

PARK HILLS CHRISTIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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A Word or Two (or three) From Wally

Allen and I spent time in early November doing some long range planning for sermons and other activities through next Easter.

I am especially excited about the sermons for December this year. We are focusing on the parables of Jesus.

Jesus gave some parables about the incarnation, God sending His son to earth to provide for the sins of mankind. I have never looked at the parables this way and it will be a new experience for me.

All past sermons have been taped and we hope in the near future that they will be available on CD.

December 2nd, Allen presented an overview of the parables: why Jesus used parables, and what they mean to us today. We will look at the incarnation parables through Christmas and on December 30th the parables of the end times.

As we get into the full swing of the Christmas season, we tend to get busy with all our family traditions and the time it takes to prepare for them. We can forget about those who are alone for the holidays, those who have lost a mate this year, those who have moved away from home or those transferred to El Paso and unable to go home.

Will you join me in keeping your ears and eyes open for those who are alone and may fall through the cracks.

You may be alone. You can either feel sorry for yourself or go and prepare to help someone else on their journey. By doing this, you will get out of your "funky" time. *Remember, our feelings follow our actions, not our actions following our feelings. If we follow our feelings, usually there is no action, just depression.*

Finally, we need to pay close attention for those who are depressed and may think of ending life because things have gotten hard and they do not know where to turn.

If you ever come across someone you think may be contemplating suicide, don't be afraid to ask them if they are thinking about ending their life. It will not offend them. People who are serious about suicide usually have worked out a plan, so don't be afraid to ask them if they have a plan.

If they tell you they have a plan, take them serious. Let them know that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Let them know things are not hopeless, however, they may not think that is true. I always ask them if they have given God a chance to work this problem out.

You can let them know that God created them, made them in His image, loves them, and wants them to have an abundant life. Why don't they give Him a chance? *(Most people do not want to die; they just want to quit hurting. You are building hope in a person who feels there is no hope.)*

I have told them if it doesn't work out, they can still commit suicide, but wouldn't it be horrible to kill yourself and then find an answer you did not explore? *(Give me a call if I can help with a problem.)*

Only as our walk with the Lord is healthy, our eyes and ears open, with hearts willing to be used, will we see these opportunities to be used by God to rescue people.

May God bless and use you in someone's life this Christmas season.

See you Sunday. Wally



Did You Know?

- **Christmas caroling for our shut-ins will be Friday, December 14th at 6:00 PM?**
- **The church building is looking ugly?** It has been pressure washed and is awaiting paint. Together we will be doing the painting in January. There are several ways to help. You can paint, help with lunch, clean brushes or babysit.
- **Leanne Chapman is playing in the El Paso Wind Symphony again this year?** In January the wind symphony will be playing with a mariachi band. It will be a great performance! Leanne can get you tickets if you wish to go.
- **On December 15th at 7:00 PM, Rhea Bullock and a group of young adults are hosting a night of worship here at Park Hills?** The minimum donation of \$5 per person will go to help rebuild Cambodia's education system through some Christian workers. This cause is open to all. There will be refreshments following the service. Rhea Bullock is the contact person.
- **The Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service will begin at 6:00 PM on December 24th?** Many people find this a great time to invite neighbors and friends. Helping friends keep Christ in Christmas is why we meet Christmas Eve.
- **Wally and Faye Chapman open their home on New Year's Eve from 8-12 PM to bring in the New Year with friends?** There is plenty of food and fellowship. Come and enjoy the night with Christian friends.
- **The Minor Prophets are the last 12 books in the Old Testament?** They usually get lost and most people know little if anything about them. Starting January 6th at 9:30 AM, we will be studying the Minor Prophets for 13 weeks in Sunday school. You will know what they said, where they fit in historically, how some fit into the foretelling of the Messiah, and more. Besides knowing about Jonah, you will know about Zephaniah and Zechariah. Join us!
- **Allen will be teaching a newcomers class starting in January?** This class will share with our new members; frequent attendees and any others interested the history, doctrines and vision

of Park Hills Christian Church. All are welcome to join us for six to eight weeks as we seek to find our place in this small part of God's Kingdom.

- **The next church retreat will be February 22-24, 2008 in Ruidoso, New Mexico?** The cost for 2 nights and 5 meals is \$100 with students ½ price and children 5 and under are free. Won't you join us for this weekend of fun and spiritual growth?

Up Coming Events

December 9th Christmas Fellowship Dinner. The meat is provided by Women's Fellowship. Please bring a side or dessert.

December 14th Christmas Caroling. Meet at the church at 6:00 PM. Refreshment will follow.

December 22nd Delivery of the Christmas Food Baskets.

December 24th The Candlelight Christmas Eve Communion Service will begin at 6:00 PM.

December 31st Wally and Faye Chapman open their home on New Year's Eve from 8-12 PM.

Allen's Thoughts . . .

Twelve to fifteen hours of complete darkness everyday for three months. There cannot be any light during that time, not even for a moment, or it won't bloom.

I can't help but believe that it is no coincidence that the darkness necessary to produce the poinsettia's beautiful display of red shows its results just in time for the holidays.

"I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds."

It seems that how we look at life says a lot about how we deal with all that comes our way, both the good and the bad. What is your outlook? Are you, at your deepest level, an upbeat or a discouraged person? Do you find yourself surprised when good happens or when bad happens? Knowing that God uses both the good and the bad to make us into the creation He wants and needs us to be helps us to handle the darkness that comes to all.

For the poinsettia to be at its best, it requires both Nine months of the 'good', the food and sunlight needed by all plants, and the 'bad' three months of total darkness. Without both it would not stand out among all the plants.

As we approach the scheduling and emotional nightmare that this season can be, remember to keep your focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Don't let the 'bad' rule your life at the expense of the 'good'. In other words don't get out of the boat in the middle of the rapids. Allow God to bring you through whatever you face and trust Him to make you all you can be.

In closing remember these words from **Isaiah 41 (NIV)**.

Verse 10 Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Verse 13 I am holding you by your right hand—I, the Lord your God. And I say to you "Do not be afraid. I am here to help you. "

Verse 14 Despised though you are, O Israel, don't be afraid, for I will help you. I am the Lord, your Redeemer. I am the Holy One of Israel.'

Seeking the Harvest with you!

Allen

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I have to believe that God planned the timing to remind us that our faith only grows in hard times. Only through darkness can we experience true rejoicing. How else could Paul say in I Corinthians,