

New Seasons Born Through Loss

I'm sure that most of us are ready for the change of seasons. We are ready to put away sweat pants and cold weather for vacations and spring. We look forward to some seasons, others are a bit more difficult. But each season is necessary and given to us as gift from God. Life comes in seasons too.

I want to begin by saying thank you. Your prayers, generosity, and faithfulness have made it possible for me to serve with CEF. CEF has been a place where the Gospel is proclaimed boldly and I am grateful for the way this ministry has invested in children, families, and workers around the world. Serving alongside people who love Jesus deeply and give sacrificially has been an honor I will always carry with me.

I also want to speak plainly and honestly about the weight of the past few years. Since Tiff passed away, ministry has often been carried out through exhaustion, heartbreak, and survival-level faith. There were days I showed up outwardly faithful while inwardly shattered. Grief did not pause for ministry schedules, and sorrow did not wait until it was convenient. There were moments when I questioned how much longer I could keep going—not because I doubted God, but because loss had hollowed me out in ways I did not yet have language for. Scripture says, *"My tears have been my food day and night"* (Psalm 42:3), and I have and continue to live that verse out.

CEF extended grace to me in that season. They gave me space to grieve, patience when strength was thin, and kindness when words failed. I will always be thankful for that compassion. And yet, walking through widowhood slowly revealed something undeniable: God was doing a deep, painful, and purposeful work in me. Out of the silence, loneliness, and unanswered questions, a calling began to form, one rooted not in strength, but in brokenness.

After much prayer, discernment, and counsel, the Lord is leading me to step away from my role with CEF to begin a ministry specifically focused on reaching and walking alongside widowers. Too many men grieve alone, unsure where they fit, afraid to speak honestly about their pain, and uncertain whether faith still has room for their questions. I know that road well. *"The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit"* (Psalm 34:18), and I feel compelled to remind widowers, through presence, truth, and the Gospel, that God has not abandoned them in their grief. There is not ministry like it in North America and I will be tasked to share hope and healing with 4.5 million widowers, of which I am one. The ministry is called Sons of the Shepherd and will be under the authority of Commission to Every Nation.

This transition also comes during a season of profound redemption in my own life. In the coming months, I will be getting married. This is not a neat ending to grief or a replacement for what was lost. It is a testimony that God meets us in the ashes and still brings life where death once reigned. Holding sorrow and joy together has been one of the hardest spiritual lessons of my life. Yet Scripture reminds us, *"Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning"* (Psalm 30:5). I am learning that morning can come slowly—and still be real.

I step into this next chapter with humility, dependence on the Lord, and deep gratitude for each of you who has walked with me through unimaginable loss and steady endurance. Thank you for standing with CEF, for standing with me, and for trusting God's work even when the path forward is costly and unclear. I remain confident that God's hand is on this ministry and hopeful for what He will continue to do—for His glory and for the sake of those who are hurting.

With sincere gratitude and hope,
Matt Robinson

Colin's Corner

While teaching about the Fruit of the Spirit at Good News Club we were talking about joy. It can be hard to explain joy to a group of 7 year olds. Almost all of them just think it's another word for happiness. I asked the kids if they could tell me the difference between happiness and joy. After multiple kids had no clue, another girl raised her hand. I expected her to give a confused answer like the rest. To my surprise this little girl gave a perfect example of biblical joy and how she experienced it in her own life. My jaw genuinely dropped while teaching. If a child so young can practice and understand this Fruit of the Spirit so well, what is holding us back as adults? It was really an eye opening experience that we are never too young to be practicing and understanding what God has laid out for us. It's also a great reminder that the kids we teach at club are growing and eager to learn about what Christ has given them. Sometimes these children may even be the ones that are teaching us something new. When teaching children, never underestimate the experiences that they have gone through and the understanding that they have of the Bible.

Notes from Nathan

Over the past several months a big chunk of my involvement in this wonderful ministry has been maintaining our busses and making sure they are updated on inspections. Two of those are with a mechanic every six months and one is with state police.

I'm thankful that inspections have been going well this year. Our busses are an essential part of our ministry but take a lot of work and finances to maintain. Please be in prayer that our inspections would continue to go well and for strength maintaining them. I'm excited to see how the Lord continues to use our busses to help us share the Good News of Jesus in our counties. Thanks for your prayers! God bless you!

Christmas Party Club Recap

This fall/winter was a little rough due to some health issues I was having and still trying to figure out. I just praise the Lord for carrying me through this season and being able to do at least 2 clubs. I went to 1 day care and the main YMCA location with my team, Alex and Soleil. We had fellowship and made more connections to prepare for the summer. At the day care center we had a total of 5 kids, 3 of which we had during the summer. They impressed us with all they remembered from the summer. We didn't get to counsel any of the kids but they enjoyed learning about Jesus and didn't want us to go.

We had 30 children at the YMCA. I got to counsel 4 kids who were full of questions and needed assurance. After the club we got invited to their Birthday Party for Jesus and had fellowship with the kids, counselors and director. It was a special time we got to have with the YMCA family.

~ Maricarmen

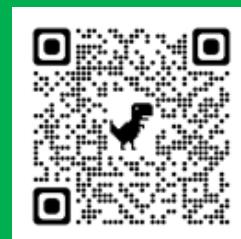
Social Media

Look us up on Facebook.

Look for updates, meetings, teacher tips, U-nite® videos, devotions, and more.

We have also created an online platform. Here is the website for the online giving: <https://franklincef.breezechms.com/give/online>

QR Code for Camp



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