

Pittsburgh District Church of the Nazarene

December
2011



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Rev. J Bret Metcalfe
District Superintendent

What brings you the great joy? I have to admit a job well done brings me great joy. When I was young, I was taught that if a job is worth doing, it is worth doing well. So, do a job well and you have great joy.

However, since I have been a pastor, seeing people accept Christ or surrender their lives fully brings me greater joy. Does seeing one who was lost and comes to Christ bring you great joy? If it does, it is not an accident.

Here is why I do not see that as an accident. When God created the world, everything He created brought Him joy. "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). As part of creation, God created man and woman. Not just humans, but humans in His image; with all of the attributes of God. We bring Him joy. Not in the stupid things we do, but in whom we are in Him.

How do I know that? Because God did the only thing He could, barring taking away our free will, to give His creation an opportunity to be with Him forever. He sent His Son. Not in some adult form. Not to a royal family, but through a young girl who was pledged to be married to a carpenter. The only fanfare was a bright star and an angel who made an announcement to a group of shepherds.

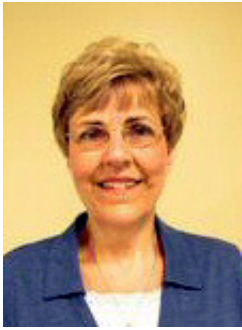
That is what Christmas is all about. During the month of December, we give gifts, gather with friends and family and have a good time. However, the main reason for the celebration should be because God loved us so much that He sent His Son.

We know that creating the world, all that was in it, and humans brought Him joy. We also know that His Son, His only Son, brought Him joy. Matthew 3:17 says, "This is my Son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased." But what was it that brought His Father joy? Was it because He was born? Yes, but not just that. Was it because He obeyed His earthly parents? Yes, but not just that. What brought the Father the most joy was that His Son was obedient. Because of obedience, the people that came into contact with Jesus saw His Father.

So, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us remember that joy comes to the Father when the lost come back to Him. Let us also remember that joy will come to His followers as we are obedient to Him. Let us make this a joyous Christmas by sharing Christ wherever you go.

Many Christmas Blessings, **J Bret Metcalfe**

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Barb Reagle
SDMI Chairman



REMINDER: Summer camps are probably far from our minds but please remember SDMI Camp incentives. If you experience an outpouring of God's presence and love in a Sunday School or small group setting, please share it with us. (These stories will be shared at SDMI convention and your church may be awarded a camp gift certificate) Also, we will be giving discounts on registration fees for Kidz camp to those churches who report Sunday School statistics each month and have their SDMI allotments paid in full.

SDMI Treasurer:

Ron Schaeffer, 141 Tressler Drive, Confluence, Pa 15424
Phone: 814-395-5168 or e-mail: ronell62@verizon.net

With Thanksgiving behind us, I am sure many of you are caught up in the whirl of Christmas preparations. If not, you soon will be. The Christmas advertisements, bargains, announcements, and invitations are already taking possession of our time and energy. Magazines are full of "helpful hints" to insure that you keep your sanity during this busy season.

I would like to invite you all to a "gift exchange" of sorts. While we in no way can match the gifts that God has given to us, we can find things that are pleasing to Him.

In exchange for ***THE GIFT OF FAITH***, we can give him a quiet spirit that is ready and prepared for him to come.

In exchange for ***THE GIFT OF JOY***, we can give him a transformed mind, filled with awe and wonder, the gift of believing.

In exchange for ***THE GIFT OF PEACE***, we can give him a surrendered life, empty of things that seem so important to us now, but have no consequence from eternity's standpoint.

In exchange for ***THE GIFT OF LOVE***, we can open our hearts so that He may live with us and through us.

So in the midst of wrapping presents, planning celebrations and hanging decorations, let's take time to prepare our gifts for Him!

WE ARE THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!
We are the reason for his coming
and
we are the reason for his staying!
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
PITTSBURGH DISTRICT SDMI COUNCIL



Pastor Sandy Sisler

NMI



Praying Discipling Giving Education

President's Corner

**“To Make Christlike
Disciples in the Nations”**

How do you share your faith? What is witnessing? Witnessing is one beggar telling another beggar where to find food. This is an old definition, but it illustrates the story of Peter and John going up to the temple at the time of prayer and finding a crippled man begging for money. Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. (Acts 3:6-7)

A reporter in that day from *The Jerusalem Herald* may have set the headlines to read: “Beggar Gets More Than He Asks For” or “Cripple Walks for First Time” or maybe even “Welfare Rolls Reduced by One.” The greatest thing about this story is that the beggar went out of the temple courts, walking and jumping and ***praising God***. People can argue about the Scriptures or religions, but they cannot argue about what God has done in this beggar’s life!

God has done great things in all of our lives. Once we lived a life of ... but now, because of God in our lives we live ... You fill in the blanks with your own history, and people will listen to see if your faith is genuine. People want to know that God is real and that He is working in the lives of people today. Why do we not readily share our faith in Jesus with the people around us? Is it because of fear? Is it because we do not know how to move the conversation from a secular topic to a spiritual topic?

Here are a few questions that can move the conversation to a spiritual topic:

- * **Did you go to Sunday school/church as a child?**
- * **What are your spiritual beliefs?**
- * **To you, who is Jesus?**
- * **What do you think about heaven, hell, angels, etc.**

Most of our friends or relatives do not hesitate to tell us about the difficulties in their lives. We Christians, on the other hand, tend to hide our problems and portray ourselves as “perfect” people. Only God is Perfect! We must allow ourselves to be vulnerable and share how different our lives were before Christ changed us, and how He now helps us through our tough life situations.

Would you like to know the secret to fearlessly sharing your faith in Jesus Christ? There is no short-cut, “trick,” or secret! But one thing is for sure; God is going before you and His Spirit is available to help you and give you courage! It is just that easy - ASK Him to help you!

God is the One that convicts a person’s heart. It is not our job, but His! He is right there with us as we do our part, sharing what He has done in our life. Once we have shared, we have done God’s will. God takes over from there. Revelation 3:20 shows that so clearly: “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”

The Great Commission from Matthew 28:16-20 stands unyielding before us to make disciples of all nations. “In reply Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again’” (John 3:3). These words of Jesus compel us to share our faith with family, friends and our fellow man wherever they are. Let us share Jesus and our lives without fear to those around us. Their lives depend on it. God bless you as you share fearlessly!

You are loved, **Pastor Sandy**

Local Work and Witness teams headed by Bill Regester have completed two projects.

Boswell New Life

In September a team worked for 2 days at the New Life Church in Boswell. An air conditioning unit above the ceiling of the sanctuary leaked and caused mold and mildew to form on the ceiling, posing a health threat. It was determined that the mold and mildew was superficial and therefore would not require the replacement of the damaged drywall in the ceiling. The team used a Clorox solution to clean and kill the area affected. The areas were then primed with a mildew preventing paint. The church is planning to use labor provided by a local prison to paint the ceiling. The team also installed four ceiling fans in the sanctuary to assist in air circulation. The cost of the materials used in this provided by the Lakeside Community Church in Ebensburg.

Corry Church of the Nazarene

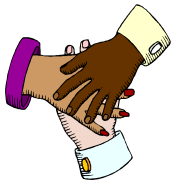
The second project was the reroofing of the parsonage, sanctuary and education wing of the Corry Church of the Nazarene. In total the team placed 79 squares of shingles. The work began on September 19, when Andy Russell from the New Galilee Church brought twelve men from his church. Andy's group and several other men from the district completely reroof the parsonage and removed the old singles from part of the education wing in one day. On September 21 and 22, another group removed the old shingles on one side of the sanctuary and replaced the roof on half of the sanctuary and half of the education wing. Completion of the project was delayed until October. Andy Russell returned with a group from his church. While they were planning to remove the other half the roof on the sanctuary and education wing, rain and high winds prevented the team from achieving their goal. The following week another team returned and completed the project.

God was truly in the control of the project in Corry. It was raining on the morning when the men met for breakfast on our first day of work. After breakfast and a time of prayer, the team went outside to begin the work to find a clear blue sky. A team member checked the weather and discovered that there was a ring of rain around the town of Corry but not a drop where we were located. Over the next hour we watched as the storm moved off to the northwest providing us with a picture perfect day. We were also advised by the local power company that the electricity would be turned off from 4-10 a.m. When the ladies arrived to prepare breakfast, the power was still on. As we were in prayer before beginning our work, the power went off. At about 9:45 a.m., we were ready to begin placing shingles. A team member went to get a borrowed generator when Pastor Phil Gilmore noticed that the porch lights had just come back on. God's timing was as always perfect.

The teams are grateful for the hospitality of the folks at the church. They provided us with excellent meals and sleeping accommodations. We also appreciated the assistance of Pastor Phil and several men and women who helped us with the roof work and cleanup. The cost of the materials was totally paid for

by the church. However, they had only saved about \$13,000 toward a project which when bid obtained a low responsible bid of over \$26,000. Because of the work of our Local Work and Witness teams we completed the project for under \$10,000, saving the church about \$16,000 and completing a project that was long over due.

Bill has offered much praise for all of the team members that made the work possible on these two projects. Any church that is in need of assistance can contact Bill at william.register@verizon.net or by phone at 814-749-7301.



December Emphasis:

Compassionate Ministries (NCM)

What We Do:

- **Child Development**
- **Disaster Response**
- **Health Care**
- **HIV/AIDS Programs**
- **NCM Projects**
- **And Much More - Check it out on the web!**

Who We Are:

Our Mission:

Following the example of Jesus, NCM partners with local Nazarene congregations around the world to clothe, shelter, feed, heal, educate, and live in solidarity with those who suffer under oppression, injustice, violence, poverty, hunger, and disease. NCM exists in and through the Church of the Nazarene to proclaim the Gospel to all people in word and deed.

Please go to the Global Church of the Nazarene website to see all the great things NCM is doing around our world. Remember to take an *offering in December* for NCM.



Rev. Chris Easton
NYI President

Pastor Appreciation Month just ended. You know a great way to show your pastor and family you appreciate them? Send their children to Clergy Kids Retreat! Clergy Kids Retreat keeps getting bigger and better! This winter, our District Clergy kids have again been invited to participate with the MVNU Region in their 6th annual regional retreat. This past year saw our largest turnout yet - 77 teenagers! Retreat is always during President's Day weekend, which for 2012 is February 18-20. Check-in is 4:00 p.m. Saturday. We wrap up with lunch on Monday.

Kalahari is an amazing resort and a perfect setting for all the goals of the retreat. We have kept the cost as low as possible again. Between MVNU Church Relations and Admissions, and MVNU Regional NYI Council, they subsidize well over 50% of the total expense.

Enough suites are reserved for 80 students this year. Notice the three shuttles offered on Saturday and Monday (Parkersburg, Columbus and Dayton). Those should be a great help to many. Registration can be completed online at <http://www.mvnu.edu/churchrelations/ckretreat>. You will also find the medical release and further information there. *We understand a few schools do not get President's Day off. If your school does not and you choose to pick your teen up Sunday evening, we will discount your registration by \$25.*

Clergy Kids are defined as assigned minister dependents. It is each family's responsibility to transport students to and from this event. Financial Aid from those clergy kids on the Pittsburgh District NYI is possible. Contact ceaston@butlernaz.org for more details.

Date: Saturday - Monday, February 18-20, 2012

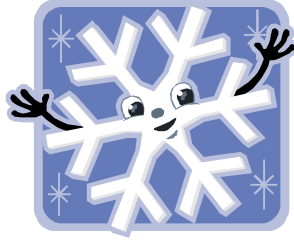
Who: Teens (grades 7-12) of Nazarene clergy

Location: Kalahari Resort & Water Park - Sandusky, Ohio

Cost: \$129/person for single-student families; \$99/person for multiple-student families

Sign-up: Registration & \$50 deposit is due January 5. The balance is due February 5.

Mount Chestnut Snowflake Craft & Gift Show



You Are Invited!!!

To the

Mount Chestnut Snowflake Craft & Gift Show

Saturday, December 3, 2011

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

At the

Mount Chestnut Nazarene Center, 177 North Road, Butler, PA 16001

Everyone invited!

Free Parking & Free Admission

Breakfast and Lunch Available

For more information, call

MOUNT CHESTNUT NAZARENE CENTER

177 NORTH ROAD

BUTLER, PA 16001

724-287-5867 or Larry Wilson after 4:00pm @ 724-285-5391

Come and shop our craft and gift booths.

You might find the exact item for which you are looking!

**Check out our facilities: rent our hall for your wedding, meeting,
retreat or special occasion**

Pastor with MD restarts Monaca Church

Beaver County Times, Sunday, October 23, 2011 - article by Bill Utterback

MONACA - As youngsters attending a muscular dystrophy camp, brothers Adam and Ernie Johnson would sit together on a bed, praying and reading from the bible. "Other kids would ask what they were doing, and (Adam) would tell them," Sue Johnson, their mother, recalled as she stood among power tools and paint cans at the rear of the New Beginnings Church of the Nazarene in Monaca this week.

On November 6, Adam Johnson, 24, will be sitting in his wheelchair at the pulpit, serving as Senior Pastor and launching a new beginning for the church at 899 Jackson Avenue. The church has been closed since 2010. "I've always known this is what I wanted to do," he said. "Ever since I was a boy, I've like telling people about Jesus."

Johnson, an Ohioville resident, graduated from Beaver County Christian School and Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio, where he earned a degree in pastoral ministry. He was working as an Associate Pastor at the Liston (Ohio) Church of the Nazarene when he received his assignment from the Pittsburgh district office. "I prayed about it, and I feel reassured that this is what God wants me to do," Adam Johnson said. "He's ready for this," said Ernie Johnson, who also uses a wheelchair.

Some people working with the Johnson family to prepare the church think Adam Johnson will be an extraordinary model. "I'm sure other people with disabilities are going to come to this church, and they're going to be inspired by him," Al Everett, a member of the Freedom church of the Nazarene, said. "I'm inspired by him."

"I was his Sunday School teacher and I always wondered how God was going to use him and his abilities," said Anita Marker of New Galilee, who will sing with her husband, Dave, at Johnson's first service. "He's had a calling from God to be a leader and an example, and I think that's amazing.

Adam Johnson doesn't want to be labeled as a minister to people with disabilities. "If that happens, it's great," he said. "But this is going to be a church for people of all ages, for families, for everyone. Everyone," he said, "has challenges. It could be something physical. It could have something to do with jobs, or money, or family. We all suffer at times, and God is there for all of us."

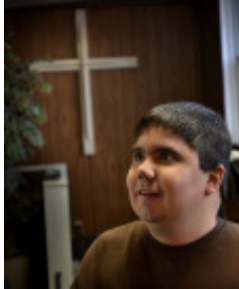
Adam Johnson was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy at age 4 and admits he struggled at times. His mother said she noticed it when he was 16 and began to use the wheelchair. "You're supposed to drive a car at that age, but he get a different set of wheels, and that was hard," she said. "That's natural," Adam Johnson said. "When you go through something difficult, you're going to have questions. You want to understand. God has reassured me and shown me that through my disability, I can encourage others. If people can see my attitude and my faith, it might help them. If you know me, you know I'm a very happy person. God has given me strength."

Adam Johnson has also been gifted with a supportive family. Ernie Johnson Sr., along with Sue Johnson and their sons, have been working through the summer and fall to prepare the church.

Ernie Johnson Sr. and Everett have been working to make the church wheelchair-accessible, adding a ramp to the main church entrance and a ramp inside that will allow Adam Johnson to reach the elevated chancel, where the pulpit, which has been lowered, sits. The altar has been placed so Adam Johnson can access it.

"This is a new beginning for the church, for the community, for anyone who comes here" Adam Johnson said. "I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know who is going to come. But I know God has prepared me for this commitment."

The next step in the remodeling, when funds allow, will be to install a chair lift that will enable Adam and his brother, Ernie, to reach the fellowship hall in the church basement.



Pastor Adam Johnson, family and friends the morning of November 6.



Visitor's Table in Foyer

