

New Life Church of the White Mountains
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January - February 2010 - Newsletter

The sun has come out and the nor'easter has passed. After 3 days of storms, it's wonderful to be outside in the sunshine with Abby, our golden retriever. I love seeing and enjoying the beauty of the four distinct New Hampshire seasons. In a few weeks, spring will be here for real and I'll tap our maple trees to gather sap and boil it into delicious maple syrup. In the meantime, I am really excited about what is happening in my ministry. It is so interesting in that I serve 3 similar yet unique groups: a resort community, the NH State Police and several local fire departments.



Check out our blog: *Love Wins*
<http://NewLifeChurchNH.wordpress.com>



Serving the Waterville Valley Resort Community

New Life Church is located in Waterville Valley, NH, an area that has established itself as a four season resort. It is here that we serve the resort guests, the residents, the property owners and the employees. Because it is a resort, we get to meet and serve people from all over the world. We provide church services each Sunday at 10 am in the Meeting Place Room in the Town Square – the business and lodging center of the valley. There are folks who attend services regularly and many more who come to worship while they are on vacation. It's exciting to see Christians come together in unity to worship GOD.

During the winter, we provide a second service on the ski slopes at 11:45 am. This service takes place on the deck of the Sunnyside Timber Lodge, off the Valley Run trail. Access is by quad chair lift and skis. People ski to the service and worship together on the lodge deck while viewing the spectacular mountain views. God has provided us with the most magnificent natural cathedral imaginable! We have a small portable sound system and an iPod to provide music for singing. The service lasts about 20 – 30 minutes, depending on the weather. The weekly attendance has been between 5 – 12 people

The skiing has been great this winter due to the excellent snowmaking and grooming. During the past 3 days, 30" of natural snow fell at the mountain. I can't wait to get on the slopes this weekend. Each Sunday, more people find out about the slope side church service and attend. The folks at the info desk, at the base lodge, are so helpful in giving people directions to the service. And folks are so *thrilled* to be able to worship outside on the mountain. One interesting note: on Super Bowl Sunday, the slopes were deserted by 11:30 am as folks headed home early to watch the football game. We almost had the whole ski area to ourselves, which is a real luxury!



Christmas at WV

It was exciting to witness God at work in people's lives during our Christmas Eve services. We offered two services: a 5:30 pm short service for families with little children and a 7 pm traditional candlelight service. It was so encouraging to see WV residents and their families attend as I have been working to build relationships with them for the past year and a half. After both services, people came up to say that they'd be sure to attend our service on the mountain!

My message was about how much God loved them and how that love is shown, even on the cross. I highlighted the message with a video "The Father's Love Letter", and concluded by encouraging people to commit their lives to Christ. I don't know how many did or didn't, but from people's attitudes at the end of the service, I wouldn't be surprised if many made a first or recommitment. The sad, stressed, indifferent-to-God attitudes that people had at the beginning of the service were replaced by expressions of joy, relief and exuberant happiness as God's love became real to them. It was truly amazing. One couple looked very bored and blasé during the first part of the service, but at the end they ran up to shake my hand, hug me, and share how much the service meant to them. Their new found joy was as exciting to witness as it was surprising to see, considering their attitudes at the beginning. One of the Public Safety guys came with his family. He gave me a huge hug at the end - and just beamed with joy in God. How awesome !!!!! You can view the Father's Love Letter at www.fathersloveletter.com/video.html

In addition to this, I have been serving the WV community as chaplain for the Public Safety Department and serve on several committees with the WV Resort Association. (This is similar to a chamber of commerce.) I'm also working with the Wedding Center to conduct weddings services. A beautiful pergola has been constructed next to the pond and provides a breathtaking location for a wedding ceremony. (*The Wedding Center*, located in Town Square, is providing a centralized service to brides and grooms seeking to have their weddings in WV.)



Easter Sunday at WV

Sunrise Service: Come join Dave, me and around 200 other people for the most amazing Sunrise Service experience. At 6 am we hold a Sunrise service at the top of the White Peak Quad chair lift at the mountain. Be there at 5:30 am to get on the lift. At nearly 4000 ft., the panorama of mountain peaks and the pre dawn colors in the sky is breathtaking. And when the sun rises over the eastern peaks, there's always a gasp of joy from the worshippers. What a spectacular place to celebrate the risen Christ. For non-skiers, you can ride the lift back down to the base after the service. Dress warmly because there's still snow and winter conditions up there at almost 4000 feet.

At 10 am we hold an Easter Celebration worship service in Town Square in the Meeting Place Room. The resort has planned lots of activities this year for folks, both before and after the service, including a brunch and an egg hunt for the children.



Serving the New Hampshire State Police - Chaplaincy

Since 2009, I have served as the chaplain for the NH State Police. This is a volunteer position and is not compensated, in any way, by the State. My “parish” includes the troopers, the non-sworn employees and their families. It is an honor to serve these dedicated law enforcement and civilian professionals. Since there are about 400 employees, it is taking time to meet each of them. Their work is stressful and often very dangerous. Because of this, I spend much time praying for all of them. I also send out regular encouraging emails, visit the folks who are in the hospital and meet with folks one-on-one. During the summer, I officiated at two funerals: one for a retired trooper and the other for a civilian employee. I got to visit with this woman many times during the last several months of her life. What an honor and thrill it was to be present when she accepted Christ - just a few hours before her passing.

I learn about the troopers’ jobs and lives by going on ride-alongs in their cruisers. There are seven (7) Troops located throughout NH. Because of the distribution/organization of the seven troops, I get to experience the events of those serving in urban, suburban and even rural locations. I am honored that these brave men and women trust me and appreciate having a caring chaplain who reaches out to them.



Serving the Fire & EMS Departments - Chaplaincy

I serve with 3 local fire departments as their chaplain: Ashland, Campton/Thornton and Waterville Valley. After five years of serving in this role, this year I see a huge change in the level of acceptance and trust. It takes time to get to know these folks. They are so used to helping others that it takes a while for them to trust and accept help for themselves. Fire Chaplaincy often means providing help to the whole community.

I’ve taken quite a few classes in Critical Incident Stress Management – CISM. This training enables me to help people who are dealing with an event that has disrupted their life. It can be a tragedy, a trauma, a crisis event, a death or even a life transition. I provide this help on an individual basis or as part of the Granite State CISM Team. Recently I helped a small town fire department in the southern part of NH. Their critical incident was their inability to save two people in the house. The fire was too intense for them to enter the building.

Because the work of fire fighters and EMTs is so stressful, I’ve found the best way for me to help them is to “be available and be there”. When they want to talk, it’s usually a spur of the moment thing – after a call at the fire house. Sometimes it’s difficult for fire fighters and EMT’s to process their shock after being at a high trauma accident where young people die.

Recently on a Saturday night, there was a tragic car accident where the driver and passenger were in their mid-twenties. I was called at 3:45 am Sunday morning to provide help for some of the newer EMT’s. I remained at the station house with them until it was time for Sunday’s church service. On Monday night I returned to the fire house to just “be there” for people. I was there for quite a while providing help. Several days later, the family of one of the accident victims, asked me to be with them at the hospital in Hanover. I drove the hour to “be there” for them during their time of need. During this one tragic accident I provided care to many different groups of people.

Sadly, I'm seeing an increase in the number of people who are dying by suicide. The effects of this type of death are devastating to the family, friends, co-workers and associates. I've become trained in suicide prevention, intervention and postvention to provide pastoral care to whomever needs it.



Financial Support - Thrift Shop Ministry & Encore Thrift Shop

New Life Church has a clothing and collection box in Waterville Valley. We provide items free of charge to those who need them. What a blessing it is to help others and to recycle material things! Loon Area Christian Ministry and the Encore Thrift Shop is a sister ministry. Skip Schwarz is the pastor. That ministry has been a financial support of New Life for many years. Skip and Joyce helped us begin our thrift shop ministry in Campton. Two years ago, our rental building collapsed from the weight of the snow. Since then, we've been doing a thrift shop ministry without a building.

Encore and New Life are working as partners again. The donated items that we have, after giving to those in need, are being sold for us at Encore. New Life receives 30% of the sales of these items and the remaining 70% goes toward the operating expenses for Encore. We see this arrangement as a blessing and very equitable. During the first week of this arrangement, we received \$100.



Financial Support – Report and Request for Help!

New Life has had an endowment which has been used, according to the benefactor's directions, to help people in need. After several years of serving the community, that money has been used up. This had been our main source of ministry support, in addition to the Thrift Store in Campton, the work with Encore and the weekly donations we would receive. Going forward, we're seeking to sell 3 acres of land in Campton which was provided to the church a few years ago.

We are also asking you to partner with us in this Kingdom Work for God in Waterville Valley and the chaplaincies to the police and fire fighters. Your donation is needed and essential for God's work to continue here.

Would you consider a one-time or even regular donation to support New Life? We are seeking to raise \$69,500 for service covering all of these areas. We can provide budget information for those that request it.

Sincerely,

Pastor Shirley Marcroft