

From Pastor John



Redding Christian Fellowship Connection

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John Craft
Lead Pastor

Rick Penner
Church Administration

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Missions

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Middle School

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Women's Ministry Director

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I love nativity scenes.

Our family has three: one that my wife and I purchased for our first Christmas together, an ornate one that has a stable with a palm tree and detailed figures, and a wooden set a friend made for our two sons when they were young that they could play with. Each of these sets have Joseph, Mary, the baby Jesus, assorted visitors (I'm guessing shepherds and wisemen), and one or two animals. Seeing them each year is a great reminder of the birth of Jesus.

Beyond the nativities in our house, we have one at our church, I see them at Walmart, I browse them at Costco, and have even passed by inflated nativities in yards around town. They are all essentially the same; the same characters arranged in approximately the same configuration. As I reflect on the scene that they portray, I am struck by the tranquility of the moment.

And I think I am wrong about that last sentence.

That first Christmas must have been anything but tranquil. The birth of Jesus place Joseph and Mary in a town that was so packed that they couldn't find appropriate lodging. In fact, Joseph and Mary were housed in a place where animals

were cared for—not a very private place to have a baby. Mary herself had just had the traumatic experience of giving birth. Their first visitors were shepherds who had just had the frightening experience of being visited by the armies of heaven surrounded by the glory of God. In their search for the baby Jesus and communication of their encounter with the heavenly host, they probably were not the sedate, quiet figures guiding a lamb while approaching Jesus on their knees. The birth of Jesus must have been a busy, loud scene.

Kind of like our lives.

In the midst of the activity that first Christmas, however, is one of the most important thoughts that Luke communicates. In Luke 2:19 it says, "But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart." In the midst of a very public, loud, even chaotic scene, Mary was moved to ponder what God was doing in the world. She was moved to consider how God was working in her life. And she was moved to worship.

As we head toward Christmas, with all of its activity and busyness, follow the example of Mary. Ponder what God was doing in the world in the birth of Jesus. And consider what He might do in your life, as well.

Observations from Pastor Rick

Some thoughts on the hand of God on His Land-- Israel.

A group of 24, mostly Redding Christian travelers have recently returned from Israel. One of the couples wrote these words to me about the trip:

We are both still trying to digest it all...It has changed the way we will think about the Bible stories...the trip will have an impact on our Christian life for many years to come. I encourage you to continue to oversee these trips as it is an important ministry to believers.

God has given me a very special interest in the land of Israel. For me, the growth and development of this nation since 1948 when it achieved statehood, is in many ways as remarkable as the centuries of its biblical history. There is not a doubt in my mind that God has His hand, in a unique way, on this little piece of desert real estate in the Middle East. Our guide repeated to us over and over the words, "this is all new!", as we rode in our bus. He was referring to new construction, new agricultural advances and so on. The growth of Israel is indeed "all new" and very impressive.

Genesis 12:1-3, to me, is a key Scripture. It records how God promised to Abraham a land. He further stated He would bless this nation and make it great. God also promised to bless the world through the nation of Israel. Although it is rarely

reported in the media, Israel today is a huge blessing to the world through its technological, medical, agricultural, and other advancements, as well as by its relief efforts worldwide. This Scripture goes on to state that those who will bless this nation will in turn be blessed and that those who choose not to, will be cursed.

November, 2017 marked the one hundred year anniversary of a momentous event which had a very direct impact towards the establishment of the nation of Israel. In November of 1917 the Balfour Declaration was issued by Great Britain. This declaration is seen by many as the launch of a foundational and international decree which helped to launch the restoration of the state of Israel. It should be noted that this declaration was multilateral. US President Woodrow Wilson, approved the language of the Balfour Declaration before it was voted upon by British Parliament. Several years later the US Congress passed a resolution copying the language of the Balfour Declaration. US President Warren Harding signed that resolution. Other nations supported it also. The Balfour Declaration is named after its signer, British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur Balfour. This is what it stated:

His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing

shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

Balfour was a Bible believer, favorably disposed toward the Jews. Two pivotal Scriptures can be viewed as milestones in the declaration. These are:

“You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her; the appointed time has come.” (Psalm 102:13)

“Hear the Word of the Lord, you nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands, He who scattered Israel will gather them and watch over His flock like a shepherd.” (Jeremiah 31:10)

In God’s providence several important developments merged to make the state of Israel a reality about 30 years after the Balfour Declaration and thus to fulfill these historic Scriptures. On one hand, Jews and some Christians alike had prayed for years for the establishment of the nation of Israel. Jews always prayed, “Next year in Jerusalem!” In the 1890’s what came to be known as the Zionist movement began to gather impetus. This movement fervently sought a homeland for the Jews in their ancestral home. Zionists met regularly, raised money, and began to make preparations to return to what we now know as Israel.

The second development was the winding down of World War I. By 1917 it was clear that England and its allies would achieve victory and the Turkish Ottoman Empire would collapse. This would free much of the Middle Eastern world from the Muslim caliphate that had ruled it. Thus two movements or historical events converged to pave the way for the establishment of the state of Israel several decades later.

The events between 1917 and 1948 are surely the most tragic in all of Jewish history. While the Holocaust immediately comes to mind, it is not the only tragedy. In an attempt to appease Arabs and their petroleum resources, Britain reneged on the Balfour Declaration. Jewish immigration was severely restricted. In spite of pleas from American political leaders Great Britain would not budge. There is no doubt that many Jews lost their lives because the door for them to the Holy Land was only open in a most miniscule way. It is a blight on British history to be sure.

It is also interesting to note that anti-Semites just recently have urged Britain to apologize for ever issuing the Balfour Declaration in the first place. Fortunately the current British Prime Minister has refused to do so. But one cannot help but wonder whether the fact that “the sun never sets on the British empire” and that “Britannia rules the seas” is no longer true, is not in fact related to the ancient Genesis promise that those who curse Israel will themselves be cursed. One wonders!

If you have ever considered a visit to the Land as it is often called, please let me know. Tentatively we are exploring the possibility of another trip in early November of 2018, God

willing. We may also invite our church family to an informational meeting in January, where many of those who attended our recent trip will recount their impressions and sentiments about the trip. Watch the church news for more information.

~ Rick Penner

Our Youth Ministries



Past Events

Early in November Baseline joined the all church missions trip to Middletown. This was the third year in a row that Redding Christian Fellowship has taken a trip to help construct homes lost in the 2015 fire in Lake County.

This year, many of the students helped homeowners sift through the ashes of their burned homes in Santa Rosa after the most recent fire which passed through there earlier in the year. Another group remained in Middletown and continued construction there. It was a beneficial trip because those serving were able to show the love of Christ to many people in very practical ways. We hope that the presence of teams like ours is a strong witness to those who have lost their homes in Santa Rosa and Middletown. This is one way we hope God will bring something good from such disaster.

This year Baseline students packed 500 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. It was great to see the energy and excitement as the students quickly packed all 500 with time to spare. We are excited to be sending our gifts in a new plastic tub created by Samaritans Purse to be more durable than a traditional cardboard shoe box. These containers themselves will be a gift to the children who receive them. A huge thank you to all who helped us with this either by physically packing the boxes or by donating to make this event possible.

Current Events

On Thursday nights Baseline has begun an exciting new Bible lesson series. We are working our way through the entire Bible hitting some of the highlights and big themes. This will help give students an understanding of the Bible as a whole which lays the foundation for further in-depth study. Bible memory is also something that is important to us and last month we launched our scripture memory program which runs through the school year. Through this we encourage students to memorize a scripture passage every month for seven months. In this way, by the end of the year they have a sizable chunk of scripture memorized.

Future Events

Over Christmas break we are planning to take a day to go up to the mountains and play in the snow for a day. We love these types of trips because students invite their friends and relationships are strengthened. Later in the winter we will be taking a weekend trip to hold a winter camp. We are excited to see what God continues to do in our middle schoolers in the future.



Christmas Banquet & Carol Sing

Thursday, December 14 at 2:30pm - Cost is \$10.00

Festive Food, Favorite Christmas Carols, Beautiful Music by the

Liberty Christian Elementary School Choir

*under the direction of Liz Adams Accompanied by Pat Franklin .
Incredible friends all gathered to celebrate Jesus the Messiah.*

***Make your reservation and pay at the
information desk or the church office by Monday, December 11.***

Hymn Sing

to



Thursday, January 18 9:00am - Breakfast \$3.00 in advance, \$4.00 at the door

PEP Redding Christian's 55+ Young at Hearts - We will enjoy a great breakfast, wonderful fellowship and have an inspiring time of worship as we sing some of our favorite hymns. ***Sign up early at the information desk or at the church office.*** Cost is \$3.00 in advance and \$4.00 at the door. Invite a friend to the exciting event.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SATISFACTION IN MINISTRY!

We've all heard the banal platitudes that plague Christian lingo. These well-intended phrases often lose their meaning sometime between the 20th and 60th time we hear them. While these phrases often have good applicable meanings, cliché has robbed their meaning and left us with eye rolls. **Here are some of my personal favorites:**

When God closes a door, He cracks a window.

God willing and the creek don't rise.

Let go and let God.

He'll never give you more than you need.

God answers kneemail, not email.

I will do my best to avoid these phrases and still encourage you. The following words are for those of you that find yourself in a difficult situation. Whether the challenge is too many changes too fast, a controlling volunteer, a disengaged student ministry, feeling unappreciated, or any other issue, I hope these words can help you make lemonade out of lemons. Ok, that's the last cheesy phrase, I promise.

1. Seek perspective.

Perspective has a tremendous impact on how you interact with your challenges. I'm not encouraging you to become delusional and convince yourself that your challenges don't exist. I am encouraging you to consider your challenges in a different light than inconvenience and frustration. We are not in control of much (and life is much better that way), but we are in control of our choices. Choose to find joy and appreciation in your situations. This might cause you to consider the possibility that you may be the problem. You may have slipped into a selfish perspective that is robbing you of joy or appreciation because you are consumed by the disparities of expectations and your perceived reality. The first step in altering perspective for the sake of improving a difficult situation is to remember that it is not all about you. This challenge is not a conspiracy against you; it can actually be a gift. Whether the gift is just intended to teach you perseverance, or if it is intended to prompt you to find a deeper sense of identity, good can come from being pushed out of your comfort zone. If you victimize yourself or throw pity parties, you will find yourself at a party of one. Discontentment thrives when you are not giving your best effort. Don't check out; dig in! Dig into the challenge and receive the gifts that come with the effort. What do you have the ability to change in this difficult situation? Have you made goals or progress in those areas? It is easy to point blame when times are hard, but assuming responsibility will allow you to serve others instead of hoping they will serve you better.

2. Take your focus off of performance.

In high-pressure situations, it is common to place all of the pressure on yourself or your performance. Again, analyze what is in your control, and beware of taking too much or too little responsibility. Focusing on your performance will often lead you toward fearful thoughts and a high attention to every failure. Fearful thoughts are going to be selfish thoughts. We focus on protecting ourselves when we perceive an outside threat. An inward and fearful focus will keep you from seeing the needs of others and serving them well. Those of us in ministry settings don't have to look hard for service opportunities, yet they are still easy to lose sight of when we are focused on our own performance or agenda. A perspective of service empowers and perpetuates service. Let me be clear that I am not saying service and productivity run against each other. An attitude of service does not excuse poor performance. I am speaking to performance or service as the attitudes with which you approach your work. When faced with difficult situations, I encourage you to identify the role you are playing in your difficulties, the role you can play in changing those difficulties, and the perspectives you can adopt to temper those difficulties. After spending a significant chunk of time exercising these efforts, you may recognize that your situation does need to change, just don't let withdrawal be your first step.

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Sharon's Sharing...



My personal favorite season is upon us, and I'm sure many of you would agree that it's a time of sensory overload, in the best of ways. The crisp weather has impacted the incredible colors of red, yellow and orange still remaining on our trees, and the resplendent visual and physical harvest of our bounty is upon us. A time that we, in our Western culture remember and celebrate all that we have to be thankful for, and then proceed into, as the song expresses, THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR. Yes, Christmas is drawing near, and we at Redding Christian will honor and celebrate this beautiful Advent season of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

For many of us, our hearts are overwhelmed with these emotions of gratitude, joy, celebration of the season, and certainly for the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. A song pops into my head...."Go tell it on the Mountain...over the hills and everywhere.....that Jesus Christ is born!" The Good Newstoo good to keep to ourselves! To me, the amazing light of that Good News supersedes all of the darkness, gloom and despair in our nation's recent months. It's so easy, in our humanness, to allow fear, discouragement and negativity to creep into every aspect of our lives, and cloud the fullness of joy and gratitude that God has intended for us. Read John 10:10 as a reminder, and then sit awhile and ponder Phil. 4:8. We can't control the devastation of disease, or the tragic loss of those we love, the devastation of fires or the moral decline of our world, but what we can control is how we choose to respond to these. Our hope is not in this world, but in the eternal freedom from sin and pain. So then, if you've read this and agree, I challenge you to focus on every point of Phil. 4:8 and make it your daily personal challenge to "Turn your eyes upon Jesus.....and the things of Earth will grow dim, in the light of His glory and Grace!" And then secondly,to go share this good news with someone you encounter. Your impact on their lives may have a profound consequence .

Let's look at a review of the good things we've experienced this past Fall:

- Our Ladies Tuesday morning and evening Bible studies are consistently growing and the goal of a deeper relationship with God, understanding and application of His Word, and meaningful relationships with other women, continues to be realized.
- Our STRANDS study, written and presented by Andrea Brown (that would be THE Mrs. Brown) continues to impact over 65 Women who are challenged to read, ponder, ask and then ACT upon what they've learned. The response to this fresh and inductive style of study definitely makes us ask if we might repeat this style of study again.
- Our current season of study will end mid December, and then 2 new studies will be offered; the first beginning Tuesday January 9th, a study based on the I AM, referenced in the book of John . Please note, these studies remain consistent in meeting location and time (9 am, and 6 pm); Our second phase begins Jan. 23rd (a study of I Peter) please watch for further details about these new studies and sign ups in our Sunday Bulletin, or on line .

- Our 2017 Ladies weekend retreat, held at the beautiful Tsasdi Resort at Lakeshore was filled to overflowing, with powerful worship, spiritual lessons, discussion groups, over the top relational connection opportunities, relaxed and delicious meals, and topping it off, our Sacred Sunday service. Our current venue location is geographically close, set in a breathtakingly beautiful area, affordable, and comfortable. BUT...unfortunately, our maximum capacity is about 95 ladies. So many of you expressed that you wished your friends could have attended. I fully agree...and my suggestion would be to mark your calendars (do that right now) for next August, when we begin registration and make sure you don't miss out. Each year has exceeded the previous year in content and response . . It's up to you, to make sure you're planning to attend next year, as it comes around quickly and then it fills up even more quickly...that's why we've chosen to schedule yearly rather than every other year.
- Precepts studies resume in January, as well as morning and evening Bible Studies.
- Two additional and successful women led ministries are Grief Share and Divorce Care, which walk people through these challenging seasons of life. Watch for updates on new classes in each of these Ministries in the New Year.
- Our annual Bake Sale Fundraiser was another overwhelming success, thanks to Vicky Schlange and her very competent team of staging and marketing experts. Also, many thanks to those of you who baked, worked a shift at our booth, or who purchased these delicacies. Our profits exceeded \$2100.00 and will go toward funding our WIM Budget this year for study materials, or scholarships. We also honor and celebrate new life with welcoming showers; supplementing the ladies who sew quilts to warm new babies, and those in life recovery programs, and many other activities inclusive to all ladies within our body.
- There are so many opportunities at Redding Christian for women willing to serve and connect with others, to be both blessed and also be a blessing. If you can cook, serve meals, do a load of laundry, or have the gift of hospitality, or your gift is to listen to and encourage a student, we can use you. Maybe you excel in the ability to express your thoughts in written words of encouragement, or you have experience teaching, facilitating or leading a small group, we need you, as well . Please ask me how you can be a part of our incredible Women in Ministry Team.

Christmas blessings and a JOYOUS New Year of honoring God as you bless and serve others;

Looking forward to your response to my challenge , I love to listen to your thoughts and ideas!

~ Sharon

December 2017



					1	2  Baby Shower For Tasha Hale 10:00 am
3	4	5	6	7  Community Closet Sorting Day 1:00 pm	8	9  Young Adults Game Night 7:00 pm
10  Begin the Journey (Session #1) 10:45 am	11	12	13	14  PEP Christmas Banquet 2:30 pm	15  Cookies & Cocoa Outreach 5:00 pm	16  Men's FUEL Breakfast 8:00 am <hr/> Comm. Closet Sort Day 9:00 am 
17  Begin the Journey (Session #2) 10:45 am	18	19 Elders/ Deacons Meeting 6:30pm	20	21	22	23
24  Evening Service Times 4:00 pm & 5:30 pm	25  Christmas Day Office Closed	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2018



	<p>1 Happy New Year</p>  <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>					<p>6</p>  <p>Men's FUEL Breakfast 8:00 am</p>		
<p>7</p>  <p>IMPACT Training 12:30 pm</p>						<p>12</p>  <p>SEAN MCDOWELL</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Sean McDowell Conference 6:00 pm</td> <td>6:00 pm</td> </tr> </table>	Sean McDowell Conference 6:00 pm	6:00 pm
Sean McDowell Conference 6:00 pm	6:00 pm							
	<p>15</p> <p>Martin Luther King Day</p> <p>Office Open</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Elder/ Deacon Meeting 6:30 pm</p>		<p>18</p>  <p>PEP Hymn Sing To Him 9:00 am</p>				
					<p>26</p>  <p>Women's Craft Night 5:30pm</p>	<p>27</p>  <p>RCF & IMPACT Family Skate Night 4:45 - 6:45 pm Viking Skate</p>		
<p>28</p>  <p>Israel Trip Sharing & Info For Future Trip 6:00 pm</p>								

Those listed below are or have been ill or in the hospital, recuperating at home, have lost a loved one or welcomed a new little one into their family. Let's lift them up in prayer.



Illnesses

Betty Achten	Hal Hanesworth	Debbie Walters
Margaret Brady	Loretta Humphries	Barbara Wiedenhoeft
Jody Charbonneau	Darlene Idehara	Glen & Myrna
Richard Cheatum	Del Jacobsen	Mapes
Shirley Coker	Laurie Lemon	Don Mangrum
Mary Doboynne	Deanna Olsen	Betty Ramsey
Pete Ferrer	Mary Olsen	Warn Seachao
Judy Gama-Strausser	Ed Robertson	Rory Woods
Louis & Donleita	Kati Rosten	
Gerdes	Barb Spellman	

Deaths

Ed Fishburn	Marilyn Dunn
Irene Kletke	Louise Rafalovich
Dianne Sills	

**ATTENDANCE AND
GENERAL FUND GIVING**

Celebration

	<u>1st / 2nd</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Giving</u>
10/1/17.....	453/317.....	770.....	\$ 21,841.65
10/8/17.....	441/357.....	798.....	\$ 16,030.86
10/15/17.....	484/372.....	856.....	\$ 13,858.65
10/22/17.....	407/389.....	796.....	\$ 14,701.00
10/29/17.....	407/361.....	768.....	\$ 13,221.47
11/5/17.....	556/385.....	941.....	\$ 29,889.23
11/12/17.....	456/327.....	783.....	\$ 17,230.14
11/19/17.....	461/423.....	884.....	\$ 27,721.41
11/26/17.....	431/354	785.....	\$ 12,030.96

FINANCIAL REPORT

Below you will see the fiscal year to date financial status of Redding Christian Fellowship. The Elder Board would like to keep the congregation informed on the financial status of the church and the various projects that are ongoing at Redding Christian Fellowship. You are welcome to address any questions or concerns by contacting the church office.

As of October 31:

Fund:

General fund giving:	\$ 87,292.91
Operating expenses:	\$ 86,671.33
Missions giving:	\$ 26,509.00
Missionary funds disbursed:	\$ 24,858.74



Thanksgiving Project Update

Thanks to all who participated in our annual Thanksgiving project. As this newsletter goes to press, we have fully funded the Benevolent fund goal of \$3000 and the Impact mentoring goal of \$2000. We also have funds for the Good News Rescue Mission dinner and we hope to fully fund that project (\$1000) before it concludes. Thank you very much for your generous support. Many will be blessed and encouraged by the generosity of the Redding Christian family.

Israel Informational meeting coming up in January!



January 28, 2018 at 6pm in the Main Auditorium

A group of 24, mostly RCF members, enjoyed a wonderful trip to Israel in October. We are inviting the church family to an evening of reporting and sharing about this eventful experience. Some of our participants will be speaking about their personal impressions and memories. We plan to share our journeys with you via video as well. An announcement will be made with preliminary details concerning our next trip to Israel. Everyone is invited.



**REDDING CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP**

2157 Victor Avenue
Redding, CA 96002

Celebration Services - 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. - Main Auditorium

OUR ELDERS

Duane Helle
(chairman)
Ken Abbott
John Kelley
John Chelonis
Troy Foster

Ken McDonald
Bruce Schlange
Dan Conklin
Rick Penner
John Craft

OUR DEACONS

Bill Hawes
(chairman)
Dave Donarico
Dan Londen
Gary Kalsbeek
George Rhoderick

Don Dunham
Don Greene
Robert Andrade
Dennis Hale
William Keeler

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OFFICE HOURS:

Monday thru Thursday
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.