



# North Fort Myers Church of the Nazarene Messenger

February, 2019, Volume 9, Issue 10

## Illusions and Promises

On Sunday night, January 20, we witnessed what is referred to as a “super blood wolf moon.” It was truly an incredible spectacle to see. (And your pastors did stay up until nearly 1 A.M. to see it.) Just a few facts about this particular lunar eclipse that made it so special: An eclipse happens when the sun, moon and earth line up perfectly and the moon travels through the earth’s shadow. This eclipse is called a super moon because it was at its perigee, that is the closest point to earth in its orbit. It was also a penumbral eclipse in that it was a partial eclipse, the most common form. It is referred to as a “blood” moon because it appears red as it is illuminated by sunlight filtered and refracted by the earth’s atmosphere. And it is referred to as a “wolf” moon, having earned that name when Native Americans and Colonial Europeans who saw the January full moon noticed that wolves would typically start howling due to their winter hunger. This event is not supposed to occur again until 2058 – and since most of us will not be around to view it then – it was an excellent opportunity to see such an incredible event – and it did not disappoint.

Having just celebrated Epiphany and the journey of the Magi – who we know studied the movement of the stars and planets – we know we are not to worship the celestial bodies or turn to them for answers (Deut. 17) they are created things. However, they can definitely teach us some very solid lessons, if we will pay attention. If we observe the sun, for instance, for just one day, we notice that while the sun changes the appearance of everything on earth – creating shadows, appearing to move behind buildings and mountains and clouds – as our planet circles it, the sun’s colossal magnitude is partly defined by its own “changelessness.” We can put our hand up to “hide” the sun, and our hand will appear larger than the sun. In fact, anything around us may appear larger than the sun. But we know nothing on the earth, including the earth itself, is larger than the sun. It is an illusion.

Jesus Christ came to this earth and we have recorded in John 8:12, His words, “*I am the light of the world.*”

Wouldn’t that make Him more important to us than even the sun? Wouldn’t that mean His existence and His Presence supersedes everything else in this old world? Yet, in the 2,000 years since He walked this earth, we have seen some pretty spectacular and ominous phenomenon. Kingdoms and empires have risen, and mankind thought those kingdoms and empires were so powerful and so mighty they would never fall. Wars have raged and mankind thought those wars would never end. Plagues of disease have come upon the earth and mankind thought, while in the midst of them, that not a person would survive. In fact, these spectacles have often seemed by many to “eclipse” Jesus Himself. But every one of those enormous and incredible events have **all** passed away into history. Everything on earth has changed – but Jesus.

Just as the sun has remained in the sky, unchanging and ominously powerful and continuously shining, our Lord has remained for us – unchanged, undiminished – central to our world and our lives, as incredible and powerful and constant and unswerving as ever. We put up our hand in anguish or pain or even in death – and we think to obscure Him, or hide from Him or pretend He isn’t here, or think perhaps He is too big and too grand to see us from His position of power. But we are reminded by the Apostle Paul that:

*neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The biggest and most ominous events in our world we could ever face will still never eclipse our Lord. We can trust Him with our biggest and our smallest difficulties. We can take to Him our most impossible problems and our highest dreams and He will not scoff at or belittle them. The most incredibly larger-than-we-can-imagine entity – the Son of GOD – was sent to this puny planet JUST for us – and He will not change and He will not disappoint.

Blessings, Pastor Becky

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

2 – Katy Garner  
 Carole Dillehay  
 9 – Butch Heath  
 10 – Dave & Kathy Parker  
 17 – Dick Van Skiver  
 19 – Bill Predko  
 Betty Retter

24 – Larry Wills  
 25 – Bonnie Rose  
 27 – Jerry &  
 Doretta Parker  
 28 – Charlie Franklin



## February Calendar

1-2 – All Church Yard Sale  
 3 – Church Elections  
 4 – LAMB's Meeting 6:30 P.M.  
 9 – All Church Picnic  
 12 & 27 – Busy Hands 9:30 A.M.  
 13 – Food Distribution  
 14 – Church Board Meeting  
 15 – Florida Everblades Game  
 22 – Movie Night  
 24 – Woodsmen Quartet

## Prayer Needs:

Dick & Janet VanSkyver  
 Jerry Parker  
 Ryan Woodby  
 Paul & Grace Boling  
 Patrick Lindsey  
 Louis Perez  
 Ernie Rybold  
 Ken Vandelinde  
 Pearl Buchkoski  
 Marlene Ryan  
 Our Church Leaders  
 Our military, our leaders & our nation

Phoebe Barr  
 David Brantley  
 Dan Bowker  
 Matthew Morgan  
 Eileen Massett  
 Cody Church  
 Regina Williams  
 Bonnie Rose  
 Jeff Werling  
 A Youth Pastor  
 House of James Ministries

Craig Smith  
 Nick Kiser  
 Ida Chaplow  
 Ardyth Eldridge  
 Joseph Groves  
 Betty Retter  
 Alice Daugherty  
 Eileen Jennings  
 Kitty Baxter  
 The Nation of Israel

Dorothy & Laurel Chapman  
 Michael Romano  
 Sheryl Colie & Family  
 Orion Predko  
 Mark & Kim Barr  
 Kenny & Gail Goodman  
 Phyllis Obney  
 Jerry & Deane Werling  
 Country of Ukraine  
 Unsaved Loved Ones

Church Elections will be held on Sunday, February 3. Please be in prayer for GOD's perfect plan for the leadership of our church.

We need volunteers to help with the distribution on Wednesday, February 13, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM, to help with a variety of tasks. Please spread the word to anyone you think could benefit from this special outreach and join us as we partner to help those in need. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus in North Fort Myers.



**Harry Chapin Food Bank**  
**OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**  
*Fighting Hunger, Feeding Hope*



**All-church sports night!!**  
**Friday, February 15**  
**7:30 P.M.**  
**Cost is \$25**  
**Free t-shirt and**  
**endless popcorn night!**





Friday, February 1 – 8 A.M. to 2 P.M.  
 Saturday, February 2 – 8 A.M. to 2 P.M.

To benefit LAMB's ministries  
 There is still time to get your donations to the church and to sign up to help.

If you cannot help with the yard sale, please consider helping feed the volunteers who will be working. Help is needed both days!

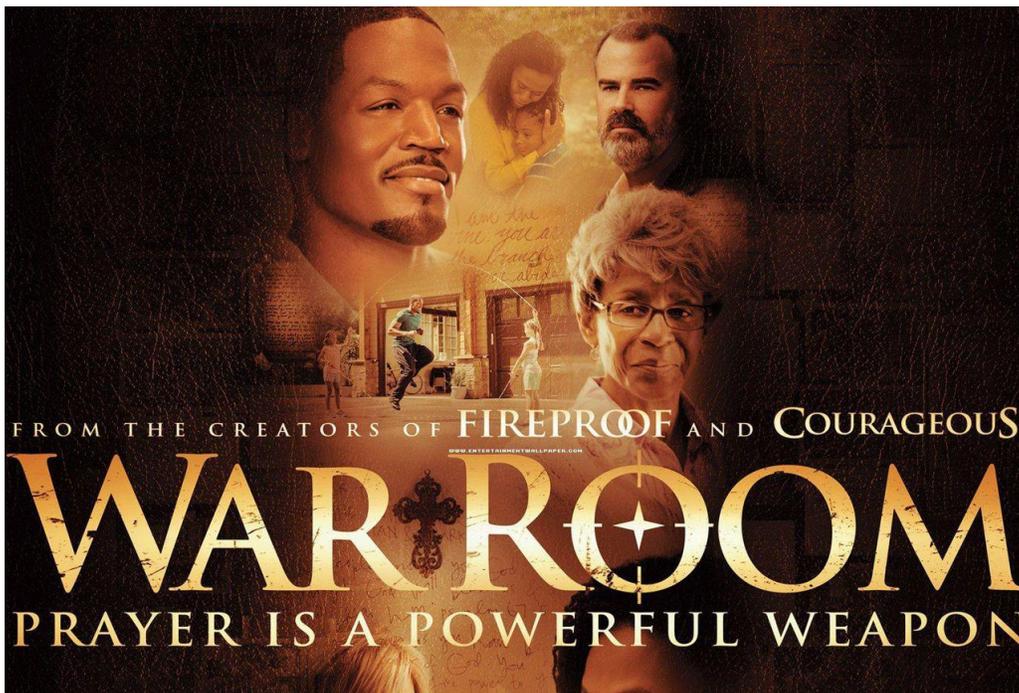
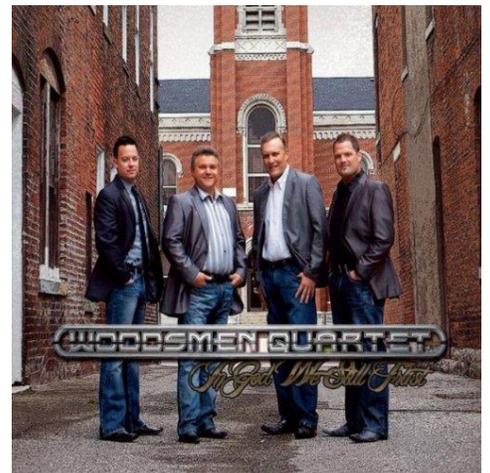
All Church picnic at Delnor Wiggins State Park – Saturday, February 9 meeting at the church at 9 A.M.



*The Woodsmen Quartet*

Sunday, February 24  
 10:45 A.M.

Invite your friends and neighbors, co-workers and family and join us for this very special event.



**Movie Night!**  
**Friday, February 22**

**6:30 P.M.**

**Invite your friends to**  
**"War Room"**

**FREE!!**

**Popcorn and drinks will be served.**

## Reconciliation

- 2013: I will get my weight down below 180.
- 2014: I will watch my calories until I get below 190.
- 2015: I will follow my new diet religiously until I get below 200.
- 2016: I will try to develop a realistic attitude about my weight.
- 2017: I will work out 5 days a week.
- 2018: I will work out 3 days a week.
- 2019: I will try to drive past a gym at least once a week.

We are already into February and many of you reading this have watered down or maybe given up on your new year's resolutions. I know some people who don't try to make them because it is discouraging to make them and then stop.

Well let me encourage you with some Bible thoughts. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 tells us:

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ **reconciling** the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of **reconciliation**. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be **reconciled** to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

God wants you to do well in this life and to do well we are to walk with Him. Let's look at that word "reconciliation."

## The Means of our Reconciliation:

The only way to end the estrangement between man and God was through the death of His sinless Son. The Lord charged all our sins to Christ's account on the cross and made Him the object of divine wrath. Through Christ's death, we become recipients of God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness. Because our sins were imputed to Christ and

## The Result of Reconciliation:

Now all those who are "in Christ" become new creations, born of God's Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17). The old things—our enmity and alienation—have passed away, and we have a renewed relationship with God and a new quality of life with godly motivations, interests, desires, and attitudes.

## The Message of Reconciliation:

Those who have been reconciled to God are then entrusted with "the word of reconciliation" (2 [Corinthians 5:19](#)). We must be careful not to distort the meaning or make it man-centered rather than God-centered, because it's the only message that can change someone's eternal destiny.

Considering our helpless, hopeless state before salvation and God's gracious act of pardon and rescue, our hearts should overflow in gratitude. The result should be a desire to live in obedience to Him. After reconciliation, how are your emotions and actions transformed when you experience friendship, intimacy, and acceptance in your relationship with God?

I pray your number one resolution this year is to keep your relationship with God close and to get even closer than you have ever been. If you mess up...God:

*who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

will give you the means, the result and the message to keep being the ambassadors you were meant to be through Him.

Be blessed and keep close to God, Pastor Van



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