



## *On the Edge*

January 7, 2008

***“Do not be afraid, only believe.”***  
***Mark 5:36***

*These* words of Jesus to Jairus the synagogue ruler are a tremendous encouragement for our new year of ministry at River's Edge. This is a new year of destiny for us in which I believe the Lord is going to do more than ever in this church family! One question we have to ask ourselves as we launch into a new season of ministry is, **“How high are our expectations?”** Often, I believe we hold ourselves back from God's will and His blessings when we do not expect Him to fill us and empower us to impact our world. We become comfortable with ourselves and our surroundings and desire to stay in our idea of a “safety zone” rather than step out into the Lord's best for us. This may mean feeling uncomfortable and even fearful of making a mistake. The ultimate faith is entrusting God with all our decisions, hopes and dreams. Jairus was afraid for his daughter who was near death. He heard the news that his daughter had died as he was bringing Jesus back to help her. Jairus could have given up and given in to fear, yet Jesus' calmed him by saying, **“Do not be afraid, only believe.”** Let these words be our direction for 2008! It will be the greatest year yet as the Lord prepares us to reach more children and families through the **Awana ministry**; to make International Missions a priority through our new **Guatemala partnership**; to make Church Planting a continued structure in our DNA as we continue to support and partner with **Mosaic Fellowship**; and to allow Personal Evangelism to be our focus through the **FAITH Evangelism Ministry**. Don't be afraid of how God will lead us or what He will do this year – just believe that He *can* do it and He wants to do it through us!

*This Saturday and Sunday* promises to be filled with good teaching and direction as we experience **Storing Treasures Weekend**. Many of you have committed to the study that begins on **Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 8:00 pm**. Sunday morning, the adults will meet in the worship center for **Bible Study at 9:30 am** for the third session of the Storing Treasures study. We will complete the weekend with the

teaching time during the **worship service at 10:45 am**. **The suggested donation per couple for all your materials is \$20**. This will help us pay for all the materials and snacks. We will record each session so that our adults who work with children on Sundays can get all the teaching time. This weekend is going to be a help and a joy for everyone. Make your plans to be here!

***Our Guatemala Team*** will have a picture party following Awana and a short Praise Team rehearsal on **Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>**. Anyone can join us to see many of the pictures we couldn't share during the worship presentation. Once again, I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, financial support and help to get the team completely through the nine days away and back home. Thanks to Mike Najafi, Brett Burleson, Todd Robinson, Doug Linnell and Amos Welch for providing transportation to and from the airport!

***The Celebration of Baptism*** will take place on **Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup>** during the **10:45 am** worship service. We rejoice in how the Lord is adding to His church and look forward to the proclamation of Christ through this special time.

***The New Middle School Bible Study*** is going well. God is blessing the efforts and I appreciate Mike and Kym Najafi and Todd Robinson as they teach our middle school youth.

***There are New Walls in the Children's Area!*** We truly had a need for some substantial new walls in the Children's Area because of the influx of new kids. Jim and Joyce Callender have blessed us by having these walls constructed and ready by last Sunday! These walls will be such a help to keep our classes focused and learning. We thank the Callenders for all they do for the church family both around the building and with seasonal decorations!

***On February 7-9, 2008***, Doug Linnell and I will be in **Awana Commander College**. This will be a super time of learning and understanding on how Awana can become an even greater asset to the River's Edge ministry. Be in prayer for us to learn and grow during this experience so we can lead the ministry to become stronger and more focused on reaching families for Christ.

***Man-Church begins again on Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>!*** This men's Bible Study will emphasize God's plan for our worship. We will be studying **"Worship from the Tabernacle."** This will show us how the Lord taught Israel to worship while they wandered in the wilderness using the tabernacle as their portable worship center. We will study each facet of worship from that Tabernacle experience. The study will begin each Thursday night at **7:00 pm**.

***“The God Questions”*** is a new sermon series that will begin on **Sunday, March 2, 2008**. This series will seek to answer some of our deepest questions about the **nature, power, purpose** and **character** of God. You can participate in this series by submitting your own God questions to me. Over this next month, please use the Connection Card envelopes to submit your questions and I promise to do my very best to address each question within the series. Go ahead and write them down. You don’t have to include your name, (Kristen) just the question. We all strive to understand the nature and love of our mighty God. The Bible gives us immense insight into our loving Creator! Let’s learn together.

***Have you seen our new and improved web site?*** Our site has a new style, format, information and pictures. You have access to recent sermons and the texts and materials from whence they came. Use this site to be an outreach tool for your friends and family. Invite them to take a look at the information and take a test drive on one of the sermon topics. Folks can get a basic understanding for who we are and Who we stand for as they look around this site. Thanks goes to Michael Tacker for all his hard work and effort to make the River’s Edge site look and function great for God’s glory.

***I’m ready to step into 2008 without fear and full of faith, are you? Raise your expectations and watch the Lord God work!***

Loving you all!

Pastor Stephen