



# Crestmont Alliance Church

*Loving God, Loving Each Other, Loving Our Community*

November 2009

## **Prison Break**

*By Pastor Joel Repic*

A few weeks ago, Jim shared in a sermon about how the Lord intends to minister to us both forgiveness and freedom as we walk with Him. That is, He forever lives to set us free from the guilt and shame of our sin, but He also lives to set us free from the effects of sin by the power of His love.

Over the past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to minister to a couple of acquaintances in jail. It's an interesting experience because by so many indicators, the individual in jail seems to be going through life as normal. They are living, breathing, walking, and talking. They exhibit the same personalities and concerns as they did before they were in jail. They care for their families and the affairs of their day to day lives. There is only one glaring problem. I am talking to them through glass – not face to face. They are clearly imprisoned. In one sense the individuals I see are very normal people. They are human beings like the rest of the human race. It's just that they are currently imprisoned.

Have you ever felt like that? You go through your day to day activities seeming like it is business as usual. But deep down inside you are aware of the areas of imprisonment in your own life. Although you continue day to day to live a seemingly normal life – even a Christian life, you still find yourself imprisoned. Sure, you are coping, and you are managing. The prisoners I visit do the same. But they – and maybe you – are still imprisoned.

There's that habitual sin you can't seem to shake. There are memories of past abuse. You carry guilt from actions you did long ago. Your parents did this and said that, and you know it still affects you. There is pain over loss, pain over betrayal, pain over broken trust. And although you manage to get through life and even grow as a Christian, you know you aren't free.

The good news is that Jesus has come to set captives free. He is the orchestrator and organizer of the great prison break we have all been invited to participate in. And this prison break is of a different kind because

the outcome has already been decided by His shed blood.

Imagine word spreading through the prison. "It's happening....soon." Prisoners spread the news. Liberation is coming. At the right time and in the right place the Great One is going to bust open iron bars and iron locks and all the prisoners are going to run out of the prison and into freedom.

If word came to you in your cell, would you refuse to participate? Would you pretend that you weren't imprisoned even as you sat in jail? Would you act like you didn't need freedom? When the prison doors bust open, would you be too afraid or too paralyzed to walk through them into freedom?

That's why we have each other. At Crestmont Alliance church, we believe that God has called us to love each other. We walk beside each other as we follow the one who leads us out of prison. You see, in the Great Prison Break, not only does Jesus play a role in setting the captives free but our fellow prisoners also play a role in helping us take steps out of prison.

And if you find yourself in prison, that is exactly what you'll need to do in the strength He provides – take steps. Sometimes God delivers us from bondage in a sweeping one-time supernatural act. But many times – maybe even most of the time – God delivers us from bondage as we pray and trust in His supernatural power, yes, but also as we form relationships with other believers who can walk beside us in our journey to freedom.

My encouragement to you, prisoner, is this. In the coming weeks and months as you participate in the life of our church, ask Jesus to bring you into places, conversations, and relationships at Crestmont that will work for Your freedom and deliverance. I believe He will answer that kind of prayer. And as you become willing to face the reality of your own imprisonment and become willing to allow other prisoners to walk beside you, you will find Jesus orchestrating and organizing your prison break. And one day you'll find yourself experiencing something maybe you never thought possible – freedom.





## **Women's Ministry**

*You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. Matthew 5:13*

### **Ladies Dinner**

I hope you can join us for a time of fellowship while we share a meal together, learn about the women Tammie ministers to in Mexico and a time of prayer on Tuesday, November 3 at 5:30 p.m. Please refer to the insert for details.

Thank you to the women who made the WORDLESS book marks on missions night in October. We will give them to Tammie at the dinner. I am sure she will be delighted!

### **Wednesday Night Women's Ministry Schedule**

Two Wednesdays out of the month are dedicated to Bible study and one Wednesday devoted to missions. Our Bible Study this year is a book study titled, "Evangelism for the Rest of us...Sharing Christ within Your Personality Style", by Mike Bechtle. It is not too late to participate in the book study, contact Elaine for your book. The book cost is \$11.

- Nov. 4 Innies and Outies  
Chapter 3: *Exploring different Personality Types, from Introvert to Extrovert.*
- Nov. 11 Missions Night  
Special guest, Allison Stanley, will share with us the many mission opportunities we have in Aliquippa.
- Nov. 18 Which Method Is Best?  
Chapter 4: *Reshaping Current Methods of Evangelism to Fit Our Personalities.*
- Nov. 25 Sabbath Wednesday  
*We meet the first three Wednesdays from 6:45 - 8 p.m. We would be delighted to have you join us.*

## **Finance Report—Sept., 2009**

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Expenses	\$207,265	\$184,257	\$23,008
Giving & Investments	\$207,265	\$156,947	(\$50,318)
<b>Total Difference</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$27,310)</b>	<b>(\$27,310)</b>

Giving to the GCF during September, 2009 was \$2,438.00. At the close of September, the Checking Account balance was \$15,284.37 and the Money Market Account balance was \$50,521.90.

Carpet Fund—We are happy to report that nearly \$3,000 has been received towards the new carpet for the children's rooms downstairs. Thank you to all who contributed. This new carpet should provide years of use for our children's ministries.


If you still desire to contribute, you may do so by designating carpet fund on your check or envelope.

## **Onramps & Outpost (O<sup>2</sup>) Ministry**

### **Men's Small Group**

Jesus launched his divine mission by making disciples out of a small group of men. *Impressive*. Why a small group? Jesus knew that most meaningful change takes place in the context of small group relationships—men sharpening men with truth, encouraging each other for the daily battle, and sticking with each other over the long haul. Come and join us on Wednesday nights at 6:45 p.m.

### **Gridiron Fellowship**

 Fall and Monday Night Football go together like Pittsburgh and Superbowl legacy. On November 9<sup>th</sup> the Superbowl Champs take on the formidable Denver Broncos. Come at 8 and graze at the Witterman tailgate buffet. Kick-Off is at 8:30. Mark your calendar for this men's event at the home of Michael Witterman.

### **Marriage Retreat**

Our annual marriage retreat is scheduled for the (Valentine's Day) weekend of February 12-13<sup>th</sup>. This is an ideal opportunity to spend quality time with your spouse in a fun and spiritually focused setting. Mark your calendar for this special occasion at the Antiochian Village Retreat Center in the beautiful Laurel Highlands.

## **Faith Builder's Home Group**

As you consider your involvement and connection here at Crestmont, why not consider joining a small group. We currently have six groups meeting that are led by Ed Phillips, Nick Lagios, Mark Stefanini, Mark Witterman, Steven Rossi, and Howard Witterman. Talk with one of these leaders and get any question about group involvement answered. The main question, however, will probably be:

**Why Should I Join A Faith Builder's Home Group?**

**Here's the answer!**

God wants us to be transformed into the image and very likeness of Jesus Christ, and Jesus in turn wants us to redeem our communities. Each Faith Builder's Home Group focuses on just that by building relationships with one another, and most importantly with Jesus. As those relationships grow, you will naturally want to reach out to others and invite them to join your fellowship. You will be connected with the church family and will receive the blessings of the intimate relationships and friendships that develop. It will be an encouragement in this chaotic world to be able to share joys, sorrows, and victories together. Through a Faith Builder's Home Group, you will experience relational connectedness, mutual support, and spiritual transformation more into the likeness of Jesus Christ while at the same time being used by Jesus to help in the redeeming work necessary and so needed in our surrounding communities. That's as good a reason as there is!





## **Crestmont Youth Ministry**

### **LIFE 2010 Youth Conference Informational Meeting**

Next summer, the LIFE 2010 Conference will be held in Louisville, Kentucky, from July 6-10. About 12,000 teenagers from all over the country will join together for a week long of learning about Scripture, participating in fun activities, and taking part in service activities. The conference is for teenagers who will be getting ready to enter the ninth through twelfth grades by next summer. The LIFE Conference is designed to bring your teen closer to Jesus and assist them in becoming more committed in their walk with Him.

If your teenager is interested in attending the conference, and you think you might be interested in sending your teen to the conference, plan to attend this informational meeting on Sunday, Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 p.m. at Crestmont. Lunch will be provided. We will explain the conference, answer any initial questions, and begin to discuss the practicalities of cost, fundraising, travel arrangements, and other details.

If you have any questions before the meeting, please feel free to contact Pastor Joel at 724.375.3379.

### **Brotherhood and Sisterhood Small Groups—7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade**

Thursday evenings from 6 - 7 p.m. and 8:30 - 9:30 p.m. Contact Pastor Joel if you would like to be in a small group.

### **CYM<sub>3</sub> Youth Group**

Youth 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade meet the first three Thursdays at Crestmont from 7 - 8:30 p.m.

## **Christmas Decorating**



Sandy Parsons invites you to share in the excitement of decorating the sanctuary for Christmas. Decorating will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a pizza lunch following on Saturday, November 28.

## **December Christmas Celebrations**

### **December 11 Adult Christmas Party**

Save the date to celebrate with our church family the birth of our Savior. Anyone wishing to help with the Christmas party should contact Geri Nicholson at 724.375.3151.

### **December 16 KIDZ KONNECT Christmas Program**

Mark your calendars so you don't miss the Christmas Program presented by the children of Crestmont.

### **December 24 Christmas Eve Worship Service**

*Come, Let Us Worship the King* Cantata presented by the Crestmont choir.

*Watch for details for the Christmas Celebrations in the November bulletins and the December newsletter.*

## **Outreach**

### **10<sup>th</sup> Annual "Thanks Giving" Baskets**

Last year we gave at least 50 families baskets representing our "thanks giving" to the Lord for the many blessings we have received. We have the opportunity again this year to bless others as the Lord has blessed you.

We are asking that the baskets are filled with practical meals that do not require extra ingredients and also include special items for children. (E.g. Pasta and sauce or just add water pancake mix, & syrup or no bake cheese cake). Remember that the baskets are not intended to provide a Thanksgiving meal but many meals. Pie mix, gravy, stuffing, etc. would not be a benefit to those receiving the baskets.

Baskets are available in the foyer and have a specific list of items to fill the baskets, We are asking that you follow the list and consider filling two baskets instead of one overflowing basket. Baskets are due back at the church by Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>.

Join us in the delivering the baskets on Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 AM. To help us prepare for the delivery day, please let us know you will be joining us signing up at the Welcome Center.



### **Circleville Christmas**

T.E.A.M. Ministry is heading back to Circleville, West Virginia to share the love of Jesus! We can't accomplish this mission without your help. Last year was a huge success because of your commitment to reaching the lost! You provided stockings for children, new flannel shirts, new bikes, and monetary gifts for potatoes, onions, cabbage and carrots. Because of your participation, many were blessed.

God is already providing before we even asked! Someone not affiliated with Crestmont already made a large monetary donation towards the purchase of potatoes for this year.

Below are highlighted points of how you can participate in blessing those in Circleville:

- ◆ Pick up a few Christmas stockings in the foyer to fill for the children with candy, snack bars, and fruit cups.
- ◆ If you would like to fill a stocking but don't want to shop, someone will shop for you. Donations towards your stocking can be given to Elaine Schreiner. Please indicate "Circleville" in the memo when writing a check.
- ◆ Purchase flannel shirts in the sizes of large and extra large.
- ◆ **Bring the stockings and flannel shirts to church on or before December 13<sup>th</sup>.**
- ◆ Have Questions? Would you like to go to Circleville on December 19<sup>th</sup>? Contact the church office.



## Join us Sunday Mornings

**9:30 - 10:30 a.m.**

Adult Sunday School  
On The Way Discipleship  
Kidz Klass

**10:45 a.m.**

Worship Service  
KIDZ Zone Worship Service

## Crestmont Alliance Church

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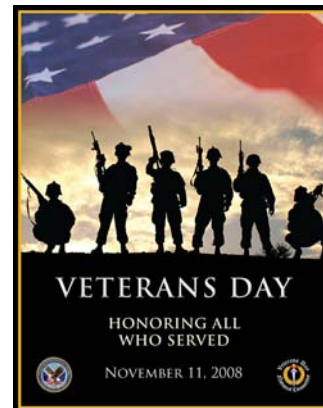
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## November Calendar of Events

- November 1 Thanksgiving Outreach (pick up a basket or two to fill)
- November 1-4 Missions Conference (refer to insert)
- Nov. 4, 11, 18 KIDZ KLUBZ, Women's Ministry, Outpost Men's Ministry (6:45 p.m.)
- Nov. 4, 11, 18, 25 Choir Rehearsal (8:15 p.m. with the exception of Nov. 25 start time of 7 p.m.)
- Nov. 5, 12, 19 Youth Group and Small Groups
- November 13 MOPS Meeting (9:30 - 11:30 a.m., childcare is provided.)  
For moms with children age newborn through Kindergarten.
- November 15 Budget Meeting
- November 18 Thanksgiving Baskets returned to church
- November 20 MOPS Bible Study (10 - 11:30 a.m., childcare is provided.)
- November 21 Thanksgiving Basket Deliveries (11a.m.)
- November 22 Circleville Outreach (pick up stockings to fill)
- November 28 Christmas Decorating (9:30 a.m.)



Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."  
John 15:13 NKJV



**Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>**  
Don't forget to turn your clocks back 1 hour before you go to sleep Saturday night.