

See? **WOW!** News and Encouragement for CID Circuit **W**itness & **O**utreach **W**orkers

Nbr. 47 – December, 2022

Advent Expectation

Rejoice then, ye sad-hearted
Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed
And tremble at your doom.
Despair not, He is near you,
Yea, standing at the door,
Who best can help and cheer you
And bids you weep no more (TLH 58:5).

See? **WOW!** This is the Savior we bring to people as we tell His Good News.

December GatePost

The December issue of CID's flagship publication, *The GatePost*, has an evangelism theme. This issue should be released sometime within the first half of the month.

You can find it at

<http://www.cidlcms.org/news-gatepost-newsletter.html> On that same page, you can sign up so succeeding issues of *The GatePost* and CID's *News You Can Use* will be e-mailed directly to you.

Please help us spread the word about the December *GatePost*! Thanks.

Beyond the Classroom

As noted at the C-WOW meeting on Sat., Nov. 19, our initial information session for Beyond the Classroom (an adaptation of *Connect to Disciple* for churches with schools) was held in Buckley on Sat., Nov. 5. Rev. Mark Wood from LCMS Witness, Outreach, and Revitalization led a group through materials he has developed, with able assistance from his wife Mary Ellen.

A number of other similar information sessions are scheduled in CID in coming months:

- Feb. 4 or 11 (snow date): Springfield
- Feb. 18 or 25 (snow date): Quincy

- Apr. 1: Altamont
- Apr. 22: Morton
- May 6: Champaign

These sessions, to be held on Saturdays, 10:00 to 2:30, will introduce Beyond the Classroom. It would be good for pastors, principals, evangelism committee or school board members to attend. Please make a point of mentioning these dates to congregations in your circuit that have their own schools or preschools or that are members of school associations.

Also Mentioned at C-WOW Annual Meeting:

- *Small Church Summit* will be Sat., Jan. 7 (snow date is Jan. 14) at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Farmersville. Evangelism is a subject for possible conversation there! For more information and to register (by Dec. 30), go to <http://www.cidlcms.org/news.html>
- *Sermon Outlines on Incorporation* are available at <http://www.cidlcms.org/resources-studies.html> Scroll down to the fourth item.
- *Bible Studies on Cultural Idols*: I hope soon to edit and load onto CID website two 4-session Bible studies, on a couple of cultural idols. Among other things, these studies can serve resources for assimilation of new members. Stay tuned for details as they become available!

Reimbursements for Prison Ministry Materials

CID will reimburse up to \$200 for pastors, congregations, or individual church members who donate Gospel-centered literature to their nearby county jail, state prison, or federal prison. This is an opportunity to get evangelistic material into such facilities even when our prison chaplains cannot enter due to COVID, short staffing, etc. For details, see <http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-missions-prison.html>



Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers

Worth considering:

But I Can't Witness! (continued from last month;

based on Joel Heck, *Evangelism* 4:2 – Feb., 1990)

“Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame” (1 Peter 3:14b-16, ESV).

Taking cues from the well-known Bible passage above, this second installment of a two-part article continues responding to reasons that Christians sometimes give for being reluctant to tell the Good News about Jesus.

3. *“What if people don't ask?”*

Peter said we should be ready to speak to those who ask. But what if they don't ask?

We may assume that people in our secular society lack interest in religion. Really, however, it is not that religion has declined; it has been displaced. And God will not be displaced indefinitely. Sooner or later, most people will wonder about any view of the world that has no place for goals or allegiances beyond human flourishing. The “trigger” for such questioning may well come when they see others who are not so closed in on themselves. Like you.

At such times, be alert for the question. It may not come in such an obvious form as “Why are you a Christian?” It may be more indirect, like “Why do you put such effort into doing your work well?” or “At a time like this, how do you remain so calm?” The question could even be implied. Someone may sigh, “This is a really tough day,” with the implication: “How do *you* manage?” Peter wrote of

Christians maintaining a good conscience in Christ amid adverse conditions. This gets attention.

Yet there's no need to be perfect. Forgiven in Christ, you can be real about your failings. Rebecca Pippert told of a time when she, saddened by a letter she had received, had been deeply moved by a gesture of kindness from two unchurched neighbors. So moved was she that when she went to thank them, she ended up on their couch, sitting between them sobbing – and thinking as she sat there that this was a terrible witness. Shortly thereafter, one of these neighbors became a Christian. She told Rebecca that seeing such hurt in someone so apparently strong and put-together caused her to think: Becky is really like me. Maybe God could love me too, even me.

4. *“I don't want to be pushy.”*

You don't have to be pushy. Peter wrote: *do it with gentleness and respect*. That's not pushy.

Jesus was not pushy with Nicodemus or with the woman at the well. While He was gentle, though, He was forthright. His witness was bold.

In a cartoon, a non-Christian says that he has no peace, no joy, and is miserable. Meanwhile the Christian also in the cartoon wonders to himself whether this might be the right time to tell the Good News. After all, he doesn't want to be pushy.

That scene goes to the extreme, but it makes the point. Usually we err more on the side of excessive caution than excessive boldness.

Part of the *respect* that is to accompany our *gentleness* is the fear of God. You have something that unchurched people need. They may not know so, but you do. Telling them the Good News, you can render them the most decisive service imaginable. – Ken Schurb kschurb@cidlcms.org

