Dear Members and Friends of New Bedford Church,

In my first sermon I gave in 2016 I spoke about the book With written by Skye Jethani. Jethani speaks of 5 different ways to relate to God. You can have Life under God. You can have Life over God. You can have Life from God. You can have life for God. Finally you can have Life with God. It is Life with God that is the goal of every Christian. Allow me to quote Jethani to explain each way to relate to God.

First, Life under God. *Jethani writes*....
The LIFE UNDER GOD view puts it's emphasis on appeasing God through behaviors—either in the form of ritual or morality. Formal religions, and those leading them, often create elaborate and arduous lists of requirements for their followers–the "heavy burdens" Jesus condemns in Matthew 23. Trying to get everyone to follow the rules and live by dine expectations, as oppressive Islamic regimes and Christian fundamentalists attempt today, is not what God intends for His people. ...

Next we have Life Over God. There are two kinds of Life over God views... one is atheistic and the other is theistic. Two quotes to show these views...

The scientific revolution and Enlightenment thinking presented a very different view of the universe. The universe was not sustained by capricious deities but by natural law and rational principles. The new view said the universe was like a machine, and our job was to understand how it operated and then leverage those principles to control it. Using mathematics and the scientific method humans can discover the immutable laws that ruled everything.

Theistic LIFE OVER GOD causes us to reduce faith to principles, divine laws and applicable instructions: five steps to a more godly marriage, how to raise kids God's way, biblical laws of leadership, managing your finances with kingdom principles, etc. But discovering and applying these principles does not actually require a relationship with God. Instead, being a Christian simply means you have exchanged a worldly set of life principles with a new set taken from the bible. But like the atheist or deist, the Christian deist can put these new principles into practice without God being involved.

Next is LIFE FROM GOD Again to quote from the book *With.*

When contemporary people look at God, they don't necessarily see the God revealed in the Bible or even God presented by the rational science or the superstitious traditions. They see a divine butler, a cosmic therapist, a holy vending machine who dispenses the wares and wisdom they desire. This is the essence of LIFE FROM GOD posture–God exists to supply what we need or desire. It makes receiving God's gifts the entirety of our religious lives. An example of the LIFE FROM GOD in it's most extreme form is the prosperity gospel (also know as the health and wealth gospel)
The LIFE FROM GOD posture is appealing because it does not ask us to change. What we desire, what we seek, what we do, and how we live–all shaped by consumerism–are not disrupted. In this way LIFE FROM GOD is nothing more than consumerism with a Jesus sticker slapped on the bumper.

Next is the LIFE FOR GOD. This one really hit home with me. *Jethani states...*

Cutting open the LIFE FOR GOD cosmic apple would reveal a mission at the core. Some great goal–understood to be initiated by God and carried forward by us–defines everything and everyone. An individual is either on the mission, the object of the mission, an obstacle to the mission, an aid to the mission, or a fat Christian who should be on the mission.
I don't wish to be misunderstood: I too, long to see more Christians engage in the good work God has called us to, but a life spent for God is not what even the Apostle Paul desired most for himself or others. Although God's mission dominated his life, it did not define it. A more careful reading of Paul's letters

reveals something remarkable– everything in the apostles life, including God's mission, took a back seat to his paramount goal: God himself.

Finally there is life with God**.** This is the Biblical goal of a Christian walk with Christ. Jethani state this

The LIFE WITH GOD posture is predicated on the view that relationship is at the core of the cosmos: God the Father *with* God the Son *with* God the Holy Spirit. And so we should not be surprised to discover that when God desired to restore his broken relationship with people , he sent his Son to dwell *with* us. His plan to restore his creation was not to send a list of rules and rituals to follow (LIFE UNDER GOD), nor was it the implementation of useful principles (LIFE OVER GOD). He did not sen a genie to grant us our desires (LIFE FROM GOD), nor did he give us a task to accomplish (LIFE FOR GOD). Instead God himself came to be *with* us–to walk with us once again as he had done in Eden. Jesus entered our dark existence to share our broken world... LIFE WITH GOD is different because our goal is not to use God, its goal is God. He ceases to be a device we employ or a commodity we consume. Instead God himself becomes the focus of our desires.

This is the challenge for 2016.... Become closer to God. Spend time with Him in Prayer and In His Word and in Worship and in Fellowship and in Service. Let us walk with Him in a more intimate relationship.

Faithfully Yours
Doug

P.S. Remember this Saturday at 8:30 AM the Elders and Deacons are meeting for a time of training

Many, many thank you's are given. Thank you to...

- Gary Greene for patching the kitchen roof to prevent leakage like we had last winter
- Bob Bell for stringing all the exterior Christmas light including the new lights on the tree at the Point
- The worship committee for decorating the church for Christmas
- Debi Fynes and Lori Smith who arranged and "directed" the Christmas Eve Service
- Jacob McMillan for repainting all the exterior signs
- Len Halt for replacing the exterior spot light on the front of the Building
- The Choir, under the direction of Debi for their wonderful music during Advent
- Donna for working with many Special Music instrumentalists and singers
- For the Worship Team for learning and sharing many new songs during Advent
- For the Worship Committee for planning and cooking the Christmas dinner
- For Dawn for planning, preparing and leading the Program for the Worship Dinner. It truly was a time of great laughter.
- For all the volunteers for Breakfast in Bethlehem. For Brad for his leadership in this ministry
- For Terri for arranging the Angel Tree
- For all the people who bought gifts for the Angel Tree. We bought 66 gifts for 23 children that were in need of gifts
- To all the men and women who came to Carol at the nursing home and to the shut ins. We had over 25 singers.
- To Nancy Bretz and Cindy Bell for cleaning out the garage and the stage. Both were very large jobs
- To the Deacons for sharing gifts for all our members over 80 and for giving food baskets to the families in need
- To the men and women, under the leadership of Mary Beckman, who gave out food and 70 food vouchers to families in need from our community
- to the anonymous donor who gave four gift certificates for Bob Evans to our church to give to families in need.

Session Highlights

- received the financial report
- received the resignation of Deneen Greene as church Treasurer effective upon hiring and training a new Treasurer. After many years as treasurer Deneen desires to spend more time with her granddaughter. Thank you to Deneen. We are looking for a new Treasurer. If you are interested please contact Pastor Doug. The Administration Committee will serve as the interviewing Committee.
- Approved a purchase of a new Computer for the Church Secretary Office. Old Computer (with Windows XP) was unable to upgrade it's programs
- Appointed Auditors
- Decided on the division of time and pay for our Youth Directors
- Approved the Job Description and the tentative Salary package for our full time Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries. The search for this person has begun. The Christian Ed Committee will serve as the Search Committee
- report received on changing status of Autumn Marshall. (See letter in newsletter)
- Approved Autumn to lead worship December 27th
- Approved Baptism of Anna Grace Taylor
- Called Congregational Meeting for January 31st for the purpose of reviewing the year. This meeting will take place between services and Breakfast will be provided.

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Confirmation Class



Beginning Sunday the 17th all 7th and 8th graders are invited to join together during Sunday School for a class to join the church. Pastor Doug will lead this class that will continue to May.

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2016 Offering Envelopes are on a table near the church office. If you cannot find your name or would like a box of envelopes, please contact the church office. Thank You.

Presbytery Meeting

New Bedford Church once again has the honor of hosting the Presbytery of the Alleghenies Presbytery Meeting on February 26th and 27th. The Mission Committee and the Deacons will provide leadership for the meal (approx. 140 people). Pies, and cookies and volunteers will be needed. We will also lead the worship services on Friday Evening and Saturday Morning. We will also need greeters and parking lot attendants and ushers and many other volunteers.

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Jakki Gardner.....01
Bud Freeman.....03
Corigan Quinn.....04
Lois Adams.....05
Philip Book.....05
Ashley Fox.....05
Shirley Janoski.....05
Nancy Bretz.....06
Dan Pelles.....06
Joel (Swiger)Phillips.....06
Brenda Miller.....09
Robert Slagle..... 10
Marshall Whiting.....11
Linda Feil.....12
Diane McConnell.....12
Allen Jones.....14
Gary Geisinger.....14
Terri Quinn.....17
Rosalie Moore.....19
William Moore.....19
Mikayln Duffy.....20
Amanda Miller.....20
Lori Smith.....24
Michael Duffy.....26
Mackenzie McCarthy.....26
Julie Whiting.....26
Joyce Goist.....27
Morgan Whiting.....27
Taylor Allison.....28



Please remember in prayer the following persons who are hospitalized, receiving treatments, recuperating at home and those who have requested prayer.

Nancy Templeton-------Overlook Medical Clinic
Dot Jones----------Avalon Nursing Home
Marie Snyder----------Home
Gladys Barnhart----------Home
Jo Ruby----------Home
Henry and Pearl Reed--Overlook Nursing Home
Don Jones----------Avalon Nursing Home-Rehab
Carl Black------Clen-Moore Place (Greer House)
Ruth McClanahan---Nugent's Ret. Community
Jim Moore(Billyray's Dad)------Passavant Hosp.



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Mark your calendars!! This year's Women's Retreat will be held April 15 & 16. There will be a meeting for anyone interested in helping with the retreat on Saturday, January 30th at 10:00a.m.

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MAN CAMP IS COMING!!

When? February 19-21, 2016
Where? Seneca Hills Bible Camp
Theme? Crucible ~ The Choices that Change Your Life Forever
Cost? $125.00

For more information and to register, go to:
www.senecahills.com/conferences.events/mancamp

***Register early! This event fills up fast!**

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Joel Swiger's (Scott & Gail Phillips son)
naval address: LSSR
Swiger, Joel
USS Kearsarge (LHD 3)
Unit: 100284 Box: 526
FPO AE 09534

email address ~ swigerj@lhd3.navy.mil

Congratulations to Tyler & Rebekah Craig on the birth of their little boy, Barrett on Sunday, November 29th. Barrett was born weighing 7lbs. 15oz. and 21 inches long. Lisa and Don Craig are the proud new grandparents!!


New Babies

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Terri & Jim Emery also welcomed a new grandson, on November 24th, Titus Reed Petro was born. Titus weighed 10lbs. 6oz. And was 21 inches long. Congratulations!!

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Join us for the "Monday Fun Group" which will begin on Monday, January 18, 2016 from 1:00p.m. to 4:00p.m. at the New Bedford Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The Group is for anyone 50 and over and open to anyone in the community. A variety of games/activities are planned.

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On Sunday, January 31st there will be a congregational meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for receiving the Annual Report. **IMPORTANT: All committee and board secretaries or chairmen should be working on reports to be included in the Annual Report. <u>Reports must be turned in no later then Sunday, January 17th</u> to be included in the Annual Report. Thank You!**

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I would like to thank the Lydia Circle and the carolers that came to my house over Christmas and brought me boxes of goodies! This congregation is filled with such wonderful, caring people.
God Bless all of you! Marie Snyder

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We would like to thank everyone who helped with Breakfast in Bethlehem this year. It would not be possible without EVERYONE!
Brad & Marty Marshall

.....

To the NBPC family
Thank you for the prayers and many cards that I received during my recent knee surgery. I know without a doubt that it was the prayers that got me through the surgery and the healing. The words of support were an encouragement. Thank you to Pastor Doug and the Janoskis for visiting me in the hospital. I am so blessed to be part of this church. God Bless You All ~ Dawn Harris

MISSION NEWS

The congregation is invited to join with the Mission Committee on Saturday, January 23rd as we go to the City Rescue Mission. We will be preparing a meal for the men at the shelter and joining them in their evening meal. We will be leaving the church at 3:45 and carpooling to the City Rescue Mission. Please join us and sign up after church!



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Missionary UPDATE
Autumn Marshall

First I want to take a minute and wish you each a HAPPY NEW YEARS! And Thanking you for all your prayers, words of encouragement and financial support this year. I pray God's blessings over each of you this coming year and that this coming year would be of peace and joy for you and your family!

"We will REMEMBER, we will remember
We will remember the works of your hand
We will stop and give you praise
For Great is thy FAITHFULNESS!"
Tommy Walker

WOW! Has an entire year really flown right on by....As I reflect back on the year I can't believe how much has happened....I just can't help but stand in Awe of God as I Remember all He has done! In many ways it has been a hard year....a year of pruning (John 15:2)...but every living thing needs to be pruned so it can reach its fullest potential. So thankful God is the master pruner and the pain is for His and my ultimate Good. God has restored my health (a 6 month battle that left me stateside), opened new doors in ministry, strengthened my faith, brought new friends and ministry partners my way, and has been and is continuing to be FAITHFUL through so many BIG changes. As I reflect and REMEMBER I am completely overwhelmed...The Lord has done so much this year & blessed myself & my ministry beyond what I could have ever asked for or imagined. I am in a place of feeling humbled, incredibly thankful, & anxious to see what God has in store for 2016.

As I sit here trying to figure out how I can condense a year into a newsletter...I realize I can't...although I want to share EVERYTHING that has been happening..I will share the highlights...For more stories & pictures you can visit my BLOG at www.autumnsreflections.blogspot.com or go to www.youtube.com & place in the search engine "Autumn Marshall" or become my friend on facebook where I post almost daily from Haiti. I hope after reading this you will be standing in Awe with a thankful heart as well realizing each of you have played a part in my ministry either through prayer, encouragement, financial support or coming & serving in Haiti alongside me. I am praying for each of you. Praying for God's blessing to be upon you & your family. That each and everyone of you will have time to reflect back on your year & Remember what the Lord has done for you and take time to praise Him!

BIG CHANGES.....

***"To everything there is a season and a time to every Purpose"* Eccl 3:1**

There are *BIG CHANGES* coming my way that I need you to be aware of..I am entering a

new season of ministry. In October I was contacted by Made Known (Formerly Kimmy's House) that they were closing and ending their season of ministry. They will no longer be an active ministry/nonprofit come January 1,2016. This decision was made after a lot of prayer and fasting. I have been extremely blessed by Made Known over the last 3 years since partnering with them in advocating for children with disabilities. I am forever grateful for them believing in me and supporting my ministries and all the children with disabilities I have in my programs. They have helped me manage my $, set up a educating nationals fund, helped me with mailings/support raising and been an encouragement to me. I would not be where I am today with my ministries without Made Known.

One door of ministry with Northwest Haiti Christian Mission (NWHCM) is closing but a new door is opening wher I will no longer be a full-time missionary through them like I have been for the last 7 years BUT be an Independent missionary partnering with them to continue to provide services to the children at the Miriam Center and outreach program. The details of this partnership are still being worked out. This gives me the freedom to partner with other organizations to more fully fulfill the mission God has given me. My vision…..calling and ministry has not changed BUT it is growing!

I needed to find a new avenue to run my donations and funding through. One that would give me the freedom to fulfill all aspects of my Ministry call, well established, and financially accountable. After much prayer and research I have chosen to serve under CTEN (Commission to Every Nation).

CTEN is a well established and financially accountable organization. For the 9th year in a row they have received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigators (that only 1% of organizations they rate have received). CTEN comes alongside missionaries to help them spiritually and administratively to maximize their effectiveness of God's calling in their life. Through this organization I will have freedom to travel and pursue my dream fully and partner with various organizations across Haiti.

3 Ways To Donate…

1. ***MAIL***
   - **~ Make Checks Payable to CTEN**
   - **~ Place Note with my name "Autumn Marshall"**
   - **~ Mail To:**
     Commission To Every Nation
     P O Box 291307
     Kerrville, TX 78029-1307
2. ***ONLINE***
   - **~ www.cten.org/autumnmarshall/**
   - **~ Can made a 1x donation or set up a Re-curring donation**
3. ***PHONE***
   - **~ Call (800)872-5404 for assistance to give by credit card or automatic draft**

My VISION and MINISTRY CALLING is Four Fold

1. **My dream is that every child with special needs in Haiti would receive the therapy and support that they need and deserve because they are *VISIBLE* and *VALUED* as members of their society.**
2. **EMPOWERING families to care for, love on and advocate for their children.**
3. **That nationals would be trained and equipped to be therapists.**

4. **That therapy would be recognized as a medical necessity and thus be integrated into Haiti's medical systems.**

God has opened doors for me to expand my ministry beyond my therapy clinic and first outreach center in the northwest zone of Haiti. Some of these new doors include:

- **Partnering with various organizations across Haiti providing training to existing professionals and organizations seeking to help or improve their work with children with special needs.**
- **Training and educating nationals through being a professor at the therapy universities in Haiti.**
- **Helping open new outreach centers and therapy clinics across Haiti so that more children receive needed services.**
- **Training on building equipment out of resources that can be found in Haiti.**
- **Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) as a medical profession recognized and utilized in Haiti.**

TOP 10 MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2015

1. **Participating in 3 different continuing education class courses (NDT course, Adaptive Design/Cardboard Carpentry class and Attending my first National Occupational Therapy convention in Nashville). I gained a lot of knowledge & skills to bring back to Haiti to provide better therapy to the kids and more knowledge to educate the therapy staff. This is also where I met the World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT) & got connected to help start Haiti's National Association of Occupational Therapy (HAOT).**
2. **Developing & opening the Haiti Association For Occupational Therapy (HAOT). I wrote the rough draft of the constitution/By-laws. We had official election for officers in November and I was elected to be President & Alternate delegate for Haiti. Opening the association was a pre-requisite for getting the new first ever 4 year bachelor level OT program accredited through the WFOT!**
3. **I had the wonderful opportunity to train and supervise 2 translators/assistants & 2 Rehab Tech students for 3 months of intense pediatric training. I loved watching them each learn new skills, fall in love with the kids, and grow as individuals!**
4. **I had the wonderful opportunity to train Haiti Health Missions (HHM) malnourishment clinic staff on Pediatric Massage which they will in return teach their families & use with the kids. Massage has been proven to help increase nutrient intake.**
5. **Had the opportunity to teach my first university level class at UNAH/LLU the Rehab Tech school. I taught the students how to make equipment out of what can be found in Haiti (cardboard, buckets, ductape, foam, wood, etc.). Loved watching the students learn and then practice and by the end of the week help make equipment that changed 7 kids lives!**
6. **Nahum: graduated from Rehab Tech School and has dreams of opening his own Outreach/Therapy Center and Nicholson: Is halfway done with Rehab Tech School and will start his year of clinical in the new year. So proud of both of these young men.**
7. **Participated in the first Special Needs Health fair where 40 children & families received education, medical care & customized equipment! These families lives were definitely changed and impacted for the good!**
8. **Facilitate 7 kids to get orthopedic surgery and 60+ kids to see STAND and Phoenix Rising which are orthopedic/prosthetic/Physical Therapy teams that come to PdP**

about an hour from the mission. Their services have impacted the quality of life for so many children this year and my staff and I have learned a lot from each of their teams as well. Thank you!

9. 70+ outreach families received weekly therapy, education, food, medical care, etc. through the Miriam Center. And we have 99 children on a waiting list for this program. It is amazing to see each of these kids grow in their skills and abilities and to watch the families grow deeper in love with their kids and more empowered to care for them.
10. All 38 children at the Miriam Center received weekly 1:1 therapy & are making great progress…..Steven started walking, Kem can feed herself, Gildine is crawling to just name a few.

PLANS FOR 2016

~ Continue therapy for the Miriam Home children. My hope is to increase the intensity to be 2x a week 1:1 for an hour by hiring some more staff.
~ I plan on taking 6 level 2 fieldwork students from UNAH/LLU for their 3 month internships throughout the year.
~ I have been asked to teach 4 different courses at UNAH/LLU Rehab Tech University throughout the year.
~ Help lead a trip to PAP for a group of Indiana State University Occupational Therapy students for a week.
~ Help Nahum start up his own Therapy clinic & outreach center in PdP (His hometown).
~ Continuing to support and help Nicholson finish his schooling.
~ Continue the For Jonathan Sake Outreach Program at the Miriam Center but work on ways to make it more sustainable (we are looking to create start up businesses that families would help run).
~ Present the HAOT constitution/By-Laws and The curriculum for the new 4 year bachelors OT program in Logan at the next regional WFOT meeting in Columbia, South America in March. If both are approved Haiti will have a university OT program accredited through WFOT and Haiti would become a full-member of the WFOT and thus have a voice and vote at the world table.
~ Create, translate and get more educational handouts on the disability networking page.
~ Provide training and build equipment for a few different organizations in Haiti that have asked me to come and help.
~ Continue to coordinate kids on the outreach waiting list, kids in the outreach program and children from the Miriam Center to see STAND, Phoenix Rising, and various surgery teams they need to see.
~ Continue to weekly CIMT clinic we started a few months ago that happens every Wednesday.

BUDGET/FUNDING NEEDS

As you can see from above 2016 is already filling up with so many wonderful ministry opportunities and growth opportunities. This also means the need for increased funding. I need to raise $59,000 this year in order to run my ministry at full capacity which is almost double from last years budget. Currently I have $1,250 per month of online recurring donations which equals $15,000 this year. I have $15,000 left from last year that I will thankfully be starting the year off with and I have a few 1x a year donors that faithfully give as well. I am trusting God to provide as He always has in the past. I truly believe these new ministry opportunities are open doors from God. I am

thankful for the ways each of them are going to impact the lives of so many in a positive way. Thank you for helping me impact lives for Christ. If you are not already a monthly donor would you please consider partnering with me by donating monthly. No amount is to small $5, $10, $25, etc. a month goes a long way. I know together with God's help we can DO THIS!

PRAYER REQUESTS

~ Continued protection for my health.
~ For God to provide financially.
~ Wisdom & guidance for decision making.
~ For my spiritual growth & walk with the Lord.
~ Peace with all the BIG changes and smooth transitions.
~ For Nahum as he opens and starts his own Therapy Clinic/Outreach Center.
~ For Nicholson as he finishes his schooling.
~ For the students who will be completing their clinical's at the MC.
~ For FJS Outreach Program that each of the families would grow in their wisdom & knowledge of the Lord and feel empowered to care for their children.

If you would like to made a financial donation
you can go to www.cten.org/autumnmarshall/

HAPPY NEW YEARS!!!!

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR PRAYERS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT THIS YEAR!







January 6th – DOUBLE POINT Night
Clubbers will receive double points for attendance/handbook/Bible/CompletingSections

January 13th – Regular Club Night

January 20th – Let Your Light Shine for Jesus
Clubbers are to wear black or dark colored clothes!

January 27th – Regular Club Night
Remember if school is cancelled because of weather then Awana will not meet that day**

PARENTS: If you have not received a Parents Handbook please get one from Commander Dawn.

AWANA MISSION UPDATE

Awana CAN make a difference for the CITY RESCUE MISSION

For the remainder of the year we will continue to collect food for **The New Castle City Rescue Mission**. It is a Christian ministry providing spiritual and physical care to the hurting, hunger and homeless of our community. Visit www.cityrescuemission.org for more information. Awana Clubs are collecting can goods/non-perishable food for the Family Care Ministry at the City Rescue Mission.

Our goal is to collect 300 pounds of food! To Date there is 71 pounds collected!!!!

Coach Lee has made a challenge that if the goal is met he'll provide a pizza party!!

Needed Items: Jelly-Cereal-Canned Fruit-Canned Vegetables-Soup-Pork&Beans-Kidney Beans-Mac n Cheese

Any of the above items can be donated at anytime. However, there is a 'Most Wanted Item of the Month'.

MOST WANTED ITEM FOR JANUARY

CANNED FRUIT

Thank you for helping to provide this ministry with food for families in need.

*****WANTED*****

Children At Worship Leaders

Intersted in helping with Children At Worship? Not sure what is involved or what to do? Come to an informational meeting and training about this ministry. Monday, January 25th at 6:30 in the Church Parlor. Let Dawn know if you are planning to come.

YOUTH NEWS & HAPPENINGS

Hopefully the New Year is bringing you all new blessings and joys! The youth is beginning their New Year by rocking out at Winter Jam on Saturday, January 30th! It's $10 to get into the Consol Energy Center in Pittsburgh to see 10 bands. A member of our church, Nathan Book, drives Coach buses and graciously offered to drive the plethora of kids to this event with a mere $10 fee added onto the admission price! It was certainly a blessing and an answered prayer of ours to be able to have enough transportation. In saying that, we definitely have room for people outside of youth group such as families and friends who are interested in going. There are 56 seats on the bus, so don't forget to sign up after church or text Jocilyn at 724-674-5199 for a seat! Meet at New Bedford Church at 3:45p.m. that Saturday with your $20 for the bus and admission and extra money for food at the Consol Center. THIS IS A LATE EVENT - THE CONCERT ENDS AROUND 11P.M. Just to inform anyone who is interested in coming, we won't be back at the church until around 1a.m. It's well worth it, though! Winter Jam is a time of worshipping God, fellowshipping with another, eating foods that will ruin your New Year resolutions but satisfy you completely, as well as opening our hearts to the message that Tony Nolan is giving. Please don't hesitate to contact Jocilyn for a spot! You won't want to miss out!

Although it's not February yet, the Winter Retreat at Camp Allegheny is February 12-14. The date is approaching fast and deposits are due if you're going. Jocilyn needs a $10 deposit to secure your spot to the retreat by Sunday, January 17th!!

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BUTTERFLY MESSAGES OUTREACH UPDATE



Thanks again to all that continue to support our "Butterfly Messages" Outreach! With the help from all involved, our Outreach continues to be a blessing to those we are sharing our inspirational messages with.

Do you have a favorite quote or bible verse that you feel would help to uplift and encourage others? We would love to include them as part of Outreach "messages". If interested, please submit either your favorite quote or bible verse via the suggestion box on the Butterfly Outreach table (just outside the sanctuary) or email Dianna at evangelizedred@aol.com or Beth at shawnbrsdn@aol.com

Please continue to pray about increasing the number of people that you are sharing our blast "messages" with. Although we may never know who all our "messages" may reach, by sharing one, several or all of our "messages" we are continuing to advance God's Kingdom by sharing His Word.

Not signed up yet to be a participant of the Butterfly Messages Outreach, look for the sign up sheet, which can be found on the Butterfly Messages table in the Narthex, or contact any Evangel group member or contact Addie at the church office and remember hard copies of our Butterfly Messages "Blast" can also be found on the Butterfly Messages table. And don't forget to check out the "Butterfly Messages" tab on the church's website (www.newbedfordepchurch.org) to view messages, challenges, blogs and more!



Blessings, NBEPC's Evangel Group

Women's Association of New Bedford EPC

It is an honor and privilege to serve as your new Moderator. I step into this role knowing that a solid foundation has been laid for this ministry by many faithful saints doing the work of the Lord here in your midst. I am humbled to be a part of this legacy of faith and service to the Lord.

We begin this new year with a called meeting of the Women's Association on Saturday, January 23 at 10:00a.m. in the church parlor. This meeting will be a time to get ourselves reorganized, to plan for the year ahead, and to brainstorm on who we are as a Women's Association. I encourage officers who have stepped down from their particular position as well as the new officers and returning officers to be present at this meeting. I also invite all the women of the church to come and see what we are all about. After all, as a woman at New Bedford Church you are automatically considered a member of the Women's Association. And don't worry about space constraints, we can always move to a larger area to have our meeting! Wouldn't that be wonderful!

I, myself, still have a lot to learn about the Women's Association of New Bedford Church and I would like to hear from each of you. What are the hopes and dreams you have for the women of this church? What area of ministry is dear to your heart? How do we as women support each other, left each other up, build relationships? What is working well? What is not working so well? How do we engage all ages of women in this ministry? As sisters in Christ, what is our witness to the world around us, to each other? Are there women in our community that we can embrace and share the love of Christ with? I have only listed a few questions that I ponder. I am sure you can come up with a few of your own.

Certainly we will not have time to discuss all of these questions at our meeting but it gives us a beginning point. Visioning for the future is not a one meeting and done kind of activity. It is an ongoing process of prayer and reflection.

If you are not able to come to the meeting, I will still love to have your input. Feel free to give me a call, write me a note or send me an email. Let your voice be heard. You are important to me, to the Women's Association, to the ministry of this church, to God. Join us in this ministry! My contact information is: cell phone ~ 724-730-6495, email address ~ jriethmiller@aol.com

We are daughters of the King! May our ministry together point to the One who calls us into relationship with Him. Glory be to God!

In His Service,

Judy Riethmiller

SISTERS IN CHRIST

MEN'S MINISTRY

The Men's Ministry Winter backpack challenge was a great time. The men who came out for this event enjoyed good fellowship and some time in the woods. We learned quite a few things about forestry and timber cutting. We tested out metal with a couple of hiking trips. We saw some trout, enjoyed a roaring fire and some fine cooking. This was the topper event of 2015. We went out on January 1st of 2016 and the event closed January 3, 2016.

During the calendar year of 2015, we worked together on setting a regular meeting date. We decided on the 2nd Saturday of every month, at 8:00a.m., as our time to meet for a time of Biblical grounding. We have been meeting at Riethmiller Lumber, in New Wilmington, PA for this time of reflecting on what the Bible has to say about manhood.

Our largest outing for 2015 was the Skeet Shoot on Steve Fox's property. we had two throwers and over twenty men present to take turns shooting down those pesky pigeons. There were two very young men with us there who took their first shots as the pigeons flew. Our youngest participant was the five year old son of one of our new members. This was certainly a multigenerational event. After the skeet, we set our sights on the roasting of hot dogs and the consumption of al the food we could handle. We had a brief devotion and some good fellowship around the fire.

We will continue to meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month in 2016 and we will focus on various topics that our men want to explore from a biblical perspective.

Attention: all men, Man Camp is coming up soon. We have men signed up to go. There will be a wide array of things to do and important times of gathering, enjoying meals together, and fellowship among predominately Christian men.

In addition, a canoe trip is in the planning stages for 2016. Some of our men want to do an overnight canoe trip. And, there are other events in the works. All of these events that have us gathering for an activity are open to any man. Please feel free to invite your friends and neighbors to any of these sort of gatherings. Also, please let us know if you have any firm commitments for an event. We need some lead time for plans to be made accordingly.

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WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

The Wednesday evening Bible Study will pick back up on Wednesday, January 13 at 7:40p.m. We will begin working our way through the Book of Hebrews. All are welcome. There is no need to have a strong background in Biblical Studies. In fact, some who see themselves as beginners in Bible Study have joined us over time and have enjoyed the freedom to just listen and not feel pressured to read aloud nor even to speak during our discussion time. In order to get the most out of our time together, this week, it is recommended that everyone read Hebrews chapter one. Reading the passage and praying about what one finds in the text prepares one to gain a deeper understanding of what is discussed during our time together. This is not required. Please come out on Wednesday evening and join us. We would be delighted if you want to just visit once to see what all of the hype is about.



stephen MINISTRY®

By Judy Riethmiller

Two years ago the Lord laid a burden on my heart for this congregation. The questions that kept repeating over and over again in my head and in my heart were: How can we care for each other in the name of Christ? How do we stand with each other in the brokenness of this world? How can we be Christ to each other? If we are not standing with our brothers and sisters in Christ through those hard times of life, who will?

It is interesting when the Lord lays a burden on my heart. First, I seek confirmation that it is the Lord speaking, not just my own desires or worse yet the Evil One seeking to lead me down a rabbit trail. Then, I begin to look for doors opening that will reveal how I can be used by God to minister, in His name, to the need that He has laid on my heart. This very process happened in my life and it eventually led to the Stephen Ministry program being instituted at New Bedford Church.

Stephen Ministry did not happen because of a quick response to a perceived need. No, it was a ministry opportunity that was bathed in prayer and discernment by not only myself and a handful of others but by our leadership on the Session. With careful attention along the way, the movement of the Holy Spirit in this effort could be seen. Confirmation that God's will was being accomplished through our efforts came in many ways in the last 2 years.

Recently, your Stephen Ministers have found themselves in a time of waiting for God's timing. We do not fully understand God's plans or His ways but we trust His plans for us will be accomplished here at New Bedford. You can read about the past year of the Stephen Ministry program in the church yearbook that will be coming out on January 31st.

For now, we ask for your prayers. Our most evident need is for care receivers. Without care receivers, the Stephen Ministry at New Bedford becomes stationary. Without care receivers, Stephen Ministers have no one to share the healing power of Christ with in the storms of life. Please take a moment to read the following article, **Receptivity to Care**. Pray about what 'receptivity to care' looks like for you. Don't suffer alone. Your Stephen Ministers are here to help, not through our strength but through the strength of the One who loves you and wants you to find healing and hope in your life. Don't be afraid. Reach out your hand. We are ready to take ahold and walk with you.

Receptivity to Care

Most people are much more open to giving care than receiving it. When a person is giving care, he or she is in a position of strength, stability, and authority. When a person is receiving care, he or she is acknowledging weakness, insecurity, and vulnerability.

As a result, there are countless people today who, though they really could benefit from a Christian friend who would listen and care for them, instead tough it out on their own. They remain the strong silent type, or wear a smile across a face that is holding back a flood of tears. Society encourages this (particularly for men). To ask for help is to admit weakness. To show weakness is to admit inferiority.

But God did not create us to be independent. We were created to be interdependent. God's Word is clear on this all the way back to Genesis: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18). The New Testament underscores this theme with more than 50 verses that contain the words "One another." These verses include admonitions such as "love one another," "encourage one another," "build up one another," and "pray for one another."

What these verses don't say is that we alone are to love, encourage, build up, and pray for other people. The "one another" wording gives them a reciprocal meaning. It also tells us that we are to allow other people to love, encourage, build up, and pray for us!

It is most difficult for people to ask for help. Whether it is because of guilt, shame, inadequacy, or fear of rejection, many would much prefer to suffer alone than ask for help. But suffering alone is not God's intent for us. Jesus promises, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). We can receive this promised rest when we turn to one another for comfort and help.

Our Stephen Ministers know all about receiving care. Many of them have been on the receiving end of care at an earlier point in their lives-something that has motivated them to care now. They know how difficult it is to ask for help, but they also know the great personal and spiritual growth and healing that follow. They know how to respond in a loving, caring, and nonjudgmental manner. They are equipped, ready, and waiting to provide the comfort and care God very much desires you to have.

If you find yourself now or in the future facing difficulties in life, don't succumb to society's norm of remaining strong and suffering alone. Take the courageous step of seeking help. Open your heart to receive God's love and grace through another person. Our Stephen Ministry offers the opportunity for a very confidential relationship with someone who will listen to you and provide you with the care and encouragement you need, while Christ works inside to bring rest to your weary, burdened heart.

For more information on Stephen Ministry, please contact:

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