

A Word from Our Pastor:

**Happy
Thanksgiving!**

As I write this letter, we have just returned from National Youth Conference in Indianapolis. We spent three days with approximately 4,000 of our brothers and sisters from all over America worshipping and fellowshiping with some fantastic young people. It was very encouraging to see so many young men and ladies who were not ashamed to worship God with all of their hearts. We had three young men with us, Jordan Sayre, G.T. Saunders, and Caleb Gussler. We had a great time with them and they represented Open Door very well. It is different to be in a hotel on a holiday but we survived and had turkey dinner in the hotel restaurant. The Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ organization always has its national youth conference during Thanksgiving week, so make a note and maybe next year you and your children can go with us. Next year the Youth Conference will be held at The Opera Land Hotel and Resort in Nashville, TN.

As we start December we will be having Evangelist Chris Leach and his family with us. Saturday December 6th we are having a 6 p.m. meeting in the sanctuary with Bro. Chris Leach

teaching, sharing and taking questions regarding spiritual gifts. This meeting will not be a typical service it will be an informal educational event where you can glean some very valuable information about the operation of the Gifts of the Spirit. Anyone who has a desire to learn more or believes that you have special gifts and would like to hear Bro. Chris Leach teach about the gifts of the Spirit I would encourage you to come. Sunday December 7th Bro. Chris Leach will be ministering in both morning and evening service.

Our annual Christmas Banquet will be Thursday evening December 11th at the Charleston Women's Club. We want everyone to plan on attending and more information will be given very soon. This will be a great evening for all of us to come together and reflect on the blessings of the Lord in our lives.

Our Sunday School Christmas program will be Sunday Morning December 21st. followed by our regular Sunday evening service. We will not be having our Wednesday service on December 24th in order for you to be with your families and share the holiday together. December 31st we will have service as normal at 7:30 p.m. followed by potluck for all to fellowship.

2014 has been a great year of growth for the church, there were many successes and God has added new families to us. It has also been a year where so many of our families have suffered loss of loved ones and friends. A message that God has placed within me is the circumstances we all go through do not determine who we are, but they reveal who we are. God would not bring us to it, if He didn't intend to bring us through it. I hope that the pressures of life reveal that we are a people of faith and integrity, whose trust in God cannot be shaken. Even though many of you were faced with overwhelming circumstances in 2014 you are still standing.

The Apostle Paul wrote...

2 Corinthians 4:8-18 (KJV) ⁽⁸⁾ *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;* ⁽⁹⁾ *Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;* ⁽¹⁰⁾ *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.* ⁽¹¹⁾ *For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.* ⁽¹²⁾ *So then death worketh in us, but life in you.* ⁽¹³⁾ *We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;* ⁽¹⁴⁾ *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.* ⁽¹⁵⁾ *For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.* ⁽¹⁶⁾ *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* ⁽¹⁷⁾ *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* ⁽¹⁸⁾ *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

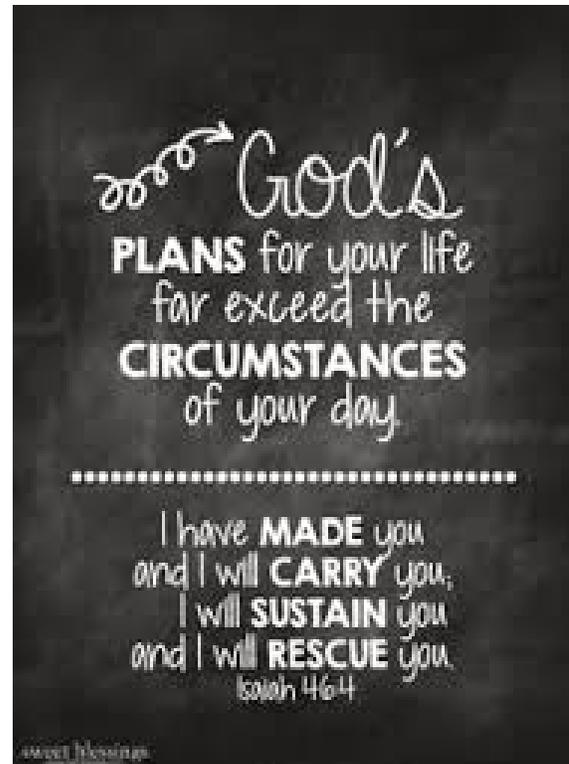
The Lord is going to return and take His bride which has prepared herself and remained faithful until the end. I want to be found ready and filled with hope and faith in my heart. God's word says He will not put more on us than we are able to bear. I want to encourage all who read this to stand fast and keep the faith God has given you.

Pray more, Love more, Give more. What has your circumstances REVEALED in you?

1 Peter 1:6-7 (KJV) ⁽⁶⁾ *if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:* ⁽⁷⁾ *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

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Pastor Chris Sowards



As much as you want to plan your life, it has a way of surprising you with unexpected things that will make you happier than you originally planned.

That's what you call
GOD'S WILL.

UPHOLDING YOUR PASTOR

By: Jon Browning, D.D.

Sunday morning, the man behind the wood or glass podium. Thursday night, the person standing next to you in the E.R. Monday morning, the one who leads your staff meeting at church. Wednesday night, the moderator of the prayer meeting. Tuesday all day, the one who fixed the church plumbing and tries to field phone calls, emails and less-than-complimentary notes from the congregation. Friday night, the one who consoles the grieving at the casket. Saturday morning, the person who prays with a heartbroken mother when her son or daughter was arrested for DUI or drug possession. All this and much more describes daily your pastor. Who is this person? Why are they here? What keeps them here? Do they feel the same way about me as I do about them?

Your Pastor, traditionally a man, but in some denominations a woman, is one of the most hardworking, underpaid persons you will ever meet. We as congregants need to understand this vital person in our lives and show greater appreciation for what they do. How can this be achieved? Below are simple yet powerful ways to help the one who spends his/her life helping you.

First, realize the Pastor is human, too.

We tend to think the Pastor has no faults or has a better edge on living more perfect than the rest of us. Nothing could be less true. All of us, even clergy, struggle with temptations and faults. True, they are held to a higher standard, but the ground is level when it comes to Satan's attacks. When you go home or out to eat after church, don't order "Roast Preacher" with all the gossip trimmings. Understand their side of things. Let them be a person around you and not a figure head. Try not to distance yourself. They are hoping you will welcome them into your life.

Second, remember the Pastor has come voluntarily.

Just as Jesus came into this world to do the will of His Father, so has His under-shepherd, the Pastor, come to your church to help lead and guide

you, too. Neither he nor Jesus is obligated. That isn't to say they look down on you or think themselves so high, but realize the love they have for you and your family. Make sure the Pastor knows not only what inspiring message they bring, but how thankful you are they decided to get down in the trenches of life with you and me.

Third, understand the Pastor needs support from you.

Treat your Pastor with dignity and respect. Unless they wish it otherwise, call them by their title. Show them you empathize with their frustrations and become involved as much as possible in solutions.

Most clergy will tell you they wish more congregants would get involved at church because it is our corporate church unto Christ- it's not Reverend So-and-so's church. Take your Pastor and his wife to lunch or to your home to eat and don't use it as a time to discuss all you don't like about the church. Let them feel relaxed. If they like to play golf or fish, then by all means, go. Don't forget the wife. Ladies, she's no different than you. Do things with her that minister to a woman's heart. Make sure she knows who she can count on when her husband and she feel alone.

Lastly, the Pastor needs your prayers. You can do no better than to uphold them before the Lord. Pray specifically for needs you know are present in their lives. Be confidential as well as fervent in prayer. Take them aside and pray with them as they would for you. Don't worry about sounding spiritual in your prayers. Pray genuinely with them; they will so much appreciate your heart in the matter. Rejoice at their triumphs, be supportive of their initiatives and mourn at their losses. Pray that God would direct them in the high pinnacle of leadership, that they would stand strong in the faith and sure in the spirit.

Your Pastor upholds you. Let us endeavor to not let them stand alone, but like Hur and Aaron did for Moses in Exodus 17:11, let us uphold them before the Lord God.

(Article from Charleston Gazette forwarded to me by Sis. Janice Johnson- Thank you)

The Ovis Project

Warming Up for Winter: Homeless in Our Community

Thank you to everyone who donated and made this year's Ovis Project: Helping the Homeless a great success. A special thank you is in order to the leaders of this project Tabby Smith and Heather Arden. With their determination and fantastic efforts donations of soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand sanitizers, deodorant, etc. and various daily items we take for granted were donated by various local businesses, members of the community as well as the church congregation.



Proverbs 19:17 NIV Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done. Never judge someone without knowing the whole story. Be thankful and help anyone in need. Not everyone knows how to lift themselves up out of their own situation.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the SWAT Youth Department:

It is that time of year again when people are dreaming of a white Christmas while a parade of wooden soldiers are rockin' around the Christmas tree. Rudolph the red nosed reindeer is doing jingle bells and the little drummer boy is drumming the jingle bell rock. Parents will be telling their children here comes Santa Claus, what? Santa Claus is coming to town? He only wants home for the holidays.

Christmas time is fun and exciting for so many. Holidays are great times with family and friends, giving and receiving of gifts, shopping and fighting the crowds. With everything the holidays bring we pray everyone will remember the true meaning of Christmas. Remember to share the true joy, we have as children of the King, with our friends, family and strangers. A smile can go a long way this time of year. I pray God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13 NLT

Love and prayers,

Youth Pastor G and Sis. Bonnie Switzer

**Upcoming SWAT Event
December 6th at 5:30p.m.-SWAT CHRISTMAS PARTY @ The Switzer's**





SWAT SPOT



Name: Rachel Chapman

Age/Birth: 15/April 21

School: George Washington

Favorite Subject: Science

Favorite Color: Blue

Hobbies: Drawing

Favorite Food: Shrimp

Desired Occupation: Doctor

Favorite Person: Anthony Dean

FEED THE SHEEP MENU

Sunday Morning Snack	Sunday Evening Snack	Wednesday Evening Snack
		3 Quesadillas
7 Oatmeal	7 Crystal Dean White Chicken Chili	10 Spaghetti
14 Turkey & Waffles	14 Tammy Coutz Nachos	17 Chili, Chips & Cheese
21 Cereal	21 Cassandra Jackson Hot Dogs	24 No Service Christmas Eve
28 Breakfast Surprise	28 Dorcas Eskew Pepperoni Rolls	31 Potluck Bring a dish
Snack Captain	Snack Captain	Snack Captain
Leslie Dean	Women	Men

December Calendar of Events

December 6th – SWAT Christmas Party- @ The Switzer's at 5:30 p.m.

December 6th - Informal Education Meeting with Evangelist Chris Leach @ 6 p.m.

December 7th - Evangelist Chris Leach Sunday Morning & Evening Service

December 11th - Christmas Banquet Charleston Women's Club

December 21st - Sunday School Christmas Program

December 24th - No Wednesday Evening Service

December 31st - Wednesday Evening Service @ 7:30 p.m. Potluck and Fellowship following service

Service Times:

Sunday Morning Worship and Children's Church @ 10 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship @ 6 p.m.

Mid-Week Wednesday Worship @ 7:30 p.m.

Open Door Apostolic Church

2630 Kanawha Blvd. East

Charleston, WV 25311

(304) 346-9175

www.opendoorapostolic.org

Please email Sis. Cassandra Jackson @ cassandramclain33@gmail.com if you would like to add any content to newsletter. Also, if you would like to receive a newsletter by email please forward me your email address.