



A Message from Pastor Mark...

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

(Gen. 12:1-3)

I am not one to write much about national or world politics. However, with the ever increasing tension in the Middle East and growing confusion concerning United States foreign policy, I feel led to share my personal concerns for the State of Israel. One cannot watch the news on TV or Internet without stories of the Arab Spring in many middle eastern countries, heightened fears about Iran's push for nuclear weapons, and political debates about how the US economy is impacted.

In my mind, Genesis 12 clearly establishes some priorities. The Lord chooses Abram (Abraham), promises to make him a great nation (the Jewish people), and gives to them the deed to the Promised Land. Today, the right of the Jewish nation to exist and their right to the land is under mounting attack. Tremendous pressure is placed on this tiny country that would fit in Lake Michigan to give up even more land, and some (like the Iranians) have clearly stated that part of their intent in developing a nuclear bomb is to destroy Israel.

At the same time, Gen 12 clearly states that Almighty God will bless not only the Jewish nation, but also those who bless and support the Jewish people. On the other hand, those who curse and oppose the Jewish nation will be cursed and opposed by God. The fact that this tiny land along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean would be the flashpoint for end times world conflict is reiterated throughout Scripture. Just one example is Ezekiel 38-39, where the prophet (hundreds of years before Jesus) says that a day will come when numerous nations will come together to try and squash the nation of Israel. God will take His stand against them.

The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. And I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great host, all of them with buckler and shield,

wielding swords. Persia, Cush, and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all his hordes; Beth-togarmah from the uttermost parts of the north with all his hordes—many peoples are with you. (Ezekiel 38:1-6)

While there is debate about who God and Magog may be today, there is little doubt that Iran (Persia) is a key player. I truly believe that the Arab nations, not necessarily alone, will try to annihilate Israel. There will be a final showdown on the world stage, and those who take a stand against Israel will find that God takes His stand against them. Those who abandon the Jews will be abandoned by God.

What does all this have to do with us today? I would suggest several very important things. First, I hope that every Christian is paying very close attention to the news concerning the Middle East. In God's plan, it is the epicenter of world dynamics. The United States is not the most important player on the world stage; Israel is. For us to think that Middle Eastern tensions are only a sidebar to American politics is in my estimation, a grave mistake. Even today, I received an e-mail alert from the Christian analyst Joel C. Rosenberg asking questions that should be in the forefront of every Christian's thoughts and prayers. Let me share just two paragraphs:

(Washington, D.C., January 24, 2012) -- Does Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu think the West is taking decisive action to stop Iran from getting the Bomb, or does he think the West is fiddling while Tel Aviv runs the rising risk of burning? That's the Big Question as tensions continue to mount in the epicenter this week. Iran is making new threats to close the Strait of Hormuz to oil shipments, just days after test-firing missiles over the Strait. The U.S., Britain and France are sending additional naval forces into the Gulf. The European Union is taking new steps to impose an oil embargo on Iran. The U.S. is taking steps to sanction Iran's third largest bank, though dragging its feet on actually sanctioning Iran's Central Bank.

Will such Western moves be enough to stop Iran from building an arsenal of nuclear weapons? Personally, I'm not convinced. Such moves would have been good a few years ago. Now they strike me as too little too late, especially after the Obama White House disastrous decision recently to cancel joint military exercises with Israel for fear of being "too provocative" towards Iran. But it doesn't matter what I think. What matters is what Netanyahu thinks. If he decides the West isn't doing enough and Iran is going to get the Bomb, then he is going to hit Iran hard, soon, and without warning.

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My second suggestion would be that we as Christians should be consistently and regularly "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." (Psalm 122:6) It is a biblical command. Furthermore, I hope that one of the questions you will contemplate as you look at Presidential candidates during the next eight or nine months is each candidate's stance toward Israel. If the United States abandons Israel, thinking that it will protect the American dollar, or the flow of oil, and prominent influence in the world, we are sorely mistaken. We will surely lose the blessing of God if we desert Israel. Personally, my vote next November will have more to do with Israel than it will with our national economy.

Finally, I would suggest that we all anticipate the return of Jesus. He has promised to come back for His church. Exactly when, we do not know. But it seems foolish to me, when we have His word that He is coming back, and in view of the state of our world today, to ignore the possibility that it might all come to a head and Jesus will appear.

Pastor Mark



**New
Revive & Rejoice Electives
Begin—Wednesday
February 15—7pm**

**Paul on Trial: The Book of Acts
as a Defense of Christianity.**

Alan Woodrum will lead this study. Attorney John W. Mauck seeks to prove that the book of Acts was written primarily as a legal brief, prepared by Luke and Paul for Paul's defense before Caesar.

The Faith

Pastor Mark will lead this study of what Christians believe, why they believe it and why it matters. Rightly understood and right communicated, the Christian faith is one of great joy. Here is what Christianity is all about and why it is a religion of hope, redemption, and beauty.

Need a day at the beach? A time to slow down, wiggle your toes in the sand, and bask in the warmth of God's presence? Join us at SeaSide Escape. It's a beach themed retreat you won't want to miss!

Location: Ridgeview Baptist Church
3838 North Vermilion Street

Date: February 18, 2012
9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m.
Doors open at 8:30a.m.

Cost: \$15: includes food, materials and service project

Seating is limited to 100

Registration deadline:
February 1, 2012

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**"EQUIP 2012" Christian Worker's
Conference**

February 24-25—Peoria Christian School

**Reminder of the January 31st Early Bird
Registration Deadline.** By doing this you will save the church \$15 towards each person registered.

Please contact the church office if interested in attending. Registration is paid for by the church.

Thank You!

A big thank you for the Christmas sack of fruit. The grapefruit was delicious.

In Christ, Jim Evans

Thank you from the staff!

We all want to thank you for your love and generosity for our Christmas gift to the staff. We are very blessed to serve our Lord with all of you.

Ridgeview Baptist Church Staff

Food Basket Outreach Schedule for February

Deadline for the number of baskets needed by:



Wednesday, February 15—5pm

Pick Up date for delivery

Saturday, February 18—9-9:30am

PLEASE NOTE: YOU WILL BE PICKING UP THE FOOD BASKETS AT THE SOUTHWEST DOOR IN THE CHRISTIAN ED WING. THE DOOR THAT FACES THE GARAGE.

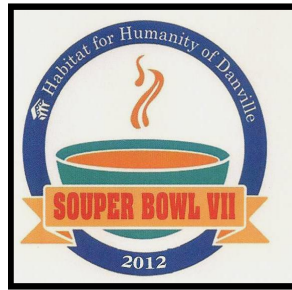
Sympathy and Prayers to:

Dianne Birky and family in the passing of Dianne's father, Roland E. Hoffman

Florence Broderick's family in her home going this week.

The family of Trudy Wyatt in her passing

The family of Pat Park, she is the aunt of Pam Albin and the cousin of Tim Park



Habitat for Humanity of Danville

What's Happening?

Fund-Raising Soup Luncheon
Eat in on Thursday or take soup home for Sunday's Super Bowl XLVI

When? Thursday, February 2 from 11am-6:30pm

Where? Gymnasium, First Presbyterian Church, corner of Franklin and North streets. Downtown Danville.

How Much? \$6 per person to eat in on Thursday \$12 (2tickets) - 32oz (quart) soup - take home only

What Will You Get? Choice of hearty soup and crackers, cole slaw, dessert and water/brewed tea/coffee.

What happens to the funds raised? Habitat for Humanity of Danville builds and sells simple, decent housing at cost to low-income, working Danville families who qualify. With a goal to build 3 homes in 2012, funds raised from the public are vital to ensure that the families waiting get their opportunity.

Where do I get tickets? Contact Habitat for Humanity of Danville at 217-497-4234 to order tickets or stop by our ReStore, located at 121 N Walnut Street, open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10am-5pm, and Saturday 10am-2pm, (217-442-0004).

Primetimers Birthday Party Potluck

(Those 50 and over)

Expect, Fun, Food, and Games

Saturday—February 11—12noon

Menu

Italian Style Turkey
(similar to Italian Beef)
Cake, Ice Cream and Drink.
Please bring a dish to share.



Feel free to bring your favorite game to play. We are excited about our day to fellowship together, and to celebrate the births of our fellow Primetimers. PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX OR ON THE TABLE BY THE KITCHEN, OR NURSERY. We need to know the count for the purchase of the meat, etc.

Ridgeview Baptist Church
3838 N Vermilion St
Danville, IL 61832
217-442-2210

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January 26, 2012

Growing Together In Faith

We would like to invite anyone with a child or grandchild in grades 1 to 5 for a fun adventure of learning about faith. We will be meeting on Tuesday nights at 6:30 beginning February 7th. Grades 1-3 will meet for 5 weeks, through March 6th. Grades 4-5 will meet for 7 weeks, through March 20th.

Pastor Mark and Pastor Tony will be facilitating the groups. This will be an interactive group where parents/grandparents work together with the kids.

Several boys from our cub scout pack and their parents will also be participating and we want to invite you to join us.

You can find more info about the programs (God and Me, and God and Family) at PrayPub.org.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Pastor Tony by February 1st so we can order materials and answer any questions you may have.



Ridgeview Kids

"Ridgeview Kids"

A New Children's Ministry

We have started a Sunday morning Children's ministry that will meet during the message portion of our service. This ministry is for kids in K-5th grades. We will meet every 2nd & 4th Sunday morning in both the 8:40am and 11am services. Children will be dismissed following Children's Moment to go to Ridgeview Kids. Parents will need to pick them up in the Narthex after the service.

RECURRING ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

Sunday Worship Services: 8:40, 11:00am & 6pm

Power Hour—10am

EVERY MONDAY

Martha Emmert Quilting Circle—9am

Men's Fellowship and Bible Study—6pm

Boy Scout Troop—6:30pm

High School Guys & Girls Small Group—7pm

EVERY WEDNESDAY—SEE DECEMBER CALENDAR

"Net-Works" Men's Breakfast—6:30am

Wednesday Fellowship Ministry Meal—6pm

BurdenBearers—6:15pm

"Impact" Jr High—6:30pm

Revive & Rejoice—KWAM—Choir—7pm

EVERY THURSDAY

Cub Scouts—6:30pm



"I'm following pastor on Twitter."