HOW DO WE NURTURE?

A profound affect on our health & happiness
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MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

By: David Devereaux

Everyday we work to offer the love of Christ to people in our community.

Welcome to Desert Oasis, the newest publication of Desert Spring United Methodist Church. Desert Oasis is a quarterly magazine celebrating the ways God is at work in our church. Each edition is dedicated to a specific ministry area of our church, focusing on the ways we are living out of our vision of “offering the love of Jesus Christ in service to others.” It is our hope that as you read the stories of ministry and lived being touched by the grace of God, you will be encouraged and strengthened in your faith—like an Oasis in the desert, bringing refreshment to your spirit. So, sit back and enjoy as you read about the amazing ways God is at work transforming people’s lives through our ministries. This edition of Desert Oasis is about Nurture, how we nurture our church, nurture ourselves, and our nurture our community. Our church works hard within and beyond our community, blessing the lives of many, many people. We see Desert Spring folks in our schools, Head Starts, hospitals, prisons and half way homes, senior living homes, and working among the homeless as we live out our vision of “offering the love of Jesus Christ in service to others”. There are so many ways that we are living out our faith! So, sit back and enjoy as you read just a sample of the ways we are involved in missions! God bless you all...

Pastor Dave

Published by Desert Spring Church 120 N. Pavilion Center Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89144

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Contributors
We would like to take a minute to thank all of our contributors to this edition of Desert Oasis. If you would like to become a contributor please contact Christopher Devereaux at the email provided above.

Distribution
The Desert Oasis is printed once a quarter and is created by volunteers in the church. We are always looking for more people to get involved in this ministry and provide guidance to improve your craft and skill.
TOM WASHINGTON AND HIS WIFE

began visiting Las Vegas in 1999 when they decided Desert Spring United Methodist would be their church home during their winter visits.

After 36 years as a Detroit educator and administrator, Tom and his wife Gloria decided to make Las Vegas their permanent home in 2000. The former Snowbirds warmed up to Las Vegas quickly. Gloria has her favourite church ministries and for 13 years Tom has spent time nurturing students at Squires elementary school after Bishop Dew announced to the congregation that all the churches should do something to help children in poverty.

“Eighty-percent of our first grade students feel good about school, but at the end of High School that number drops to 5 percent, says Tom Washington.”
By: Margo Williams

The goal of the Mentoring program for the 17 volunteers, who are also role models, is to change student’s attitudes, give them academic guidance and improve school attendance. Washington says to release negative behavior you need to start by first grade. He says, “when their attitude changes, their academic performance changes, and the children will also have better relationships with their parents, teachers, and kids in the neighborhood.” Mentors also teach students skills to help them make the right decisions. Tom and the late Thomas Cromartie founded the Thomas Cromartie program that provides incentives for students for attendance and academic improvement. Each student is also given a personalized dictionary.

When adults say they don’t have time to volunteer, Tom who mentors seven students says, “time is relative. Washington, from a family of nine brothers and sisters says, “You may not have 10 hours, but you may have an hour. You may not realize you are sharing a richness given to you. It not only helps them, but it helps you,” Tom adds.

One of Desert Spring’s most active volunteers, Linda Chapin agrees. The former Escrow Officer and Realtor and her husband Steven moved from Texas to Las Vegas in 1989. The mother of four and grand-mother of nine makes time to nurture others in spite of her own past illnesses.

“I love God and serving other people,” she says. “They prayed me through a health issues and truly supported me in a time of crisis,” she added. Linda who has had lung cancer and back surgery, still finds the strength to organize and maintain the Desert Spring’s Prayer Chain for 250 plus families. Another one of the church’s most important ministries is taking cooked meals to the homebound, sick or those who are Caregivers. She has 30 volunteers.

“It’s a real blessing for those who jump in and help others,” says Chapin.

Linda’s husband Steve is actively involved. He has been part or the Lay Leadership Team and served as chair to church council for nine years. Steve continues to serve as a delegate to Annual Conference and teaches a class on Methodism at Desert Spring quarterly.

When asked where to start if we would like to nurture others, Linda replied “Pray on it, open your heart and God will tell you what to do.”

Linda Chapin also facilitates a Cancer Support ministry. How does she get volunteers? She says word of mouth and those blue cards that we fill out during the service. Both Linda Chapin and Tom Washington have one thing in common. They both love what they are doing. The Nurturing never stops for both of them. They also have the love and support of their spouses, who also spend a great deal of time volunteering.

“Pray on it, Open your heart and God will tell you what to do.”

TO VOLUNTEER OR TO GET INVOLVED IN THE MANY PROGRAMS CALL (702) 256-5933 DESERTSPRINGCHURCH.COM
PRAYER IS POWERFUL

If you want evidence of Christ working miracles in our lives look no further then the powerful act of prayer.

HOW DO WE NURTURE OUR CONGREGATION?

By Christopher Devereaux  EMAIL desertspringsocial@gmail.com

I was recently invited to experience one of the churches most important ministries. It’s a ministry that does not have a lot of people in it and it stays pretty quiet. There is no fund-raisers needed and it isn’t growing in the traditional sense. It is the Prayer Ministry, and it is incredible. Marilyn Maki and her trusted group have been praying over the Desert Spring Church and its congregants for many years and had invited me to come experience what they do so that I might write this article. For the sake of all our members no information regarding the specifics of the prayer requests were shared with me but it was an amazing experience for me to be in the presents of so much energy.

Some people, like myself, have a hard time with prayer. It just does not come natural to me, and I end up feeling like I am reading from a book. Not Marilyn, not her team. They poses a gift to graciously and lovingly pray for all the things we wish we could say out loud but don’t have the courage to. They pray for families that are broken, for people out of work and unable to pay their bills, for loss of love.

Marilyn and her prayer group also pray prayers of joy for all the wonderful things we have in our lives. For new babies, and old friends and all of our wonderful members of the church.

While I sat there, six ladies and I, an overwhelming calm came over me. I wish I could say that all of the sudden I was able to pray like that best of them. That I no longer had to worry about the words that come out or if I was going to pray the same sentence twice. No today would not be the day I became a master at prayer, but I instantly realized something. The power of prayer is not in the person who is praying or their praying prowess, but rather in GOD who we trust will answer our prayers. We cannot access the power of prayer just by reciting certain words (although prayers like the Lords Payer are great places to start) or by praying in specific ways. None of that matters as long as you are praying from your heart and are willing to accept the ways GOD answers our prayers. So take a moment and pray, for your family, for yourself, for your GOD. Because everyday is a blessing and it is just waiting for you to fully experience it. GOD bless.
“THE POWER OF PRAYER IS NOT THE RESULT OF THE PERSON PRAYING BUT RATHER, THE POWER RESIDES IN GOD”
Yesterday, we arrived home safely after 3 days at Knott’s Berry Farm. Geri and I decided to take the kids to the amusement park for the long weekend—one last get away before school was in full gear for the kids. We had a great time! And, I survived! I have always loved Roller Coasters (and still do), but as the years roll on the rides seem to be a bit harder on my body! The most intense ride of the weekend was called “The Xcelerator”; a roller coaster that is exhilarating to say the least! The “Xcelerator” begins fast—reaching 82 miles per hour in 2.3 seconds! It shoots you almost straight up 205 feet before twisting and dropping straight down. Some more twists and curves and the ride is over almost as quickly as it started—62 seconds, start to finish. So, what is a 60 year old man doing on a ride like that (besides screaming the whole way)? Jeremiah wanted to ride it, but he wasn’t ready to ride it alone. So, I did what parents do—I took him! And, he had a great time! So did I (mostly because he had such a great time)! And, Geri (who couldn’t watch the ride) enjoyed seeing how excited he was! Two days later, my back is still a bit sore...and, I will probably do it again when Cody and Saralane ask me to take them. Why, because families do all sorts of things for each other (sometimes even crazy things) simply because we care about each other! That was the point of the trip—to do something that would bless the kids, and that they would remember! And, they were blessed...but not as much as Geri and I! (Isn’t that the truth—we do something to bless someone else and end up blessed ourselves!)

In the church, we may not ride roller coasters but we do care about each other as family. St. Paul said to the Church in Corinth “When one celebrates we all celebrate and when on suffers we all suffer”. That is the way it is with people who love each other. We want what is best for each other, and do what is needed to bless each other. This is what is at the heart of all our “Nurture Ministries”—doing what love requires blessing each other’s lives. Sometimes that means praying for each other, sometimes it means visiting each other, sometimes it means supporting each other through the tough times of life, sometimes it means taking a meal or offering a ride, but always it means that we care for each other and are willing to “celebrate with each other and suffer for each other”. “My how they love each other”—it is my hope that those words come to the minds of all who see us caring for one another!

After three days and dozens of roller coaster rides, it is good to be home with you! And, as I write this article, I am wondering “does anyone have a heat pad?”

I will see you in church!
Pastor Dave
“IN THE CHURCH, WE MAY NOT RIDE ROLLER COASTERS BUT WE DO CARE ABOUT EACH OTHER AS FAMILY.”
Tony Issa encountered a severe sickness that, at first, evaded medical diagnosis. Eventually, it was determined he had Lymphoma, which lead to many months of tests, treatments and eventually a liver transplant. That sounds fairly simple, but it was not. At one point he was hours away from dying, but Tony was not giving up. Resulting from a multitude of prayers from his wife Nancy, our church’s Prayer Chain, friends across the county, and the comfort of his Prayer Shawl, at the most critical time a liver donor was located. A transplant ensued, followed by five blood transfusions, injections and pills, which caused a very painful recovery. Tony and Nancy, both, credit his miraculous recovery to the prayers of their Christian friends. This experience has inspired their Christian spirituality to a depth previously never attained or realized.

Another example is provided by Joy Morse and her committee of seven “Essential Lay Visitor” members. They provide friendship to those in Nursing Homes or who are home bound. Joy says they are very lonely and appreciate every minute of friendly companionship. Pastor Gerber compliments this service with approximately twelve visits per month to shut ins and hospital patients in need of Christian inspiration.

Charlie Sandefer is one of the facilitates for “Caregiver Support Group”, which focuses on people who are experiencing physical, emotional and spiritual challenges. This support group of ten to twelve caretakers, have had similar experiences, so they can identify with the concerns of those needing care, and provide appropriate sympathy and insight. Just knowing someone cares is a blessing to them.

Our church’s “Grief Support Group” facilitated by Sally Rogers, provides support for any type of grieving, and lately have been serving many who have lost a loved ones. Consolation is provided for as long as helpful, generally around a year. They offer monthly meetings and then all enjoy a meal together.

“Stephen Ministries”, facilitated by Jean Akers, offers a more intense relationship with people needing emotional/spiritual attention. One minister is assigned to each person in need until they feel more comfortable with their crisis. Each minister is trained to primarily listen and offer prayer on a private basis. Recipients of this service are very pleased to know someone will listen to their concerns.

If a single, or series of meals, are needed during a time of illness, Linda Chapin is the person to contact. Gail Eason Steele said that she may not have survived had not a number of meals been provided for her family during her five months of Chemo treatments. The meals took a great deal of stress and worry off her shoulders. She is extremely grateful to the church and the meal providers, and would like to say a personal “thank you” to each one.

Our “Prayer Shawl Ministry” provided Tyler Janes with a shawl prior to her surgery for a benign brain tumor. Tyler wore her shawl up to the time of the her seven hour surgery and immediately afterward. She had a difficult recovery, but credits the shawl for an uplifting peace of mind and spiritual comforting.

Volunteers for “Next Steps Prison Ministry” facilitated by Peggy Morache, involves Christian counselling with people seeking spiritual stability during, or after prison, as they recover from addiction.

Praise and worship services using the Gospel take place at Clark County Detention Center. Additionally, volunteers lead weekly discussion groups at the Walter Hoving Home, which serves women who have participated in unhealthy life styles. They now are immersed in Bible study and religious education. These women are very receptive to this ministry as the teachings are brought to life through discussions of practical application.
The “Cancer Support Group” meets monthly to support one another in prayer and understanding. This group is facilitated by Linda Chapin. Linda Yard best summarizes the emotional help this group offers in saying “not only did they understand what I was going through, they cared about me.” She is proud to be a member of this group as they continue to share God’s love with those who are facing critical times in their lives.

The above programs are only helpful if they are utilized, so everyone is invited to ask for consolation in their time of need. The volunteers do not consider this as a duty they have to perform, but more as a blessing to be a servants to others. And it must be mentioned, that Pastor David is the glue that holds all these programs together, and participates as time allows.

Remember, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as his final act before his crucifixion to emphasize the importance of serving others. The only improvement to the above programs would be if everyone realized the opportunity to serve Jesus by serving others as needed. Those who do will feel very blessed.

WANT TO HELP CREATE THE DESERT OASIS MAGAZINE?

Please feel free to contact Christopher Devereaux to talk about how you would like to volunteer. You can take pictures, write stories or interview people and also come up with article ideas. There are so many ways to help.

Desertspringsocial@gmail.com
Those were the biggest questions of the day as my husband was recuperating from surgery back in April and again just a few weeks ago.

I had been taught by my own mother that providing a meal for a family in crisis was a perfect way of showing the love of Jesus Christ to someone. Of course, that was her line and I helped it; even carried on the tradition as I became an adult.

The importance of such a simple act, however, did not become real and tangible to me until the people of Desert Spring began to minister to us with these gifts. Through the generosity of those kind hands I was given more time to care for my husband and he had an unexpected bright spot in his day. Let us always be at work in His vineyard; you never know how God will choose to change another’s life!

Carolyn Wood

“WHO’S COMING BY TODAY?”

“What’s for dinner?”

Give The Gift
A meal in a time of need can be the perfect way to offer the love of Jesus Christ
desertspringchurch.com
“I don't remember a lot about the days following my cancer diagnosis, but I clearly remember the first day I walked into the Desert Spring Cancer Support Group. My cold and scary “new reality” was met with a group of warm and caring people. Not only did they understand what I was going through, they cared about me! Over the last eight years I have received a lot of love, support and wisdom from this wonderful group. I am proud to be a member of this group as we continue to share God’s love with those who are facing a very critical time in their life.

Linda Yard
HOW WELL WE NURTURE OURSELVES HAS A PROFOUND AFFECT on our health, happiness, and our ability to serve others. Here are a few simple ways we can restore and reboot for the New Year!

**REST.**
- Find ways to reduce stress
- Get more sleep
- Unplug more often
- Declutter your schedule

**EAT.**
- Reduce/eliminate sugar and processed foods
- Watch your caffeine intake
- Eat breakfast (always)!
- Hydrate with more water and fresh veggies

**PRAY.**
- Connect with God often
- Forgive and let go
- Love unconditionally
- Stay present and enjoy each moment

1 Corinthians 6:19-20
Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.
A nutrient dense breakfast will set the tone for your day. Protein in the morning is so important for lasting energy. Eggs are fantastic, and adding root vegetables or sourdough bread provide needed carbohydrates without the sugar overload and energy crash later. Don’t forget some healthy nourishing fat! Grass-fed butter on your toast and avocado slices will keep you satisfied until lunch. Yum!

**INGREDIENTS:**
- Sweet potatoes, cubed (same size)
- Olive oil (or your favourite)
- Salt and pepper to taste

**INSTRUCTIONS:**
1. Preheat oven to 425F.
2. Peel and cube sweet potatoes, making sure they are about the same size, so they cook evenly. ½-1 inch cubes will do it.
3. Dump your cubed potatoes onto a sheet pan or stoneware.
4. Drizzle the potatoes with your oil, and toss them with your hands to make sure they are coated. Spread them out in a single layer, so they brown and not steam.
5. Bake for 15-20 minutes, check in and giving them a stir halfway through.
6. Take them out of the oven and sprinkle with salt and pepper.

**ARUGULA SALAD WITH CANNED WILD SALMON, OLIVES, ORANGE BELL PEPPER, SHALLOTS, AND LEMON HERB VINAIGRETTE**
BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN, FOR THEY WILL BE COMFORTED."

MATTHEW 5:4

PLEASE VISIT desertspringchurch.com
You can be involved with a number of great ministries.
Six years ago last July my beloved husband of 40 years, Bob, passed away from cancer. Just a few days after the funeral and burial at the Southern Nevada Veteran’s Cemetery in Boulder City I received an invitation to join the DSUMC Greif Support Group from Sally Rogers. The invitation said the group meets the first Sunday of each month at 3:30 pm. When the afternoon of the first Sunday afternoon in August arrived it found me sitting in front of my TV with my ever present box of Kleenex that was always there since I had lost Bob. I told my brother who had lost a son just a couple of years before Bob passed about the invitation and his advice was I should not go because it was too soon. The closer it got to meeting time I finally decided I could sit with others in mourning with my trusty box of Kleenex as well I could alone at home. At that point I got into my car and drove to church. It turned out to be one of the best decisions I made. There were others there who had just lost spouses, children and friends who were feeling what I was feeling. I found a lot in comfort in our joint experiences and perspectives.

As the weeks and months passed I found that most of us at those early meetings looked forward to them because many we encountered during those first months outside of this group didn’t always understand. Some of us even found that as time went on some of our friends and family couldn’t understand why we were still mourning and hadn’t moved on. It was good to talk to others who did understand that mourning takes a different time for each individual. This became a bond between each of us. Most of us found that the second year after losing a loved one is often worse than the first year. We shared prayers with each other over our mourning processes.

What makes the DSUMC unique is that for those who wish we share/shared a social fellowship after our hour long meetings. This fellowship is, of course, optional, but we would select a local restaurant and go out to share a casual meal together. This turned out to be a time to share stories and some laughter. Most grief support groups do not do this, but it has become a buffer between the support group meetings and going home to a sad place where our loved one is missing.

If you have just lost a spouse, child, parent or other relative, good friend, or experienced divorce. The DSUMC Grief Support Group welcomes others in grief and need as well as DSUMC member. I personally would recommend this fellowship that DSUMC offers each month.

Molly Governs
WITH YOUR GENEROSITY WE HAVE MET OUR GOAL TO RAISE $80,000 FOR HOLY HAMMERS AND NOW WILL BEGIN BUILDING NEXT MONTH!

THIS IS GOD’S LOVE
Desert Spring United Church is a part of many social networks. We invite you to become a part of our online teams to spread the love of Christ to others.