



REAL JOY  
COMMUNITY  
FELLOWSHIP

**Monthly Newsletter**

December 2011

## From Pastor Tony

It seems like in each newsletter I always start by asking the question, “**Can I get a ‘praise the Lord’?!**” And once again, I start it that way because of what God is doing. I feel like a child at Christmas rushing to see what is under the tree when I walk into the church each day for our services. And each day when I stop in to coordinate the construction with Rick and the construction team, I get to see the changes that have occurred and I am filled with excitement. At each service, God is sending new people into our midst to worship Him, and each day the building takes a new shape that will help us reach and accommodate more people for Christ! God is so awesome!

However, let me caution each and every person who comes to Real Joy Community Fellowship to be on guard. We need to guard our hearts, our minds, our thoughts, and even our mouths. We have to be so careful because the stress that can be brought on by all the changes and the unfinished rooms that we have to meet in can cause us to take our eyes off the prize, which is Christ! The reason we are doing all of this is so that we can reach more people for Christ. Do not become the reason that someone might not return to worship with us or the reason that someone doesn’t come to Christ. People are watching, and if you don’t believe me, tell someone where you go to church and listen to the comments like “that is the church that is adding on,” or “wow, that place is growing,” or “man, I went by there and the parking lot was packed!”

Christmas morning is going to be a great day to be in church. Remember that we will not have Bible study at 10:00 or an evening service, but we will have an 11:00 service and I am so excited about it! December 25, 2011 will be the first time that our Christmas Sunday service will actually fall on Christmas Day. That day will be a great time for your whole family – we will have a special time with the children, a special time of worship in music, and a special time observing the Lord’s Supper where each head of the family will serve their own family. If you have children, as I do, I know that they will want to play with their new toys, but what a perfect way to explain the real reason that we celebrate Christmas than to take them to church to celebrate the birth of Christ. Let them know that they will only be gone from their toys for a short time and then they can return home to play.

As I look forward to next year, I see several things that will happen in the life of the church. We could baptize our first person in our own baptistery and not have to go to the lake or to another church. We could constitute and become a church instead of a mission. We could start planning to sponsor a church plant from our church. We could have a month averaging above 150 or 200 in worship. We could see a new ministry started for the tweens: the children in 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade who are too old for children’s worship (so they think) but too young for the youth group. We could see the new areas fill to capacity and need more space. Who knows what this coming year has in store for Real Joy Community Fellowship? Only God knows. But the one thing that I want to see happen is for the lost to come to know Christ, for people who were struggling in their walks to be strengthened in their faith, for God to call people into the ministry from our group, and for each and every one of us to bring glory and honor to God with our lives and service to Him through Real Joy Community Fellowship.

I would like to close my part of this newsletter by giving praise to God for what He is doing here at REAL JOY COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP! I would also like to remind us that we have a job to do as a church and as a Christian, and that is to GO! Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:19-20 That is the Great Commission. Notice there is never a time to stop; we are to continue reaching out, inviting people, and one day we will hear the trumpet in the sky, or God will call us home, and then our time of doing the Great Commission will stop and we can start worshipping Him in person. But when that day comes, it will be too late for us to reach any other person for Christ because the one thing we cannot do in heaven is witness to the lost; everyone there is a believer. So invite people, reach out to the unchurched, and make the visitors, as well as the regular attenders, feel like they are the most important person to us and to Christ, because they are.

The Lambert family (Tony, Trisha, Valaree, Joshua, and Jeremy) would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please continue to pray for us this coming year. We love each and every one of you so much that words cannot express it. In the past three years, God has sent so many wonderful people into our lives and we are truly blessed. Thank you for everything and for coming to support the vision that God gave us at Real Joy Community Fellowship!

Love,  
Pastor Tony

### **>From Pastor Bob and the Youth Department**

Christmas is approaching so quickly that before you know it, we'll be beneath a pile of wrapping paper and 2011 will soon be a thing of the past. It is my prayer that we slow down for a few moments and take time to think about Christmas time and all the ways God is showing His love and care for us.

Gift giving is always a time of great anxiety for me, due to the different things people say when giving or receiving a gift. First there is the person who gives a gift and then shortly after giving asks, "did you get me anything?" Then there is the person that receives a gift of great value, and soon after receiving asks, "what else did you get me?" And there is the one that tries to refuse a gift saying, "but I didn't get you anything." (I find myself being this guy most of the time.)

And on top of all of that, there are a wave of statements that can make this joyous time seem a little less joyful. These include, among other things, "did you keep the receipt?" "What made you think I wanted that?" "May I re-gift this?"

I see the struggle between God and man in this seasonal dilemma.

God gives us gifts – so many, in fact, that we overlook many of them. Some of us refuse to see many of them, and others simply complain about the one thing we don't have, forgetting to focus on all that we do have.

To say that God's first gift to us was Jesus, is overlooking thousands of years that God has made promises to us, and has been blessing us before we ever realized it. This time is to thank God for the gift of Jesus, but maybe we need to take time to see the gifts that He has been blessing us with all along. That way we can see, by God's example, that He is not one who gives gifts just one day out of the year, but that His gifts are abundant and new every morning!

Please come visit us Sunday mornings at 10:00 am for Bible Study, and Wednesday nights at 6:30 pm for Youth Group, where we will fill you in on all of the latest events that we have going on!

On New Year's Eve, we will be having a Lock in from 10:00 pm until 8:00 am! This will be an all-nighter that you will be talking about for a long time to come. We will have all the details very soon, but one thing is for sure: you won't want to miss out on this event!

January 28<sup>th</sup> is Winter Jam!! There is a great line up for this night full of concerts with Skillet as the headlining band. The cost is \$10.00 and you will want to bring extra money for food and souvenirs. We will leave the church at 4:00 pm and return at 10:30-11:00 pm.

With all of the changes in the church expansion, there will be room for more of our friends; please invite some of your friends that may not have a church.

### **>From Brady and the Music Department**

It is hard to believe another year is almost over. It seems like just yesterday we were celebrating the New Year. Looking back, we have been so blessed with all of the talent that God has given us and the willingness of everyone to participate. I have seen a fantastic growth in our singers and musicians. I have really enjoyed the voice of the church bringing encouragement and new ideas to the worship team. My prayer is that we can continue to grow in musical style while maintaining unity as the body of Christ. Another wonderful thing taking place is the construction on the church. I am excited for the completion of the reconstruction. There is a lot of good going on in the church. It is also nice to revamp what we already have going, and is additionally an encouragement to do so in our lives as well. Just as we are adding on and updating things in the church, we need to constantly be changing and making ourselves better. I am excited to see what the next year holds and how God is going to move in our lives together as a church.

Although Christmas is a fun time, it can get busy and it has been easy to get overwhelmed with everything that has to be planned. But time and time again I find myself realizing what a joy Christmas time really is. I remind myself of the love and peace that Jesus brought on the night of his birth. Though our world has changed the meaning of Christmas, we must remember who and what Christmas is all about. I hope that through our celebration of Advent and our service on Christmas Day, that all of you can feel the same peace that I have in knowing that God loves each and every one of us more than we could ever imagine. I know that God has great plans for us in the coming year, and I pray that we can all grow together as we turn the page into 2012.

## **From Tami and the Children's Department**

Howdy! During the next couple of weeks, there will be a few changes in the children's department. The room assignments will change and the trailer will be gone. I will inform everyone as those changes occur and let you know where to take your child.

We are also starting a nursery age division that will need more workers. With all of the young families coming with their children, they need a place to take their children so they can worship. The cool thing is that we will have video and audio in the room so that you can actually watch and listen to the service as well as serving in a major role for the growth of the church. So if you are interested in serving in this new area, please see me.

The Daly family would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

A fellow child in Christ,  
Miss Tami

## **Spot Light Article of the Month**

**By Rick Detillian**

It has been such a blessing and a privilege these past few months to be planning, renovating and building at our Place of Worship. We know that the Father dwells within each and every believer, so I am reluctant to refer to our "Place of Worship" as the dwelling place of God, as was the Temple in the Old Testament, but it is certainly the Place where Real Joy Community Fellowship gathers for the purpose of worship, Bible study, fellowship, and to equip one another for the purpose of carrying out the Great Commission, which was the subject of Pastor's message to close out a year-long study of Matthew this past Sunday night.

Not only did Father allow me to see "what could be" at 56 Maple Lane with regard to the physical property, but He blesses me beyond measure with "hands on" involvement. Words cannot describe the joy of seeing what He wants to do and of being just one of the persons used by Him to accomplish it.

While there have been a few questions regarding the changes, the response to the transformation of the building has been completely positive, and the cooperation of our church family has been a picture of unity and love for Father and for one another.

While I have been referred to as "in charge" of the construction, and I do make decisions and settle issues arising from performance of the work, I remain confident that Father is the architect, the builder, the supervisor and the finisher of the work, as well as our faith.

Father has involved so many believers in the work, from a number of different churches and denominations, that I stand amazed at His procurement of goods and services and at the talent and expertise He brings to the job virtually every day. While I have always found enormous satisfaction at the end of the day surveying what my hands have done, nothing compares to the awe I feel for Him as I survey the wondrous works of His mighty hands on the facility He has provided to Real Joy Community Fellowship.

Until His work is complete, may Father continue to bless each and every worker, volunteer, prayer partner and contributor with the very same blessing He bestows upon me each and every day.

Loving and serving Him and you...

Rick