

# Report for February and March

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Germantown, MD | April 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.

God has been really good to us over the last couple months. We have had a number of visitors to our group and I have a couple on ongoing studies that are going really well. Additionally, the meetup that we started in January has been proceeding well and we continue to have visitors every now and again that join us to study the Bible. All of these things have made for a really encouraging time not just for me but for our whole group.

I've been having two regular Bible studies every week. The first is with Don Allen. Don is 60 and lives near us. He and I actually connected via the meetup app back in January and since then, we've been in regular communication discussing a variety of spiritual things. We study every Monday evening on zoom. We actually have not met in person yet due to COVID concerns on his part but I am hoping we'll meet soon. Over the last couple months, we've really gotten to know each other well and we've been discussing a variety of biblical principles and the pattern for why we (the members at Northwest Church of Christ) do what we do.

I believe Don was baptized for the right reasons but he fell away several years ago for a number of reasons. Recently, he has renewed his desire for God and His word and he had been actively searching for a group of God's people for some time before he came across our meetup group and we began talking. Don told me about his past experiences at different religious groups but they were short lived because they eventually steered away from the Bible. He kept looking and he is certainly wanting to learn more.

Ever since we got connected, he has been stressing the need to focus on Jesus and the Bible and I appreciate his refreshing perspective in a world and a religious world at times that can be too focused on traditions, culture and emotions rather than on God's word first and foremost. He has been on all of our zoom services since we connected and he and I talk on a regular basis about different Bible passages and concepts. Recently, he asked me about what it would take for him to become a member of our group. That is where we currently are in our journey together. We are all praying for his spiritual growth and that he will come and join us in person very soon.

He is married and has two kids who I believe are 19 and 22. His family is not very interested in spiritual things and it really discourages him because he wants nothing more than for his family to be saved and to learn about Jesus and what He can do for them. His wife does not have any issues with him spending his time to increase his faith but she won't join him in it just yet. She is not exactly an atheist but she does have some trouble with belief in God. His kids are not in the mindset to want

religion right now in their lives. He is actively trying to lead by example and to talk to them about God in a loving but edifying way.

I really think that this is one of our most fruitful opportunities in recent months and I ask that you please pray for Don and his family. Please pray that he will learn more about God's will for his life and that he will come and see us all in person soon. Please pray for his family that their hearts would be softened and open to the Gospel even as they see Don's desire for God grow more and more.

My second study is with Nancy Brooks. I have mentioned Nancy in my previous report. We study every Tuesday evening and we are halfway in Mark's Gospel currently. Nancy is at the beginning stages of her spiritual journey. She is learning so much about who Jesus is, the things He did and why He did them. At times she feels overwhelmed by all the information we read about in Mark and study because it's so amazing. But as each week goes by, she is connecting all the dots together and appreciating the picture being painted of Jesus and the salvation He affords via the cross. She tells me all the time that she so regrets not seeking for God and His word earlier in his life.

I am so encouraged by her because there is so much she wants to know and she feels so inadequate and yet she is fully trusting in God that He will be patient with her and see her through this journey. She will not be in our area for much longer as she will be moving to South Carolina sometime this summer or in the early fall. I hope that we will continue to study or stay in touch when she moves but for now, there is so much ground still yet to cover and so much application to be made. Please pray that the word will work in Nancy's heart and that she will learn more about God's will for her and what she needs to do in relation to it.

We meet every Thursday at Panera bread for our "meetup" Bible study and so far we've had four different visitors over the now 10 week period we've been doing it. Some of them are repeat visitors and others were just one time visitors. Our repeat visitors are not always able to make it due to different obligations but we continue to do this endeavor praying that it will lead to much good. Regardless of our visitors, it is always such a good and fruitful study with those among our members who come to learn more about God's word.

One of our goals in doing this meetup is to spark interest in those that do come and visit such that we can perhaps set up a private study with them to teach them more or to have them come and join one of our weekly services to learn more about who we are and why we do what we do. Please pray for the success of the meetup and that seeking souls in our area will connect with us and ultimately with God.

For the last month and a half now, we have had a couple who have been faithfully visiting with us in person on Sundays and joining zoom on Wednesdays. Their names are Randy and Karen Hemmig. The Hemmigs are neighbors of some of our members. Last year, they were given a flyer for our then Fall Gospel meeting. In February, they decided to come and find out more about us. Since then, they have kept coming back. The Hemmigs told us that they used to go to a "community church" in the area but they really felt like it was distant and cold at times. They stopped going and looked us up on our website to learn more.

On multiple occasions to different members of the group here, they have noted that they feel “at home” with us and that they can tell we are really a “family.” To God be the glory. I’m so thankful that they kept the flyer in the back of their mind and that they decided to bite the bullet and come see us. They have been asking questions and learning so much. Our hope is that we will continue to educate them to the best of our ability according to the scriptures so that they can learn His way more accurately.

In terms of our church family, we have all been doing well both physically and spiritually. We continue to strive to grow closer to each other day by day and seek to become for effective for each other and for God as we take His Gospel out into the world. The brethren here are so good to my wife and I and we are so blessed to be a part of this work and this group. We have been studying John’s Gospel together and learning more about our responsibilities as Christians.

Since the start of the year, I’ve been focusing on sermons from Genesis in addition to sermons about major biblical themes and topics that I will hope to continue to present as the year goes on. I generally preach 3-4 times a month since we only have one service in the morning and every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month is a song service.

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.