

# JAY<sup>2</sup> NEWS

UPDATE  
05.11

Jay: a nickname for Jason. A2: a nickname for Ann Arbor. Together my News.



## Ministry Update

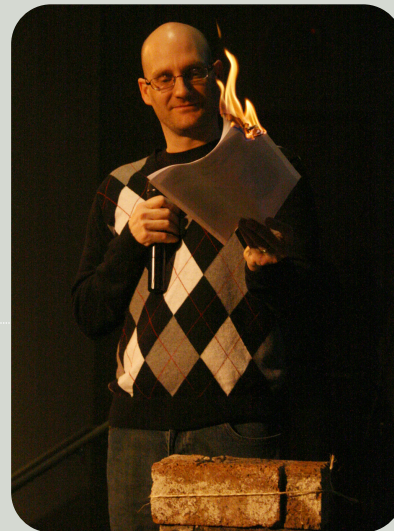
**Debt Free!** - As of March 9th, 2011, New Life Church's (NLC) mortgage balance is \$0. The dream of a permanent location for NLC to meet in began a decade ago, was realized in 2007 with the kickoff event at 1541 Washtenaw Ave, and paid in-full this past March. What's incredible about this story is that it was accomplished through countless donors both in and outside of NLC.

That's right! Those who call NLC home gave with overwhelming generosity as did scores of Kingdom minded people *who don't even attend NLC*. With a congregation comprised of mostly undergrad students it is nothing short of a miracle that we have reached this point, this fast amidst one of the worst economic recessions in US history. We celebrated with three nights of Jubilee at the building filled

with worship, video, and story. The beauty of the celebration was that it wasn't actually about the building or the debt killing.

While the facility is great and God's financial provision has been incredible the real celebration was over all the life transformation that has occurred in the past ten years through New Life Church. The building journey just happened to be the story line through and around which God worked in peoples lives.

One highlight from our Jubilee celebration was Steve Hayes (Lead Pastor) burning the mortgage on the last night. Here's a photo of the moment. I wish I could share the passionate shouts of joy that filled the room that night. It was powerful.



- Bye, Bye Mortgage  
- Steve Hayes (Lead Pastor)

*Praise the Lord for his provision and unceasing handiwork in transforming lives. He alone is Amazing.*

**Vision Sunday** - In my last newsletter I highlighted that Steve Hayes was going to revisit NLC's longstanding dream of embracing the city of Ann Arbor (A2) in greater ways. On March 6th, that day came and it was great - thank you for your prayers. Hayes revisited our history, shared some of the key scriptures God has

## Ministry Update Continued...

lead us to as a church concerning the city, and ended with an open mic Q&A session during the Sunday morning service. The highlight of the morning for me was the revealing of some new language that we have been working on for months.

For a long time NLC has been viewed as a “college” focused church that has some city folks attending. In actuality, we are a “discipleship” focused church that desires to carry out the Great Commission in the Ann Arbor area. Upon this foundation, Hayes shared that New Life Church is one church with two heartbeats - the Campus and the City. Hayes introduced the reality that we are going to remain one church - New Life Church - but that we have two distinct heartbeats. We are:

### New Life Church

New Life Campus | New Life City

The response to this new language has been extremely positive. It captures the essence of who we are and what we are striving towards as a church in A2. Thank you for all your prayer on this. ~ *If you'd like to hear Hayes's actual unveiling of this go to <http://nlcweb.org/node/829> the terminology is introduced around the 18 minute mark.*

**Writing** - Let me begin by saying **Thank You for Your Prayers** concerning my writing. The Vision Packet I was working on with the City Lead team came together nicely. The entire team is unified around the vision and direction we are hoping to head in. We have currently passed this

packet on to the elders for review and approval.

Upon completing the vision packet I shifted the conversation and focus within our lead team. Whereas before we were dreaming and planning on a large scale for New Life City, we are now pressing into the individual dreams that collectively make the whole. Specifically, we are examining where the Lord would have each of us serve and lead to make these dreams become reality.

The conversations continue but the questions have changed. Rather than “what,” we are asking “who?” Rather than “why,” we are asking “when?” We are seeking the Lord for people, for leaders, for the champions of dreams who want to live them in to existence.

*Please ask the Lord to speak clearly to those within NLCity who are to be a part of championing these dreams. Pray for clarity, discernment, and sensitivity to the Spirit's leading in this process. Ask God to reveal Himself in Great and Mighty ways to those who call Ann Arbor home.*



- Ann Arbor Cityscape

**Home Groups** - While my role within the City is to be a champion at all levels there is one dream in particular that I feel the Lord is calling me to invest in more strategically - Home Groups. In actuality, our Home

Groups are already in place and growing. What we have a need for is more support for our Home Group leaders in the way of training, coaching, and networking. Furthermore, we need a strategy and methodology for embracing new folks, multiplying groups, and launching new groups. I believe God is leading us to some creative solutions that will work in our context.

*Please pray that God would build a team of people who desire to live for the betterment of others in these groups, supporting the leaders and navigating growth in ways that keeps relationships, discipleship, and Christ at the core.*

For our Home Groups themselves - **pray** that they remain open and vulnerable in their relationships, that their vision for being on mission together is renewed and expanded, and that God works in and through them in mighty ways.

**New Life Kids** - Please continue to pray for a New Life Kids Director. We had a great pool of applicants, narrowed the field to first round interviews, and have a final round of interviews scheduled for next week - May 23-27, 2011. Our final pool of candidates is solid and we are going to have a great NLKids Director in the near future. I will keep you posted as we near our decision.

*Please pray for wisdom, discernment, and clarity in this final round and that we are led to the director the Lord wants for NLKids.*

## Life Update

Tami had a birthday in March. We decided to celebrate this year by having a family getaway. We *priced* a hotel in Southfield, MI. I doubt Southfield, MI appears on any of the top vacation destination lists but for us it is close to home, cost effective, and the hotel had an incredible pool that Reese absolutely loved. We swam 3-4 times a day as a family.



- Loving the pool

To make the getaway more meaningful I gave Tami what she asked for - Jay unplugged. Tami asked that I would not get on my phone, computer, or email in any capacity for the entire weekend. What was intended as a gift for Tami ended up being a profound gift for me as well. I thoroughly enjoyed being disconnected from work and the world.

Tami and I realized that it was the first time in nearly five years that I had truly unhooked. Five years! I went from work, to seminary, to support raising, to work seamlessly. A perfect model of the American drive and busyness that pervades our culture. Do more, go faster, last longer, sleep less, get more done and by all means don't stop.

*Praise the Lord for a wise wife and her birthday request. It was an illuminating experience that has envisioned me to embrace the Kingdom value of rest more and more. Thank you Tami.*

## A Scripture I'm Dwelling In

Philippians 2:14-15 (MSG) - "Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. **Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God.**"

What a challenging and inspiring passage...

### Uncorrupted

#### Breath of Fresh Air

#### Glimpse of The Living God

Will I live like this daily? When I'm tired, hungry, busy, or stressed? It may be then that someone around me most needs a glimpse of God.

Lord fill me! Amen.



- An April stroll in the park

## Praises

- Debt Free Building
- New Life City Vision
- An awesome wife and daughter
- Rest

## Prayer Requests

- Hiring a NLKids Director
- Champions and leaders who will help the NLCity dreams become reality
- Day Shift for Tami - There may be an opportunity for this in June. Pray that Tami's manager would adjust the job posting hours to accommodate her part-time status. It is currently a full-time posting.



## CONTACT INFO

New Life Church  
1541 Washtenaw Ave  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

[www.nlcweb.org](http://www.nlcweb.org)

Jason & Tami Bennett  
2769 Parkwood Ave  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

231.580.1712  
[jason.bennett@nlcweb.org](mailto:jason.bennett@nlcweb.org)  
[jay2news.com](http://jay2news.com)

## SUPPORT GOAL

