

# FAITH *In Focus*



Engaging the Word...Impacting the World

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## WELCOME TO FAITH!

### From Pastor Tom's Desk...

A number of years ago, the church I was serving purchased a new copy machine. As the technician was installing the copier in our office, he rather casually said, "Of course, you realize that this machine requires a dedicated line." My first thought was, "You mean a line that really wants to produce electricity?" But as I thought a little more, I realized that a dedicated line serves only one purpose. In other words, there must be nothing else on that electrical circuit besides the copier.

We use the word "dedicated" quite frequently in the life of the church. Have you dedicated your life to the Lord? My, he certainly is dedicated to ministry. She is a very dedicated parent. By this phrase we mean that the person in question has a clear priority that supersedes everything else in his or her life.

That's basically what I mean when I use the word "devoted," as I have in today's message. To be devoted to someone or something is to clearly make that person or concern your first priority. Everything you do takes a back seat to that priority. For example, a loving parent will immediately drop whatever they're doing when their child is hurt. The top priority always comes first.

In light of this, let's think about what it means to be "devoted to Christ." It doesn't mean that there is a slice of our life that is consistently reserved for Him, such as going to church regularly. Instead, it means that our entire life is centered around Jesus Christ, and there are no persons or concerns who come before Him in our lives. In fact, everything we do is conducted and evaluated in light of the question, "How will this behavior (attitude, thought, choice, belief, etc.) reflect on Christ?" If I am devoted to Christ, every aspect of my life must be considered in respect to the good of His Kingdom.

Let me suggest an illustration that might clarify what I'm saying. If my life were a bicycle wheel, Christ would not be one of the spokes in the wheel. He would be the hub around which everything else revolves. If a few spokes were missing or broken, the wheel might continue to function. But if the hub were missing, the wheel would be useless. When we are devoted, everything revolves around Christ, the hub. Colossians 1:17 says of Christ, "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

Jesus seems to have called us to this kind of devotion when He was asked which commandment was the greatest. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,

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### From Pastor Tom's Desk...

(Continued from page 1...)

and with all your mind, and with all your strength," He said (Mark 12:30). Nothing ahead of Christ. No other person, no activity, no cause, no concern. Jesus comes first when we are devoted to Him.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Tom

### Love and Hope Envelopes...

Located on the hall wall between the Fellowship Hall and Christian Education building are "Love and Hope" envelopes. You can share in sending our mission teams and help provide materials for the projects they will be working on during their trips by taking an envelope and filling it with the dollar amount listed on the front. Instructions are inside the envelopes. If every envelope is taken, we will raise \$20,000 for missions! Thank you for your support of our mission teams and projects.



### All Gabon Mission Teams Reunion Pizza Party...

If you participated on a Gabon mission team from 2009 -2015 or if you plan to go in 2016, please join us for a fun, relaxing time with Pastor Jacob and E4 Project Partnership leader, Dan Lean, on Saturday, January 23, at the Youth Center from 6:00 p.m. until around 7:30 p.m. Bring trip pictures or videos and share some stories of past trips with all of us. Pastor Jacob would love to see you!

### Volunteer Needed....

Family Life Center of Auglaize County is looking for a volunteer to work 3 hours one day a week (Wednesday or Friday). Please contact Candice Dicke at 419-300-9755.

### Current Prayer Concerns...

- Jim Wessel, recovering from a stroke
- John Costa, Julie Sabourin's brother-in-law, mass in his abdomen
- Ryan Kennedy's father, Tim, seriously ill
- Ted Wagner, recovering from heart surgery
- Robin Holcomb, Lavonna Springer's mother, recovering from bypass surgery
- Riker McDonney, Wanda Miller's great-great grandson, newborn, seizures
- Catelyn Cedarleaf, recovering from surgery on her lip
- Mary Ann Herriot, recovering from accident
- Mitchell Nutt, upcoming back surgery January 29
- Ben Boyle's sister, Angie, brain tumor
- Christ Bowers, undergoing chemotherapy
- Jay Berkey, undergoing chemotherapy
- Brent Paulus, on-going illness
- Kitty Stroede, friend of Pat Meyer, stage 4 bone cancer

### Cost of Youth Center Project Covered...

We are happy to report that the cost of our youth center project, which included a new HVAC system and a new roof, has been met! We want to thank everyone who contributed to the project. In light of this, we are no longer soliciting funds for the youth center. However, you may continue to contribute to the Building/Capital Improvement Fund to help cover future needs. Once again, thank you! We praise God for His provision!

### Address Correction...

Jay and Shirley James' daughter, Ashleigh Miller, her husband Colin, and new daughter, Blake Elizabeth, reside at 210 Jay St. in Rockford, Ohio (not Indiana) 45882.

### Care Fund Needs Your Support...



Our Care Fund, formerly called the Deacons' Fund, provides assistance to those who are financially distressed. The needs of the Christmas season, coupled with an urgent request that we received last week, have more than depleted our funds. In fact, we are currently nearly \$1,000 in arrears.

Let me explain how we got there. Last week, I received a call from a county agency telling me about a disabled woman who lives about 2 miles from the church. She had experienced some flooding and was currently without hot water or heat. The social worker reported that he had contacted all the agencies he was aware of, and was unable to find help. Would it be possible, he asked, for the church to do anything?

When I called the woman, she said she had applied for a grant to fix the furnace, and she had temporary heat. However, she had no means to fix the hot water tank. I called NK Supply to evaluate the problem, and they determined that a new tank was needed. I authorized the installation of the tank, knowing that there would be people in the church who would contribute toward this cost of \$1,073.

If you wish to contribute, please place your gift in the regular offering and mark it, "Care Fund." I am hopeful that we can build our fund beyond the current deficit, so we are in a position to help others when they call. I thank you in advance for considering a contribution to this project.

– Pastor Tom

### Wednesday Night Live...

It's not too late to become a part of our Wednesday Night Live studies. Pastor Tom is teaching a study on the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Pastor Trent is leading a study on the Gospel of Mark at the same hour. Youth and Children's activities are held simultaneous to these studies. A soup-sandwich-and-salad supper is held in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30 p.m. each Wednesday evening as well.

### Attendance

Week of January 10, 2016

9:00 Worship – 63

10:30 Worship – 97

Youth Discipleship – 6

Kids – 21 ; Adult Workers – 7

Total Worship – 194

International Class – 7

*Wednesday Night Live was cancelled  
due to snow!*



### Sermon Series...

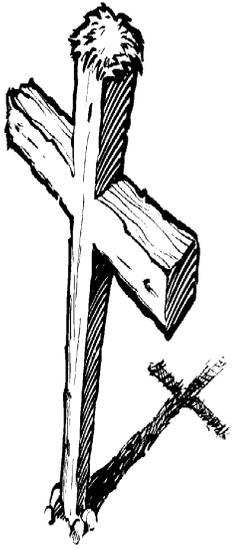
Last week, Pastor Trent began a series of messages on the Fourfold Gospel. This is an Alliance emphasis that reminds us that Jesus is our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. Trent will preach future messages in this series on February 14, March 13, and April 10.

This Sunday Pastor Tom begins a new series entitled, "Discipleship: What's It Look Like?" This series will define four characteristics of a disciple: devotion to Christ, love for others, trust, and obedience. The dates of these messages will be January 17, January 31, February 7, and February 21.

We also have a special opportunity on January 24, when Pastor Jacob Moule of Libreville, Gabon, will preach. We look forward to his message.

Consistent worship attendance honors God and helps us grow as followers of Christ. Please join us each Sunday as we explore God's Word together.

## RENEW



## COMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 17, 2016

### Today

- 9:00... Early Service
- 9:00... Discipleship Class
- 10:30... Late Service
- 10:30... Kids Church

- Jan. 20... Life '16 papers/deposit due
- Jan. 24... Mad River Mountain Trip  
3:00 pm–10:00 pm
- Jan. 27 ...Pizza Sale Orders Due
- Jan. 29 ...Overtime
- Feb. 6... Pizza Prep/Pick-Up Day

## MINISTRIES



### This Week

- Wednesday... Youth Group... 6-8:30 pm
- Next Sunday... Mad River Mountain



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## Fundraiser for Cierra Otting's Gabon Africa Mission Trip

*Artistic Impressions by Rhonda Hager*  
Painting Show & Sale

**January 29, 2016**  
**7–9 p.m.**  
**@ The Cottage Café**  
**Minster**  
**100% of proceeds**  
**for Cierra's**  
**6 month Gabon**  
**Africa Mission Trip**