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## Pastor's Thoughts For January 2010

"This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalm 118:24

Well, it is hard to believe we are starting a New Year. Think about it, 2009 is now history. We can't relive it, redo it, or start over again. That page in our life and the life of the church is now turned forever. As we look at this New Year, I pray that it will be good year for all of you. If we dwell on all the problems in our world and our lives today, our faith will become small. The Bible says we walk by faith and not by sight. This is your day, your year, and your time! Some of you will start this New Year with rejoicing and some in despair. Some of you have no plans as you start this New Year. First, may I say that every day is a gift. So I would encourage you to start each day in this New Year with rejoicing. Live in amazement of what God is doing in your life. Second, may I remind you that every day passes quickly. The Psalmist says: *"Lord make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. Indeed, you have made my days as hand breadths. And my age is as nothing before you certainly every man at his best state is but a vapor."* Psalm 39:4-5

Third, may I remind you that every day is an opportunity. So do you begin each day with a purpose in mind? Do you have goals for each day or do you just wonder through life? Do you have a plan? What is your Life? All you have is today! It will pass by quickly. When the day is

over, when this year is over, will you make a difference in your world? A young mother once asked her child if he knew what a church was. With a big smile on his face he said, "Yes, Mommy, that is where God lives." What a statement. The church is the body of Christ. In the local congregations we play an important part of the body of Christ. God wants us to work together so that the church, His church can reach the world. It really doesn't matter what size the local church is today. What really matters is do we have a heart for the lost and do we realize it is not about us but about Him? So as we begin this New Year, only God know what is in store for the Gathering Place Church of God. It is hard to believe that it is 2010; how many of us thought we would never see this year? But God has blessed us with a New Year.

Enjoy the Journey,

Pastor Clayton

## January 2010

### Sermon and Service Outline

**Morning Message: Preaching Series:  
What We Believe!  
Pastor Clayton**

January 3 "We Believe in the Holy Spirit"  
1 Corinthians 3:16-18

January 10 "We Believe in Pentecostal  
Power" Acts 1:8

January 17 Bill Beltz speaking. "The Mission Work in Nicaragua"  
January 24 "We Believe in the Kingdom of God" Psalm 24:1-10  
January 31 "We Believe in Fearless Living" Psalm 34:4

### Evening Services

January 3 The Truth Project  
Lesson 10: The American Experiment!  
January 10 The Truth Project  
Lesson 11: Labor: Created to Create!  
January 17 The Truth Project  
Lesson 12: Community and Involvement!  
January 24 Message: "Something New From God" Isaiah 43:18  
January 31 Message: "Staying in The Race" 1 Corinthians 9:24

### Sin Assassins Youth Group

I have lots to tell since I failed to get info to our fearless editor for the December newsletter.

Jim and I attended the **State Youth Pastor/Worker Conference** held at Camp Warren the end of October. There were about 30-35 in attendance. The conference was mostly a brainstorming session on what we would like to see happen in Illinois Youth Ministry. There were lots of ideas shared and discussed, and we came away very enthused about what God is doing in Illinois. We all agreed that we need better coordination between the state and the various churches and their youth pastors/workers and between each other. We also agreed that we need a system where we can all be connected via computer either thru email or a website so we can ask each other questions, share information and materials, etc.

In November, we headed down to First Church of God in Marion, IL for a **youth lock-in**. We had 5 youth and 4 adults attend this event. Churches

in attendance included Marion, Carbondale, Ivy Heights, Danville, Bonnie, and us for about 75 youth and several adults. The evening was spent playing games, eating food, playing games and eating food. We also had a time of worship with the praise band from Marion and Corey (the youth leader at Danville) gave the message. Everyone had a good time and except for our driver (Mr. Jim); no one slept until we got in the car to come home. Thanks to Adam and Shannon Peiffer who went along with us!

November also had us out in the community collecting food for "**No American Should Go Hungry Food Drive**" in support of the Fairview Heights Food Pantry. We had 8 youth participate including 2 guests. We collected well over 20 bags of groceries from our neighbors. The youth were divided into 3 teams with Jim and me on the street monitoring their efforts and collecting the food in our vehicles. The youth were given fliers to hand out explaining who we were and our efforts to support the food pantry. They did a great job and should be congratulated for their efforts.

In December, our youth group did a **Christmas Carol Fundraiser**. We raised \$105.00 and that included a \$20.00 donation from our last stop. We had 9 youth and 4 adults that made 6 house and 2 nursing home stops. A good time was had by all despite some direction issues. I know the highlight for me was the faces of the residences of the two nursing homes---I know we blessed them but oh how they blessed us. Thanks to David and Belinda Floyd who provided us with the guitar and choir direction!

In the coming year we plan on attending the **Dare2Share** conference held in St. Louis, Mar 26-27th and the Illinois State Youth Convention, Apr 30-May 2. We will continue to meet on Sunday evenings at 5:00 for youth meeting and on Wed. evenings at 7pm for Drama and Prayer time.

Jim and Candy will be gone to Florida Jan 23 to Jan 30th. Jim is attending a convention and Candy is tagging along for some much needed r&r. We would appreciate your prayers for traveling safety.

In His Service,  
Candy and Jim Niemeyer

Children's ministry is important. The educational benefits include the following:

## Christian Concert Connection

Jan 22 at 7pm---WinterJam 2010 at St. Charles Family Arena. Concert features **Third Day, Tenth Avenue North, Newsboys, New Song, Sidewalk Prophets, Speaker is Tony Nolan.** No advance tickets-\$10 at the door only. (Sorry youth, Mr. Jim and I have a prior commitment--we can't go)  
<http://www.hearitfirst.com/winterjam>

Feb 26 at 7pm--Church on the Rock (St. Peters, MO) JOY FM Birthday Bash featuring **Phillips, Craig and Dean** and special guest **Jonny Diaz.** Tickets can be purchased online at JOY FM for \$9.50 or \$12.50. [www.joyfmonline.org](http://www.joyfmonline.org)

April 2 at 7pm---**Casting Crowns** at St Charles Family Arena with **Tenth Avenue North** as opening act. Tickets are not on sale yet and I don't know cost. (Although other venue prices range from \$15 to \$75) Tickets will go on sale thru [www.joyfmonline.org](http://www.joyfmonline.org) so keep checking.

For more Christian events and/or concerts in our area listen to JOY FM at 97.7 or visit them on the web at [www.joyfmonline.org](http://www.joyfmonline.org). You can also listen to WIBI at 91.1 or visit them on the web at [www.wibi.org](http://www.wibi.org)

Candy and Jim Niemeyer

## Living Inside Out

As the New Year begins, we are given another opportunity to re-evaluate what we are doing and begin again in 2010.

Familiar faces will be seen each week in leadership with a different assistant each month to help us do the best we can to minister to the children; will be following the new format during the Sunday School hour. It is going to be exciting and fun for all. This is an excellent opportunity to teach Biblical principles to the children. It is not just a play time, but an opportunity to increase knowledge that will be the foundation for life.

1. **It accommodates the unique educational needs of children.** We all learn differently and this provides an opportunity to target those differences.
2. **It allows teachers to target multiple intelligences in their teaching.** A variety of learning activities that appeal to distinct learning styles helps the children learn.
3. **It allows for age-graded instruction.** During our time together we will have times when children from similar grade levels break out to learn together.
4. **It allows children to memorize portions of scripture.** One major focus for children's ministry programs is Bible memory. The children will be challenged to learn and retain memory verses that will be reviewed throughout the year.
5. **It provides systematic Bible instruction.** We will target basics that the children should know assuring they get a broad introduction to the Bible and its major teachings to continue their spiritual growth.
6. **It allows learning to worship in a group through singing.** The singing of chorus's and songs will prepare the children for congregational singing.
7. **It allows children to learn how to read scripture in public.** The children read scripture in a small group setting which helps them learn to read the Bible aloud.
8. **It helps kids learn to pray aloud in public.** The same is true for praying in public.
9. **It provides a context for children to learn how to respect their elders.** Children's ministry is an excellent format to teach kids how to interact with and to respect older people. Bringing in a different assistant each month allows the children to get to know more of the older people in the church and learn to appreciate them for who they are.
10. **It increases the total amount of instruction time children will get in the Bible.** Reading from the Bible will benefit from this extra learning time.
11. **It promotes the use of music as a learning tool.** One of the easiest ways to

learn is through music. Music is designed for worship as well as teaching.

12. **It provides a context for children to learn to do peer-to-peer evangelism.** Children's ministry helps make that happen by encouraging kids to share Jesus.
13. **It provides opportunities to re-teach the Gospel in every developmental stage.** Often a child's response (or lack of response) to the Gospel is hidden by their immaturity. The best way to overcome this concern is to continue to reinforce the plan of salvation as they mature.
14. **It helps maximize spiritual development at every developmental stage.** The principle is true for their spiritual development before and after they accept Jesus as their personal Savior.
15. (Summarized from Children's Ministry Matters)

"Your continued support through prayer is essential for this program to be all that God wants it to be. Children make a difference in our every day living. We need to arm them with Biblical treasures for their use. Getting to know Jesus is a continuing process—one we never outgrow."

Your assistance is needed. Please share your comments and concerns which will be assessed and addressed to help insure that we are delivering the message in the best way possible. Parents, we will ask your support in helping us keep this a learning environment. Should we have a difficult situation that results in distractions so the children are unable to receive the message, we may ask you to come join us to help insure the children's short time with us is most beneficial. Your cooperation is appreciated and crucial to the overall success of each Sunday's lesson.

January 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be discussing "How We Worship". Be sure to ask your children about what was talked about in **Living Inside Out**. If you demonstrate that this is an important thing for the children, they will value it even more.

Parents, I will be calling you in the near future to discuss your desires for the Sunday School hour for your children. I'd like to get to know you and your children better so that as we work together we will meet all needs as best we can.

Thank you in advance for your prayers and support as we begin again to minister to our children in 2010.

Karen White

Living Inside Out Director

## Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in the bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as Knowing when to come in out of the rain; Why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair, and Maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies such as Don't spend more than you earn; Don't expect to get paid for everything you do; and Reliable strategies such as Adults, not children are in charge.

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned overbearing regulations were set in Place. Reports of a six year old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home because the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live when people lost their jobs or took pay cuts at the same time others demanded pay raises; still others spent money on pet projects rather than on people who were suffering and in need.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, by his wife, Discretion, by his daughter, Responsibility, and his son, Reason.

He is survived by four step-brothers:  
I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else  
Is To Blame, and I'm A Victim.  
Not many attended his funeral because so few  
realized he was gone.  
If you still remember him, share his memories.  
Take a course of action so your neighbors don't  
lose their home or go without another meal, and  
take a little so others don't lose more.  
If you don't remember him, join the wicked  
stepbrothers, and do nothing.  
I wonder which road will each of us choose?  
God has blessed this country with so much, yet  
we still want more, and we have given loss to  
those who need the most. Maybe God is saying  
"Because we have not loved our neighbors as  
ourselves, it is our turn to be in need."  
I wonder?

Submitted by Viola White

## Cell phone vs. Bible

Ever wonder what would happen if we treated our  
Bible like we treat our cell phone?

What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets?

What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to kids as gifts?

What if we used it when we traveled?

What if we used it in case of emergency?

This is something to make you go....hmm...where is my  
Bible?

Oh, and one more thing. Unlike our cell phone, we don't  
have to worry about our Bible being disconnected  
because Jesus already paid the bill.

Makes you stop and think 'where are my priorities?  
And no dropped calls!

Trust in the Lord and \*ASAP (Always Say A Prayer)