



Jonah 1:1-3 NLT

The Lord gave this message to Jonah son of Amittai: “Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce my judgment against it because I have seen how wicked its people are.”

But Jonah got up and went in the *opposite* direction to *get away* from the Lord. He went down to the port of Joppa, where he found a ship leaving for Tarshish. He bought a ticket and went on board, hoping to escape from the Lord by sailing to Tarshish.

Jonah was God's prophet. He was assigned—by God—to warn the Ninevites of God's judgment so they could repent and then receive His love and mercy. The problem was that Jonah *didn't* want to do it. Specifically, he *hated* the Assyrians and the wicked things they did...the wicked things they did to his own people. So he decided to *forsake* his mission. He decided to go the opposite direction instead...

My Study Bible titled this portion of scripture “Jonah Forsakes His Mission,” and that title caught my attention. When Jonah *didn't* do what God asked him to, he was *forsaking* his mission. *Knowing* what he was supposed to do—and then choosing *not* to do it—he was *disobeying* the Lord...

This is the same for us today, folks...

In addition to the mission we each have (to obey and live for the Lord), we on the Pastoral Search Committee have been given a specific mission: we have been appointed to the task of finding the next shepherd the Lord has for our body (and we have been obeying from the start!). Over the last five months we have been faithfully meeting together, researching, working, searching, and praying behind the scenes. Over the last five months we have prayerfully considered *MANY* potential pastoral candidates. When a potential candidate ends up *not* being the one, we are disappointed, but we are *not crushed*; we know God's shepherd for us is 1) out there, 2) he's on the way, 3) he's being prepared for his call here, and 4) we know the Lord is preparing our body (and carrying our body!) as we wait for his arrival!

We on the committee pray for you, beloved! We pray God gives you patience and endurance and spiritual growth in this time of transition. We also pray that the Lord unifies our body and that He draws us together (in love, in caring for each other, in serving together) like never before! Moreover, we pray the Lord makes us *all* increasingly faithful to His missions for us...whatever they may be! As for the Pastoral Search Committee, we ask that you keep us covered in prayer as well, beloved—we desire to *continue* to be faithful to the task assigned us—that of finding the one called to shepherd First Baptist Church of Newman!

*In His Name,
The Pastoral Search Committee*

MISSION 2018—TRIP SELECTION STEPS REMAINING

1. MISSION COMMITTEE PLANNING MEETING OF 7-2-17

Approval of a composite rubric for committee use in selecting top three choices by unanimous vote to go to elders (ACTION)

Objective strengths and weaknesses of the 11 trips (INFORMATION)

Setting of special planning meeting date (ACTION)

Direction to Paul to set up meeting with elders (ACTION)

2. INTENSE STUDY & PRAYER BY MEMBERS IN COMPLETING COMPOSITE RUBRIC BEFORE SPECIAL PLANNING MEETING OF JULY _____

3. SPECIAL PLANNING MEETING OF JULY _____

Determination by committee of top 3 choices (ACTION)

Notification of date & time to meet with elders (INFORMATION)

Selection of presenters for meeting with elders (ACTION)

4. MEETING WITH ELDERS OF JULY _____

Selection of top 2 choices (ACTION)

Voting method for congregation on options (ACTION)

5. QUARTERLY CHURCH FAMILY MEETING OF _____

Presentation of two options and vote by congregation (ACTION)



A new business item for our August planning meeting will be the process and eligibility for applying for the trip, and the possible establishment of trip dates if not already fixed.

Shanika & Sherika and the Notebooks—A Shoe Box Story

We grew up in rural Jamaica sharing most things, not because we're twins but because it was a necessity for our family to make ends meet.

Our parents had us in their late teens. They couldn't afford an ultrasound, so having twins was unexpected. Our mom and dad had to stop attending college in order to provide for us. They worked hard—our mom at home and our dad in sugar cane fields.

Both Christians, our parents had faith that the Lord Jesus would provide for our needs. Every morning, they gathered us together for devotions.

To enable both of us to have something to write on at school, our father cut an 8- by 9-inch notebook in half. He also broke a pencil in two and sharpened the lead with a knife because we didn't have a pencil sharpener.

We wished we could have full-sized notebooks and pencils like some of our peers. Our wish came true at age 8 when we heard shriek after shriek of delight in the halls of our school.

Large cardboard boxes with a shoebox plane printed on them were delivered to each classroom. We were so excited about these huge brown boxes and were curious to see what was inside. We rejoiced when we learned that they contained shoebox gifts for us. One of us received two full-sized notebooks! We shared what was in our shoeboxes so we would each have one. We also received our first calculator—a small, gray one we still love to use.

“We knew that Good Samaritans had sent us these gifts.”

We received a pair of woolen mittens. We didn’t need them for warmth, since we lived in the Caribbean, but we put them to good use as pot holders. Our parents still have them at home in Jamaica. We were glad to receive a game of jacks since previously we used stones or the balls from roll-on deodorant to play the game. We also each received pencils and pencil sharpeners, as well as crayons, coloring books, and personal care items, such as combs, toothbrushes, washcloths, and soap.

One of our younger brothers also received a shoebox gift. He still has the flashlight he received in his box.

At first, we wondered who we knew that would send us these gifts. We had learned the story of the Good Samaritan in Sunday School. So, when we saw Samaritan’s Purse printed on the tape that held the shoebox closed, we knew that Good Samaritans had sent us these gifts. Through the shoebox gifts, we learned that you don’t have to be close neighbors in order to help each other. These gifts came from strangers. The boxes of gifts ultimately reflected the goodness of Christ, showing us that the Lord graciously provides for us. We felt God’s love for us as we received them.

Earlier that same year, we both made professions of faith in Jesus Christ during an evangelistic crusade. We each stepped forward that night to dedicate our lives to Him.

The shoebox gifts and The Greatest Gift Gospel booklet that we received along with them helped us as new Christians to continue to grow in our faith. We read the booklet in Sunday School and together as a family before we went to bed. The lessons, which we read over and over, were such a blessing and comfort to us.

Our parents instilled in us how important it is to study the Bible and pray together. We talked and prayed through any issues that came up, seeing how God works through situations. We sisters still have morning devotions together.

Our parents are so proud that both of us graduated last year with business administration master’s degrees from Liberty University, a Christian college in Virginia. Our mom went back to school to earn a teaching diploma and our dad has certifications in food service, hospitality, and nutrition.

It wasn’t until we saw an Operation Christmas Child video at our church in Virginia that we realized those were the gifts we received. We knew that logo—the shoebox plane. And there was that word again—Samaritan. We raised our arms in joy and praise. We exclaimed: “We’re shoebox recipients!” We stood and shared our stories right then.

“The boxes of gifts reflected the goodness of Christ.”

It meant so much to us to learn the background of how our boxes were sent—through churches! It also was moving to see how much church members appreciated



hearing us talk about the lasting influence the gifts had on our Christian walk. Then, we saw the shoebox logo again on our college campus. They pack shoeboxes there, too! That's when we knew we had to keep sharing our story, so the message of how God is working keeps spreading.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY SAMARITAN'S PURSE & YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE

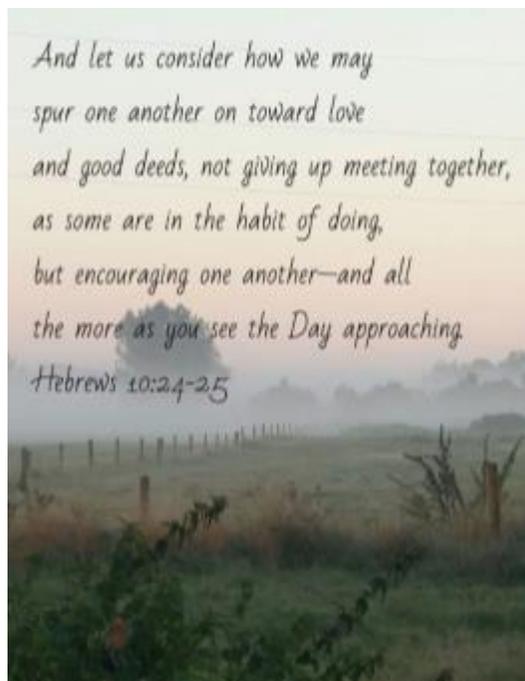
JULY IS "CLOTHING MONTH" FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Let's fill the box in the foyer as many times as we can this July!!



So bring in your new clothing items including socks, shoes, shirts, shorts, pants, dresses and underwear for kids from Age 2-14.



*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Hebrews 10:24-25*

How many of us have used the phrase "oh, I'm just waiting on the Lord...." It seems like a very grown up, mature Christian thing to say, but are we actually hiding behind it, or using it as an excuse to be inactive? I was reminded through a recent Bible study, that God of course wants us to wait on His timing and His actions, but that doesn't mean we wait in bed with the blankets over our head until He drags us out, or tosses us out that "open door" we were waiting for. We have to move!!! A mentor and friend said it best "God can't steer a parked car!! You have to turn on the ignition and start driving!!

You might not know where you're going, but God does! Our church is in a waiting period now. Waiting on God's timing and His actions. But we as the church cannot sit idly by while we are waiting! Keep on praying (Matthew 7:7). Keep on Serving (Romans 12:11) Keep on worshipping and going to Bible Study (Hebrews 10:25). Keep on BELIEVING (2 Timothy 3:14)!!! I encourage you to look those versus up and be moved by the Spirit to continue to act. Doing these things help us develop the skills and habits we need to be more like Jesus....STAY ACTIVE!!

Jennifer Lane