

# THE NEWSLETTER

*A Ministry of Cornerstone Fellowship of Coatesville Pennsylvania*

*The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor  
Mr. Peter E. Jensen, Assistant Pastor of Youth Ministries & Group Life*

610-384-1375 or 610-384-1216  
610-384-6757 (fax)  
email: fbcccoatpa@aol.com  
www.cornerstonefellowship1.org

VOLUME 37, Number 1

JANUARY 2018

## **A TIME TO RETREAT?**

(some thoughts based on Matthew 2:13-15 and 19-23)  
People can be very vicious. We tend to pick on the inadequacies or idiosyncrasies of other people. These tactics are used especially against those whom we are quite certain will not or cannot retaliate.

If we are, or think we are, on the receiving end of such attacks, there are times when we feel compelled to react. There are times when we would rather take a physical or verbal beating than endure the taunts.

The text above deals with the decision of Joseph to take Mary and Jesus away from the threats of Herod. Perhaps you have wondered, "Why should they have gone? Would not God have protected them? Did Joseph exhibit poor judgment and a lack of faith?"

The lesson to be learned is that "to everything there is a season." There are times to fight and times to flee. Joseph made a decision that the best thing to do was to leave Israel and flee to Egypt.

Put yourself in Joseph's place for a moment. An angel warns him that the king and his forces are intent upon killing the baby. How would you feel if you knew there was an all-points bulletin out for your child? Mary and Joseph knew that the baby was someone very special. They also knew something of the hate that humankind can demonstrate.

There are times in the church when we feel like "they are against me." At such times, there is a temptation to run to a far land and avoid the slings and arrows of fellow church members. Then, there are those other times, when we summon the courage, and we stick out our necks.

The text suggests that there is a time to withdraw – to go on retreat, if you will. The world is complex. There are daily anxiety-producing events. Personalities and forces invade our space and send us into a spin of emotions. And, we become so preoccupied with all of this activity that we lose our spiritual base. God suddenly becomes crowded out of our lives, and we do what WE want to do. Joseph had the

good sense to continue listening to God even in the midst of fearing for the lives of his family.

In the days following Christmas, how many of us are so exhausted that we have literally forgotten about God? The parties and celebrations have drained us. What has become of our prayers and our devotional life?

The time is ripe for refueling our spiritual lives. The spiritual base needs to be reconnected. Recall the times in Jesus' ministry when he retreated from the hectic pace, to be alone and to pray.

The function of a "vacation" is to provide with time to rejuvenate. However, we can never afford to take a vacation from God. When we remove him we fall out of balance and we run low on the spiritual fuel that makes life meaningful.

One of the ways we might begin to refuel our lives is to shut off the noise in our lives. It might be a television or a radio. I am convinced that NOISE is a great contributor to a spiritual imbalance. The time comes for SILENCE. The time comes for listening to God. The time comes for sharing with those we love versus merely existing with them. The time comes for prayers and reflection.

In other words, the time comes when we must set aside our personal agendas and turn our lives over to God and TRUST HIM! Joseph listened to God!

We need to MAKE the time for this renewal or it will not happen. If we are too busy, then we are TOO BUSY!

But, when we allow God once again to enter our lives we will discover an energy that had been sapped from us. We will feel our convictions and courage enriched. We will discover that we are alive and creative once again.

Mary, Joseph and Jesus retreated to Egypt, but they did not stay there. They returned to the battle. Recall that many years later, at the Transfiguration, Jesus would literally kick Peter, James and John off the mountain and back into the battle of the world.

There is a time for everything: a time to fight, a time to rest and a time to return to the fight in the name of Christ. In the end, those who follow Christ are always in the midst of the battle against sin and the forces of evil.

Perhaps the New Year will hold times of transition for you. You may want to flee, but remember that those who stand firm to the end will be saved. We, even now, are engaged in a great spiritual battle against the forces of evil – forces that would drive us apart, forces that would pit us against one another, forces that would deny the power and glory of the great Almighty God, forces that would rob us of the joy of serving the Lord together.

In the New Year before us, may God find us faithful in His service, and abounding in mercy and grace towards one another, even as we have received mercy and grace.

### CHRISTMAS THANK YOUs!!!!

**THANKS** to everyone who came caroling at Hibernia Mansion this year. Hope you were blessed by your participation and will plan to come caroling again in 2018.

We want to thank everyone who made the **Annual Christmas Concert** a great success. We thank those who performed those beautiful Christmas melodies, those who worked the sound and lights, those who organized and worked in the kitchen, those who brought the delicious food and everyone who attended. **YOU ARE ALL A BLESSING!** Can't wait for next year!!

Also, **THANKS** to everyone who made **Swag night** a success. Special thanks to **Aunt Dian** for making all the bows for our creations and sending them all the way from Colorado; and to everyone who donated greens.

Also, **THANKS** to everyone who helped make **Breakfast With the Wise Men** a great success – even in spite of the snow. Wasn't it GREAT to have a visit from the "plain-clothes-undercover" Wise Men for a change. And **THANKS, Mike Mulhollan and Tim Warren**, for the DELICIOUS breakfast! Thanks also to the Children's Team for all the planning for A Night Under the Stars, even though we had to cancel because of the weather. **NEXT YEAR!!!!!!???????**

Also, **THANKS** for a great evening at the **PUNK ROCK CHRISTMAS PARTY and CHRISTMAS with The CORD & Friends!** Both added something WONDERFUL to the season's celebrations.

And, **THANKS** to those who made **The Children's Christmas Pageant** and the **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** so lovely and meaningful for all those who attended.

**GOD BLESSED CORNERSTONE WITH AN OUTSTANDING ADVENT SEASON OF SPECIAL EVENTS.** Thank you one and all.

### UPWARD 2018

Please pray for the children and adults who will be participating in the UPWARD basketball and cheerleading program this year. Our goal is that each child will experience the love of God as they are having fun learning their skills.

Game Day Volunteers are still needed! You can still volunteer to help. Please see Peter Jensen or Lois Jensen if you can help with set up, break down, clean up, or security.

UPWARD practices begin Monday, January 15, with the first games scheduled for Saturday, January 27.

### SNACKS/REFRESHMENTS NEEDED

We are looking for donations of refreshments for the refreshment stand for the UPWARD season. We need:

- cases of water& gatorade
- bags of snacks (chips/pretzels/pop corn, etc)
- slim jims
- twizzlers (individually wrapped)
- candy bars
- individual size rice krispie treats
- individual size fruit snacks
- individual size cracker snacks

If you would like to donate, please bring your donation to the church and put them in the bin in the gym or talk to **Kalee Meeder** to find out how you can help. Thank you!

### BIBLE READING

Shall we try to do it again!?! Please follow the readings below and by year's end you will have read the entire Bible through. God will bless you as you faithfully study His word.

The month of January

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Genesis 1&2, Psalm 1     | 17. Exodus 1-3, Psalm 17    |
| 2. Genesis 3 & 4, Psalm 2   | 18. Exodus 4-6, Ps 18:1-24  |
| 3. Genesis 5-8, Psalm 3     | 19. Exodus 7-9, Ps 18:25-50 |
| 4. Genesis 9-11, Psalm 4    | 20. Exodus 10-12, Psalm 19  |
| 5. Genesis 12-14, Psalm 5   | 21. Exodus 13-15, Psalm 20  |
| 6. Genesis 15-17, Psalm 6   | 22. Exodus 16-18, Psalm 21  |
| 7. Genesis 18-20, Psalm 7   | 23. Exodus 19-20, Psalm 22  |
| 8. Genesis 21-23, Psalm 8   | 24. Exodus 21-23, Psalm 23  |
| 9. Genesis 24-26, Psalm 9   | 25. Exodus 24-26, Psalm 24  |
| 10. Genesis 27-30, Psalm 10 | 26. Exodus 27-29, Psalm 25  |
| 11. Genesis 31-33, Psalm 11 | 27. Exodus 30-32, Psalm 26  |
| 12. Genesis 34-36, Psalm 12 | 28. Exodus 33-35, Psalm 27  |
| 13. Genesis 37-40, Psalm 13 | 29. Exodus 36-38, Psalm 28  |
| 14. Genesis 41-43, Psalm 14 | 30. Exodus 39-40, Psalm 29  |
| 15. Genesis 44-46, Psalm 15 | 31. Leviticus 1-3, Psalm 30 |
| 16. Genesis 47-50, Psalm 16 |                             |

### INVITE A FRIEND

**START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT!!! PLEASE MAKE A POINT TO INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS, CO-WORKERS OR FELLOW STUDENTS TO WORSHIP WITH YOU AT CORNERSTONE!**

Maybe today is the day Jesus has a special mission for you. Ask God to use you in a special way that may surprise even you. It's good to be surprised by the

power of God from time to time - it reminds us of who is really (or needs to be) in charge of our daily routines. Inviting someone to come to worship with you could literally free someone from the bonds of sin. What a gift to give in Christ's name.

Keep inviting those friends!

**IT'S GREAT TO SEE NEW FACES IN CHURCH, and the old faces keep getting better looking each week, too!**

### FORGETTING & REACHING

On December 31<sup>st</sup> we close the volume of the old year and look forward to the new one that begins on January 1. And so, the new year is upon us and the calendar seems to offer 365 new, fresh days. As we move into the new, let us forget the failures and sins which God in His grace has forgiven, and reach out for those spiritual attainments which will make us more fruitful Christians.

George Burger has aptly commented, "By God's grace I will forget those things which are behind and press forward to new heights. I will, like **David**, lift up my eyes unto Him from 'whence cometh my help;' like **Abraham**, trust implicitly in His guidance; like **Enoch**, walk in daily fellowship with my Heavenly Father; like **Moses**, choose to suffer affliction rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; like **Daniel**, commune in prayer with God regularly; like **Job**, be patient under all circumstances; like **Caleb** and **Joshua**, refuse to be discouraged; like **Andrew**, strive to lead my brother into a closer walk with Christ; like **John**, lean upon the bosom of the Master and partake of His Spirit; like **Stephen**, manifest a forgiving attitude toward all who seek my hurt; like **Timothy**, study the Word of God; and like **my Lord Himself**, overcome all earthly allurements by refusing to succumb to their enticements.

Realizing that I cannot hope to achieve these objectives by myself, I shall cling to the promise that 'I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.'

Someone has said, "The narrow way is very worn on the EDGES!" The meaning is clear. Many desire the spiritual blessings and the salvation which the Lord freely offers them, but dread the cross-bearing, the self-denial, and the constant attention to holy living that keeping to the center of the "Jesus way" demands. Such careless living grieves the heart of Him who gave His all for us.

One day while walking with some children, Queen Mary was caught in a sudden shower. Quickly taking shelter on the porch of a home, she knocked at the door and asked to borrow an umbrella. "I'll send it back tomorrow," she said. The queen had deliberately disguised her appearance by putting on a hat that partly covered her face and by wearing some very plain clothing. The householder, reluctant to give a stranger her best umbrella, offered her

a cast-off she found in the attic. One rib was broken and there were several holes in it. Apologizing, she turned it over to the monarch, whom she did not recognize. The next day she had another visitor -- a man with gold braid on his uniform and an envelope in his hand. "The queen sent me with this letter," he said, "and also asked me to thank you personally for the loan of your umbrella." Stunned, the woman burst into tears. "Oh, what an opportunity I missed that I did not give her my very best," she cried. Many, I fear, will have to make the same confession when they face the Lord at the end of life's road.

Let past mistakes stay in the past! Never become discouraged; instead, reach for the higher blessings of the Spirit which come only to those who walk in close fellowship with the Lord -- those who walk down the center of the "Jesus way." Remember that the narrow road leads to LIFE. Why not make George Burger's practical suggestions your goal for the coming year?

*The New Year lies before you  
like a spotless track of snow,  
Be careful how you tread it,  
For every mark will show!*

As the New Year dawns, may the Lord give us a vision of His will for us in the days ahead and the strength to carry on. May He increase our faith, renew our hope and be our guide, in the name of Christ -- Amen.

### THE NEW YEAR

At the birth of the twentieth century, ministers, teachers and other leaders had high hopes for the century to follow. They knew that the year 1900 stood on the threshold of new discoveries in science, and they believed that science might become our "savior." They knew that we stood on the threshold of new economic discoveries and they believed that economics might "redeem" us. They knew that we stood on the threshold of new discoveries in transportation, which would make the world one. So, as the 1800's faded away, celebrations were held all over the world to usher in the new "millennium."

In Boston, crowds gathered in the streets. Up and down Beacon Hill they marched, singing and making revelry as only a New Year's Eve crowd can do. On the stroke of twelve, thousands thronged Boston Common for a service of worship. Edward Everett Hale was the featured speaker. With the wind whipping his coat, he rose, held up both hands, and with earnestness pronounced the words, "O Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

A Boston newspaper commented on the speech by saying that this brief statement was the finest tribute that might be paid to the new year. Hale knew that unless the twentieth century became the century of God, it would become a century of failure.

We have not only completed that century but have long since entered a new one. Hopefully we have learned that the new discoveries in science, though wonderful, cannot save us, nor can the new discoveries in economics redeem us. And the new discoveries in transportation, though stupendous, made it possible for evil people to use this invention to kill and maim men, women and children.

As Christians approach another new year, they must pray again that God will redeem yet another year, and create his "holy city." God is trustworthy and true. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He is, indeed, our dwelling place in all generations. May we be at the forefront in bringing America back to the Lord.

"And I said to the man who stood  
at the gate of the year:  
'Give me a light, that I may tread  
safely into the unknown!'

And he replied:  
'Go out in the darkness and put your hand  
into the Hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light  
and safer than a known way.'"

### **PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR**

To grow a little wiser day by day,  
To school my mind and body to obey,  
To keep my inner life both clean and strong,  
To free my life from guile, my heart from wrong,  
To shut the door on hate and scorn and pride,  
To open up to love the window wide,  
To meet with cheerful heart what comes to me,  
To turn life's discords into harmony,  
To share some weary worker's heavy load,  
To point some straying comrade to the road,  
To know that what I have is not my own,  
To feel that I am never quite alone—  
This would I pray from day to day,  
For then I know my life would flow  
In peace until it be God's will I go.

### **ATTITUDE**

*The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10% of what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our attitude.*

### **DAILY SURVIVAL KIT**

Items needed: Mint  
Candy Kiss

Tea Bag  
Eraser  
Rubber Band  
Toothpick  
Chewing Gum  
Band Aid  
Pencil

WHY????

**TOOTH PICK** - to remind you to pick out the good qualities in others - Matthew 7:1

**RUBBER BAND** - to remind you to be flexible. Things might not always go the way you want, but it will work out. - Romans 8:28

**BAND AID** - to remind you to heal hurt feelings, yours or someone else's. Colossians 3:12-14

**PENCIL** - to remind you to list your blessings everyday. Ephesians 1:3

**ERASER** - to remind you that everyone makes mistakes, even you. God forgives you, so forgive others. Genesis 50:15-21

**CHEWING GUM** - to remind you to stick with it, and you can accomplish anything. Philippians 4:13

**MINT** - to remind you that you are worth a mint. John 3:16-17

**CANDY KISS** - to remind you that everyone needs a kiss and a hug everyday. John 4:7

**TEA BAG** - to remind you to relax daily and go over your list of blessings. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

### **WHY GO TO CHURCH?**

If you're spiritually **alive**, you're going to love this!

If you're spiritually **dead**, you won't want to read it

If you're spiritually **curious**, there is still hope!

A church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone to church for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all." This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher.

"I've been married for 39 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this. They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

Remember, when you are DOWN to nothing... God is UP to something! ***Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!***

Thank God for our physical AND our spiritual nourishment!

### **Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth**

Jesus LOVES YOU! Why not resolve to live 2018 more highly devoted to living for HIM! HAPPY NEW YEAR!