

Report for January

Germantown, MD | February 1, 2022 | John Pollard

Brothers and Sisters,

I hope this report finds you all doing well physically and spiritually. My wife and I express our gratitude to you for your prayers, love and support of our work in MD. We appreciate it greatly. If you have questions about the information in this report, please feel free to get in touch with me.

If I may say, I do believe that this past month was a good one. We had numerous contacts established and a new endeavor started with the hopes of leading to some good fruit in this area for our Lord. Let me begin with Nancy Brooks. Nancy, early 60's, contacted me through our website just as the new year began. She had been searching for answers and searching for the truth. At first, she tried to get acquainted with some denominations in our area but she was turned away by them because they were all asking for donations (money).

After those doors closed, she came across our website and reached out. We had a long phone call that led to a Bible study. Since then, we have studied 3 times in the last month and we are scheduled to have our fourth this coming week. We have been studying the basics about the Bible to begin with since she doesn't know too much. Although she doesn't know a lot about the Bible itself, she is convinced that God exists and He has all the answers she needs. I am really encouraged by her attitude.

Lord willing, we will begin studying Mark's Gospel this week after having covered some important facts about the Bible itself. Nancy lives with her mom not too far from my wife and I. Lord willing, they are desiring to move back to South Carolina later this year to be closer to family. Her mom, 85, is immunocompromised and on oxygen 24/7. Due to this, Nancy and I have not formally met in person. She would like to keep all interactions virtual for now. We have been studying on zoom and she has also joined in on some of our zoom services for our regular gatherings as a church. Please pray that this opportunity will continue to yield encouragement and spiritual growth for Nancy.

This past month, I decided to start a meetup at a Panera Bread in Germantown. This is a suitable location for many reasons: it's a very large restaurant, it's close to most of the members and it's in a very accessible area for visitors. I've been pondering doing something like this for a while but the COVID pandemic has often provided a setback. It hasn't gotten any better but we are able to meet in the restaurant to study and so far, it has gone really well!

We have been doing it for 3 weeks now and we do it every Thursday at 7pm for 1 hour. Our topic of study is the Gospel of Mark. We do a chapter per week. To date we have had 2 visitors come 2 times and one of those visitors came all three times. Merilee Paran is her name and she decided to join us because she wanted to study the Bible with other Christians. Merilee identifies as a Christian herself and she certainly knows a lot about the Bible which is really encouraging. In our limited time together in the past 3 weeks, we have disagreed on some biblical issues but none so big that has led to any major factions.

After her first time, Merilee brought her neighbor, Carole, who has come the past two weeks. Carole isn't actively involved in spiritual things but she has been willing to come for our meetup study and she has been asking questions and making really good comments. Merilee has been a really good influence on her. It is our prayer and our hope that this will continue and that this meetup will yield good results for God and His kingdom.

Speaking of the meetup, about a week ago, a gentleman reached out to me via the meetup app which is how we host the meetup gatherings. He stated that he was interested in coming but he is fearful due to COVID currently so he is choosing to stay away for the time being. Nevertheless, we have been talking every day since then and we've exchanged several emails. He's been listening to some of our sermons and Bible classes online and He indicated that he has had past struggles in his spiritual life but he knows Jesus is the answer. His name is Don Allen. Don has been able to join a couple of our zoom services as well and he stated that he has really benefited.

I continue to stay in touch with him and we are building a relationship even as I write this. He has invited my wife and I over for dinner at some point in the near future so that we can get to know each other's family some more. I am hoping that we can start a private study soon to learn more about the Bible together and perhaps we can provide him with some continued guidance into spiritual things. Please pray for Don and his family.

The church here decided to run a series of Facebook ads starting in January. So far, the results have been fairly decent for the budget we chose. We've had a number of comments and conversations stirred up from these but none that have led formally to a Bible study or visit. Nevertheless, seeds are being sown and we never know when and what the results could look like. Please pray for all these opportunities the church is actively engaged in.

In terms of the church itself, we are all doing well. Many had fallen sick at the start of the new year but all have since recovered and are doing much better. We have been making our way through John's Gospel for our Bible studies and this has been going really well. To start the year, I've been seeking to present lessons from the book of Genesis that pertain to God's nature, the creation, sin and its consequences and others. I am proactively trying to preach more through the Bible this year than I have in the past while at the same time providing needed topical lessons when necessary.

God is good and we thank you once more for your willingness to support us in these endeavors. The brethren here greet all of you and we pray for the work and the brethren in your respective locations.

Thank you for reading this report and may God bless you.