



# The Earnest Christian

Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore.  
 From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets,  
 the name of the Lord is to be praised.  
 The Lord is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens.  
**Who is like the Lord our God, the One who sits enthroned on high,**  
**who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth? Psalm 113:2-6**

As we continue our march through the book of *Joshua* in Sunday Morning Worship, consider the implications of these stories of God's amazing provision, protection, and power on behalf of the Israelites as they took possession of the land of Canaan in accordance with God's promise to Abraham. It is interesting to note the parallels between some of the Old Testament stories and the New Testament message of our salvation in Jesus Christ and our call to serve the kingdom of God.

For example, the story of God bringing his people Israel out of their slavery in Egypt through wondrous acts of deliverance in order to take them to a land flowing with milk and honey is often viewed as a picture of the salvation God has provided for us in Christ Jesus and our ultimate destination of spending eternity with the Lord in heaven. Likewise, the story of the Israelites' conquest of the land of Canaan can be viewed as an illustration of the work to which God has called us as followers of Christ Jesus. Just as God called Joshua to lead Israel in taking possession of the land and promised that he would give them every place where they went in the land (Joshua 1:3), Jesus Christ told his disciples that they would be his witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Just as God planned for Israel to be **a light to the Gentiles** (Isaiah 60:3), Jesus called his disciples **the light of the world** (Matthew 5:14). Just as the foreigners living among them received God's forgiveness alongside the Israelites through the sacrifices Israel offered to God (Numbers 15:26), so we as disciples of Jesus are called to be peace-makers (Matthew 5:9) and ministers of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20), helping others to come to faith in Christ and experience his forgiveness, cleansing, and empowerment for holy living and kingdom service.

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10 that the stories of the Israelites' sins and God's punishments against them are written in the Scriptures as examples and warnings to all who read them, in order that we might avoid those mistakes and sins of unbelief. In the same way, the stories of the miraculous victories God gave to the people of Israel serve as reminders to us that God is able to accomplish amazing things in and through us today. Let's pray that he will. Let's look for opportunities to let the light of his presence shine through us. Let's commit ourselves as his servants to be available for whatever he desires to do through us in building his kingdom and helping those who don't yet know him come to a personal relationship with him through Christ Jesus.

**CONNECTION GROUPS** are starting up. These are great ways for you to get connected with other believers for discipleship, Bible-study, and mutual edification in Christ. I encourage you to get involved.

A **MEMBERSHIP CLASS** will be held on Sunday, March 11 following Morning Worship. If you are interested in becoming a member of WLFMC, or in just learning more about the Free Methodist Church, I invite you to register for the class. Lunch and childcare will be provided.

God is on his throne and we are called in Christ to serve his kingdom in this present day. Let us each and all give ourselves wholeheartedly to the work of advancing the kingdom of heaven in full faith that God is with us, God is leading us, God is going before us, and God is empowering us.

The hymn writer Charles Wesley wrote in **A Charge to Keep I Have:**

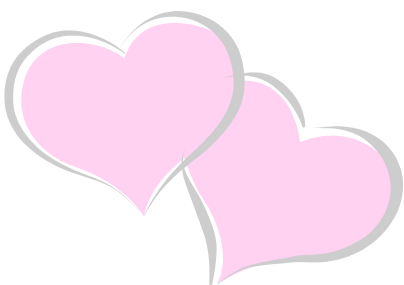
**To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill;  
 O may it all my powers engage to do my Master's will!**

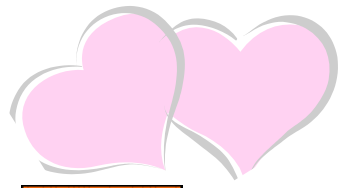
We love you and we are glad to serve in Christ's kingdom with you,

Pastor Roland and Elaine Kramer

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# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



## The 'Zone

Jesus was pretty clear about people not hindering children from coming to see Him. The reason is simple. God loves children. In fact, He encourages us all to approach the life of faith like a child. This month we'll be sharing the good news of the Gospel at kidZone. God loves you!

**Theme: God So Loved**

February 1 Wednesday Night Live!

- February 8 Going Deeper in KDG's
- February 15 Valentine's Party
- February 22 Service Night
- February 29 Creative Kid's Classes

Would you like to work with children? We have areas that are need in of more help. If you are interested, see Rick today.



## Growing Deeper Bible Studies

Sundays 9:15-10:15am

### Dose of Reality

Sundays 6-7:30pm

### Bible Quiz Practice

Wednesdays 4:45pm

### Middle School Church

Wednesdays 6:30-7:45pm

## This Month's Teaching Theme

*Fruity.* Character will be an issue that we hear a lot about this year. It's something we hear about every year, but with presidential elections looming, it will be discussed ad infinitum. Our character says everything about us. While all of us have a sinful nature to struggle with, the Bible is full of descriptions of the kind of life we should live. We'll be diving into Galatians 5 and discussing the Fruit of the Spirit.

## Pure Life Event

Parents and teens are encouraged to attend this event. On Sunday, February 26, from 3-6pm, at Christ's Covenant Church, area youth ministries will be joining forces to talk about purity. Local youth pastors will be sharing God's desire for us to have a pure heart, pure head and pure hands. Not only that, you'll be given practical tools to make it happen.

There is no cost for this event. There will be food. For more information on this event, visit <http://www.purelifeevent.com/>.

## Super Bowl Party

On Sunday, February 5, all teens are invited to Rick and Jen's house for a good time. There will be Gold Dip (a staple food for any teen party), good friends and hushing before the commercials come on (because no one needs to *hear* a football game). The fun begins at 5:30 and ends with the game or when your parents want you home (whichever comes first).

## Teen Connection Groups

Senior Teen Connection groups will begin Thursday, February 9. Erin Hayes will be leading the ladies and Sean Smith will be leading the guys. Sign up now.

## Bible Quizzing

This month we travel to Bedford on Saturday, February 4. There are only 4 more tournaments until Nationals in Seattle this summer. Keep up the good work teams!

## Need information?

You can receive weekly updates and announcements by subscribing to the *Virtual Reality*. Simply email Rick to sign up or join our Facebook group (Look for The Reality).

You can also view our website ([www.wlfmc.org](http://www.wlfmc.org)) and check out the youth ministry page for all the latest.

## Super Bowl Party – Sunday, February 5

It's not about watching two teams clash for the biggest title in pro-football. It's not even about seeing which company comes up with the best commercial. It's about spending time with others. Once again, we'll be back at Rick & Ellen Swaim's home for the big game. If you need directions, contact Rick Swaim or Rick Nier, who knows where Rick Swaim lives.

## Bible Study – Sunday, February 12

We continue our series on Shame and Guilt. Tonight we will discuss repentance and forgiveness. It's harder than it looks, but more necessary than we imagine. Location: Steve and Martha Beeson's home.

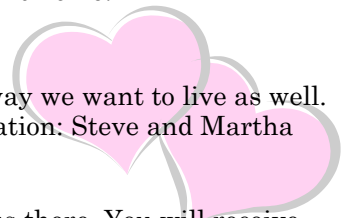
## Bible Study – Sunday, February 19

Shame and guilt do not have to last. But sometimes our choices carry long term consequences. What do we do about those? Find out at tonight's study. Location: Rick and Jen Nier's home.

## Bible Study – Sunday, February 26

Freedom! The very sight of the word makes you want to shout it. It's the way we want to live as well. But at what cost? Tonight we'll discuss how God wants us to live free. Location: Steve and Martha Beeson's home.

If you are a Facebook user, search YOUturn Ministries and connect with us there. You will receive weekly updates and invites to every activity we plan.



## **RICK'S DIMWIT**

Among the other rabble we mostly know as heroes of the Bible is a questionable character by the name of Jonah. Does that sound a bit harsh? How would you put it? Let's look at his life briefly.

Jonah disobeyed a direct command from God. He was told to go right, he went left. He endangered others around him. When he finally does what God tells him to do, he finds success to be an unhappy occasion. In fact, the story ends with Jonah more concerned with his own comfort while waiting for the people of Ninevah to be destroyed. And who doesn't like to be comfortable when watching death and destruction?

So, for those of you keeping track, we have a prophet that doesn't want to actually be listened to. I imagine some of the other prophets might have put a beat down on Jonah, only wishing their audiences listened as well. A prophet wanting to be ignored is like a musician wanting only to sell his art to the deaf.

Perhaps, if we were to go back in time, we would find that Jonah never wanted to be a prophet. Maybe it wasn't his choice. I understand that. But it is his total lack of compassion that earns him disdain by those who hear his story.

However...

Let's not be so hasty. After all, February is Compassion month. Where is our sympathy for Jonah? Even more importantly, where is our sympathy for those less fortunate than us. Others may have physical ailments, emotional traumas or spiritual problems. Hmm, don't we all?

I am offering up a challenge for us all. What if we spent this month finding and supporting some ministry that was already showing compassion? What makes your heart break? What makes it beat and feel alive? Jump in and make a difference. You may just find someone else out there who feels as you do.

The difference you make may not be earth-shattering, but I imagine that it will change the world of someone. After preaching to Ninevah, Jonah was upset by God's show of compassion, showing he had none himself. On the flipside, we can read many stories where Jesus had compassion on those who were lost and hurting.

The compassion you show may be to someone or group inside our church. It may be to someone who has yet to see the face of God through acts of caring and love. I'd recommend doing something inside and outside the church. And when you find someone that shares your burden, praise God! You just doubled your efforts.

It's too easy to criticize Jonah while forgetting that God has called us to go as well. Are you heading in the right direction?

*\*To see more of what is going through Rick's head, or to continue this discussion, follow him at [www.ricknierwoo.blogspot.com](http://www.ricknierwoo.blogspot.com)*



### **The Adult Connection Groups**

The Connection Groups booklet has been released, available in the Church Lobby or online at [www.wlfmc.org](http://www.wlfmc.org). Some of the groups have already begun and others are about to start. Do not lose out on your opportunity to connect with new people and old friends. Join a Connection Group today!

Just to name a few of the new groups:  
Creation Science Study & Dug Down Deep both on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Crop Til You Drop ~ Scrap booking, every fourth Friday at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.  
Please bring a finger food to share.



You may wonder what your Senior Wanderers were doing in South Africa in January. It was a special seminar in Community Church Planting. Community Church Planting is the priority of the Impact organization for which we work. So, we needed to be trained. And besides, it was a good opportunity to visit South Africa again.

We had a few days off with some of our Middle-Eastern friends, visiting Kruger National Park. We saw lots of animals and really enjoyed the great South African landscape. Then we went to Johannesburg where we met for three full days of study. Above is a photo of some of our group. There were students present from Egypt, Jordan, Hungary, Spain, the USA, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

We were very privileged to have two of our former students from Zimbabwe, now pastors, attend the seminar as well. They were a blessing to us all.

We learned the methods taught by Jesus in Luke, where He told His disciples to enter a village, look for a “man of peace” who would receive them, and beginning with that man, share the gospel, and then use his hospitality gifts to reach out to the community with the gospel. There is a lot of teaching materials to prepare the people of peace to open their home. There is material for Church Planter trainers, and discipleship materials for the church planters. Everything they would need. One Middle East country using this method has planted over 300 churches, most of them small, in the past 3 years, numbering over 2000 members, at least. Africa has planted nearly 2000 churches in the past 4 years with over a million members. This program is currently being used in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle-East, and at least one friend has planted 3 churches this way in Michigan. Many of them are house churches or cell groups.



We can't always talk a lot about where we go and what we do but we want you to know your prayers and support are very valuable to us. Thanks so much! We love you all.

Henry & Bonnie (at the Tropic of Capricorn!)



## Library Hours

### Sunday Mornings

Before and after

Morning Worship

### Monday—Friday

8:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Many new books and DVDs have recently been added to your WLFMC library. One of the unique books was written by a former member of WLFMC, Lori Hearn, who attended here with her husband Mike and daughter Mallory until a job move took them to Tennessee. [An Unfamiliar Path](#) is the story of one family's journey into the unknown. On April 28, 2010, life for the Hearn family was forever changed when Mike discovered that his health problem, which they assumed focused on a sinus infection, was actually brain cancer. As you read the account of the ups and downs this young family encountered in Mike's battle to regain his health you will be inspired by the entire family's faith and trust in God's grace to carry them through this unexpected journey. (Mike is doing well currently; his parents live at Tippecanoe Lake.) Another challenging book is [Not a Fan](#), written by Kyle Idleman. The author encourages you to consider what it really means to call yourself Christian. With direct frankness Kyle invites you to take an honest look at your personal relationship with Jesus—and perhaps make some changes in your response to Him.

New items of interest to the children include several DVDs in the “Paws & Tales” series by Chuck Swindoll, conveying biblical wisdom in child-sized doses. For the youth, “The Seven Sleepers Series” written by Gilbert Morris and published by Moody Press delivers interest-catching fantasy adventures that convey a Christian perspective. And for those who enjoy reading about the Amish, a new series has begun with intriguing events focused in Shipshewana—almost in our back yards! Try [Falling To Pieces](#) by Vanetta Chapman for some entertaining, wholesome enjoyment.

# February 2012

| Sun   | Mon  | Tue | Wed   | Thu   | Fri   | Sat  |
|---|--|-----|---|---|---|--|
|   |  |     | 1<br>kidZone<br>Middle School Church and<br>Wednesday Night Prayer<br>service at 6:30 p.m.  | 2   | 3   | 4<br>Bible Quiz Meet in Bedford.<br><br>Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m.<br>in the Sanctuary.                       |
| 5<br>Sunday Evening Bible Study,<br>6:00 p.m. in Room 5.<br>Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in<br>the Youth Room.  | 6<br>Ministry Team Meetings<br>at 6:30 p.m. and<br>BOA at 7:30 p.m.                              | 7   | 8<br>kidZone<br>Middle School Church and<br>Wednesday Night Prayer<br>service at 6:30 p.m.  | 9<br>Creation Science Study<br>Led by Del Fisher<br>in the Parlor.<br>Dug Down Deep<br>Led by Pastor Rick<br>In Room 4.<br>Both are at 7:00 p.m.  | 10  | 11<br>Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m.<br>in the Sanctuary.   |
| 12<br>Sunday Evening Bible Study,<br>6:00 p.m. in Room 5.<br>Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in<br>the Youth Room. | 13<br>Beth Moore Bible Study<br>"Esther"<br>Led by Ellen Swaim<br>In the Parlor<br>at 7:00 p.m.. | 14  | 15<br>kidZone<br>Middle School Church and<br>Wednesday Night Prayer<br>service at 6:30 p.m. | 16<br>Creation Science Study<br>Led by Del Fisher<br>in the Parlor.<br>Dug Down Deep<br>Led by Pastor Rick<br>In Room 4.<br>Both are at 7:00 p.m. | 17  | 18<br>Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m.<br>in the Sanctuary.   |
| 19<br>Sunday Evening Bible Study,<br>6:00 p.m. in Room 5.<br>Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in<br>the Youth Room. | 20<br>Beth Moore Bible Study<br>"Esther"<br>Led by Ellen Swaim<br>In the Parlor<br>at 7:00 p.m.. | 21  | 22<br>kidZone<br>Middle School Church and<br>Wednesday Night Prayer<br>service at 6:30 p.m. | 23<br>Creation Science Study<br>Led by Del Fisher<br>in the Parlor.<br>Dug Down Deep<br>Led by Pastor Rick<br>In Room 4.<br>Both are at 7:00 p.m. | 24<br>Crop til you drop!<br>Scrapbooking.<br>5:00 p.m. in the<br>Fellowship Hall.<br>Bring a finger food to | 25<br>ManHands<br>8:00 a.m. in the<br>Fellowship Hall.<br><br>Power Prayer at 7:00 p.m.<br>in the Sanctuary. |
| 26<br>Sunday Evening Bible Study,<br>6:00 p.m. in Room 5.<br>Dose of Reality at 6:00 p.m. in<br>the Youth Room. | 27<br>Beth Moore Bible Study<br>"Esther"<br>Led by Ellen Swaim<br>In the Parlor<br>at 7:00 p.m.  | 28  | 29<br>kidZone<br>Middle School Church and<br>Wednesday Night Prayer<br>service at 6:30 p.m. |   |   |  |

WINONA LAKE FREE METHODIST CHURCH  
902 COLLEGE AVE.



ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING  
WLFMC MEMBERS TO SIGN UP AND  
ATTEND A MEMBERSHIP CLASS, MARCH 11  
AFTER MORNING WORSHIP IN THE  
FELLOWSHIP HALL.

LUNCH AND CHILDCARE WILL BE PROVIDED.

PLEASE SIGN UP AT THE  
INFORMATION DESK.