



New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor. 5:17

Sunday, May 16, 2021

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PASTORAL PONDERING

SHARING THE GIFT OF JESUS

"Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me all that I ever did.' So, when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of the word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.'" John 4:39-42

Many years ago a complete stranger came up to me at work and asked me in a contentious manner "Are you saved?" I must admit I was very uncomfortable with the confrontation. I was raised in the church and, although still early in my Christian walk, I knew the answer to the question but felt it wasn't any business of this complete stranger especially in the manner he asked it.

As I've gotten older and continue my faith walk, I look back at that encounter and I'm left with the question as a follower of Jesus, "What is the best way to witness and bring the good news to a dark and fallen world?" I've always believed, as the saying goes, that you catch more flies with honey than vinegar. How can we expect people to consider the Gospel if it's done in a confrontational manner or by opening a conversation by telling people they are going to hell?

I have always loved the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus meets the woman all alone at the well and in opening the conversation asks her for water. From there he turns the table and actually offers her the ultimate gift, that of eternal life.

I love this interaction in that it breaks all the rules. Jews, much less Rabbis, didn't speak to Samaritans. Jesus doesn't condemn the woman for the poor choices she had made in the past but offers her Himself. The thing that I want to focus on is what the woman does after this encounter with Jesus and how this might be an example for us in regard to reaching the unbelievers we encounter in the future.

It turns out that perhaps we do know the name of this Samaritan woman - Photini, meaning "luminous one" or "one who brings light." She wasted no time in going back to her town and telling everyone about Jesus. She didn't have any theological training; she wasn't well known and in fact her name wasn't even mentioned in the story since it wasn't important, and she certainly didn't possess a stellar reputation. The truth was she was a Samaritan woman with five prior husbands

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PASTORAL PONDERING

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and living with another man but yet God used her to testify of His goodness!

I find it interesting that it states many Samaritans believed because of her testimony - meaning that some still didn't - but this didn't seem to discourage Photini from speaking the truth. Often I have placed too much emphasis on *my* role in people coming to faith and over time realize I am just an empty vessel placed in a position to tell others about the water that is eternally satisfying. Unfortunately, I have found myself at the well many times and have only offered another a drink of water that merely satisfies for the moment, fearful of rejection.

Photini (according to Eastern Orthodox church tradition) continued to offer testimony to whoever would listen and is said to have brought so many to the Christian faith that she was described as "equal to the apostles". She ultimately ended up going before Nero to testify of her faith, was beaten, tortured, and ultimately martyred by being thrown down a dry well.

This past year has been very difficult for this world and things aren't going to get better as we already know the ending, but now more than ever the dark needs to be exposed. We have the ultimate answer to the pain and suffering, and it isn't by placing our trust in masks, vaccines, governments, money, or any man. It is only found in Jesus Himself.

My prayer for myself and anyone reading this is that we can stand and proclaim, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*" (Romans 1:16) Let your testimony be heard today.

In Christ, Greg Mattson



welcome

If you are a visitor this morning or have only been coming to New Life for a few months we are glad you are joining with us! If you would like to learn more about New Life be sure to stop by the Resource Center in the front foyer to pick up a welcome bag we have for you. We encourage you to stay after service for fellowship and a meal so we can get to know each other.

MINISTRY DIRECTORY:

Building & Grounds Ministry

Jim Judkins 715.338.8837
oldoutboardjim@hotmail.com

Coffee Ministry

Sandy Moe: 715.417.1812
sandy.klj@hotmail.com

Finance Administration

Bruce Gilliland (Treasurer): 715.338.2580
financeministry@newlifechristiancommunity.org

Greeting Card Ministry

Lynn Nelson: 651.373.1426
lynnjimmnelson@gmail.com

GriefShare Ministry

Robin Mattson: 715.566.1945
robinmattson27@gmail.com

Immerse Ministry

Ana Smith: 715.566.3740
anajoy87@gmail.com

Meal Train Relief Ministry

Danielle Panik: 715.554.2214
dhischer@gmail.com

Music Ministry

Jeff Warren: 316.308.0833
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com

Missions Outreach

Lorraine Milner: 715.557.0661
lrmilner@gmail.com

Newsletter Administration

Dawn Holm: 715.472.8453
djhholm@lakeland.ws

Resource Center

Cory Mattson: 715.417.0945
cory79mattson@hotmail.com

Sunday Meal Services

Barbara Judkins: 309.269.0556
bjdarnell@hotmail.com

Transportation Services

Art Behr: 715.220.6882
behrden1@charter.net

Video Ministry

Jim Mabee: 651.470.4172
jmabee@centurytel.net

Widow's/Shut-ins Ministry

Linda Rominek: 760.252.1786
lindajoy77@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982
galatiansii20@yahoo.com	
Pastor Paul Linzmeier	320.226.5581
pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com	
Pastor Jeff Warren	316.308.0833
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com	
Cory Mattson - Secretary	715.417.0945
Zachary Fugate	715.379.2918
Brian Gates	651.230.6554
Matt Leko	651.465.3154
Dale Mattson	715.566.2302
Greg Mattson	715.417.2444
Rene Milner	715.557.0185
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132
Jay Swisher	763.587.3472

This Week's Scheduled Events:

Tues	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Wed	Every Man's Battle– 6:00 am
Wed	Ice Cream Social– 6:15 pm
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Study– 10:00 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 12:00 pm
Thurs	Ladies Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	GriefShare-6:30 pm (Adults & Youth meet separately)

May Memory Verse:

Isaiah 45:8

"Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit; let the earth cause them both to sprout; I the LORD have created it." ESV

May Fellowship Tip:

Have you begun a prayer/discipleship relationship with someone from New Life? If not, prayerfully consider whom you can be regularly meeting with for the purpose of growth and sharpening as disciples of Jesus.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

May 16	Meal Team #1
Jun 2	PICNIC IN THE PARK

Contact Barbara Judkins if interested being on a meal team.

Check out New Life Online
newlifechristiancommunity.org

- **Church Directory:** If you call New Life your church home (even if you're watching from home), help us know and care for one another by updating or adding your family information and picture. If you missed getting your picture taken for the directory the past 2 weeks there will still be a classroom open for pictures **today after service**. If you can't attend in person you can upload a picture & contact information and email it to nlccdirectory@gmail.com.
- **Ministry Team Fair:** Interested in serving on a New Life Ministry Team but don't know much about the current ministries? We will have the large classroom across from the kitchen set up to display all the various ministry teams at New Life. Make sure to pass through **today** on your way to get the meal. There you will get to hear more about each ministry and ways to serve as well as the opportunity to meet the team leaders. We are grateful for the many gifts God has appointed to each member of the body of Christ. May these ministries represented at the fair as well as the ones already happening organically be used unto the Glory of Christ and for the building up of the saints in love.
- **Sunday Meals:** We anticipate starting meals every Sunday this fall! More help is needed on current meal teams plus addition of 1 meal team for a total of 8. Each meal team would serve every 8 weeks. Come to the Ministry Fair today for the list of needs and choose what works for you. Sunday Meal Ministry contact Barbie Judkins 309-269-0556 or Barb Manship 612-804-9793.
- **Young Adults:** (including high school juniors & seniors) You are invited to meet up at 3 Arrows Coffee at **1:30pm this Sunday (today), May 16th**. We may go for a walk after an hour or so of fellowship, so bring your walking shoes!
- **Youth GriefShare:** Additional volunteers for youth GriefShare are needed. There will soon be about 5-6 youth meeting each week. Margo currently facilitates the class but will need additional help to give appropriate attention to each youth as they process through recent grief. If you have gone through grief, have a good listening ear, and want to love on some youth in this community please consider this opportunity to be present for these youth and share Christ with them. GriefShare meets Thursday nights 6:30pm and the current class session begins this week and will last over the next 13 weeks. If interested contact Margo (715) 566.4325.
- **Motherhood Study: Tuesday mornings from 9:30-11 beginning June 8th**, we invite all moms and those who would like to be a mom someday to join us for a 10-week study through the book *"Risen Motherhood."* We look forward to growing in motherhood as we look to Jesus and the truths of the gospel together. Childcare will be provided. For more information or to get a copy of the book, contact Amy Linzmeier @ 320-226-7956 or Taylor Newman @ 715-554-2858.

Today's Passage:
Pastor Jeff's message is from the
Old Testament book,
PSALM 1

Sermon Notes: