

JULY | 2021

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# NORTHERN LIGHTS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN MICHIGAN DISTRICT  
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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[NMD Website](#)

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Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people  
whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Psalm 33:12

"...AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY TO OURSELVES AND OUR POSTERITY..."  
- FROM THE PREAMBLE TO THE US CONSTITUTION



*"This constitution is intended to govern a moral and religious people, it is wholly inadequate for the government of any other."  
-John Adams*

## SECURING THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY

BY DAN GILMORE  
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Psalms 119:45 - And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

Proverbs 14:34 - Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

As we celebrate our independence and liberty this July 4th let's remember that the surest way to perpetuate this "blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity" is by living in and promoting the marvelous grace of our loving Lord! Living in and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ is our great glory and joy and the only hope for our beloved country and our world! May God bless each of us in these troubling days to abide under His shadow, and rejoice as the people of hope! May our rejoicing be not only in word, but in truth and power and the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left (see 2 Cor. 6:7)! May our salt permeate every level of society and government with heaven's grace and truth! May our light shine the glory of heaven's joy to every corner of our precious land!

I close with this reflection attributed to Alexis de Toqueville:

*I looked for the source of America's greatness in her emerald harbors, in her bustling avenues of commerce; I searched for it in her corridors of government, and her halls of learning; I looked upon her gleaming fields of grain, upon her mighty forests, upon her towering mountains, upon her thundering rivers and glistening seas, but I did not find her greatness there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution, and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.*



Join us for food, fun and fellowship.  
Lunch served at 1:00 pm.

# DISTRICT PICNIC

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2021

REED CITY COTN

5300 220th Ave. Reed City, MI



Guest Speaker: Dr. Gregg Chenoweth  
President - Olivet Nazarene University

Lunch will be provided. Bring your chairs or blankets and join us.  
Games and activities for the kids.

This event is FREE but to help us prepare please click [here](#)  
to RSVP.

## WELCOME TO REV. NANCY & LEATHEL GRODY



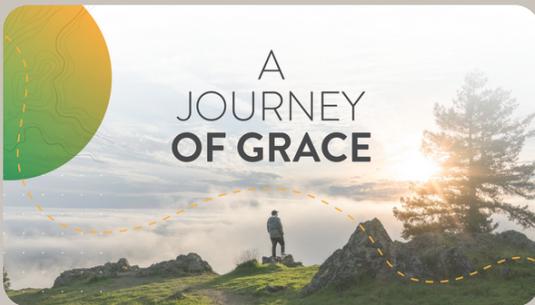
Rev. Nancy Grody has been supply pastor at Kalkaska COTN since September, 2019. After receiving her district license at our district assembly in April she was elected in May by the congregation as their pastor. Welcome Nancy and Leathel to the Northern Michigan District Ministry team.

## GOODBYE TO REV. MARK & BRENDA HOULT



Rev. Mark and Brenda Hoult have retired after 20 years of faithful ministry at Gaylord Church of the Nazarene. They will be moving to Essexville, MI. We are sad to say goodbye but are excited for this new chapter in their lives.

## HOLINESS TODAY OFFERS FREE JOURNEY OF GRACE RESOURCES



In support of the Nazarene Discipleship global initiative, "A Journey of Grace," Holiness Today is offering free sets of Magazines to churches in the United States and Canada. Each set contains four issues of Holiness Today explaining the Nazarene theology of God's grace. If you would like to order, "Journey of Grace" sets for your church, please email [holinesstoday@nazarene.org](mailto:holinesstoday@nazarene.org) with the number of packets you would like to receive and the address they should be shipped to.

**Join** the journey today

Northern Michigan District Men's Ministry is  
hosting a **Promise Keepers** event at  
Alanson COTN - 7489 Mission Road, Alanson MI  
and  
Clare COTN - 10160 S. Grant Ave., Clare, MI

# PROMISE KEEPERS SIMULCAST EVENT

July 16-17, 2021

July 16 - 6:00pm - 9:30pm

July 17 - 8:30am - 2:30pm

Cost: \$20.00 at the door

For more information contact  
Rev. Bill VanPatten at 989-418-2770

or

Rev. Foster Schmitt 231-548-5462



# SDMI CONNECTIONS

## Wedding Invitations and Divine Declarations

**SCOTT RAINEY**  
**SDMI GLOBAL DIRECTOR**

The summer months are usually full of beautiful weddings and anniversary celebrations of weddings long past. A quick walk through social media on any given day from May through August brings congratulatory overload! When I reflect on the significance of weddings, I am reminded that weddings have a unique combination of invitation and declaration.

A wedding is always preceded by an invitation. I met my wife, Jenni, when we were teenagers in a Nazarene youth group. We were great friends for three years and would jokingly introduce one another to new people by me saying, "This is my sister," or Jenni saying, "This is my brother." I was 18 years old, however, when our friendship took a turn toward dating. I wanted to spend more time with Jenni, so I invited her to dinner one evening.

That invitation led to a growing relationship of love with one another. One day in February 1992, I made another invitation. I told Jenni of my love for her and my desire to have her be my wife. I told her what our lives together would be like and my desire to make her happy and blessed. She said, "Yes!"

When our wedding day came 15 months later, my invitation was followed by a pastor's declaration. We said our vows and the pastor said, "By the power vested in me, I now pronounce you husband and wife." From the moment of the declaration, we were officially wed!

### Jesus's Words

God's Word has many examples of invitation/declaration statements. Jesus' words in Matthew 7:7 contain three consecutive examples, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Ask, seek, and knock are all invitations. Each of these three verbs is followed by a declaration, "you will...."

Jesus later said to the crowd around him, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). A simple invitation to come followed by a declaration, "I will give you rest."

Take a moment to consider what these invitations would be if they were not followed by a declaration. An invitation to be married but never a wedding. An invitation to seek but never find. An invitation to come but never rest. The invitation is tied to the declaration.

### Our Response

One of the most well-known invitation/declaration statements is from Jesus when He called Simon and Andrew to be His disciples. In Matthew 4:19, Jesus said to the brothers, "Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people." Consider the invitation to follow Jesus. Go where He goes. Learn of Him. Be His disciple. Do the things He does. That invitation, however, is not the end of the story. The invitation to follow Jesus is followed by a declaration, "I will send you out to fish for people." The Greek literally says, "I will make you fishers of men."

Many Christians today try to accept the invitation to follow Jesus without acknowledging the declaration. "Come, follow me" is not the end of the story. Those who follow Jesus always go fishing. Jesus makes you and me "fishers of men." Fishing is a part of the new life of the one who follows Jesus. If you follow, you fish! Jesus invites, and Jesus declares.

Have you gone fishing recently? The season for fishing is upon us. Christ has invited. Christ has declared! May Nazarenes everywhere join Jesus in His seeking the lost!

## Prayer Mobilization Line

The prayer mobilization line is a great way to stay informed and updated about our missionaries and their ministries and prayer requests. Go to [www.nazarene.org/nmi/prayer](http://www.nazarene.org/nmi/prayer).

Scroll to the bottom of the page if you would like to subscribe.



The latest issue of NCM Magazine is now online!

We are excited to share stories of Nazarene churches who are serving with Christ's compassion around the world.

[See how churches are spreading hope.](#)

## Upcoming Events

### 2021

July 16-17 - Men's Ministry Promise Keepers Simulcast

August 19 (9:00am-noon) - Pastors' Focus Group meeting w/ Dr. Chenoweth - Clare COTN

Sept. 4 - District Picnic - Reed City COTN

Oct. 7 - Prime Time & Grandparents Day @ ONU

October 8-9 - District Women's Retreat - Lakeside Resort in Houghton Lake

October 22-24 - Homecoming @ ONU

Dec. 4 - Pastor's Family Christmas Gathering - West Bay Beach Resort, Traverse City

### 2022

Jan. 29 - District Board of Ministry - Traverse City COTN

Feb. 17 - District Advisory Board - Traverse City COTN

March 11-13 - Pastor and Spouse Retreat - West Bay Beach Resort, Traverse City

April 22-23 - District Assembly - Clare COTN

May 21 - NMI Convention

### 2023

June 9-16 - General Assembly - Indianapolis, Indiana

July 5-9 - Nazarene Youth Conference (NYC) - Tampa Bay, Florida