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Newsletter—February 2024

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Fullness of Joy



I visited my 86-year-old neighbor in the hospital this morning. We found out last night that she just had surgery and would soon go to the nursing home. I don't know her that well. I've helped her start a stubborn mower and snow blower, helped her with other small tasks in the past, and most recently cleared the snow from her sidewalk and driveway. We chat a little from time to time, but it has never been permissible to spiritually go past, "your church my church." Nonetheless, she welcomed me into her room and allowed me to read some Scripture and pray for her. It was a joy for me because there was no expectation that I would be there.

I read most of Psalm 16, mostly because I wanted to read verse 11 and point to the joy in that verse. Here's the last 5 verses of Psalm 16:

"I will bless the LORD who has counseled me; Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night. ⁸ I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ⁹ Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. ¹⁰ For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. ¹¹ You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever." (Psalm 16:7–11, NASB95).

"Fullness of joy," a feeling of joy, a full feeling of joy! Isn't that what we all really would like? If you've read *Deeper Walk*, by Marcus Warner, which I referred to in the sermon January 21st, you know that our minds and bodies need joy, research shows it. Those who have joy are healthier and handle stress better. I wonder if we don't internally know it and that's why we pursue different forms of recreation so strongly.

I don't know about you, but often I feel like I have to push so hard to get done the things that I need to get done, just to have some time for something I enjoy. And lots of time, that push takes some of the joy out of the joy! Ever ask yourself why you have to work so hard to have some fun, and is it worth it? Psalm 16:11 speaks of a joy that is not found in recreational pursuits, but in God's presence. I'm not knocking hobbies and recreational pursuits; they are good for us. I just wonder if we haven't lost sight of the greater, in the pursuit of the lessor. Why is it so easy to be so busy pursuing enjoyable activities that I don't have adequate time to sit quietly before the Lord and simply enjoy Him? Has our adversary pulled a flipflop in our understanding of joys?



What is the "fullness of joy" that we find in God's presence? Would it not be the good feeling we get just from interacting with Him? There are certain people that I call energizers for me. Time with them leaves me energized. It's because we share common values, we don't spend our time criticizing people or complaining about things, we just talk about the Lord and good things. Time with energizers always leaves me walking away feeling good because I have a more positive and hopeful outlook.

I wonder if the fullness of joy David writes about is something like that. It makes sense that time with the Lord is a time of God assuring that He's in control, that He is good, that He's working out good things. It makes sense that God would be affirming that He loves me despite my failings and weaknesses, that He won't abandon me, and that He will always give me strength, instruction, and the wisdom I need for life. To be sure, it is also a time of correction, gentle correction, like I get from my energizer friends. Recreational joys are good for us, but they can't replace this kind of joy.

A disciple-making person has "in Your presence" time built into their daily routine, and they help the one they are discipling build it into their life as well. It's a "forever pleasure" we can begin to enjoy right now, and it's something we can pass on to others as we "go" (Matthew 28:19), whether it's a hospital visit, a phone call, a car ride together, or a Bible study. I hope you are experiencing this joy!

For Our Joy,
 Pastor Dan



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Moms/Girls study—10 am-Noon, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC MBC Worship Practice—7 pm, S	2 No Homeschool Co-op Awana Girls Overnight – 5 pm, All Church	3 Awana Girls Overnight ends—11 am No Regrets Men's Conference, Faith Community Church, Janesville Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC
4 Worship Services: The Gathering 9:00 am & Café 10:30 am Sunday School & Pipeline—9:00 am Step 2 (s.1)—9:00 am, LL #100 Choir Practice—Noon-1 pm, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica—2:00 pm, S Ignite—4:00-6:00 pm Fusion—6:00-8:00 pm	5 Prayer Meeting—6 pm, LL #102	6 Primetimers Games & Lunch—10 am-1 pm, NC/K Missions Meeting—5 pm, LL #102 Choir Practice—7 pm-8 pm, LL #106	7 Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm Women's Study—6:15 pm, LL #106	8 Moms & Girls' Study—10 am- Noon, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC MBC Worship Practice—6:30 pm, S	9 Homeschool Co-op—8:45 am-3:30 pm, LL Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S What's Up With Israel? A History of the Middle East Conflict—6:30 pm, NC Fusion leaves for Lydia Home	10 Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC Fusion returns from Lydia Home
11 Worship Services: The Gathering 9:00 am & Café 10:30 am Sunday School & Pipeline—9:00 am Step 2 (s.2)—9:00 am, LL #100 Choir Practice—Noon-1 pm, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica—2:00 pm, S Super Bowl Party—4:30 pm, NC/K No Ignite or Fusion	12 Prayer Meeting—6 pm, LL #102 Elder Board Meeting—6 pm, LL #106 Deacon Board Meeting—6 pm, NC	13	14 Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm Women's Study—6:10 pm, LL #106 	15 Moms & Girls' Study—10 am-Noon, LL #106 Blood Drive– Noon-6 pm, NC Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, LL #101 No MBC Worship Practice	16 Homeschool Co-op—8:45 am-3:30 pm, LL Primetimers Pizza Hut Lunch– 11:30 am Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S	17 Iglesia Biblica Marriage Seminar—4 pm-9 pm, All Church
18 Lord's Table Worship Services: The Gathering 9:00 am & Café 10:30 am Sunday School & Pipeline—9:00 am Next Steps-Step 3—9:00 am, LL #100 Iglesia Biblica—2:00 pm, S Ignite—4:00-6:00 pm Fusion—6:00-8:00 pm	19 Prayer Meeting—6 pm, LL #102	20	21 Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm Women's Study—6:10 pm, LL #106	22 Moms & Girls' Study—10 am-Noon, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC MBC Worship Practice—7 pm, S	23 Homeschool Co-op—8:45 am-3:30 pm, LL Iglesia Biblica Worship Practice—5:30 pm, S Fusion Winter Retreat	24 Iglesia Biblica Youth Group—6-7:30 pm, NC Fusion Winter Retreat
25 Worship Services: The Gathering 9:00 am & Café 10:30 am Sunday School & Pipeline—9:00 am Choir Practice—Noon-1 pm, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica—2:00 pm, S No Ignite or Fusion Fusion returning from Winter Retreat	26 Prayer Meeting—6 pm, LL #102	27	28 Sr. Life Group—1 pm, NC Awana: Trek/Journey—5:30 pm Cubbies-T&T—6:15 pm Women's Study—6:10 pm, LL #106	29 Moms & Girls' Study—10 am-Noon, LL #106 Iglesia Biblica Prayer Meeting—6 pm, NC MBC Worship Practice—7 pm, S	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> <p>MBC Office Hours: Monday—Thursday 8:00 AM—4:00 PM, & Fridays 8:00 AM—Noon</p> </div>	



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Happy Birthday!



- 2 Aaron Holverson
Tabitha Thostenon
- 6 Julie Paske
- 7 Nate Bloom
Tasha Erdmann
- 8 Luca Petersen
Justin Rhoe
Mason Rische
- 10 Liam Erdmann
- 11 Al Ostenson
- 12 Timothy Kramer
Anita Peach

- 12 Braden Williams
- 13 Deb Hurlbert
- 14 Josiah Hauri
Jake Watson
- 15 Jaclyn Miller
- 16 Felicity Eddy
Liz Garchie
Devan Schulte
- 17 Eli Schmitz
Marie Wunschel
- 19 Brigham Holverson
- 20 Randy Whyte

- 21 Darlene Bartelt
Emmalynn Brunner
James Hurlbert
Sarah Olmstead
Lillie Rische
- 23 Jo Figi
Scott Larson
- 26 Betty Anderson
- 27 Beth Figi
Gloria Huffman
Harold Pieper
- 28 Kathy Markham
Deb Westphal



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

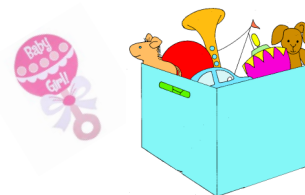
- 1 Peter & Katelin Rische
- 10 Richard & Mary Kubly
- 12 Dale & Lynn Klitzke
- 13 Roger & Kathy Krauss



Pizza Hut Lunch:
Friday, February 16th
 (weather permitting)
 11:30 AM at Monroe Pizza Hut
 Contact Carol Hasselmann
 with questions at 815-505-3324
Games & Lunch: 10:00 AM
Tuesday, February 6th

Welcome Baby!

Ross & Chelsey Simler welcomed their new baby girl, Charlene Mae, on Thursday, January 4th. She weighed 9 lbs. 14 oz. and was 20" long. She joins big brother, Case, at home. May God bless your family!





Marriage Ministry

We invite you to join the Marriage Ministry in celebrating **National Marriage Week, February 7th-14th**. This is an annual celebration dedicated to promoting the institution of marriage and raising awareness of the profound impact strong marriages have on society. Coinciding with the week leading up to Valentine's Day makes it the perfect time to celebrate the joys and virtues that marriage brings into our lives.

Be intentional to daily cherish God's gift of your spouse and your marriage. Celebrate your love with a date night. Enrich your relationship by attending **Pipeline** on **February 4th-March 10th** for a 6-session series entitled, "Us In Mind: How Changing Your Thoughts Can Change Your Marriage" with Ted Lowe. In this series you will discover through Scripture, research, and neuroscience a simple way of rethinking about your marriage. We will focus on just Five Thoughts which are designed to help you love well, even when it is not easy. This series is full of humor, real-life examples, and practical application. We will have a lot of fun while we work together to strengthen all our relationships.

If you are married, dating, or even considering dating, mark your calendar now. Join us **February 4th-March 10th** to learn how you can change your marriage by changing your thoughts. It's simpler than you think. Spoiler Alert: sweet treats will be provided at the February 11th class!

Jeff & Marie Wunschel, Marriage Ministry Leaders



What's Going On?!

With all that's going on in the world today, you may be asking, "What's going on?!" Due to inclement weather in January, MBC has re-scheduled the presentation "**What's Up With Israel? A (brief) History of the Middle East Conflict**" for **Friday, February 9th** at 6:30 PM in the Nehemiah Center.

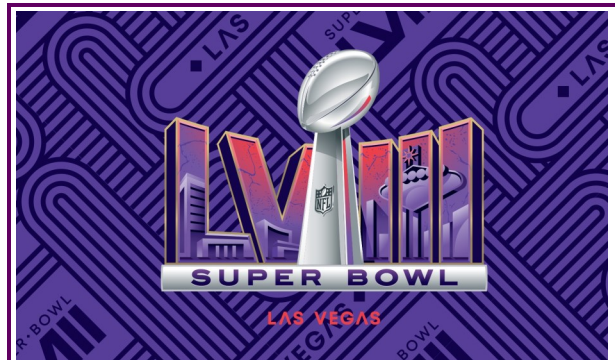
Come join us as we talk about what is going on in Israel.

We will explore the roots of the problem with a short history beginning with the Ottoman Empire and moving to the present day. We will examine the roots of the conflict and ponder why peace has been so elusive in this holiest of lands. We will explore how to answer our friends when they ask if this is the "end of times".

Most importantly, we will learn what God would have us do as we represent Christ on this issue.

Come join us, all are welcome!

Contact Jim Kampa with questions,
920-757-9551 or jrkampa44@gmail.com



Superbowl Party for the Entire Family!

Sunday, February 11th

Bring a snack and tailgate game or favorite board game to share!

Ping-Pong table, Bean Bag toss,
& Lemonade provided.

In the Nehemiah Center of MBC
4:30 PM until game ends.



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Can you believe February is upon us? Someone once said the older one gets, the faster time seems to go. I believe it.



Have you set your goals for the new year of 2024? I would encourage you to read through God's Word, the Bible, in one year. There are five day, six day, and seven day a week Bible reading plans. I'm using a five day per week plan this year. Each time I read through the Bible, I learn more important truths.

I also encourage you to set aside a time each day to pray. If you're married, pray with your wife daily. If children are in your home, pray as a family each day, too. You will be greatly encouraged and blessed if you set aside these times for prayer. It's a great tool to teach your children the importance of prayer and Bible reading.

Take time to be still and know that, "I am God;" as is found in Psalm 46:10. Make sure you're not so busy that you don't have time to be still and let God communicate with you. We pray to Him, but we also need to be still and let God speak to us through His Word.

Encourage your fellow believers by praying for and with them, and sharing truths from God's Word. It will help make 2024 a great year!

Dan Keen, Prayer Ministry Leader



It may look like not much happens with missions over the winter months, but

there is a lot going on behind the scenes! The Guatemala mission team is forming and details are being worked out. Missions ministry is exploring another One Meal food packing with Kids Around The World this spring. We are working on a visit this summer from one of our missionaries, who serves with his family in a closed country and is eager to meet the MBC folks who support them. We are considering a visit to Shepherds College in Union Grove for those interested in their ministry. We are also considering another couple possibilities for later this year. We don't plan things because any of us needs more to do, but because we are a body made up of people with different interests, abilities, and gifts designed to serve Christ. As Christians we work together to spread the Gospel and to make disciples. The Missions Ministry looks for various opportunities for you to invest in God's work however you are able. Those of us serving with the Missions Ministry feel very blessed to be part of a church that is so supportive of missions. If you might be interested in joining the Missions Ministry Team, speak to one of us (Rich Peach, Bernie Roidt, Bernadette Wong, or Crystal Zimmerman). We would welcome new ideas and talents. Most of all, remember to pray for the missionaries and missions we support. We all can pray!

Crystal Zimmerman, Missions Ministry Leader

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS is an exciting opportunity to share the love of Christ with others and see them grow! We are looking for a summer VBS Coordinator. If you enjoy working with children and coordinating a team of volunteers, please contact the church office by February 1st and let us know of your interest. Amanda Ohlrich (last year's VBS Coordinator) is able to come alongside you and help answer questions, offer suggestions and advice if wanted, and help in smaller bits.

Thank you for serving!

Library Bingo

Pick up your Bingo card from the Library. Read 3 boxes, one book per box. Books can be fiction or true. Turn in the filled out card to the Library by March 1st for your treat!

Library Reading Resources

Lent starts February 14th. Easter is soon upon us. Whether you will be practicing a lenten practice of fasting or not, this is a great time to start preparing our hearts for Easter; reflecting on our own sinfulness, God's grace towards us, and drawing closer to Him. "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Ps. 139:23-24)

The library has a list of books we have in stock for Lent, Passover, and Easter



HE IS NOT HERE. FOR HE IS RISEN.



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Next Steps at MBC

Next Steps are ways to learn more about and become involved at Monroe Bible Church. Sign up for all Next Steps classes on our website, contact the office, or use the Chromebook at the Welcome Center.



***Next Steps 1, 2, and 3 are required for membership at Monroe Bible Church**

Next Steps-Step 2 (2 sessions)

“Our Core Beliefs” - **Sunday, February 4th & 11th**
at 9:00 AM, lower level room #100.
Find out our core beliefs and biblical doctrines.

Next Steps-Step 3 (1 session)

“Our Commitments” - **Sunday, February 18th**
at 9:00 AM, lower level room #100.
Topics of eternal life, spiritual growth, baptism,
and church membership.

Elder & Deacon Recommendations

Our annual process for recommendation of Elders and Deacons is underway. If you would like to recommend someone as an Elder or Deacon, recommendations must be received in Pastor Dan’s mailbox (lower level workroom) by **Sunday, Feb. 25th**. Pick up a recommendation form at the Welcome Center.

AWANA Girls’ T & T Overnight

Church lock-in, all church in use.
Beginning Friday, February 2nd
at 5:00 PM and
ending Saturday, February 3rd
at 11:00 AM.

Contact Tessa Hurlbert (608-473-2939) with questions.
Permission slips are required!

Fusion Youth Group

Lydia Home

Fusion is going to serve at Lydia Home **Friday-Saturday, February 9th -10th**. Contact Pastor Troy for permission slips. Please keep this group in prayer.

Winter Retreat

Friday-Sunday, February 23rd-25th
Camp Living Waters in Westby, WI
Contact Pastor Troy (608-325-3966) for information and permission slips.



Thursday, February 15th
Noon-6:00 PM
Nehemiah Center

Sandwich and snack donations are always appreciated. Please drop them off at church labeled for the Blood Drive. Thank you!

JESUS' PRAYER IN THE GARDEN

Hebrews 10:36
For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

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Family Devotional

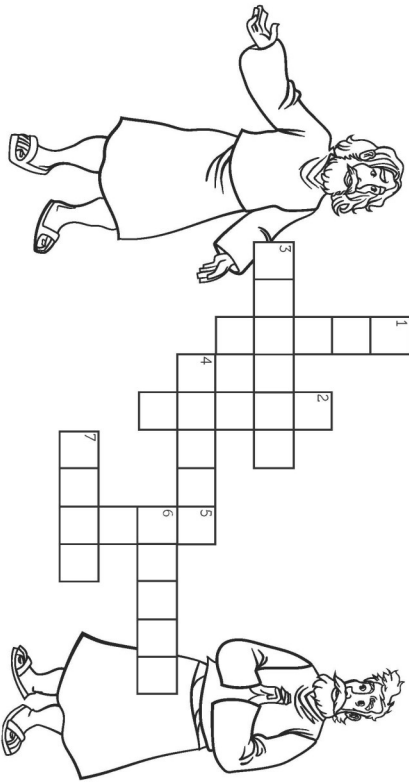


UNLOCK
CODE!

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- Across**
- Jesus took His disciples to the _____ of Gethsemane.
 - Jesus' betrayer, _____, arrived to turn Him over to the hands of sinners.
 - Jesus came back to find the disciples asleep under the _____ trees.
 - Jesus prayed that God's _____ would be done.
- Down**
- For a _____ time, Jesus went into the garden to pray.
 - _____ left the three disciples to walk farther into the garden to pray.
 - Jesus told Peter, James, and John that His _____ was sorrowful.

**JESUS'
PRAYER IN THE GARDEN**
Matthew 26:36-46