

Letter from the Pastor

February Sermon Series

Upcoming Events

Partnership Updates

Churchwide Game Night

Connection Luncheon



A Cloud by Day...

by: Pastor Brandon Lenhart

On the day the Tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered it. But from evening until morning the cloud over the Tabernacle looked like a pillar of fire. This was the regular pattern—at night the cloud that covered the Tabernacle had the appearance of fire. Whenever the cloud lifted from over the sacred tent, the people of Israel would break camp and follow it. And wherever the cloud settled, the people of Israel would set up camp. In this way, they traveled and camped at the LORD's command wherever he told them to go. Then they remained in their camp as long as the cloud stayed over the Tabernacle.
Numbers 9:15-18 (NLT)

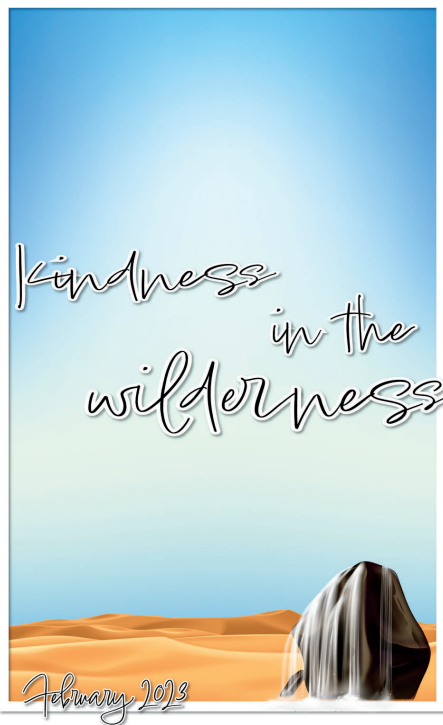
In this Old Testament passage from the book of Numbers, the Israelites are living under the judgment of GOD in the wilderness outside of the Promised Land because of their disbelief. GOD, who led the out of Egypt with might, power, and miracles, was rejected by His people as they grumbled and complained in the wilderness. Because they didn't believe GOD would be with them as they conquered the Promised Land, and because they believed that they would be devoured by its large inhabitants, GOD punished them by not allowing them to enter the land He promised to give them. So, for 40 years the land flowing with "milk and honey" would lay just out of reach.

However, it was in the wilderness that the Israelites had to learn to trust again. They had to learn what complete submission to GOD really meant. They had to come to a place of full surrender to GOD's will and ways to benefit from GOD's promises. Though they still wrestled against GOD, it was in the wilderness that they learned of the very nature of GOD's loving-kindness. Even though they failed Him time and time again, they would ultimately learn that He would never fail them.

This specific passage from Numbers 9 is a good example of the Israelites' learning to follow GOD wherever He led them. Notice how the presence of GOD (a cloud by day and fire by night) was what caused them to stay or move from a place. Like an infant learning to walk for the first time, the Israelites had to learn the heart of GOD, and their first lesson was in learning to follow. As they learned to follow GOD, they ultimately learned about the heart of GOD. They learned that wherever He led them, He would be with them. Though it didn't always look safe (and oftentimes wasn't) GOD's protection and provision over them and for them was proven time and time again. GOD not only proved to His people that He was trustworthy, but He also proved to them that He loved and cared for them by providing what they could not find in great supply in the wilderness (food and water).

Today, the GOD of the Israelites' wilderness wanderings in the book of Numbers is the very same GOD who walks with us through our wildernesses. His loving-kindness is readily available to anyone who would seek to follow Him. Though not by cloud or by fire, GOD still leads today through the power of His Holy Spirit for those who would listen and obey. And it all starts with "trust."

To follow GOD, we must first trust Him and believe in Jesus Christ, His Son. We must trust that Jesus died for our sins and that He took our punishment. We must trust that the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf was enough to lead us out of the wilderness of our own making and into the Promised Land of salvation and eternal life. We must learn to lean upon the truth of GOD's Word to direct and guide us as well as learn to commune with Him in prayer and praise. It's through these disciplines that we come to understand and learn the heart of GOD, and how good, loving, and kind He really is.



FEBRUARY SERMON SERIES

February 5th - Learning to Follow

Numbers 9:15-23

Key Point: "Following GOD in obedience is the first step in understanding His loving-kindness."

February 12th - Learning to Restrain

Numbers 20:1-13

Key Point: "Self-control is the discipline to follow GOD's commands rather than our personal impulses."

February 19th - Learning to Remember

Deuteronomy 8:1-20

Key Point: "Remembering GOD's hand throughout our past is the means by which we stay the course for our future."

February 26th - Learning to be Holy

Deuteronomy 18:9-14

Key Point: "True kindness isn't the absence of correction or instruction, it's the presence of all truth."

ELEMENTARY MINISTRY CHANGES

After much prayer and consideration, we are changing the format for our Jump Start Elementary Ministry for 1st-6th graders starting on Sunday, February 5th. Parents will check in as usual upon arrival, but kids will then go into the worship service with their families. They will be dismissed right before the sermon to meet their leaders in the hallway out the side doors to head up to Jump Start. After service, parents will still head upstairs to Jump Start with their security pick up tag to pick up their children.

WOMEN'S HIKE

Saturday, February 25th @ 9:30am

All women are welcome!

Join us on Saturday, February 25th at 9:30am, for a women's hike on a portion of the North County Trail (Shawood & Lake Arthur Trail) located at Moraine State Park - North Shore Exit. All women ages 18 and up are welcome! We will meet at the McDanel's Boat Launch parking lot near the Owllet Gift Shop. Be sure to dress for the weather & bring plenty of water & snacks. This is an easy to moderate out and back hike. Plan for at least a 2 hour hike. Feel free to ask Melissa Hickman or Beth Marino if you have questions and to RSVP. The park allows dogs but they must remain on a leash.

GROUPS OF KINDNESS

Every year North Main focuses on one of the spiritual fruits, and 2023 is the year of "kindness." As we head into the new year, I would like to share with you a list of vetted and approved studies which focus on "kindness" and align with the beliefs of the Church of God. If you are part of a group or class and looking for material please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have.

With kindness,

Christy Pittman

christyp@northmaincog.org

SUNDAY AM GROUPS

We have new groups starting!

We have a series of four Discovery Classes that we would love everyone who considers North Main their church home to attend. Check out more details at

northmaincog.org/discover

Discover North Main (Class 1 of 4)

6 weeks - Starting 2/5 @ 9am in LC 2

Discover Your GO (Class 4 of 4)

6 weeks - Starting 3/5 @ 9am in LC 3

Sermon Bible Study

4 weeks - Starting 2/5 @ 9am in LC 3



Scan the QR code or visit

northmaincog.org/groups

for our current classes & groups

MEALS ON WHEELS

Every February North Main collects desserts to take to Butler Meals on Wheels. We would love to have you bring in some desserts and baked goods to help those in Butler receiving these meals. Please have your items in disposable containers, labeled, & ready to freeze.

No icing, nuts, or cream pies.

- Cookies
- Cupcakes
- Fruit pies
- Brownies
- Muffins
- Sweet breads

Please bring your baked goods to the church kitchen
on Sunday, February 26th.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

The process of educating, resourcing, and encouraging believers toward missional living with established ministry partners can be found in the New Testament in Matthew 25:35-36.

North Main Street Church of God fleshes this command out in several ways, one of which is with our Community Partners. We focus our efforts on partners who have established relationships instead of attempting to reinvent the wheel, so to speak. These partners in the Butler and the surrounding areas are working with excellence to share and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ and we are honored to be a part of the work they are doing in our very own "Jerusalem." These are the community partnerships with which we currently connect and the highlight for this month:



Fishbone Ministries



Serving dinner and Christ-centered activities every Tuesday and Thursday evening to children from pre-K through teens and their families on The Island, the Bowers have built a ministry that is intended to build relationships with the people in the community. Fishbone meets the physical as well as the spiritual need of the community. If you are interested in serving Fishbone and the community they reach, contact them at:

fishboneministries.org/get-involved



GLOBAL CONNECTIONS: GUATEMALA TRIP UPDATE

Our Global Connections Team put together a missions trip to Catalyst Resources International (CRI) in January. Fontaine & Paula Greene at CRI are missionaries that we support as a congregation. Guatemala is a country where it is estimated that almost 60% of the population earns less than \$10 a day and 50% earn less than \$5 a day. The ministry of CRI serves the people of Guatemala in many ways including 2 Orphanages, building homes, adding bathrooms to homes, providing cooking stoves, food distribution, and reaching out through teaching opportunities to name a few.

During the trip, our team of 17 from North Main visited both orphanages, painted 2 houses, provided eye tests, and gave eyeglasses to 15 people. We also packed bags of food that would provide 520 meals to a family of 4, built a house for a family with an outdoor cooking area, and had a "VBS" with over 200 kids in a local village for a day where we passed out small toys and quarters to those who attended.

We saw God work in so many ways and would love to be able to give everyone the opportunity to witness this type of ministry firsthand.



North Main Street Church of God
1201 North Main Street Ext
Butler, PA 16001-1537



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CHURCHWIDE GAME NIGHT
OPEN TO ALL

GAME NIGHT

Friday, February 17th @6:30pm
North Main Life Center

You're invited to join us for a churchwide game night! We'll have some games available, but please feel free to bring your favorites along with any drinks and or snacks to share. Open to all ages!

North Main exists to:
Develop completely committed
followers of Christ who..

KNOW Christ intimately
GROW in Christ continually
GO for Christ daily



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info@northmaincog.org



Mon-Thu 9am-4pm

Sunday Connection Luncheon



FEBRUARY 5TH • 12:00 NOON



ON THE MENU:

Shepherd's Pie, Salad, Dinner Rolls,
Ice Cream Sundae Bar and Drinks.

**Invite a friend to join you, anyone new to
North Main eats for free!**

Cost: \$6/adult \$4/child and a max of \$20/household