

Monthly Support Report

November 30, 2016

Dear elders,

Greetings. Another month has come and gone. It's the end of November and it still feels like Spring. Well, maybe not quite like spring. But heading into December and still looking at temperatures in the 40s and 50s during the daytime isn't bad for us. I'll take it. The weatherman said a week or so ago that in 2009-2010 we had 44" inches of snow and in the following year 33" of snow. I remember both of those seasons and in my memory both winters were very beautiful. But as they say, time heals all wounds and I guess that includes my sore back from doing all of that shoveling. Anyway, I don't know what this winter will bring because we're just getting started. But so far it's been pretty nice.

I hope this report finds all of you doing well and healthy. We're fine. We're very thankful for the measure of health that we've been blessed with. We understand that many are not as fortunate as we have been. So we try our best to remain both humble and very thankful for the good days we have been blessed with. My wife's niece's husband, Matt Jones was in a pretty serious dirt bike accident just a couple of days ago. He had to be airlifted to a hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I'm not going to try and list all of his injuries because I'm certain that I would leave some of them out. But he had a head injury which caused some brain bleeding and swelling. That's getting better. For a while both of his eyes were swollen shut. That is better and the swelling has gone down. Both legs were broken and he has had surgery on both legs. He's likely going to have to have additional surgeries on his legs. When he arrived at the hospital he was in critical condition. He is much more stable now although he continues in ICU. Please continue to pray for Matt and his good wife Marla. The good church in Chattanooga, Tennessee has been so good to Marla and one of the elders and his family has opened up their home to Marla during this very difficult time and they have been so good to her and helped so very much. Please pray for Matt and for his recovery during this difficult time. This will likely be a long period of healing but he is making good progress thanks to the good doctors in Chattanooga and the many good prayers of faithful Christians across the country who have lifted him up before the throne of God in prayer. Your prayers would be greatly appreciated. As you might have gathered without my even saying anything about it, both Matt and Marla are faithful Christians and they have three young children.

Our work for the Lord continues to go very well. Our Bible studies are going well. The Parables are such an interesting study especially when you dig a little deeper than the surface and then you make some present-day applications. We've centered a lot of our attention thus far on Matthew 13 beginning with the Parable of the Sower, moving forward to the man who sowed good seed in his field only to have someone come along and sow tares. This proved to be an interesting discussion. And then we considered the tiny little seed called mustard seed and its growth into a large tree that could at times range upward to 10-12-feet tall. A man once gave me a small bottle of mustard seeds and they are indeed very tiny. And the thought of one of those little seed growing into such a large tree is astounding. But what's even more astounding is how just a handful of disciples gathered together on the Day of Pentecost could take the Good News about the crucified – resurrected Savior and preach it to

an audience of unbelieving Jews, and from there, within a period of about 30-years without the aid of so many modern-day technologies we make good use of could spread that message to all of the known world. It makes me wonder if we might be depending too much on modern-day technologies instead of word-of-mouth advancing of the message. That's a question that each one of us has to answer individually as we go about our daily routines. It's rather clear however as you go through the book of Acts beginning in Acts 2 that we aren't making the advances when it comes to conversions that were being made back in the first century. Is that because the world today is saturated with so much religious teaching that our friends – neighbors and communities have turned a cold deaf ear to the message about our resurrect Lord? Or, is it as a friend of mine used to say repeatedly that instead of planting the seed of the Kingdom, we're leaving the seed in the barn? One sister-in-Christ made the obvious observation in Bible class that a farmer who doesn't plant his field has no realistic expectation of harvesting a crop. The Bible tells us that God gives the increase (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:7). But isn't that only after we are planted the seed of the kingdom and that seed has found a good and honest heart? As you can see we've had some rich studies and discussions. I look forward to our studying of the other Parables that we are planning on prayerfully considering.

We continue to be blessed with the occasional visitor that we do our best to follow-up with. And, of course this holiday season is good to also bring us visitors who are visiting family members in and around the area who will stop in and visit with us. That's a huge encouragement to us as all of our visitors are because the holiday season also takes some of our members away from us to see their family in other areas.

We continue to pray for open doors and look for the good and honest heart to tell about the Lord Jesus Christ. We know that good soil is out there and we will continue to prayerfully do our very best to spread the word to anyone and everyone who is willing to listen. And we are making it a point to be a warm and friendly group of Christians so that everyone who visits will know that we are sincerely interested in them. And I'm confident that we accomplish that with most every visitor that we are blessed to meet. So we keep trying to do what the Lord would have us to do with every opportunity the Lord sends our way. And we pray that our humble efforts will not only help save a soul, but that it will bring glory and honor to God. We understand that Satan will attempt to sow tares in and among the good seed that we sow so we'll just have to be more diligent in the planting we do.

We continue to work together in peace and harmony. And for that we are most thankful. Thank you for your fellowship with me in the gospel in this place. We will continue to do the work the Lord would have us to do looking for and praying for increase. Thank you and may God richly bless you with health and peace as you work to do the Lord's work where you are. It's a blessing to be a worker for the Lord.

God bless.

Randy