

May/June
2019



Redding Christian Fellowship

Connection

From Pastor John

As I sit in my office and type this article, I am preparing for our monthly Elders and Deacons meeting. Unlike a lot of pastors across the country, I love these meetings! We have a great group of godly men who are dedicated to the mission and vision of Redding Christian Fellowship. Each month I am reminded of the incredible blessing I have to work with an amazing leadership team.

In some ways, this month's meeting will be like most other months. We'll start with a devotional focused on becoming a more biblical leader. We'll hear what's taking place in the ministries the Deacons oversee. We'll discuss what's taking place in our various ministries. We'll look over the finances of the church. We'll pray for each other and for Redding Christian Fellowship. In all things, we continue to do our best in Helping People Take Their Next Step In Following Jesus.

This month, however, we're also going to spend some time discussing an incredible ministry opportunity and blessing that concerns a chunk of property that RCF was given a few years ago—the property that is on Mistletoe Lane. You may recall that there have been several ideas that have been floated over the years concerning how to use this property. We have either considered or been approached about using the Mistletoe property for two different community organizations, a storage facility, missionary housing, and a couple of other projects. For one reason or another, those ideas never fully took root.

Recently, we were approached by another ministry with which we've had a long-standing relationship—Hope Crisis Response Network. Our church has partnered with them for years as they've helped Middletown rebuild after the fire there several years ago. We've had teams of youth and adults go and have established a great friendship with their leadership, particularly Kevin Cox. After the Carr Fire swept into West Redding this past July, Kevin was in town quickly offering help and wisdom as we thought about how to move forward as individuals and as a

church. Kevin made himself available and helped several RCF families negotiate some tricky waters with decisions in the rebuilding process.

After looking at several different options for housing Hope City (HCRN's base) in Redding that all fell through, Kevin and I met to discuss the possibility of using the Mistletoe property to be the center for their rebuilding efforts. We dreamed about a 6300 square foot storage and garage building that could also be used to house and feed volunteers from across the country. We thought about different options for housing volunteers. After that meeting, the details fell quickly in place—funding was secured from an outside source in 8 hours, Redding City planners gave the green light for what we wanted to do there, and engineering reports were given for free!

The end result of this process is that RCF will be able to partner with Hope City to be a blessing to our community to fulfill our value statement, "We love Redding." We will be an active part of Redding rebuilding after the Carr Fire—and we'll do it in Jesus' name. Hope Crisis Response Network's goal is to be able to rebuild close to 100 homes in the Keswick area, where the largest percentage of uninsured homes were located. While I am very careful to attach God's name to things that we see happening, it seems to me that, perhaps, God was delaying other plans because He knew that a fire would come into Redding and that He could use the people of Redding Christian Fellowship for His purpose's sake.

An additional blessing is that when the work of HCRN is done, we will receive a great storage and garage facility, a need that RCF has had for some time, provided through outside funding and used for an important purpose first. God truly has been amazing through this process and I can't wait to see how He continues to work!

Please continue to pray for your church, our leadership, HCRN, and for Redding as we move forward. Now...off to one of my favorite meetings!

Ministerial Staff:

John Craft
Lead Pastor

Rick Penner
Executive Pastor

Jerry Mapes
Missions

Jeff Lange
Life Groups & Family Life

Levi White
Middle School & College Age

Caleb Little
High School & IMPACT

Mister Brown
Preschool/Children's Ministry

Tom Bryant
Worship & Production

Sharon Greene
Women's Ministry Director

Observations from Pastor Rick

WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD STOP SAYING "PRAYER WORKS"

One reason people stay away from Christianity is *not* because they don't know any Christians. It's often because they do. Our actions and our words as followers of Jesus have the power to attract or repel people from Christianity. The number of people who never go to church or follow Jesus keeps growing. And their thinking keeps changing.

So what can we do about it? Well, in addition to modeling humility, grace, truth, love and so many other things that describe the earliest Christ followers, we Christians can watch our words.

1. PRAYER WORKS

Should we really stop saying that prayer works? Well, yes and no. Most people who say prayer works these days really mean *God did what I wanted him to do*. As if prayer was a button to be pushed to release exactly what they wanted from the vending machine. Prayer is *not* a button to be pushed; it's a relationship to be pursued. Prayer does 'work,' but it works very differently than we'd like. It still 'works':

When we can't trace out any direct result from our prayer.

When the opposite of what we prayed for happens.

In those moments when we feel very distant from God; when we bang down the door of heaven for years and are not sure anything is going on up there at all. There are scores of people inside and outside the church whose spirits are crushed because they prayed (fervently) and: They didn't get the job. Their mom died of cancer. Their child was born without a heartbeat. They ended up in a car crash that left them permanently disabled. Prayer doesn't 'work' because I got what I wanted and they didn't. The parade of saints across the centuries would have been shocked to see prayer reduced to God-doing-what-I-asked-him-to-do-when-I-asked-him-to-do-it. God is not a puppy to be trained or a chef in the kitchen who prepares food to suit our every

Continued from previous page...

whim. He is sovereign. As Richard Foster says: *For those explorers in the frontiers of faith, prayer was no little habit tacked on to the periphery of their lives; it was their lives. It was the most serious work of their most productive years. Prayer—nothing draws us closer to the heart of God.* Do things happen supernaturally when we pray? Well, yes they do. But often in ways we cannot understand or even trace out. I think Christians can take consolation in the fact that when we pray, we often don't know what to pray for or even how to pray, yet the scriptures tell us the Holy Spirit will translate the prayer into something better than we could phrase in the moment. So pour your heart out to God. Pray about the things the scripture says are close to God's heart. And when something 'goes your way,' be grateful and offer it back to the God who gave it to you. And when things don't go your way, understand that God is still very much in control and very much loves you. Just because God is silent doesn't mean God is absent.

2. GOD TOLD ME TO...

Often, you hear people (and pastors) say things that start with, "God told me to" The longer I follow Jesus, the more hesitant I am to say God told me to do anything specific. Maybe that's an issue I need to work on, but it springs from my observation that I've seen this misused far more than I've seen it used well or authentically. In fact, I've often noticed that the more outrageous the claim, the more likely someone is to say, "God told me to" When I hear someone claim God told them to do something, I feel like saying: *God told you to do that? Really? God himself spoke directly to you and told you to specifically build that building for which you have zero money? Or leave that church that you were in deep conflict with without resolving things? Or buy that house that's way out of your price range? Wow! Are you sure it wasn't the pizza? Or the voice in your head that often tells you to do the things you simply feel like doing?* For the record, I believe there are times when God does speak to people today. But let's be realistic. What made me put this phrase on the list is the number of times I have heard the phrase used to describe a decision that is: Selfishly motivated (come on, admit it ... you're justifying your impulses). Contrary to scripture (the scriptures pretty clearly suggest that what you're doing is sinful ... or at least isn't wise). Designed to shut down debate (does anyone really think they can win a "God told me" debate?). I'm not saying God never tells us anything directly, but I am suggesting it happens far less than most of us claim. So what's a better course? Say something like, "Based on what I know from scripture, I believe this is the best/boldest/wisest course of action." *That* makes sense. And then you can have an intelligent discussion. And you don't pull the God card to justify something about which Christians and others can have a legitimate discussion. Or, if you're just trying to shut down debate, just be honest. *I wanted to do it, so I did it.* There. Now you said it and everyone will feel better. If you're dead honest, you might even realize you made a crazy decision. *(for a copy of the entire article, please call the church office).*

Sharon's Sharing...



Having just celebrated Easter/Resurrection Sunday together, definitely gives me a levity to my spirit, and I pray it is so with you as well. Our grounds at RCF looked so beautiful with our Azaleas in bloom, and all the landscaping touches added to our property recently. Thanks to the many hands and small life groups that assisted in that endeavor.

Spring is definitely "springing forth" around this city that we love, over these past few days! It's amazing to think of the challenging weather that we've had (including pelting hail just recently) and NOW our backyard is filled with colorful signs of new life. It causes me to smile as it reminds me of the HOPE that we have for NEW LIFE in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's my FAVORITE season to celebrate, and draws me into intimate communication of gratitude to our Loving God, who allows us to share in and experience this splendor of His creation. I find myself singing "Great is their faithfulness morning by morning new mercies I see!"

Speaking of enjoying our beautiful scenery so near to us, ladies, you are invited to join us on May 11th as we do an easy hike to Chamise Falls trail. Watch for announcements in the bulletin and overhead slides on Sunday Mornings for additional information.

On Saturday, May 18th, 1-4 pm, Women's Ministry will be hosting another no cost event. Our Annual Ladies Tea will fill the main auditorium with beautiful tables set with lovely dishes, delightful finger sandwiches and sweet treats, and is a wonderful opportunity to gather with our ladies and cultivate new friendships. Please sign up while there is room as we are limited on seating.

Our Ladies Morning and Evening Bible Studies will come to a close on May 21st, as we take a break through the summer, but will resume in September. As an opportunity for our ladies to become, (or stay) connected during the summer, we will be featuring an easy, small groups BOOK CLUB. Several reading choices will be offered, and these will be displayed at our information table for group sign ups, beginning May 26th between services. We've tried to have topics and titles to interest women in every stage of life. We'd love to have you join us for this comfortable connection, bonding and growth.

As I try to be visible for conversation and questions on Sunday mornings in our foyer or at the Information Desk. I hope to connect with you. Whether new to RCF, or we just haven't spoken in a while, these connections are precious to me. ALSO... MY OFFICE REMODEL is completed and I'd welcome you to call for an appointment, stop by and have a cup of hot or iced tea with me! Until then, HUGS AND BLESSINGS

WORSHIP MINISTRY

We are just coming off a great Easter weekend and summer is beginning to show. I have had the joy and privilege to work very closely with some of our high school and adult worship leaders giving voice lessons, music theory, and worship ministry 101 type stuff. I am actively looking for and intentionally giving opportunity to these folks as they hone their worship leading skills. I am continuing this trend and am looking forward to the fruit these lessons and trainings will bear in the future.

Conference: Please be in prayer as I have opportunity to take some of our worship team members and leaders to the Getty conference again in Nashville Tennessee. The conference exists to help pastors, leaders and musicians build a Biblical understanding and creative vision for the congregational singing in their churches. Bringing together speakers and artists from many traditions and walks of life, our desire is to encourage churches towards a deeper, more dynamic view of theology, artistry and mission in congregational singing. I am excited that two of our team will be leading worship while we are away.

TeamNight: We had great TeamNight last month and I am looking forward to another on May 29th from 6-9pm in the auditorium. Everyone is invited as we participate in a time of worship and prayer, instruction and vision for our ministries, and culminates with a worship team practice and volunteer training. It is always important to remember the "WHY" in ministry. Our "WHY" is to worship Jesus, point people to Jesus, create an atmosphere in worship where that might happen, and support the word being preached. **Attend a TeamNight and be encouraged with a worship service and time together.**

Growing Leaders: Our worship ministries focus on building up new leaders is continuing with the help of volunteers both young and old. It is still my hope that our praise choir creates opportunity for some new faces to join us in leading worship Sunday mornings. The High School worship team is continuing to grow stronger in their skills and has continued to make an impact on their weekly meetings as well as ours. I am looking forward to building more bridges between the Youth ministries and our Sunday morning

services in the future.

We are continuing to try and build up our teams of volunteers and are actively seeking new people for the following positions: sound tech, livestream video, projections, producer, bass, drums, piano, guitar players as well as singers for worship team and praise choir. We are having monthly meetings with different teams to encourage, inspire, and train.

If you are interested in what we are doing please send an email to worship@rcfellowship.org. Even if you just would like a tour and see all that goes on behind the scenes reach out.

PRODUCTION MINISTRY

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A NERD/YOUNG TO BE PART OF THE PRODUCTION MINISTRY.

The Production Ministry consists of everything that happens off the stage and behind the scenes on a Sunday morning. We are producing slides, sound, lights, video and supporting an environment for people to encounter Jesus through worship and the preaching of God's word. Also, **you don't need to be a nerd or young to serve here.**

We have a new onramp to volunteering in the Production Ministry. Ask me or Marsha Anderson about getting involved. Teaching, training, one on one discipling and job shadowing are a huge part of this.

It is a joy, honor and privilege to serve our Lord and Redding Christian Fellowship as a Worship Pastor. My hope is to equip, train, and encourage our youth and adults to lead worship when opportunity arises. We are putting into place tools, resources, and people who will help us make that a reality. I am so very excited about the future of Redding Christian Fellowship.



Redding Christian Kids News

Did you know we have a news channel? Did you know it's called Redding Christian Kids News? Come check out what our kids have been up to at reddingchristiankids.com. Click on Videos to see all the latest news and weekly shenanigans from our kids' news team. You'll be glad you did. Oh, yeah!



Kids Bible Camp is Coming Soon!

Save the date for Kids Bible Camp June 24 - 28, 2019

For kids in Kindergarten - 5th grade

Come join us for The Incredible Race! Registration begins in May.

Go to reddingchristiankids.com to register your kids and to find out how you can be a part of *The Incredible Race*.



Patrick and Sonya Just are coming on board as our newest ministry partners with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). They will be serving in Indonesia. The Just's have been members of Redding Christian Fellowship over the past 3 years. They have asked us to be their sending church which we are thrilled to do. Over the next 6 to 9 months they will be raising support and finish their training here in the states before heading to Paupua for language school. I've had several opportunities to hear their presentation about their ministry and would highly recommend seeking them out to find out where you might get the chance to hear it. It's well done. Keep them in your prayers.



Laurel Bennett is counting down the days before she'll be heading to Angola Africa with SIM. Laurel has been a member of RCF for years. She has been an active part of our Global Ministry Team (GMT). She has mentored some of our high school girls in the past and traveled with our RCF short term mission trips. It's always comforting to have someone in the medical field traveling with our teams on international and local trips, Laurel has been one of those people for us. Laurel has just returned from the headquarters of SIM in South Carolina where she has been continuing her preparation for leaving. Like all missionaries, Laurel is raising her support. Look for opportunity to hear her speak sometime this summer.



Special Pray need: Robert (Bob) Wilson with Pacesetters ministry has been one of our keynote speakers at our Fall mission conference several times. Bob just returned from Cuba where Pacesetters Ministry has been invited to work with their Educational system, teaching teachers Biblical ethics. God has opened doors for Pacesetters that we thought would never be opened. Cuba is just the latest. Pacesetters has been invited back to Central American countries as well as Middle Eastern countries where the gospel has been allowed to be shared openly with the government's knowledge. We serve an amazing God! Here's the prayer request, Bob's wife Dawn has been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. She has been undergoing treatment in San Diego which doesn't seem to be working. This week they are doing more tests to try to find a new approach with her treatments. Pray for healing for Dawn. Bob is going to be staying in the States with his wife until she is on the road to recovery. Pray that the seeds of truth that have been planted by Bob and Pacesetters will continue to germinate, and with Dawn's healing he'll be able to continue his work. Pray for Robert and Dawn Wilson.

Special guests at Family Camp



















Steve and Brenda Hines will be sharing at Family Camp this year. Saturday nights at camp has been a time we highlight our global ministry. This year is no exception. Steve and Brenda will be talking about the exciting work in India. June 22nd is the date. Just another reason to go to family camp!

Foundation for His Ministry – Mexico Mission Trip

We have a mission's trip scheduled to go to Baja California this Summer. July 14th through the 21st. We will be working with Foundation for His Ministry. It's not too late to sign up but don't delay. July will be here before you know it. This trip is open to anyone of any age.



May 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2  National Day of Prayer	3  Community Closet Sort Day/ Set up 1:00 pm	4  Community Closet Event Day 10:00 am
5  Begin the Journey Session #2 10:45 am	6 Prayer Time Noon	7	8	9	10	11  Women's Hike 8:30 am
12  Remember to pick up your Mother's Day Pies 	13 Prayer Time Noon	14	15	16  PEP Event 11:30 am	17  Comm. Closet Sorting Day 9:00 am Ladies' Annual Tea 1:00 pm 	18  Comm. Closet Sorting Day 9:00 am Ladies' Annual Tea 1:00 pm 
19  Begin the Journey Lunch 10:45 am IMPACT Mentor Mtg. 12:30 pm  5th Grade Promotion Lunch 12:30 pm	20 Prayer Time Noon	21 Elder/ Deacon Meeting 6:30 pm	22	23	24 ManCAMP-2019 →	25
26	27 Office Closed MEMORIAL DAY 	28	29 Worship Team Night 6:00 pm	30	31  Women's Craft Night 5:30 pm	

2019

JUNE

2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2  Mexico Mission Training Meeting 12:30 pm	3 Prayer Time Noon	4 Election - Remember to Vote!	5	6  Community Closet Sorting Day 1:00 pm	7	8  Men's FUEL Breakfast 8:00 am <hr/> Church Work Day 9:30 am 
9  Mexico Lunch Fundraiser 12:30 pm	10 Prayer Time Noon	11	12	13	14  FLAG DAY	15
16 	17 Prayer Time Noon	18 Elder/ Deacon Meeting 6:30 pm	19	20  PEP Event 11:30 am	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Family Camp → </div>	
23 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> ← Family Camp </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> Kids' Bible Camp </div>					29
30	Prayer Time Noon					

Those listed below are or have been ill or in the hospital, recuperating at home, have lost a loved one. Let's lift them up in prayer.



Illnesses

Betty Achten	Loretta Humphries	Glen & Myrna Mapes
Margaret Brady	Darlene Idehara	Don Mangrum
Jody Charbonneau	Del Jacobsen	Ron Schart
Shirley Coker	Laurie Lemon	Bob Snyder
Mary Doboynne	Barb Spellman	
Dick Garner	Debbie Walters	
Don Greene	Barbara Wiedenhoeft	

Deaths

Juan Salcido Sr.
Zella Brewer

ATTENDANCE AND GENERAL FUND GIVING

<u>Celebration</u>			
	<u>1st / 2nd</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Giving</u>
3/3/19.....	347/432.....	779.....	\$27,001.78
3/10/19.....	440/394.....	834.....	\$12,969.15
3/17/19.....	473/422.....	895.....	\$23,596.62
3/24/19.....	418/405.....	823.....	\$11,615.07
3/31/19.....	476/430.....	906.....	\$22,103.50
4/7/19.....	446/419.....	865.....	\$17,149.93
4/14/19.....	409/409.....	818.....	\$13,092.78
4/21/19.....	873/475.....	1348.....	\$16,911.26

TEACHING MISSIONARIES TO CHINA IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

by Jeanne Lindner

Our church family is active in many ways to help people take their first or next steps in following Jesus. For some time now, Duane and Jeanne Lindner along with Benjamin White and Emma Fay have been meeting weekly with some of the Chinese student pilots here in Redding. This is their story:



It never ceases to amaze me what God can do with a willing spirit and heart. In February 2018, Duane and I, along with Benjamin White, began working with a group of Chinese pilots. Starting out with eight, many fell away leaving us with a solid core of four. Our initial goal was to teach them English using the Bible as a textbook. We have met every Friday night, spending one hour on English and one hour in the book of John. We have watched God, at his best, transform the lives of these four young men.

To date, none of them have made the commitment to take Jesus as their Savior. However, we have talked about it often enough that when the Lord's time comes for each one of these young men, they will be prepared to make that move. They said from the beginning, what drew them to us (Christians) was the way we loved them, and were faithful to the commitments that we made. We have become a family – both for them and for us. As they are finishing up their training and preparing to go back to China, we are assured that “He who began a good work in them will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Phil 1:6) The relationships that we have with these young men will be treasured by us and by them for the rest of our lives. God is so good!

FINANCIAL REPORT - Below you will see the fiscal year to date (beginning Oct 1st) financial status of Redding Christian Fellowship. The Elder Board would like to keep the congregation better informed on the financial status of the church and the various projects that are ongoing at Redding Christian Fellowship. This will be published once a month and you are welcome to address any questions or concerns by contacting the church office.

As of April 30, 2019

Fund:	
General fund giving:	\$ 621,774.77
Operating expenses:	\$ 638,053.21
Missions giving:	\$ 131,404.03
Missionary funds disbursed:	\$ 141,224.41

May We Help You?

When someone tells us to “get our house in order”, it is usually an ominous scenario. A medical doctor may say that because he or she feels we are about to die! Those are not words we want to hear, ever. But being good stewards, and having our proverbial house in order is a very important thing. Scripture tells us not to worry about tomorrow. But it also tells us to manage our time, our work and our assets for the Master!

Our church leadership is committed to helping us to be good stewards. We offer a great many venues for serving and exercising our spiritual gifts. We receive the gifts and offerings our people give and seek to use them wisely and gratefully. We want to assist our people in matters that deal with legacy, estate planning and the like.

Are you sure you have a current will or trust in place? If so, do these documents express your precise wishes as they exist today? Is the information accurate and up to date? We have noticed that care givers and others often still have old, long abandoned land line phone numbers in their files. If an emergency arose, it might be very difficult to track down family members and others who need to be reached. These kinds of details need to be reviewed regularly.

Duane Helle, our current elder chairman, would love to talk with you if we can be of help in any of these areas. We have assembled a list of professional resource people who you can talk to in order to get the assistance or advice you need. You can contact Duane at duanehelle@sbcglobal.net.



**REDDING CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP**

2157 Victor Avenue
Redding, CA 96002

Celebration Services - 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. - Main Auditorium

OUR ELDERS

Duane Helle
(chairman)
Ken Abbott
Ron Bridges
John Chelonis
Dan Conklin

John Craft
Troy Foster
John Kelley
Ken McDonald
Rick Penner
Bruce Schlange

OUR DEACONS

Robert Andrade
(chairman)
Shawn Bernardi
Dave Donarico
Don Dunham
Don Greene
Dennis Hale

William Keeler
George Rhoderick
Jerry Wheeler

CONTACT US:

Phone: 530-222-3425
Fax: 530-222-3490
www.rcfellowship.org

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday thru Thursday
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.