

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 *Senior Pastor, Ken Clowdus*

This is a rerun of an article taken from the Sept, 2003 Newsletter

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

HOW IMPORTANT IS GODLY FELLOWSHIP? That is like asking how important is breathing, or eating or drinking: for truly our Spiritual health demands that we stay in close relationship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. None of us can say to others in the body, "I have no need of thee." This powerful truth is illustrated by the following story:

FIERY SERMON

~ A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the minister decided to visit him. Guessing the reason for the minister's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited. The minister made himself at home but said nothing.

In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the minister took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The minister glanced at his watch and chose this time to leave; he slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the minister reached the door to leave, his host said, with a tear running down his cheek, "Thank you so much for your fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday." Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken. ~

You have no idea how important your attendance is to me. You encourage me just by being in the services, whether you participate publicly or not. I know there are times we must miss church, but as we see that day approaching, let us make up our minds, that we are going to burn for Him, together, and not cool off by separating ourselves from the corporate fire of God.

WOMENS ADVANCE

We all need to advance and there is still space available for the women of the church to get away from it all and join with each other for a special time of worship, fellowship, and fun. The dates are Oct. 8th through the 11th. Please see Melba Redd, or Dee Paraspolo for details. This just may be your chance for a real breakthrough!!

Women's Meeting - Baby Shower for Jennifer



A precious picture (left) of Jennifer's Mom, Angel, and grandmother, Rose, praying for this brand new little girl before her birth. What a great Christian legacy she will have. There are four generations right here.

Below - opening gifts. What fun. We saw some precious onsies.



Four beautiful friends of the mother to be, Christina, Heather, Caitlyn, and her sister, Shelby (upper left). Susie and Lori (upper right). Debbie, Cindy and Frances (left)



Forgive Those People? – Are You Kidding?

by Sharon Johnson

Several years ago when I was working as an R.N. in a prison medical unit, there were some nurse co-workers who took a disliking to me. That's okay, I'd rather you like me but if you don't, it's okay. These nurses were jealous of the job I was assigned to – they wanted it. Floor nursing can be grueling and very difficult, for example, lifting patients, turning them and taking care of their bodily needs require a lot of work. I had a job that didn't call for direct patient care – I had already done that for a few years in the past. Anyway, they chose me off. They shunned me and caused other nurses to treat me poorly.

One time, when I was having difficulty giving an Aids patient some medicine and had my back to the medicine cart, they snuck in the room and stealthily took the cart out of the room and hid it. Now, there are prisoner workers all over the place and if they got a hold of the medicine cart that I was in charge of – I would be fired. I became very upset and went looking for it while they sat snickering in the nurses' station. I found it in the secretary's room. It was a cruel joke. There was more – they always tried to make things hard for me. The supervisors said I had to handle the situation myself, but somehow I couldn't. So you get the gist of how it was for me. This happened for about 1 ½ years. I cried a lot during this time.

Pastor Tony is a witness to the pain I was feeling because I was always asking for prayer at a Bible study he was leading. He told me I had to forgive these people and pray for them. When he said that, I was extremely outraged, and I mean that. How on earth could I pray for them, let alone forgive them? But after a while I realized what he said was scriptural and I had to be obedient. So very grudgingly I started praying for them. At first it was hard but it got easier after I kept doing it. When you earnestly pray for someone, you are investing in their lives, so you start thinking of them differently.

One day, another nurse yelled at me for something and I just went into the nurses station and started crying – weeping actually. I asked God what was wrong with me – why couldn't I handle this problem? God revealed to me that there was the spirit of being of a victim on me. I rebuked that spirit and, as God is my witness, I felt something leave me. I sat there with tears still on my face but there was no grief – I had been set free. (I thank God that no one came into the nurses' station while this was going on – it was another miracle.)

From that day forward – no one ever shunned me, hurt me, played jokes on me or any of the other things. I am still amazed about that. It all stopped that one night.

There were three of them that had ganged up on me. Some time after that, two of them accepted Christ as their savior and the last one, who was a Seventh Day Adventist, was forced to retire because of a grievance that had been filed against her by another nurse.

One day after all this happened, I was talking to one of these three nurses and she said, "I will come against other people, but not you – I will never come against you." What happened to cause that attitude change I don't know, but I do know Who it was that changed her heart. I don't know what would have been my fate, if I had not prayed for them and forgiven them.

The moral of the story is you must forgive and pray for those who spitefully use you. It will cost you too much to keep grudges and the word says that God cannot forgive you unless you forgive. I wish freedom from the torment of unforgiveness for all my Christian brothers and sisters.

Martha and Mary...and Sharon

by Sharon Johnson

During the time I was so upset because of hurtful actions of my co-workers, my dad was dying. My sister, Martha, and I used to travel together to Las Vegas to see him almost every week-end. Martha has always been a happy, upbeat person and she kept telling me how much she loved her job, how wonderful the people treated her, and how life was just a joy a minute for her.

(Martha is not a Christian, although, I know, by faith, she will be saved and on fire for Jesus in the future.)

So when I got home from Las Vegas one day, I was thinking about how miserable I was and I compared myself with my sister who was so happy. I knew I loved Jesus, but felt that my life was really messed up. So, again I was crying and I called out to God to help me. I felt like I was nearing crisis mode.

Looking for an answer, I went to my Bible, opened it randomly and miraculously pointed with my finger to this passage: "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary (your sister) has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41-42 NIV

The first word I saw was my sister's name, "Martha." Isn't that amazing? But, not only that, the passage answered my cry. The Lord was telling me that I had chosen the better thing, my faith in Jesus, and it will not be taken away from me.

Now the cry of my heart is for my wonderful sister and her family to accept Jesus. I know He'll answer that cry too.

Editor's Note: It's really hard for me to reveal some parts of myself and my life that aren't praiseworthy. But, I do it because God has worked such miracles in my life to change me and free me, that I can't help but want to share this with those who may be struggling with any of the things I have described, especially unforgiveness, because if God can help me - He will help you too. My favorite word is HOPE and in Him there is an abundance of hope - no matter what the circumstances.

March of the Unqualified

from the writings of Matt Tullos

Think God can't use you? Think He only uses perfectly qualified people?

- ▶ Moses was not a great speaker
- ▶ Jonah ran from God
- ▶ Jacob was a liar.
- ▶ Noah got drunk.
- ▶ Rahab was a prostitute.
- ▶ David had an affair & caused a murder.
- ▶ Jeremiah was depressed a lot.
- ▶ Solomon was rich in wisdom but poor in lifestyle.
- ▶ John the Baptist was just plain poor & questioned if Jesus was the Messiah.
- ▶ Timothy was too young.
- ▶ Abraham was too old.
- ▶ Lazarus was dead.
- ▶ Sarah was barren.
- ▶ Naomi was a widow.
- ▶ Gideon and Thomas both doubted - so did Sarah.
- ▶ Peter lacked self-control.
- ▶ James and John were self-righteous.
- ▶ Paul had a short fuse. So did Peter and Moses.

God's Army isn't perfect - it's the march of the unqualified. Get in line!

In Loving Memory

Leota Maxine Ely

by Sharron Bonessa

Born Leota Maxine O'Neal

Scotts Bluff, Nebraska, May 5, 1919

Went home to be with the Lord August 31, 2010 at age 91.

She was #9 out of 11 children, six survived to adulthood. She was raised on a farm



& milked a lot of cows in her day.

She was raised a Mormon but her older sister, Ann, asked Jesus into

her heart at an Assembly of God revival, and Ann began to fast & pray for her family. Mom loved going to dances at age 13, but looked like she was 18, so she caught the attention of lots of older boys. But, her sister kept praying and fasting for the family and one night Mom said that she saw what looked like a vision of the Second coming of Christ. She thought the Lord had come back, and she knew she was lost and bound for Hell!! She became very convicted and knew she had to get to a church to get right with God. She found her way to a Nazarene church, went forward, and prayed through till she had a real experience with the Lord.

After that, she went to every church that had a revival and, when she was 15, she met Cecil Ely who was a preacher's kid, and she thought, "What a nice young Christian man!" They began to like each other & Daddy would walk her home from church. After about 6 months, Daddy tried to put his arm around her & she thought he was too forward and fresh, and wanted to break up with him, but he redeemed himself and they fell in love and were married on November 14, 1936.

LaVonne was born on April 14, 1938; Jeanette Maxine was born on January 3, 1940; and Sharron Elaine was born on September 15, 1949.

We moved to California in 1951. Daddy would always make sure we went to church and he would pray for you if you didn't feel well. Mom & Dad showed us how to follow Christ and live for him – it was their passion! I am so grateful for that. We remember her telling us Bible stories every night - she was so good at it that she would make them come alive, we loved it. We always knew that Mom & Dad loved us.

Mom was Irish & loved to play tricks,

she was a lot of fun & had a very interesting recipes to say the least: her twice baked brownies, corned beef enchiladas, cherry pie & jam made with grapes & her funny homemade chocolates (with hard-boiled egg centers, a gift to Pastor Ken once!) among other things. She was the best at making fried potatoes, baked bread & Thanksgiving dressing. I have some wonderful memories & I praise God for her dedication to God; her prayer was for all of her family to be saved. I can still hear her pray, "Lord, don't let anyone of us be lost." I am now praying that same prayer for all of us.

We attended a different church until the Lord led us to CCC through Lorraine Lubbers, who said, "You have got to come to this church, you really get fed." So Mom & I came on a Sunday night in late 1979. It is the best church we have ever attended!!! I am proud to be a member of CCC.

Mom was married to Daddy for 67 years. Daddy passed away July 1, 2003. We miss him very much & we miss Mom too and all her hugs & kisses, but are so happy for her also because we know she is well and whole in Glory with our Lord and with Daddy and all her loved ones who had gone on before her. To God be the Glory!

3 children: LaVonne Adams - CCC's pianist; Jeanette Merica (husband, Orval); and Sharron Bonessa (Husband, Richard) - CCC praise team members.

9 Grandchildren: Ron Adams & Laura; Rick Adams; Tim Merica & Kandy; Lisa; Jeremy; and Jonathan & Justin Bonessa.

2 Great Grandchildren: Jonathan Merica & Katie Merica.

Magdalena Beatrice Hernandez



Magdalena (Lena) Hernandez went home to be with the Lord on Sept 7, 2010 at age 56. She was a beloved member of CCC and faithfully ministered to the lost at the L.A. Mission.

She had been a walking miracle since God provided her with a heart transplant 13 years ago. She accepted Jesus as her savior after having a vision of Hell while

in the hospital.

She has a very devoted family, including three grown children and grandchildren.

She is a heroine and example to many people because of her bravery and her strong faith in the Lord.

We ask for blessings of comfort and peace for her family and that the God of all comfort be with them. We know that she is now walking in beauty on streets of gold - free from all pain or trouble.

Mystery Photo



This is a childhood picture of a young lady who has been a member of CCC since the beginning. She was (and is) a real cutie.

Can you guess who it is?

Baptism



Bresett Alvarez



Minister **Wanda Lee** has been chosen to be the new director of Children's Ministry. Pastor Ken said it was an easy choice since Wanda is a retired school teacher who has a love for children. Pastor Mike and Linda Stephens have served faithfully and very effectively for many years. We are grateful and very appreciative of all the time and effort they have contributed to the children.

Only God Knows

by Donald Burnett
(a CCC member)

There's life out there beyond the known that we don't understand, that we can't comprehend, but only God knows and only He understands and comprehends what the unknown is.

Kitchen Korner

...from the kitchen of *Dee Paraspolo*

A friend sent this to me several months ago. It is an excerpt from a book called, *The Invisible Woman* by *Nicole Johnson*. Johnson is the dramatist for the Women of Faith Conferences. My friend heard her at a Conference and described her thus, "Her (Johnson's) dramas are so rich and meaningful...she has you laugh till you cry and emotionally wrenched so you cry - either way, you're crying!"

The Character in Johnson's book is a mother who fears she is erasing her life. I think you will enjoy it:

I'm invisible. It all began to make sense, the blank stares, the lack of response, the way one of the kids will walk into the room while I'm on the phone and ask to be taken to the store. Inside I'm thinking, "Can't you see I'm on the phone?" Obviously not. No one can see if I'm on the phone, or cooking, or sweeping the floor, or even standing on my head in the corner, because no one can see me at all. I'm invisible.

Some days I am only a pair of hands, nothing more: "Can you fix this? Can you tie this? Can you open this?" Some days I'm not a pair of hands; I'm not even a human being. I'm a clock to ask, "What time is it?" I'm a satellite guide to answer, "What number is the Disney Channel?" I'm a car to order, "Right round 5:30, please."

I was certain that these were the hands that once held books and the eyes that studied history and the mind that graduated summa cum laude - but now they had disappeared into the peanut butter, never to be seen again. She's going...she's going...she's gone!

One night, a group of us were having dinner, celebrating the return of a friend from England. Janice had just gotten back from a fabulous trip, and she was going on and on about the hotel she stayed in. I was sitting there, looking around at the others all put together so well. It was hard not to compare and feel sorry for myself as I looked down at my out-of-style dress; it was the only thing I could find that was clean. My unwashed hair was pulled up in a banana clip and I was afraid I could actually smell peanut butter in it.

I was feeling pretty pathetic, when Janice turned to me with a beautifully wrapped package, and said, "I brought you this." It was a book on the great cathedrals of Europe. I wasn't exactly sure why she'd given it to me until I read her inscription: "To Charlotte, with admiration for the greatness of what you are building when no one sees."

In the days ahead I would read - no, devour - the book. And I would discover what would become for me, four life-changing truths, after which I could pattern my work: No one can say who built the great cathedrals - we have no record of their names. These builders gave their whole lives for a work they would never see finished. They made great sacrifices and expected no credit. The passion of their building was fueled by their faith that the eyes of God saw everything.

A legendary story in the book told of a rich man who came to visit the cathedral while it was being built, and he saw a workman carving a tiny bird on the inside of a beam. He was puzzled and

asked the man, "Why are you spending so much time carving that bird into a beam that will be covered by the roof? No one will ever see it." And the workman replied, "Because God sees." I closed the book, feeling the missing piece fall into place. It was almost as if I heard God whispering to me, "I see you, Charlotte. I see the sacrifices you make every day, even when no one around you does. No act of kindness you've done, no sequin you've sewn on, no cupcake you've baked, is too small for me to notice and smile over. You are building a great cathedral, but you can't see right now what it will become."

At times, my invisibility feels like an affliction. But it is not a disease that is erasing my life. It is the cure for the disease of my self-centeredness. It is the antidote to my strong, stubborn pride. I keep the right perspective when I see myself as a great builder. As one of the people who show up at a job that they will never see finished, to work on something that their name will never be on. The writer of the book went so far as to say that no cathedrals could ever be built in our lifetime because there are so few people willing to sacrifice to that degree. When I really think about it, I don't want my son to tell the friend he's bringing home from college for Thanksgiving, "My mom gets up at 4:00 in the morning and bakes homemade pies, and then she hand bastes a turkey for three hours and presses all the linens for the table." That would mean I'd built a shrine or a monument to myself. I just want him to want to come home. And then, if there is anything more to say to his friend, to add, "You're going to love it there."

As mothers, we are building great cathedrals. We cannot be seen if we're doing it right. And one day, it is very possible that the world will marvel, not only at what we have built, but at the beauty that has been added to the world by the sacrifices of invisible women.

NEW LEADERSHIP IN WOMEN'S MINISTRIES



In September, Melba Redd was chosen to be head of Women's Ministries along with Dee Paraspolo as second in charge. Melba has served faithfully as an assistant in Women's ministries for a few years now. She has blessed us with anointed messages in the past and we thank God for providing us with a talented and caring leader. CCC congratulates her and we pray God's blessing upon both Melba and Dee.

The Good Tidings Newsletter

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