



From your Pastor...

David Brownlee

February 2, 2012

Happy Ground Hog Day, Crew!

Today is for those who yearn for spring. Clearly it has more meaning for those in northern climes who are suffering from months of frostbite, but even here in the sunny south, the promise of renewal and new life is something our hearts yearn for.

Remember the 1993 movie Ground Hog Day? TV weatherman Phil Conners, played by Bill Murray, is doomed to repeat the same day, every day forever. After exploiting the situation by indulging in hedonism, he eventually slides into reckless despair. After numerous suicide attempts, Phil begins to re-examine his life and priorities and eventually discovers that his life could have unimagined value and meaning if he would use his knowledge of the day to develop himself and to help others.

At last night's Oasis I talked about the importance of intentionality in our spiritual lives. We looked at the story in John 5:1-9 where Jesus asked a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years if he wanted to be healed. What a question. But Jesus sensed that the guy had become fixated on his condition and had built his identity around his limitations. Sort of a Ground Hog Day life.

This Sunday we begin a three-week series entitled R3 where we will look at three transforming, life altering ways to break out of the Ground Hog Day syndrome. Reading, Relating and Reflecting are means to grow spiritually and to develop vitality in all dimensions of life.

As always, my encouragement to you is to invite your FRAN's (friends, relatives, associates and neighbors) who don't have a church home. Last week's worship was a powerful experience in receiving God's healing for our brokenness. This new series will follow with biblical help in sustaining that healing.

I'm excited about some other happenings. Last night a delegation from the Mississippi Chinese Association came by and gave us check for world missions and a letter of appreciation to our church for hosting their Chinese New Year celebration that was attended by over six hundred Chinese persons who live in the Jackson area. Kudos to Chuck Meador and his team.

Tonight at 6:00 pm is the Alpha introductory dinner meeting. The ten-week experience begins February 9th. Check our website for details. Alpha is for everyone, especially those who would like to learn more about the basics of the Christian faith in a low-key, high-hospitality environment.

This Sunday at the 10:00 am Sunday School hour in the library, we begin Starting Points, our new discipleship path. This study is composed of three discussion courses, each lasting six weeks and flowing from our mission statement, "Making Disciples of Jesus Christ Who...Know Him...Love Him...Serve Him." The first course is entitled "Knowing God." Please join Pastor Vicki Landrum and other members for some interesting discussion.

I am encouraging each of you to connect with a Lenten Small Group. These groups will coincide with our Lenten sermon series "Journey to Hope." This study will provide insight to see life situations with new eyes. You can sign up on the church website or by calling the church.

After last week's Large Church Initiative Conference in Dallas with nine of our staff, I am never more hopeful for what God has in store for our future as we live into our vision of serving Christ in Restoring Lives, Families and Community.

Ground Hog Blessings,
David

Scripture Readings

Thurs, Feb 2
Matthew 15:29-39

Fri, Feb 3
Mark 10:46-52

Sat, Feb 4
Luke 6:36-38

Mon, Feb 6
Psalm 119:1-29

Tues, Feb 7
Psalm 119:30-60

Wed, Feb 8
Psalm 119:61-89

Thurs, Feb 9
Psalm 119:90-119

Fri, Feb 10
Psalm 119:120-149

Sat, Feb 11
Psalm 119:150-176

Psalm of the Week
Psalm 119

Key Scripture:
With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments.
Psalm 119:9

Centering Prayer
Living Word, guide my life...