

a conversation on life and faith

LOOP THE

JANUARY 2013



ISSUE NO. 31

THE THIRD WAY

An introduction to our January series entitled "Greater" inspired by the book by Steven Furtick.

PARTNERSHIP AT CENTRAL

Everything you need to know about what partnership is and why we have it.

GREG & JACKIE

How our Marriage Prep Course set this great couple on the path to a strong marriage.

PRAYING WITH AUTHORITY

How to create a daily discipline of praying with authority over your own life.

A PUBLICATION OF CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH
ONLINE AT WWW.CENTRALCC.CA



The Third Way

Inspired by the book *Greater* (Steven Furtick), and the journey we've been on as a church, Lead Pastor Bill Markham is walking Central through a January series that will ignite your faith to live a **third way** - by dreaming big and starting small.





WORSHIP+PRAYER

ENCOUNTER

JAN 27 | 6PM

JOIN US FOR A POWERFUL NIGHT OF EXTENDED
WORSHIP AND PRAYER.

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Pastor Bill Markham at the Garden City Arena. Taken during our September 2012 series production. During that series Central saw 77 people come to faith, and Pastor Bill believes that in 2013, God is calling Central to even greater things.

PHOTO: SCOTT TRAPASSO

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LifeLessons

TUESDAY JAN 29TH @ 7PM

LifeLessons are 6-8 week DVD courses with expert teachers and relational facilitators.

Childcare is provided for those attending LifeLessons.

*** Some courses require a registration cost*

FINANCIAL PEACE:

Experience freedom in your finances through hands-on tools. Teaching is by Dave Ramsey.**

STEPS TO FREEDOM IN CHRIST:

Discover how to walk in freedom in every area of your life. Teaching is by Neil Anderson.**

HOME WITH A HEART:

A unique program designed to help a woman make her home a special place for the whole family.**

GRIEFSHARE:

It hurts to lose someone. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone.

giant leaps always start with

BABY STEPS

WHY YOU NEED TO BE HERE EVERY WEEK OF OUR JANUARY SERIES CALLED 'GREATER'

BY ANDREW PLETT

“Baby step to four o'clock. Baby step to four o'clock.” That was the mantra of Bob Wiley (played by Bill Murray), the co-dependent, highly manipulative patient of psychiatrist Dr. Leo Marvin (played by Richard Dreyfus) in the 1991 movie *What About Bob*. Besides being one of the funniest movies I've ever seen, there is truth to the principle of baby steps that often gets diminished or lost in our desire to do great things.

After years of apathy and neglect, I've decided to start practicing guitar again. When I was younger I spent countless hours in lessons and thousands of hours hunched over my guitar with the incessant sound of the metronome ticking in my ear, but over the last few years I've let my practice slide and my discipline in *how* I practice go out the window too.

If you ask any seasoned guitar player what the key to developing speed and synchronicity is, they will all tell you the same thing. Start slow! In order to play fast and fluid, you have to play slow, painfully slow. The part of me that loves instant gratification cringes at the thought of hearing that metronome tick away at 60 beats per minute while I practice precise placement of my fingers and perfect timing between my hands. Alas, there is no way around it.

When I take an honest look at my life, I realise that I've approached my spiritual life with the same casual apathy that I find in my guitar playing. After experiencing years of intense spiritual growth and discipline, I've been coasting

and resting on past growth. I'm hoping to be used by God in great ways, yet I've been undisciplined in *how* I develop my spiritual life.

It is around this time of year, every year, that I look at the progress I've made (or not made) in key areas of my life and start to beat myself up about wasting another year of potential, whether it is with my spiritual life, my marriage, my kids, or on the guitar. Inevitably, because I feel like I have to make up for lost time, I dream even bigger than last year, set loftier goals and assure myself that I will make up the difference, and I don't, or haven't yet.

That's why I'm so excited and energized by our January series, 'Greater,' inspired by the book by Steven Furtick. If you read the tagline, it says "Dream Bigger. Start Smaller".

That's exactly what I need to get back to - starting smaller and staying disciplined with the little so that God can trust me with much.

I want to strongly encourage you to fully engage with every week of this series - buy the book, do the study in your LifeGroups, do whatever it takes to start small again.

Don't be overwhelmed with everything you think you could have, or should have done last year. Rather, commit to taking the baby steps you need at the start of this year and turn that into discipline you can build on. I've gone back to 60bpm on the metronome, and to simple devotional discipline. What are the baby steps that God is calling you to take in 2013?

AlphaLife

**THE BASICS OF CHRISTIANITY
TUESDAY JAN 29TH @ 7PM**

An 8-week course that provides a great opportunity to explore the meaning of life, and learn more about faith in God in a relaxed, friendly setting.

THE THIRD WAY

Happy New Year! If you are reading this, it means that the Mayans didn't get it right and we are still here. Congratulations! I love the start of a new year; it always brings the opportunity for a fresh start and a new beginning.

That being said, it is also an opportunity for us to make promises and set goals that we will fail to keep after about three weeks (statistically speaking).

In a 2008 article, Steve Shapiro, (business leader, speaker, and author) stated: "Only 8% of people are always successful in achieving their resolutions. 19% achieve their resolutions every other year. 49% have infrequent success. 24% (one in four people) never succeed and have failed on every resolution every year. That means that 3 out of 4 people almost never succeed." (www.steveshapiro.com/2008/12/11/interesting-new-years-resolution-statistics/)

So, how can we make good New Year's resolutions and then stick to them?

Well, one of the ways we can do that is by starting smaller. For the first month of 2013 we are going to embark on a church-wide journey called Greater. It's inspired by a powerful new book that I've just read by author and pastor Steven Furtick. I am so excited about this series because I believe that God wants to do something amazing in our church in 2013. The best part is that it doesn't start with lofty unattainable goals; it starts small, and leads to something greater.

Here's a bit about the series, taken from the book:

"Are you ready to open your imagination to the possibility that God has a vision for your life that is greater? We all have honest moments when we're gripped by a desire to feel that what we're doing matters more; that who we are matters more.

"The Bible suggests that the feeling is rooted in a calling ignited by Jesus: "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." John 14:12

"That single promise – "even greater things than these" – should be enough to shatter our acceptance of spiritual

mediocrity. Unfortunately, most believers have only tried and given up on vague notions of greatness...then settled into a life that's just good enough.

"Good Enough – Baseline living that is marked by mediocrity, stuck in spiritual survival mode, and controlled by complacency.

"Greatness – Vague, unrealistic aspirations of doing better that don't work in real life and lead to endless frustration.

"But there is a third way. Greater – The life-altering understanding that God is ready to accomplish a greatness in your life that is entirely out of human reach – beyond anything you see in yourself on your best day, but exactly what God has seen in you all along.

"If you're tired of being ordinary – dream bigger. If you're feeling overwhelmed about where to begin – start smaller. Ignite God's Greater vision for your life."

I don't know about you, but just reading that gets me pumped up! We're in for an amazing year and I'm excited that you are part of it with us!

BILL MARKHAM, *Lead Pastor*
Central Community Church
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GREATER
DREAM BIGGER. START SMALLER.
IGNITE GOD'S VISION FOR YOUR LIFE.

JANUARY 2013

INSPIRED BY THE BOOK BY STEVEN FURTICK

why partnership is an
ESSENTIAL

PART OF LIFE AT CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH.

BY BILL MARKHAM

Some of the questions that we get asked at Central are: why do we have Partnership, why is it renewable, how can I become a Partner, and am I already a Partner? Let me take a few minutes to address each of these questions.

1. WHY DO WE HAVE PARTNERSHIP?

We believe that we are a family of faith that works together toward shared, God-given goals. We don't use the term 'members' because for us this implies dues and duties. Instead we prefer the term 'Partners' because we are trying to do something together that honours God and our community, not out of duty or obligation, but rather out of a deep-rooted love for God and what He is doing in our community. Our Partners are not an 'elite' group who get special privileges - they are a special group of people who have chosen to be a part of something bigger, to give their time, talent, and treasure to seeing the Niagara Region transformed. That is why we ask this wonderful group of people to be a part of every big decision that we make at our church.

2. WHY IS PARTNERSHIP RENEWABLE?

We recognize that people's situations change. Sometimes people move, their worldview changes, or their commitment levels change. Because we strive to be non-threatening, we respect this reality. We are also faced with the administrative challenge of staying updated on this reality for almost 500 people. So, every year, we simply ask if

"We are trying to do something together that honours God and our community, not out of duty or obligation."

those who have chosen to be a Partner are interested in continuing for another year. If they are unable to continue as a Partner, for whatever reason, we respect that and hope that there comes a time in the future where they become a Partner once again.

3. HOW DO I BECOME A PARTNER?

Becoming a partner is fairly simple. It requires coming to a class called

Central 101 where we outline what Central is all about and the expectations of Partnership. Once you have heard the vision and heartbeat of our church and decide that you would like to become a Partner, there is a simple application form that you will fill out. This is followed by a short connection point with one of our Board members to answer any questions that you or they have, and then if everything checks out, you become a Partner.

4. AM I A PARTNER AT CENTRAL?

If you are already a Partner, you will be receiving your 2013 Partnership Renewal Form by January 10th via email or mail. We're asking you to hand these in before January 31st so that we have ample time to answer your questions and prepare for the Annual Business Meeting. If you are unsure whether or not you are a Partner or if you know you are a Partner but did not receive a form, you are welcome to contact Emily Sluys, emilysluys@centralcc.ca, for clarification.

No matter where you are in your journey of faith I am delighted to have you as part of our church family. May you experience the joys of being part of this family in new ways this year!

CONTRIBUTIONS OF A PARTNER

EXPECTATIONS OF A PARTNER

1. Regularly be a part of our church family for a weekend experience
2. Join others in serving / or be a part of a LifeGroup
3. Be a part of joyfully giving to making a difference in the world
4. Live your life reflective of a follower of Jesus Christ and the fundamental beliefs of the Bible

—
Next Central 101 Class: Wed, February 6th (7pm)
2013 Partnership Renewal: Forms Due January 31st

BOARD NOMINATIONS

PARTNERS: It's time to nominate a Central Partner whom you think would serve well on the Board. Three people will be elected at the Annual Business Meeting in April 2013. You can pick up a ballot as well as a description on the role of board members at Central Connect throughout the month of January.

Standing Board Members: Joe Caruso, Quinn Hofland, John Schroeder, Scott Schultz, Paul Oladipo, Barry Wills

Completing One 3-yr Term & Eligible for Re-election: Jamie Idzenga, Rick Rikkerink

Completing Two 3-yr Terms: Sharon Hauck. Thanks for your dedication and service, Sharon! You have been a valuable part of the Board these last six years.



Greg & Jackie

HOW THEY FOUND LOVE AND USED THE MARRIAGE PREP COURSE TO EQUIP THEM
FOR THE BEST DECISION OF THEIR LIVES

BY EMILY SLUYS
PHOTOGRAPHY: JUSTIN DRIEDGER

I've had the privilege of getting to know Greg and Jackie through the Pen Campus, and attended their wedding on September 15th in Port Hope. Greg is a gregarious guy who is eager to help out and amazing at making guests feel at ease. Jackie is a quiet, steady presence keeping Greg focused and organized. A few months ago, as I interviewed them about their experience in the Marriage Preparation Course, I observed the love, friendship and respect that had deepened between them over the last couple of years. Greg makes Jackie laugh, and he seems deeply appreciative of the treasure he has in her.

EMILY: Tell me about yourselves and how you met.

GREG: We met online at christiancafe.com a couple of years ago, and met in person for the first time on July 17th, 2010.

JACKIE (laughs): Very good....

GREG: Jackie lived in Port Hope and I lived here in the Niagara Region, and we started dating long distance. Jackie loves Central and everyone here in the area so much that she moved down in January 2012. She got a job at Brock Day Care with the kids, and I was doing call centre work.

EMILY: How did Greg propose?

JACKIE: We went to the Skywheel in Niagara Falls. I knew something was happening, but I didn't know what. We got on the Skywheel and I was looking out the window, and he started shaking the cage. I told him to stop it, but when I turned, he was on one knee and proposed. It was great.

GREG: And then we had a dinner at The Keg for free! Yeah, that was a good night, November 22nd.

EMILY: You attended the Marriage Preparation Course earlier this year. What was it like when you first walked in?

GREG: We were nervous because we didn't know what to expect, but we knew we were going to have to get in touch with our feelings—

JACKIE (laughs): Talk, and I don't like that.

GREG: So we were both kinda dreading it. Plus we didn't know anyone else.

EMILY: So what was the first session like?

GREG: It was good. We found out that what happens in Marriage Prep is along the style of the Alpha Course. It's run by the same people who run Alpha, so we watch a video, do questions, and the exercises were good.

JACKIE: Very, very good.

GREG: They're right on in terms of what we need to do after we're married so that we have a long, successful marriage. And everyone was nice.

JACKIE: Mike and Ingrid, the hosts, were just real. They let us know it's not going to be all perfect. There are going to be good times and bad times, and you learn how to stick together.





GREG: Their input was really helpful. I mean, they knew couples who had broken up, and that's why they led the course. They didn't want other couples to go through the same thing, and not realize that marriage is a lot of hard work.

EMILY: What were some of the topics in the course that you hadn't considered before?

GREG: I think the hard one for us was on communication.

JACKIE: And learning that how we were raised, and how our family functions, affects how we think marriage should be. I didn't realize I was bringing those expectations. In my family we don't talk about anything; we don't talk about emotions. So in the first week we talked about communication, and I didn't know how to do that. And it was good to know that Greg's family is really outgoing. We bring that into our relationship, and then we have to decide what we want. It's not good or bad, it's just what we want in our family. We learned how to talk, and that it's okay to be angry as long as you get it out that you're not angry at him, but frustrated and that's okay.

GREG: We worked on other stuff, too. Chores, finances, sex. Stuff we needed to learn but it was kind of taboo.

JACKIE: Yeah, we weren't ready to talk about it before then.

EMILY: What did you find most helpful?

GREG: For me it was the priorities. There's this exercise where you have to rate what your priorities are out of everything you do. So for me, I put #1-God, #2-Jackie, #3-Family, and #4- fun. And there were a couple times when I could have done things that were fun but I had to look back at my priorities.

JACKIE: Yeah, that week you got a call from someone asking if you wanted to come over.

GREG: I had bowling tournament that weekend. I said I wanted to hang out with Jackie because she was just down for the weekend. And I have no regrets.

JACKIE: The thing I liked was when we talked about personalities – the rhino and hedgehog. I'm more like the hedgehog, so when I face frustration, I pull in. Greg's a rhino, so he charges ahead. He's learning not to charge but still move ahead, and I'm learning not to pull in. We're learning how we can come together without hurting each other.

GREG: Also, the testimonies from others on the video were very real. That helps, because we thought we were alone in many of the topics we had discussed. Like the people who waited for marriage to have sex, like we're doing, and said they were glad they did, or others saying they wished that they had.



JACKIE: Yeah, the video hosts asked a couple "What's one thing that you would tell a couple that's getting married?" When they shared about waiting, that was great, because sometimes it's hard. We started wondering, "Why are we doing this?" and hearing them reminded us.

GREG: We also enjoyed Mike & Ingrid as hosts a lot.

JACKIE: Yeah, I still talk to them. They're so open; they gave us their phone numbers just in case we need it after the course.

GREG: It seems as though their ministry is to help out people like us. It was really helpful to have them share what they have been through, because everyone thinks marriage is puppies and rainbows.

been going on with the wedding. It's just a blessing. How God has provided is unbelievable.

GREG (to Jackie): I'm just so thankful to God that I found you. I'm blown away. I wasn't really at a good place with God at the time I met you, but in coming to Central for a couple years, I've grown in my faith every day. We're blessed.

JACKIE (chuckles): We are.

EMILY: What would you say to other couples intending to get married?

GREG: Definitely take the course.

THE MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE:

Building a strong foundation for lasting marriages. This 5 week course, for couples considering marriage, runs three times a year at Central, each February, May and October. To find out more, visit Central Connect, centralcc.ca/#/forms, or contact Emily Sluys at emilysluis@centralcc.ca.

REGISTRATIONS FOR THE NEXT COURSE are welcome. The next course begins on Wednesday, February 13, 2013.

EMILY: How has God been a part of your relationship?

JACKIE: I don't know where we'd be if God wasn't a part of it. My faith has grown since we've become a couple. We pray almost every night when we're together, something I never did before. And we're aware of how God is taking care of us.

GREG: And how much He wants us to happen.

JACKIE: Yeah! Like moving from Port Hope to here, finding a place to live, finding a job, and fitting in so well, and everything that's

JACKIE: And be open. You don't have to air your dirty laundry, but be open. The more Greg knew about me, the better he could help me. The more he knew I was worried about this or that, the more he could support me. He's not a mind reader, so I had to step out and tell him what bugs me and why. That was hard, but once I told him what I couldn't handle, he was able to step in with his personality and help me. And then it's like, "Why didn't I do this before?"

GREG: Couples should come just to realize they don't have to do it on their own. Other couples are going through the same thing. They can go through it as part of a community. The best thing is to go at it full blast. Take it seriously and do the exercises, because you'll learn a lot.

COATS FOR CHRISTMAS

HOW OUR DOWNTOWN CAMPUS AND A GROUP OF 30 VOLUNTEERS BROUGHT HOPE AND WARMTH FOR CHRISTMAS TO PEOPLE DOWNTOWN

BY MARTHA HICKS

Ask any of my children, and they will be quick to tell you that my favourite time of year is Christmas. I'm unsure exactly why, but I think it is a combination of many different reasons. Growing up, Christmas meant special times with my family. Being a child I had an innocent and naïve understanding of the world around me.

As an adult things have changed. Working as a nurse for 28 years, the majority of those years in an emergency department, has changed my perception of the world in which I live.

For many years when my husband has asked me what I would like for Christmas, I struggled to answer, because what I would like for Christmas cannot be purchased in any store. To quote one of my favourite songs; "No more lives torn apart, That wars would never start, And time would heal all hearts, And everyone would have a friend, And right would always win, And love would never end," are some of the items on my Christmas list.

Many people have crossed my path, probably thousands, and they are hurting. Whether they have experienced the loss of a loved one, been abandoned by family or have lived a life that has led them to make bad decisions to hide from their pain, people need hope: Hope that comes from small things: a smile, a caring touch, the generosity of a gift.

This year I had the opportunity to be a part of 'Coats for Christmas'. We put the word out for donations of coats, clothes and toys. In

collaboration with 'Make a Difference Open House' we gathered more donations than we had hoped for.

On Saturday morning, December 8, our group of 30 volunteers gathered the clothing, coats, toiletries and toys to be given away. We had passed out flyers, emailed posters, and approached local businesses and schools to let people know that Coats for Christmas would be at the downtown campus that day.

We arrived early to get ready. We organized and displayed our donated items, prepared the coffee and snacks, and waited. At 9:30 the doors opened and people came - 155 people came through the doors that day! Men got new leather coats, women smiled as they showed off their new items, children giggled as they picked out new toys from our toy room, and dads cried. Seeing their appreciation was humbling.

As folks left the building with bags full of clothing and toys, we offered them an invitation to return for a pancake breakfast and the opportunity to hear about the only true hope for our world, Jesus Christ. That next morning, the Sunday service at our downtown campus saw many new faces.

Helping people in need, and seeing some of those people come to learn about Jesus, gives me a feeling of warmth and joy that no wrapped gift could give.

We are already planning for next year and hope that each of you chooses to be a part of this amazing day!

"Men got new leather coats, women smiled as they showed off their new items..."



CREATING A HOME WITH A
HEART

A NEW LIFELESSON COURSE STARTING THIS MONTH

BY HELENA PATTITUCCI

Ugh! Where is that shirt I was going to wear today? I search the closet, I search the pile of clean clothes beside the pile of dirty clothes... hmmm not there...oh I know, the dryer... the clothes line...where is it?

Losing clothes, keys, paperwork, and forgetting deadlines was once a daily routine for me. There was so much wasted time, running around looking for things and scrambling to meet deadlines. I would spend a whole weekend cleaning top to bottom, only to be living in the same chaos a week later. Piles of paperwork, clothes - you name it - I had piles of everything.

I would like to say I was an organized mess, but instead I was just a straight-up mess. My closets and drawers were always neat, because nothing was in them! I would get so caught up doing one thing (usually work) that I would neglect my diet, exercise, my home, and everything else. Then I got married and had 2 kids.

I had never felt so overwhelmed. I would take it out on my husband: "I need more help. I can't keep up!" I would misplace my keys, and then my kids would be stressed getting out the door because of me impatiently rushing them...it was NOT FAIR.

I did not want my kids to grow up in an environment of frustration and contention. What could I do about it? How do I juggle running a business and all that comes with it, plus keeping a house, being

a mom, being a wife, and still have my own interests, hobbies, and time to relax? I didn't know the answer, so I just buckled in for the ride. After all, working with many people taught me one thing: All women feel this way - too much to do and not enough time. Oh, and... Who am I again?

Then I was invited to a home organization class, a synopsis of the Home with a Heart program. I snarled...Oh gosh...who does this?... All those moms with nothing else to do but 'organize'. Everyone will have ideas and advice and I'm sure I will burst into tears because, well, I don't have any ideas and I don't have time. I am glad to say I was wrong!

"The Home With A Heart program has changed my life. I've learned the skills to run my life, rather than my life running me."

The Home with a Heart program has changed my life. I have learned the skills to run my life, rather than my life running me. I will admit, at first the thought of the routine made me feel trapped. After all, I am a spontaneous person, that's my personality. After implementing the program, I found it actually brought freedom. I don't have a mental checklist running through my head all day; I don't

think about what to make for supper all day; if I don't do my cleaning for one week, it's just a matter of picking it up again the next. It never results in chaos in my home anymore.

Now being spontaneous and getting out to play when I have work to do doesn't have negative side effects or hurt my relationships. I spend my weekends with my family, not doing all the stuff I didn't get to all week. The program teaches the skills necessary to bring balance into life. I have peace in my home, in my relationships and within myself.

HymnSing

TIMELESS WORSHIP

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to join in uplifting worship and meaningful connection with one another! Our HymnSing is an evening of worship with the classic hymns that have been an inspiration to the church for generations.

**SUNDAY JANUARY 13TH
6PM (SCOTT ST.)**

Mike & Sara Varhmeyer

Mike and Sara are two incredible volunteers here at our Scott Street Campus! Together with the rest of the Vahrmeyer clan, they are a colourful part of our Sr. Kids Ministry every other week, bringing a fun and exciting energy every time they volunteer!

At Central, we have hundreds of amazing volunteers who give their time, gifts and resources every week to make our church the best that it can be. If you are interested in volunteering or trying a FirstServe opportunity to find a role that you'll love, contact our volunteer coordinator Karlene Markham today.

KARLENEMARKHAM@CENTRALCC.CA



PHOTO: SCOTT TRAPASSO

PRAYING WITH AUTHORITY

PROCLAIM. RENOUNCE. ENTREAT. PRAISE.

PRAYING WITH AUTHORITY DOESN'T NEED TO BE BIG AND SENSATIONAL. THE ENEMY DOESN'T CARE ABOUT THE VOLUME OF OUR VOICE, HE PAYS ATTENTION TO THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS. THIS IS A PRAYER DISCIPLINE THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER INCORPORATING INTO YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE IN 2013.

BY ANDREW PLETT

During the orientation of my first mission trip to the Middle East, the program director (Randy Friesen) encouraged us to develop the personal prayer discipline of praying with authority every morning. He spent time teaching us the biblical foundation behind it (which I don't have time to do here) and challenged us to begin every morning with prayer in this specific way.

As a result, almost every morning for the last seventeen years I have woken up and spent time praying in a very specific way.

Through our *Greater* series in January we are going to unpack what it means to dream big yet start small. What I am going to share with you is something small that has had a tremendous impact on my life, far greater than I would ever have thought.

Randy used the acronym P.R.E.P (Proclaim. Renounce. Entreat. Praise.) to make it easy to remember and create a logical sense of flow, I've modified it and made it my own over the years, so I'll walk you through what I've woken up to do almost every morning for the last seventeen years.

PROCLAIM

The very first thing is to proclaim *who* God is and *who you are* in Christ.

Ex: Father, I worship you this morning. I proclaim that you are robed with majesty and strength (Psalm 93:1), and that You are the Alpha and Omega, the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come (Rev 1:8). I proclaim today Father that I am not my own, but that I have been bought with a price (1Cor 6:20) and I am a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in me (1Cor 6:19). I proclaim today Father that I have been fearfully and wonderfully made by You (Psalm 139) and that your grace is sufficient for me (2Cor 12:9), there is nothing that can separate me from your love. (Romans 8:38-39)

Of course there are countless other scriptures that describe who God is and who we are in Christ. The point is that you begin every day by establishing what is true about God and what is true about yourself. This isn't about repeating self-help phrases all day long, it is about deeply understanding who God is and who He has created us to be. I can tell you from experience that this has had a tremendous impact on my life. It is much easier to spot what is *not* God when you understand from scripture what *is* God.

Every morning that I wake up and proclaim these things I am more deeply anchoring my feet in truth. Take some time to study for yourself and begin to memorize verses that declare *who* God is as well as verses that proclaim *who* you are and *how* God sees you, there are hundreds!

RECOGNIZE/REPENT/RENOUNCE

From "proclaim" I move right into "recognize". Every morning I acknowledge to God that I am a sinner, that I've been born into sin (Psalm 51), that I fall short of God's glorious standard (Rom 3:23)

and that I have only been saved by His grace, not by anything I have done. (Eph 2:5)

Ex: Father, this morning I recognize that I have been sinful from birth (Psalm 51) and that I fall short of your glory (Rom 3:23). I recognize today that when I have sinned I have grieved You Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30) and I am sorry for that. Holy Spirit, today I invite You to show me any areas of my life that have grieved You, uncover any sins that I have committed and teach me how to repent. Jesus, I repent for my pride (acknowledge your sin specifically, i.e. pride, lust, fear, anger, lies, slander etc) and ask you to cleanse me with your blood from my sin of pride. Father, in Jesus' name I renounce the spirit of pride; it is written "God opposes the proud but give grace to the humble" (1Peter 5:5). In the name of Jesus I break any bonds I have made with the spirit of pride and cancel any agreements that have been made and send you to the cross for judgment in Jesus' name.

As I'm in prayer I ask the Holy Spirit to identify any and all sin areas and anything that I need to take authority over. This can take a bit of time, but it is like cleaning the house, you just have to do it!

ENTREAT

Entreat means to earnestly ask for something. After repenting and renouncing I ask the Holy Spirit to fill me, to replace pride with humility, anger with grace and peace, lust with purity, etc. I also take time to clothe myself in the armour of God. (Ephesians 6:10-19)

Ex: Holy Spirit I ask that you would fill me again this morning. I ask that you would replace pride with humility, lust with purity, anger with peace, and judgment with grace. I ask this morning Father for you to clothe me in Your armour again (take time to pray through each piece of armour) and make me alert to your voice today. I am available to be used by You today.

One of the things that I want to encourage you with is to ask the Holy Spirit for a deeper understanding of the armour that we've been given. Take time to ask, reflect, ponder and study. Understanding our armour is part of being trained to use it.

PRAISE

Worship isn't about a type of music, what happens on Sunday morning or how well you can sing. It is about declaring the greatness and goodness of God. Take some time to praise Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and use verses that back up what you're saying.

After a few years of praying like this every morning, a friend of mine asked me if I was simply just engaging in religious repetition every day. I've thought about that a lot over the years and the response I gave him then still stands true for me today. Learning (I'm still learning) how to pray with authority, backed by the Word of God, has been an anchoring force in my life. It has provided me with a response of truth in some of the most difficult seasons of my life.

There is no right way to pray, but I want to encourage you this year to make prayer a discipline: Not aimless prayer, but focused, intentional prayer that is rooted in the truth of who God is and who you are in Him.

This past Christmas fifteen LifeGroups took part in our Merry Christmas World local initiative. Each group provided gifts for a family as well as a Christmas meal, all with the hopes of helping to make Christmas Day special. The Vahrmeier LifeGroup (pictured here) was one of the groups to take part in this local initiative.

PICTURED (FROM TOP LEFT): ALEX SMETHURST, MIKE VAHRMEYER, JESSICA SMETHURST, SARA VAHRMEYER, CATHARINE KRUITBOSCH, BRIGHTON KRUITBOSCH, LAUREN VAHRMEYER, MADY VEHRMEYER

PHOTOS: SCOTT TRAPASSO



IT'S BETTER TO GIVE

ONE LIFEGROUP WHO DECIDED TO BE A BLESSING TO THOSE LESS FORTUNATE OVER THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

BEHIND THE LENS

A GLIMPSE INTO THE FILMING OF OUR
CHRISTMAS EVE WELCOME VIDEO

Christmas is always a great time of the year to “get creative”, and this year was no exception! Our creative team landed on what we think is a pretty hilarious Christmas Eve welcome video concept, and so we hit the ground running.

Our day of filming was interesting, to say the least. From dressing up the Galessiere family in costumes to helping unload a 300 pound donkey, the day was filled with many comical moments. One of the highlights was when we headed over to Fourth Ave in St. Catharines to film a scene during one of the busiest times of the day. Besides almost causing a dozen car accidents, we definitely caught the interest of onlookers as we had to stop and explain what we were doing so many times, and also allow people to take pictures.

The point of our Christmas Eve welcome video is really quite simple: We want people to take a moment and enjoy the light-hearted side of the season. Hopefully we accomplished our goal.

SCOTT
TRAPASSO

IS THE MEDIA DIRECTOR AT CENTRAL
COMMUNITY CHURCH.

PHOTOS BY: DAVID RUSTENBURG





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QUINN HOFLAND

ONTARIO VALENTINE'S TOUR 

Couples Night Out



FEATURING AUTHOR & SPEAKER
Phil Callaway

7:30PM | FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2013
CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH
240 SCOTT STREET
905.937.5610

*TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE HOST CHURCH &
GOSPEL LIGHTHOUSE, ST. CATHARINES | HERITAGE CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE, ST. CATHARINES
THE GOSPEL SHOPPE, NIAGARA FALLS

TICKETS ALSO AVAILABLE AT TICKETWINDOW.CA*
*ONLINE CONVENIENCE FEE APPLIES

WITH THE MUSIC OF
Jay Calder



Inspiring couples of all ages to live, love and laugh together as God originally designed.

VISIT www.couplesnightout.ca FOR EVENT INFO





JANUARY EVENTS BY CAMPUS

JANUARY

A FRESH COVERING OF WHITE SNOW AT FIREMEN'S PARK, NIAGARA FALLS.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SCOTT ST. CAMPUS

WEEKLY REPEATING EVENTS

SUNDAY MORNING
9:30 - 11:15AM:

6 13 20 27
GREATER SERIES

SUNDAY EVENING
6PM:

13
HYMN SING

27
ENCOUNTER

TUESDAY:

8
60's Plus Lunch (12PM)

29
ALPHA LIFE
FINANCIAL PEACE
STEPS TO FREEDOM
HOME WITH A HEART
GRIEF SHARE

*ALL ARE AT 7PM

WEDNESDAY:

2 9 16 23 30
MORNING PRAYER (7:15AM)
THE WELL (9:30AM)
CYM LIVE (6:30PM)

THURSDAY:

3 10 17 24 31
NOON PRAYER (12PM)

NIAGARA FALLS CAMPUS

WEEKLY REPEATING EVENTS

SATURDAY (6PM):

5 12 19 26
GREATER SERIES

19
GROUPLINK (7:30PM)

TUESDAY:

8 22
KNITTING
LIFEGROUP (7PM)

15 29
YOUNG MARRIED
LIFEGROUP (7PM)

WEDNESDAY:

9 23
MIXED
LIFEGROUP (7PM)

THURSDAY:

3 10 17 24 31
CYM NIAGARA (6:30PM)

24 31
ALPHALIFE (6:30PM)

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

WEEKLY REPEATING EVENTS

SUNDAY MORNING
9:15 PANCAKE BREAKFAST
10AM SERVICE:

6 13 20 27
GREATER SERIES

TUESDAY:

1 8 15 22 29
DROP IN (9AM)
LIFEGROUPS (7PM)

WEDNESDAY:

2 9 16 23 30
DROP IN (9AM)

THURSDAY:

3 10 17 24 31
PRAYER (6:30PM)

FRIDAY:

4 11 18 25
DROP IN (9AM)

SATURDAY:

26
KIDS FILM FEST (2PM)

SPECIAL EVENT

■ **SCOTT ST. CAMPUS**

240 Scott St.
St. Catharines, ON L2N 1H6
P: 905.937.5610

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday Morning
[9:30am & 11:15AM]

■ **DOWNTOWN CAMPUS**

203 Church Street,
St. Catharines, ON
P: 289.271.1014

SERVICE TIME

Sunday Morning [10AM]

■ **NIAGARA FALLS CAMPUS**

6970 Mountain Rd.
Niagara Falls, ON
P: 905.325.8224

SERVICE TIME

Saturday Evening
[6PM]