

JAY² NEWS

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

UPDATE
7.10



“Pressing on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took Hold of Me.”

Support Update

A prayer request from my last newsletter was 20 financial partners by June 1st. While I cannot say that was answered in full, I can say I have 6 new financial partners and my support level has crossed the 50 yard line. Thank you all for your ongoing prayers for this. I am getting close and look forward to the day I am fully engaged in the work here in Ann Arbor.

Team Building

In our last two leadership team meetings we completed our initial assessments and envisioning of the various ministry needs within the community/city side of NLC (the other side being campus). This has been a really encouraging process as people begin to see eye-to-eye on things and get excited about the road ahead.

Our next meeting is July 18th from 7:30-9:30pm and we will be focusing on revamping our Wednesday Night Community Meetings for a relaunch this fall. These meetings are currently our only regular church wide venue for the city side of New Life Church. Thus, they are strategic times that require thought and care. Pray that we are unified in our approach and that we hear the heart of God on this.

The World Cup for the Kingdom

Several members of our community leadership team are soccer fanatics. Two in particular have an incredible passion for the game. The awesome thing is that these two men have found ways to use their passion for soccer as a means of engaging others with the Kingdom of God.



They started by co-coaching in some youth leagues as a means of impacting through modeling and relational interactions. This past

winter they created a team for a local league with a 40/60 ratio between fellow believers and non-believers. They quickly created a routine of going out after their games to hang out and talk,

which enabled for countless Kingdom minded discussions. Most recently, they spear headed an event for the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa (June 11th - July 11th).

The event was the World Cup at New Life Church. NLC selected nearly a dozen games to show on the big screen in the sanctuary that just so happens to have theater style seating.

World Cup Continued...

We created a flyer and web page for the event and then posted it around town and shared it via email with friends and colleagues. Our heart was to serve the international community in Ann Arbor first and foremost by providing a unique opportunity to catch the games on a big screen without a cost. Furthermore, we saw it as an opportunity to reach out to others through a common passion - soccer. I had the pleasure of taking in a couple of the games being viewed at NLC and must say, it is a lot of fun to watch soccer amongst a crowd of people who truly love the game.

A Scripture I'm Dwelling In

I recently had the opportunity to teach at the church my brother pastors at, Overflow Church in Benton Harbor/St Joseph, MI. I spoke on Romans 4 and have to say it was one of the most challenging talks I have ever prepared for. Romans 4 is merely a stepping stone in Paul's argument for salvation through faith alone; in this chapter Paul focuses in on the roots of the Jewish people, Abraham. Paul was well versed in the scriptures and new the story of Abraham. In fact, it was his pride and joy at one time because

his Jewish world-view told him that his lineage to Abraham, his circumcision of the flesh, and his upholding of the law was his means to salvation. This all changed on the road to Damascus when Jesus asked Paul why he was persecuting him. That experience sent Paul on a new trajectory. In short time the Holy Spirit gave Paul incredible insight and understanding into the scriptures and the story of Israel and Yahweh. Paul reveals one of these insights in Romans 4 as he points out a 14 year gap between Abraham's reception of the promises of God and his circumcision. Paul explains that Abraham received the promises through FAITH before circumcision. To the Jew, this is game changing. It undermines their understanding of order, of the people of Israel, of salvation, their very history. Yet, Paul sees the beauty of Abraham as the father of FAITH.

The reason I have been unable to move beyond this passage is because I have always longed to go back in time and sit before the early Apostles to hear their messages. To hear how they share about Christ and reason from the scriptures (the OT) that Jesus is the Messiah and fully God. Then, in the midst of preparing for this talk I began to see that in Romans 4 I was getting to hear one such argument

from the Apostle Paul. Here was one of Paul's profound insights, that was surely life transforming for himself, tucked away in a book I am all too familiar with. When viewed from this perspective I marvel at the insight God had given Paul and the passion with which he so boldly proclaimed it.

Praises

- I'm over halfway in my support
- For an incredible body of Christ here at NLC

Prayer Requests

- 10 Financial Partners by August 20th
- New Contacts for Support
- Unity in Leadership
- Day Shift for Tami



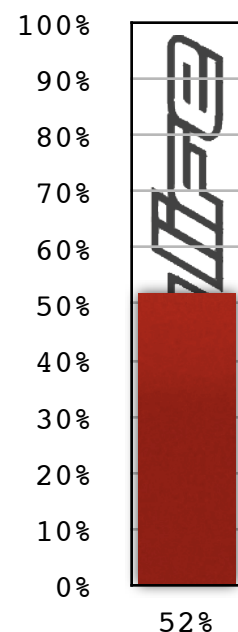
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SUPPORT GOAL



NLC: Mission to El Salvador

New Life Church recently went on a mission trip to El Salvador in Central America. While I did not attend this trip, I thought I would allow one of the participants from the trip to share her story with all of you. This story means a lot to Tami and I because it involves God and a gal whom we have been sharing our lives with for the past year. Enjoy!

Hello!

My name is Kara Rutledge and as some of you may or may not know, I have been living with the Bennett's over the past year. I am writing to share about an incredible trip I recently took to El Salvador and its relationship to my move to Ann Arbor. So to rewind a bit—I am 23 years old and have known Tami on a close, personal level for my entire life. Tami grew up down the street from my parents and quickly adopted them as a second set of parents. After my parents decided to adopt my brothers and I, she was so kind to take me under her wing as I went through childhood and now post-college years.

I attended college at Grand Valley State University to study pre-medical courses and will be moving to Virginia in August to study to become a Physician Assistant at James Madison University. After graduating from Grand Valley last summer, God took grip of my heart and closed the doors to job opportunities in the Grand



Rapids and Kalamazoo areas and led me to a job here in Chelsea, MI. Upon receiving this job offer, Jay and Tami graciously opened their home to me despite their recent purchase of a new home, new career paths, and of course, pregnant with their beautiful daughter, Reese. Soon after moving in with Jay and Tami, I joined New Life Church. Prior to my move, I had some exposure to New Life, as I attended various times during my visits to Ann Arbor while in college. However, this was the first time in four years that I had gotten totally plugged into a community of believers and engaged in deep, Godly relationships with my peers. Since then, God has continually been working and softening my heart to His plan for me.

About two months ago, God placed an unexpected event in my journey with Him. A mission's couple from New Life came in to give a presentation regarding the needs of El Salvador, specifically a small community, La Libertad. Prior to attending the meeting, I had a short exchange with Tami expressing my lack of interest in these mission trips and

how they do not seem applicable to my life at this time. However, as I listened to the couple present about this underdeveloped nation, God spoke clearly and loudly to my heart and that night, I decided to blindly follow His lead and He blessed me time and time again for obeying His desires for me.

Immediately after arriving in La Libertad, God had big plans for our group—we landed in El Salvador during a national tragedy. They were experiencing life threatening mud slides and torrential downpours, so severe that they were forcing families to flee their homes as their belongings were destroyed, disintegrating major roads in the town, and putting a halt on most all of the local businesses. Our group quickly adapted to the change of events and generated a plan with the head pastor, Pastor Ivo, of New Life's sister church, Iglesia Gran Comisión as to how we could serve the community, and more importantly, the Lord.

We came to the consensus that although our goal is to establish sustainability among La Libertad, it was the immediate needs of the people that were vital considering the recent crisis. In saying that, our team was able to donate financially, raising enough money to support and provide for over 150 families of four. As we walked through these communities and donated goods to them, I had never been moved in the way I experienced in El Salvador. Although these families were literally left with nothing, they showed the love of Jesus in a way I was not familiar with. They exhibited so much faith in Him and felt so blessed by Him through the gifts that we bore; they were selfless and loving toward one another. More importantly, they were so welcoming and willing to hear about what our thoughts were about the Gospel. Just amazing!

In addition to the disaster relief we were able to provide, we also assisted in the nutrition center that the church launched targeting extremely malnourished children and hopes for restoring a healthy childhood. We had the opportunity to serve these children, play games with them, love, and pray for them. It was beyond rewarding to see the children filled with joy and



NLC: Mission to El Salvador Continued...

to foster a loving environment that some of them may have never experienced before. The church started this program which includes one large meal a day Monday-Friday plus specialized medicinal needs per each child's pre-entrance physical examination. Currently, there are 24 children receiving care by the nutrition center with financial help from sponsors across our nation and Pastor Ivo hopes that the program will continue to grow and these malnourished children can be cared for appropriately.

Along with all of this, we were also given the opportunity to teach English classes and share testimonies with the teens of the community, speak at a church service as well as some local neighborhoods, and of course enjoy God's greatness and beauty through the gorgeous landscape and mountain ranges of El Salvador. And finally, perhaps the one of the most moving parts of my trip was a nine year old

named Keyla. Keyla is Pastor Ivo's daughter, whom I found myself immediately drawn to. The linguistic barrier between the two of us did not stop me from falling in love with this little girl. And to paint a picture of the selflessness I spoke of earlier, on the last day, Keyla came up to me and handed me a cute stuffed animal. She wanted me to have it. My eyes immediately swelled with tears and my initial response was to



deny it. However, Pastor Ivo voiced that Keyla has the gift of giving and she wanted me to have her toy to show me how much she loves me and will never forget me. This action was one of the kindest that I had ever experienced and something I will never forget.

After coming home and processing God's revelations for me during my time to El Salvador, I now realize that my trip started far sooner than just two months ago when I first heard about the needs in church. God began preparing my heart for this trip even before I knew anything about it. He has and always will know all of my plans and thankfully He taught me just that during my recent experience. He taught me to have a deeper faith, hope, and love for Him, as well as allowing me to get my feet wet for missions. I know He has only just begun my burning passion for nations and I will be able to use the gifts and skills that I acquire in PA school to serve His people. I am so excited to see what more He has in store. !