

The Messenger

N. Ft. Myers Church of the Nazarene

A loving, caring, serving community of believers in Jesus

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Sown in Tears, Reaped With Joy

The following article is based on a sermon by missionary Del Tarr who served fourteen years in West Africa with another mission agency. His story points out the price some people pay to sow the seed of the gospel in hard soil.

I was always perplexed by Psalm 126 until I went to the Sahel, that vast stretch of savanna more than four thousand miles wide just under the Sahara Desert. In the Sahel, all the moisture comes in a four month period: May, June, July, and August. After that, not a drop of rain falls for eight months. The ground cracks from dryness, and so do your hands and feet. The winds of the Sahara pick up the dust and throw it thousands of feet into the air. It then comes slowly drifting across West Africa as a fine grit. It gets inside your mouth. It gets inside your watch and stops it. The year's food, of course, must all be grown in those four months. People grow sorghum or milo in small fields.

October and November...these are beautiful months. The granaries are full -- the harvest has come. People sing and dance. They eat two meals a day. The sorghum is ground between two stones to make flour and then a mush with the consistency of yesterday's Cream of Wheat. The sticky mush is eaten hot; they roll it into little balls between their fingers, drop it into a bit of sauce and then pop it into their mouths. The meal lies heavy on their stomachs so they can sleep. December comes, and the granaries start to recede. Many families omit the morning meal.

Certainly by January not one family in fifty is still eating two meals a day.

By February, the evening meal diminishes.

The meal shrinks even more during March and children succumb to sickness. You don't stay well on half a meal a day. April is the month that haunts my memory. In it you hear the babies crying in the twilight. Most of the days are passed with only an evening cup of gruel.

Then, inevitably, it happens. A six-or seven-year-old boy comes running to his father one day with sudden excitement. "Daddy! Daddy! We've got grain!" he shouts. "Son, you know

we haven't had grain for weeks." "Yes, we have!" the boy insists. "Out in the hut where we keep the goats - there's a leather sack hanging up on the wall -- I reached up and put my hand down in there -- Daddy, there's grain in there! Give it to Mommy so she can make flour, and tonight our tummies can sleep!"

The father stands motionless. "Son, we can't do that," he softly explains. "That's next year's seed grain. It's the only thing between us and starvation. We're waiting for the rains, and then we must use it." The rains finally arrive in May, and when they do the young boy watches as his father takes the sack from the wall and does the most unreasonable thing imaginable. *Instead of feeding his desperately weakened family, he goes to the field and with tears streaming down his face, he takes the precious seed and throws it away. He scatters it in the dirt! Why? Because he believes in the harvest.*

The seed is his; he owns it. He can do anything with it he wants. The act of sowing it hurts so much that he cries. But as the African pastors say when they preach on Psalm 126:

"Brother and sisters, this is God's law of the harvest. Don't expect to rejoice later on unless you have been willing to sow in tears."

And I want to ask you: How much would it cost you to sow in tears? I don't mean just giving God something from your abundance, but finding a way to say, "I believe in the harvest, and therefore I will give what makes no sense. The world would call me unreasonable to do this -- but I must sow regardless, in order that I may someday celebrate with songs of joy."



June Events

- 5 – Blood Mobile
- 12 – Ben Bergman Funeral
- 15 – Church Board Meeting
- 19 – Mighty Mussels Baseball Game
- 20 – Father's Day



June Birthdays & Anniversaries

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|--|-----------------------------|
| 1 – Darlene Roach | 15 – Betty Garten |
| 6 – Paul & Grace Bolling
Van & Becky Garner | 17 – Craig & Libby
Smith |
| 7 – Craig Smith | 19 – Diane Bowker |
| 08 – Wellma Owens | 22 – Gary & Judy Rice |
| 09 – Richard & Sheryl Colie | 24 – Kathy Parker |
| 11 – Phoebe Barr | 26 – Beth Garner |
| 13 – Lillian Love | 28 – Galen Clark |

Prayer Needs:

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|---|---------------------|
| Bergman Family | Eloise Garner |
| Ronnie Kiser | Woodby Family |
| June Carsey | Drew Baker |
| Shelby Pickett | Elis Lodge |
| Rev. Greg Story, D.S. | Eileen Massett |
| Paul Jones | Tom Blakeman |
| Dorothy Chapman | Paul & Grace Boling |
| Mark & Kim Barr | Louis Perez |
| Kenny & Gail Goodman | Eileen Jennings |
| Roof Repairs and Sign | Unsaved Loved Ones |
| Those affected negatively by the Corona Virus | |

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|--|-----------------------|
| Patrick Lindsey | Phoebe Barr |
| Lisa Koch | Martha Wade |
| Greg Atkins | Anna Marie Anderson |
| Rev. Dan Copp | Cindy Jones' son |
| Dave Peck | Ernie Rybold |
| Joseph Groves | Regina Williams & Fam |
| Lorraine Jungles | Laurel Chapman |
| The Monroe Family | Our District Family |
| Doug Keuther | The Church Roof |
| Youth, Children's, and Worship Leaders | |



Saturday, June 19
\$30 per person

Leaving the church at 5:30 P.M.
Sign up in the foyer and choose an entrée
and a side.

Check Out Our Church App!

Access sermons, prayer requests, events and more.

1. Download Church by MinistryOne in App Store
2. Search for Our Church
3. Select & Explore!



BUSY HANDS
Tuesdays at 9:30
Meet in the Fellowship Hall
All ladies are welcome

Ladies, be on the lookout for a survey we're conducting to get a better idea of how to move forward with Women's Ministries. We need your input. See Julia Moore for more information.

