

The E-FreeBBie

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 123

MARCH 2013

In Progress

There's a question that I have been asked several times lately from people in the community. "How is the new building coming along?" My answer is the same every time. I simply answer, "It's in progress." I've included a few pictures so that you can see for yourself. They aren't the normal pictures that you would include on the front page of a newsletter. They aren't quite as glamorous as showing pictures of the outside of the building. However, that's what the inside looks like right now.

You could look at these pictures and you might summarize them in a different way than I did. You might say that it looks like a big mess, or that it doesn't look much different than it did a few months ago. I wouldn't argue with you if you did. However, things aren't always as they seem. "In Progress" is not the same as "No Progress." Just because it

doesn't look like there has been much progress, doesn't mean there hasn't been any. There have been several guys working on things that you don't see in the pictures. Things like the duct work for the heating system, and the electrical work and the plumbing. They are all very important functions that have to be completed before we move on.

When the sheetrock starts going up in the next few weeks, it will seem like we are making great progress. But we can't forget all the work that has to be done behind the scenes so that we can start finishing the walls. By the time the next newsletter comes out, we should have some pictures that look much different from these. Until then, I'm very happy to say to everyone that asks, "It's in progress."

As I was looking around the building the other day, I started to think about how it resembles our spiritual lives in

a lot of ways. If someone were to ask me how I am doing, I think that a great and truthful answer would be, "I'm in progress." That's a good way to describe our journey with Christ. On the outside we might look like everything is in order and looking good. But if we were to unlock the doors and let people see what's inside, they would be in for a shock. It's not finished yet and there are still some piles of junk laying around. Jesus, the master carpenter, still has some rough edges to smooth out.

That's why Paul says "*Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to*

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Easter Sunday - Don't Get Stuck on Saturday

Have you ever been stuck? I'm sure most of us have had that experience at one time or another. I remember when I was in High School and worked on a ranch during the summers. Some of the hay ground was down near the river. You always had to be careful not to get stuck in the soft ground right next to the river. But even on the more solid ground further away from the river, you had to watch out for the mud holes that were hiding. One day while I was pulling a dump rake with an old International FarmAll tractor, I wasn't paying close enough attention and drove right over the top of a mud hole. One of the back tires dropped in all the way to the axle. Needless to say, I was stuck. There wasn't anything I could do to get out until someone came by with a chain to pull me out. Have you ever been stuck like that?

On Easter Sunday, I'm going to preach a sermon called, "Don't Get Stuck on Saturday." Only we're not talking about tractors or pickups or anything with four wheels. We're talking about our lives. Sometimes we get stuck and get in a place in our lives where it feels like we're just spinning our wheels and not

going anywhere. That stuck feeling could come from depression, or sin, or stressful situations. The good news is that Jesus is there to throw us the tow rope and rescue us. And he's able to do that because of what happened on Easter Sunday. After Jesus died on the cross, they laid him in the tomb, but when some ladies went to the tomb on the third day, he was no longer there. He had risen from the dead. That is very significant because it proved that Jesus was God and had the power to overcome sin, death, and Satan, and any other problem that we'll ever come up against. If Sunday had never happened, we'd all be stuck on Saturday with no hope and no rope.



So come and join us on Easter Sunday, March 31st, as we celebrate our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The day will start with an Easter Coffee at 9 AM followed by the Easter Worship Service at 10 AM. There will not be any Sunday School classes on Easter. We look forward to this very special day with our church family and all the visitors that will be joining us. He is alive!

Good Friday - Passover Seder

We are having a very special Good Friday celebration this year by hosting a Passover Seder. What is a Passover Seder? It's a traditional Jewish holiday celebrating the time when God delivered the Israelites out of slavery from Egypt. The Passover specifically refers to the night when the Angel of Death passed over the homes of the Israelites that had the blood of the lamb painted on their doorposts. The Passover Seder is a supper where each item on the plate is symbolic and reminds the participant of this great story from Moses and God's people. Why are we celebrating a Jewish holiday? It's the holiday that Jesus was celebrating with the Disciples at the Last Supper. It's also because Jesus fulfilled the Passover when

he died on the cross. Jesus is our Passover Lamb. So the more we understand about the Passover, the more we'll understand about Easter.

Bring your family and join us for this very special observance. We will be joined by Michael and Linda Rose from Minnesota. As Jewish believers, they have great insights into this Jewish holiday, and how it proves that Jesus is the Messiah. We will eat some matzo and learn some Hebrew words along the way.

The Passover Seder will begin at 6:00 PM on Friday, March 29th. There will be a potluck supper during the Seder, so please bring something to share with the church family. This event is for the whole family, including the children.



Urban Plunge

This June the Student Ministry has a great opportunity for anyone who has completed 7th grade through adult. The weekend of June 20-23 we will be headed to Iowa to take part in an experience called Urban Plunge.

The Des Moines Urban Plunge invites our group to leave the comfort of the suburbs and the safety of the small town, and experience ministry in the inner city of Des Moines. It gives our group hands-on experience with multiple faith-based social service agencies in one concentrated time frame. Our group will go to jail, feed the homeless, help sort and hand out clothes, and love various ages of young children. Jesus referenced all of those when He said, "I was in prison.... I was hungry.... I was naked...."

By going we will increase the volunteer capacity of local ministries. We are not starting a new ministry, rather coming alongside existing ministries to increase their volunteers, resources, and visibility. We will challenge and engage the students who participate to: "Move out of the pews and into the streets." The Plunge will help to mobilize our church and plant the seed of passion for ministry and missions among our participants. This truly is not a "tour of poverty." Instead, it leads participants to discover how they can use their passions and talents to make a difference for Christ within their community and eventually where ever God places them.

Statistics report 50% - 75% percent of young people leave their faith when they enter college or venture out into the world. In discussing the underlying causes for this with several youth pastors who have participated in

the Urban Plunge, they have concluded that many youth are merely practicing their parents' religion. While they may have "accepted Christ" or completed a confirmation class, they have never really moved into a personal relationship of following Christ in practical ways. The Urban Plunge helps students to transfer what it means to follow Christ from the second hand faith of their parents into their own personal faith, walked out daily by following the example of Christ.

During the Plunge weekend, we spend a great deal of time in "street prayer" – praying often, with our eyes open and with simple petitions. We also go on prayer-walks, challenging students to continue praying at home. Ninety percent of Plungers have never gone on a prayer walk. Ninety-four percent believe that their future prayer life will increase as a result of participating in the Plunge.

Families – consider this as a trip for the family. What a great way to invest in their spiritual formation as you lead and model by your personal involvement. Perhaps you could consider a Dad/Son or Mother/Daughter experience for a week-end getaway? The cost will be approximately \$200 per person and will include: t-shirt, housing, meals, a facilitator to be with your group, all ministry materials, assistance with recruiting, faith journal for each participant, follow-up DVD slideshow of pictures of your team on the Urban Plunge, and a team photo. Registration Forms and a \$50 deposit are due to Pastor Brant by Sunday, April 17th. (See church entryway or office for Forms) Fundraising will be utilized to help defray the cost of the trip.

- Pastor Brant Taylor

In Progress (Continued)

win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Phil 3:12-14)

Basically Paul is saying, "I'm still in progress." Now if Paul said he's still in progress, then I don't feel quite so bad about my being in progress. I think it's OK for us to admit that we are all "In Progress". That doesn't mean we're satisfied with where we are at, but we acknowledge that we still have room to grow and improve. No matter how much I wish I could get to the point where I don't give in to temptation and I don't sin, it's just not reality. It's not reality for any of us. Yet somehow we're all shocked when we get a glimpse of the unfinished part of someone else's life. So rather than being shocked at somebody else's sin, we just have to remember they are in progress, just like we are in progress.

The good news is that I won't always have to give that answer. There will be a day coming soon, when we'll be able to say about the building, "It is finished." We'll be able to use the building to carry on our mission of reaching people for Jesus Christ and building them up to maturity. I also know that one day, Jesus will also say of me, "It is finished." That's what Paul says about us as well. *"Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."* *Philippians 1:6* Until then, we keep plugging along a little at a time, making progress.

- Pastor Scott Harvey



Leading People Into A Growing Relationship With Jesus Christ

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Celebrate Easter With Us!

Passover Seder



**Friday
Mar. 29th
6:00 PM**

Easter Coffee



**Sunday
Mar. 31st
9:00 AM**

Easter Worship Service



**Sunday
Mar. 31st
10:00 AM**