

# February 2025 Clarion

## A Newsletter of Christ Ministerial Fellowship

A non-denominational communion of ministries with the purpose of mutual encouragement, like-minded fellowship, and love toward one another.

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Please enjoy books, past and  
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### Paul's Replacement for Ephesus

Lou Pressman

Ephesus is first mentioned in Acts 18:19, where Paul teams up with Priscilla and Aquila, and later, Apollos joins the team. There is evidence that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Corinthians from Ephesus. While the city of Corinth had a negative reputation (for it was a rough seaport city), Paul saw an excellent opportunity for the Gospel (1 Corinthians 16:8-9).

"Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without cause to be afraid, for he is doing the Lord's work, as I also am. So let no one despise him. But send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I expect him with the brethren." (1 Corinthians 16:10-11)

Paul was contemplating sending young Timothy to Corinth. Because Timothy had traveled previously with Paul, observed Paul, and learned from Paul, it would be accurate to say Timothy was a disciple of Christ but was mentored by Paul. Timothy was young and vulnerable, and Paul was protective. Paul saw something of great merit in Timothy and Timothy had become indispensable to Paul. The Apostle Paul and young Timothy had a very close and trusting relationship. But at some point, Paul needed to launch Timothy out, to be on his own, away from Paul.

1 Timothy 1:2-3 "To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines."

Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus. Where Paul never loses concern for his spiritual son, Paul writes and encourages Timothy to be steadfast and, most importantly, do the will of God. This may have been a difficult time for young Timothy, who was used to being with Paul and leaning on Paul. However, Timothy had to grow in his own right; he needed to learn to make decisions and lean on the Holy Spirit instead of Paul. For though they were close, there was a distinct and separate call upon Paul and a distinct and separate call upon Timothy. That is why Paul imparted, as stated in vs.2, "Grace, mercy and peace" for Paul knew it would be needed in young Timothy's life.

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1 Timothy 1:3b-4 *"...Remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith."*

In Paul's eyes, who better to watch over Ephesus than Timothy? Timothy now had an opportunity to learn and grow. Paul was a true father in the faith, and Timothy was a true and devoted son in the faith. Both were needed.

I want to share my testimony of what God is doing in my life and that of my wife, Theresa. As Paul moved on, Theresa and I are moving on from Montrose, PA, where we have been pastoring Montrose Christian Fellowship for 35 years. Like Timothy, Pastor Gary and his wife Dana are staying on in Montrose. This past year, 2024, I turned 76. It's not that I want to emphasize my age, but I want to use it as a point of reference. When I turned 65, then the usual age for retirement, Theresa asked me about my retirement, just wanting to know my thoughts. My thinking was and continued to be, when the time comes, I will know it.

From early on, I desired to be open to the Lord and never wanted Montrose Christian Fellowship to become an idol. At age 70, we revisited retirement, but still, I had it in my heart to continue to teach and preach. I thought, "Let's continue and review it in five years," but through the subsequent years, changes were happening within me, primarily the emphasis and calling to overseas missions.

For several years, Ric Vargas and I had been looked upon as fathers in the faith, and missions were becoming our focus. I recognized this as where the Lord wanted me to put my energies. This was not an instant understanding but a slow and steady confirmation by the Holy Spirit. The grace was lifting regarding my local pastoral ministry but increasing toward the pastors and leaders conferences, and I had already released much of the responsibility of Montrose Christian Fellowship to Gary Rose.



Before Covid, God was opening doors of opportunity and in 2019, I believe we visited 7 countries and made six mission trips. That had become my focus, and there were many confirmations along the way. Wanting to do everything right (for we believe in church order), we spoke first to Pastor Gary and Dana, then to our deacons, and finally to the rest of our Governing Board. Lastly, to those in our little flock and now to you, dear saints of God. Our destination? Winston Salem, NC.

Our final day as full-time residents of PA will be sometime in mid-April. The Lord has helped us sell our house in PA back to the original farming family and seamlessly made a way for us to buy a home in Winston-Salem. May it all be for the glory of God! This is not the end but a new season for Montrose Christian Fellowship, Pastor Gary and Dana, and Theresa and me. There will be no goodbyes, for we will stay rightly related and see one another several times a year. I will still be fully committed to Christ Ministerial Fellowship as I have been for several decades.

Like Paul and Timothy, Theresa and I must follow God's plan. Being faithful to the Lord releases peace, especially knowing that ministry will be furthered. To all my fellow pilgrims, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. As Proverbs 3:5 states, "Do not lean on your own understanding," and God will show you the plan or the next season He has for you. Always keep in mind that God always has a timing and a Godly order. He will show and confirm, so be of good cheer, and may the Lord bring increase into all your lives as well.

Bro. Lou Pressman

# Women's Retreat 2025

Since September 2013, we have been having women's retreats. For years, the men of CMF have been getting to know one another and becoming joined in the bonds of common fellowship. However, their wives, who often could not attend the CMF retreats because they were faithful to the home, did not know one another and had no opportunities to cultivate friendships and fellowship among the ladies of CMF.

The underlying purpose of the CMF Women's Retreats is ***"to know one another and to love one another."*** The writer of the book of Hebrews (10:25) exhorts the believers to put time and effort into gathering together and that much more as we see the day approaching that will usher in the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. We encourage each other to press on to know the Lord. We spend time in the presence of the Lord under the ministry of the Word of God. We listen to each other and seek the Lord for one another. There is a diligent, faithful core of women who have set themselves aside (and paid the cost of their hotel and registration) to seek the Lord together with their sisters in Christ.

In most of our retreats, at least 80 percent of the women who register participate in a formal role like worship leading, teaching, activity presenter, or Lord's Supper leader. Some participate in prayer or by adding their comments at workshops, but all are actively involved in one way or another. In this way, we have come to know and love one another.

## ***Special Guest Speaker***

The Women's Retreat of 2025 on June 6 & 7 will be no different. This time, we will get to know our guest speaker, Roberta Wilber. Roberta is the wife of our beloved Brother Steve Wilber, who received his promotion to the heavenly realm in April of 2019. Since then, Roberta, mother of four, grandmother of two, and a top real estate agent in Atlanta, GA, has written a delightful book called, "Confessions of a Preacher's Wife." The book is also an excellent tool for educating those in the ministry. You can buy it on Amazon.com. We look forward to having her in our midst.



## ***Retreat Details***

The theme of the Women's Retreat this year is ***Awake, Arise, and Be Ready!*** Roberta's ministry, workshops, and activities will revolve around this theme. We have reserved a block of hotel rooms at the Comfort Inn, Elmira Street, Sayre, PA, for a special price of \$112.02 (including taxes) per night. The cut-off date is early this year—**May 6<sup>th</sup>** so don't put off making your reservation. Call (570) 888-1100.

To register, send your check made out to *House of Bread Fellowship Church*, 15 S. Avenue B, Endwell, NY 13760, by Monday, May 26th, the registration deadline. Please see the attached registration form for full details.

We look forward to seeing you Friday, June 6, and Saturday, June 7.

Sincerely, Arlene Ghilardi



## In Fond Remembrance

**Gloria Nieves**, passed away on Sunday, February 9, 2025. She will be remembered among us as the faithful wife of over 50 years to Joe Nieves. They served the Lord together in South America, at Pinecrest Bible Training Center, Salisbury Center, NY and as pastors of Emmanuel Fellowship Church, Allentown, PA.

## Prayer Requests



Joe & Anne Marie Faillace of Salt & Light Community Fellowship in Montague, NJ. Anne Marie needs physical healing.

[www.christianmaturity.com](http://www.christianmaturity.com)

invites you to listen to the messages from the  
CMF Fall Retreat  
October 23-25, 2024

## Save the Date

### Women's Retreat

June 6 & 7, 2025

Bethany Christian Fellowship,  
Athens, PA (see attached)

### Fall Conference

Wednesday, October 29-  
Friday, October 31

Bethany Christian Fellowship,  
Athens, PA

# REGISTER NOW!

## Christ Ministerial Fellowship Spring Conference

April 23-25, 2025

Bethany Christian Fellowship, Athens, PA

The registration is \$15/meal. Meals include Wednesday supper, Thursday lunch and supper, and Friday lunch. We have booked a block of 10 rooms at the Comfort Inn Hotel in Sayre, PA. Call (570) 888-1100 to make your reservation. Please mention that you are part of the Christ Ministerial conference group for the special price of \$97.02 per night. The **deadline** for registration is **March 24**. We hope you will join us for fellowship and this vital time of seeking the Lord.



Pastor Shane Nichols,  
Full Gospel Fellowship,  
Avoca, PA



Lou Pressman, Jay Lecher, Ric Vargas



Pastor Gary Rose, Montrose Christian Fellowship (top left), Chuck Parrish, Dublin, Ohio, (top right), Rick Heilala, Montrose Christian Fellowship (bottom left) and Michael Deane, Vestal Center, NY Montrose CF, (bottom right)