

## 1 Corinthians 10:11

From Pastor Jim

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

Isaiah 30:15a-16



If He cared about us, why would He let the Assyrians come against us in the first place?

Sure, God may have helped people long ago and far away. He may have done wonderful things for Abraham.

He may have used Joseph to save the world from famine. He

may have gotten our people out of Egypt and through the Red Sea in Moses' day.

He may have enabled Israel to conquer Canaan without a trained army. He may have given David great military victories and Solomon marvelous wisdom and wealth.

But that was then. This is now.

No, we'll put as much distance as we can between ourselves and the As-

syrians and go to the safest place we can find on earth. Isaiah and the other prophets can take their chances with following the instructions of an unseen God, but we'll go with what we can see and do ourselves. We can't wait for Him—we've got to take matters into our own hands and assume that God helps those who help themselves. We'll think about relying on Him after we've done everything we can on our own.



*A relief from one of Sennacherib's palaces depicting how his soldiers treated those whom they conquered.*

Return? Rest? Quietness? Trust? You've got to be kidding! How can we turn around and go back to Judah and be at rest there when the Assyrian army—the most vicious, cruel army in the world—is approaching with the intent to conquer and destroy us? After all, their current king, Sennacherib, is even more cruel than any of his predecessors. He boasts in his stone writings how he treats his conquered enemies, and the details are too grisly to repeat!

How can we be quiet and trust at a time like this? We have to act, and we have to act now. We need a place of refuge, and Egypt is as safe a refuge as we can find. We need an ally, and Egypt is as strong an ally as we will be able to get. So there is no way we're going to turn around and head back to Judah. That would be like volunteering to be defeated, tortured and slaughtered by the Assyrians. We don't have the manpower or the weapons to stand against them. So we'll be keeping the horses' heads pointed toward the southwest until we get to the Nile, thank you all the same.

After all, how can we be sure that Isaiah is really speaking for God when he tells us to trust God and go back home instead of devising and following our own plans? For that matter, how can we know God really cares about us? It sure doesn't seem as if He does.

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# D. and R.

## - Ambassadors in the Middle East since 2004

*For security reasons photos, names and locations have been eliminated from the following article.*

It was great to see many of you and share at Oakridge this past summer. We also were blessed to be able to spend an extra 2 months in the states for some needed rest. We got back here the beginning of November.

### **Here is what we have been up to...**

In terms of **team and family life** there have been quite a few changes. Our teammates added a fourth child at the beginning of December. This makes our son not the only boy on the team anymore. :) We also began the task of homeschooling our oldest overseas. We are officially the only ones in our town homeschooling. It was and is quite a shock to tell our neighbors and friends what we are doing. They really have no concept of homeschooling. In fact, the school principals and teachers don't either. They continue to send report cards home with a friend to give to our daughter. They didn't know what to do with her. Here it seems, once a child enters the school system they can't get out of it. :)

In terms of **ministry** it has been an unusual time. Currently most of the work that needs to be done in terms of discipling young believers or reaching out to seekers needs to be done by women. We have about 10 ladies from different walks of life to whom we are trying to minister. Unfortunately, our wives have the least amount of time, with homeschooling and a new baby! We have been working through some strategies to allow the men to be involved. We are so grateful, though, for these women that God has brought into our lives. Pray that God would lead us in ministering to these ladies, and that they would grow in their faith producing fruit.

The men on our team recently have been able to get to know some more religious people in our town. We are discerning whether these reli-

gious men would be more open to Jesus than others in our town. They are not as apathetic in regard to faith as many others seem to be in our town. In fact they have regular times of discussion and studies of their religion's bible. We were recently invited to one. Unfortunately our friend has not followed through with the invitation. Pray that we could get involved with religious people who would be open to hearing about Jesus and not just trying to convince us.

This past month one of our teammates was able to reach out to a neighbor in a very real way. They got a call at 11:30 p.m. asking them to take 3 little girls into their home for the night. The husband of their good friend was getting violent. Sadly, it turns out that the family is in an abusive situation. However, this neighbor really opened up, and the relationship deepened significantly because of this time, as they have talked and prayed with them on several occasions. The wife and children have now separated from the husband and for the time are safe. Please pray for the family that has moved from the abusive husband. First, that they would come to know their Creator, and also that they would be wise in their choices and remain safe. Pray for our teammates' relationship with the neighbor family. They have all connected well with husband, wife, and children and have had a lot of spiritual conversations.

**Looking ahead** we have a pretty full summer. We have several groups scheduled for our cultural exchange program starting in May. This is exciting, as many seekers have come from relationships that have been built through the cultural exchange program. Currently we have two groups scheduled for May and two for June. We very much enjoy having the groups come, as it helps us make more contacts with people in the community. Pray that we would be a blessing to this community and come in contact with people of peace in our city.

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# April Bible Reading

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

## April Birthdays

April 2 - Holly Misener

April 3 - Joe Schmotter

April 12 - Phyllis Anderson

April 12 - Jim Odens

April 12 - Amy Runk

April 14 - Helen Goldberg

April 15 - Wendy Flynn

April 15 - Jane Kittelson

April 15 - Marion Stahl

April 17 - Bill Butler

April 24 - Nancy Magler

April 25 - Eric Larson

April 29 - Dave Flynn

April 29 - Jordan Magler

*This year the order of the Old Testament readings is similar to Israel's Hebrew Bible. The New Testament readings are based upon non-conclusive research regarding the order in which the books were authored.*

*“Come, let us go  
up to the mountain  
of the Lord,  
To the house of the  
God of Jacob;  
That He may teach us  
concerning His ways  
And that we may  
walk in His paths.”*

*Isaiah 2:3*





# April 2013

**Sunday**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

**Wednesday**

**Thursday**

**Friday**

**Saturday**

	<b>1</b> 1-3:00 p.m. - ODWITS Exhibit 4:00 p.m. - Elders Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Missions Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Piecemakers 7:00 p.m. - DeCaro C.G.-Wom.	<b>2</b> 1-3:00 p.m. - O Death, Where is Thy Singing? Exhibit	<b>3</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 1-3:00 p.m. - ODWITS Exhibit 6:30 p.m. - <b>Conn. In Prayer</b> 7:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study	<b>4</b> 6:30 p.m. - Butler Care Group	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Youth Planning Meeting	<b>8</b> 4:00 p.m. - Elders and Deacons Meeting 7:00 p.m. - DeCaro Care Group - All	<b>9</b> 7:00 p.m. - Worship Team Practice	<b>10</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - <b>Connecting</b> in Prayer 7:00 p.m. - Youth Meeting 7:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study	<b>11</b> 6:30 p.m. - Butler Care Group	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 9:00 a.m. - Children's Ministry Workers Breakfast Meeting
<b>14</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship	<b>15</b> 4:00 p.m. - Elders Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Piecemakers 7:00 p.m. - DeCaro Care Group - Men	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - <b>Connecting</b> in Prayer 7:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study	<b>18</b> 6:30 p.m. - Butler Care Group	<b>19</b> 6:00 p.m. - Friday Night Light	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship 1:45 p.m. - Good Samaritan Sunday Service	<b>22</b> 4:00 p.m. - Elders Meeting 7:00 p.m. - DeCaro Care Group - All	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - <b>Connecting</b> in Prayer 7:00 p.m. - Youth Meeting 7:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study	<b>25</b> 6:30 p.m. - Butler Care Group	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 9:00 a.m. - Worship Team Practice
<b>28</b> 8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship	<b>29</b> 7:00 p.m. - Elders & Wives Meeting	<b>30</b>	<p><b>You visit the earth and cause it to overflow; You greatly enrich it; The stream of God is full of water; You prepare their grain, for thus You prepare the earth. You water its furrows abundantly, You settle its ridges, You soften it with showers, You bless its growth.</b></p>			

# Youth News

*Submitted by Jeremy Misener*

**We had a special evening together** on Saturday, February 16, as fathers and mothers had the opportunity to bring their sons and daughters on a “date” at the church. A group led by Jill Odens turned our Fireside Room into an elegant restaurant that included hors d’oeuvres, salad, a sit-down meal, and dessert.



On the one hand our goals are not too lofty for an event like this, but on the other hand our goals are impossible in our own power. On the one hand we want our youth to know that they are loved and cared for by their parents and their church body. On the other hand we want this love to point them towards a far greater love that is found in Jesus Christ. On the one hand we want our young women to experience what it is like to be treated with respect, and for our young men to learn how to treat other women with respect. On the other hand we want this to go beyond mere outward appearances, and take root in a heart that desires to love and obey God by how they are treating one another. Sin has deeply fractured the way in which we relate to one another as men and women. Be praying that our youth would look to honor Christ in their relationships with one another.



A special thank you to Jim and Jill Odens, Tim and Wendy Hood, Darlene Schmoeckel, Ann and Jamie Runk, and Eric and Sarah Larson for all your help making this evening as special as it was. At our April Friday Night Light we will continue a three-part series in which we are looking at finding our treasure in Christ alone. This will be held on Friday, April 19, at the Leslie home. Please continue to pray that God’s Holy Spirit would work in powerful ways at these meetings.

# 1 Corinthians 10:11

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*But you were unwilling, and you said, "No! We will flee upon horses"; therefore you shall flee away; and, "We will ride upon swift steeds"; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. A thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill.*

Isaiah 30:15b-17

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6-7

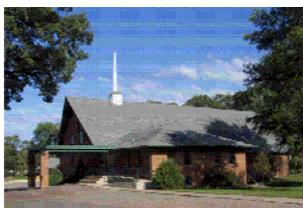
(Note: this article grew out of a realization of my own constant need to trust God and heed His Word at the beginning of every circumstance rather than waiting until all my own devices and strategies have failed. I share it with you with the assumption that others need the same reminder! JAO)

## D. and R.

(continued from page 3)

As a side effect, many times when we have groups come we find that we are watched more by the plainclothes police. Recently the phones of both families on our team began to act up in the same week. R. also heard other voices on the phone as she was talking to someone. Bugging phones is a regular practice here, and we have always worked under the assumption that our phones have been bugged. Additionally the men on the team can be followed as they are out and about downtown. Pray that we would have favor with the officials and police in the town, and that they would not hinder the ministry.

Thank you all for your prayers and support of us over here! We appreciate it so much.



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### OCC Vision

The vision of Oakridge Community Church is to spread a joyful passion for the absolute, eternal supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things, to all peoples.

### OCC Mission

The mission of Oakridge Community Church is to glorify God by delighting in, declaring and displaying the gospel of Jesus Christ.

