

THE JOURNEY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM FPC-KINGWOOD

LEARNING TO LIVE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD WITH PASSION, POWER AND PURPOSE

FEBRUARY, 2012



THE ALPHA COURSE
Returns to FPC-Kingwood



Denominational Discernment

I wanted to take an opportunity to write to all of you this month because, for the past eight months, since the report that was completed and presented to all of us by the Denominational Relations Study Task Force (DRST), I know the issue of our congregation's continuing denominational identity has been on the minds of many of you. It's been on my mind too.

At the beginning of December I took time to write an insert for "The Weekly" that sought to bring all of us "up to speed" on the process our Session continues to pray and work through in order to bring a recommendation to our congregation. (If you missed seeing that insert you can find it on our web page www.fpc-kingwood.org. Just click the "DRST" button and look for the section called "Updates.")

Since that update though an important development has taken place. At a conference in Orlando in January, more than 2200 Presbyterians from 765 congregations came together to discuss their continuing relationship to the PCUSA. Like us, most of them are "in process" on this issue. But some congregations that were there were ready to band together and begin something new, a new branch of the Presbyterian family tree, a new Reformed body, a new denomination called The Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians or ECO.

This news broadens the possible directions of our discernment process here at FPCK. And currently our Session is considering those directions and familiarizing themselves with the current theology and polity of the PCUSA, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the new Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians. I want to encourage you to do the same.

For that reason, we've placed all of the resources our Session is studying on the web page. You can find the resources by looking in the same location I referenced above. I hope you'll take some time in the next few weeks to do that. And as you do, remember the words Paul wrote: "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."

May those words guide us as we move forward, reminding us that our attitude in expressing our convictions and making decisions is as important as the convictions and decisions themselves.

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Jim Davis,
First Presbyterian Church of Kingwood

Missional Spotlight

The February Communion designation is *The Forge For Families*.

The Forge is strategically located in the most disadvantaged section of Houston, Texas, to serve the Second and Third Wards.

The Forge for Families is intent on serving as watchmen in the inner-city by holistically addressing the needs of our community and encouraging children & adults through children's programming (educational & athletic), practical parent training, pre-marital and marital counseling, and economic development which includes personal financial management and employment.

This results-oriented approach to programming is based on The Forge's previous success in parent classes, encouragement of healthy marriages, and economic improvement. We have operated family services for 19 years, including children, parent, marriage, father, and single-mother programs. The Forge for families operates in a new, 28,000+ square foot facility situated on two acres.

FPC-Kingwood has a wonderful history with this important program. The commitment of The Forge for Families to Houston's inner-city is to assist in repairing the breach and to serve as Watchmen or Sentries for these precious families.

There are 6 commitment areas each of our programs fall under.

- Family Discipleship
- Youth Educational Training
- Economic Development
- Servant-Leadership Training
- Whole-Life Self Development Training
- Athletic Discipleship

Recently, Craig Whitlock, the Executive Director for the Forge, visited FPC-Kingwood to share the wonderful work that they endeavor to achieve. Please consider helping this worthy program.

The Alpha Course Begins

We would like to invite you to join us for the ALPHA COURSE, which begins Sunday, February 12 at 5:30 p.m.

Alpha is a practical introduction to the Christian faith, and it is a great way for anyone with serious questions about faith to explore Christianity. The Alpha Course meets every week for eleven weeks. Each evening begins with supper, includes a talk about one aspect of faith, and ends with an opportunity to meet in small groups to discuss and study the Bible. All meetings will take place on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:45 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of First Presbyterian Church in Kingwood, 5520 Kingwood

COME AND SEE – February 12 DINNER AND A MOVIE

Introduction to the Alpha Course – Come for dinner and a taste of the course and then decide if you want to register for the rest of the course. The topic for February 12 will be "Christianity – Boring, Untrue, and Irrelevant??" Just let us know that you are coming so that we can have enough food prepared. There is no charge for the Alpha Course, no obligation to attend all sessions, and no pressure to join our church.

You can let us know you want to come by contacting Dot Chapman, 281-361-2028 or by registering for the course on our website at www.fpc-kingwood.org and go to the Ministry tab and look for Alpha.

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| February 12 | Christianity – Boring, Untrue, Irrelevant? |
| February 19 | Who is Jesus? |
| February 26 | Why did Jesus have to Die? |
| March 4 | How can I be sure of my faith? |
| March 11 | Spring Break No Alpha |
| March 18 | Why and How should I read the Bible? |
| March 25 | Why and How do I pray? |
| April 1 | How Does God Guide Us? |
| April 8 | EASTER - NO ALPHA |
| April 13/14 | Holy Spirit Retreat (Friday 6-9 p.m. and Saturday 9-11:30 am) |
| April 22 | Why and How Should we tell others? |
| April 29 | What about evil? |
| May 6 | Does God Heal Today? |
| May 13 | What about the Church? |

News to Know... News to Use.

Cursillo Weekend Do you ever desire for your Christian faith to be fuller and a little more joyful? Would you like to find a way to connect with others? Take a 3-day weekend to learn more about Grace, Faith, Action and the Christian Life. Bring your questions and ideas to life as you explore them with a small table of fellow believers. Enlighten your heart with great food, song, and movies. This is a Cursillo weekend and you can experience this at Camp Allen. Come join us February 9-12 and for more information, contact Dot or Howard Chapman (dotchap1@gmail.com), Mark or Sandra Smith (doc_smith@hotmail.com) Art Tanamachi (art.tanamachi@gmail.com), or Roland Zavala (rrzavala@gmail.com) or visit the Cursillo website at www.houstoncursillo.org.

FPC-Kingwood Blood Drive Please donate blood at our next blood drive on February 12th in Fellowship Hall. Appointments are available from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. You may sign up online at www.commitforlife.org, sponsor code 0331, or call Lloyd Higdon at 281.359.1020.

Donuts with your Deacons on February 19th It's that time of year again! The Board of Deacons would like to invite everyone out to enjoy a donut in Fellowship Hall and get acquainted with your deacon. Come on over between services and spend a few minutes with our deacons.

Annual Meeting Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, **February 26th, 2012**, starting at 11:00 a.m. The meeting will follow a single worship service to be held at 10:00 a.m. Box lunches will be provided, courtesy of the Church Life committee, from Jason's Deli. There will be no fee for the lunch but donations will gladly be accepted. To reserve a lunch, please see the sign-up sheet at the Church Life table in Fellowship Hall. We look forward to seeing you there!

H.A.A.M. Chili Cookoff The annual Humble Area Assistance Ministry Chili Cook-Off is scheduled to take place on February 26th from 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. at the Humble Civic Center.

Vienna Boys Choir a Big Success! Thank you to all who helped to make the historic February 4th concert such a wonderful experience both for our congregation and our community.

Conservation Reminder The Building & Grounds Committee asks that we be mindful of electricity usage and look for ways to conserve whenever possible. Some useful suggestions include:

- Close doors and shut off lights when leaving a room
- Cut lights off in any unoccupied room that you pass by.
- Avoid propping exterior doors open.
- Do not alter thermostats settings. If temporarily occupying a room, use the "temporary occupied" button.
- Keep blinds in the closed or near-closed position.
- Keep night meetings at church to a minimum. Consider holding meetings at location other than the Church.

The Building & Grounds Committee welcomes your suggestions as to how to conserve the use of electricity. A ten percent reduction in electrical use would provide the Church almost \$15,000 more to spend on spiritual programs.

Deacon Doings -

... In the TV mystery series, Columbo, actor Peter Falk always turned and said, "Oh, just one more thing..." The board of deacons is asking that those of you who are interested in helping with "Just one more thing" let us know who you are as we expand our Good Samaritan program. This is an outreach program where we drive our own FPC members to doctor appointments or treatments. Please pray about this and if you would like your name on our growing list of volunteers, kindly phone Jane Quebedeaux at 281-358-6797 or express your interest to any of the deacons. By having this list of names available we can witness to church members as they experience difficult times. Please pray about this and talk to others in our church family about how this is "one more thing" we can do to witness to our Savior.

...Did you know that FPC-Kingwood participates in **Loaves and Fishes** on the second Sunday of each month?

Loaves and Fishes is a meal ministry to 300 to 400 homeless people in Houston. The site of this ministry is in the shadows of Minute Maid Park.

If one of your new year resolutions is to do more to witness to others, please let Doug McGrath at 281.361.5560 or Jane Quebedeaux at 281.358.6797 know you want to help. Our assigned task is to prepare the salad and assist in the serving. The deacons provide the salad ingredients, so all we ask is a few hours of your time and that you wear some kind of hat, a baseball cap works fine!!! This is an invitation extended to the entire congregation to participate in this meaningful mission.

Children & Family Ministry

What's Happening in Children's Ministries...

On Facebook? So are we! Lets be friends -
"FPC-Kingwood ChildrensMinistries"
Follow us on Twitter 'firstpreskids'

Kids' Stewardship Campaign

Children 2 years thru 4th grade returned their offering boxes in 2011 during Palm Sunday, Promotion Sunday, and December 18th services, collecting over \$700! Proceeds were sent to Compassion International, Rice Bowls Inc. and The Hands and Feet Project. Our proceeds will continue our sponsorship of a little girl from Ecuador thru Compassion International, allow us to provide support to Christian orphanages (currently in India, Haiti, Rwanda and South Africa) thru Rice Bowls, Inc and The Hands and Feet Project. We will continue our children's stewardship campaign in 2012, sending new boxes home during Sunday school and Kids' Church this month. Additional boxes are always available in the church office or CE wing Resource room.

Thank you for helping our children to understand that there are many ways to give. It is important that the focus is not only on the monetary offering, but rather learning to give back.

VBS 2012 - Babylon: Daniel's Courage in Captivity

In just a few months, our church will be filled with the aromas, sights, and sounds of kids participating in fun discovery activities at a special Holy Land Adventure—in Babylon!



Register online at - <http://www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/hl/fpckids>

What are the dates & times for VBS this year?

Monday, June 11th – Thursday, June 14th
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm for 4-year-old preschoolers – 4th graders

When can I register my child?

Registration for church members only begins March 20th (online); April 1st on Sunday mornings between and after services in the Fellowship Hall.

"Open registration" begins Friday, April 13th – either online or by picking up a form in the church office/Fellowship Hall between services.

Children's First School registration is April 17th in the Fellowship Hall from 9-11am.

How much does VBS cost this year?

\$15 per child/\$50 maximum per family

I can't come on Sunday morning – can I still register? How?

Yes! Forms can be picked up in the church office or completed online.

Please note - registration is not final until payment has been received.

Who can I talk to for more information or if I have other questions?

Questions can be emailed to fpckvbs@gmail.com.

Are you interested in helping to plan this year's VBS? It isn't too late to join our steering committee – contact Angela Howard at angela@fpc-kingwood.org for more information!

Want to get involved?

Do you have an awesome idea for Children's ministry? Love working with kids? We'd love to talk to you! Contact Angela Howard at angela@fpc-kingwood.org or join us on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:00pm at the Children's Discipleship Committee meeting (child-care provided).

Student Ministry

Octane's Sex, Love & Dating Weekend: February 17-19, 2012

FPC-Kingwood's Student Ministry will be hosting a weekend-long Sex, Love, and Dating course in which they will candidly and honestly address important issues that high school students face everyday. In this weekend course, we will cover topics such as dating, relationships, the multi-dimensions of sex (anatomy/physiology/psychology), pregnancies, STDs, break-ups, marriage, and God's intended purpose for all of the above.

All permission slips can be found on-line at www.fpc-kingwood.org

For more information about this weekend, please contact the Student Ministry staff:

Angie Alanowski: angie@fpc-kingwood.org

Matt Davis: matt@fpc-kingwood.org

Announcing Breakaway....

Breakaway is our 5th-8th grade Spring Break trip that will be taking place March 12-15, 2012. All 5th-8th grade students are invited to spend a week at Deer Creek Camp in Medina, Texas. We have the entire camp to ourselves!

What happens during this trip? Students will travel together in 15-passenger vans. On our way to Medina, we'll be taking a stop at Bucees! Once we arrive at camp, students will participate in things such as the Deer Creek Camp Hillbilly Hoedown Dance, zip lines, low ropes courses, canoe races, chocolate syrup slip-n-slides, awesome worship, and so much more! The cost for this trip is only \$175.

There are only 48 spots available, so sign up soon! All permission slips can be found on-line at www.fpc-kingwood.org.

For more information about this trip, please contact the Student Ministry staff:

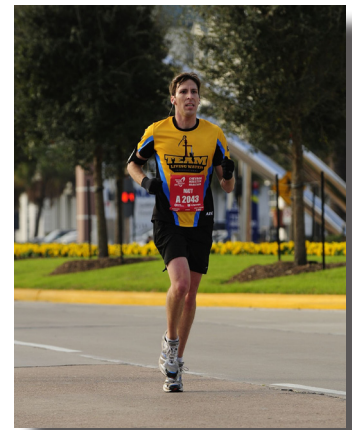
Angie Alanowski: angie@fpc-kingwood.org

Matt Davis: matt@fpc-kingwood.org



Running for Water

In the dark and cold morning hours of January 15 Matt Davis found himself lining up with 25,000 other people in front of the George R. Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston. Six weeks of training--not nearly enough if you ask him--was about to be put to the test. As the 2012 Houston Marathon started, Matt took his first few strides in what would be the most memorable 26.2 miles of his distance running career.



Running has always been a significant part of his life; through high school, college and after. At one point, he was running 120 miles a week! However, amidst the long runs, shoes, blisters, fartleks, track meets, road races, and more he struggled with his identity. Too often, he allowed running and not God to tell him who he was; deriving self-worth and value as a person from performance, time, or finishing place. A few years ago, weary of it, he decided to hang up his shoes and step away from the track.

Last Easter weekend, he felt the urge to begin seriously running again. Matt began to put in some easy runs a few times a week. He signed up for a local 5k. Fighting the old competitive temptations, he simply began to ask that the Lord would use his running for His glory, that He would delight in it, and that he would feel His pleasure with every step. Things went well. Matt was able to run just to run and enjoy it and, more importantly, enjoy Him. Then during the week of Thanksgiving, Matt received a call from Living Water International asking if he would consider running the Houston Marathon as a member of their advocacy team. Excited, he eagerly agreed, because God was using the talent that He had given him for a purpose. Living Water International is a faith based non-profit that exists to provide clean water wells to disadvantaged communities in the developing and third world countries. FPC-Kingwood's Student Ministry has been partnering with them for the past four years through Advent Conspiracy to help them raise funding. Suddenly two things Matt felt passionately about were blending seamlessly together and all for God's glory.

As Matt staggered across the finish line completely exhausted, he considered the dream he had just fulfilled and the money that was raised for Living Water and was reminded of a favorite verse found in Psalm 119:32, "I run in the path of the Lord's commands, for He has set my heart free." Set my heart free? Indeed he had. Matt's marathon experience was an exercise in running for the glory of God.

For more info on Living Water International, or to make a donations check out: <http://water.cc/>

Adult Ministry

Sunday Mornings at FPC-Kingwood

9:45 a.m.

[Present Word](#) (Meet in the Chapel)

Tradition and Wisdom Unit 1: Teaching and Learning

Feb. 12 Freed From Law Through Christ

Galatians 3: 1-14 Roger Eddy

Feb. 19 Heirs To the Promise

Galatians 3:15-18;4:1-7 Roger Eddy

Feb. 26 Fruits of Redemption

Galatians 5:22-6:10 Larry Offenbacher

[Biblical Stream](#)

[Kindred Spirits](#) (Meet in the Parlor) The Gospel of John

Feb 12 Jesus Prays for Us Judy Crowell

Feb 19 Trial & Trust Lloyd Higdon

Feb 26 Character Test Gert Meij

[Theology Stream](#)

[Our Conversation Class](#) (Meet in Room 215)

The Making of the King James Bible: Next to the Bible itself, the English Bible was -- and is -- the most influential book ever published. The most famous of all English Bibles, the King James Version, was the culmination of centuries of work by various translators, from John Wycliffe to William Tyndale to Miles Coverdale, and others. During the month of February the Conversation Class will look at the events that took place that brought us our English Bible. It's a story filled with political, religious, and cultural forces that reads like a modern day battle of good and evil. Come join the Conversation Class with Phil Wagner as we examine the events that changed the world. You will be glad you did.

[Biblical Stream](#)

11:05 a.m.

[Emmaus Way](#) (Meet in the Chapel) This class goes deeper into the sermon and the text for the day.

[Biblical Stream](#)

[Truth Seekers](#) (Meet in the Parlor)

Over-emphasizing Satan's power is a huge mistake, but so is ignoring his activity. We live in a world where many people would prefer to pretend he doesn't exist, but he is real. Come and hear how to stand firm against the wiles of this being who "masquerades as an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). We will be using the DVD and book "The Invisible War", by Chip Ingram.

[Theology Stream](#)

The Upper Room, a ministry for Adults with Special Needs, (meets in room 208 from 9:45 until 12:15) is led by Emma Henderson.

[Biblical Stream](#)

Volunteer with the Upper Room! If you have an extra hour one Sunday a month we could sure use you to help in the Upper Room class. Please email marylee@fpc-kingwood.org This is a great time for the parents or caregivers to go to worship and class together.

Looking ahead:

[Wednesday Family Night](#) continues through February 15th. Join us for food, fellowship and study!

Dinners for WFN will be a combination of potluck and made in our kitchen. (\$3 for adults and children)

Feb. 8 prepared in the kitchen, baked potatoes, salad and dessert

Feb. 15 Potluck a-l entrée, m-z side dish or dessert

REFINING WOMEN

We will cover Beth Moore's newest study, *James: Mercy Triumphs*. This study will explore both the life and the Book of James.

We will meet in the Parlor on Monday afternoons from 12:45-2:30 p.m. The dates will be January 30, February 6, 13, 27 and March 5, 19 and 26 As you can see we will not meet when Humble ISD is on holiday.

[SISTERS IN CHRIST](#) will also be doing this study on Saturday mornings in the Conference room from 9-11 a.m. Feel free to go to either study or if you miss one and want to make it up then there will be another time that may fit into your weekly schedule. Helen Doyle will be the contact for Sisters In Christ.

This is an 8 week study. But Refining women won't stop there! We are going to continue on with a follow up study to the retreat this year. Sandra Mauerhan will lead us in this study using materials from our speaker at the retreat, Laurie Cole, who will be speaking on *There is a Season: Experiencing Contentment in Every Season of Life*.

As always childcare will be provided for each session. Please feel free to forward this to anyone who may be interested in these life changing studies.

Women's Ministries

Hannah Circle will meet on Monday February 20th at 11a.m. in the home of Carole White. We are currently studying the book *Traveling Light* by Max Lucado and all women are invited. If you'd like to attend, please call Carole at 281.360.4369.

Dorcas Circle has monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of each month in the Church Parlor at 1:00pm. We are studying *Unexpected Blessings, The Beautitudes Expanded*. Dorcas is a circle for all ages and everyone is welcome. If you would like more information please call Betty Ladish at 281.358.2785 or e-mail at blladish@suddenlink.net.

Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) meet every 2nd and 4th Wednesday from September 2011 till May 2012. Childcare is provided for our general meetings. If you have any questions regarding MOPS please contact Sheri Frost at 281.793.7948.

CAWT (Calling All Women Together):

Attention Ladies! We would love to have you join our fun events for the New Year. Our schedule for the next few months:

March 2nd Humble City Cafe

April 5th Maundy Thursday - We will be going to lunch at an area cafe.

May 3rd Nundini's Italian Cafe and Market in the Heights.

Questions? Contact Sue Plato at 281.360.3160 or d5807riley@gmail.com.

2012 PW Retreat: *How is your GLOw doing?* · Renew the HOLY SPIRIT in your daily life · Refresh your BODY, MIND, & SOUL · Rejuvenate your GLOw · Restore your HEART in the Service of God · Resound your FAITH Your body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit ... Therefore GLOrify God. 1 Cor 6:19-20. Make your reservation now for Presbyterian Women's annual retreat the weekend of April 13th at Moody Gardens Hotel and Conference Center, Galveston Island. Come to the Fellowship Hall or go online to <http://www.pw-fpck.org>.



Senior Ministries

SENIOR CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 14 - Valentine Day Luncheon. Bring your favorite beaux or belle and let's have fun. Music, Music, Music games and good food.

Thursday, March 22 – Goliad – more Texas History – Bus leaves the Church parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Lunch on your own, to be announced. \$12.00

Sunday, April 29 – La Cage Aux Folles at the Hobby Center – no meal included. Bus leaves the Church parking lot promptly at 12:30 p.m.

Friday, June 1 – OPERA LEGGERA: As Time Goes By! Meet at the Nathaniel Center for curtain time of 7:30 p.m. Enjoy some of America's Greatest Music.

We have a wonderful trip planned for October 2012 – [Lancaster Show Trip and Philadelphia](#) (see Senior Ministry table in Fellowship Hall or call Ann)

Sign-up sheets available in Fellowship Hall on Sunday and in the Church Office during the week. Contact Ann at 281.360.5555x110 or ann@fpc-kingwood.org.

Men's Ministry News

Men's Life's Don't feel real confident about your Bible knowledge? Not sure you could tell Ester from Ezekiel? This is a chance to get a more comfortable feel for our scriptures, the basis of all we believe. Come join the men of the church as we continue a 12 week adventure in learning to be more familiar with our Bible. The spring series is called *A Man's Guide to the Bible*. The group meets on Fridays from 6-7:30 a.m.

MoRanch Retreat April 29 – May 1, 2012
Just for Men! - Friday night to Sunday noon
MoRanch, Hunt, Texas.

Mark Your Calendar now and make your reservation. Contact Mark Smith for more information. Or go to the MoRanch website (www.moranch.com). Gather for worship and fellowship in a beautiful place.
Contact: Brent Barry, bbarry@northparkpresbyterian.org

Men's Bible Study on Thursday Mornings at 6:45 in the Conference Room

Retired Men's Bible Study We are studying Romans for the foreseeable future and we are now meeting every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. in the Conference Room. If you have not joined us, the new year offers a great opportunity to start! We are a great group of guys just moving along with our relationship with God. If you want more information please email Chad Erb, chad@fpc-kingwood.org.

Super Bowl Breakfast Post-Game Wrap-Up

Everyone who attended Super Bowl Breakfast IV received a fresh message of hope. Former NFL New York Jets running back Derrick Blaylock and tight end James Dearth shared their life's story of God's grace and mercy that was played out on the gridiron.

Each one shared a similar life growing up in small Texas towns of Scurry and Atlanta. Early in life both James and Derrick were determined to be successful. Their dedication and courage made them stand out in sports even though they both had to overcome several injuries which could have ended their desire to play in the NFL if they had accepted defeat. Derrick and James both were recognized in high school and college at the district and state levels of play which lead to them being drafted to play in the NFL.

During his senior year in high school James was befriended by a boy named Scott. Over time they became friends but their goals were different. James was focused on football and Scott was focused on his relationship with Jesus Christ. However Scott's influence on James began to reshape his thinking of what a true friend should be. The more time James spent with Scott the more he heard about the love of Christ and what it really meant to be totally sold out for God.

One day Scott invited James to go to church which was the same church that his girlfriend (now his wife) attended. He left church that Sunday knowing something was missing in his life and he wanted to know more about this man called Jesus. Questions like "Why am I hurting?" "Why did I have this empty feeling inside even though I had a loving family and my football career was all falling into place?" "Why wasn't I going to heaven even though I considered myself a good guy?"

Scott's testimony and witness bore fruit some time later when James realized that no matter how much he loved football, football could never love him back. So on a Sunday morning, James walked the aisle and gave his heart and life to Jesus Christ. He became the new creation the Apostle Paul talks about in 2 Corinthians 5:17.

James was a sixth-round draft choice of the Cleveland Browns in 1999. He spent the 2000 season on the Tennessee Titans' practice squad before signing a free agent contract with the Jets. At one point, James played 9 years with the Jets without missing a single game. In a career that lasted 12 years, he was able at last to say he had accomplished a goal that was set when he was five years old.

Derrick on the other hand was not as fortunate as James. Oh he frequently attended church and even gave his heart to the Lord while still in high school but gradually slipped back into his old habits. Derrick said this happened for two reasons: first there was no follow up. No one from the church came to visit to encourage him to begin reading the Bible and getting involved. Second he didn't see any genuine Christians around him. They professed to be

a Christian but their lives didn't bear the fruit and didn't measure up to their confessed faith in Christ.

So his life continued to focus 100% on making it to the NFL and proving to everyone that he was talented enough to play with the pros. Finally, in 2001 the dream come true and Derrick began his professional career with the Kansas City Chiefs.

But God wasn't done with Derrick yet. God's plan for Derrick had not been perfected. In 2005 Derrick was offered an opportunity to play for the New York Jets and while he didn't really want to leave Kansas City the money offered to play in New York for the Jets sealed the deal.

During the 2004 season in New York, James had lost one of his Christian friends who went to play with another friend. Over the off season James prayed that the Lord would send another player who could be his accountability partner. He desired another Christian he could talk to. He walked in the first day of spring training in 2005 to find Derrick sitting in the locker right next to his. Over time they became friends and Derrick soon realized that the commitment James had to Christ was genuine and the real deal. He knew this was what was missing in his life and he accepted the Lord and has been his disciple since that day.

Derrick and James both spoke of life in Christ that guides and directs their every step. Nothing compares to salvation you get in Jesus Christ. It is the ultimate victory. In football, when you win a championship, everyone is living it up for a few days and they automatically start thinking about the next championship. As an athlete, you can never have enough victories. Nothing will ever satisfy your hunger for another win. With Jesus, what more can you want than knowing you are going to spend eternity in heaven with your Savior, Jesus Christ?

Derrick's final words are still ringing in the ear of this writer – "Be Intentional." God has a plan for your life and it is to share the message of hope with those individuals around you who are hurting and need a Savior. Be Intentional. Be Intentional. That is the message.



Denny Schwartz, Derrick Blaylock, James Dearth & Phil Wagner

Love is Universal

Karen R. Kilby



“Oh that you would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that your hand would be with me and that you would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain.” Prayer of Jabez, 1 Chronicles 4:10

“Come to Costa Rica and do a book signing!” the email message implored.

Costa Rica? How can we do that? Airfares are expensive, it's in Central America, bordered by Nicaragua. How safe would it be? When would we have time to go? What would my heart doctor say?

Like the Prayer of Jabez, my husband David and I had been praying for God to expand our opportunities outside of our community to share what He has done in our lives through my book, *Becoming a Woman of Purpose*, but never in my wildest imaginings did I think He would be sending us to another country. Yet the more I thought about it, the more excited I became, especially when Sandra sent another request to do a workshop for understanding the Personalities based on the book, *Wired That Way*.

“There has to be a way to do this, David. Do we have enough frequent flyer miles for two tickets? Maybe with help from our kids as an early Christmas present, we can make it work.”

With our tickets booked and my heart doctor shaking his head wondering if I'd lost my mind, plans were made to be part of the first women's conference to be held in the Dominical, Costa Rica area in January, 2012.

Dominical, a small beachfront, surfing town on the Pacific Ocean, is a three hour shuttle drive from the San Jose airport. Our friends, Sandra and David anxiously awaited our arrival at an open-air beachside restaurant before taking us up the steep gravel incline winding its way to their home that sat nestled on the mountainside, surrounded by jungle, overlooking the peaceful valley below. I was awed by the breathtaking glimpse of another brush-stroke of God's magnificent creation.

Our week was filled with exploring the beautiful countryside and fabulous ocean views but the most exquisite beauty was experiencing the love of the people and the powerful impact of their prayers, coupled with prayers from home, for what God would do through and for the women at the conference. As I sat in the center of the circle of women lifting me to heaven with their petitions, God's peace enfolded me, and I knew He would be my spokesman as my translator and I shared His wisdom together to the Spanish Tica and English Gringo women.

Entering the conference room for our time to begin, butterflies were everywhere! They flew from the cover of my book to adorn the walls, tables, name tags and banner that welcomed everyone to the *Woman of Purpose* conference. It would indeed become a transforming experience for all as we felt God's universal love through the Holy Spirit moving all around us.

It began with worship in song, praising God in English then adoring Him in Spanish uniting our hearts and minds together as one. We danced in place to the beat of Sandra's keyboard as Dina clapped her hands and led us with her lyrical voice, encouraging us to raise our hands and voices in joyful praise.

It ended Saturday with families joining us at the beach waiting to hear what the women, brimming over with what they learned, share their excitement from my presentations and from Julie, the local pastor's wife on how to live in extravagant worship.

“We have been empowered!” Vicky exclaimed in her native tongue as she stood before the congregation Sunday morning. We will continue to learn how God has created us and know we are beautiful in His sight. Alleluia!”

How thankful I am I didn't allow anything to prevent me from going to beautiful Costa Rica and the embrace of God's beautiful people. How wonderful Costa Rica, known for its beautiful, exotic butterflies, would also be remembered for God's transforming power.

Our Mission:

First Presbyterian Church of Kingwood is a family of faith where people sense the presence of Christ, respond with passionate worship, embrace the power of personal discipleship and partner in God's mission to the world.



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