



FCOG E-Newsletter

February 2009

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His Way Cafe Presents:



Heather Williams

When: Saturday, Feb. 7th @
7:30 pm

Where:

Following God is the most exciting ride that life can offer! Let me share several thoughts with you that just keep coming up in my mind when I think of First Church of God and what God is doing in us and through us.

Isaiah 55:8-12 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts... ..My word which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

For you will go out with joy and be led forth with peace;"

I love it when God gives us a clear initiative and we follow Him with child-like faith and see His marvelous plan unfold before our eyes. His plans are so much bigger and better than anything we can imagine!

For example, two years ago we followed God's leading to be a debt free church. At the time, we didn't foresee the economy and world crisis that we are facing today but out of simple obedience we followed His leadership. The result was that we saw our 1.2 million debt disappear miraculously without a pledge drive. What I find interesting is that it was only after we obeyed God, that we came to understand the "why" of the whole thing. At the time, we only knew three things:

1. Become debt-free as a church.
2. Challenge, teach and train the people to be debt-free, personally (we are still helping many families in this quest).
3. Set our community free.

Today, not only are we in a better financial position to be good stewards in the Kingdom, but God has positioned us to make the greatest impact when it is needed the most! People everywhere are hurting and they are looking for answers and help with their real-life problems.

Friends, this is a pivotal moment in history and we are positioned to make an impact in the Kingdom of God like never before! We must bless and love people, unconditionally.

How thankful I am for the opportunity to pastor a generous, loving church in a time when people need our love the most!

OASIS Youth Wing

Childcare upon request: Jerri

@ x210

\$5.00 donation includes refreshments from Blessings Bistro

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

Yet, our responsibility is not merely to meet felt needs of people who are hurting. We have a message that transcends their temporal needs! God has a plan for each and every person we touch and we get a front-row seat to watch them develop and grow, just as you and I are growing in Christ!

Let me end by saying that I think we all sense God's Spirit has been doing something extraordinary in our church since last summer. Now we're seeing the fruit of His work. People are experiencing spiritual breakthroughs in so many different ways. Marriages are being restored, destructive habits are being broken, lost people are coming to Christ, believers are experiencing personal revival. People are confessing sin and repenting before God. God has been teaching us that repentance is necessary if we are serious about our walk with Him. Let me remind you where you are that until there is a personal decision to change - how we think, how we behave, how we treat others - we will not grow in Christ. A decision to change has to occur before we can experience personal growth.

This year, our focus is "Experiencing Spiritual Breakthroughs". Both in our heart and with our hands! There are some who are quick to feed the poor and clothe the naked but they need a fresh breakthrough in their hunger for God and His word! There are others who are quick to press into the truth of God's Word but need a fresh breakthrough to get out of their Christian sub-culture and minister to real hurting people who don't have a clue what the Bible says.

Let's make the greatest impact for God our community has ever seen!

Be part of what God is doing, it's the greatest ride that life can offer!

Pastor Greg

Prayer Ministry



Testimony of Holly Ohs

The view I had of life and the view I had of God's presence in my life changed dramatically in 2008. The change began with signs that God provided my body. God gave me many signs something was not right, I made multiple visits to doctors and all the tests results were normal. God continued to give me "new signs", and I did not want to continue to go back to doctors for more tests. During my prayer time one morning, after I had a month long headache that never ceased, God spoke to me and said "I have given you a headache for an entire month, what more do I have to do to get you to go back to the doctor?" I made an appointment that morning and the length of the headache was concern enough for the doctor to order a CT scan. This test found an un-ruptured brain aneurysm which would require open brain surgery to "clip" and prevent what could have been devastating and fatal if the aneurysm ruptured. God led us to Shands hospital in Gainesville through a church member. I was told it would be months to get an appointment there to see a doctor. However God is so amazing, within a week I was seen by a leading neurosurgeon that specialized in aneurysms with no outside referral!

As we tried to prepare for the following two weeks, we had many questions. First, what we would do with our three small children during this time. The anxiety I felt over this issue was even with pending open brain surgery. Then, the telephone rang one night and it was a sister of Christ who had heard about our situation and wanted to help. We did not know her that well personally, only through church, but we knew she was sent by God. No one could call that we would feel more comfortable and safe leaving our children with for several days, God sent the perfect person to ease my fears. The surgery and recovery period that was ahead was long and hard. However God never left me and never stopped reminding me He was with me. He sent the perfect family member to stay for 2 weeks to help. Through Him, our wonderful church family brought over 60 meals. Incredibly, the meals ended on the exact day that I actually felt like cooking!! He sent countless sisters in Christ to care for our kids so Courtney could have a brief break. One one very bad day I

received a card from a church sister who was out of state and had heard the news. The card read "There are greater things than you can imagine ahead of you-and there's a great God walking beside you. I know His purpose is at work within you as He's guiding your life with wisdom and love." The card even sang "How Great is Our God" when opened. Another particularly bad day, when I found myself questioning life, I received a card with the quote "never be afraid to trust and unknown future to a known God". I could list many other incidents of how God made His presence known, how He spoke to me but it would take a book. I am 7 months post-op and God continues through a variety of venues to let me know He is walking with me every day. In closing, I pray you will see more clearly, as I have, when God is speaking to you. I leave you with the hope that God provided me the morning of surgery. Hope when I awoke in the dark hotel room, feeling scared and alone, hope that comes from knowing who is in control of my life and destiny. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future".

Jeremiah 29:11

Women's Ministry-Spring Event-



[Have You Heard What's Happening Mar. 13th & 14th?](#)

Plans are being made for a fabulous get together for all of the ladies in our lives. We will begin on Fri. evening, Mar. 13th, by dining in Vero's elegant southern style "The Courthouse Executive Center" party room, with soul stirring music and then receive a taste of what God has in store for us through the gifts He has given our guest speaker and worship leader, Jennifer Shaw. Jennifer's passion is to share her love story with Christ and how God became so real to her in the midst of the traumatic experiences that touched her life through her gift of music and ministry.

It seems the later it gets, the sillier we get, so Fri. evening will wind up with fun and games. You may get to know some of your sisters in Christ better than you ever expected.

Then Saturday morning, March 14th, we will gather at FCOG and be filled with more scrumptious food (breakfast and lunch) and hope to overflowing through more inspiring music and faith building teaching.

So, don't miss the evening of Fri., Mar. 13th and Sat. morning and afternoon on the 14th. Tickets are \$30 and are available in the church office Mon.- Fri. and in the media center after weekend services. The last day to purchase your tickets is Sun., Mar. 1st. For further information ask any Women's Ministry Council Member or call the church office at 562-2256.

[Missions Thursday Brunch](#)

Do you get all caught up in what is going in your corner of the world, like I do?

Join us Thurs., Mar. 5th from 9-11:30 in the Oasis to hear some exciting stories from Peter and Bette Verkaik about how God is working in the corner of the world where He has called them to share His love, Nigeria.

Bring a dish so we can share a brunch together while our minds are broadened to consider how we

can encourage and pray for Peter and Bette and those they are ministering to.

[Get Connected, Come Grow With Us](#)

Are you part of a Women's Bible Study? If not there is space for you and you are missed. Studies are being offered on Wed. and Thurs. evenings plus Thurs. morning. Check out all of the studies, which just began in Jan. by picking up a Women's Ministry Brochure in the A-wing hallway information wall.

Missions Ministry

MISSIONS WEEKEND MARCH 5 - 8



Peter & Bette VerKaik our Missionaries in Nigeria will be speaking to us during this week.

Peter & Bette had a vision that God placed on their hearts over 12 years ago; a vision that they relentlessly pursued. About 11 years ago they presented God's vision for them to FCOG.

God was leading them to Nigeria, to the Fulani People. It was interesting, because as Peter was telling how God was leading them specifically to the Fulani People, our Youth Group returned from a Youth Convention and had committed themselves to pray for the Fulani People, not knowing anything about Peter and Bette's visit.

Since that time much has transpired. There are many Fulani men, women & children that we'll be meeting in Heaven because of the faithfulness of Peter & Bette and their many co-workers. You will not want to miss the dangers, the miracles and the glory of God, as Peter relates to us the adventures that God has seen them through these many years.

Peter & Bette will be with us at all three services and will be looking forward to meeting you after each service.

Also on the schedule during this exciting weekend are the following events:

Thursday March 5 - 9AM. Peter & Bette will be the Guests of the Woman's Ministry - all women are welcome and urged to attend. This would be an excellent time to bring a friend. Peter & Bette are a couple that you can't help but love and will be available for any questions that you may have. Refreshments will be served.

Saturday March 7 - 7:30AM. All men's breakfast. Have a good hardy breakfast and then listen to Peter as he relates the many miracles of God and how God will manifest Himself through the faithfulness of His servants.

Saturday March 7 - 9:00AM CareNet 'Bridges to Life Walk'. Riverside Park, Vero Beach. Sign-up tables will be at Church entrances prior to Walk.

Saturday & Sunday after each service there will be informational & sign-up tables in the dining hall for those interested in Mission Trips. We have a confirmed trip to Honduras set for June 20 - 26. Applicants will be accepted on a first come first serve basis. As of this writing there are still some openings left. There is some physical construction work planned as well as opportunities for ministry with children.

Other tentative plans are for trips to Guatemala, Bonaire, Appalachia & to wherever the Lord may lead. Sign up lists and further information will be available. Opportunities for service with our local ministries will also be presented. Our local ministries are serving our community and FCOG wants to be available to also serve locally in Christ's name.

Don't forget! Missions Weekend- March 5th thru the 8th, see you all there. Refreshments in the dining hall.

Primetimers Ministry



We are excited about increased interest in the Senior Adult Ministry and events. We have had some awesome programs and trips so far this year and a few more are scheduled. If you are interested in programs or trips and are not receiving phone calls, please contact us at 772.766.0356. We are here to provide support and encouragement to all seniors.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tuesday, Feb. 10, 11:30am - We will gather at the church s.w parking lot to travel by our church bus to Ft. Pierce where we will have a tour of MISSIONARY FLIGHTS INTERNATIONAL. Joe Karabensh, a member of FCOG and MFI Executive Vice President will give us the scoop on missionary efforts in Haiti and other Caribbean countries, where they support the work of over 700 missionaries. Following the tour we will enjoy a late lunch at The Golden Corral before heading home. Only cost is lunch.

Sunday, February 22, 4:00pm -

Dining Hall - Beat the winter doldrums with an inspirational HYMN SING and special music. Bring some homemade cookies to share along with hot java.

Tuesday, March 10, 11:30am - we will be back to our regular Tuesday luncheon program. Patricia Moody is a very special young lady with Downs Syndrome, whose life and gifts are an inspiration to all who have ever used the words, "I can't". You are guaranteed a blessing as Patricia shares her special story and giftedness with us. Chicken salad croissants will be served. We need members A-L to bring desserts and M-Z bring fruit & veggie dishes. Please bring enough to serve 8 persons.

We appreciate the way so many volunteers have made themselves available for the various aspects of this huge ministry!! WE STILL HAVE MANY AREAS THAT NEED MORE HELP!

Is God leading you to help out in any way? Call Pastor Bill & Elaine Jerrils 772. 766.0356



Local coaches and former high school and college players, will offer a clinic and tournament.
Times as follows:

- 5-8 yr olds-clinic:10 am -12 pm
- 9-10 yr olds-clinic:10 am-12 pm -tournament 1-2 pm
- 11-13 yr olds-tournament:1-4 pm

**PARENTAL RELEASE REQUIRED
LUNCH PROVIDED TO PARTICIPANTS**

For registration and more information, contact Kerri @ 562.2256 x223

Youth Ministry

Hello Friends of the Oasis & Wave!

This is the weekly update, giving you all the details and information you need to know about events, programming, and ministry opportunities at the Student Ministries of First Church of God!

Spring & Summer Oasis & Wave Events:



February 12th-16th: We're taking a ski trip to Beech Mountain, NC, for a ski trip over President's Day weekend. The trip is currently open to high school seniors only and it costs \$200, which includes all rentals, lift tickets, lodging, transportation, and most of your meals. There are 22 spaces, and beginning February 2nd, the remaining spaces will be open for underclassmen!

Sponsor Letters Available Now!

Come by the youth office to pick up your sponsor letters to mail out!



Spring Break: April 4th- 11th: The Oasis & Wave will be spending Spring Break serving overseas in a unique missions trip to the people of Costa Rica! We have room for approx 25 students and staff who are interested in ministering within the diverse jungles and rainforest of Central America. The projected cost is approx \$950 for all travel expenses, meals, and lodging. Don't miss this once in a lifetime opportunity!

Sunday, April 12th: Come see real ancient artifacts, taste the foods of Jesus' day, and experience the reality of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Easter Sunday @ 9am in the Oasis...



July 11-19th: Our church will be teaming up with First Baptist church to attend Mission-FUGE in Philadelphia, PA!!! This awesome 9 day summer trip is open to all students and will include a day at Busch Gardens Williamsburg, VA, and a week at the M-FUGE camp, held at Eastern University in Philly! Don't miss this exciting trip that focuses on missions, spiritual growth, and building community! The total cost of the trip is \$450, which includes transportation, lodging, and most meals! Reserve your spot by March 5th by calling the youth office and dropping off a \$50 deposit!

Need info? We'd love for you to stay plugged in and up to date with all the great opportunities of the Oasis & Wave Student Ministries! In case you missed our annual Spring Parent Meeting, you can pick up the brochures and literature about our spring and summer trips and all the fundraising opportunities in the Cabana!

Know someone who needs to get this newsletter? Pass the word and have them send us their email address!

Young Adults: Come check out our young adult ministry, SHIFT, that offers a hip and relevant service for 18-29 year olds @ First Church of God. It starts around 8pm in the Oasis every Thursday night.

FCOG
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Vero Beach, Florida 32966