

Oklahoma City First Church of the Nazarene

Activities and Announcements 05.31.09

THANK YOU...to Sam & Jane Speropulos for their service to us each Wednesday night for so many months. The dinners were fantastic, and we can't thank you enough for your dedication to feeding us on Wednesday nights. Your gifts of time and talent are truly appreciated- please enjoy your break this summer! (Special thanks to Ellen McNeill for filling in once a month as well!)

BE A PART OF SUMMER KIDS CLUB AT FIRST INDIAN CHURCH!

First Indian Church of the Nazarene is reaching out to the kids in their neighborhood and offering a fun, educational, and Christ-centered program each Monday and Wednesday from June 8-August 5. We need YOUR help! If you are available to help with tutoring or coordinating any of the following subjects or have equipment or teaching supplies for these subjects- we need you! Subjects include: reading comprehension, math, science, health, art and music. Sessions will be held from 12:00-3:00pm. For more info, please contact Teri Inman at teriinman@cox.net or 204-8800.

THANK YOU...to the McNeill & Williams families for all of their hard work on Sunday's All Church Dinner. The food was delicious, as always, and we truly appreciate your act of service and generosity.

DON'T FORGET YOUR PIZZA TO GO!...Next Sunday, June 7th, after the service, enjoy a large Pizza Hut @ pizza, salad for 4, and a 2 liter of pop with every \$20 donation that will benefit OKC First Church's BEYOND THE BUDGET ministries. Two pizzas will be \$30. GRATZIE!

YOU'RE INVITED...to a come and go wedding shower and welcome reception for the new Mrs. Whiteside! Brandon & Ashley are back from their honeymoon and we'd like to help them celebrate on Sunday, June 14th, from 4:30-6pm in the Parlor. The Whitesides are registered at Target, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Crate & Barrel and Macy's.

VBS WORKERS NEEDED!...We are still in need of 22 volunteers. If you would like to help, please contact Kristin Pilcher (517-3411), Ryan Martin (615-4355), or Lisa Sanders (823-0444). If you have any decorating items please bring them by the church this week! And don't forget that VBS starts next Sunday at 6:30 pm and runs through Thursday, June 11.

NWO DISTRICT CHILDREN'S CAMP... will be held at Camp Bond in Tishomingo, OK.

Camper Registration forms are located on the children's information board by the Children's Church room. If you are interested in being a **Camp Counselor**, applications are located in the tray on Pastor Lisa's office door.

Camp dates & cost:

Primary camp (1st & 2nd) July 13-15, cost is \$120.
Junior camp (3rd & 4th) July 15-17, cost is \$120.
Preteen camp (5th & 6th) July 13-17, cost is \$140.

If you would like to sponsor a child to camp please note your checks: NWO District Children's Camp- your support will be greatly appreciated!

WEDDING SHOWER...Please join us in showing our support and congratulations to Clint Neher and Rachel Snode! Clint and Rachel are new to the OKC First Family and will be getting married this August in Rachel's hometown in Washington. A come and go shower will be held at the home of Toby and Kristin Drake (9540 SW 25th OKC 73128) on Sunday June 14th from 2-4 PM. Please see Kristin Drake or Kathy Hill for more info and/or directions. Clint and Rachel are registered at Target, Macy's, and Williams-Sonoma.

YOUTH GARAGE SALE...Saturday, June 13th on the front lawn. We open at 8 am! If you have any items you would like to donate, please contact Mike Laughlin at 843-9588.

BABY SHOWER...for Ben and Stephanie Grant on Sunday, June 14th from 3-4pm in the Parlor. They are registered at Target, Walmart and Babies R Us. Come and join us as we welcome and celebrate the birth of Ian Benjamin Grant.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

**Annual operating budget (Jan 1-Dec 31)
\$800,000**

Received May 24	\$10,720
Annual Need as of 5/24	\$323,077
Received as of 5/24	\$264,799
Balance	(\$58,278)
Monthly Need	\$66,667
Received as of 5/24	\$54,468
Balance	(\$12,199)

Don't forget about our "Beyond the Budget" goal to fund Spiritual Direction (\$2500) and Celebrate Recovery/Literacy babysitting costs (\$2500)! If you want to contribute to these areas **beyond** your tithes, please indicate this!

Zambia Vending Machines: at the South end of the South hall.

Designated smoking area: outside the South doors of the South hall . Celebrate Recovery Information: outside the Green Room South entrance

A Resurrection Story Revisited

At 10 years old, Joe had a smile as large as his face. He first started attending our church, Oklahoma City First Church of the Nazarene in 2000 as a child brought in through vacation bible school outreach. Extremely likeable, he quickly made friends and especially connected with another boy – the son of our children’s pastor. This friendship endeared him to the entire Sanders family. The next few years saw Joe coming in and out of church, but he occasionally found him in trouble by getting involved with the wrong crowd. This eventually led to a path of selling drugs as a teenager and inevitably accepted in an official gang. His life journey, even as a teenager, was very bumpy and led straight to inevitable destruction. Last year, Joe spent time in jail. Last year he experienced a death of his hopes and dreams.

Life to death is a natural progression. It is expected, sometimes dreaded and always accepted at the final moment. Death to life, unavailable to mortals, is what Christians celebrate through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But what does that really mean in today’s church?

After Joe was released from jail, he expressed a desire to get on a different path and wanted to concentrate on his schooling. His age indicated that he should graduate in May, but because of his choices, he was classified as a sophomore.

Remember his friendship with the son of Lisa Sanders, our children’s pastor? Lisa and her family knew Joe from all these years and were very involved in his life. Lisa knew Joe’s potential and refused to give up on him. Through her perseverance and connections at his school, and through the patience of Dr. Pam Broyles and Dianne Dawkins (education professionals and members of OKC First Nazarene) tutoring him, Joe was able to catch up on his studies and graduate on time. One sentence will never describe the hours both of these two women spent in working with Joe.

Due to his past record, Joe found out that although he would indeed graduate and receive his diploma, he would not be allowed to walk at the convocation.

It was a special Sunday. People were thinking about the fact that it was Mother’s Day and probably wondering how long the lines would be at restaurants. It was also High School Senior Day when we honored our graduates and showed our support for them as they begin a new chapter in their lives. We whooped and hollered at our home-grown high school graduates, many of them who have grown up in our local church.

It was a special day for all our seniors, but it was extremely special for our friend Joe.

Our pastor has been preaching a series “In Broad Daylight – Stories of Resurrection.” This series has our pastor filling the shoes of a reporter who chases after stories of life, hope and resurrection through Jesus Christ.

Pastor Jon interviewed Joe as part of his sermon. He asked Joe to talk about his difficulties and asked him about the three most influential people in his life. Joe talked about the profound impact of the Sanders family, his tutors and Jesus Christ. He stated simply that all his life he would ask God to get him out of trouble, but now he knew that he could just talk to God whenever he wanted. Pastor Jon asked him about not participating in a graduation ceremony and Joe confirmed it.

At the end of their interview, Jon indicated that Lisa Sanders once again intervened on his behalf. She contacted the school district and made arrangements to have the school officials at our church that day. Joe was having his own graduation ceremony as part of the morning worship service.

The look on Joe’s face was priceless. It was a look of shock, joy and full of gratitude.

As Joe put on his cap and gown, the congregation without a cue rose to its feet, erupted in applause and expressed support for him.

The stage was set. Joe’s family and the Sanders family stood on the

side to greet him. Pastor Jon, the two individuals that tutored him and the school officials stood in the middle. As the principal read the statement that made Joe an official graduate and announced his name, Joe proudly walked across to receive his diploma. When he reached the end, the other principal indicated that he could move his tassel, thereby signifying he was a graduate.

Dr. JBrunk, assistant principal of the 9-10 grades at Yukon HS commented, “I spent a lot of time with Joe and his family during his freshman and sophomore year. I was very proud to hear that he had completed his graduation requirements. I came to OKC First Church that Sunday out of support of this accomplishment. When I listened to the sermon the preacher had been preaching on resurrections and then he called Joe to the stage, I had a very difficult time fighting back the tears and the emotion. And then at the end, when the preacher told Joe that they had decided to bring graduation to him, it was an amazing experience. I never expected anything like that. I got to do the “fun” part, but the real heroes were those members of the church who spent 4 to 5 hours a day with him and went to his house in the middle of the night to intervene.”

Joe’s story is indeed a beautiful testimony of resurrection. Living in the light of the resurrection is living in hope and refusing to accept darkness. Joe had many people who refused to give up on him and Joe chose not to give up on himself. But most of all, living in the resurrection is actively living in community with one another and bringing the hope of Jesus Christ to everyday life.

It is an ongoing story that invites participation from everyone who believes in God.

-by Kristin Moyer and Paula Meder

RESURRECTION STORIES

Our hearts have been stirred in the past few Sunday worship sermons as people have shared their testimonies of resurrection. But if you are interested in sharing God’s resurrection power in your own life, please send it to Paula Meder via e-mail paulameder@gmail.com.

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