16). Other women bearing this name include Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus (John 11:1-12:8; Luke 10:38-41); Mary, the mother of James (Mark 15:40); Mary, the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12); Mary, the wife of Clopas (John 19:25); Mary of Rome (Romans 16:6); and Mary Magdalene, who is featured in John 20:11-18. All the gospel writers place this Mary at Jesus' death or resurrection or both (Matthew 27:56-61; 28:1-10; Mark 15:40, 47; 16:1; Luke 24:10; John 20:1, 18). —Arthur Jackson

Ministries, Grand Rapids, Michigan,  
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### Crises/Emergency: Cell phone 860-754-4606

Cross Street Recovery Ministry the "Hope Line" is in operation 24 hours per day. Please call 860-754-4606 if you, a friend and/or a family member are in need of counseling and/or are in crisis, **PLEASE** dial the "Hope Line". All information will be confidential.

**CROSS STREET MINISTRY OF RECOVERY**  
*We can't but through God, all things are possible. How might we pull on God's strength to help each other recover?*

**Let the spirit of God work for you in a Mighty, Mighty Way**

For more information contact:  
 Church office 860-344-9527.or  
 Rev. Gregory B. Winborne: Days: 860-616-3834

## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

<p><b>Sunday</b>  <b>8:45 a.m. Church School</b>  <b>10:00 a.m. Worship Service</b>                  2nd Sunday Senior Usher Board Meeting (following service)                  Youth Meeting 1st &amp; 4th Sunday's (following service)</p> <p><b>Monday</b>                  6:00 p.m. Zumba                  7:00-9:00 p.m. Bible Study, Eddy Shelter                  7:00 Media Ministry (1st and 3rd of month)</p> <p><b>Tuesday</b>  <b>Special Prayer for Pastor Harvill</b>                  6:00—7:00 p.m. Prayer meeting and</p>	<p>bible study.</p> <p><b>Wednesday</b>                  6:00 p.m. Zumba                  6:00 p.m. Ministerial Staff (1st of month)</p> <p><b>Thursday</b>                  6:00 p.m. Steward Board                  7:00 p.m. Trustee Board (2nd of month)</p> <p><b>Friday</b>  <b>Day of Fasting</b>                  6:00 p.m. Vision Choir (3rd &amp; 4th of month)                  6:00 pm - 7:30 pm Cross Street Recovery Ministry (room 2)</p>	<p><b>Saturday</b>                  10:00 a.m. Pastors Aide (2nd)                  11:00 a.m. Security Ministry Meeting (2nd Saturday of month)                  12:00 noon Missionaries (2nd Saturday of month)</p> <p><b>Choir Rehearsals</b>                  Men - 7 p.m. Monday                  Women - Tuesday &amp; Friday before 5th Sunday                  Children - 7 p.m. Friday before 1st Sunday                  Unity - 7 p.m. Thursday                  Praise &amp; Worship Choir 7:00 pm Wednesday</p>
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## MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

### Coronavirus-19

Some may be wondering what we plan to do as a church, so we would like to outline the following, realizing of course that the situation continues to be fluid and things could change.

On Sunday at 10:00 a.m. I will make a brief statement on Facebook Live Stream on Cross Street page. We will make every effort to stay in contact with all members through the Class Leader System, Facebook, email, voicemail, Zoom, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, postal mail, phone calls, visits, and the website.

For any concerns, call the church office (860) 344-9527, the Pastor (860) 262-1136, and your Class Leader. Please provide the office with all your contact information that we can keep you informed on critical matters. We are in touch with Federal, State, and Local officials on efforts that are in process to support our community in this crisis.

**Let's love each other through this! Much Love from the Pastor and First Lady Eledia.**

Christ Blessings,

Pastor Harvill

**Note: Counting on you to join others to keep Christ Church going by the giving of your tithes, offerings, and Men's Day gifts.**

You can give:

1. On-line: [crossstreetamezion.org](https://crossstreetamezion.org) Realm, (Realm: <https://onrealm.org/TheCross/-/give/TJXKDEVIXE>)
2. Text: "Thecross \$(enter desired amount to give)" to 73256
3. PayPal,
4. Mail: P.O. Box 223 Middletown, Ct 06457,
5. Drop off on Sunday 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
6. Call the office for someone to pick up.

(Note: links can be found on website; [www.crossstreetamezion.org/Give](http://www.crossstreetamezion.org/Give))

**We are stronger together.**

The Cross Street Journal is published Bi-monthly. It can be found on our website: [crossstreetamezion.org](http://crossstreetamezion.org) & in the front lobby. If you would like a PDF copy sent to you, Email your request to: [ken46@snet.net](mailto:ken46@snet.net). If you have an article or information (word count 1000 - 1500 or less) for current and future publications the deadline for this information is the Monday after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each Month. **You may submit your information in the following ways:** place the information on a CD (Window format) and leave it in the Cross Street office, E-mail Ken Simmons ([Ken46@snet.net](mailto:Ken46@snet.net)), or give it to him. **Praise God!!!**

### The Year of Expected "Miracles"



#### CROSS STREET A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Organized in 1823

440 West Street P.O. Box 223  
Middletown, CT 06457

Phone: 860-344-9527 Fax: 860-344-1740

crossstreetchurch@snet.net  
www.crossstreetamezion.org

**Sunday School — 8:45 a.m.**  
**Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.**

**Rev. Moses L. Harvill, M. Div.,**  
Pastor

Email: mharvill@snet.net

**The Rev. Dr. Terry L. Jones**  
Presiding Elder

**Mrs. D. Diane Proctor**  
Missionary Supervisor

**The Right Reverend Dennis Proctor**  
Presiding Prelate

#### Ministerial Staff

- Rev. Robyn Anderson-Turner
- Rev. William D. Wilson
- Rev. Ella Frances Perry
- Rev. Karen Nesmith
- Rev. James Battle
- Rev. Myrtle Turner
- Rev. Gregory Winborne
- Rev. Joyce Johnson
- Rev. Earlene Grants
- Sister Felicia Freeman



#### "I am a Christian"

By Maya Angelou

When I say ... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not shouting "I'm clean livin'."  
I'm whispering "I was lost,  
Now I'm found and forgiven."

When I say ... "I am a Christian"  
I don't speak of this with pride.  
I'm confessing that I stumble  
And need Christ to be my guide.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not trying to be strong.  
I'm professing that I'm weak  
And need His strength to carry on.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not bragging of success.  
I'm admitting I have failed  
And need God to clean my mess.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"  
I still feel the sting of pain.  
I have my share of heartaches  
So I call upon His name.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"  
I'm not holier than thou.  
I'm just a simple sinner  
Who received God's good grace,  
somehow!

#### The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV)

Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom  
come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is  
in heaven. Give us this day our daily  
bread. And forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors. And lead us not  
into temptation, but deliver us from evil:  
For thine is the kingdom, and the  
power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.



Then the Lord answered me and said:  
Write the vision and make it plain on  
tablets, that he may run who reads it.  
Habakkuk 2:2

#### The Jabez Prayer

And Jabez called on the God of Israel  
saying, "**Oh, that You would bless  
me indeed, and enlarge my territory,  
that Your hand would keep me from  
evil, that I may nor cause pain!**" So  
God granted him what he requested.  
1 Chronicles 4:10 (NKJV)

#### "God's Word

*For the word of God is quick, and power-  
ful, and sharper than any two-edged  
sword, piercing even to the dividing  
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the  
joints and marrow, and is a discernor of  
the thoughts and intents of the heart"*  
Hebrews 4:12

**Prayer:** Forever, O Lord, your Word is  
settled in heaven. I bless you because  
you have given me rest according to all  
that you have promised to me. Not one  
word of all your good promises has ever  
failed. In light of this truth, I will walk in  
your Word at all times.  
I love your Word, Father, it is a lamp  
unto my feet, and a light unto my path.  
All of your words are pure, O God, and  
you are a shield to me. Lord God, your

way is perfect, and your Word is tried.  
You are a shield and a mighty buckler to  
me as I trust in you.  
With your Word you made the heavens,  
O Lord. all of your promises are yes in  
Christ, unto your glory, O God. You  
have spoken through your Word since  
ancient times, in order to give light to  
those who sit in darkness, and you guide  
my feet in the way of peace.  
Your Word is quick, alive, and powerful,  
and sharper than any two-edged sword.  
It pierces even to the dividing asunder of  
my soul and spirit, and of my joints and  
marrow, and is a discernor of the  
thoughts and intents of my heart.  
Father, I am thankful for your Word, and  
I will endeavor to walk in the light of your  
Word all the days of my life.

**If you were to die today, do you know where you will spend eternity ???**

#### Doxology

*Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*  
Jude 24-25