

MINISTRY UPDATES

Greater Grace Newsletter from Mike Thompson

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Mike's InFaith Mission Focus

Here is a brief overview of my ministry focus with InFaith.

1. **Planting and strengthening residential recovery ministries** and rescue missions through developing, and coaching leaders and providing structure and gospel centered recovery related curriculum.
2. **Strengthening churches and non-profit ministries** by equipping leaders & teams to align their ministry with their God-given mission.

Front Lines Updates

GOSPEL CENTERED RECOVERY HOUSES

The Branches—In Mora, MN

SAVE THE DATE: On Sept 27th 10am The Branches will hold a public information meeting followed by a time of fellowship and snacks. Rev Brian Cole will be our guest speaker. We will explain how the ministry will work, when we will open the doors and take in our first group of men and give you an opportunity to volunteer or contribute to the ministry in any way the Lord leads you. The event will be held at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Mora, MN.

We have been busy filing a variance for the property with the city, creating a purchase or donation list, writing and gathering program materials and forming teams.

Beginning this fall I will be donating about half of my missionary time to The Branches to help this vital recovery ministry launch well and find their footing. I will be functioning as the Program Director until others are trained.

It is a blessing to be able to use all the things I have learned over the years to help launch this ministry. What a blessing it is to serve the Lord in this way alongside an amazing board of directors.

Note: The building we are purchasing for this ministry is located at 114 Maple Street in Mora, MN.

NON-PROFITS AND CHURCHES

Gospel 4 Haiti

I will begin the process of finalizing their 501c3 filing. They will be good to go.

CHURCH MINISTRY

I continue to serve as interim pastor of Fish Lake Chapel, which is an InFaith associated church. As an InFaith missionary I am serving this church beginning with a one year commitment as Interim Pastor.

After a church assessment there have been several initiatives that have been put in place. We have begun to move from traditional music only to a blended service that includes contemporary music. We are also hosting an AA group and have taken other steps to minister to those outside the church. I am excited about the future of this church. Some of our methods might change but the unchanging essentials are that we hold the word of God up as our unfailing guide. And we confess Jesus is Lord of all.

ADVANCED DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM (ADP)

On May 7th we launched a 3 year Advanced Discipleship Program with local ministry leaders, pastors from Liberia and Haiti, and others interested in growing in their bible study and leadership skills. Some hope to complete the entire program and become licensed with various denominations for vocational ministry. Other will take courses that line up with their interests. Holler if you are interested. (we can do zoom). Presently we are going through a course about how to be an emotionally and spiritually healthy leader. We are finishing up our second class and getting ready for Bible Study Tools and Methods.

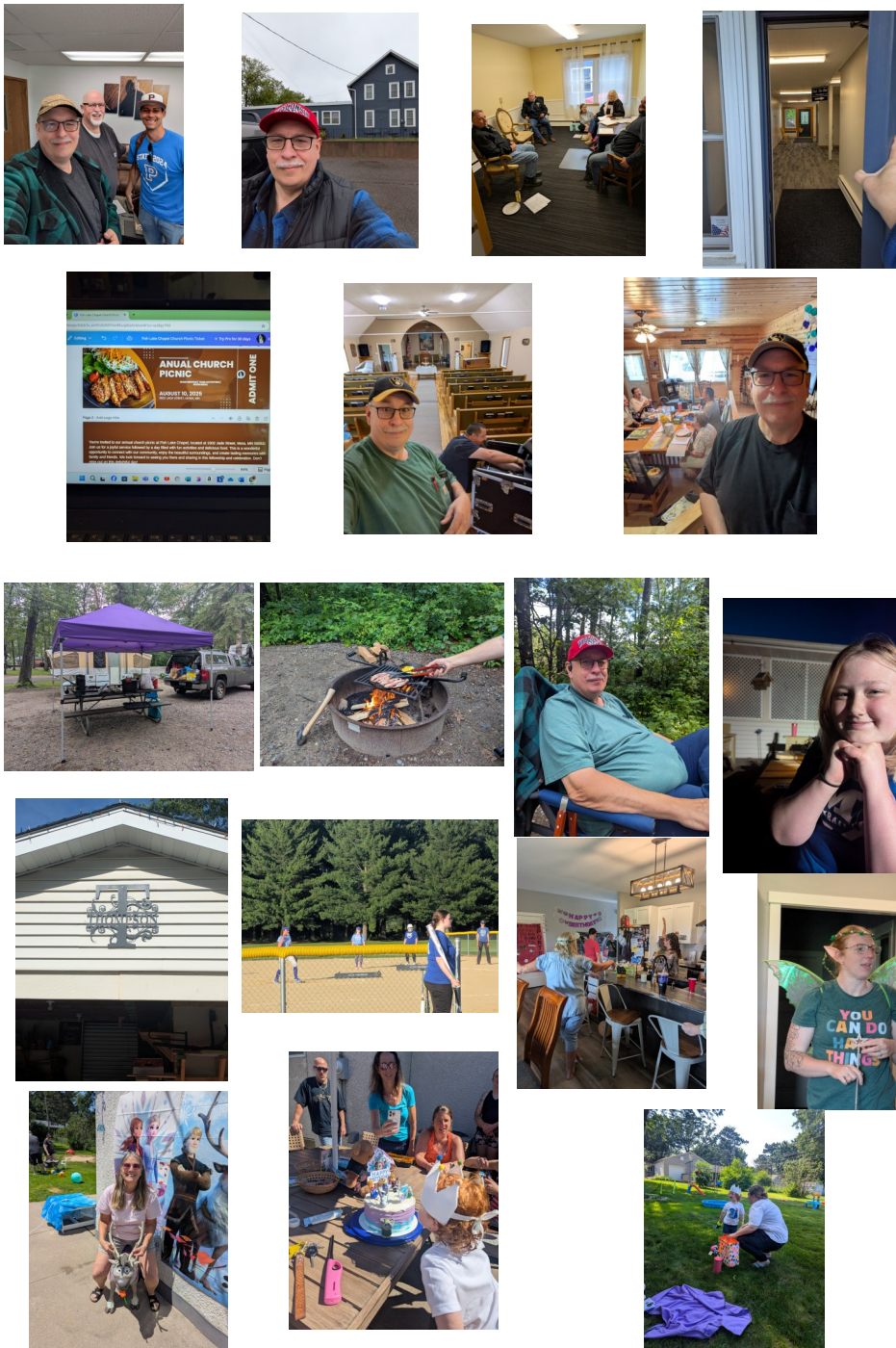
INFAITH UPDATES

I am in early discussions with the InFaith leadership to organize a pastors conference for the Midwest. This could be a vital equipping and encouragement source for InFaith Pastors.

PICTURED BELOW

Ministry pics, camping, family activities a more.

UPDATES IN PICTURES



Praise Reports Prayer Requests

PRAISES	PRAYERS
Meaningful connections with other pas-tors and ministries in the area	Need to raise 1200 more per month to reach my full support goal.
Dawn’s women’s study is thriving and well attended	God will lead many to freedom in Christ through The Branches
People are coming to faith in Jesus and others are growing in their faith.	Health and fitness goals will be met. Try-ing to extend my expiration date :)
God’s favor with working toward the opening of The Branches Recovery Min.	My family members would all grow closer to Jesus or come to faith in Christ

Contact & Other Information

MINISTRY PAGE: <https://infaith.org/ministries/michael-thompson>
Michael Thompson
411 Central Ave West
Mora, MN 55051
Mthompson@infaith.org
715-661-3254



Note: Ministry page (QR Code and/or web site link above) has a ministry overview and a link/button for donations

TEXT TO GIVE: (484) 897-7097 Mthompson Dollar-amount
(Note: Include a space between Mthompson and the dollar amount. Don’t use decimals, only whole numbers please)

InFaith Home Office: (send checks via U.S. mail) (Include my name in memo)
145 John Robert Thomas Drive, Exton, PA 19341
610-527-4439

Bonus Devotional Thought

The New Humanity and Missions
Eph 2:19-22

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

In the passage above are highlighted words that speak to three metaphors related to the church. Paul is helping the Ephesian Christians broaden their understanding of the church.

The term “**citizens**” suggests that people in the church can think of themselves as citizens of a kingdom ruled by Christ.

The primary place in the world right now that Jesus functions as King is the church. This church is located throughout the world and is comprised of people who submit to Jesus as King. His will is sought and obeyed in the true church. False churches make excuses for sin and cast doubt on the book of the King, the bible. But the true church submits to the will of Jesus and His word.

When we present the gospel in our mission field do we present Jesus as our holy King? If we do not begin there we leave out a primary element of the gospel, the glory of God and rule of Jesus. If we present the gospel as a “relationship” (which it is) but neglect teaching Jesus is a king, we present a false gospel in which Jesus is our buddy.

We are invited to be citizens of a Kingdom ruled by Christ. He is a just king, a loving king, and a holy King.

The second metaphor given is that the church of Christ are “members of his **household**.” If we are members of a household then the Christian Church is like a family. In our culture we think we belong to ourselves. We add things to our lives that appeal to our whims. A bit of Sunday sports, perhaps a podcast to take the place of church. If you are a missionary it is important and biblical to present the faith as joining a family.

If we never gather with our family we show that we do not care about other members of our household and we neglect the primary means by which we can grow in the faith. Elders teach parents of the faith who teach children in the faith. We grow in community. Moreover, if we have spiritual gifts and talent, those gifts become a blessing only when we fellowship with other believers and give them the gift we have (such as words of encouragement, gifts of teaching, gifts of leadership and so on). There is no gift until it is given away. God has given each believer gifts but they are useless until they are given to others. Let's encourage those we win to Christ to think of themselves as members of a family who have gifts to bring to the family gathering.

Lastly, the church is like a building. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone. The cornerstone in ancient building techniques took the place of our poured foundations, levels and chalk lines. The cornerstone was carefully leveled and supported so it would be load bearing. It was perfectly square, so that all other stones were aligned with the edge of the cornerstone causing the walls to be straight.

Concerts are awesome and spark engagement of youth and children. Swimming and playgrounds draw children. So do activities and games. But if these activities do not point to Jesus and his call for obedience, they are no better than putting a child in front of a screen to entertain them. Our admonishment to all people in the church, young and old, is to align our lives, beliefs and practices with Jesus the chief cornerstone.

Moreover, we are called living stones. We are part of the building of faith. What would a building look like if several concrete blocks or field stones were missing? It would not look right and it could compromise the building.

Lastly, consider **verse 22. “And in him you too are being built TOGETHER to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”**

Paul is addressing the Christian community. When God puts all believers together in churches that treat Jesus as their cornerstone, the Spirit of God is present. In our individual culture we miss the community emphasis of passages like this.

The church of Jesus is like a family, a kingdom and a building. These are things to emphasize among converts in our mission work. If not, they will bring their individualist lenses with them into the church and compromise the work of Christ.

How amazing that God has moved his presence from behind a curtain in the Old Testament temple into God's people who gather in His name. As you engage your mission know that Jesus will make the stones come alive. Align with the cornerstone, Jesus, and watch Him build His church. We get to be part of this holy work!

Blessings and love in Christ
Mike Thompson