



The Ram's Horn

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A Church for All Nations and a Fellowship of Living Grace!

THE SHEPHERD'S CORNER

By Pastor Daniel L. Switzer, Ed.D.

Called to the Ministry of Reconciliation

We live in a very polarized society. People argue about everything from politics to marriage. People even argue about free speech—one of the basic foundations of our nation! I recall being struck last decade with the increased sense of disunity in our nation. Then we learned that Russia had been stoking the fires of discord on the internet. This increased division hinders our nation from making progress. With the unprecedented levels of discord, how can we accomplish peace? How can we ourselves be at peace and then how can we help others to be at peace? There is only one way: people need Christ, the Prince of Peace, in their lives. God is calling us be *ministers of reconciliation who bring the message of reconciliation in Christ* to this hurting world!

Ephesians 2:14 emphasizes, "For he [Christ] is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility" (NIV). Before Christ—without Christ—we were in a state of hostility—not only hostility with God but also hostility with other people. Throughout history, this hostility has often been expressed between different people groups. A prime example is this past century with the terrible Holocaust against the Jewish people. But Christ has "destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility" not only between Gentiles and Jews but between all people groups! By coming to Christ, we are able to be one, no matter our ethnicity.

Christ's work on the cross accomplished many things. One thing He accomplished was the ability to have true peace. Jesus provided the way for us to be reconciled! He gave us *the ability to have true peace with one another!* In Christ, all peoples can have peace and live together in unity! And that's our identity as a church—a House of Prayer for all Nations. No matter our background, no matter our ethnicity, in Christ we're

family! We're family—brothers and sisters in Christ, and God is our Father. This is our unity—the unity of Christ. And we need to bring what God has given us to this world. We need to bring this message of reconciliation to a hurting, divisive world!

Ephesians 2:21-22 says, "In him [Christ] the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." In Christ, the whole building is joined together! That means that in Christ, all of us are joined together to become a holy temple in the Lord! We're being built together to be a place God lives—a place where God dwells! We pray, "Lord, build your house!"

Since we have been given this ministry of reconciliation, what should our message be? 2 Corinthians 5:16 says, "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer." In Christ, we are all going through a process of change in which we are being transformed to be more and more like Christ. We are growing in imitating Christ and becoming others-focused champions! We are being changed **and** we are changing in our perspective toward others!

As 2 Corinthians 5:16 asserts, we no longer view people "from a worldly point of view." We don't view people from a worldly lens; we refuse to take on the views of this world. In other words, we don't think that "those people are just that way." As the Bible tells us, "We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). We don't think "those people should be hated" or "those people are filled with hate." We take captive our thoughts and choose not to view people from a worldly perspective.

Remember, Satan is the liar and the father of lies; he is an evil deceiver. As the prince of the air, he is using the air waves to spread discord, disunity, and division. Again, 2 Corinthians 5:16 declares, "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view." Let me be very frank: Our young people are getting their minds full of a worldly point of view on social media. Parents, we need to be very attentive to what our young people are seeing on social media, including the worldly, unbiblical viewpoints that are filling their minds. *Continued on page 2*





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I want all parents to take this pastoral warning to heart: social media is educating and indoctrinating your young people unless you are monitoring this medium very carefully! Sometimes, quite frankly, social media is shaping our perspectives as well.

Teenagers, please receive my heartfelt warning: Don't be deceived by the deceiver—keep a Biblical point of view! Don't be deceived by a "worldly point of view." Hold to a Biblical view!

As parents, we need to help our young people to have a Biblical point of view and not acquire a worldly point of view. We need to influence them with God's Word to have a Christian Biblical point of view! One thing I love about our curriculum at Living Grace Christian School is that it helps young people to have a Biblical world view. However, the battle versus what our students are getting on social media is very intense! We need to influence our young people to line up all of their perspectives according to the Word of God.

What's more, we need to view all people through the eyes of Christ—with the eyes of Christ's love. We should not view people the way they were—not even what they are. **We need to see what they can become and are becoming in Christ!**

2 Corinthians 5:17 declares, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" In Christ, we and others have become a new creation! Even the murderer on death row can become a new creation in Christ!

2 Corinthians 5:18 tells us that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." First, in order for reconciliation to happen with others, **we** need to be reconciled to Christ! The message of reconciliation is summed up in Romans 5:9-11: "Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation." We have been reconciled—from being enemies of God to being friends of God!

Second, once we ourselves have been reconciled to Christ, we need to embrace the **ministry of reconciliation!** What is this ministry of reconciliation? 2 Corinthians 5:19 tells us: "That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." Listen, this society pushes people to hold others' sins against them—to literally cancel them! Well, with God, there is forgiveness. God calls us to forgive people—to **not hold their sins against them** and to communicate that **in Christ they are forgiven and free from sin**—to let people know that they are free from their past and that they can have reconciliation with God and with others!

What is the message of reconciliation? It's that you can be reconciled to Christ in the following ways: that your sins can be forgiven; that your sins will not be counted against you; that you get another chance to live the life God created you to live; that you can have a true relationship with Christ, the prince of peace; and that you can have peace with others. **And you can be used by God to start that process of others becoming new creations in Christ as well!**

You are a vessel in the Lord's hands carrying his message. I implore you

to let God use you this way! At work, at play, and in your neighborhood, you have a voice! You can speak up, you can show Christ, and you can make a difference in bringing reconciliation to the people in your life!

It all comes back to reconciling people to Christ! It's about helping others to become new creations in Christ! **Christ is still the answer!** Christ is the answer to all the divisions in our society! And we can bring this freeing, liberating message to a divided world! I encourage you to keep this message of reconciliation at the forefront of your heart and mind!

Let's be committed to being part of the solution: to be ministers of reconciliation who bring the message of reconciliation to a divided world and to help people know that they can be forgiven as well as live in the power of forgiving others! In a society that pushes people to hold others' sins against them, God calls us to forgive—to not hold others' sins against them. God calls us to help people to know that they and others can be free from sin and free from their past wrongdoing—that they can have reconciliation with others as a new creation in Christ!

The Lord is calling us to be ministers of reconciliation who confidently bring Christ's message of reconciliation to a hurting world! Every day, wherever you are, simply live Christ! Let's bring this message of reconciliation to a world that so desperately needs it! Be a minister of reconciliation!

Northgate Community Church

*Reaching People from All Nations
by God's Grace!*

Worship Schedule

Sundays, 9:45 am - Congregational Prayer
Sundays, 10:00 am – Worship
Midweek Flock Home Groups

*We're here to help you
love and serve the Lord!*

*Our Leadership Team: Pastor Dan,
Pastor Thurlow, and Elders
Vance, Alfred, Greg, and Oscar*

Northgate's New Usernames

Instagram - @northgateccmd
Twitter - @NorthgateCCmd

FLOCK HOME GROUPS

Flock groups are meeting on Zoom or at church - contact the leader to participate.

Montgomery Village, Thursdays, 7:30 pm, Alfred and Jacky Johnson, 301-977-2220 and Keone and Yohana Tagodoe, 240-478-5390.

Montgomery Village, Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, Thurlow & Lynda Switzer, 240-631-1769

Damascus, First and Third Thursdays of each month, 7:30 pm. For information on this Flock Group, please call the church office, 301-840-9830. Assistant leaders – Greg & Annette Windsor.

Mid-day Flock meeting on Zoom Wednesdays at 11:00 am, led by Pastor Thurlow, 240-477-6686, and Elder Vance.

Portuguese Flock Group, led by Jonadabe and Valda de Souza, 240-551-6100, meets on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month, from 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm, at the church.

Ladies Flock, Beauty for Ashes, Saturdays, 9:30 am – 11 am, led by Karla Ayala-Oliver, 301-366-4161.

Men's Discipleship, First and Third Saturdays, 9:00 am, Pastor Dan, 240-620-1244

Youth discipleship, Third Fridays, 7:30 pm, High School and Middle School. Led by Dan & Silvia Switzer and Oscar & Julia Garcia, 301-351-3475.

CCYA, College & Career Young Adults, Greg & Annette Windsor, 240-505-6544.

April Birthdays

Lourdes Reynolds, Apr 1
Luke Swander, Apr 1
Luis Haskins, Apr 5
Lisa Toman, Apr 5
Ron Davis, Apr 15
Sherry Lyles, Apr 17
Jessica (Reynolds) Walter, Apr 20

April Anniversaries

Shawn and Mindy Swander, Apr 5

Praise and Prayer: Pray for . . .

1. Christians standing for Christ amidst persecution all over the world
2. Healing for Seth Garcia
3. **Our nation and our leaders at the local, county, state, and federal government**
4. Northgate pastors, elders, and families
5. Betty Money, healing and strength
6. David Szymanski in AZ – pray for health and protection
7. Living Grace Christian School
8. Dena Windmueller – prayer for healing
9. Healing for Hannah Lee
10. Gloria Ayton – Recovering from dental surgery
11. Ruth McFarlane – healing and strength
12. Kevin and Karla Oliver and Manger House ministries in Haiti
13. Karla Oliver's father in El Salvador - healing
14. Gbenga Alabi – full restoration of his lungs and success for his business enterprises in Nigeria
15. Ukraine – for resolve, freedom and peace

Ladies Spring Tea
Saturday, April 30th, 2 pm

Glimpses of Northgate and LGCS Life



Baby
Dedication:
Bethel
Crevecoeur



Welcome to
the Northgate
family!



“Christ did not come into the world that we might understand him, but that we might cling to him, that we might simply let ourselves be swept away by him into the immense event of the resurrection.”

--Dietrich Bonhoeffer



LGCS
Girls'
Basketball



LGCS
Boys
Basketball

