



November/December 2025

# NEWSLETTER

*Sidewalk Sunday School*



## Running the Race

What are some things you are looking forward to this new year? The answer to this question reveals, at least in part, the type of race in life you are running. New year resolutions have been set; goals are being pursued.

We may not all be runners or athletes but we're all running a race. What are you running towards? What's your idea of a finish line for your life? Paul says in Philippians 3:14, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

This upward call of God in Christ Jesus is one that I challenge and encourage each of us to consider. Too often most of the goals and things we pursue are in the realm of horizontal living as opposed to vertical (upward) living to which we have been called.

There's nothing wrong with personal goals (i.e. eating healthier, saving money, exercising, reading more, getting organized, etc.) These are good things and often necessary things in our lives. However, we must consider how these things (our personal goals) bring us and others close(r) to Jesus.

What good is it to run a race so focused on horizontal living that we neglect the call to vertical (upward) living? Vertical living empowers horizontal living not the other way around. The more we focus on Jesus and pursue Him the greater impact He has on our everyday daily living and horizontal position in the world.

Paul said earlier in this chapter that his sole desire was to know Jesus and the power of His resurrection. The focus of his life and the race he was running is the heartbeat of our ministry – to know Jesus, to make Jesus known, and to be known by Him.

Paul's eyes were so fixed on Jesus that every area of his life was impacted. Every choice that he made and decision he considered was filtered through the lens of the Gospel. We run the race to see children saved as God captures them with His love and grace.

We go into the dark places of the earth, hopeless places of desperation, and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ who is light in the darkness and hope in seasons of hopelessness. Our focus this year isn't on how big we can grow as a ministry, how much money we can raise, or how many large events we can run.

These aren't bad things, but they are horizontal things of which God hasn't called us to prioritize. Our focus is on leading children to Jesus one person at a time. When we prioritize vertical (upward) living and the call to simply know Jesus all things horizontally fall into place.

Our ministry is growing, our influence is growing, our volunteer base is growing. Together let's prioritize everything that bring us and others close to Jesus. We can't even begin to comprehend or imagine what God would do in response if this remained the meditation of our hearts.

*Pastor Nick*

## MEMORIZE IT

"I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14



## MINISTRY UPDATE

January and February are months we prepare for the Spring and for the year in general. Our official Sidewalk Sunday School program will start again at the end of February.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2/14: Community Outreach
- 2/22: Volunteer Team Meeting
- 2/28: Spring Series Starts
- 3/7: Snow Cone Outreach
- 5/16: Spring Series Ends

## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1/11: Jayden  | 2/14: Leonel   |
| 1/18: Raiden  | 2/17: Ariana   |
| 1/25: Dimon   | 2/18: Hiliary  |
| 1/30: Adalyn  | 2/28: Samantha |
| 1/30: Loza    | 2/20: Esaud    |
| 2/2: Terrance | 2/20: Aaliyah  |
| 2/9: Moises   | 2/21: Diland   |
| 2/10: Abdiel  | 2/27: Jiret    |

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



## PRAISE REPORT

1. We had such an amazing end of the year! More than 80 children, 30+ families, received Christmas gifts this year.
2. More than 150 people heard the gospel as they attended our Sidewalk Thanksgiving event.
3. Our volunteer and partner base continues to grow. We have more of a solid base of volunteers than we've ever had.
4. Church partners are getting more involved with what we do.
5. More children and student volunteers are leading our worship. One of our student volunteers did a fantastic job teaching our last lesson of the fall!

Scan me!



## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Pray. Participate. Provide. Partner.

Volunteers: We need people who are willing to help us serve children and families in the community.

Meals: We prepare food for at least 50 people every week. Sponsor a meal and help us feed families in need.

Prizes for Kids (ages 4-12): Children compete in games to earn prizes. Purchase a prize and pray for the child who will receive the gift.

Snacks for Kids: Kids earn snacks for good behavior. Sponsor a weekly snack.

General Ministry & Benevolence: General ministry is operational expenses, and benevolence goes specifically to meet needs in our community (i.e. utility assistance, food, etc.)

## HOW CAN YOU PRAY?

1. **Yearly Preparations.** Pray for guidance and direction as we prepare our lessons and program for the spring, summer, and fall.
2. **Older Children.** This will be our 4<sup>th</sup> year serving children in the community. Some of the children are growing and have "aged out" of our program. Join us in praying for ways to continue to serve them and get them connected.
3. **Volunteers.** Pray for our volunteers. We're so grateful for the people who come and serve with us. They make our ministry possible. Pray for them, their families, and their children.
4. **Families in the Community.** People are struggling. Families are broken by divorce, evictions continue to take place, young children are pregnant and expecting child, parents are in rehab trying to overcome addictions.