

MESSENGER OF HOPE

“AND YET WE ARE THANKFUL”

“GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST FOR YOU.” (1 THESSALONIANS 5:18)

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY COMMENTARY

SISTER PATRICIA SWINNEY, STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY LEADER / DEACONESS TRUDY HAMM, VICE LEADER

Being a Stewardship Ministry Leader in the Age of COVID

Here we are, trying to navigate through these uncharted waters and trying to keep our church afloat financially. We walk in a balance of what will happen to us, our families and our sanctified response to our Lord's grace in support of our church. Plans how best to appeal for faithful giving, how to maintain the welfare of church staff, how to care for those in need, and how to manage well the resources the Lord blesses us with; what follows? **WE PRAY!** “rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you,” (1 Thess.5:16-18) and the prayers of a righteous person has great power as it is work” (James 5:16b). Continue to faithfully intercede for your church in its financial need before our gracious and abundant Lord.

Continue to Give Your regular Offering: This may be more challenging as we are not able to meet together in the Lord's house. If you have not considered giving online and becoming a regular online giver, now is the time to do so. If you do not wish to give online, make a plan to regularly mail in your offerings.

Reach Out: Like so many, stretched, tired because we are focusing on the care for others, and concerned about your own welfare and that of your families. Make a call just to check in, ask what prayer concerns there are, ask how you might support them at this time. This will be a powerful assurance and reminder that we are a family in Christ who are caring for them through you.

Adopt a Special aspect of New Hope's Ministry as your Passion Project: Sponsor our food pantry for a given week. See what you normally give and find something that your church needs to expend resources for that your care about and make that your “above my normal giving” gift.

Be at peace in our Lord's Abiding Grace: No matter what our circumstances, it is a comfort to know that Our Lord promises “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5b). The days ahead may seem uncertain and will bring no surprises to our Lord, He holds us in His almighty hands. When you are stressed or troubled may God's Word of Grace and Promise surround you and turn to Christ's peace which passes understanding. As Ministry Leader and Vice Leader, “We are in this together. And our Lord is with us!

Generosity Faithful Purposeful Caring Grateful Sharing
Growing Engaged Humble Reliable Giving



YET THANKFUL THROUGH TRYING TIMES

BY PASTOR FREDDIE HINSON JR.

The weather is changing, early mornings here in Florida are filled with less humidity, a lightness in the air a sense that seasons are changing. We have come through the holidays of summer and fall is upon us. Normally at this time we're anticipating the joys of the holidays, cooler temperatures, gathering of family and friends, decorations and festive occasions.

Holiday traditions are fun. They build memories and focus on the blessings of life; but during these times of pandemic, uncertainty and chaos it is harder to list what we are thankful for. Honestly some people may find it a little difficult to be sincere when we talk about our "Thankfulness."

Thanksgiving in the past for some has been a time of carefree living. This year as we approach the season of Thanks, our thoughts are of wearing masks, staying safe from Covid19, children in virtual school, job loss, challenging finances, and careful travel. Young adults are feeling the pressures of life closing in, as they entertain the thoughts of how long will we remain in this state? There is heaviness as we attempt to drum up feelings of thankfulness on its namesake holiday.

"I am proclaiming right now that in times of pandemic, uncertainty and suffering, a heart of gratitude means more than just saying "Thank You." Being thankful means surrendering our struggles to God. It means believing that God is who he says He is. Believing that He is good, that He is love, and that He is for me. Believing that He never changes, that He never fails, and that He is working all things together for our good."

God understands that thankfulness in difficulty is not usually a gut-reaction. Jesus' struggle to thankfully accept God's Plan of salvation as He prayed in the Garden shows us this truth.

"Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thy will, be done." And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him," (Lk 22:42-43).

Here we learn two things:

First, there is value in going through the motions even if the feelings aren't there. Choosing to thank God even if you don't feel like it and are actually more stressed than thankful is an important step in having your heart opened to true gratitude.

Secondly, we see that angels ministered to Him and strengthened Him. We have someone even better than God's entire host of angels, we have Jesus Himself.

Life will bring us trials, we are not alone. Offering up thanksgiving in the midst of trials may be a sacrifice, but it is rewarding.

"During these times of difficulty we "Yet Thank God" for whatever good He plans to bring out of them, and we must offer the sacrifice of praise." This world and the life we live in it can be a thankfulness-stealer. But in Christ, we know we can "Rejoice always" (1 Thessalonians 5:16) because the trials and hard times are not a test, but another reason to trust God who has given us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3), and we "Yet Praise Him" because He is working all things out for our good. (Rom 8:28)

Pastor Freddie Hinson Jr.





THE DEACON: MINISTRY THROUGH WORDS OF FAITH AND ACTS OF LOVE

DEACON WAYNE HAMM SECRETARY
OF DEACON MINISTRY

"Remembering before our God
and Father your work of Faith
and labor of love and
steadfastness of Hope in our
Lord Jesus Christ."
(1 Thessalonians 1:3 NIV)

We as Deacons, we have a leadership role to support and work for the vision and mission of the church. As Deacons we been set apart for the servant leadership role of "Deacon," because we are already active in the ministry of the church and in spiritual leadership.

We minister and serve well in our roles and responsibilities. We teach and pour ourselves into our life group classes and apply what we teach with passion.

As Deacons we oversee a number of families within the church. Our Bible Fellowship Groups are the primary arm of our church for ministry. The deacons' function is to fill the gaps in ministry. Sometimes the church staff needs special help, and they know they can call on the Deacons.

We as Deacons ministering to the widows in New Hope, we fill the gap or make sure it is being filled and then go on to the next challenge.

As Deacons we serve alongside the Pastor in the pastoral ministries of the church. The Deacon Council is a service oriented, consultative body rather than a decision making or administrative one.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

DEACONESS CLARICE PEARSON

**NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE
OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."
(ROMANS 8:39)**

Our Christian Education Ministry, since the closing of New Hope, due to COVID 19, is still **ENGAGED** and moving forward with the vision Pastor Hinson was given by God in Proverbs 29:18 (KJV), "Where there is no Vision the people perish". The Christian Education Ministry ramped up to **LIFE GROUPS**, consisting of members meeting on conference line and Zoom, studying the same life group lessons while being, on one accord being Thankful, Blessed, and Loving.

WHAT IS LIFE GROUP? WHAT HAPPENS IN LIFE GROUP? A

Life Group is 4 to 15 people gathering on a weekly basis to share fellowship, Bible Study and prayer. Life Groups exist to accomplish two vital goals of the Kingdom. First, to edify believers remove by connecting them on a more intimate level and helping them to become more like Jesus. The second goal is to evangelize by offering another venue beside the regular church service that may be initially less intimidating to seekers and those interested in finding out more about Jesus. All our Life Groups consist of a Facilitator, Assistant Facilitator, Host/Hostess, Greeters and Special Events Coordinator.

The best way to get connected at New Hope is by joining one of our Life Groups. During COVID 19 we meet at conference calls and/or Zoom. You become part of an intimate family helping others to handle everyday issues, listening to and caring for each other for accountability by keeping in touch via email, calls, etc. as we study and apply the word of God in our daily life.

Men's Life Group: Deacons Larry Chesteen and Wayne Hamm, Facilitators. Group meet Sunday at 8:30am via Conference Call.

Woman's Life Group: Deaconess Deborah Chesteen, Facilitator. Group meet Tuesday at 7pm via Zoom and Conference Call. ET


Life Group: Elder TJ, Facilitator. Group meet Monday at 6:30pm via Zoom and Conference Call.

Seasoned Members Life Group: Sister Lee Grant, Facilitator. Group meets Sunday at 8:30am-9:30am via conference call.

Faith in the Time of COVID-19: Bible Study and Prayer

COVID-19 is now affecting every part of the world, disrupting people's lives and creating fear, anxiety, sorrow and hardship. Where can we find strength and hope at this troubling time? Join Pastor Hinson. Monday through Friday for a moment of Scriptural dialogue and Prayer beginning at 6:30, via Facebook and conference call, and Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting and Bible Study, beginning at 6:30pm. Via Facebook and Conference call. I pray that these encourage Bible Study and Prayer meetings, you will find comfort and grace in these difficult days and discover we are never abandoned but are held by God's Word.

DEACON RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
 2. To care for the church's members and other persons in the community.
 3. To lead the church in the achievement of its vision and mission.
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THE MEDIA MINISTRY

Sister Melinda Glover

The Media Ministry mission is to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) by spreading the Gospel of Jesus through video, sound and technology. We assist other ministries of New Hope with digital and electronic materials so their outreach may go forth.



The ministry consists of four parts:

Sound

Video

Photography

Technology

The sound involves being in charge of a 26 channel sound board that outputs high and low volumes and records the sound for CD reproduction. We videotape the service and events to be displayed online as well as on DVDs. As the service is going on or events are happening, we take random pictures to keep the memories of the body of Christ. We use multiple computers to display announcement slides, show videos and to broadcast live.

GET INVOLVED

Do you have some skills in sound, video or electronics or maybe a strong desire to learn? New Hope is here to help volunteers willing to learn.

TRUSTEE

By the Rev. Frederick Johnson

UPDATE

On behalf of the Trustee Ministry, I want to take the time to say thank you for your commitment to giving. Although we all have not been utilizing the Church buildings and facilities to worship as normal that has not hindered your faithfulness in giving. Through your tithes and offerings, the Church has continued to maintain and upgrade our facilities while meeting the needs of the community during these unusual times. We have been blessed with the ability to be able to purchase new air conditioning units for our sanctuary and modular buildings that were in need of replacement. We have also been able to purchase additional lawn equipment, which is utilized to maintain the church grounds. We have repaired and updated our alarm system for our modular buildings. The previous system was damaged by lightning. We are starting work on the Church sign out front. We are working to raise the sign and repair the signage lighting for better visibility. We are also planning additional repairs and upgrades to our facilities as we continue to move from Good to Great!

On a final note, as we move forward with having a limited number of our congregation attending Sunday Services during these Covid-19 times, it is of utmost importance that we practice good social distancing, safe interaction and proper cleaning and disinfecting at all times. Therefore, we have purchased a commercial grade fogging disinfectant machine and disinfectants to ensure the Church is properly disinfected after each use. So, if you do attend the worship service then you can rest assured that we are going the extra mile to ensure everyone's safety.

Be Blessed!

"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established." (Proverbs 16:9)



THE MEDIA MINISTRY (CONT'D) 9 HABITS OF THRIVING CHURCH TECH VOLUNTEERS

Sister Melinda Glover

1. They Show Up Early

Many people wait until the last minute to show up for their jobs. Great volunteers show up early and are prepared for the day ahead.

2. They Are Committed To Learning

There is no shortage of educational material on video, lighting, and sound. There are books, podcasts, blogs, and YouTube videos available for little or no cost. Thriving tech volunteers are dedicated to becoming proficient in their area.

3. They Work Well With Others

It doesn't matter how talented you are if other people can't stand to work with you. Be humble. Be kind. The best volunteers remember that they are only a small part of the body of Christ and depend on the rest for success.

4. They Look For Ways To Improve Their Area

No tech system is perfect and may require adjustments over time to better serve the church. Great volunteers keep an eye out for ways to improve and research how it can be done effectively and affordably.

5. They Honor The Vision of The House

A church tech team that looks great but doesn't follow the vision of their leaders isn't great at all. The best tech teams commit to following the vision of the pastor and turning his goals into reality.

6. They Stay Positive

Not every service will be good, but there is something good in every service. You will run into problems, equipment will fail, and mistakes will happen. That's okay! Thriving tech volunteers learn from their failures and remind others to keep their chin up.

7. They Take Great Care of Equipment

Tech gear shouldn't be taken for granted. No matter what equipment your church has, God has entrusted it to your care. The best volunteers take the time to treat these resources right and maintain them well.

8. They Are Strong Spiritually

There should be a noticeable difference between a tech volunteer in the church and someone working tech in the corporate world. The Spirit of God is in you and you are called to do a special work. Thriving volunteers take this calling to heart and come in on Sundays already in tune with God.

9. They Look For Ways To Get Others Involved

I've saved the best for last, because it has the potential to make the most impact. The best church tech volunteers don't try to do everything on their own, but strive to get others involved on their team. There is great strength in numbers and God will bless your work when you're helping people get involved in ministry.

INSPIRING READING AND MOVIES

Pastor Freddie Hinson Jr.

Movies

"Case for Christ": Movie is based on the true story of an award-winning investigative journalist - and avowed atheist, who applies his well-honed journalistic and legal skills to disprove the newfound Christian faith of his wife, with unexpected, life-altering results.

Books to Read

"Before You Vote" - David Platt, Jr. Author In Before You Vote, David Platt urges every Christian to ask seven critical questions before casting a ballot. These questions are based on biblical truths, not political talking points. Platts message is non-partisan, practically helpful, and biblically saturated.

How can I love church members with different politics- Jonathan Leeman & Andy Naselli

"How Can I Love Church Members with Difference Politics" - Authors Jonathan Leeman and Andy Naselli propose that Christians should learn how to disagree on such issues with a spirit of gracious understanding by recognizing the importance of what binds us together as a local church body - the gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE MILLENNIUM GENERATION AND VIRTUAL TEACHING

By Fredajah

I recently graduated from USF this past summer, so I have experienced the not so easy transition to 100% online learning. Getting used to the new adjustment can be quite difficult, especially if you lack self-discipline. Finding the motivation to do your schoolwork can be challenging when you have a lot of things that can distract you at home. I think the most challenging part about taking classes online is when I had group projects. Although it was difficult, it taught me a lot about accountability. I also gained a lot of leadership skills, because I wanted my group to succeed. I would often be the one to reach out to everyone and remind them of due dates. Although the COVID pandemic brought a lot of disheartening events, like not being able to see my friends and not having a normal graduation, I feel like I have grown a lot during this time. I can appreciate the good that came from it, it allowed me to slow down and work on my relationship with God, I got closer with my family, and it truly made me value this life God has given me. I just want to encourage any younger people who may read this to always try to see the good in every situation and bad times don't last always. "As believers we don't have to worry like the world does because we have hope in God." (Matthew 6:25-34)

By Gracie

I am currently a fifth year student at Centenary University in New mJersey. With COVID-19 being at school is very different than normal. My school cafeteria is no longer an open buffet and I only get up to 30 minutes to eat there. That's not the only change for me, now most of all my classes are online. It is hard for me to stay motivated in classes because it is harder to stay focused. When I go to class I'm still in my room in my PJs and just staring at my screen. There is no interaction that I never knew I relied on when I was in person. But you guys aren't alone if you are also struggling to find motivation to do school work from home. I recommend to try not doing your school work in your room. I found that when I go to a different part on campus I actually get my work done. Or if I do homework with my friends just being in the same room as them while I do work just helps my motivation go up. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. "Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace(A) for those who have been trained by it." (Hebrew 12:11)



QUICK TIPS FOR LIVING WELL.

CAN YOU STILL ENJOY A HUG?

Many of us have gone for months with few of the everyday touches that were once a regular part of life, and touch may be surprisingly important (holding hands, hugging or sitting snuggled up with someone). While there's no guaranteed safe way to hug a loved one you do not live with during this time, some steps can reduce risks. You should both wear masks and be outside. Turn your faces in different directions, so you are not breathing on each other. Do not talk while hugging and do it quickly. Small children can hug you around your legs or waist so you can pat their head. Afterward social distance and wash your hands or cleanse them with hand sanitizer.

SURPRISINGLY HEALTHY HOLIDAY FOODS

Sweet Potatoes and Butternut Squash – People get worried about eating any kind of starch, but these are healthy starches, and they give you plenty of beta carotene and fiber. Pass up the candied yams and roast your own sweet potatoes or squash and drizzle them with a little honey.

Cranberry Sauce - We are not talking about the canned stuff, which is high in sugars. But cranberries have soluble fiber and polyphenols, which may help prevent heart disease and cancer, and play a role in weight control. Make it yourself to control the sugar.

Roasted Chestnuts - Chestnuts are mostly carbohydrates. Because carbohydrates have fewer calories per gram than fat ---4 vs. 9 – they are for lower in calories than other nuts. Plus, they provide fiber folate, magnesium, potassium and vitamin C.

Pumpkin Pie - It is not exactly a health food, but it is the best pick among the traditional holiday pies. Pecan is the highest in calories and added sugars, and apple pie tends to have more calories and saturated fat than pumpkin, thanks to its double crust. Plus, pumpkin pie supplies the antioxidant beta carotene.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE IN A PUBLIC PLACE IS NOT WEARING A MASK?

Say nothing and walk away, Staying close and talking to someone who is not wearing a mask in the grocery store, library, or post office could increase your exposure to any germs released into the air when they speak. It is smarter to focus on what you can control like increasing your distance. If you see an employee not wearing a mask, talk with the manager. And if you would like family or friends to wear face masks when visting you, tell them ahead of time.

Patricia A. Swinney, Stewardship Ministry

