



THE NORTHWESTER

News and Notes

Fellowship Lunch

Our next fellowship lunch will be on Sunday, **May 20th**, after Sunday School. Please bring a dish to share and stay for a great time of fellowship. Visitors are welcome to join us.

Racial Unity Leadership Retreat

The Racial Unity Leadership Retreat begins this Friday, **May 18th**, at 6 PM at the Loyola Retreat Center in Woodstock. Space is still available for this retreat, led by Jerry Taylor of Abilene Christian University. Come and share this time of prayer and dwelling in Scripture in order to bring salt and light to the racial situation in our community, city, and world. Cost is \$70. See *Patrick* for details.

Graduation Announcements

Harding If you or someone in your family is graduating from any level of education, let *Diana Allen* or *Liz Motyka* know so we can recognize your accomplishments!

POLAR BLAST VBS: Jesus will always love you

Mark you calendars for VBS! This year it will be Saturday, **July 14**, from 9:30-3:00 and Sunday, **July 15**, from 11-11:45. It will be the coolest activity this summer! On Saturday we will have Bible stories, games, crafts, and lunch for ages 2-teens. And join us for worship on Sunday at the regular times and a special VBS celebration during class time.

VBS Supplies Needed

Clean, empty milk jugs are being collected for VBS. See *Jana Kalkowski* for more details.

VBS Help Wanted

If you would like to help with VBS in any way, please email [Cathy](#) or [Laura](#).

Gathering Times

Sunday

Worship (English, Korean)	9:30 AM
Bible Study (All)	11:00 AM
Worship (Spanish)	12:00 PM
Worship (English)	4:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study (All)	7:30 PM
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Upcoming Events

May

- 18-19** Racial Unity Leadership Retreat
- 20** Fellowship Lunch — 12 PM

Welcome to Northwest! We're glad you're here today. If you're a visitor, please consider yourself an honored guest.

Please feel free to join in worship this morning to whatever extent you feel comfortable. Please fill out a visitors' card and put it in the offering plate so we can have a record of your visit.

[Sermons are available online.](#)

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Servants

Help Wanted!

We need volunteers every Sunday to work in our **food pantry** from 1:00 - 3:30.

[Sign up Here](#)

Winston Manor

5/13/18 Noel Martinez, Rene Torres
5/20/18 Clarence Thrasher
5/27/18 Perry Littrell, Van Wilson,
Kwaku Osebreh

Help Wanted - Communion Prep

Can you prepare communion before the 9:30 worship service?

[Sign Up for a Sunday Here](#)

Last Sunday

Sunday School	88
AM Worship	176
PM Worship	6
Wednesday PM	31
Offering	
Regular	\$6,249.00
Orphans' Lifeline	\$ 100.00
Budget	\$5,205.00

Online Directory

[Click here for the online church directory.](#) See *Patrick* if you need the password.

Worship Gathering

9:30 AM

Singing: Matt Bain

We Worship Together

722 We Have Heard the Joyful Sound

160 Glory to His Name

421 Love Lifted Me

Responsive Reading — John 1:40-46

36 Amazing Grace

275 I Love to Tell the Story

779 Without Him

We Hear the Word of the Lord

Reading: Alan Bain — Romans 9:1-5, 11:25-27

Sermon: Patrick Odum — *When Loved Ones Reject Jesus*

771 Will You Come?

Prayer for the Needs of the Church: Alan Bain

We Come to the Table

622 Tell Me the Story of Jesus

Communion Meditation: Dan Allen

Table: Wayne Mitchell, Andrew George, Travis Marsala, Robert Nunoo

Offering and Announcements: Alan Bain

We Go Out As Witnesses

482 O Listen to Our Wondrous Story

Prayer: Don Wood

4:00 Worship

Singing: Perry Littrell

Opening Prayer: Matt Bain

Meditation: Dan Allen

Closing Prayer: Alan Bain

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Patrick's Points

And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone...

-1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NIV)

We wish we had been warned.

On a family vacation this past week, we got the chance to swim with some dolphins. Lots of fun, of course. When we were done, though, Laura asked me to look at her back. She thought maybe she had gotten sunburned, but the welts she had looked *nothing* like sunburn. I noticed a few similar welts on my arm; they itched and burned considerably. Then Josh mentioned that his back was burning a little too; sure enough, the red, angry-looking welts were raising up from his shoulders to the middle of his back. We were pretty puzzled, at first. Had the dolphins passed on some rare cross-species skin disease? Was the Caribbean sun particularly dangerous to pasty-skinned people from the Midwest?

We started asking a few questions, and the guys who worked at the dolphin place came back with a quick answer: "Fire coral. We put vinegar on it." So Laura and Josh spent the rest of the day smelling like salad dressing. (Laura also bought some hydrocortisone cream, which probably worked better than the vinegar.) They recovered quickly. Vacation crisis averted.

As near as we can guess, the fire coral was growing on the dock we were holding onto while waiting our turn to play with the dolphins. After we had been there for a while, the trainer did mention we shouldn't brush up against the side of the dock, but by then the damage was probably done. A late warning is really no warning at all. Would have been nice if, while he was telling us exhaustively what the dolphins did and did not like, the trainer had mentioned that there were little sea creatures growing on the dock that hated us and would take advantage of any opportunity to make us miserable. Guess that didn't cross his mind. I suppose it isn't very Christian of me to wish for fire coral to grow in his underwear drawer.

We recognize from time to time that warnings are necessary. We even understand that it can be irresponsible to fail to warn someone. Ever seen a child doing something dangerous right under her parents' noses? Ever noticed a person about to brush up against wet paint? If you've stopped someone from straying into traffic, called a friend to tell her about traffic on her route to work, or pointed out to your neighbor a house repair that needed to be done, then you know what I mean. Sometimes a warning is exactly what's needed.

So why, I wonder, do we not consider warnings to be necessary to our walk with Jesus?

The Bible says we should warn each other. The text above mentions warning those who are "idle and disruptive," but there are actually quite a few places in Scripture where warnings are encouraged, for all sorts of things. According to the Bible, folks need to be warned about the likely future consequences of their actions. Warnings are needed against sin as a general category, along with specific sins. The expectation for God's people is that we won't be afraid to warn each other when we aren't living in a way that's worthy of the label.

Expectation is the right word, actually. The Old Testament book of Ezekiel says explicitly that we're *responsible* for warning "a wicked person." He probably has in mind especially people who claim to worship God, but whose behavior belies that claim. If we don't issue a warning, he says, we're "held accountable" for

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what happens to them. The human heart can be deceptive, and sin can do such damage that it's irresponsible of God's people not to warn one another away from ways of life that can hurt others and undermine our own spiritual lives.

Maybe this is the problem for us: we don't feel adequately responsible for one another. "That's between him and God," we sometimes say, as though that absolves us from responsibility to say something if we see something (to borrow an idea from the TSA). Of course a person's behavior is between him and God. But how do we know that ours isn't the voice God would use to warn someone and get him or her back on the right track? How do we know that warning that we decided not to give wouldn't be the very thing that might bring someone to his senses?

Our world has created a disconnect between private faith and public life that didn't really exist in the early church, and probably was never supposed to exist. Simply put, "my" faith is a community matter, and the community has the responsibility to help each other in our walks with the Lord. A community in which no warning against sin is forthcoming when necessary is not really a community at all.

Look, don't get me wrong here: this isn't an excuse for gossip, judgment and self-righteousness. I'm not judging you if I warn you that a bus is coming and you should get out of the street. I have no right to take pleasure in your predicament, or point out to others how much better a person I am than you because I didn't walk out in front of a bus. The holier-than-thou, the self-righteous, the judgmental snobs who look down their noses at everyone else's sins need to be warned as well. Their attitudes jeopardize the community too. But that possibility is no excuse for winking and laughing at the most obvious, blatant sin in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Maybe it's our own sins that discourage us from warning each other. Most of us probably don't feel very qualified to warn anyone about anything, knowing that if someone were to look hard enough at our own lives — or maybe not very hard at all — they'd find plenty to warn us about. That's a fair concern, but really it's exactly that attitude that makes a warning go down a little more easily. Warning a sister or brother is *not* about having any power over them, or pretending to be better than them. Often, a warning is most credible when it comes from someone who's upfront about their own failings, and maybe has even been burned by the very thing he or she is warning against. No one person in a community should be doing all of the warning while holding him or herself above receiving a warning, either; that's a disaster waiting to happen.

The kind of warning I'm talking about comes out of a sense of love, not judgment, anger, control, or disdain. It should be expressed in loving words and tones. It should invite repentance, not demand reparation. It should make the person being warned feel valued, not diminished. It should honor their agency and freedom to make their own decisions. It should always be offered in a way that emphasizes God's grace, compassion, and forgiveness. It should always offer a way forward. It should be accompanied by reassurances of the person's place in the family of God and the family's commitment to their support, encouragement, and well-being.

Maybe we should look again at what Paul says: "warn...encourage...help...be patient." Warning should be part of our life together in the community of faith. Love demands it. But encouragement, help, and patience will ensure that those warnings are delivered in the proper context and with the right spirit, and that they accomplish what they're supposed to accomplish.

Trust me: sometimes the most loving thing you can say to someone is "Stay away from that!"

And a warning not given may be something you end up regretting.

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Prayer Requests

New Requests and Updates (Please don't forget to give updates to Diana Allen.)

Mervin Manzanares, minister in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, is receiving treatment for his abdominal pain.

Wayne Mitchell is thankful that his sister is doing better and he also asks that we pray for a second job prospect and his upcoming court date.

John Mudloff's surgery went well. He could go home this weekend or early next week.

Kimberley Schiyer, *Evelyn Wooten's* daughter, is recovering from surgery for a mass in her throat. The mass was not thought to be cancerous.

Ongoing Concerns

Sister *Tomasa Agosto* needs our prayers due to her health issues.

Dan Allen's aunt, *Willia Cott-Meissel*, has a tumor on her leg and will need radiation therapy.

Brother Baker, a resident at Winston Manor, has asked for general prayers for Booker T. Houser and family, the Lotts, the Burns, the Taylors, and the Schafers.

Don Ballarini asks that we pray for his brother, *Ronald*, who is suffering from dementia and other health problems.

Hillary Beata asks that we keep *Rachel*, a member of her parent's church, in our prayers. She is a young mother who was just diagnosed with cancer.

Wilma Brumley is grieving the loss of her son, *Daniel*.

Elida Cano is still fighting cancer.

Jess Cobb, *Patrick Odum's* cousin, is recovering from quadruple bypass.

Ranae Collins asks that we remember her uncle in our prayers due to his health problems.

Richard Cooper has asked that we continue praying for the brethren in Guinea.

Jennifer Duff's sister, *Judy Duff*, is still fighting cancer. Jennifer's mother also has some health concerns.

Carlos Estrada's friend, *Madeline Badea*, has a degenerative bone disease.

Barbara Foucher's cousin, *Jonathan Williams*, has been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis.

Maria Fuentes, who lives at Winston Manor, is dealing with severe pain in her back and side.

Jan Gunter, *Jim's* wife, needs some radiation therapy.

Darrell Hutchens has moved to Manteno Veterans' Home, Room 423 West, One Veterans Drive, Manteno, IL 60959. Cards are appreciated and visits are welcome.

Irma Rae from Winston Manor asks that we pray for issues in her life.

Perry Littrell's brother-in-law, *Joel Dallas*, has three bulging disks in his back.

Martha Lucunza, a dear friend of *Susan Thrasher's*, is going through treatments for bone cancer.

Mary Lynn, friend of a resident at the Oak Park Nursing Home, has a leg that needs healing.

Maria from Winston Manor asks that we pray for her daughter and granddaughter.

Linda McNeal is coping with dizziness and other medical issues.

Linda McNeal's husband has some health problems.

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Maria McNeal, Linda's mother-in-law, broke her hip.

Jay Min asks for prayers regarding his mother's diabetes.

Wayne Mitchell asks that we pray for his court date, which was rescheduled for June 13th. He also asks that we pray for his brother, whose wife passed away recently, and his sister's health problems.

Gus Ramirez, a friend of the *Thrasher* family, has been diagnosed with lung cancer.

Marge Reavis asks that we continue to pray for her brother, *Jim*, who has cancer, and her brother, *Rick*, who needs to rebuild his strength to be able to have heart surgery. Marge also asks that we pray for her living situation and a recent car accident.

Anabel Rice is dealing with lupus.

Celeste Rucker's father, *Bob Konczal*, is struggling with chronic pain due to scoliosis and arthritis in the lower spine and hip.

Celeste Rucker's mom, *Barbara Konczal*, is struggling with chemotherapy side effects in her battle with cancer.

Tom Rucker's aunt, *Sally Rucker-Dobbs*, is recovering from a recent stroke.

Tom Rucker's best friend's niece, *Katie Fearer*, has a large mass in her shoulder, lungs, and spine, and is waiting to be admitted to a cancer center in Houston. Her father, *Zane*, was in a bicycle accident and has multiple injuries, which has left him with no use of his arms. Please keep *Katie*, *Zane*, and their family in your prayers during this very difficult time.

Vicki Sebela, *Laura Odum's* cousin, is still recovering from eye surgery, diabetic retinopathy, and breast cancer.

Herb Sherrod, a former member at Northwest, is in the process of obtaining a new kidney so he can go off dialysis.

Mary Smith's cousin, *Jim*, fell and broke his hip during physical therapy. *Jim's* brother, *Stan Thompson*, had a stroke recently.

Mary Smith's friend's father, *John Brecht*, has prostate cancer that has spread.

Mary Smith's son-in-law, *Jay Kijer*, has heart problems and pulmonary edema.

Mike Thrasher needs prayers for continued guidance and direction in his life and with his Tourette's and OCD.

Eugene Urbaszewski, *Celeste Rucker's* uncle, has been diagnosed with a form of liver disease.

Liz Van-Klingerin/Sumner, *Clarence Thrasher's* sister, has a leaky aortic valve and may need surgery.

Johnny Vera asks for prayers for his family, health, and relationship problems.

Cynthia Webster, *Barbara Foucher's* sister, is in rehab recovering from a coronary. She is also dealing with kidney and immune system problems brought on by lupus.

Calbert Williams asks that we continue to pray for his struggles with diabetes, blood pressure, and mild chest pains.

Daniel Williamson, *Miriam Williamson's* husband, needs our prayer for recovery from his health problems.

Willie, a resident of the *Winston Manor Nursing Home*, has cataracts and glaucoma.

Bill Wooten, *Evelyn's* brother, has pancreatic cancer.