



RTNI Newsletter

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A Transition and a Challenge

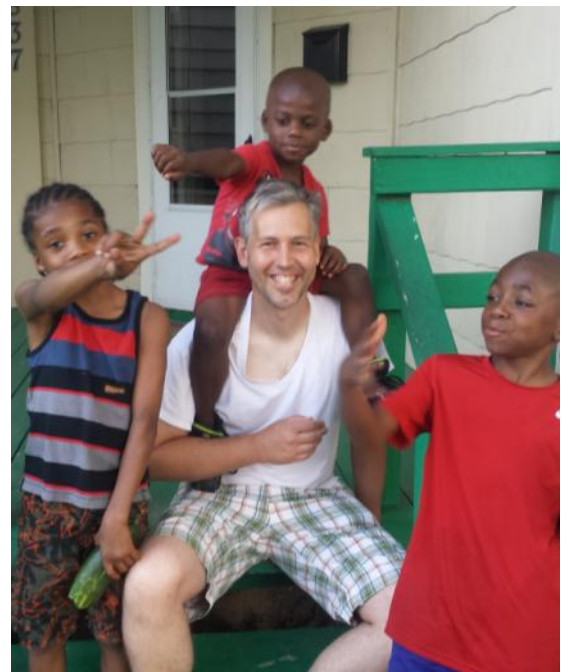
For those of you who do not know, I recently transitioned out of my job at Citibank in order to focus all of my attention on what God has for us at RTNI. It has been amazing! It has been so good to have the time again to walk through the neighborhood praying and talking with neighbors while it's still daylight. It is refreshing to more fully engage in relationships. God is good!

With the transition, I have been thinking a lot about the transformational work that God has called us into. Transformation has become a buzzword these days. So, what does it really mean to us and to RTNI? I believe that it is something that affects the whole person, and even a community. Individually, we can see it play out in the spirit, soul, and body. To me, this means that people are drawing closer to God through His Son Jesus Christ, while at the same time taking advantage of opportunities to grow in skills and abilities that help one escape the grasp of poverty and hopelessness.

Further, transformation isn't always on our terms. I am thinking of a young man that I know. He has been with us since middle school. He has always been strong in math, and we had found him a tutor who was an engineer. They did many cool projects, transforming the theoretical into the tangible. I had hopes that he might put that ability and experience to good use in an engineering field after pursuing a four year degree. However, that was not the course that this young man elected. Should I be disappointed in this choice? Are we failing to see transformation? On the contrary! He did get certified in a trade and is currently working in that field in which his math ability serves him well. He is working hard; he is committed to and is taking care of his girlfriend and their two children. He did not follow the footsteps of many of his peers. He is not selling drugs. He is not running the streets. His children are learning about Jesus from an early age and have the stability of a two-parent home.

This story is just one example of God working in many lives and changing future generations. God's vision of transformation is whole, complete, and perfect – changing lives inside and out. *It is much greater than my limited view.*

My challenge to you is to see the people around you with a different lens. You may have your own ideas about what their growth and transformation should look like. But what is God's plan for their lives? How can you pray for and encourage them in that process with genuine excitement? The process may not be complete. That's okay. It's not complete in us either. God is at work in you, me, and those around us. His plans are perfect. He will finish what He has started. Let's be a part of what He is doing!



Prayer Tent

In March a seven year old was shot and killed at our corner store in Milo-Grogan as a victim of gang related violence. One of the moms in the community wanted to hold an anti-violence demonstration at the store in order to create an outlet for parents and children to grieve the loss of the community. She asked Emily to help organize the event.



During that rally God gave Emily the idea of having a prayer tent at the store, so we talked with the owner to get permission. Three days a week we set up a pop-up tent at the store with signs that say "Stop Here for Prayer". In the last six weeks we have had almost 200 people stop for prayer. Many who do not stop for prayer have encouraged us and expressed their thankfulness for the sign of hope and peace in the community. A few people have even stopped by to share testimonies of answered prayer. One gentleman stopped by needing God to provide food for him and his three children. We asked God to provide for his daily bread. He stopped back before we left – God had provided three bags of groceries! Another young man came seeking prayer for housing. The next week he was back to celebrate that God had answered – he was signing the lease for an apartment. I received a text last night from one of the prayer tent volunteers who saw a woman that they had prayed with two weeks ago. They prayed for her back, and she has been pain free ever since. Most exciting of all, several people have made the decision to follow Christ!

So far individuals from eight churches have participated at the prayer tent. We are so grateful for the unity and help of the body of Christ! We are looking for people willing to sign up for two hour shifts and for captains who can help lead the effort. If you would like to be a part of what God is doing at this prayer tent, please email Emily at estarr@reachtni.org.

Summer Snapshots



Baby Jotham makes everyone smile! Thanks Megan & Jordan for sharing him.



RTNI students learn about Jesus!



Our chalk art is...beautiful.



Thank you Columbus Fire Fighters for sharing about what you do, and showing students the truck.



There are some serious UNO games at our Jesus Fun Days.



A day at the lake is worth 2 anywhere else...