

NEW HOPE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

WELCOME SPRING - APRIL/MAY "E" NEWSLETTER

# MESSENGER OF HOPE

## CONTENTS

- **Pastor's Desk**
- **Stewardship Commentary**
- **Elegant Place to Worship - Beautification Ministry**
- **Pandemic Promotes (Marital) Prosperity - Marriage Ministry**
- **April Showers Bring May Flowers**
- **Happy Mother's Day!**
- **Health & Wholeness Ministry - Fruit for All – 5 Reasons to Eat More**

*HAPPY RESURRECTION DAY*

HE IS  
*Risen*

MATTHEW 28:1-10

*"Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess That Jesus Christ is Lord."*



# What Jesus Does Best

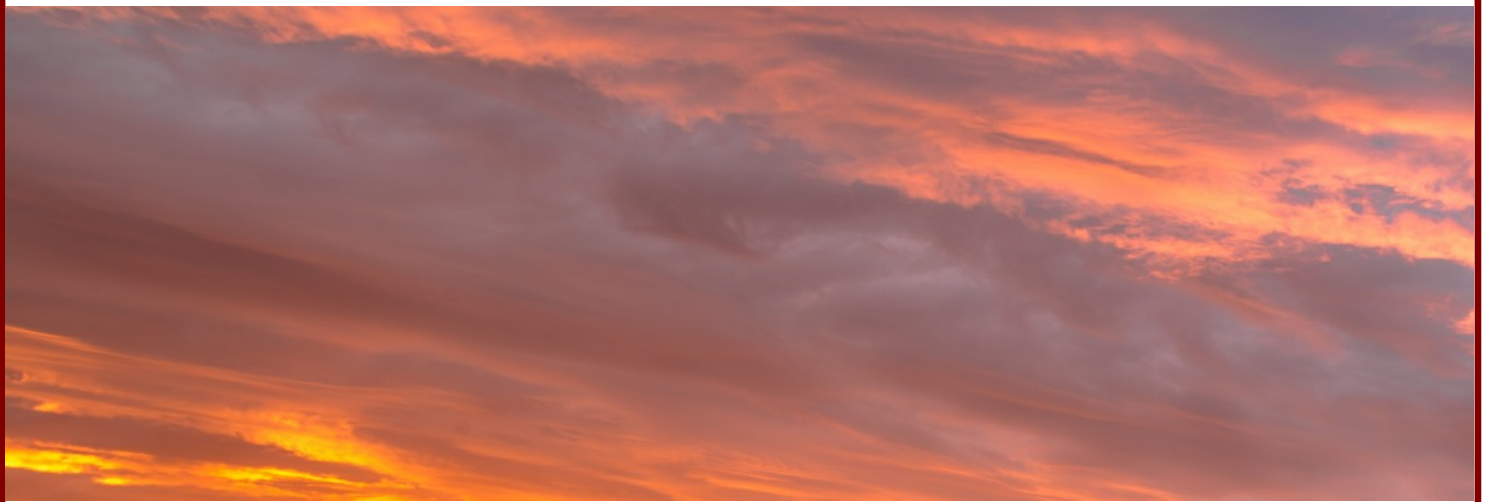
In 1934 Kirk Christiansen was a Danish carpenter turned toy maker. The company he created was called LEGO, a word coined from two Danish words meaning “play well.” Their motto? Only the best is the best. That’s not a bad encapsulation of the miracle at Cana. The master of ceremonies put it this way to the bridegroom:

*Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.* (John 2:10)

Imagine the surprise and the sheepish smile on the bridegroom’s face. Jesus did more than help him save face. He helped him put his best foot forward. Jesus didn’t just save the day. He made the day. And that’s what Jesus does best. He can turn our worst days into our best days! And He always saves the best for last.

The raw material for the first miracle is the most basic building block in nature. It’s a reminder that God doesn’t need much to work with. In fact, to be honest He doesn’t need anything. His best work is making something out of nothing, “ex nihilo.” Of course Jesus could have started with grapes and miraculously expedited the three-year fermentation process, and that would have qualified as a miracle. But He starts with water, demonstrating His ability to take the simplest thing on earth and turn it into something even more beautiful, something even more flavorful. And if God can do that with water, what can’t He do? The God who spoke everything we know into existence is the One who can change any molecule. That includes blood cells, brain cells, and cancer cells. Our cells are simply His LEGOs.

Kirk Christiansen was an audacious dreamer, but I doubt that even he could have imagined having a flagship store in Times Square or Legoland amusement parks across the country, not to mention a Hollywood blockbuster movie, video games, and themed



LEGO sets that make an appearance every Christmas. LEGO's annual production of twenty billion bricks boggles the mind. But it all started with a simple building block.

The story is told of a recent event where one of the masterminds behind the LEGO brand met a gathering of entrepreneurs in Las Vegas. He gave every participant six LEGO bricks that turned into an unforgettable experience and object lesson in ingenuity. He asked each participant to estimate the total number of unique combinations they could create with six LEGO bricks. Most guesstimated a few hundred, leaving them just a few hundred million short of the actual answer. None of these creative geniuses' came anywhere close to the total number of possible permutations: 915,103,765.

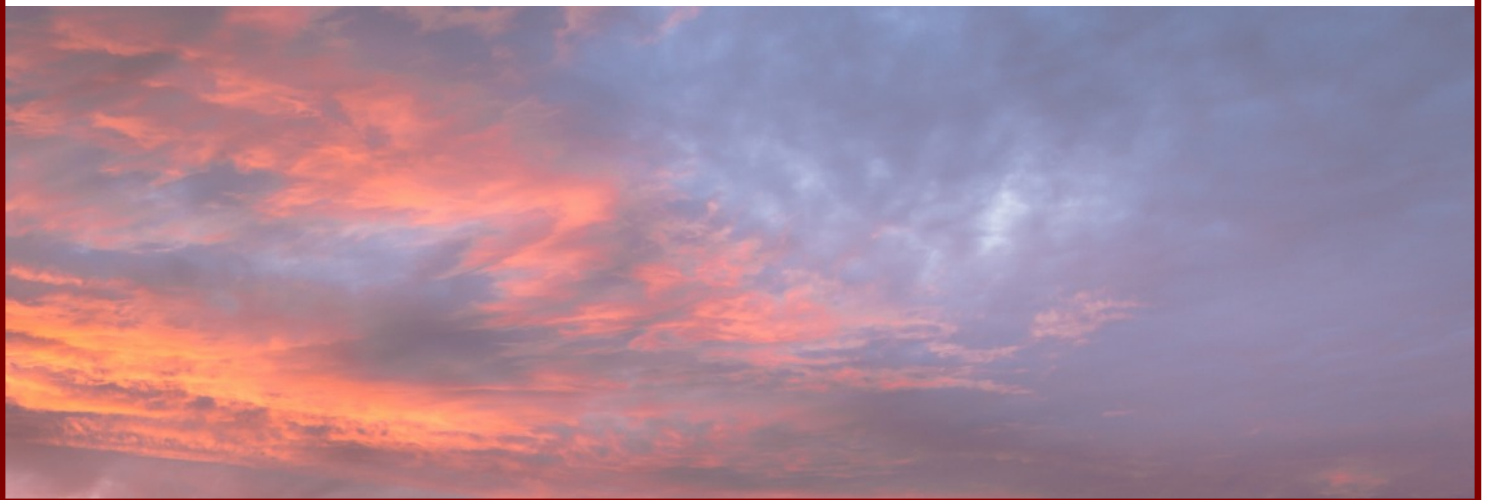
Hard to believe, isn't it? In much the same way, we grossly underestimate the God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine. And maybe that's why Jesus starts His miraculous ministry with water, simply to show what He can do with next to nothing. The object lesson is far more unforgettable than six LEGO bricks. Start with six water pots. Add water. Bring them to Jesus. And watch what He can do!

Now imagine what He can do with our individual lives. Imagine what He can do with our gifts and talents. What can He do with our church and those of us who surrender our lives to Him for His glory and our good?

Surely God has preserved us through some of the most unprecedented times this world has ever seen. If He has kept us we can rest assured that He has a plan for us. I want to encourage us as a body of believers to let our audacious God who created all that we see and more to use us to do exceedingly and abundantly above all that we ask or think for the advancement of the gospel and His kingdom.

Consumed by His call,

Pastor Freddie Hinson Jr.



# STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY COMMENTARY

The coronavirus pandemic has changed our lives. With directives to stay at home to help mitigate the spread of the virus, many of us are working from home and helping our children with their schoolwork. Some of us have become unemployed. Our social calendars have been wiped clean.

I know it is difficult to think about giving right now, especially for those who have lost income. It is important in times like these to remember that any donation we give is needed now more than ever, but most importantly, it must be a gift of self.



In Mark's gospel, we read about the generosity of a poor widow. As a crowd gave their rich offerings, the poor woman put in a few coins. Jesus told the crowd, "She from her poverty has contributed all she had her whole livelihood." Now is the time to consider what is important. Please remember to unite your giving with Jesus and doing so you will open your mind and heart to the working of the Holy Spirit.

The decision to give is done after careful prayer and consideration of one's financial obligations. It is not about giving what is left over, but considering what can be given from the start, by giving the "first fruits" in gratitude of your blessings and in support of God's priorities. Giving is a sacrifice when it comes from substance rather than abundance. The importance is realizing that our security lies not in our material resources, but in God. God's gifts are given to us in an unconditional manner. We give because God has already given to us.

Being good stewards means recognizing that everything we have, and everything we are, are gifts from God. We must be grateful and generous with those gifts. Stewardship is a lifestyle rooted in gratitude and generosity and helps us strengthen our relationship to God. It means putting complete trust in God.

Patricia A. Swinney  
Stewardship Ministry Leader



# BEAUTIFICATION MINISTRY

The Beautification Ministry has been working diligently to enhance the visual appeal of the church and emphasize holidays and special events.

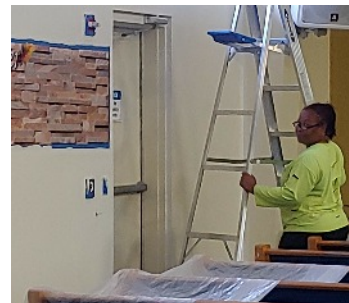
During this Pandemic we are continuing to create an inviting atmosphere by providing decorations and flower arrangements for our limited number of members entering the church and to our online members/visitors.

Along with maintaining the above, we are assisting with many changes within the church. In the brightened vestibule, we have new chairs, and the Sanctuary is in the process of receiving a new look. New wooden baseboards and chair railing have been installed in the Sanctuary and a fresh coat of paint is being applied. Also, plans are being made to improve the pulpit and choir area. In the near future, the bathrooms will be repainted, and repairs will be made.

The Beautification Ministry provides a chance to ensure that the church is beautifully decorated and assist in creating a beautiful place to magnify the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual gifts, skills and traits desired for people considering serving in this ministry: A gift/talent for decorating. A willingness to learn. Patience and passion. A desire to work for God in keeping His Sanctuary in excellence. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Katrina Smallwood at [kat125smallwood@yahoo.com](mailto:kat125smallwood@yahoo.com). "Honor and majesty are before Him. Strength and beauty are in His Sanctuary." Psalm 96:6

*Katrina Smallwood*  
*Beautification Ministry Leader*



# MARRIAGE MINISTRY

## Pandemic Promotes (Marital) Prosperity

“We’re in this together” may be the statement of infamy for year A.D.2020-like the statement “December 7,1941 a date which will live in infamy ....” has been remembered by many after being uttered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt following Japan’s aerial and naval attack on Pearl Harbor.

“We’re in this together” is our current battle cry as we, the United States of America (and the world) are at war fighting a common enemy – the coronavirus. “We’re in this together” as married couples battle dire circumstances – health and economic issues --- which accompany the coronavirus bringing destruction to society, especially married couples, and the family. The coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic has wreaked havoc on the world --- massive and record breaking in many aspects. Millions of people have been affected by covid-19, followed by millions of deaths caused by the virus. The severity of covid-19 has made new terminology like “social distancing” a product of everyday speaking, and actual practice. More people believe in and practice social distancing than those who believe in God and practice Christianity – a shameful commentary. Due to covid-19 I believe more people are driven to seek (but not believe in) God as a source or entity of safety.

How has your marriage fared during the coronavirus pandemic? Hopefully, your marriage is among marriages that strengthened. Numerous marriage surveys were taken during 2020 --- some late during the year (after the effects of the pandemic were in full swing in the United States). Marriage surveys --- American Association of Retired Person (AARP) Christian Organizations Government Agencies, News Agencies, etc. --- show both pessimistic and optimistic views of marriage. However, combined survey consensus tends to show marriage is stable according to a January 7, 2021 article --- Good News for Families in 2021 by the Institute for Family Studies (IFS).

Marriage appears stable, but bits of information are important to know --- so you can compare and possibly make adjustment in your marriage. All of us probably know someone who has been tragically affected – health wise, financially, relationship, or otherwise – by the pandemic. Marriage has not escaped the effects of the pandemic. The following information presents some negative and positive aspects imposed upon marriage by covid-19, but overall, the pandemic has promoted marital prosperity.

Men and women – husbands and wives – have been denied working due to safety concerns for the workforce and those with whom the workforce interacts (like family and social interactions). Marital stress increased by about 34% (according to an American Family Survey sponsored by the Deseret News and the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy) as husbands and wives were forced to spend more time with each other. (Pre-pandemic, to the dismay of marrieds, most couples spent about eight hours per day together – with six of those hours being sleep time, thus about two hours to interact (maybe). As may be expected, those whose finances are most impacted report the biggest increase in relationship stress.

The pandemic has caused a decrease in the marriage rate (as reported by four states –Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, and Oregon – offering public records in 2020). Due to lockdowns and decreased dating hangout places wide-spread dating decreased with a probable outcome of a lag in newly marrieds through 2021 and into 2022. Reportedly, a dating decrease has resulted in less sexual activity among non-marrieds. Whereas sexual intimacy in marriage (even with more time together) essentially remained unchanged in 2020 as compared to 2019 – probably triggered by stress factors of one sort or another which did not inspire a romantic environment. However, historically, birth rates tend to increase over a four-year period following an epidemic of any type according to an IFS December 2020 article -- Will the Coronavirus Spike Births. Thus, anticipate a slight increase in family sizes.

Hooray for commitment to marriage, and appreciation for the spouse. Surveys taken in 2020 showed husband and wife not only better connected to each other but also increased connection to other family and close friends. Noteworthy, although stress increased, the divorce rate decreased in 2019, hit a 50-year low in 2020, and really is expected to continue to decrease according to U.S. Census Bureau data released in an American Community Survey.

Regardless of survey results how is your marriage – Mr. Husband and Mrs. Wife? Are you – husband and wife – doing all you can to promote marital prosperity?

To further enhance your marriage, we --- the Marriage Ministry – suggest:

Speak your spouse’s Love Language

Daily (dedicated) Couch Time

Creative Date Night (at home)

Apply the following to your spouse and in your everyday life:

Romans 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith may edify another.”

Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

Set God as the foundation in your marriage, travel along His marital pathway.

Blessings upon you,

Pastor TeeJay and Sister Cynthia  
Marriage Ministry





# Have You Heard The Saying?

## April Showers Bring May Flowers

The month of April, traditionally a rainy period gives way to May, when flowers will bloom because of the water provided to them by the April rains. A period of discomfort can provide the basis for a period of happiness and joy. May is known for being the first warm month of the year when flowers begin blooming. It is Spring, the time of year when rain flows and then begins to reveal the growth and beautiful creation of our Creator.

Make sure your heart is watered frequently and consistently. A devotional life early in the morning, which includes scripture reading and meditation will go a long way to keep the soil of the heart fertile for fruit production. The more you work the soft soil the more access you get to the rocks buried deep beneath the soil that rob us of the Fruit of the Spirit.

As Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." This applies to planting as well. Tender seed plant prefers a gentle and moist climate. As a child of God, the best time to cultivate the seed of God's word is in the early morning before the heat of day. The time to prepared for eternity and the Day of the Lord is now! Do not wait until later to prepare for fruit, the season to sow, water and reap spiritually is now.



### *Proverbs 31: 25-28*

She is clothed with strength and dignity; She can laugh at the days to come.

She speaks with wisdom, And faithful instruction is on her tongue.

She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children arise and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her:



# FRUIT FOR ALL - FIVE REASONS TO EAT MORE

“But the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” Galatians 5:22-23



FIBER: Kumquats, Raspberries, Guavas (pink), Blackberries, Pomegrates

POTASSIUM: Guavas (pink), Bananas, Dried Apricots, Kiwis (gold or green) Diced/Dried/Sliced Peaches

VITAMIN C: Guavas (pink), Kiwis (gold or green), Lychees, Papayas, Strawberries

FOLATE: Guavas (pink), Mangos, Pomegranates, Papayas, Kiwis (gold or green)

CAROTENOIDS: Guavas (pink), watermelons, Papayas, Persimmons, Grapefruits (pink or red)

Eat more fruits and vegetables. This advice goes for just about everyone. When it comes to fruit, it's not just about the vitamins and minerals (plenty) or the calories (few). Who can resist a bite of a sweet summer peach, a wedge of juicy watermelon, or a succulent mango?

They pack in nutrients  
They're low in calories per bite  
They protect the heart and brain  
They're easy  
They're delicious