

Navigator

Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You. Psalm 143:8b

Our God

It has been said that the only thing that remains the same is change. How true. In the midst of uncertainty we can always know that change will be a constant. How comforting. Most do not like change because that introduces the unknown into the equation of life. We creatures of habit like routine and predictability, but then change comes and causes us to feel less than in control. There is a sense of security in things that are common and things that we are used to. It feels like we do not have to trust God as much for the routine stuff because we know how it has always gone and what the outcome has always been. And then change arrives to rock the boat of life.

But change is not always a bad thing. God's intention in the midst of change is that the uncertainty would move us closer to Him and the stability that He alone provides. That is why the Bible refers to God as a rock and a fortress: God wants to remind us that even while everything around us may be in flux, He is forever solid and unmovable. Psalm 18:2 says, "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." In the midst of David's distress and uncertainty he is overwhelmed by the stability of God. Later in Psalm 18 David writes, "The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted" (Psalm 18:46). Unlike a rock, an inanimate object, the solid God of David is alive! He rescues and guides His people and is an anchor for their lives in the midst of change and turmoil.

Our Strength

In the Scriptures God also makes plain the truth that He is utterly unchanging. Older theologians referred to this as the immutability of God. God says in Malachi 3:6, "For I am the LORD, I do not change." God does not change in His plan, His purposes, or His character. The New Testament writer James states this truth as well by writing, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:17). While our lives seem to change like the lengthening and shortening of a

shadow with the movement of the sun, God does not change. He is not like His creation. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). So the loving, faithful character of God that we read about in the Scriptures and experience in our daily lives will forever remain. While we may wake up tomorrow not knowing what the day will bring, we can rest assured of the unchanging character of God. No matter what change might bring, God is always good; always love; always just; always sovereign; always God!

Our Refuge

This year will be one of change for NorthRidge Fellowship. Out of obedience to Jesus and His call upon our lives, my family and I will be moving to Senegal, West Africa to serve as missionaries with the International Mission Board sharing the Gospel among the Jola people. I will continue to serve as the pastor of NorthRidge until June of this year when at that time our family will begin our transition to Africa. But even though change will come to NorthRidge, God will remain forever faithful to His people. Jesus always cares for His church and wants the absolute best for it. So if God is calling one pastor away to the mission field it simply means that He is also preparing another pastor to come and serve Him and His people here at NorthRidge.

God has promised to care for His church. We move into the future knowing that no matter what change comes that God, through Jesus Christ, has declared His overwhelming love for His church. He calls us now to trust Him with our future. He spoke to His people in the Old Testament and told them, "Do not tremble; do not be afraid. Have I not proclaimed from ages past what My purposes are for you? You are My witnesses-- is there any other God? No! There is no other Rock-- not one!" (Isaiah 44:8). And He told them this so that their hearts would be turned from fear to faith.

No matter what happens this year, NorthRidge Fellowship must continue to cling to God our Rock as He continues to manifest His unwavering faithfulness to His church. May we be able to say with David, "On God my salvation and my glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God" (Psalm 62:7).

† Pastor Matt



newsletter@nrfellowship.org

Office Hours

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays

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 Treasurer Kim Flick 536-4643
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Navigator PDF

To receive the newsletter as a PDF in email, please send a request to newsletter@nrfellowship.org and you will be added to the Navigator email list.

Children's Ministries
Helping Children Become God-Focused Believers Through Essential Christian Truth

Children's Ministries: F/S Wednesday evenings, 6:30pm to 8:00pm
Sunday School 9:15am-10:15am ♦ **Bible Builders** During the 10:30 worship service

WATCH AND PRAY

Jesus could come today! Do we live each day as if we think that were true? If we really believed that Jesus was coming back today, next week, or even this year what would we do differently? Some of Jesus' last words before He went back to heaven are found in Matthew 28: "Go and make disciples of all nations." In Mark 16:15 Jesus says, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone everywhere."

Earlier in the book of Mark in chapter 14 Jesus was with Peter, James and John in Gethsemane. He asked His disciples to pray while He went off by Himself to pray. When He returned He found that they were sleeping. He said, "Are you asleep? Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour? Keep alert and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak."

Sometimes as Christians we are like the disciples. We are followers of Jesus. We love Him and want to serve Him, but we are spiritually asleep. If Jesus would come back today would He find you asleep?

"Two men will be working together in the field: one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left. So be prepared, because you don't know what day your Lord is coming" (Matthew 24: 40-42).

Gina Bickel

VBS Prep ♦ Friday, March 5, 6:00 pm ♦ Bring a snack to share!

T₂G | TRANSFORMED TO GLORIFY

Teens transformed by Christ, to transform the world, for His glory.

During the month of February, we see and hear a lot about hearts. The Bible also has much to say on the subject of our hearts. The Bible says that the condition of our hearts is central to our thoughts, emotions, motivations, and, ultimately, who we really are. So, let's take a moment to evaluate the condition of our hearts as God sees them. Here are just a few verses dealing with the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Proverbs 21:2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the heart.

Isaiah 29:13 And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men."

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

Romans 10:9-10 Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Important T2G Dates:

February 7th Ticket Deadline for Valentine Banquet
February 12th Valentine Banquet Fundraiser 6:30 p.m.

Kevin and Gina Bickel



Meet

Alison Arreaga

Where were you born and raised?

I was born in Pocatello, Idaho - raised in Soda Springs, Idaho.

Who are (or have been) the most influential people in your life?

Denise Birdsall was influential in my life as a baby Christian; my brother because he's overcome a lot of obstacles and keeps on going; my incredible husband because he loves his Lord, loves to read the word and study and he first taught me how important it is to memorize scripture and he leads by example.

What is one of your favorite passages and/or books of the Bible?

My current favorite memory verse is Jeremiah 33:3. Another favorite is John 15:7; it is a life verse.

Aside from the Bible, what are your favorite books?

I like to read Beth Moore, Max Lucado, Kay Arthur, Dianne Mott Davidson, Fionna Walker, Grisham, Patterson, Bodie Thoene.

If you were stranded on an island, what four foods would you most want to have?

Cinnamon rolls, German chocolate, Swiss chocolate, and Italian coffee to wash it all down with!

Who in the Bible do you most identify with?

Currently, Paul. I have been praying that the Lord would not so much as remove a "thorn in my side" (and no it is not my husband-smile) but give me the grace and wisdom to deal with it and to allow the Holy Spirit to "grow me up" through it.

What are the most interesting places you have been to?

Toledo, Spain – behind the old city wall there are over 80 different churches; sadly little evidence of Christ! We've also had the privilege of visiting some of the most beautiful, largest Cathedrals in Germany. (Trier and Koln).

How did you come to know Christ?

My mom made sure my brother and I were raised in church; the Presbyterian church in Soda Springs. We grew up being very active in all aspects of church life. However I never entered into a personal relationship with Jesus. Oh, I remember very well hearing the gospel more than once but in my immaturity I probably thought I already had that. My senior year of high school I became increasingly more curious of spiritual matters and started to research other religions.

I moved to Long Beach, CA to go to college and the Lord made sure I was in the section of the dorms that had a lot of Christians. For the first couple of months, I did the worldly thing and had a good ole time. However, the girls that were really having a good time were the ones that started going to this thing called Zeta Chi College Fellowship at Grace Brethren Church in Long Beach. They would come back on Fridays and talk about the amazing time they were having going to Bible study and that was always followed up with some fun activity; bowling, volleyball, game night. I invited myself one night and I was hooked.

After a few of months of intense study and searching, I finally gave myself up to the Lord. That was November of 1982. God is good!

Books Worth Reading

Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Romans 14:19



Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World edited by C.J. Mahaney

Christ's Church is made up of a wonderful variety of people. We have different vocations, different gifts, different talents, and different lives. The one thing that binds us together is the thing we all have in common...we are followers of Christ. Unfortunately, as Christians, we have another thing in common. We all, at one time or another, struggle with worldliness. We are to be "in" the world but not "of" the world. We are currently going through a book in our Sunday morning Bible study that focuses specifically on resisting worldliness. It is another small (5x7) book put out by Sovereign Grace Ministries that has a big message. I would recommend everyone getting a copy and sharing that message with those in our lives.

Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World is made up of six chapters by five Sovereign Grace pastors. It has a foreword by John Piper and was edited by C.J. Mahaney. Most of the time, if you bring up the topic of worldliness and Christian living it turns into a discussion about rules. People have questions about what things they are "allowed" to do or not to do. One of the great attributes of this book is that they go over these specific real world challenges in a biblically and Christ-centered way. There are chapters on media, music, wealth, and clothes, as well as a chapter on how we are to properly love the world. Though the authors address these questions about certain topics, they each point out that these questions are secondary. They point out that any discussion of worldliness must start with our hearts. This keeps us out of legalism. They focus on a far more important question: What do you love?

Much of the discussion in this book is based on 1 John 2:15. It is a simple verse made up of ten words that are abrupt and to the point: "Do not love the world or anything in the world" (NIV). As they point out, this is not a verse we tend to underline as we come across it in our daily reading. Most of us do not put "Do Not Love The World" on an index card and rehearse it during our daily commute. As they further point out, we do not hear many sermons based on this verse. We live as if it is not in our Bibles. Page 23 of this book quotes Charles Spurgeon writing 150 years ago: "I believe, that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church." This book reminds us that 1 John 2:15 is in our Bible. This book is a tool that helps us answer the question: What does it mean for a Christian not to love the world?

One of the many insightful sections of this book is in the introduction chapter by C.J. Mahaney. It asks, "if a person was given two reports detailing conversations, Internet activity, manner of dress, iPod play lists, television habits, hobbies, leisure time, financial transactions, thoughts, passions and dreams, would they be able to tell you apart from your unconverted neighbor?" With questions like this throughout the book, the authors help us to evaluate our daily walk. It helps us check and see if our focus is where it should be or if we have "lost a measure of clarity" when it comes to how we relate to the world. This little book does not stop there, however, but in the last chapter tells us how we are to properly love the world. I would encourage everyone to get this little book whose message can make such a big difference in our Christian walk.



To The Ends of the Earth



www.nrfellowship.org
314 West Ave J
Jerome, ID 83338

Place
Stamp
Here

Sunday Services

9:15 a.m.	Bible Study
10:30 a.m.	Worship

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

FEBRUARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Come join us for prayer as we continue to seek God's leading at NR, **Sunday, February 7.**

Ladies' **Esther Bible Study starts February 2, 11:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.** Babysitting will be provided. Contact Alison Arreaga at 944-4950 or 650-8127 for more information.

MEN's LEAD Bible study meets **every Wednesday from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.** All men are invited to study and eat lunch with us at the Wok and Grill in Twin Falls.

HEY KIDS! Read 1 Kings 17:17-39. How many waterpots of water did Elijah have poured on his sacrifice and altar? Tell Mrs. Brockway the answer, and you will get a prize!

q & a with Matt

As most of you know by now, Pastor Matt and his family are preparing to enter international missions with the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. In June, Matt and his family will wrap up their ministry here at NorthRidge, and begin their ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Senegal, Africa, soon after.

When will you know exactly where you are going in Senegal?

We may not know for sure until we get to Senegal or a few months afterward. When we first get to Senegal in October we will likely be in the capital city of Dakar for a few months doing some language study and then hopefully transition to a village some time in early 2011. We and the Jola team in Senegal are currently praying about us living in the village of Balingore in southern Senegal. It is a totally unreached village of between 3,000 and 4,000 people. The village also boasts of being totally Muslim with two large mosques and a smaller mosque in each "neighborhood." As far as we know there has never been any Gospel-spreading in this village.

What will the training be like, where is it, and how long will it take?

In July we will go to Richmond, Virginia to the International Learning Center of the IMB and live there for eight weeks. During those eight weeks we will be in class every day studying culture, missiology, and learning how to be used of God more effectively in a cross-cultural setting. All of our children will also have class every day and will be taught about the culture of the people group we will be living among and how to adapt to living in a new and different culture. We will live there with other families who are also transitioning to the mission field. Also, when in Africa we will likely go to the country of Mali for some additional training that is West Africa specific.

Where and when will the commissioning service be?

Our commissioning service will be held the week of May 3 in Chicago.

Is there a time period you are approved for as a missionary? Do you have to renew your "contract" with the International Mission Board?

During our first term of service (4 years) we will be considered a missionary apprentice. After that period we will have the opportunity of continuing to serve through the International Mission Board as what would be considered "career" missionaries.

How often will you return to the states?

An on-field term lasts between two-and-a-half and four years. At the end of each term we would come back to America for "stateside assignment" that would last between six months and one year. While on stateside assignment we would travel to churches across the country sharing with them what God is doing among the Jola people.

Coffee for your soul



*Tuesdays and Thursdays
6:00 am*

Jolly Bean

Bible Study, Isaiah

How can people keep informed about your ministry and stay in touch with your family? Will you have internet access?

We hope to have internet access (depending upon where we end up living) and be able to send out regular e-mail updates. We also plan to have a blog that tells about our new life in Senegal and gives the children a way to stay connected to their friends in the states.

Will you be able to visit with the new believers at our mission church in Diouloulou?

No matter where we end up living in southern Senegal we will be no more than an hour or two away from Diouloulou. We plan on making the church there a regular part of our ministry as we seek to disciple them and watch God grow His church in Diouloulou and the surrounding villages.

Will you have electricity or running, reliable, clean water?

We will have solar electricity, our own well, and gravity-fed running water. We will still have to filter and treat our water for drinking, but it should be quite safe after doing those things. And yes, we will have a western toilet in our home!

Will you have access to medical care?

Most of the reliable medical care is in Dakar; at least a twelve hour trip by car. We will, however, be able to contact the regional nurse in Dakar by phone who can assist us with medical issues that arise and we will receive some training in basic first aid as well as medical conditions that are prevalent in that region. We are trusting that God will care for us and our medical needs.

Do you plan to take many belongings with you, and how will you get them there?

We will be able to pack a 700 cubic foot crate with our belongings. The crate travels by truck to the east coast and then by boat to Dakar where it is once again loaded onto a truck and taken to the village. We likely will not receive it until the spring of 2011, if not later. 700 cubic feet sounds like a good amount of space until you factor in homeschool materials for three years, solar panels for our home, propane appliances, etc.

What have your children expressed about moving to Senegal?

Ezra and Thea are very excited. We all keep expressing to one another that we are so blessed for God to give our family this opportunity to go and live among an unreached people of the world to share the Gospel with them for the first time. They are sad about leaving their friends at NRF and are somewhat apprehensive about certain aspects of the culture, but they are excited about a new and different life in Senegal as our family ministers together. Hosanna of course is oblivious to all that is going on, yet we are all bracing ourselves for the fact that she will learn the language much quicker than all of us!