



New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor 5:17

Sunday, December 7, 2025

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Pastoral Ponderings

Blessed Assurance: A Brief Testimony

I grew up in a Christian family that attended church faithfully. That's a blessing I do not take for granted. It shaped the majority of the foundational thinking of my life. It means I have always lived with the conviction that God exists, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation, that there are places called "heaven" and "hell," that the Bible is the Word of God, and there is a difference between right and wrong.

Those convictions did not mean, however that they always directly affected my values and behavior. One factor was that the church we attended did not have a clear understanding of the perfection of the work of Jesus on the cross. The doctrine that especially affected me was the idea that my salvation depended primarily on me and my efforts to be faithful. If there was something lacking in my efforts, it indicated that I had drifted away. No one would say I was no longer saved, but that implication always hung over my head. I was a good boy, but emotional appeals and warnings about the seriousness of our walk with the Lord did nothing to equip me to face the enemy's attacks meant to turn me completely away from the Lord. My entire youth was affected by this uncertainty.

Everything changed one night when I found myself in a situation where I had an encounter with God. This was something I had never experienced. I was accustomed to emotional appeals to accept Jesus, but on that night, I met the Lord in reality. There was only one thing to do: I must turn my entire being and life over to the Lord who had a direct interest in my life. I did, and I knew I had experienced something new and real.

Of course, I still had those years of teaching that emphasized my works and the fragility of a relationship with the Lord. But thankfully, God had a different plan for me. A friend gave me a book.

It was a workbook written for new believers to give them a basis in the doctrine of salvation. Due to my history in a Christian home, most of what I read was familiar. "Familiar" often means "not very interesting," and that's what much of it was. Until I encountered three verses. The verses were 1 John 5:11-13:

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Pastoral Ponderings cont.

And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

I read those verses and one word literally jumped off the page. (I hate it when people misuse the word, “literally,” so I better restate what happened.) It was *as if* the word had jumped off the page into my eyes, into my brain, and into my heart. I was stunned and overwhelmed with something I had never heard in countless sermons and Sunday School lessons. I was filled with joy, wonder, and security. The word was “know.” I had never been taught that I could *know* that I had eternal life. In fact, I was taught that I *could not know*. I had hoped like crazy that I had eternal life, but deep down inside there was the fear that I either did not have it or that I could lose it. The Bible clearly contradicted that dangerous teaching.

All the things I learned at home and church did not give me what that word, “know,” suddenly provided. Knowing that I actually had an eternal and certain relationship with the One True Living God formed a confidence that *really* shaped all of life for me. Almost 56 years later, I am the man I am by God’s grace and faithfulness. And I can confidently say, “I know I belong to the Lord forever.”

“Blessed assurance! Jesus is mine!” Is He yours?

Jay Swisher



If you are a visitor this morning or have only been coming to New Life for a few months we are glad you are joining with us! If you would like to learn more about New Life be sure to stop by the Resource Center in the front foyer to pick up a welcome bag we have for you. In addition, you’re invited to join us for our meal after service. We would love to meet you and get to know and for you to get to know us more.

Ministry Directory

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Resource Center
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Sunday Meal Services
Barbara Judkins,
309.269.0556
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Video Ministry
Jim Mabee, 651.470.4172
jmabee@centurytel.net

Check out New Life Online newlifechristiancommunity.org

This Sunday's Worship Songs:

All I Have Is Christ,
I Will Wait for You (Psalm 130)
There Is A Fountain, Beneath the Cross,
& My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness

This Week's Schedule of Events

Tues Men's Bible Study- 6:30 am
Wed Immerse - 6:15 pm
Thurs Men's Bible Study- 6:30 am
Thurs Ladies Bible Study- 10:30 am
Thurs Ladies Bible Study- Noon
Thurs GriefShare- 6:30 pm
Thurs Women's Study- 6:30 pm
Thurs Men's Bible Study- 6:30 pm

Meal Teams

Dec. 7 Meal Team 4-Rice & Beans
Dec. 14 Meal Team 5-Breakfast

*Contact Barbara Judkins if interested
in being on a meal team or a helper.*

Fellowship Tip for December

As we enter this season of Advent, share with someone a tradition, book resource, or specific passages to meditate on that help you stay centered on Jesus during this busy time.

December Memory Verse

1 John 1:5 - "This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

Pastoral Eldership Team

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Announcements.

Carols and Cookies: It is a great joy to sing hymns that celebrate the birth of Christ together during this season. It is also a great joy to eat Christmas cookies. So lets do both!! Join us Wednesday December 17th for Carols and Cookies, 6:30pm. Oh, and don't forget to bring the cookies to share!

Christmas Eve Service: Be sure add Wednesday, December 24th @ 4:00pm to your "must go to" family gatherings. And that is what it is, the family of Christ gathering together celebrating our most gracious Savior who emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men to bring salvation to all who would call upon His Name!

Partners Meeting: Our Annual New Life Partners meeting will be held after service on Sunday January 11th at 12pm. Those who are partners we need you there and those not yet partners please know you are welcome to stay and celebrate God's faithfulness to this body and pray together for His continual guidance and care for the year to come.

Young adults Genesis study will be meeting this Tuesday at Greg and Cory's home. Don't miss it! Address: 649 220th Street Osceola.

Thursday evening Men's bible study will be taking a break during December and the beginning of January but will resume weekly studies Thursday January 15th @ 6:30pm.

Meal Team Ministry

Are you looking for a way to use your talents or time to serve God?

Consider joining a Sunday

Meal Team. If interested, please,

Contact: Barbie Judkins (309) 269-0556,

Barb Manship (612) 804-9793 or

Rosie Swisher (763) 458-1261

Today's Passage



Jesus

Proclaimed
to the
Colossians

Pastor Tony will be teaching from
the book of Colossians.
Our passage for today is Colossians 2:8-10.

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Sunday service starts at 9:30 am • nlcc.dresser@gmail.com

Join New Life Connect by emailing Pastor Paul at pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com