



# THE LINK

LINKING GOD AND HIS PEOPLE, EACH TO THE  
OTHER, TO CHRIST JESUS OUR SAVIOR AND LORD

## PASTOR'S NOTES

PASTOR JAMES W. CARLSON

My precious sheep:

I ran cross-country and track in high school. I was a runner. I was pretty good. I remember the ending to one particular race on the track. It was the 3,200. That is two miles (8x around the track). I was on the last leg of the race. It was a close ending! I was in the lead; but there was another guy not far behind me, who was gaining as we neared the finish line. I started to look over my shoulder. But that slowed me down. He was getting closer. The crowd was excited. I focused intently on the finish line ahead of me, and I won the race. It was exhilarating!

Running a race is one of the metaphors for the Christian life in the Bible. Too often we get slowed down because we look back. We are overcome with regrets. Mistakes. Sins. We believe (in theory) that God forgives, but I think we have a hard time forgiving ourselves. Do you have regrets from 2021? Do you look back and wish you hadn't sinned this way or that way? I want to share a paragraph of Scripture to encourage you not to look back with regrets on 2021 (or any other year prior) but to focus on 2022 ahead.

The Scripture is **Philippians 3:12-14**. Paul the Apostle begins in **Philippians 3:12** by saying, "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me." In context, Paul is speaking of his own spiritual growth and maturity. He acknowledges that he's not there yet; he acknowledges that he's not perfect. Sometimes we excuse our sin by saying, "Nobody's perfect." That's not what Paul means. He's simply acknowledging in humility that there's always room for more growth.

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### THE MISSION OF CCC:

"WORSHIPING GOD, GROWING,  
SPIRITUALLY, SERVING OTHERS,  
INVITING FRIENDS"

**\*\*The Church is open for Worship Service  
on Sunday Morning at 11 AM .  
Also please check out our Facebook page to  
watch the worship service live  
11 AM on Sunday.**

### GUEST WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS

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Notice carefully his motivation for growth according to this verse. It's not guilt. It's not shame. Paul of all people could have been paralyzed by these emotions – because he literally killed Christians! He says, "I press on to TAKE HOLD of that for which Christ Jesus TOOK HOLD of me." Jesus is already at the finish line. He's waiting for us there. And He has a hold of us, and He will never let go! Jesus Himself says in **John 10:28**, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and NO ONE WILL SNATCH THEM OUT OF MY HAND." His grip on us is tight.

Next, in **Philippians 3:13** Paul writes, "Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead." Paul says: ONE thing I do. That's an important phrase in the Bible. To the anxious and worried Martha Jesus said, "ONE thing is necessary" (**Luke 10:42**). In **Psalms 27:4** David writes, "ONE thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple." Our problem is we want "many things" when the secret to progress is to focus on the "one thing." We should devote ourselves to running the Christian race. No athlete succeeds by doing everything; they succeed by specializing in their sport. The winners are those who concentrate, keep their eyes on the goal, and let nothing distract them. They are devoted entirely to their calling. And they don't look back.



*"The LORD is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?*

*The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1*

Imagine if a runner on a track constantly kept looking back. What would happen? They might trip or fall. And that's what happens to us when we dwell on our past sins. We get tripped up and we don't make progress. We all have regrets. But what Paul is saying is: Don't let the past define you. Instead, we are encouraged to be "forgetting what lies behind." That doesn't mean we are able to completely erase all our bad memories. That's impossible. "To forget" in the Bible means: "to be no longer influenced by or affected by." It means we break the power of the past by living for the future.

Lastly, Paul writes in **Philippians 3:14**, "I PRESS ON toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Twice in this passage Paul says, "I press on," meaning, "I'm not where I want to be, but I'm going to keep moving in that direction." Direction makes all the difference. We Christians are not in heaven yet, but we aim our steps in that direction. And we are determined. The Greek word for "press on" has the idea of intense endeavor. In our spiritual life we are as determined as an athlete who desires to win their event. Wouldn't it be wonderful if some Christians put as much determination into their spiritual life as they do golfing, fishing, or bowling? Following Jesus Christ is not a hobby—like collecting stamps or comic books. It demands a total commitment of life!

We CAN make progress. Don't be fooled into believing we can't. Don't dwell on the past. God has forgiven you in Christ. I know it's harder to forgive yourself. But just think of all the good you could do for God and others if you would just forgive yourself. You HAVE a future. Heaven is the finish line. Jesus is waiting there for you. He's cheering you on (along with the cloud of witnesses from **Hebrews 11**). Let's make Him proud in 2022. Let us press onward Christian soldiers!  
Grace and Peace, Pastor James



## LOVE'S GIFT

I see life's worn silver threads appearing  
Midst the golden tresses flowing from your brow  
Bringing reminiscent thoughts afront my mind  
With your arms drawn around my shoulders  
Drawing me close to your beating heart  
Restoring strength and courage to my lagging spirit  
Then with an exuberant smile accepting my acknowledgment  
For the good life working together and what it means  
Of our children growing up and entering the world  
You who bore life's primal burden with love  
When we were two young people seeking companionship  
You filled the vacuum of my loneliness  
This in essence is the story of emerging humanity  
This is an expression of a lifetime's eternal quest

*By Edward S. Murphy*

## The Miracle of the Snowflake

God's artistry  
falling from the sky,  
Water vapor condensing,  
crystallizing into ice;  
each one intricately patterned  
as one- of- a-kind.  
Each designed  
and created  
by God's own hand.  
Each one unique and special  
just like God made you and me.  
Elaborate, dancing ice crystals  
light as a feather,  
beautiful, swirling, complex,  
Breathaking to behold,  
-like touching the Face of God...

written by, Dianne Ingle



# HIS GATHERING PLACE CAFÉ

## BIRTHDAYS

- Jan. 2nd: Kaylin Davis
- Jan. 3rd: Mary Maynard
- Jan. 8th: Marci DeGroot
- Jan. 18th: Maureen Umbriaco
- Jan. 18th: Geri Poling
- Jan. 18th: Dorinda Carey
- Jan. 23rd: Brydon Stanley
- Jan. 27th: Bill Storing
- Jan. 27th: Traudy Sanborn
- Jan. 28th: Molly Moulton
- Jan. 31st: Wayne King

## CLASSES & STUDIES

### Classes/Groups for Fall:

#### SMALL GROUPS – in person & online

- 1) A Women's group led by Shari Boehmer - is on **Discipleship Curriculum by The Navigators** – FH - Tuesday at 7pm.  
All are welcome!
- 2) A men's group led by Chris Morin, "**Growing Strong in God's Family** by The Navigators" on Thursdays at 7pm in the church cafe.
- 3) Women's Bible Study on **Messages of the Gospels** -FH  
Wednesday 10 AM led by Pat Baker
- 4) A study through the book of **Ezekiel** on Wednesday's at 7pm.  
A group for everyone led by Pastor James  
(jamescarlsonsr@gmail.com).

***\*This class is facilitated via the church's Facebook Page.***

#### Directions:

When you sign up to be part of a group, you will email the group leader. Then, they will send you an email inviting you to join their small group. This email will include a link that you press on and, voila- you can join. It will ask you to run the program on your computer, and after a couple clicks, you'll be in the chat room. If you have questions about how to use this, contact your group leader or Pastor James (626-476-5543) or the church office (801-825-1115).

# HIS GATHERING PLACE CAFÉ

## MINISTRY NEWS

### Rocky Mountain Care Center Ministry

Please Come join us every Friday at 10:30 AM for a half hour of song and a message from the speaker that day with patients. Any questions you may contact Eileen or Dennis Richards 801/825-3471. January 7th -Pastor James Carlson, January 14th - Lee Oswalt, January 21st - Dennis Richards, January 28th -Alice Cipollini

### \*\*\*MARTHA CIRCLE NEWS\*\*\*

**ATTENTION LADIES: WELCOME BACK! MARTHA CIRCLE IS STARTING BACK UP! MARTHA CIRCLE MEETING AND POTLUCK WILL BE ON FRIDAY JAN. 14TH 2021 AT 11:30 AM IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. WE ALWAYS HAVE A GREAT TIME AND HAVE A WONDERFUL BUNCH OF LADIES THAT ATTEND. ALL LADIES OF THE CHURCH OR FRIENDS OR FIRST TIMERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO JOIN US. WE HAVE A SHORT MEETING ALONG WITH DEVOTIONS, WONDERFUL FOOD AND SOCIALIZING. DON'T WORRY IF YOU DON'T COOK – SOMETHING “STORE BOUGHT” IS PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE. PLEASE COME JOIN US. REGULAR MEETINGS WILL BE ON THE 3RD FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 11:30. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

### FISH 'N LOAVES

**THE PANTRY NEEDS ARE: TOILET TISSUE, BATH SOAP, JAM AND HAMBURGER HELPER. OUR SHELVES ARE FILLED WITH ALL OTHER ITEMS. HOPE YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON WAS FILLED WITH JOY AND PEACE WITH LOVE & KINDNESS! SARAH L. VOIGT**



**WE ARE COLLECTING DONATIONS OF NEW BLANKETS TO BE GIVEN TO THE HOMELESS IN OGDEN FOR A MEN'S MINISTRY PROJECT IN JANUARY 2022. THERE WILL BE A TOTE IN THE LOBBY FOR YOUR DONATIONS. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT.**



# HIS GATHERING PLACE CAFÉ

## PRAYER CONCERNS

January 2022

Ronald Branham, Kevin Branham, Sue Carlson,  
Kaylin Terry, Kathy Knighton, Eric Palmer, Lynn McCarthy, Pat  
Call, Linda Manning, Jamie Richards, Stuart Simmons,  
Jean Varner, Bob Roberts, Matt Tobey, Travis Jeffery, Barrett  
Wellington, Ervin Herdt, Marte Hazelwood, Dennis & Naomi  
DeGroot, Marilyn Simon, Angelika Bertrand, Traudy Sandborn,  
Jean Moneymaker, Tonya Brandler,  
Audrey Otrumbar, Bob Schellhase, Pat Zabel, Joe Umbriaco,  
Jackie Ross, Andrew Milito, Robert & Doris Stott  
Mel Enders, Kristin Taylor

"Rejoice  
always, pray  
without  
ceasing, give  
thanks in all  
circumstances;  
for this is the  
will of God in  
Christ Jesus for  
you."

1 Thess 5:16-18

**WE STARTED A PRAYER MEETING ON SUNDAY MORNING AT THE CHURCH (9AM - ROOM #10). WE ARE FOCUSING ON THE FOLLOWING THREE PRAYER REQUESTS. WE ARE ASKING THAT YOU FOCUS ON THESE PRAYER REQUESTS EACH WEEK THROUGHOUT THIS MONTH OF JANUARY DURING YOUR OWN PRAYER TIME.**

**-1) PRAY FOR GOD TO BE GLORIFIED IN ALL THINGS (MATT 6:9; 1 COR 10:31)**

**-2) PRAY FOR GOD'S KINGDOM TO COME AND GOD'S WILL TO BE DONE (MATT 6:10)**

**-3) PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO COME (ACTS 1:14; 2:1-4) AND TO TRANSFORM HEARTS OF STONE INTO HEARTS OF FLESH (EZEK 36:26-27) AND FOR ALL OF US TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT (LUKE 11:13; EPH 5:18)**



**HIS GATHERING PLACE CAFÉ**

## **NEWS & NOTES**