

# Community Christian Center



The Word  
Fellowship  
Prayer

## The Good Tidings Newsletter

A Report on the Revival at CCC

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KENNETH CLOWDUS, PASTOR

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### Pastor's Corner

This month featuring Associate Pastor *Dustin Paraspolo*

#### Eternal Hope

When we think of our Lord Jesus Christ being bruised, wiped, beaten so badly He was no longer recognizable, and finally crucified on the cross for our transgressions, we fall into worship; but do you ever wonder how His disciples and those closest to Him felt? In the four gospel accounts we read that they were scared, anxious and defeated. It's fair to say that their hope was gone. Their hope had been in walking and talking with Jesus, the miracle man, and not in the crucified, resurrected and living Christ. In fact, it says in Luke 24:17-21. *17 He asked them, "What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?" They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. 18 Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days." 19 "What things?" Jesus asked. "The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth," they said. "He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. 20 But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him. 21 We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel. This all happened three days ago.* (NLT)



These were followers of Jesus who called Him a man, a prophet and a mighty teacher who they HOPED was the messiah. You see, when Jesus died, so did their hope. Think of Peter: he had told Jesus that he would die before he would deny Him, and yet the last time he saw Jesus before the resurrection, Peter denied Him. Imagine Peter's face when Jesus looked at him. Imagine how he felt. In sorrow, Peter left the courtyard weeping bitterly only to await the death of his Lord, the One he had denied.

In the gospel of John, as Mary Magdalene was looking for the body of Jesus, she seemed scattered as she anxiously looked for hope in searching for her savior. When she saw Jesus her hope was fulfilled and she embraced Him. When Peter heard the news he jumped up and ran to the tomb which was empty, but he saw the cloth that had been used to cover Jesus' face - it was neatly folded. (God bless our late brother and elder, Cal Henk, who taught me about the folded cloth that signified Jesus would be back. In their culture the master of the house would crumple up his napkin and throw it on his plate when he was done eating and walk away, signifying to his servants that he was done. However, if he folded his napkin and placed it next to his plate that would signify to his servants that he was coming back!) Peter's hope was recharged.

Up until this point their hope was defeated. Their hope was in a man who they believed died. They doubted and/or forgot about the resurrection. They had a temporary hope secured by being with the physical Jesus, but their hope died when Jesus died. BUT when he was resurrected so was their hope. They no longer had a temporary

hope but an eternal hope that is available to all of us. He's alive and with us! Our hope is in an everlasting and Living God. This resurrection puts life into our memory verses: John 14:1-6 (NKJV) *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."* Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

We no longer need be troubled by this world. We have a promise of Glory and we know the way. If you're hurting, depressed, angry, stressed, feel like giving up, etc., be encouraged in the hope of our resurrected Jesus. One day we will be like Him and all this world's sorrows will be wiped away and we will be transformed!! We won't even remember what we were so upset about. We will see Jesus face to face and be like Him.

1 Corinthians 15:19-23 (NLT) *19 And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world. 20 But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.*

*21 So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. 22 Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. 23 But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.*

1 Corinthians 15:45-54 (NLT) *45 The Scriptures tell us, "The first man, Adam, became a living person." But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. 46 What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. 47 Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. 48 Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man. 49 Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man.*

*50 What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever. 51 But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! 52 It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. 53 For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. 54 Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory."*

That's almost unbelievable. That's something to make a joyful noise about. That's love we can't understand that is our eternal hope; and that eternal hope started at the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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-(Continued from first page) I pray God bless you, but I also pray that we Bless the LORD in thanksgiving for His life, His death and His RESURRECTION! In Jesus name, Amen.

## JOSEPH AND BLESSINGS

by Sharon S. Johnson

You ask, "How can I receive God's blessings?" There are probably many ways but obedience, is what comes to my mind first. And, then, how about patience? We all are kind of afraid to pray for patience but we really need it, because God's perfect timing can drive you nuts without patience.

I have to add to that, attitude. We can be obedient but grumble and complain about "all that we're going through. Poor me!" We can become a negative mess. From one potential mess to another: I don't want to go there or stay there, do you?

And what about forgiveness: it is forgiving those who offended us and receiving God's forgiveness for when we offend Him. Forgiveness is essential. Humility – we are the created who have been given gifts from the Creator – how can we brag or think we are better than others when it's all gifts from God? (Einstein did not create his own brain capacity – it was a gift to further the knowledge of man.)

Then there is faith, and when it is combined with hope, it is marvelous, and it is impossible to please God without faith. And Love is the greatest of all – love comes from God: He is love. Love covers a multitude of sins, and since we are all sinners, I think learning to love others is a wise thing to do, if we want to be blessed.

Sometimes I just ask for God's mercy to help me – and He does. These are my thoughts on the subject – there are probably more ways, but I hope you get the idea.

I think that Joseph is a prime example of the above attributes. In ancient times before Israel was a nation there was a Hebrew boy named, Joseph. He had 11 brothers and he was his father, Jacob's favorite. He started out by bragging a little too much about the dreams he was having – dreams indicating that his family would one day bow down to him. This angered his jealous brothers who began to plot against him. Their opportunity for revenge came when they were tending flocks far away from the camp, they attacked Joseph with the intention of killing him, but instead they sold him into slavery to a caravan that happened to be passing by. They let their father, Jacob, believe he had been killed by some wild animals.

So Joseph ended up in Egypt as a slave to Potipher, the Captain of the Pharaoh's Guard. Did he cry and angrily plot revenge? No. Did he sabotage Potipher's house in order to get even? No. Was he lazy and did he do the least amount he could because it was so unfair? No. Did he turn to alcohol or any other vice? No. Did he try to escape? No. What he did do was amazing and is an example for all of us. He excelled. He did the best job as a slave that he could with the gifts God had given him. I believe the anointing of God was upon him because of the way he conducted himself. God had a plan for Joseph's life and Joseph was obedient with a good attitude, when one might think he had every right to act differently because he had been terribly wronged by his own brothers.

God blessed Joseph, and all those around him were blessed. Potipher's house prospered and Joseph was put in charge because of this. Happy ending? Well, there was a problem – not with Joseph, but with Potipher's wife. She lusted after Joseph and tried to seduce him, when he fled from her, she accused him of attacking her. So our mistreated Joseph ended up in jail.

Those dungeons must have been filthy, dangerous horrors. There was no indoor plumbing and you can just imagine what kind of people were imprisoned with him. So he angrily beat

people up and, NO. He developed severe depression and gave up? NO. He hid in the corner hoping no one would notice him? NO. What did he do? He excelled. What? Yes, he trusted God and excelled. He eventually was put in charge there in the prison and proved to be a blessing again. He stayed there for at least a few years, and continued to work well.

Using his gift of interpreting dreams, he was given the chance to interpret Pharaoh's dream. He predicted seven years of plenty in Egypt followed by seven years of famine. This was the correct interpretation and so Joseph was put second in charge of the entire land of Egypt and made preparations to build a food supply that would last during the famine. He was given a wife and had children. He had a new family but He still missed his father, and his younger brother, Benjamin, who was not among those who sold him out.

Because of the severe famine, his brothers, with the exception of Benjamin, came to Egypt to get food. Joseph recognized them, but they didn't recognize him. To them he was a very powerful ruler in Egypt in charge of selling grain. Eventually, he managed to get all of the brothers together before him and, very emotionally and tearfully, Joseph revealed who he was. This news terrified his brothers who had sold him into slavery, but Joseph comforted them and said, "...God has sent me here to keep you and your families alive so that you will become a great nation. **Yes, it was God who sent me here, not you!** Gen 45:6-8 There was no blaming here. He didn't say, "You don't know what I went through because of you!" No resentments – just an honest evaluation of how God used his life to preserve his family and further God's plan for Israel – which eventually included the birth of Jesus, our dear Savior.

Joseph's life really speaks to me, because my attitudes can get real stinky, but I have to remember the word says in Rom 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.* NKJV

Whatever we have to go through, good or bad, if we belong to Him, we can further His purposes which are oh so good, and we will be blessed and will be a blessing to others.

The above description of Joseph is very brief. Give yourself a treat and reread the whole story of Joseph in the Bible at Genesis chapters 37 & 39-50.

### Impossible!!!

Submitted by *Dee Paraspolo*

After being interviewed by the school administration, the prospective teacher said:

"Let me see if I've got this right. You want me to go into that room with all those kids, correct their disruptive behavior, observe them for signs of abuse, monitor their dress habits, censor their T-shirt messages, and instill in them a love for learning. You want me to check their backpacks for weapons, wage war on drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, and raise their sense of self esteem and personal pride.

You want me to teach them patriotism and good citizenship, sportsmanship and fair play, and how to register to vote, balance a checkbook, and apply for a job. You want me to check their heads for lice, recognize signs of antisocial behavior, and make sure that they all pass the final exams.

You also want me to provide them with an equal education regardless of their handicaps, and communicate regularly with their parents in English, Spanish or any other language, by letter, telephone, newsletter, and report card. You want me to do all this with a piece of chalk, a blackboard, a bulletin board, a few books, a big smile, and a starting salary that qualifies me for food stamps. You want me to do all this and then you tell me. . . I CAN'T PRAY?"

## Never Say Never to the Lord

by *Zeda Stade* and *Sharon Johnson*

Many people at CCC remember Zeda Stade's wonderful sister, Lorraine Lubbers, who went home to be with the Lord in 2002. Zeda tells of a time over 15 years ago when Lorraine was being very badly treated by her ex-husband, John Lubbers. Zeda got so disgusted with his actions that she made the statement: "I'm not going to pray for John Lubbers anymore!" and she meant it.

A few nights later, in the middle of the night, Zeda was awakened by an extremely brilliant, bright light that suddenly appeared in her bedroom, and she heard something that sounded like thunder. Then she heard a loud, deep, stern voice – almost like a clap of thunder – say to her: "Pray for John Lubbers." Just as suddenly as the light appeared, it disappeared and everything was quiet. Her husband, Clovis, slept through the whole thing. In the morning she knew that she had to continue praying for John, and she did.

John moved to Colorado and has since passed away, but Zeda believes that he is with the Lord because God wanted prayer for him.

Zeda laughs and says, "Don't ever tell the Lord you're not going to do something, you'll get zapped!"

I (Sharon Johnson) had something happen to me on the same theme as what happened to Zeda. I got tired of praying for my family. I had prayed for them for decades and still none of them seemed to have any interest in the Lord. I told the Lord, "I'm not going to name my family members when I pray for them anymore. I'm just going to pray a generic prayer like, 'Please save my family, Lord.'" I told no one about this decision.

One week later, at the end of a prayer meeting, Martha Griego said, "I have a word for someone from the Lord. He says that He wants you to pray for your family members by name. Lift up their names to Him." Well, I had just been zapped, and I returned to lifting up each individual's name after that.

One of the things that I learned in these two incidents is that our prayers are very important to God. We can't give up even when we're tired or angry. God works through our prayers. Isn't it amazing! Keep praying, CCC!



## The Outreach

Our Outreach was at Wannamaker in March and it was a very anointed time. The weather was beautiful. We served hot dogs, chips, and popcorn; we provided clothes and shoes. The kids enjoyed the Goliath game. We had our traditional raffle for a bike. Someone donated a guitar and that was raffled also - the little boy who won it was so happy and in awe over having a guitar of his own. One special little girl accepted the Lord with Michele Watts, and most of the kids prayed with Al Olquin.

There was a brand new NIV compact Bible at the raffle table that someone had donated. A boy of about eleven asked if he could have it. I told him that it probably should go to an adult. He said, "I'll read it, I really will!" He really wanted to have a Bible. I told him that he could have it if he read John 3:16 to me. He started searching the Bible for John - starting at Genesis. He finally found it and read it to me. He was so happy to get that Bible. I put an inscription on the appropriate page that he was given that Bible by Community Christian Center on that date. What a joy it is serving the Lord.



## New Members



*Jim Christopherson*, Leader of the New Member's Class



*Joyce Waller, Judy Avey, Teresa Molina & Nia Agostino*  
(Not Present - *William and Elsie Cole*)

# Happy Resurrection Sunday, CCC

## Kitchen Korner

...from the kitchen of *Dee Paraspolo*

A cold March wind danced around the dead of night in Dallas as the doctor walked into the small hospital room of Diana Blessing. She was still groggy from surgery. Her husband, David, held her hand as they braced themselves for the latest news. That afternoon of March 10, 1991, complications had forced Diana, only 24-weeks pregnant, to undergo an emergency Cesarean to deliver the couple's new daughter, Dana Lu Blessing. At 12 inches long and weighing only one pound nine ounces, they already knew she was perilously premature.

Still, the doctor's soft words dropped like bombs. "I don't think she's going to make it," he said, as kindly as he could. "There's only a 10-percent chance she will live through the night, and even then, if by some slim chance she does make it, her future could be a very cruel one."

Numb with disbelief, David and Diana listened as the doctor described the devastating problems Dana would likely face if she survived. She would never walk, she would never talk, she would probably be blind, and she would certainly be prone to other catastrophic conditions, from cerebral palsy to complete mental retardation, and on and on.

"No! No!" was all Diana could say.

She and David, with their 5 year-old son Dustin, had long dreamed of the day they would have a daughter to become a family of four. Now, within a matter of hours, that dream was slipping away. But as those first days passed, a new agony set in for David and Diana. Because Dana's underdeveloped nervous system was essentially 'raw', the lightest kiss or caress only intensified her discomfort, so they couldn't even cradle their tiny baby girl against their chests to offer the strength of their love. All they could do, as Dana struggled alone beneath the ultraviolet light in the tangle of tubes and wires, was to pray that God would stay close to their precious little girl. There was never a moment when Dana suddenly grew stronger. But as the weeks went by, she did slowly gain an ounce of weight here and an ounce of strength there. At last, when Dana turned two months old; her parents were able to hold her in their arms for the very first time. And two months later, though doctors continued to gently, but grimly, warn that her chances of surviving, much less living any kind of normal life, were next to zero, Dana went home from the hospital, just as her mother had predicted.

Five years later, Dana was a petite but feisty young girl with glittering gray eyes and an unquenchable zest for life. She showed no signs whatsoever of any mental or physical impairment. Simply, she was everything a little girl can be and more. But that happy ending is far from the end of her story.

One blistering afternoon in the summer of 1996 near her home in Irving, Texas, Dana was sitting in her mother's lap in the bleachers of a local ball park where her brother Dustin's baseball team was practicing. As always, Dana was chattering nonstop

with her mother and several other adults sitting nearby when she suddenly fell silent. Hugging her arms across her chest, little Dana asked, "Do you smell that?"

Smelling the air and detecting the approach of a thunderstorm, Diana replied, "Yes, it smells like rain."

Dana closed her eyes and again asked, "Do you smell that?"

Once again, her mother replied, "Yes, I think we're about to get wet. It smells like rain."

Still caught in the moment, Dana shook her head, patted her thin shoulders with her small hands and loudly announced, "No, it smells like Him. It smells like God when you lay your head on His chest."

Tears blurred Diana's eyes as Dana happily hopped down to play with the other children. Before the rains came, her daughter's words confirmed what Diana and all the members of the extended Blessing family had known - at least in their hearts - all along. During those long days and nights of her first two months of her life, when her nerves were too sensitive for them to touch her, God was holding Dana on His chest and it is His loving scent that she remembers so well. (From the internet - author unknown)

## Womens Meeting



Melba Redd spoke at Women's Meeting last month. She is such an expressive, dynamic speaker. Some of the things she said were: "I'm a liberated woman today, set free by God." - "I was in Kindergarden praying for a sister and look how the Lord answered - he got me so many sisters in the body of Christ, I just had to open my eyes to see it." - "Don't think outside the box - stay in the box, which is your Bible!" She said her message was to encourage us, and that she accomplished.

## Guest Speakers



CCC is very blessed to have wonderful, anointed guest speakers. Pastor George and his beautiful wife run a large missionary training program in India, along with orphanages and other Godly ministries. Chris Holloway is a beloved world-

class singer with an incredible voice. Both love the Lord with all their hearts. Their messages, along with Chris' singing, can be heard on the internet at CCC's website under 'Pastor's Sermons'.



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