



Fresh Springs of Opportunity

In *Simply Christian*, N. T. Wright tells a wonderful parable. Once upon a time there was a dictator who ruled his country with an iron hand. Everything was thought out and rationally decided.

This dictator noticed that the water sources around the country were erratic. Fresh water springs located in inconvenient places would flow gently one day and in torrents the next. The dictator decided on a sensible, rational plan. The whole country would be paved over with concrete so thick that no spring of water could ever penetrate it. All the water the people needed would be brought through a complex system of pipes, courtesy of the government. Further, while he was at it, the dictator decided to apply various chemicals to the water that would make the people healthy. Everything was planned, regulated, and controlled.

For many years the plan worked just fine. Occasionally the people would look back wistfully at the days of bubbling streams and fresh springs. But they got used to it and forgot the old way.

Then without warning, the springs that had gone on bubbling and sparkling beneath the solid concrete could no longer be contained. In a sudden explosion—like a volcano—the water burst through the concrete. Muddy, dirty water shot into the air and took over streets, houses, and businesses. Some of the townspeople were delighted—at long last they could get water without depending on the government. But the leaders were devastated that they could no longer control people's lives like they used to.

We are the citizens of that country. "The dictator," says Wright, "is the philosophy that has shaped our world for the past two or more centuries, making most people materialists by default. And the water is what we today call 'spirituality,' the hidden spring that bubbles up within human hearts and human societies."

Everywhere the word "spirituality" is heard. Angels in the media, New Age mysticism, horoscopes, militant religionists of every stripe—our world is a different place today. We can stand by, or we can take fresh water to thirsty people around us. God has given us a brief window of opportunity; how long will it last? *G. Crowe*

Faith Initiates

One of the things that we took away from last week's Sunday morning drama time is that a faith that takes initiative is a faith that will birth more faith in others. Simply by taking the time and energy to sit and pray with the teenager, the parents fostered faith in their daughter. That is the way faith works. Faith begets faith.

A proactive faith changes lives. The adults were proactive in seeking God in front of their daughter. They did not wait for the daughter to be "interested" in prayer time. They initiated prayer time instead and their daughter followed suit.

When I was a teenager, I was involved in baseball...ALOT. We traveled all over playing baseball, but I was in church no matter what when it was time for worship. They forced me to go to church no matter whether I had a game or not. There were a few times when I actually went in my baseball uniform! We were cutting it that close! I hated going to church in my baseball gear.

But over time my parents' point became clear: church is the most important thing in your life. It does not matter what you are doing, you stop and give time back to God. I will always appreciate my parents for taking the initiative and teaching me that.

I encourage you to initiate faith this week with a friend, a child, or a co-worker. Invite someone to church; invite someone to prayer; invite someone to see God working in your life. Be proactive and see how God uses you. You have no idea of the impact a proactive faith can have, even on a grumbling teenager in cleats..... ~Dan

Sunday Night—Gayle Crowe & Mark McClain

This is an interesting year. *The DaVinci Code* is playing in theaters all over the nation. People are asking their neighbors what they think of Jesus, what they think of Mary Magdalene, what they think of the Bible. Great opportunity for Christians to witness to their faith.

But that's not all. Some are also asking each other, "What do you think about Judas?" That's because of an archaeological discovery that has been published this year, *The Gospel of Judas*. What's this about? It claims to be an ancient document that chronicles the life of Jesus in a way that is very different from what we read in our four Gospels. Is it real? Is it authentic? What about its teaching about Judas (that he was the preeminent disciple, that Jesus asked him to betray him)? Who are the Gnostics and what do they have to do with all this?

Sunday night at 6 PM, Mark McClain and Gayle Crowe will be co-teaching a lesson on *The Gospel of Judas*. The whole topic makes for an interesting study. You and your friends will benefit.

NACC 2006: A Gift from God

Today, June 27, is the opening day for the North American Christian Convention at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville. The NACC is a once-a-year gathering of Christian Churches, the equivalent in the fellowship of Churches of Christ of our college lecture programs rolled into one.

100 years ago this year, in 1906, the U.S. Census Bureau officially recognized the split between the Christian Churches and the Churches of Christ. This, in view of Jesus' plea for unity among his people, has been a sad memory for Christians on both sides. Now, 2006, the time has come to begin taking steps to repair the breach. This year's NACC is one more in a series of meetings and events designed to address the unity issue.

Speakers on this year's program will include representatives from both the instrumental and the non-instrumental churches. The topics for each of the main lectures will begin with the word "together": "Together in Christ," "Together in Faith," "Together in Service," "Together in Holy Living," "Together in Grace," and "Together in Battle." In addition, throughout the day will be workshops on twelve tracks:

Church Health	Christian Education & Discipleship		
Eldership	Evangelism & Missions	Finances & Stewardship	
Family	Preaching	Restoration Movement	Worship
Women's Ministry	Theology & Apologetics	Senior Adults	

In addition, a teen convention and a full children's program will be held.

Through our 200-year history, churches of the Restoration Movement have been guilty of leaning toward the narrow and exclusive. While this was not the intent, the result has often been perceived by others (and some among ourselves) as reflecting a smug and judgmental spirit. The purpose of this year's NACC—as well as Elmwood's schedule this summer of inviting the preachers for Lafayette's Christian Churches to speak for us on Sunday nights—is to open us up to the unfamiliar and hence to provide the opportunity of examining ourselves more closely.

Paul wrote the Philippians, "In humility, regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." Pray for the speakers and the participants of this year's NACC. It can be a milestone in the history of our movement. Families should act like families, and this is a step.



Our **Camilla Lawson**, Purdue University Student Learning Center Manager, was awarded the "Dale E. Dowden Award for Outstanding Student Services in Distance Education" at a state-wide conference on June 16. Camilla is the second Hoosier to receive the honor, which was developed in 2005 to recognize individuals whose tireless work provides the foundation on which student success, particularly in distance learning, often depends. Camilla has been involved in distance learning for more than a decade. Congratulations, Camilla!

Thank You!

Dear Friends,
Many, many thanks for the grand "send-off." It was a wonderful reminder of 40 years of caring, sharing, friendship and Christian love. When we count our blessings, the Elmwood family is right there near the top. You touched our lives in so many wonderful ways. And we will treasure the book on Indiana as a memento of you "good people." May God bless you all. Love,
Mary Ella & Herb King

June 25, 2006

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Invisible Children

- What would it be like if there was a civil war in your country for over 20 years?
- What would it be like if children between 8 and 14 years old were abducted and conscripted to fight that war?
- What would it be like if your children were so afraid of being abducted, that they no longer felt safe at night... in your own home?
- What would it be like in a nation where every night the children travel miles by foot to the city just to sleep where they feel safe?
- What if no one outside of your country knew about it, or even seemed to care?

It would be awful. It IS awful, and it's happening right now in Northern Uganda. There is a Civil War going on in Northern Uganda and it has been going on for over twenty years. The Lord's Resistance Army, or L.R.A., is a religious army which has perverted the ideas of God and the Holy Spirit and has been waging a war in Northern Uganda. The L.R.A., led by a man named Joseph Kony, kidnaps children to continue his mad war and literally force them to fight a war against their friends, family and other loved ones. To escape the L.R.A., thousands of children sleep together, packed together with each person having just enough room for their body, if they are lucky. Now all the children ask for is for the war to end.

Three young men went to Uganda to see the story they had heard about and to capture it on film. What they recorded is a heart wrenching story. They brought back their video and started a movement called "Invisible Children," an organization whose purpose is to raise awareness and end the war in Uganda. They are not content with allowing such atrocities to continue. They are not stopping until something changes in Uganda and the Children are no longer Invisible.

So what can you do to help? Do you want to? The first thing you can do is find out more information on www.invisiblechildren.com. There are many ways to get involved, as described on the website. For you tech-savvy folks, the entire "Invisible Children: Rough Cut" is on Google video (there are plans for a full-fledged theatre release of the documentary). Get involved! Show the Ugandans that Christians do care.

-Phil Travis



Remember daily our **Let's Start Talking Team**—**Josh, Gina, & Kinley Boyd, Lanita Boyd, Ryan & Stephanie Middleton, and Alison Ruhl**, in Suva, Fiji, for 6 weeks. They desire and depend on our prayers for them. (The team web page will be updated periodically by team members. The URL address is: <http://www.ryansmiddleton.com/lst>.)

Helen Clements, Carol Koons' mother, is in Home Hospital, room 4407, recovering from surgery for a broken hip....**Henrietta Frampton** is at St. Mary's Healthcare Center while she recuperates from surgery....Continue praying for **Elizabeth Tinkle** (surgery on her leg July 17), **Valley Stockton, Carol Koons, Jim Rustin, Nathan Weir, Kaden Koebecke, Noah Powlen, Natasha Risley, Phyllis Gray, Mark Eddy, Marie DeWoody, Anna Dale, Carrie High** (Regency Place Nursing Home), **Irene Fox** (George Davis Manor Nursing Home), **Delpha Allen, Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Gulden** (Rosewalk Village).

Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner, Loren Sniffen, and Brad King**. Serving in South Korea: **Amanda Martin**.

Pre-School Teacher Needed

Elmwood Nursery School and Pre-K is looking for a preschool teacher to replace Mary Fee who has moved to Georgia. The position is that of a co-teacher for the 3-year-old class which meets Tuesday through Thursday mornings from 9 to 11:30 AM. This is a paid position. You must be able to work from 8:30 AM to 12 noon. If you are interested, please contact Sue McClain. We would like to fill this position by mid-July in order for teachers to have time to prepare for the beginning of the school year in September.



- June 30....**The Ride (Youth trip to Cedar Point)
July 2, 6 PM....Gayle Crowe & Mark McClain speak; Finger Foods to follow
July 8-14....Camp C.U.M.O. Mission Trip
July 16-22....Spring Mill Bible Camp Senior week
July 23-28....Spring Mill Bible Camp Intermediate week

Read:

Luke 19-24; Amos 1-9;
I Chronicles 1-3; Hosea 7-13

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 28: July 9-15

Life for me is truly a spiritual adventure! Life is not for the faint of heart! A scripture this week really grabbed my attention, as I find myself attempting to practice courage in spite of great fear. In Luke 21:18-19, Jesus tells us, "...but not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will gain life."

It's been three months since my drug addicted daughter left our family to live life on her own terms. After the death of my first husband I thought that I could never experience that level of pain/grief again; however I have learned that losing a child is a different kind of grief.

Through weekly attendance at Al-Anon meetings with people who are experiencing the same situations as I, and applying the 12-step program, God is teaching me what He expects of me. He is helping me to keep my head above water during those long nights when I don't know where my daughter is or whom she is with.

Life's paradox is that the more grief we suffer, the more joy our hearts are capable of experiencing. I have found God to be exceedingly and abundantly faithful to me through these times. Some days He enables me to do nothing more than stand firm; other days I am able to make progress. I have learned to take life one day at a time, as that is how God's grace comes to me. The future looks grim for my daughter, but I hang on to the fact that God knows what I can bear; that His grace will be sufficient no matter what happens; that He loves her *and me* more than I can imagine; and that He is a God who answers prayer and can work in miraculous ways. He is our only hope in this situation. The words of my favorite hymn ring so true for me: "*Great is Thy Faithfulness, Lord unto me...*"

-Terri Miller



This Week's Highlight: "Outreach"

Each of Elmwood's five deacons leads one ministry area. Over the next few weeks all five areas will be highlighted in the newsletter.

What is the "Outreach" Group About?

Josh Boyd, deacon who supports the "Outreach" group, was asked specific questions about his area of ministry.

1. In 20 words or less, would you describe what your ministry is about?

Sharing Jesus by meeting people's needs: physical needs, social needs, practical needs, and spiritual needs.

2. Why is this ministry important? Why do you think God wants this ministry to be a part of this church's life?

Jesus did outreach the same way—he gave people what THEY knew they needed so that he could give them what HE knew they needed. We don't have a healing ministry like he did, but by feeding hungry families, providing safety and support for college students, providing a nurturing environment for preschool students from the community, teaching English with Let's Start Talking, supporting foreign mission efforts, and providing support for families in various ways, we are in most cases meeting the needs that people know they have in order to tell them about the Good News of Jesus.

3. What in your background has led you to be prepared to lead this ministry?

I have been involved with Let's Start Talking since 1992 (and Gina has since 1996), participating in 8 (6 for Gina) 6-week projects (including this summer) teaching English using the Gospel of Luke. I was a part-time campus minister in Bloomington for a year. We have been part of an outreach-focused LIFE Group 3 years here at Elmwood.

4. What are some of your most immediate objectives for your particular ministry?

Seeing our own children as our primary mission area, making sure that when they leave us (whether or not they come back), they have relationships with God that will make them Christian leaders wherever they end up. Cultivating our opportunities on Purdue's campus, both to convert students who don't know Jesus and to strengthen the faith of those who do.

5. What are some of your long-range goals for this ministry?

Improving and perhaps building a new campus facility. Becoming more directly involved with our foreign missionaries.

6. What specifically could the Elmwood members be praying about regarding you and/or your ministry?

That we would all take more of an evangelistic interest in Elmwood's children. That God would guide us about how to make best use of our location and commitment to Purdue students.