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THE MAINE DISTRICT UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH INTERNATIONAL ■ FALL 2020 ■ VOLUME XIII, No. 3

Maine Focus

GIVE THANKS

WITH A

*Grateful
Heart*

I THESSALONIANS 5:18



THE CHURCH: GOD'S GIFT TO YOU

By: Rev. Rick Stoops, Superintendent
Maine District UPCI



The Lord's Day is the first day of the week because Jesus arose from the Grave on the first day of the week. From Christ's resurrection until now, the first day of the week is known as the Lord's Day. The Church gathered then and the Church gathers now to worship the Lord on the Lord's Day.

On the Lord's Day, the Apostle John heard a trumpet like voice behind him, "Saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.* And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. (Revelations 1:11-12)

John whirled around to see the voice that spoke with him. As far as we know, the apostle John had not heard his Lord's voice since Christ had ascended to Heaven from the Mount of Olives more than sixty years before. But if you've ever heard His voice, you never forget it. Even if you are in the midst of a fiery trial, or walking in the valley of the shadow of death that voice should cause you to turn sharply wheel about. That voice will give you strength. That voice will give you instruction. That voice will take away your fears. The Devil hates that voice but the saved love to hear the voice of God. So John whirled around to see the voice that was so dear to him. **"...And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks."** (Revelations 1:12)

When John turned to see and welcome that voice back into his life, he saw seven golden candlesticks. It is very important that you understand why. Revelations 1:20 tells us the secret of the golden candlesticks, **they represent the Church which is the Light of the World.** This agrees with what Jesus said in the Gospel according to Matthew about His Church, "**Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.**" (Matthew 5:14)

God showed John seven golden candlesticks when he turned to see the voice of God.

Seven Candlesticks because seven is God's number of perfection. Golden because the Church has been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ and made as pure gold. John was so eager to see and hear the voice of his beloved Christ. When John looked, he testified, "*I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst (square in the middle of the seven candlesticks, I saw) one like unto the Son of man...*" (Rev. 1:14)

JOHN RECEIVED A REVELATION THAT DAY THAT GOD'S VOICE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS REVEALED THROUGH HIS CHURCH!

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SAFE AT HOME SWEET HOME

By Jackie Little

We caved. After 16 years of her begging, my husband and I finally agreed to allow our daughter, Kristen, to get a dog. A friend of Kristen's was moving and unable to bring her 8-month-old Australian Shepherd to her new home. Chica joined our family in late-June.

Let me tell you about this breed. Australian Shepherds have a herding nature – high-energy, bossy and very smart. Chica has tons of personality and is such fun...when her energy is appropriately directed. She quickly learned several commands and tricks and we fell in love with her – well, mostly! She needs lots of attention and physical activity and she hates being left at home alone.

The chaos erupted one Sunday morning as we were leaving for church. Don't most problems in a pastor's family occur as we are leaving for church? Chica was determined not to be left behind. With the men in their suits and the teenage dog owner in silver glittery heels and a fancy updo, Chica darted out the door before we could blink.

Now, Aussies can run 35 miles per hour, so there was no way we could chase her. This newfound freedom was exhilarating for Chica. She leaped high into the air, dashed through neighborhood yards and ran across our busy street. Drivers slammed on their brakes as Chica danced with delight. I'm sure she was thinking, "Who knew that dancing in the road could be so invigorating? How could Kristen have kept me indoors and away from this wonderful experience?"

You see, even with her high level of intelligence, Chica did not realize the danger she was in. She was oblivious to our fear...our caution...our concern. She did not understand that our boundaries were there for her safety and protection.

You know where I am going with this story.



Some view the Word of God, the laws of God and a life of separation as restrictive, smothering, lacking freedom. If God's people could only realize how much God loves us and wants to keep us from unnecessary harm. His boundaries are for our protection.

Jeremiah 29:11 assures us that God has a plan for us. His plan is for prosperity and not harm.

Psalm 91:4 describes a protecting God who covers us with His feathers. We can find refuge under His wings. It is when we shrug aside God's protection that we find ourselves in a mess. Thankfully, Kristen lured Chica with treats until my daughter could pick her up – still in those silver glittery heels – and carry Chica back home where she belonged. Yup, even when we mess up, dismiss God's direction, rebel against God's plan – in His mercy, He still wants us to come home.

Sis. Jackie Little is pastor's wife at the First UPC of Lewiston and serves as the Maine District Ladies Ministries President.



**2021 Marriage Enrichment
October 15-16, 2021**

Save the date and make plans to attend.
For more information, please contact:

Joseph & Heidi Sage

Jay (207) 491-4939 | Heidi (207) 446-6839
northlandfloors@gwi.net

VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS FOR CHRIST RALLY | JOIN US!

We invite you to join us on November 12, at 7 PM for our Christmas for Christ Rally. Our special guest speaker that evening will be Rev. Kenneth Stewart. We hope you will join us and help us finish out 2020 in victory for the Kingdom of God!

Because we are not able to come to the various sections this year, we will be sending all Maine District pastors and their spouse \$50. That's right! We want to bless you as you have blessed Christmas for Christ.

We hope your church will consider giving to Christmas for Christ this year. The Christmas for Christ program supports vital ministries and programs designed to reach the lost right here in North America.

Even if your church is not able to host services in person, you can set up a fundraising page specifically for your church so that everyone can participate in giving and be blessed. Go to www.christmasforchrist.faith for more information on how to set up an online offering for your church!



OFFERING

Christmas for Christ is an annual offering for North American Missionaries.

This special offering is received during the Christmas season and is used to enlist, train, and financially support missionaries who are called to establish churches in unevangelized areas in North America.



THE MISSION GOES ON

By: Rev. Todd Little

COVID-19...the virus that has changed our lives. If you're like me, you have grown weary of its continued presence in our world. This pandemic has taken the world by storm and caught everyone by surprise. We've been 6 months having church in first in our homes, then in parking lots, and finally in smaller-than-normal groups in the church building.

Our nation has experienced many challenging issues in conjunction with the pandemic. Protests, rioting, looting, lawlessness, job losses, financial concerns, and quarantine restrictions that change with each state. In addition, our country is in a presidential election year where hatred is boiling over. With the recent passing of a Supreme Court justice, another level of anxiety and frustration buffets our society.

While the nation's situation may seem negative and bleak, God is omnipotent and sovereign. He was not surprised nor taken aback by the events of 2020. He is in control. Jesus works all things together for the good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

As I've read and heard reports from in our district, throughout our nation, and around the world, there is a common thread; the mission to reach the world still goes on. The church is moving forward even during the pandemic! In every region, Bible studies are being taught, water baptisms are happening, the Holy Ghost is being poured out, and healings are taking place. The power of God continues to work through believers to be witnesses in all the world.

We have had to adjust our methods, but the message remains the same. With the help of God, we

will reach our world regardless of the obstacles that we face because Jesus promised to build a church which the gates of hell would not prevail against. During the first century, the Book of Acts church needed to be prodded to go beyond Jerusalem and Judea. Opposition and persecution propelled the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. God is stretching us to reach beyond what we had been reaching. Livestreaming, social media, and Zoom meetings extend our reach at times when we are traveling less and staying closer to home.

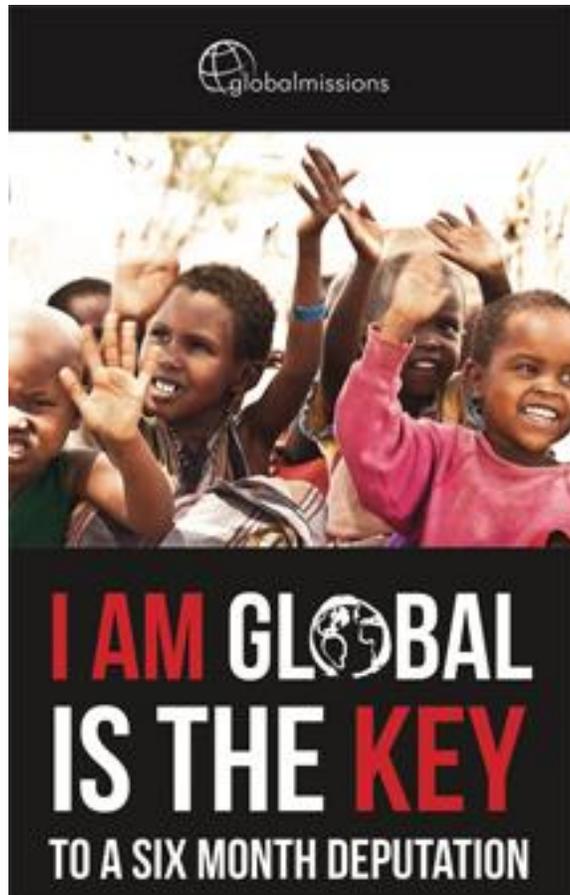
Brothers and sisters, be encouraged; the mission of the church still goes on! I'll conclude with the words of Missionary Eugene Dominguez in his most recent missions report: "The Church is unstoppable. We are Apostolics! We are resilient! The gates of hell will not prevail! Many have received the Holy Ghost and backsliders are returning as the church prays and the rapture nears."

I Am Global

The "I Am Global" offering completes the budgets of career and intermediate deputizing missionaries who are within reach of returning to the field. Last year, 13 missionaries were recipients of the "I Am Global" funds. Our district has the opportunity to help get missionaries back to the field of their calling. If you want to be part of this exciting offering,

you can make a pledge (due by January 1, 2021) at www.globalmissions.com/giving/i-am-global-online-giving.aspx. If you have any questions, please contact Maine Global Missions Director, Todd Little via email at pastor@lewistonupc.org or via telephone at (207) 754-3582.

Rev. Todd Little is pastor at the First UPC of Lewiston and serves as Section 5 Presbyterian and Global Missions Director for the Maine District UPCI.



I AM GLOBAL GETS
MISSIONARIES TO THE FIELD
QUICKER AND TOGETHER WITH
PARTNERS IN MISSIONS KEEPS
THEM THERE.



THE STRUGGLE IS REAL, IT'S A STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL, IT'S SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

By: Brenda Orffer

In Ephesians 6:12, we read, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” The world today is proving the scripture day after day. While we battle spirits, the things we face from day-to-day can be very physical in nature. Satan will use the things of this world to attack our spirit and to discourage us. Whether it is sickness, financial distress, emotional turmoil, fear—of anything, family challenges, problems on the job, or a pesky neighbor, there are things that we struggle with each day. There is no doubt to anybody that *the struggle is real*.

As we strive with the things that challenge us and would distract us from our walk with the Lord, we have to understand that we are not just struggling so things will get better, we are struggling for survival. Moses and the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness. They needed food and water. Exodus 16:3 says, “And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

There are times when I feel like I have been led into a desert and left there. I do not see an oasis. I do not know where my spiritual sustenance will come from. But just as God provided manna from heaven and water from a rock, I know he will provide for me now. As I face struggle and challenge, I have confidence that the Lord will provide in this *struggle for survival*.

You see, it is not God’s intent that I—or anybody—should perish. He has given us what we need for survival of the fittest! I had always thought that survival of the fittest meant that the weak ones wouldn’t make it. I thought Darwin’s theory indicated weakness would mean the end of a species. But, that is not entirely what he meant. While the term, “survival of the fittest” originated from

Darwinian evolutionary theory as a way of describing natural selection, the biological concept of “fitness” is defined as reproductive success. In Darwinian terms, the phrase is best understood as, “survival of the form that will leave the most copies of itself in successive generations.”

What?! The form that will leave the most copies of itself in successive generations...?! According to this insight, I am made to survive. I am part of the fittest because I am made in the image of God. In Genesis 1:27, we read, “So God created man

in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” If I am made in God’s image, I have His strength, his power, his ability, his spirit. I am part of the fittest!

How do I know I possess His spirit, power, and strength? In Acts 1:8, we read, “And ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:

and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Because I have the holy ghost dwelling in me, I am not only made in the image of Christ (a copy of the form of God), but I am filled with His spirit that gives me power.

Without question, God is the form that has left the most copies of Himself in successive generations. Even to this generation, women and men of God are filled with His spirit, overcoming struggle, and living victoriously.

When he had defeated death, hell, and the grave, He said he would send the Holy Ghost to be our comforter and our power. It is our job to not only survive, but thrive, and to share the gospel of Jesus to ensure copies of the form of God continue to be part of each successive generation after us. With Him, *it is survival of the fittest!*

Brenda Orffer attends Olympic Christian Center in McCleary, Washington, where she serves as Music Director and supports several ministries. This article includes excerpts from a message she gave at Olympic Christian Center earlier this year.



THE CHURCH: GOD'S GIFT

TO YOU, *continued...*

The Bible is absolute about this. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, **it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.** (1 Cor 1:21)

Paul exhorted Timothy, *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* (2 Ti 4:2-4)

The first thing the enemy of your soul has to do to take you out of God's will and favor is to separate you from the Church. There are some things the Devil knows that you need to know. The Devil knows you need a steady diet of Holy Ghost preaching of the Pure Word of God to complete your mission. You need Holy Ghost anointed preaching that is aimed at the heart, not human philosophy that is aimed at the head. You need prayerful preaching, powerful preaching... anointed preaching to **stay** saved. It is one thing to get saved. It's another thing to stay saved. *It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save **them that believe.***

If the Devil is going to have his way with you—he HAS to separate you from the Church first! Satan and his demons work like a pride of lions who separate the fleet footed gazelle from the herd to destroy it. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, **as a roaring lion,** walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:* (1 Peter 5:8)

The promise of prevailing and proving more powerful than the all the forces of Hell was NOT made to A Lone Ranger! One sheep against one lion is not a fair match. Christ's promise of prevailing was made to the Church! **Upon this rock I will build my CHURCH; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** (Matthew 16:18)

The Christ of the New Testament resides in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. The New Testament Holy Ghost center of operations is in the middle of the New Testament, blood bought, Holy Ghost filled, Jesus name baptized Church.

THE CHURCH has been commissioned by God: for the preaching and teaching of The Gospel of Jesus Christ, for the conversion of sinner, for the

teaching of the ways of God, and for strengthening and edifying. The incense of unified prayer and praise ascends from the Church to God. God has designed the Church to be a perpetual light to guide God's pilgrims through the night into the land of everlasting light. It is the Lighthouse for prodigals trying to find their way home. The Church is where children of sin and sorrow find refuge from despair and ruin. The Church is a harbor from the storms of life. The Church is a place where sinners may repent, be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. The Church sends and supports missionaries at home and abroad. The Church is the tool that God uses for the salvation of our children, the instruction of our youth and nurturing of our elders. The Church is God's gift to you!

Let me tell you just a few things of the many things I've seen God do **in Church:**

Multitudes repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, thousands filled with the Holy Ghost, deliverance from depression, deliverance from drugs, frozen shoulders healed, backs healed, Carpal tunnel healed, breast cancer healed, chronic pain healed, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma healed, arthritis healed, blinded eyes opened, a deaf ear healed, the dead raised, a new set of knees, a fist sized hernia that simply disappeared, fibromyalgia healed, and many, many more miracles. Thank God for the Church!

Lisa Larios was diagnosed with cancer of the hip when she was 12, and was unable to walk unaided. Her family decided chemotherapy was too traumatic and called it off after one dose. The family was not very religious, and a family friend invited the family to church. The friend fasted and prayed for a week beforehand. During the service, Lisa felt a warm feeling in her stomach, and the preacher said someone in her section of the auditorium was being healed from cancer and should stand up. Lisa, against her mother's wishes, stood up and was able to walk without pain for the first time since the problem had appeared. Lisa was X-rayed several times after that, and it became clear that something strange had indeed occurred. Further X-rays were taken and reviewed by several doctors, and these showed that Lisa's hip had been fully restored and the cancer was gone.

And now you know why Satan does not want you in Church and will do literally anything to try to divide you from it. The Church, God's Gift to You!

November 2020

1	AYC Application Available Online	
2	Ladies Prayer International	
6-7	Esther Conference	
12	Christmas for Christ Rally	Virtual
18	Thanksgiving Offering to Support Media Ministry	
20	Articles Due for Maine Focus	
26	Thanksgiving Day	

December 2020

7	Ladies Prayer International	
20	Christmas for Christ Offering Date	
25	Christmas Day	
31	AYC Application Deadline (Global)	

January 2021

1	New Year's Day	
	District-wide 30 Days of Prayer and Fasting	
4	Ladies Prayer International	
	Section 1 Prayer Meeting All Ministers and Spouses	Houlton
5	Section 2 Prayer Meeting All Ministers and Spouses	Bangor
7	Sections 4 & 5 Prayer Meeting All Ministers and Spouses	Lewiston
8	Section 3 Prayer Meeting All Ministers and Spouses	Ellsworth
9	Junior and Senior Bible Quiz Tournament	Augusta
15	CFC Applications Due to Headquarters	
	Departmental Financial Reports Due to District Secretary	
	AYC Application Deadline (North America)	
22	New Year's Rally	Hampden
31	Christmas for Christ Offering Call-in Date	



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