

# Milford Ministries Monitor

Created by Ruth Houston-Behrens

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Has God been over worked lately  
answering your prayers?  
Does God need a vacation?

## Open Your Doors & Hearts

For well over two decades ICES has promoted a more peaceful world by advancing international awareness and cultural understanding to thousands of exchange students from all over the world.

*Open Your Doors:* When you choose to be an ICES Volunteer Host Family and welcome a foreign exchange student into your home, you will have the chance to establish a wonderful life-long friendship, while making a difference in a student's life.

Our host families learn first-hand about a foreign country from the perspective of an exchange student who has grown up there. They share in the evolving process of bringing the world closer through cross-cultural sharing and friendship. Most of all, they gain a new family member for a lifetime.

*Becoming an ICES Volunteer Family:* ICES Host Families are the backbone of student exchange. So much of our success is dependent on the environment created for our students by these very special host families.

The first step to finding out more about becoming an ICES Host Family is to contact us by submitting an Online Application Form. The application carries no obligation.

After completing the ICES Host Family application process, our ICES Area Representative will thoughtfully help you choose a



prospective new son or daughter, using his or her knowledge of other cultures,

student profiles, your preferences, general family information along with the criteria of your local school. We will recommend a select choice of students for you to consider hosting.

Please let me know if you know of anyone that would enjoy hosting or contact Erin Windsor  
ICES Field Manager  
302-725-7777  
ewindsor@icesusa.org  
www.icesusa.org



ENRICHING OUR WORLD  
THROUGH CULTURAL EXCHANGE

# Church, On the Road?

*When asked regarding attending Church while on the road for vacation there was a variety of responses:*

*•I enjoy having Sundays off to do anything I want.*

*• I enjoy attending church in different countries because I learn so much from meeting local people and seeing how they are trying to live the same ideals I'm trying to live.*

*•We like to go to church locally when we're travelling because we like to get to know people from different places and backgrounds.*

*•As a kid, we always went to church when we were on vacation, not because my parents wanted to, but because they felt so guilty if they didn't.*

*•One daughters View: We can't go anywhere with my parents on vacation without all activity coming to a halt on Sunday, or actually going home so they can go to church. Seriously?*

*•We attend because it prepares us for the upcoming week with an uplifted heart and spirit. There is something very special about attending a religious service with friends and acquaintances.*

*• If you're doing what you want to, fantastic. If you're doing what they want, need or expect of you....maybe it's time for a vacation.*

*•One of my favorite parts about being on vacation is being on vacation from church. Not for me.*

*So, is there a Biblical response? Is it necessary to attend Church every week?*



## Surrendering Brings You What?

*The well-known "serenity prayer" offers strength and calmness in pursuit of a more stable life.*

*First, through uttering these words, we are acknowledging God's existence and recognizing that He is truly the only one who can bring us inner peace regardless of chaotic circumstances. His wonderful presence in our lives brings 'serenity' that can be found nowhere else. "His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).*

*Until we allow the 'peace of God' to enter into our mind, heart, and soul, we will never experience that ultimate peace that defiles the most severe circumstances in life.*

*The prayer goes on to speak of acceptances, courage, and wisdom. It all comes down to asking and allowing God to give us these things. In other words, it is surrendering to*

*Him. Learning to face our own self, finding how much you needed God and His help. Praying with your whole heart, supplementing your other prayers to help deal with life, which is a day-by-day walk with God.*

*Real serenity requires that you submit to the will of God. It means you must press hard into his Spirit and draw strength to face trials. Learning to surrender your ideals, hopes of what life should be to God. This will help you find joy in what you do have. Learning to surrender also frees you to do meaningful work or pursue real relationships, to be real, to accept life, people and to encounter the presence of God, which is satisfying.*

*All we have to do is surrender to Him, we can be happy in Him, in this life and forever after. Would you surrender to Jesus now? Take your heavy burdens and lay them all down, so that you can find peace and rest?*

# Getting Kids Back to God

Early last June, a local meeting of the Milford police and concerned Christian leaders was organized by the Milford Interdenominational Ministers Association and held at My Father's House Church on Causey Ave. The several dozen in attendance heard the police express concern about growing problems with groups of youth assembling and getting into trouble. There had already been gun play with young people in the hospital as a result. The police were asking for the cooperation of the Christian Leadership of Milford.

One cannot but be impressed at the magnitude of the problem, or with the magnitude of the disconnect between churches and youth that has made it difficult to approach. American church attendance has been dropping steadily since the 1950's. Today, while polls indicate 40% of Americans attend church "regularly", actual Sunday headcounts put the number at closer to half of that each week.

One study found that 3500 per day in the US leave the church system. Further, most of the attendance comes from older people. Among people under 30, only 20% believe that regular church attendance is important, only 30% claim to attend regularly.

Reasons commonly quoted for the low numbers are they want to "have fun and sleep late", their lifestyles are "criticized" in churches, the churches lack the "energy" of other religious experience, and the authoritarian structure of the churches is not appropriate to the modern individualistic lifestyle.

Indeed, additional statistics indicate that while church attendance is dropping across the board, Bible reading and home church attendance is on the increase.

Those of us who work regularly in internet based ministry see another side of the problem. Age 30 is the exact cutoff age for people who have never known a time when internet did not exist. This is thus a group that defines a large portion of its social life by online relationships. At JCIC, we encounter many dissatisfied young people, organizing groups online that could

even be considered anti-church (atheists, LGBT and Moslem apologetics), which are automatically international groups in which they can remain anonymous.

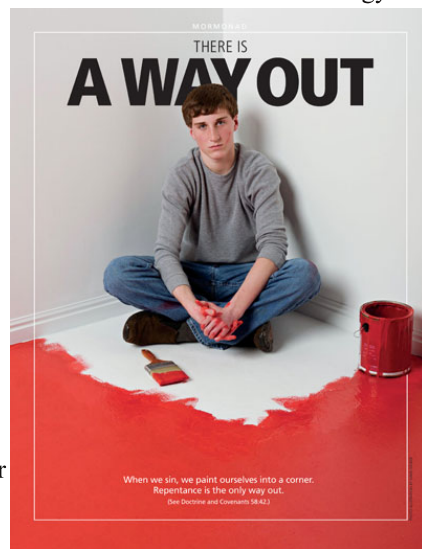
It would be fairer to say that people under 30 today are largely "raised pagan" than that they are "less likely to attend church". But also young people are getting saved on the internet, where the very nature of the medium makes possible intimate gatherings without the authority structure, time constraints, and tradition-based criticisms that they criticize in the irl (internet jargon - "in real life", i.e brick and mortar) churches. The speed of the internet allows for whatever level of speed, and thus "energy" that participants wish to enjoy. But these people often have no irl church to go to, and they connect to God only through the internet friends who ministered salvation to them in the first place.

The potential for reaching the youth is amazing. But based on my experience, traditional churches and outreaches will not work. Most of the internet ministry is still talking at young people, not working with them to help them determine their need for Jesus and where He can minister to them personally.

We do indeed need to reach the young people of Milford, and of Delaware with the freedom and empowerment of the gospel. But the techniques of the past simply won't do it. We need people who will commit to getting together with them, listening to their needs, and helping them figure out who they are, in a culture that is completely different from that of the older generation that most churches are currently serving.

It is particularly noteworthy that many of Milford's churches have on staff or in their congregations such people ministering to youth, and of course, these youth are not the ones causing the problems mentioned by the police. But sheer numbers indicate that this a fertile field for ministry, that more people must become involved with.

by Rev. Ken Behrens, coordinator of Jesus Christ International Community



# You and Homelessness?

The fundamental cause of homelessness is the widening housing affordability gap. Federal housing programs are one of the most successful housing-based solutions to reduce homelessness.

The two programs are Housing Choice Vouchers or Section 8 vouchers. Under HUD's definition, a chronically homeless individual is someone who has experienced homelessness for a year or longer, or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years and has a disability.

They tend to have high rates of behavioral health problems, including severe mental illness and substance abuse disorders, conditions that may be exacerbated by physical illness, injury or trauma.

As an example cities as diverse as Phoenix, Salt Lake

City, Houston, and New Orleans have now eliminated homelessness among veterans.

Take action now,! Get involved to find a solution for our area.

Your help is needed.

So how are YOU going to make a differences with your committment so we can end homelessness in Delaware this year?



## Give A Kid A Chance

Backpacks Needed!

Will you help us get them into the hands of more kids who need them?

There are several programs statewide, here are a few that are accepting donations.

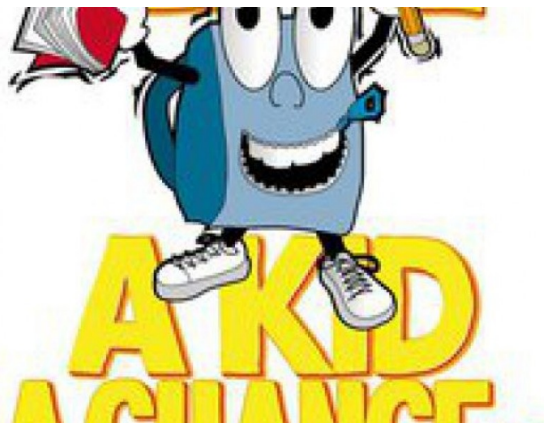
- Operation Backpack program to assist elementary school age kids with necessities for school, for children in need established by the Delaware State Police Community Outreach Unit. Donations can be taken to any State Police station, statewide. Donations accepted through August 10th.

- The Food Bank of Delaware's Backpack Program: to help or learn more, contact Greg Coumatos at [gcoumatos@fbd.org](mailto:gcoumatos@fbd.org) or (302) 292-1305 ext 242.  
<http://www.fbd.org/program/children%E2%80%99s-nutrition-program/backpack-program/>

- The United Way Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway 2015  
<http://uwamov.com/backpack>

- Feed the Children Organization  
<http://www.feedthechildren.org/story/backpacks-full-of-hope/>

- School supplies donations are accepted at the Milford Community Center 105 NE Front St. Milford, DE. as the Milford Middle School will distribute for the children in need.



Needed supplies: Backpacks, No.2 pencils, spiral notebooks, washable Crayola crayons (box of 24), large pink erasers, pencil cases, colored pencils, washable markers, loose leaf wide ruled paper, highlighters, composition books, 3-ring binders, plastic folders with pockets, tissue boxes and hand sanitizer.

## Wide, Long, High & Deep?

*How do I know that Jesus loves me? I know that Jesus loves me because, "the Bible Tells Me So!" Other religions don't show that they're loved, only the Bible tells us that God loves us. Romans 5:8. The Bible tells us that even when we weren't worthy of love - God loved us anyway. ... when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son..." Only God can devise a plan whereby sinners, who are His enemies, can go to Heaven."*

*What makes the Bible distinctive is that it says God loves us. He cares for us. He created us. We're made in His image. And it hurts Him when we damage our lives. He wants to make our lives better. And in order to do that, He gave us the most precious gift He could give. "Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong we are weak but He is strong" We are weak? Why? Because we sin, we sometimes misunderstand who this Jesus is that Scripture tells us loves us so much.*

*It is when we understand how wide, long, high, and deep Christ's love has been for us - THAT IS WHEN we can be filled with all the fullness of God. His love was as HIGH as heaven itself And His love went DOWN into the very bowels of Hell to draw us to God. And it was as DEEP as the pain He bore when He carried our sins away. And it was as WIDE as the length of His arms as He was nailed to the tree.*

## I Am What?

*Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'*

*John 8:12-30 When you follow Him you have Him—you have Him as the light of life. "I am the light . . .*

*Whoever follows me . . . will have the light . . ." You will have me, He says, as your light. If you follow me, you have me. I am yours. I am your Shepherd and your Sacrifice and your Living Water and your Bread from Heaven and your God, and your Light. "You will have the light of life." What is the connection between light and life?*

*John 1:4 gives the answer: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." The life gives the light. The life Jesus has, and the life He shares with those who follow Him, gives them light. That is, we are dead and blind to the light until the life of Jesus is imparted to us by God's Spirit, and then we see. The eyes of our hearts are opened, and divine light streams into our living spirits. And thus we have the light of life.*

*The light that comes from new, spiritual, eye-opening life—the life that gives sight to the blind soul, eternal life giving eternal sight. But He offers them hope—and He offers you hope. "Unless you believe that I am . . . you will die in your sins." Believe, and you won't.*

*"Believe that I am—that I am from the Father. And that I and the Father are one. Open your eyes and see that I am the light of the world and receive me as your light. And you will not perish." Jesus said, that He is from the Father and that He speaks what the Father speaks. "So Jesus said to them, 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am.'"*

*So it is with you and me: We see Him and receive Him as the light of the world now. Or we die in our sins and see it only when it is too late. May God grant you to believe in Him.*



# Between The Dash

*Then there is only a "Dash" between now and death you realize how life really matters.*

*What did we do with "Our Dash of Life".?*

*So when we dash from this errand, that job or another project what are we creating in "Our Dash of Life"?*

*So there's only one thing that you can control. It's the dash. It's the years between your birth and your death. The dash represents your life.*

*And the question is: What are you doing in your dash? How are you spending your dash? Remember, you only get one. Nobody gets two.*

*Do you want to know how God describes your dash? How God describes your life in the Bible?*

*A mist that is blown with the wind.*

*Life only has meaning, value and significance if we have a relationship with the eternal God and if we have God's blessing upon our life and work.*

*When the grace of God truly resonates in our hearts, how can we not give our all to reach others for Him?*

*"And that He (Christ) died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:15).*

*What things would you do if you only had a short time left to live?*

*What would matter enough to focus on and what would suddenly become unimportant?*

*What would consume those few days and what would be discarded?*

*A saying, "The days are long, but the years are short"?*

*I think it's easy during long days to forget that our dash dashes by!*

*We are called to love one another every single day, not just when it's convenient or easy. Are you consciously loving others with all of your heart?*

*God used Moses, and Paul's and others'*

*compassion to make a difference in the lives of those who came in contact with them. No one doubted their authenticity or genuineness. They preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.*

*They were willing to spend and be spent, though the more abundantly they loved, the less they were loved.*

*Nothing could move them from the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. These men and countless since have lived to rescue the perishing!*

*When the "dash" is the only way to communicate our heart for the lost, we have come to understand the command to "rescue the perishing."*



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