



# new life news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST JULY 2018

## Steve Says...

### What God Showed Me In Honduras

#### **Ezekiel 40:4**

*<sup>4</sup>And the man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel.”*

This verse comes from a vision Ezekiel had where God measured the temple. But for one week in June it was the theme verse for our New Life Team in Honduras. Specifically, we focused on the second part of the verse. **“Look with your eyes and hear with your ears and set your heart upon all that I shall show you.”**

As we looked and listened we saw a lot of things. Some of those things were disturbing. Things like poverty, sickness, garbage, death, and violence. But in the midst of these disturbing things we saw some beautiful things as well: compassion, tenderness, laughter, love, and the people of God offering hope and help.

God showed us that we could be brothers and sisters with people who don't speak the same language that we do. He showed us that we can reach out and help others—even if it makes us feel uncomfortable. He showed us that the needs that surround us are great and there is no one else to do the job. He showed me that the Gospel is clothed in the skin of ordinary people loving others in extraordinary ways.

And so as the verse says, I am declaring what I saw to the House of Israel. And I encourage you to join me in once again setting our hearts on the things of God expressed in loving one another!

## Church Events

- July 18<sup>th</sup>  
Senior Moments  
Event 12:00pm
- July 18<sup>th</sup>  
Comfort & Joy  
Sewing 5:30pm
- July 22 – 28<sup>th</sup>  
Youth Mission  
Trip
- July 29<sup>th</sup> - August  
10th  
Safety Town

## Simply Sing

During my recuperation following surgery, I had ample time to do some reading and studying regarding congregational singing. There is virtually no end to the articles, books, and sermons offering something significant to the conversation, but there is one book in which I enjoyed a profound simplicity written by Keith and Kristyn Getty entitled, *Sing! How Worship Transforms Your Life, Family, and Church*.

*Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise (Psalm 95:1-2)!*

Mary and I were sitting quietly on the deck one morning when she asked, "What are you thinking about?" "Musical worship in the early church and why we do things the way we do today," I answered. (It was a complex thought for so early in the day, but such are the workings of my mind.) "*Congregational singing is one of the greatest and most beautiful tools we have been given to declare God's excellences, strengthening His Church and sharing His glory with the world*" (Getty). This single sentence summarizes the purpose of worship, especially musical worship in the form of singing, as declaring the greatness of God, strengthening God's people, and testifying of the glory of God to a lost world.

So why do we sing? The Gettys give us some biblical insight as to why we are created, commanded, and compelled to sing in worship.

### CREATED to Sing!

When we sing we are simply joining in what the rest of creation is doing. Worshiping God is what we were created to do. The intricate design of the human vocal apparatus is knit together wonderfully by our Creator. Every voice is different, but each one is created with the same purpose.

*Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (Ephesians 5:18-21).*

Whether you sound your best on stage or in the shower, worship and singing begin with the heart, not the lips. Our focus should not be on how well we sing. Instead it should be the beauty of our voices and hearts knit together in praise. *We sing to encourage and praise, not to impress and earn praise (Getty)*. We sing because we love our Creator who made us, formed us, and enables us to sing.

### COMMANDED to Sing!

God's commands are not arbitrary. We must act in obedience with warmth of conviction and joy of relationship.

*Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song,  
his praise in the assembly of the godly (Psalm 149:1)!*

There are no caveats or conditions regarding our obedience in singing. Lifting our praise together with the body of Christ is a directive in scripture. Musical worship is something that should be taken seriously, to value and set aside time for. It is not "just singing," it is an integral part of worshiping together and alone. The content of what we sing allows the word of Christ to dwell in us richly. There is so much creative freedom in music and songs, but what we sing matters the most. The lyrics are not simply words on a screen, they are truth and should be sung with thoughtfulness, conviction, and expression. "*How we sing reveals how we think and feel about something*" (Getty). It betrays the truth about us, for better and for worse. Congregational singing and our participation says a lot about who we are as a church and as members of Christ's body.

### COMPELLED to Sing!

Saved people are singing people. "*Worship isn't primarily about music, techniques, songs or methodologies. It's about our hearts. It's about what and who we love more than anything*" (Kauflin). The work of Christ in our lives compels us to sing. Worship comes as a response to revelation. The Gospel explains who God is, who we are, and why we need a Savior. That truth compels us to sing because we have been set free. As the old song says, "I sing because I'm happy, I sing because I'm free." God did not just free us from something, however, He also freed us for something-to glorify Him.

*For the love of Christ compels us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised  
(2 Corinthians 5:14-15).*

I pray that these words may encourage us to engage in deeper and more melodious worship of our God. "*We sing because we're created to, commanded to, and compelled to. And when we sing great truths, great things happen. Christ-filled, Spirit-prompted singing moves out in concentric circles changing your own heart and mind...changing your family...changing your church...and changing this world*" (Getty). So as we gather in worship each week as a congregation I encourage you to join with creation and your church family and...Sing!

## Jason's Jam

I wanted to take a moment and reflect on the first annual "Church Campout" we had here at the church the last weekend in June.

It was beautiful out, no rain, but it was hot, heat index near 100 hot. But we did not let that damper the weekend as we were able to move several activities into the nice air-conditioned New Life Center. It was a great time of fellowship, eating, worship, and competition.

It was a powerful evening of worship with the Broughtons and a late night movie and popcorn in the parking lot.

The pancakes and sausage in the morning were amazing and of course, the hog roast was quite delicious. The kids (and some adults) enjoyed several "minute to win it" games.

Dave and Mary Crawford won the best homemade ice cream as picked by the kiddos.

We want to encourage those who did not attend this year, to make it a priority to attend next year as it was a great opportunity to grow closer as a church family!

## July Birthdays

1 – Robert McCready

3 – Carol Cogar , Cliff Hardin,

4 – Evan Bayse, Spencer Benick, Kiona Cover

5 – Riley Johnson, Lauren Johnson, Alex Kistler, Mary Mowry, Brooklyn Puckett

6 – Addison Noe, Rich Tucker

7 – Jon Beveridge, Kim Landis

8 – Kim Dixon, Cari Johnson

9 – Brad Sharp

10 – Jennipher Fletcher, Phyllis Shaffer

11 – Martha Hamilton, Karla MacTavish, Dan Noe

16 – Jason Sharp

17 – Tabi Hamilton, Ginger Kunz

19 – Ralph Walker

20 – Rebecca Sharp

22 – Carla Armstrong

26 – Ann Jordan

# Kyle's Korner

*Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to give recognition to those who labor among you and lead you in the Lord and admonish you, and to regard them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brothers and sisters: warn those who are idle, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient with everyone. See to it that no one repays evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all. -1Thessalonians 5:12-15*

Paul ends his first letter to the Thessalonians with a list of commands. These commands come at the end of the letter as a sort of practical application of the ideas that were discussed through the rest of the letter. This is common for the structure of Paul's writings: the commands are natural outpourings of how to live based on what was taught through the rest of the letter. There are a couple very interesting observations I'd like to make about this list of commands (and many others found in other New Testament books).

First, every time we see the word "you" it refers to the whole community to whom the letter is being read. Modern English doesn't have a way to distinguish between a singular you (you alone as an individual) or a plural you (you all as a group) and we can only determine which is meant by the context. But these phrases as they appear in the language they were first written make clear that Paul is giving these commands to a group. If Paul were an American Southerner he would have written "y'all be at peace" and "y'all help the weak" and so on. The

point is that these were commands given to the community as a whole to be lived out as community principles. This means that community is assumed. For Paul and the Christians to whom he was writing there was no concept of a Christian living out their faith apart from a church. A strong communal flavor runs through this list of commands and even the entire New Testament. Any form of Christianity that fails to grasp the emphasis on Christian community is not New Testament Christianity.

The second observation actually flows from the first. Since these commands are given to a community, they are impossible to obey apart from fellowship in a community. Every command given in this portion of Scripture, along with the overwhelming majority of commands in the New Testament, are given to Christians to be obeyed communally. This means that it is impossible to obey the bulk of New Testament commands if we are not actively involved in community with other Christians. In short, we cannot obey Christ if we are not actively participating in Christian community.

Participation in congregational life has been downplayed in recent years. We have tended to individualize the faith so much that we see little need for the community. But is this what Christ envisions for His Church? We see from Scripture that community is assumed and that we cannot live obediently without it. The challenge I want to lay before us all is this: invest in congregational life. View your brothers and sisters as fellow-heirs of the Kingdom. Treat them as those purchased by the Blood of Christ. Commit to work together, as one body, for "what is good for one another and for all."

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR AUGUST

July 30-August 10 – Safety Town

August 15 – Senior Moments – 12:00pm

August 15 – Comfort & Joy Sewing Ministry – 5:30pm

August 26 – Celebration Milestones