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The Nutshell



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News and Information from Chestnut Street Baptist Church

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As I See It ... by Pastor Frank Johnson Finding Our Way Back Home

"Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened." This is what Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008) heard when he was still a boy from older people in his native Russia. The Soviet experiment in communism (atheist at its core) would eventually be revealed for the horror story it was, largely due to Solzhenitsyn's prodigious literary output. When he was receiving the Templeton Award in religion in 1983, he said, "If I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous Revolution that swallowed up some sixty million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened'" (from E Ericson and D. Mahoney, *The Solzhenitsyn Reader: New and Essential Writings, 1947-2005*, p. 577).

In that same lecture, he concluded that this would identify "the principal trait of the entire twentieth century: 'Men have forgotten God'" (*ibid.*, his emphasis). Remembering God, and what He has done for all humanity in the Person and Work of Jesus the Christ, is the goal of the Church. We are called to be agents of *restoration*, to help people recover spiritual vitality, to remember the way Home.

This has happened before. During the latter third of the sixth century before Christ, a strange twist in history occurred. It was foretold by Jeremiah the prophet (see Jeremiah 25:11; 27:22; 29:10). A pagan ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire, Cyrus by name, decreed that the people descended from Israel could return to their land, aided by the financial support of their neighbors, to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and resume the worship of YHWH,

"God of heaven." The story of this return over the next century is told in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The narrative is full of interesting food for thought regarding how God wishes to restore proper worship and the practices of faith for His people in Christ. The parallels are not exact, but they are worth thinking about for life in Christ today. How easy it is for all of us to "forget God," to go about our lives as though the God who created, redeemed, and sustains us was not really there at all. Some have critiqued modern faith and concluded that it is purely theoretical, without any real impact on the way life is lived. They have observed a "practical atheism."

As I see it, here is the value of the entire Old Testament storyline. "For everything that was written the past [i.e., the Old Covenant Scriptures] was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4, NIV). Ezra teaches us what finding our way back to our true spiritual home in God's revelation will involve. There is adventure, risk, opposition, and the clear intervention of the hand of God. This is strikingly parallel to what it means to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior. Join with me on Sundays as we explore this theme further.

My Love in Christ,
 Pastor Frank



In the Coming Month: February 2019

Sundays	9 a.m. Bible Study Hour, and 10:15 a.m. Worship
Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.	LIFE Group at Johnson's, 808 E. Capitol
Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.	Prayer Group at the church's facilities, room 202
Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.	Cornerstone Kids' Club (grades 1-5)
Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.	Ignition (youth group, grades 6-12)
Thursdays 6:30 p.m.	LIFE Group at Jim & Laura Bisonnette's, 2406 N. Ellington
Thursdays 7:00 p.m.	LIFE Group at Boudreau's, 1001 E. Mountainview
Thursdays 7:00 p.m.	Crosswalk (Collegiate students and young adults)
Fridays 4:30 p.m.	LIFE Group at Briarwood Commons, 1001 S. Chestnut St.
Sunday, Feb. 3, 10:15 a.m.	Lord's Supper Observance
Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 a.m.	Men's Breakfast
Saturday, Feb. 9, 7 a.m.	NCM Variety Show
Sunday, Feb 10, 9 a.m.	<i>Making Your Case for Christ</i> Bible Study begins
Saturday, Feb. 23, 6 p.m.	Women's Game Night
Sunday, March 2, noon	Fellowship Potluck



Stacia's Notes: Youth Ministry Update

Ignition

As Ignition continues under the leadership of Aren and Bryce please pray for them to be led by the Spirit and filled with love, patience, and insight for the youth that we have attending each week. Our group has such fun together and these faithful men are a big part of that! Pray that the students that come would hear truth from God's word, be encouraged to make their faith personal, and be confident of the love of God through the love of the local Church.

Throughout the Winter and Spring we will do various lesson series' on Big Dreams, Bullying, Leadership, and Treasures. Our aim each week is to open Gods word, have discussion about the topic, and send students out with a challenge to put into practice throughout the week. We trust that it is God that is truly teaching us and leading us! May He be known and glorified in the youth room on Wednesday nights and in our hearts throughout the week!

Sunday School

Our youth Sunday School class is made up of different students each week but we consistently open God's word and hear His truth! We started a study of the book of Mark this week and I think it will be a great series to go through together. We have a small team of people who will be sharing the load of teaching in this class for the time I will be away. I am so grateful for the willingness that these ones show in investing in our church and these students. Along with the study of Mark we have a reading plan that the students can choose to partake in. Really it just involves reading one or two chapters of Mark for the next 12 weeks. Join us in this simple challenge! I trust that as we plug into God's word in and out of class that God will bring light, truth, and understanding to our lives. How wonderful!

Highlight Story

As I head into a few weeks off I can't help but highlight just my joy at doing this job that God has called me to here with this church. There have been multiple Wednesdays over the last few weeks where right in the midst of the laughing during card games or right when I hear the answers these teenagers give to questions about the Bible, God and faith or when I see the way friendship is being developed and deepened that my heart rejoices that I get to play this role here. I have no doubt that this is where God has placed me, or that He has equipped me to do the job He has asked of me. I encourage each of you taking the time to read this to spend some time praying this week, asking God to open your eyes to see where He is bringing you richness of life and fullness of joy. He is a God of generosity, abundance, and goodness. If you aren't seeing it, it's not because it's not there. May each of us, whatever our age or circumstance in life, be struck with wonder at what God has and is blessing us with even now. For His glory!

With hope in Christ,

Your Youth Director,

Stacia Harmsen



Collegiate Ministry Pastor Jeremy's Update

NCM Variety Show

Our Ninth Annual NCM Variety Show to benefit Spring Break missions is on the schedule for February 9 at 7pm. Plan to come and enjoy song, spoken word and much more. During the show we will share about this year's plans to return to SAFE Family Ministries in Chehalis, WA for a week, and how you can help us get there. After the program, we will offer complementary desserts to enjoy together. If you would like to contribute to the trip but cannot be there on February 9, make checks payable to CSBC designated "NCM Missions."



Collegiate Ministries

We were so blessed to have Daniel, Sara, Courtnie and Makayla with us January 6-10 was such a blessing. Thank you, Wes and Karen, for hosting so well, and for all of you who provided a meal for the team. They were such a blessing, and we would love to have them back again! During the week they were here, we were able to bless around 90 students with free hot chocolate. And many of the 90 stuck around for a conversation. We also got to connect with several students on a one-to-one (or two) basis while canvassing on campus. Join us in prayer for more laborers in the field at CWU, and pray with us for the TSU Baptist Student Ministry to flourish and continue sending out missionaries around the world.

Preparations are coming together for our annual spring break mission. If you'd like to see what SAFE Family Ministries is all about, check them out online at safefamilyministries.com. We are confident that even now God is planting His heart for that ministry in students, and that our group will be a blessing to this beautiful work of the Lord.

We are so excited to celebrate Stacia and Bryce's new baby, and wish her all the best during maternity leave. We could use your help in making Crosswalk a success week after week. Would you be willing to bake up some cookies or other snacks a time or two in the next few months? We would love having treats to share and this is something that Stacia often is helping with. Let me know (jeremy@csbcfamily.com) if you would like to help in this simple and fun way!

CSBC Choir

Rehearsals for our Easter Choir will begin this month, on February 10. If you have a desire to sing with an encouraging choir and are available Sundays at 4:30, we invite you to join us. Child care for choir members will be provided, and we will prepare some wonderful music to enhance our celebration of Jesus' death and resurrection. Easter Sunday is April 21, and we will perform for the church that day and God-willing on a few other occasions! Come and sing!

Yours,

Jeremy



With Valentine's and President's Day being the same weekend as our ladies breakfast, we're switching it up this month!

There will be no Ladies Breakfast in February, HOWEVER, we'll be having a Game Night! Join us February 23 at 6 p.m. for snacks and games! Bring something to share and some games to play! Ceri will be hosting the game night at her apartment: 2420 N Airport Rd. #1105AB Ellensburg.

Also, we are beginning to organize a Women's Retreat, so watch for more information coming soon!

Men's Ministry Events

Monthly Breakfast

All Gentleman are invited to join together Saturday, February 9, at 8:00 a.m. for a time of Scripture, food and fellowship. Pastor Frank and Ron Ness will be cooking, and Merle Woody will share the devotional message. Put this on your calendar!

Making Your Case for Christ

A new Bible Study Class, spanning 6 weeks, will be offered by Mark Oursland starting this month. The title of the study is *Making Your Case for Christ*. It will feature Lee Strobel and Mark Mittelberg, who have collaborated on a variety of good studies for Christian growth and witness. The class will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. beginning February 10th. The workbook materials for the class will be available (possibly with a minimal cost). Please sign-up in the office so we can allocate adequate space for the meetings.

Fellowship Potluck March 2

The schedule was pretty crowded around Valentine's Day, so we are planning our next fellowship potluck for noon-ish on Sunday, March 2. All our members and regular attenders are asked to bring a main dish and a side dish/dessert with enough to share with guests. It is always the right time to share good food and fellowship!

New Logo Adopted by Church



Variety Show for Missions

The NCM Variety Show is on its way to you! Come support the college students in their effort to raise money for their Spring Break Mission Trip to SAFE Family Ministries in Chehalis, WA.

Join us in the worship center on Saturday, February 9, at 7 p.m. for a night of entertainment, to include singing, dancing, and other talents shared by members of CSBC and outside friends. There will be a cookie social to follow.

Church Giving Review

Our church is involved in both local and international giving. We actively support various organizations that stand for the name of Jesus and reach out to assist believers and non-believers alike. These are a few records from last year's contributions:

• Care Net Pregnancy Center	\$7,296.51
• Annie Armstrong Offering	\$16,739.73
• Lottie Moon Offering	\$3,599.25
• World Hunger Relief	\$882.64
• Cooperative Program	\$9,110.84

Deacons Coordinate Practical Ministries

In the next few weeks, the deacons are hoping to distribute a list of ways to meet people's needs in the Church. A *Serving Others in Jesus' Name Survey* is being created for church members who are willing to assist when needs arise. Once compiled, the deacons will reference this confidential information to help better those in our Church family. Watch for the survey to be distributed soon.



"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."
1 Peter 4:8