



April 2011

Dear Friends,

### **GIGANTIC SHIFT**

Can you feel it coming? Something in the Spirit seems to be flashing "alert, alert" as if a significant checkpoint is upon us. In our last newsletter, we called for some prayer times because we were sensing an urgency regarding this shift. As we prayed, the Lord indicated to us that the prayer-front and the action-front must connect more strategically. There are many who have new ideas and fresh plans that will positively impact the region via the arts, the media, the economic sector and much more. There are also those who desire to pray in concert with the implementers and thus support and participate in the fresh practicalities of transformation. We also sensed that this past decade has taken its toll on the regional strongman, the "principalities and powers" of Eph. 6. In prayer, one of our intercessors saw him *"worn down and packing his bags..."* We must not forget that there is a war raging in the heavenly realms. Let's press in and press on!

### **WIDOWS & ORPHANS**

In James we read that true religion is taking care of orphans and widows... Without really trying, just following peace and open doors by the Spirit, God has managed to lead us into a relationship with both widows and orphans through Grace-in-Motion and mentoring... He has an amazing heart!

Our Grace in Motion team was deterred a week due to inclement weather but took the opportunity this past weekend to extend a loving hand to 2 shut-in widows in Happy Valley. Compass Care Services had the open door; they called us and we mobilized close to a dozen helpers who stepped in to make the love of God tangible to these ladies.

Project 18 mentoring continues strong. There are 2 teams going into the hall weekly and building relational bridges, and we now have over 40 active matches with 5 more to finalize this week. We have an **ongoing need for mentors!** Please consider building a relationship with a young person who needs someone to cheer him/her on. Here are snapshots from 2 of our mentors:

*Usually we go out for lunch or dinner or ice cream or to a movie because that's what she likes to do. Now she calls me a few times a week because she is bored and wants to hang out. She is doing better now when she gets angry and doesn't get into as many fights at school. My main approach is to encourage her in who she is, particularly when people are telling her lies about being stupid, etc. Progress is slow but our relationship is really growing.*

(over please)



**Grace in Motion serving widows together**



**Coming alongside with tools, smiles, and prayer**



**Bringing God's grace and love**



**Working with Probation for maximum impact**

*We usually meet at an eatery or coffee shop. He prefers the relationship to be "laid-back." He has been opening up, though he seems to have his main issues coming from the men in his life - or who have been in his life. His stepdad has cancer. This has created some extra stress coming toward him. His Dad has pushed him out of the house to live on his own for the most part, but lets him live in a camper on the property. I think he values our relationship.*

We've been looking at grant money to fund a mentor coordinator so the program can grow. The Community Development Board heard us out in early March as we shared the program. The Anti-Gang grant we've been working on with the Redding Police Department and a community coalition was sent off this month. Karen and I are working with Shasta County Juvenile Probation to write a grant proposal to reduce the number of youth who re-offend (OJJDP 2nd Chance Mentoring Grant). We are asking God for wisdom and His will to be done on all these as we welcome more and more broken youth into our Project 18 family.

Indeed, God has shown us that Project 18 is a family, a support structure for these youths who have too few support mechanisms and positive role models. This long range commitment will include regular group outings, celebration parties, life coaching, job skills education and serving others. This model welcomes teens into our "family" where they will grow into hope and a future.

### **GOTTA TALK FINANCES**

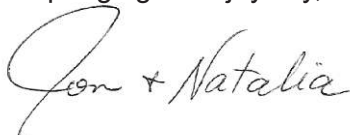
Like so many non-profits, we've seen a dip in donations. We have very modest expenses yet find ourselves needing to add about \$1500 in regular monthly donations to avoid shortfall; pray and give as you can. Maybe you'd like to cover a specific monthly expense, like: phones/internet (our connecting tools) - \$200; liability insurance - \$130; worker's comp - \$100; office rent - \$150.

### **GATHERING TO SCATTER**

Ecclesiastes 3:5 mentions "*a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing.*" Years ago, I understood the second part to be about letting go of a current assignment to embrace a new one, but the 'stones' thing.....? I see that we're all "stones in the house of God." The focus of our ministry is not to gather only, but to scatter living stones across the community with a vision and purpose to transform it. This passage probably means more than this, but the Lord used it in my life to highlight regionwide coverage and potential linkage of those scattered.

We sense the Lord saying GATHER at this time! He is giving puzzle pieces to various ones and the need of the hour is to bring those disparate pieces into one place to perceive what God is doing amongst us. Practitioners and leaders, dreamers and intercessors, young Joshuas and seasoned Moseses who are anointed to take territory and prayer-cover will all begin to align. Some have felt a 'God-nudge' but need backing, clarity and/or wisdom. Others simply seek teammates to run with. I want to invite any and all of you to whom this makes sense, to join us **April 20** and **May 18** for "**TRACTION**" (save the date; place and time TBA). Those who know they carry a call for the city, to uplift and transform portions of society, or those called to be a prayer warrior toward this end, please come!

Springing forth joyfully,



Jon and Natalia Thompson