



**SET FREE CHURCH OF THE HIGH DESERT**  
**PO BOX 291265 PHELAN, CA 92329 760 868-3805**

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1

JANUARY-2019

## IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS



Happy New Year! We are so blessed to continue in the work of the Lord and are excited about everything the Lord has for us to do on the horizon. As we bring in the New Year let us keep in focus that a busy church is a growing church and let us prepare our hearts to be willing and submissive to whatever the Lord has in store for us to do this year.

December was very exciting in that we were blessed to take part in two toy giveaways. Both Toy Giveaways were held on the same date: December 23rd, 2018. The first giveaway was at our special Christmas Service at Set Free Church of the High Desert. We distributed toys to Set Free Church of the High Desert member Families at this Service. There, children of all ages from our congregation were blessed bountifully with toys—and were there toys! No child left empty handed. later at 6PM we were privileged to participate in our annual Toy Giveaway in the Community alongside New Life Church and other local partner churches in the body of Christ. The Toy Giveaway for the children of the community was held at New Life Church 4232 Phelan Road in Phelan. The event was a tremendous success. Families of hundreds of local children showed up to participate in the event, receiving free toys or bikes. Ten food baskets complete with Tur-

keys and all the fixings were also raffled off. It was truly a joy and a blessing to see the smiles and joy on everyone's faces and a privilege to spread the love of Jesus with the community.



For more information about our annual Toy Give Away please call 760-868-3805.

We look forward to opportunities to fellowship and worship the Lord with you. Services are at 10 AM with Family Day the third Sunday of the month. We also meet every Wednesday Night (6P) for Bible Study @ Set Free Men's Ranch in Phelan. Come be a part of everything Jesus is doing in us, through us and to us at Set Free Church of the High Desert. Jesus Loves You!

### CONTACT INFO

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### **PASTOR'S CORNER**

*By PASTOR  
RON THOMAS*



Happy New Year! I am exciting in what the Lord is doing in the life of the members of our congregation as well as in our church body as a whole. As we are growing in God's Word, I invite you to come and be a part of us as we grow. If you want to genuinely grow in spiritual maturity, it is not enough to simply be instructed by the Word.

You may be going to church or listening to Christian radio programs. You might talk about everything you hear and assume you're growing because your knowledge is increasing. However, if you don't actually grow closer to God, by allowing His Word to change you from the inside out, your head will merely continue to fill with information.

Spiritual Growth is the result of practicing the truth you receive from God. He wants you to give away what he gives you. That is accomplished by loving and serving others and sharing the truth of the gospel. Our example is Jesus who said that He did not come to be served, but to serve even the lowest outcasts in His society (Matt 20:28). He could have exalted Himself and spent all His time preaching and teaching. Instead, Jesus did the Father's will which was to reveal His heart of love to a broken world.

—Pastor Ron Thomas

# Word of our Testimony

Visit Our Website: [www.setfreechurchofthehighdesert.org](http://www.setfreechurchofthehighdesert.org) —Jesus Loves You!

My name is Joshua Barker and this is the testimony of how Jesus Christ changed my life forever. When I was 10 years old I lost my mother to a drug-induced heart attack, in other words, she fell victim to an overdose. When I found out that the cause of her death was because of drugs. I remember entering a very dark place in my mind, and starting off at the very young age of 10, I often contemplated suicide, as well as acting out against my dad and the rest of my family. At her memorial people attempted to reach out to me and comfort me, telling me that she was with God and that He took her from me, because of the hate and the hurt I was harboring in myself I decided to not believe in God. Around age 12 I began to use drugs and alcohol in an attempt to suppress the grief and anxiety I felt when I thought about life. I emphasize all of these things because they are a big part of why I am who I am today. Now, fast-forward a few years and I'm 20 years old, already out of high school, and I found myself in a bit of a sticky situation... I was getting kicked out of the house I grew up in because of the way I was walking all over my dad and disrespecting the fact that he was still allowing me to stay there. So, I found myself homeless for the first time and let me be the first to say, that was a very scary realization, because I was

by myself, nobody to call, nobody to go to, completely alone. The way I attempted to blind myself from that fact was through even more drug use and starting a career in crime. After 2 years of being on the streets, in and out of jail institutions and hospitals, I remember I had just gotten released from jail in Orange County, where the majority of my homeless life took place, and I was encountered by Christ through this older couple at the a court-house.

They prayed for me to come to salvation and that God would enter my heart... And He did, in a major way, because 2 weeks later I found myself here at Set Free Men's Ranch in Phelan. I remember very clearly the day I actually made Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. It was on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 that my name was written in the Lamb's book of Life. God had his hand on my life the entire time, keeping me from losing my life through all of the scary situations I found myself in.

I am proud to call myself God's child because He never ceases to amaze me every day. I pray for things that align with His will for my life, things concerning righteousness and furthering His gospel message. He took my anxiety and depression and filled that empty place in me

with His unconditional love for all people, and He even took my dark past and changed it from a vessel of dishonor into a vessel of honor, and I'm able to minister to people going through loss and anxiety and depression through His Spirit. The last 4 and a half years have not been easy because if had my fair share of bumping my head and being disciplined by the Father, but I refuse to give up. God has carried me so far that there is no way I can give up, I refuse to do that. I'm happy to say that I am being made into the mighty man of God that He desires me to become, and I'm not planning on trying to prevent that. Thank you Jesus for saving me from myself and giving me a new life that is more abundant than my old one, Amen.



—Josh Barker

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