

# Riverside Current

May/June  
2016

News From Riverside Alliance Church, Akron, OH

*As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross.*

— Ezekiel 47:3-5

**When I was a child, I remember having a fear of water that was over my head. I would do everything in my power to avoid going even near water that seemed like it was deep. As I grew, I learned how to swim. Today, when I go swimming, I do everything I can to avoid the shallow water, because I now know the freedom and joy that comes from being in the deep.**

**This year, God has called us to be people like Ezekiel – who don't settle for where we have already been, or to simply wade in the shallow waters of our faith. We are called to be people of the river, who dive deeper in our walk with Him. The question is, are we willing to be that kind of people, that kind of church?**

**To dive deeper means that we must be willing to let go of having control in all situations. It means we must be willing to go places with the Lord where we have not been open to going previously. It means we have to trust that when He says the waters are safe, that He means it. It also means that when He calls us to go to that deeper place, we are willing to dive there immediately – remember, delayed obedience is disobedience!**

**What does it look like to dive deeper? It could mean a renewed commitment to daily prayer or bible study. It could mean an openness to new things in your worship experience. It might mean taking a step of faith and making yourself available to a small group or an accountability relationship. Perhaps it means a new willingness to serve in some capacity at church. It could mean taking a fresh look at who the Lord might be calling you to minister to: a friend, neighbor, co-worker, classmate, or family member.**

**The question is not really *if* God is calling us to deeper waters – as long as we have breath in our lungs, there is something new and wonderful that He has in store for us – the question really is how willing are we each going to be to go to those places as we are called to embrace becoming people of the river?**

**Don't delay! If you sense the Lord calling you to deeper waters today, dive in! He will not call you to deeper waters and leave you there to struggle on your own.**

**Let's be a church that goes to those deeper places. Then, let's get ready to see the amazing things that God has in store for us as we are faithful to go there.**

Serving & Swimming With You,



Pastor Jim Souza  
jim@riversidecma.com

## **The Value of Worship** By Greg Laurie

***So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. — Acts 2:46-47***

Just as something wonderful happens when God's people get together and study His Word, something extraordinary happens when God's people get together and sing His praises. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Now this verse is not saying that God only shows up when people worship, because God is omnipresent. But He manifests His presence in a special way when His people lift up His name in praise and worship.

The early church was a worshipping church. Acts 2:46–47 tells us, "They ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." The phrase "gladness and simplicity of heart" literally means "with unaffected joy." There was joy in the early church. There was vibrancy. But there also was reverence. A few verses earlier, we read that fear came upon every soul, and wonders and signs were done through the apostles (verse 43). There should be joy and reverence. Those are elements that should be in our worship. The Spirit-filled church will be a worshipping church, and the Spirit-filled Christian will be a worshipping Christian.

Someone might say, "Well, I just don't always feel like worshipping." Do you think the first-century believers always felt like praising God? They were harassed. They were beaten. They were mocked. These Christians faced persecution on a massive scale, but they were thankful to God.

The Bible doesn't say, "Give thanks to the Lord when you feel good." Rather, it says, "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!" (1 Chronicles 16:34). That is how Job was able to worship God after calamity came knocking at his door (see Job 1:20).

Sometimes worship can be a sacrifice. But we should still worship.



### ***Ephesians 2:10***

***“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”***

When we met this past December at our annual Christmas brunch, we talked about who God is calling us to be as the women of Riverside. I shared with you three key areas I felt the Lord was calling us to focus on. First, being women of sincere faith. This means we begin to peel back some of the layers and focus on real and honest relationships with each other. It means asking the tougher and deeper questions, and being willing to answer them ourselves. This means asking for help or coming alongside a sister in need. Second, we are to be women who live unhindered lives. We need to take the time with our Lord to ask Him what areas of our lives have been held back from His purposes. These hindrances might be things like busyness or areas of insecurity, feelings of inadequacy or misplaced priorities. Third, we are to be women who take our place in God's Kingdom plan. Remember the puzzle pieces? As the scripture above in Ephesians says, each one of us is a masterpiece of God. Each one of us has specific good works that God has chosen and called us to. We are part of the bigger picture of the body of Christ, and we are each uniquely designed to fit perfectly as the piece God designed us each to be. I encourage you to take some time this week and pray through each area. Are you finding deeper fellowship with other sisters in the Lord and sharing more than just the surface level things in your life? Are there things the Lord needs to reveal to you that have been holding you back from being all God has designed you to be? Are you walking out who you are as a masterpiece of God, and have you found your place, your calling, and your purpose? May we continue to seek the Lord in these areas as we embrace who we are as women placed for a purpose!

– Dawn Souza

# CCO/College Ministry

When I reflect on this last semester, I am humbled to be part of God's work at the University of Akron and with college students. This has been an exciting semester and we have seen God add to the kingdom.

It started off with a very busy first three weeks right after Christmas where I had the opportunity to travel to Austin Texas with a group of students to go to a conference called Vision. While there we explored the idea of Jesus as the Messiah together. Following that I was able to meet with my friends from the CCO for a week in Pittsburg PA, for training. Immediately after that I left to spend the next week in Haiti with a group of students from the University.

All of those trips seemed to be a springboard for the semester. Much of the fruit that we have seen in the ministry has actually come as a result of relationships built on these trips. I am beginning to see how important it is to have off campus transformative opportunities and am excited to begin planning more in the future for students.

As I am winding down on the first year of being on campus, I am beginning to see more and more of a vision for what our college ministry might look like. I am excited to spend the summer months brainstorming and continuing to see what God might have us start to do in the fall semester.

Would you partner with us in prayer for a few items? Be praying that God will raise up student leaders who would labor for the kingdom beside me, that God would continue to give me vision for the ministry, and continue to open up doors for meaningful relationships with students.



The Alliance Men have been studying what it takes to become a leader. The material we are using comes from Dr. Myles Monroe and his philosophy matches very well with the path Nehemiah took to become the leader in Jerusalem and rebuilding the wall of the city. The main points are:

- \* Trapped in every follower is a hidden leader.
- \* Every human was created to lead and is designed for dominion. Just not over people.
- \* Leadership potential resides in every individual.
- \* You were born to lead but you must become a leader.
- \* True leadership is self-manifestation.
- \* The Purpose for true leadership is the production of leaders.

Here is one of Dr. Monroe's quotes:

"The difference between managers and leaders can be expressed in the saying, "There are four types of people in the world: those who watch things happen, those who let things happen, those who ask what just happened, and those who make things happen.""

He points out that people have different perspectives when things happen. I believe as Christian men, we should strive to be in the last category, making things happen and not watching, letting, or wondering what is going on around us.

As the Alliance Men move forward, we will be using these ideas and backing it up with scripture to see how this leadership looks in the home, on the job, and in the church.

Join us Saturday mornings at 10 am in the Youth Room. We meet every other week. See Bruce Martin for more info.

## The Elders Corner

### Shepherding God's People Like Christ

Our elders meetings have been spiritually challenging and enriching. We have made it a priority to share with each other what the Lord is doing in each of our lives, and praying for each other's needs. In addition our meetings have included a discussion of Jeramie Rinne's book, *Church Elders: How to Shepherd God's people Like Jesus*.

In chapter 2 Rinne states, "elders are under-shepherds who serve the Good Shepherd by leading his sheep." As elders we seek to partner together with Pastor Souza and Pastor Goon to provide spiritual leadership as pastors, teachers, and shepherds.

What does shepherding entail? We believe it changes our ministry emphasis in two major ways. First as shepherds we plan to seek ways to further engage in relationships and invest more time with church members. Secondly, as we continue to grow in Christ, we wish to lead church members into Christian maturity. Being an elder is a lesson in complete sacrifice, humility, and obedience. It is only from this position that decisive moves in the name of Jesus can be made.

We are committed to pursuing his will for our lives, our marriages, our families and our work. We believe that for spiritual revival to take place in and through Riverside it must begin in each of our hearts first.

May we all encourage one another to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which we have been called." (Eph. 4:4:1)



# Youth!

## GROWING TOGETHER

As we look ahead to the spring and summer months, I am reminded of growth, in nature and in the lives of the students. Recently, we have been looking at how the youth fit in at Riverside and what role they play. Do they see their role as being vital to the church? We are working on being a group that shows God's love to all who enter, and to those outside our walls as well.

### Scheduled activities

April 30 - Youth work day and laser tag

Meet at church at 10 with a lunch, do some work, and spend your \$15 on 2 games of laser tag. We will come back to church and play games. Supper is provided. Pick up at 6:00

May 1 - Pete from DR will be speaking to youth during Sunday School

Please be in pray for our youth as they prepare for LIFE 2016. Pray that hearts will be open to hear what God is calling them to do, final preparations for travel, and for those planning and working on LIFE at the national level.



We have a lot of exciting things coming this spring/summer in the Children's department. In April we had a fishing party. Please keep the following dates handy on your calendar and watch for more information to come home with your child. All children K-5 grades are invited. Please invite your neighbors and friends.

May 15<sup>th</sup> Scavenger Hunt and Game Party right after church until 2:00 pm

June 11<sup>th</sup> Summer Foot Party 2pm - 4pm

Wet and Wacky Wednesday at Beulah Beach June 29<sup>th</sup> ages 8-12 cost \$22 10:30 - 5:30

Please see Sherry Basinger or Vonda Dunn if interested for more information and so we can make plans for transportation and chaperones.

We are planning on some special summer programs. Watch for details about changes to our Junior Church Summer program detail to come out soon.

Please be praying for our Vacation Bible School July 18<sup>th</sup> - July 22<sup>nd</sup>. If we have not contacted you to help and you would like to help in any area please see Sherry Basinger or Molly Gladwell. Our theme this year is Jesus to the Rescue. We can use everyone's help big or small. Please pray as we plan and prepare to tell children about Jesus!

# *Keenagers!*

Our Seniors group (55+) meet together for luncheons, special entertainment and outings throughout the year. Coming up May 12 at noon we will go to West Hill Baptist church to hear the "Grannies". Sign up in the narthex soon! See Fred or Barb Ayers for more information.



**May Birthdays & Anniversaries**

- 1 Steve Tomcsik
- 2 Owen White  
Scott Rochford
- 5 Fred Ayers
- 6 Maryanne Dunn  
Renee Bergevin
- 8 John Miller
- 10 Barb Ayers
- 12 Kim Warren
- 14 Bruce Martin
- 15 Kristin Bisheimer
- 17 \*Daryl & Lisa Nichols
- 18 \*Mike & Tammy Fitts
- 19 Alicia Nichols
- 20 Alexis Nichols
- 21 \*Jeff & Sherry Basinger
- 22 \*Jim & Dawn Souza  
Helen Jakob  
Justin Miller
- 26 \*Steve & Molly Gladwell
- 28 Joy Manda

**June Birthdays & Anniversaries**

- 2 Alene Rayl  
Chris Wiest
- 5 \*Jerry & Ann Bisheimer
- 6 Aryn Shaub
- 7 Kathleen Jackson
- 8 Josiah Bergevin
- 12 Abbey Dunn  
Marilyn Mays  
Tina Westover
- 16 Donna Osborne
- 18 Jerry Basinger
- 20 Eleanor Rogers
- 22 Jeff Basinger Jr.  
Laura Synder
- 24 \*Jeremy & Renee Bergevin
- 25 Lincoln Gladwell
- 29 \*Chuck & Gloria Beal  
Paul Runner

# Vacation Bible School!

It's time to start thinking about VBS. VBS planning can be a stressful thing, but it doesn't have to be. I think we can have a great program if we all do a small part and not leave one or two people with a huge task. We are including a list of the different categories, if you will, in which we would like to have volunteers take charge.

- \*Crafts and snacks - Kelli Miller leader
- \*Registration and inviting ideas.
- \*Offering contest
- \*Skits- Sharon Farrell leader
- \*Music
- \*Skit sets and stage design
- \*Games
- \*Class leaders
- \*Donations coordinator
- \*Parents' cafe
- \*Parade (possible advertising option)
- \*Memory verse and points coordinator.



By working together we are certain that we can reach many kids for Christ. If you or even you and a friend have any gifting or interest in any of these areas please feel free to get in touch with, Sherry Basinger 330-958-2296 or Molly Gladwell 330-599-9096.

**Current & Coming Events**

- May 12 Keenagers to West Hill Baptist "Grannies"
- May 21 Arts & Craft Show
- May 22 Great Commission Sunday
- June 5 Graduate Recognition  
Special Speaker, Andrew Berry  
(Pavilion Day following service)
- June 18 Tidal Wave @ Beulah Beach
- June 29 Wet & Wacky Wednesday
- July 2 Outdoor Service @ Pavilion Day

**UNIQUE TREASURERS**  
**MARKET**

Art, Crafts, Up-cycled Goods,  
Collectibles, Flea Market items

**SATURDAY, MAY 21**  
**9:00 AM – 4:00 PM**  
**See Jana Demchak for**  
**more information.**

You are invited to join us on Thursday, May 5, 12:00pm for a time of prayer for our nation.



Pray for Federal, State & Local Government, Military, Media, Business, Education, Church & Family.