



A Publication of New Hope Ministries

WINTER/SPRING 2017

New Hope Ministries Celebrates 35 Years

Plans Underway To Build Church At New Hope Site

Plans are underway to take to various local lending institutions. If all goes well, Thigpen hopes to see the church completed by 1985.

The plans for a new church illustrates the rapid growth of New Hope Ministries from its humble beginnings as a Wednesday night bible study group in a North Naples residence two years ago. Since that time, church membership has grown from 20 to 175 people, and church location has moved to several progressively larger locations.

New Hope Ministries is an independent, non-denominational church.



Ministry on fire

Former firefighters are lighting spiritual fires

By LOUI DARIAS

Grant Thigpen and Don Taniel spent years fighting fires. But instead of trying to start fires, they are now lighting spiritual fires in the hearts of others.

Thigpen, a non-denominational minister in Naples, and Taniel, a minister and church growth pastor, are the leaders of New Hope Ministries.

Thigpen was in the back of Thigpen's mind when he was stationed in Little Rock, Ark., as an Army aviator and a flight instructor. Taniel, the son of a minister, was in the ministry. But he was not in Little Rock, and the couple decided to stick together.

Thigpen, a carpenter by trade, was the first to leave the ministry. He was a good father and a good husband. He was a good father and a good husband. He was a good father and a good husband.

Thigpen was a good father and a good husband. He was a good father and a good husband. He was a good father and a good husband.



From left are the Rev. Grant Thigpen and Youth Minister Don Taniel of New Hope Ministries. Both were former firefighters.



#NewHopeNaples

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Do you have a testimony or article you'd like to submit for consideration in future issues of the NHM Magazine? Email your draft to frontdesk@newhopenaples.com

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The Cover Story

1982
1985
2017

Pastor Grant Thigpen is invited to lead a Bible study at the home of a friend.

The first building is completed on the site which is now the Boys and Girls Club.

New Hope Ministries celebrated its 35th Anniversary on February 10.



The best is yet to come!

ePinion

by Faye Sentovich
Editor of Ignite



Have you ever heard of sympathetic vibrations? If I sang a D note while holding an acoustic guitar in front of my face, something amazing would happen! Without touching the guitar strings, the D string would start to vibrate, while the other strings would remain silent. The D string has an affinity to the D note and resonates in response.

God has created each of us to uniquely resonate to His specific design for our lives. The thought of leading worship might make you physically ill, while I feel an affinity - comfortable and "at home." Even practice energizes me! I might be exhausted, sick, or in pain before going to choir/band practice, but as soon as we begin, the time flies by

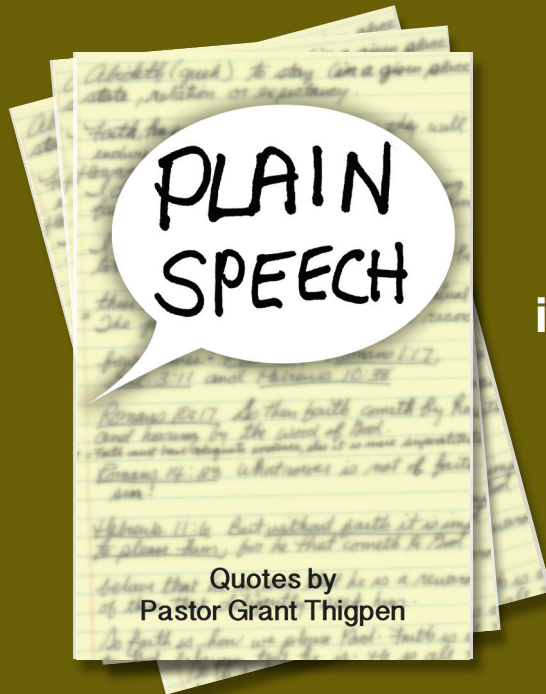
and I forget about everything else. Finding your affinity is fundamental to determining God's specific design for your life.

However, affinity alone is not enough to dictate our design. Ability is also necessary. American Idol is a perfect example. Every season, thousands with a love (affinity) for vocal performance audition, but not all are skilled (ability) to do it well. Affinity without ability can lead to failure. Ability without affinity will wear you down and burn you out. Affinity WITH ability is sweetly satisfying.

But wait, there's more... one other critical piece...

[continued on page 5](#)

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**Pastor Grant's
book of quotes
is available in the
Books of Hope
Bookstore
(Room 103)
\$8 per copy**

**Breakfast is served...
Sundays in the Event Center
8:00-9:00am
and
10:00-11:00am**



There must also be opportunity, which may be something you must wait for. It may also be something you must give up for a season, as was the case for me. In 2007, after serving on the NHM praise team for 20 years, the Lord required that I step down. This was a very difficult and painful step to take. For weeks I cried through every song service, before finally surrendering. God desired that I give up my familiar and safe comfort zone - my place of refuge - because I needed to find my security (e.g., safety, protection, peace of mind) in Him alone.

God had me sit for almost 5 years while He taught me and used me in other venues. I didn't miss singing or feel a void during those years but when the time was right, and the opportunity opened, I had no doubt that it was a NEW season. Sometimes we must wait for God to present the opportunity to use our affinities and abilities. Just like an athlete who warms the bench for a season or two before the coach finally uses him. While waiting, the athlete was not wasting his time. He was studying the game and honing his skills until he finally had the opportunity to serve.

The affinity, ability, and opportunity principle also applies to finding the right career or vocation. Author, Bible teacher and frequent speaker at NHM, Joe McGee, recommended I read *Discover Your God-Given Gifts* by Don and Katie Fortune. As a school administrator, he used this book as a resource to help determine his students' (and

his own six children's) strengths and giftings.

I purchased the book, but it remained unread, gathering dust until a friend shared how, throughout her life, God had led her into various fields of business for which she felt totally unqualified. Each time she would pray, "Lord, I don't know how to do this, but if it's what You want, provide the tools, the opportunity, and the ability to do as You are directing." God did! Her testimony inspired me and the next week I read the book, followed by numerous articles, devotionals, and two more books on finding the God-given design and direction for your life.

My friend's testimony and the literature I read caused me to realize how much I missed no longer having my own business in the printing and publishing industry. God provided a way for me to purchase a new computer and upgrade my ancient graphic design/typography software. Shortly thereafter, I was asked to put together a magazine for NHM, which was to be published three times per year. Affinity and ability was followed by an opportunity. This year will be my fourth, as Editor of the magazine which has recently increased from 20 pages to 32 pages.

I pray that you will be inspired to discover at least one talent/skill that you LOVE to do, pursue the ability to do it, then ask God to supply the opportunity!



Teresa Rahaim
(d. 10-5-2016)

Christine Hurtado
(d. 1-17-2017)



*Gone from us, but present with the Lord.
Thank you for bringing us joy and friendship;
Thank you for allowing God to use you.
You touched our lives in so many special ways.*

*The NHM Worship Arts and Media Departments
loved you deeply and we miss you.*

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Susan who? Much more than being Pastor Grant's wife, Susan Thigpen has an identity of her own that many do not know. She is a devoted wife, mother, and woman of God. She has a passion for the Body of Christ, particularly the women. She researches and chooses Bible studies suitable for the women of NHM and - by the direction of the Holy Spirit - invites the right person to teach/facilitate the Thursday studies.

Susan is detail and task oriented. She believes in practical Christianity and strives to "live the Word." If the Word says it, you live by it.

One of the practical ways Susan lives out her faith is by sewing baby blankets for new mothers, both those she knows and for mothers being helped by the Pregnancy Resource Center of Southwest Florida (see page 10). She enjoys shopping for the fabric and then getting together with a friend to make the blankets.

Susan started a mentoring program bringing women alongside expectant mothers for prayer and spiritual support. If you regularly attend NHM and want to be a part of this program, contact her at the church office.

Prior to becoming the office manager at NHM, Susan was a paralegal, followed by home-schooling their son, Stephen.

When Susan met Grant, neither were walking with the Lord. It would be a few years and some rough times before he would arrive home and announce that he was going to attend Rhema Bible Training Center. Do you think it was a shock? Did Susan recall that God had told her, as a young girl in Little Rock, Arkansas, that she would one day be a pastor's wife?

If you want to know the answers to those questions, get to know her as a friend, not just as the pastor's wife.



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"Change" a Life Baby Bottle Campaign

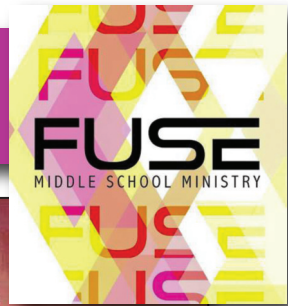
Collect your cash, coins and checks in a
baby bottle to save a life.

Return the filled bottles to
New Hope Ministries by
Sunday, March 5, 2017



FUSE: Middle School Ministry

by Courtney Hubbell



FUSE is the middle school ministry at New Hope Ministries. We have service every Sunday morning at 11am in the Ministry Center. We launched our new program on February 6, 2016 with the desire to create a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere for students to experience Jesus. Our hope is that each student who walks through our doors will encounter Jesus in a way that will ignite their souls so that they will dig deep into a relationship with Him.

Our heart is to engage middle school students in practical teachings and our goal is to equip and empower students to walk out their faith on a day to day basis.

We are grateful to have four incredible teachers to lead our students at FUSE. Each of them is on rotation to teach once a month. We are blessed to be able to get poured into by four different individuals.

We believe that being different is a good thing. When students walk through our doors the first thing they will notice is that our room is not set up like a normal church service. We have filled the room with bean bags and couches for students to sit in while they engage in the service. We believe that Jesus can and



will reach people in any way He desires, but we want to make sure we do our part by creating a space to bring people to Him.

We understand that we cannot do life alone. At the end of each message we take time to break out into "small groups." Small groups consist of 6-8 students who are led by the teachers and leaders at FUSE. During this time teachers, leaders, and students have the opportunity to connect with each other on a different level. We go over the teaching for the day, discuss everyday life, set goals for our week, laugh together, confide in each other, and pray for one another. Our goal of small groups is to build relationships with one another that will, hopefully, last a lifetime.

If you are a parent of a middle schooler, we would be honored to have your student be a part of what we have going on. If you're in middle school yourself, we hope to see you soon!

Missions We Support

Pregnancy Resource Center

OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

The Pregnancy Resource Center of Southwest Florida is an outreach ministry of Jesus Christ through His Church.

Vision: A transformed community where every baby is wanted.

Mission: To prevent abortion and present eternal truth.

What: A network of pregnancy clinics and education centers providing clear and truthful medical based pregnancy confirmation and education for men and women facing an unplanned pregnancy or sexual health crisis.

Pregnancy Resource Center of Southwest Florida stands on the truth that every life has a divine purpose and every human being is endowed with human dignity and precious worth.

It's their belief that real choice involves knowing all the facts and no one should be forced to make a decision because they lack support and encouragement. All women are served without discrimination against race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, or marital status.

When a woman receives an ultrasound and counseling at a life-affirming pregnancy clinic, 80%

of the time she will choose life. 96% of PRC patients continue with their pregnancies because of the compassionate care they receive upon walking through the doors. Where she goes first is the difference between life and death.

They never advise, provide, or refer for abortion or abortifacients (An abortifacient is any drug that produces an abortion. Example: RU486 or the morning-after pill.) They do not recommend, provide, nor refer single women for contraceptives. The value of abstinence is emphasized with single clients when discussing the topic of birth control.

Pregnancy Resource Center is committed to assisting women to carry to term by providing emotional support and practical assistance. Through the provision of God's people and the community at large, women may face the future with hope, and plan constructively for themselves and their babies free of charge at all times. Because of PRC **114 babies** were saved from abortion in 2016!

For more information visit the website at <http://supportprc.org>.

Testimonies:

In previous issues we have heard testimonies from NHM members who are personally involved with the ministry/organization we are featuring. Due to the personal nature of the following testimonies, we are not including names or photos of the individuals.

"Soon after arriving in Naples my boyfriend left me and I found myself pregnant. A family member offered to pay for the abortion and said it would be easier. I came to PRC one night with nothing but fear and deep depression. I left with support, help with rent, a picture of my baby and new friendships. One day I was told about Jesus Christ. How I could have resurrection power to overcome my sins and live a new life. I believed that! Today my baby girl is my life and Jesus is with me."

"I never realized that I could be a parent until the women at PRC told me I could. I was dead set on aborting my baby and was convinced that this was the best course for me. The baby's father could have been anyone. I was dead in my sin and unaware of how much my actions had harmed me. I walked into PRC thinking that they would be able to fulfill that sinful desire for me, instead, I met a group of women who began to love on me, even when I gave them no reason to. They told me that this baby was a precious gift from God and some-

thing to be loved and cherished. They told me of a Father who will never leave me nor forsake me and will provide for me in a way that I never would have been able to on my own, the only thing He would need would be for me to give my life to His, for He already owned it. Since that night at the clinic, I have come to know the Lord as my personal savior and through PRC I was given the tools to be the best kind of mother I can. Now, I can say my baby is 4 months old and she is the best thing to ever happen to me. The Lord truly does provide in a miraculous way! I am so thankful to PRC for being there for me that night as I contemplated life and death."

"I had gone to Planned Parenthood to get the abortion pill. I took it, but my baby survived. Planned Parenthood told me to do another pill, but instead I came to PRC. The nurse helped me see the baby was fine and their weekly parenting classes helped me get ready for her arrival. I am so grateful for all their help."

"I saw the little heart on the TV screen and knew I could not go through with it."

Pregnancy Resource Center of Southwest FL may be reached by calling 239-217-4838.

Business Feature



Gloria Robinson, owner of **Kings Lake Hair Design & Spa** has been attending New Hope for approximately ten years. She had a salon on Long Island, NY for seventeen years before moving to Naples in 1997. She took over the Kings Lake salon fourteen years ago.

The salon has expanded and flourished under Gloria's ownership and her daughter recently earned her cosmetology license and joined Gloria to make it a mother-daughter business.

Kings Lake Hair Design & Spa is a generous supporter of NHM's Fishing Banquets and Hunting Banquets. Gloria donates salon services along with fishing and hunting gear and accessories and, multiple times, has been the winner of her own contributions. Of course her ticket is put back into the "hopper" and another winning ticket is chosen.

Gloria is also a generous supporter of our Angel Tree, School

Supply, and other drives.

Gloria is quick to say, "This is God's salon and I just run it. More than 80% of my workers are born again believers."

The salon has 18 hairdressers, 3 barbers, 3 skin care technicians, and 2 nail technicians. One barber offers an old fashioned hot lather and straight edge razor shave. The nail technicians offer full service manicures and pedicures to both men and women.

One of the newest services at the salon is **Epiwave**, which Gloria describes as "a deep power wash of the skin using ultrasound."

The salon uses and sells Matrix, Paul Mitchell, and Goldwell products, and has recently added a unique jewelry line.

Gloria loves the connection she has with her salon clients and when she is not shampooing, cutting and styling hair, she can be found showing property to her real estate clients.

Conviction and Grace



Jay Johnstone

In the summer of 2000, I was about to turn 47. I had been married for 5 years. It was just my wife, her two sons, and me in our house in East Naples. There were many unresolved issues that year, and instead of operating in the spirit, I was operating in the flesh.

One unresolved issue resulted in my arrest on the second Saturday of July that year. After a night in the Collier County jail, I went before the judge. When my misdemeanor case came up, the judge said, "No contact with the victim," and the bail was set at \$200.00. That night, I fell into a deep sleep and was awakened by the jailer a little after midnight on Monday morning. When I was suddenly released, the bail bondsman informed me that a woman where I had worked had called her husband, a Collier County Deputy and, "He called me to pay the bail and get you out of jail."

I was driven by this gentleman to an East Naples motel. That night, I realized I had worked with that lady for many years, but never really knew her. She went to bat for me and got me out of a dark place.

The next morning, I headed out from the motel with the mission of walking the two miles to my house. I needed to pack a suitcase and find a place to live

before my arraignment in three weeks. I had only walked a short distance when a car pulled over, and a lady called out my name. It was a woman I recognized from New Hope. Within moments of trying to explain my weekend, I fell apart, went to pieces, a floodgate of emotion opened up. If a person had looked into that car that morning, the natural man might have said, "That poor blubbing fool." That woman was very kind to me. She did not judge me. She had compassion for my situation.

My arrest had been over an altercation with my stepson. The two boys had been wrestling while my wife and I were out of the house. When we returned, I reacted in anger by giving the 16 year old a boot in the butt with the side of my foot for making his 10 year old brother cry.

My wife was inconsolable; she was very angry at me when I told her I had reacted the way I did. While I took time to cool off in our bedroom for an hour, my wife called one of her closest friends from New Hope. The friend suggested calling the Sheriff's office. In this county, if one spouse calls to report a domestic disturbance, more than likely, someone is going to jail.

continued on page 14



Conviction and Grace continued from page 13

The battery charges were dropped without having to hire a lawyer; however, the marriage did not survive. It had been on shaky ground for many months because of poor communication and unforgiveness between family members.

Many years went by; fast forward to 2010. I felt the Holy Spirit had brought a remembrance of that weekend in 2000. Later that same year, I gave a testimony at a dinner meeting of the NHM men's ministry. The last two points I made that night were: (1) I had many regrets about that weekend. Some had been resolved and some had not. (2) I remembered the tears.

They started to fall the next Monday morning and continued for seven days. I cried a bucket of tears, but I was not ashamed. I knew I had misjudged someone at work. Someone who came to my rescue that weekend in jail. When we see someone in a new light, and are convicted by the Holy Spirit, through confession and repentance, we are restored. We are washed clean by the Blood of the Lamb.

In the fall of 2016, after being away from church ministry for six years, I knew it was time to come back. Since then, I have been helping teach the second and third grade boys on Wednesday nights. On Friday nights, I help with the Harvest Ministry on Airport Road. We bring food over

from New Hope's kitchen to serve dinner to all who attend their meeting. Sunday mornings, I help direct traffic at NHM.

Last week, a young brother in the Lord helped me move some furniture out of my house. I felt led to share a scripture with him. The tears have returned these last few weeks. Not sad tears, but glad tears. I knew the Holy Spirit wanted to impart the last piece of the puzzle. In the apostle Paul's letter to the church in Rome, he writes in chapter 1, verse 16, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It is the power of God to salvation for all who believe, first for the Jew and then for the Gentile."

I know what the natural man looks like in the mirror. There were many days and nights over the years, I did not like what I saw reflected back. All those years digging up old corpses (hurt feelings) and wondering if there was ever going to be some victory for me in my Christian walk.

However, when I started to see my true reflection in God's Word as Christ sees me, then I knew there is Christian liberty, freedom, and no condemnation. So, I can share a scripture with a young brother in the Lord or I can go out into the street and share the Good News with a stranger, and I am not ashamed. **Not Ashamed.**

With grateful thanks to God the Father, the Lord Jesus, and my guide, the Holy Spirit. Amen.



HIStory of New Hope Ministries

New Hope Ministries began on February 10, 1982, as a home Bible study on 105th Avenue North, with about 20 people in attendance. One month later, we moved to our first storefront location, at the North Naples Shopping Center, on 108th Avenue North. In September 1982, we moved to the Central Mall on Goodlette Road, now the present day Bayfront Inn. We held church in the old RadioShack location and used the hallways of the mall for our children's church.

The building was scheduled to be torn down, so in March of 1982 we moved around the corner to the Benson Insurance Agency building on 5th Avenue South where the Hyatt House currently resides. It was at that location that we started to hold multiple services.

In March 1984, we moved to the Hitching Post Shopping Plaza on the East Trail. We had 120 theater seats, plus we had to add more chairs to accommodate our Sunday service attendance. Thinking ahead we purchased property on the south side of Davis Boulevard and in April of 1986, we moved into our new sanctuary building.

The church continued to grow, and in 1989 we had to enlarge our sanctuary. Back then we held three morning services in addition to our Sunday evening and Wednesday

evening services. In 1990, we purchased property on the north side of Davis Boulevard, realizing that we, eventually, would need a larger sanctuary to accommodate our rapid growth.

In the fall of 1995, we broke ground at the present day site of New Hope Ministries. After lots of blasting and land clearing, the foundation began to be built in March 1996. We held the dedication service on May 4, 1997.

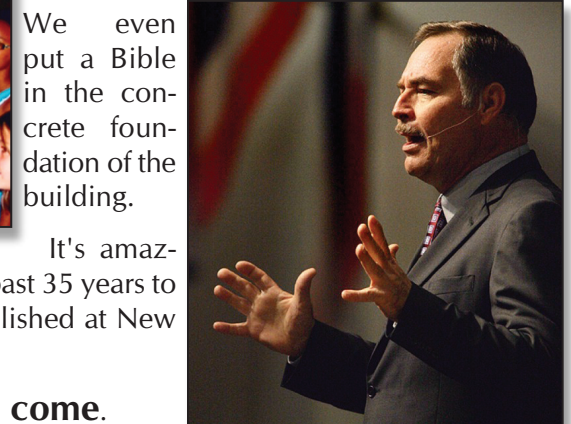
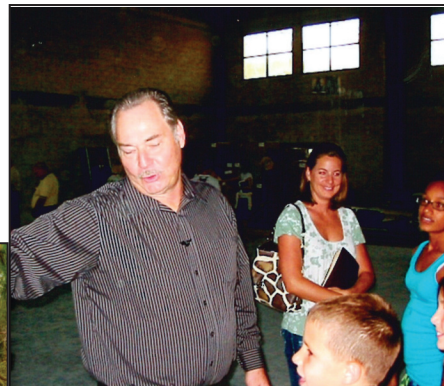


Since 1997, we have renovated our stage eight times. In February 2002, we celebrated our 20th anniversary. In the summer of 2004, we began broadcasting on television, a weekly, hour-long



service on the SkyAngel satellite network and locally on WRXY. It was such a hit for the station that, in September 2005, we were asked by the network to record an hour-long broadcast showcasing our worship department in a night of worship.

In February 2007, we celebrated our 25th anniversary. One year later, on April 11, 2008, we began clearing the land for our Event Center. Construction began one year later and we finally moved in a year after that (2010). One Sunday evening, we took a service time to have people write scripture verses all over the concrete floor of our gym, before we put the floor down.



We even put a Bible in the concrete foundation of the building.

It's amazing, looking back at these past 35 years to see what God has accomplished at New Hope Ministries. And...

the best is yet to come.



- ___ Cherries, ___ Cupcakes,
- ___ Strawberries, ___ Donuts,
- ___ Cakes, ___ Hearts,
- ___ Conversation Hearts,
- ___ Flowers, ___ Love Birds,
- ___ Rainbows, ___ Arrows,
- ___ Cookies/Macaroons



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ANSWERS: Cherries (9), Cupcakes (7), Strawberries (4), Donuts (6), Cakes (3), Hearts (6), Conversation Hearts (8), Flowers (5), Rainbows (4), Arrows (4), Cookies/Macaroons (3)

IT WORKS!

BECAUSE OF YOU!

NEW HOPE MINISTRIES' VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BANQUET



Saturday, March 11, 2017
6:00pm to 8:30pm
New Hope Banquet Hall

Please RSVP online at newhopenaples.com
no later than Monday, March 6

Childcare is available,
but you MUST pre-register

Red Bliss & Dill Potato Salad



Recipe compliments of
Chef Brian Elwell

Cook time: 35 minutes; Prep. time: 30 minutes;
Ready in: 1 hour 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

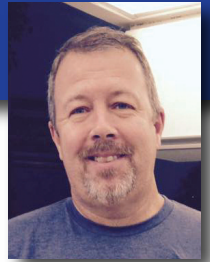
3lbs unpeeled red potatoes
3/4 cup sour cream
3/4 cup mayonnaise
1 Tablespoon apple cider vinegar, or to taste
1 Tablespoon Dijon mustard, or to taste
1/2 white onion, finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely chopped
1 teaspoon celery salt
salt and pepper to taste
1 Tablespoon fresh chopped dill weed

DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Place the potatoes in a large pot, cover them with water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the potatoes are cooked through but still firm, about 20 minutes. Remove from the water, let cool and cut the potatoes into chunks. Set aside.
- 2 In a bowl, stir together the sour cream, mayonnaise, apple cider vinegar, Dijon mustard, onion, celery, celery salt, and salt and pepper until well mixed.
- 3 Place the cooled potato chunks into a large salad bowl and sprinkle with fresh dill. Pour the dressing over the potatoes and mix lightly. Cover and refrigerate the salad for at least 30 minutes. Serve cold.

Lost At Sea

by Chef Brian Elwell



My friend and I were traveling in a small boat from Montrouis, Haiti to the island of La Gonave. We were five miles off shore when a violent storm capsized our boat. We were able to get the boat upright and get inside, but it was floating a few feet beneath the surface of the water. Being "in" the boat meant we didn't have to tread water, but we were submerged up to our necks.

Day turned to night and still we floated without food or water and no land in sight. It was pitch black and we were cold. **Three weeks earlier a Haitian boat had capsized and eighty-seven people were eaten by sharks. Needless to say, we were afraid!**

As morning dawned and all we could see was water, we were discouraged. We had been crying out to God, but the hopelessness of our situation was weighing heavy on us. We'd had to "talk each other off the ledge" more than once. There was no relief from the beating sun, we had no fresh water, and death seemed eminent, especially when we saw shark fins circling us. **Around and around they swam and then suddenly they were gone!** The next sight was of a whale spouting water.

God had sent a whale to deliver us from being shark food!

Finally a fisherman in a small boat, miles from his island, spotted us and took us to safety. After two days lost at sea, we were dehydrated, hungry and severely sunburned, but God had rescued us. This was truly a life changing event and my passion to serve God and His people was made even stronger.

The youngest of six children, my siblings and I were raised by our single father after the sudden death of our mother. I came to know Jesus as my Savior as a young teenager, during a huge "Jesus Movement" at my high school in Massachusetts. God placed a desire in my heart to know His Word so I completed my junior and senior classes in one year and graduated high school at the age of sixteen.

Following graduation I attended Stevens School of the Bible for three years. After Bible school I spent two years aboard the "La Gracia," a medical mission ship sailing throughout the Caribbean islands. We distributed medicine and food, and ministered the Gospel of Christ. (It was during this time that I was lost at sea.) God also allowed me to

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Lost at Sea continued from page 21

minister in Africa, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Greece.

Shortly after returning from the mission field I started dating Carrin. We were married in 1987 and have three beautiful daughters. This year we will celebrate our 30th anniversary!

I worked my way up from dishwasher to chef, trained by a famous chef at a five star restaurant in Massachusetts, and later became the Executive Chef at Moorings Park in Naples, FL.

Work and raising a family had started to overshadow God's calling on my life until He put me in the position of nursing my dying father. The weeks I spent with my father brought perspective and was another life changing event for me.

Being offered the opportunity to work for a Christian organization which helps the homeless of Collier County meant a large reduction in salary, but my family believed that this was what God wanted. It was there, at St. Matthews House, that we discov-

ered the great needs of men and women with addictions. Each morning we had a Bible study and we also began picking up the residents and bringing them to New Hope Ministries to attend services on Sundays and Wednesday nights.

Four years later, after New Hope's commercially equipped kitchen was completed, I came on staff as Executive Chef. My beautiful wife, Carrin, volunteers in the concession stand serving breakfast on Sunday mornings and spends countless hours working alongside me ministering to our church family and the community.

Our daughters grew up attending New Hope. The oldest spent a year on the mission field in Africa. She is now back at home, and her passion is working with victims of human trafficking. Our middle daughter is a hair stylist here in Naples and was married at New Hope in October 2015. Our youngest daughter lives with us while working part time as a hostess and attending FSW.

Reaping Your Financial Harvest

by Pastor Heath Jarvis



It's been my observation that the Body of Christ has heard a lot of teaching on sowing and reaping, as it applies to finances. However, there needs to be more teaching on what to do after we sow.

Farmers don't simply plant seed, then wait for their barns to magically fill themselves. Farmers must purposefully plant their seed, cultivate and nurture that seed, then they must take the physical action of reaping the harvest their seed produces. The same principle applies to us when we sow financial seed.

I believe many Christians think they simply sow their seed, then wait for God to drop unexpected checks in their mailbox. Does God ever bless us in that fashion? Actually, yes. But, more often I believe He blesses us through God-inspired ideas that channel financial prosperity to us.

Galatians 6:9 says, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

The word "due" in this verse is a Greek word which means "pertaining or belonging to one's self; individual." It is translated "his own" and "their own" over 60 times. To my knowledge, it is

only translated "due" in this verse. The season in which you reap your financial harvest is your individual season. It may be longer or shorter than someone else's season. It's your season. Don't faint before your season of harvest arrives. Don't let go of your profession of faith. Don't become double-minded. Your harvest is coming. It has no choice.

The word "season" really excited me. It's the same word that is translated "opportunity" in the next verse. So when you understand that "due" means "individual" and "season" means "opportunity," here's what you get: "In individual opportunity we shall reap, if we faint not."

Your financial harvest most likely will come in the form of individual opportunities – opportunities God has designed specifically applying to you; opportunities that fit your niche; opportunities that only you can fulfill; opportunities that channel financial prosperity into your life.

Sow your financial seed, then watch for God to send you those individual opportunities. When they arrive, have the boldness to walk out those opportunities by faith. That's how the Kingdom operates, folks!

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Love: Convenient or Covenant

by Pastor Michael Smith



There is a government standard for weights and measures that guarantees you always get what you pay for. Imagine ordering a pound of meat and the butcher only gives you ten ounces instead of sixteen. When you protest, he says, "Well, you call it the way you see it, I call it the way I see it. Looks close enough to me." How would you feel? In God's kingdom He sets all the standards including the one for love. John 15:12 says, "This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you." When we start living by that standard, we won't have to worry about betraying each other or speaking evil of each other. We'll be able to confront each other with a love that is protective and seeks only the best. Also, the one who is confronted will be secure enough to know that they won't be rejected, judged, or thrown out with the garbage just because they had made a mistake.

There are really two kinds of love: convenient love and covenant love. Convenient love says, "I'll love you as long as I get what I want." But covenant love says, "I'm committed to loving you in spite of your shortcomings, because God put us to-

gether." In I Thessalonians 3:12, the apostle Paul prayed that our love would "...increase and overflow for each other..." Increasing love! Overflowing love! In order to meet that standard we have got to cleanse our heart, get our motivation right, and begin to move to a higher level of commitment. That covenant love or "agape" love will always manifest itself in the physical realm by our willingness to serve others. Serving friends and enemies, family and stranger, church and community, is what God has called us to do. In Galatians 5:13, the scripture instructs us to "...serve one another in love..."

One aspect of serving one another is to help people by looking for something good in them and then helping them to build on it. Help others to capitalize and develop their God-given gifts and talents. Low self-esteem runs crazy in this world today because people choose to listen to what the world says about them instead of what the Word of God says about them. If people don't feel good about themselves, they'll never believe that they can be successful.

Learn to make the people around you, especially your fam-

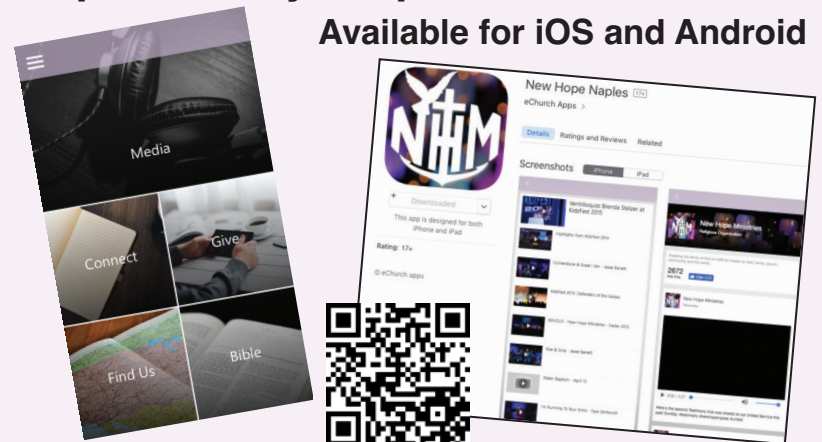
ily and friends, feel special and important, because God says that they are. You can love them into that reality, even when they have lost the love for themselves.

I John 3:2 says, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He (Christ) appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." For every individual, God has a divine plan and purpose. Help those around you to see that. Regardless of color, culture, or background, with God, everyone has the potential for excellence. Paul once said of

Timothy, "I have no one quite like Timothy. He is loyal, and genuinely concerned for you." (Philippians 2:20) Can you imagine how Timothy must have felt when he heard those words? Life gives us more kicks than kisses, and all of us need words of praise and encouragement from time to time. Think about it. There are words of encouragement that you can turn and speak to someone right now. If no one is in the room with you at this very moment, pick up the phone and call someone. Take five minutes right now, and the Lord will show you who to call and what to say. **Can you do it???**

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Our Children's Walk

by Shearon Piper

A friend of mine was concerned about her grown children's spiritual walk with the Lord. I wrote this to encourage her, remembering what I had gone through with my son, Chad.

To me, it looked as though Chad had walked away from God. Those times I went to the Father, He always assured me that He had Chad in the palm of His hand, and that no person or thing could take him out.

To my way of thinking, Chad's actions represented his heart. When I spoke with him, Chad would tell me, in a few words here and there, that he was seeking the Lord. That he had found

the Lord. The things he spoke and his actions did not look like my walk, so I doubted the validity of his words. I thought he was deluding himself.

However, even through all the stuff, God saw Chad's heart. He saw that Chad sought Him and, in spite of the things meant as detours from the enemy and the influence of lost friends, Chad found God.

Chad and I both found God to be faithful through it all, even to Chad's very end.

If our children know God's free gift of salvation, He has them in the palm of His hand. Nothing can steal them from God. Thank You Father, for your faithfulness.

The Basics... of Emergency Preparedness

by Tony Rahaim,
Retired Military and Public Safety



Spring in south Florida is a great time to review your emergency planning and supplies.

Most of the year, our top three natural concerns are severe lightning, tornadoes, and tropical storms. Being prepared can make a difference - physically, financially, and emotionally.

Plain and simple, are you ready for some sort of disaster? If not, why not? Please get over the "It won't happen to me" mentality. After more than 33 years of public service, I've learned that a lack of planning will cause problems.

This article is a brief look at basic preparedness based on biblical principles. Yes, I said biblical principles. There are many places in the Bible that talk about preparedness. Due to space limitations, type this into your web browser <http://tinyurl.com/hqfvha9>.

Where to start? First, stay on your budget. Begin with 24-48 hours of food, water, shelter, medications, climate control, communications, alternate power, etc. After that, extend your supplies to 72-96 hours and keep building from there. Ultimately, you should be able to take care of your family for at least ten days or longer - without any assistance. Realistically, you should plan for the number typically in

your household, including pets and regular houseguests.

I cannot stress this enough - make a plan! Discuss it with all family members that drive or are old enough to babysit.

Having a plan gives you options. You can always change a plan. No plan = poor choices and possible panic.

Think about:

Safe exits from home and neighborhood.

Meeting places to reunite.

Designated person to pick up children should you be unavailable.

Contact persons close-by and out-of-town.

Health history/medications - chronic conditions for humans and pets.

Special needs or medications that require refrigeration.

Location of fire extinguisher(s), water, electrical, gas shutoffs, etc.

Local and regional paper maps - learn how to use them.

Making sure you, your family, and your pets are healthy.

Ensuring your vehicles are in good working condition.

Checking the weather at least

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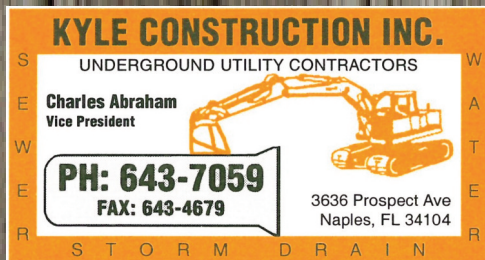
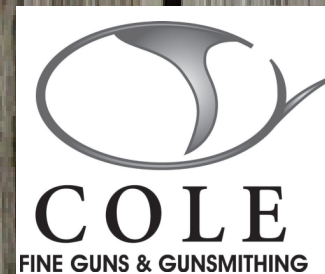
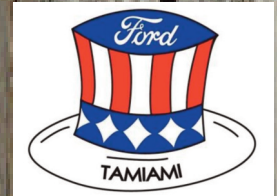
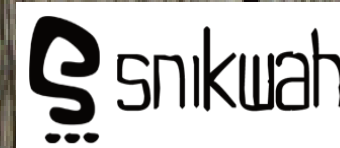
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The Basics continued from page 27

once a day for the most current forecasts.

Remember, you may have to travel some distance to get to safe areas. Things that happen hundreds of miles away can affect our region.

Have primary and backup communications and plans that include if there are total communications failures. Cell phone towers will be overloaded and only have enough fuel for about forty-eight hours on generator.

Have two weeks of medication(s), and don't forget basics like vitamins, aspirin, antacids, etc. Remember to check for expiration dates. Throw out medications more than 30 days out of date.

If you have not taken a first aid and CPR class within the last 5 years, get current. New Hope offers first aid and CPR classes several times a year, as do other organizations in the area.

Keep some clothes that fit (for all types of weather conditions) in your go kit.

Figure out your family's food,

water, and gasoline budget for two weeks. You should have that amount of cash available. In a major disaster, there will be no power for ATMs, and banks will be closed.

Work with your family, neighbors or co-workers. Plan and discuss things before time. If your neighbor has a generator that will power the block, ask if you can share it if you help with costs. Share each other's resources.

Pets are not allowed in some emergency shelters, so plan for a pet friendly location.

If local officials dictate, leave the area. Secure your home, notify your family that you are leaving, and go.

In case of a major disaster, there will come a point in time where you call the local emergency number and no one is coming. The public safety personnel coming to your aid must ensure their families are safe, too. Then, they need to get organized, and then safely get to your area. This takes time.

Preparedness Web Sites:

For our furry, feathered or scaly family member:

<http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/disaster-preparedness/>

American Red Cross:

<http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/be-red-cross-ready>

Food Safety: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/>

National Weather Service: <http://www.weather.gov/briefing/>

Specials Needs resources:

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/disabilities>
<http://www.accessibleemergencyinfo.com/>



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