

***A TIME FOR REFLECTION*** – [Pastor Gene Henderson]

This should be the front page because, from all we can learn about God in the Bible, this is His #1 goal.

The Bible teaches us to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. Believe it or not, in a comparison of all the world's religions, that's rare. Most religions teach adherents to fear and obey. They teach followers to petition / pray to their gods, but those prayers are delivered in repetitive, prescribed chants, not very often in heart-felt, person-to-person conversation. In other words, most religions do not teach people to build a relationship with their gods. That would be demeaning to the deity (Why would a god want to have much to do with a mere earthly mortal?) and disrespectful of the petitioner. On that point, Christianity parts company with all other religions.

The Hebrews should have figured this out centuries – two millennia, in fact – before Jesus showed up and started teaching. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel all had **relationships** with God (Yahweh). **They talked to God and God talked to them.** But the religionists didn't get it. They kept everything structured and ritualized, full of fear and blind repetition. Jesus took His followers behind the scrolls and the temple rituals and taught God's purpose – **He wants to get to know us!** Jesus did not come to condemn. **He came to forgive!** He did not come with another recitation of the rules. **He came to introduce us to our Heavenly Father!** As Jeremiah had predicted, God planned to write His purposes on our hearts, not just on a couple of stone tablets. [Jeremiah 31:33]

It is not enough "**to think good thoughts about God**". That may qualify as respect, but it's a long ways from love. So when the Bible teaches us to **love** God, that means we should step away from the fancy rituals (meaningful as they may be) and **embrace** God. So, what do you say? Are you ready to embrace your Heavenly Father, to allow Him to embrace you?

# Welcome!

May 6, 2018



*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way."*

## SERVICES

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM

Unity In Prayer: 6:00 PM

Wednesday – Bible Study: 7:00 PM;

Kid's Club & Youth

Prayer ½ hour before services

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Wednesday Bible Study** – We are studying the Book of Romans. We will be meeting in the basement during the winter to save on fuel costs.

**Snacks For Children** – There is a basket in the foyer for donations of snacks for Children's Church and Wednesday night Kid's Club.

**Teen Challenge Service** – the Teen Challenge team will be with us today. If you wish to give a special offering, please use an envelope and make any checks payable to New Life Assembly.

**March For Life New York** will have their third annual march in Albany on June 4th, 2018. All are meeting at 10:30 AM at the Children's Memorial at Empire State Plaza for prayer. Then we will be marching to the State Capital steps for a Pro-Life Rally. We encourage all to plan to attend. Jeremiah 1:5: **"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."**



## TEEN CHALLENGE

Adults and youth who participate in Teen Challenge are given an opportunity to confront their destructive choices, their self-sabotaging behavior, and their unhealthy views with the love of God and the guidance of Biblical principles.

One of the major differences between recovery programs and Teen Challenge is our emphasis on Christian values and cultivating a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is this central spiritual dynamic upon which all aspects of the Teen Challenge program are built.

The benefits of Teen Challenge's long-term residential recovery program are many, beginning with how we identify those who participate. We refer to them as students, because they learning a new way of living. Teen Challenge students enjoy these benefits:

- They are able to separate themselves from the environment and relationships that have contributed to their life-controlling problems.
- They come to a controlled environment which helps them to avoid the substances and behaviors that have contributed to their self-destruction.
- They enter into a loving and supportive Christian community.
- They are mentored by others who have walked the same path to freedom and understand the process they are going through as they grow.
- They are positioned to confront the destructive thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that led to their life-controlling problems.
- Chapel services, Christian growth classes, church attendance, and Christian mentoring facilitate their spiritual journey to discover God's truth for themselves.
- They are given the opportunity to cultivate the life practice of personal prayer and daily devotions.

They participate in work programs designed to teach a positive work ethic, responsibility, and taking pride in a job-well-done, regardless of the tasks they are assigned to complete. This generates funds for Teen Challenge, and students are given the opportunity to contribute to their own recovery through their work, which gives them a sense of productivity and dignity.

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