

# FOOTSTEPS

Volume 3

March 2010



## Thoughts from Pastor Wayne

I received an e-mail recently from Ken Walker that told of a church in Atlanta that honored one of its senior pastors who had been retired for many years. He was 92 years of age at that time.

After a warm welcome, he rose from his high-back chair and walked slowly, with great effort, to the podium. Without a note he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself, and then quietly and slowly began to speak...

"When I was asked to come here today and talk to you, your pastor asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson ever learned in my 50 + years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustained me through all my trails, when tears and heartbreak and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me. It was this verse...

*"Jesus loves me this I know.  
For the Bible tell me so.  
Little ones to Him belong.  
We are weak but He is strong.  
Yes, Jesus loves me.  
Yes, Jesus loves me.  
Yes, Jesus loves me.  
The Bible tells me so."*

"Jesus loves me." Our relationship to God is to be personal. It's not Grandpa's and Grandma's religion. It's not Mom and Dad's religion. It's not the Church's religion. We must personally come into relationship with Jesus Christ. He is The Way,

The Truth and The Life.

*"This I know."* We can know that we are in the right relationship with Christ. I John 2:3,4 states, "and hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

*"For the Bible Tells me so."* The Bible is the only criteria for our knowledge of a personal relationship with Christ. Read the book of I John. Read all five chapters. Test yourself to see if you truly know Christ personally.

*"Little ones to Him belong."* I John 3:1 states, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." Oh, my friends, we are adopted into the family of God when he have a personal relationship with Christ. Praise God, we are joint-heirs with Christ.

*"We are weak, but He is strong."* Praise God, "to as many as receive Christ, He gives the power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). We are enabled to keep the commandments of God through the birth and fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Oh, my friends! Jesus loves you, and so does your pastor.

Bro. Absher

## Relief for Victims of the



## Earthquake in Haiti

Individuals and congregations from across the movement continue to respond to the critical need for funds to support the disaster relief and recovery operations in Haiti.

Thus far, \$234,600 has been donated to the disaster relief fund. The true scope of the devastation for those associated with the Church of God in Haiti has yet to be learned, but a second assessment team is scheduled to go to the country in mid-February and will deliver additional funds to support the relief and recovery effort.

All donations received as a result of the appeal for disaster relief in Haiti will be devoted to the relief effort. The initial disbursement of funds (\$10,000) delivered in January was divided equally between John Ackerman, our career missionary in Haiti, and the national leader of the Church of God in Haiti, Phyllis Newby. Both were given the discretion to use the funds to meet the immediate needs within their ministry areas.

The Church of God Ministries (CGM) Disaster Relief Committee arranged for a second assessment team to travel to Haiti on February 13. This team was led by Don Smith, coordinator for compassionate ministries at CGM, and Phil Murphy, former missionary to Haiti. The team

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# Haiti Relief

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will also include an architect with extensive experience in developing plans in third-world countries, along with two other key individuals. In cooperation with Newby and Ackerman, the team will conduct a more detailed assessment of the overall situation and travel to the southern part of the country to assess the damage to Church of God congregations in the area hit hardest by the earthquake. Upon the team's return, the Disaster Relief Committee will finalize a strategic response plan that likely will include calling for work teams.

CGM anticipates that hundreds of thousands of dollars will be needed to purchase medical supplies, food, water, fuel, and the materials needed to rebuild homes, churches, schools, and medical clinics. Immediate donations to the Disaster Relief Fund can be made online at [www.chog.org/DisasterRelief](http://www.chog.org/DisasterRelief). Checks can be mailed to Church of God Ministries, PO Box 2420, Anderson, IN 46018-2420. Please write Project 45.04502 in the memo line.

**Special Request** - If you stop by the church during the week PLEASE use the north doors (closest to the office) for safety reasons. Also let the office staff know that you are in the building.

**Newsletter Deadline** - Please have your newsletter information in the church office by Sunday, March 14.

Thank You.



## March Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Evelyn Moffit
- 2 Brenda Bartels
- 4 Amanda Barrett  
Romaine Vickers
- 5 Charlie & Kathy Peters
- 6 Linda Poe
- 9 Miranda Bartels  
Gabbi Kreke
- 11 Ivan Boggs
- 13 Kimberly Clark
- 15 Addy Stortzum
- 22 Michael Poe
- 23 Nathan Painter
- 25 Hallie Brockett  
Lanny Randolph
- 27 Cherry Devore

*If your birthday or anniversary is in March and does not appear above, please call the church office at 342-3640.*



**M.O.B  
will be meeting  
on February 28  
from 5-7pm.**

## The Healer Without Latex Gloves

by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

Religious people can be so quick to judge. Maybe because they so badly need to affirm their fragile righteousness, I don't know. What I do know is that Jesus wasn't like that.

When I watch hurting, sinful people come to Jesus, I am amazed to see the gentleness with which he treats them. There was a leper, a social outcast, doomed to die of a progressive, disfiguring illness, who came to Jesus and said, "If you want to, you can heal me." Jesus, the Bible records, touched the flesh of this diseased man and said, "I want to. Be whole." And he was. Matthew 8:1-3.

Mary Magdalene, from what we can discover, was a wealthy heiress who was tormented. The demons of her past and present completely controlled her. Jesus set her free, and gradually, as she spent time listening to his teaching and following him, she was healed from the inside out. Did you know that this Mary was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection? Luke 8:1-3; 24:1-12.

Blind people came to him and went away seeing. Friends and relatives carried cripples to him. He was their friend. He never turned them away or rejected them. Instead, in his presence they were healed. Rich-robed leaders seeking to fill an inner emptiness came to talk with Jesus. So did ragged beggars. One lady was dragged to Jesus. You know the story. Earlier that morning she had been surprised in the arms of her lover, and hauled in front of Jesus while

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**Everyone is Invited!  
On Sunday, March 7  
Following the Worship Service**

**Please Sign-up to Enter  
Your Best Chili Recipe.**

**We will all try the different types of Chili  
and then vote on our favorite!**

**We will also hold a dessert auction...**

**Please bring your best dessert to donate!**

## The Healer Without Latex Gloves Continued from page 2

he was teaching in the temple. "Should we stone her for adultery?" the Pharisees sneered, hoping to expose Jesus' legendary mercy.

"Let the one among you who is without sin cast the first stone," Jesus replied. And when they had all slunk away, one by one, Jesus knelt down to where the woman was crouching. "Where are your accusers?" he asked. "Gone," she said. "Then I don't pronounce sentence upon you either," he told her. As she got up to leave, I can see him touching her sleeve, as if to give her a final healing word. "Go," he said, "and sin no more." John 8:2-11.

What gentleness! What love! Without compromising right standards of living, Jesus had communicated an incredible amount about how much God loves us, aches for us, longs for us, and gently calls us to paths of wholeness and wholesomeness. No self-righteousness here, not even from the only One who has any right to the term "self-righteous." Just compassion.

I can see us taking a step or two back from this radical Healer. You're too messed up. I don't want to associate with you, we might think about this woman. Our Jesus wore an everyday robe that he washed out in the creeks, and a pair of plain leather sandals. He didn't feel the need to preserve

his "space" or reputation or social standing. All these he sacrificed so he could reach out to the people who really needed him. So that he might touch them.

Do you need him? Do you feel messed up or ashamed or confused or lonely or just plain tired of it all? You are his kind of person. Jesus knows your pain, and reaches out a strong and friendly hand, and says to you, "Come to me, all you who are weak and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. For I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 11:28-29

No matter what, friends, we need to be like Jesus. Let someone else play the religious game. For us it is getting to know this Jesus, and then being his hands to reach out in our communities to the hurting and struggling. Some of those who are hurting and struggling live in nice homes and drive BMWs. Others live in apartments and have barely enough for the coming month's rent.

If we serve a Healer, then we are called to be a healing people, unafraid of pain, even our own. We know that through his love and working in our midst, that ancient healing touch of the Living Jesus will touch again. With power.

**FOOTSTEPS** First Church of God in Effingham, IL

**Senior Pastor:** Wayne Absher E-mail: pastorwayne@consolidated.net, **Worship Director:** Jeremy Adam **Youth Director:** Jacob Wright  
**Services:** Sundays: Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship: 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays: Small Groups 7 p.m.

**FIRST CHURCH OF GOD**

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"Return Service Requested"

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 Web Site: www.effinghamcog.org



**WEATHER  
 CANCELLATIONS**

Due to inclement weather you can tune your radios to WXEF 97.9 FM or WCRA 1090 AM for all services cancellation announcements.

**SCHEDULES**

Dates		AM		March 7		March 14
<b>Greeters</b>	9:15	doors center		Dave & Kathy Hoesli Nancy Goldtrap	doors center	Don & Bev Thoele Barb Painter
	10:15	doors center		Dave & Kathy Hoesli Nancy Goldtrap	doors center	Don & Bev Thoele Barb Painter
	11:45	doors center		Dave & Kathy Hoesli Nancy Goldtrap	doors center	Don & Bev Thoele Barb Painter
<b>Sound</b>				Jerry Probst		Tim Hoesli

Dates		AM		March 21		March 28
<b>Greeters</b>	9:15	doors center		Michelle Plummer & N. Goldtrap Nancy Goldtrap	doors center	Chris & Phyllis Eskew Linda Poe
	10:15	doors center		Michelle Plummer & Rick Kreke Nancy Goldtrap	doors center	Chris & Phyllis Eskew Nancy Goldtrap
	11:45	doors center		Michelle Plummer & Rick Kreke Nancy Goldtrap	doors center	Chris & Phyllis Eskew Linda Poe
<b>Sound</b>				Roger Kreke		Roger Kreke

**FACTS & FIGURES**

<b>Jan. 31</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>\$2,930.00</b>
<b>Feb. 7</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>\$3,957.15</b>
<b>Feb. 14</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>\$2,983.50</b>
<b>Feb. 21</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>\$5,544.93</b>
<b>Budget Weekly Need</b>		<b>\$4,446.75</b>
<b>Jan. 31</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>Feb. 7</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Feb. 14</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Feb. 21</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>148</b>

**USHER'S NEEDED**

We are in need of some volunteers to help with the offertory on Sunday morning. We need two people for the second Sunday of the month, two people for the third Sunday of the month, and one person for the fifth Sunday. Contact Trent Kreke or the church office if you can help.