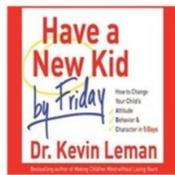


# NFP

News for the Pews

## 6 Weeks of Fall Fun!



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For 6 weeks in the fall, families gathered together to have fun, and grow in their walk with Jesus.

Game Day Central was an opportunity for the kids, (nursery to Grade 5) to play fun games, do crafts, sing, hear stories from God's Word and be challenged in small groups. We learned from the lives of Mary and Joseph that true heroes obey God even when it's not easy. From John the Baptist we learned that true heroes do their best in everything, and from Jesus we learned that true heroes follow God's plan. The early church taught us that true heroes put others first and Priscilla and Aquila reminded us that true heroes tell others about Jesus! We would ask that you pray for the children that participated in this fun learning opportunity. Pray that the lessons from God's Word would challenge them to rise up and be heroes as well!

While the kids were having fun and learning, the parents participated in a video series by Dr. Kevin Leman called, Have a New Kid By Friday. Each week following the video there was opportunity to have a discussion, facilitated by Pastor Greg, and spend time praying together. Parents were challenged to get to the heart of their child(ren) to affect change of attitude, behavior and character, so that true discipleship can take place.

Each night ended with a time where families gathered together to chat, and of course have delicious snacks lovingly created for us by Kim! Yummy!

This super fun night was a lot of work, and would not have been possible without our amazing team! Many Thanks to Toni, Chris, Joyce,



Our Newsletter:

A Catalyst for Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer

## Pastor's Corner



“An essential element of turning prayer into action is to move beyond your own personal needs, fears and desires and to look to what God is doing in the world.”

*We have been challenged by the example of Nehemiah during our ‘Under Construction’ sermon series. Nehemiah was a man of action who prayed AND made himself active in the purposes and plans of God. I hope this article challenges you as it does me.*

### When Should Action Become Part of an Active Prayer Life?

The Bible is crystal clear on prayer. Along with Bible reading, it is the fundamental practice of the Christian life. Paul encourages us in his first letter to the Thessalonians to pray continuously (1 Thess 5:17) and we read in Acts that the first gathering of Christians was marked by the fact that, “they all joined together constantly in prayer” (Acts 1:14).

A great danger for all Christians is that we neglect our prayer life, or that we do not have a personal prayer life at all! My great, great uncle, Andrew Murray, wrote in his spiritual classic, *The Prayer Life*:

“The enemy uses all his power to lead the Christian and above all the minister, to neglect prayer. He knows that however admirable the sermon may be, however attractive the service, however faithful the pastoral visitation, none of these things can damage him or his kingdom if prayer is neglected. When the Church shuts herself up to the power of the inner chamber, and the soldiers of the Lord have received on their knees ‘power from on high’, then the powers of darkness will be shaken and souls will be delivered. In the Church, on the mission field, with the minister and his congregation, everything depends on the faithful exercise of the power of prayer.”

But there is an equal and opposite danger. And that is the Christian who does have an active prayer life, but who never turns their prayer into action.

The prophets of the Old Testament often castigated the people of Israel for upholding the ritual aspects of their faith (burnt offerings, prayer and fasting) but not doing anything practical to help the poor or support the marginalized (Is 1:11, Hos 6:6). And Jesus himself highlighted the hypocrisy of those who pray loudly in public to be seen and heard but do nothing to practically build God’s Kingdom (Matt 6:5). But it is the book of James that does the most in emphasizing the importance of transforming faith and prayer into action and works.

James does not tell us to do works instead of prayer. He values prayer highly, telling us that, “the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (Jas 5:16). But what James stresses over and over is that, having prayed and meditated on God’s Word, we are to go out and do what it says! In James 1:22-25 he writes:

## Pastor's Corner Continued...

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.” It is not always straightforward to discern what God wants us to do. Jesus himself spent nights in prayer communing with his Father and discerning the next step to take. Famously, in the garden of Gethsemane the night before his arrest he prayed and asked God to, “take this cup from me” (Mk 14:36). But on not getting a positive response, he handed himself over to be arrested and crucified.

What often keeps us from action is doubt or fear, in other words not being sure of the will of God in the circumstances we find ourselves in or being afraid to do what is asked of us. But how do we discern the mind of God if it is not in earnest prayer? So to act requires prayer, but having prayed, God requires of us to act! Whether we like the answer we get or not. We are, after all, his hands and feet in this world until he comes again to complete the work he started at creation and has sustained throughout history.

An essential element of turning prayer into action is to move beyond your own personal needs, fears and desires and to look to what God is doing in the world. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2.5). Let me put it bluntly: wherever possible get over yourself! Look at the need in the world around you. Don't just pray about your own needs but ask God whom and what you can pray for in terms of the needs of people around you. What is God calling you to do? What need can you meet? As your circle of concern expands and whom and what you pray for grows, so also your understanding and compassion for the world around you grows. Enlightened by Scripture and the conviction of the Holy Spirit, you also become aware of what God is asking of you in terms of how you need to act in the world, no matter how large or small the action.

So you may be asking what can I do? Share the gospel and your own personal testimony; support ministries that are sharing God's Word in the world; speak out against injustice; support what is good and oppose what is bad; treat everyone you meet with love and compassion; or as the prophet of God, Micah wrote over two and a half thousand years ago:

“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Mic 6:8)

Marius Brand

Biblica's Southern African Director.

*Encouraging words for sure, as we seek to turn our prayers into action,  
Pastor Greg*

## Missions Corner:

Your Mission Committee will be submitting a complete report on Mission activities during 2019 in the Annual Report for the General Meeting which will be held shortly. In this newsletter we would like to get you better acquainted with the three families we support financially and spiritually. These families are working as missionaries in very different countries and in different ways. As you make a financial donation each week, a small portion of it goes to supporting these three international missionaries. As you read about our missionaries and how they are fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19) REMEMBER THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS.

Here is a bio on Matt and Zita (Last name withheld for safety reasons):

Matt and Zita, who St Ann's has partnered with for many years, work with SIL and Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada in Tajikistan. Matt oversees the work of Bible translation in that country and the border region of China. They have multiple translation projects underway along with language development work in minority language communities. Zita also partners with development of minority languages and has been taking in more responsibilities in oversight of the Bible project managers. They work to identify nationals (local people) who will be future leaders in Bible translation. Please pray for spiritual growth in their national leadership partners and that their Bible translation projects will be fruitful. Please pray personally for their safety and their family as their two daughters have returned to Canada for post-secondary school education but their son, Noble remains in the field.

## Church and Community Announcements:

**Family Movie Night:** Friday, January 17th @ 7pm we will be having a 'Family Movie Night' in the gym. This is a great way to chase away the January blahs, and have some fun. The youth will be selling popcorn and drinks with all proceeds going to West Lincoln Community Care.



Kids are invited to bring a cardboard box decorated to look like a car for them to sit in while they watch the movie. A prize for the most original design will be awarded that night. A few boxes will be available outside the nursery on Sunday January 12th if you can't find your own (first come first serve).

**Annual Business Meeting:** The date for our Annual Church Business Meeting has been set for March 1st. Please save the date and plan to join us. (Report submissions are due by January 14th)

**Fundraiser:** Camp Crossroads is celebrating 40 years of ministry with a 'Jazz and Chocolate Fundraiser' at Cornerstone Community Church (434 Hunter Road, Niagara –on-the-lake) on Friday January 31st for 7:00-10:00 pm. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

**GPS:** Ministry leaders, mark your calendars for Thursday January 30th from 7:00-8:30 pm for our next GPS meeting.

**Ontario MB Conference:** This year's Ontario MB Conference will be held on February 21-22 @ Cornerstone MB Church in Virgil.

**Questions? Concerns? Comments? Please call or email us. We would love your input!**

**Visit Our Website: [www.stannscommunitychurch.ca](http://www.stannscommunitychurch.ca)**



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