

# Pastoral Perspectives

## Ears to Hear... Words of Encouragement

- “New Year, New Body”
- “I AM healing Melissa”
- “God is able”
- “God is faithful”
- “God is on the move”
- “Peace, I give to you”
- “Do not be afraid”
- “I AM with you”
- “I AM for you”

## January—February 2010

2nd Sunday after Christmas	1/3
Baptism of the Lord Sunday	1/10
Ordination of Officers (1/10-17)	1/17
Renewing Hope (with Baptism)	1/24
Pastoral Leadership	1/31
Communion Sunday	2/7
Acts 16:5 Initiative of Love	2/14
1st Sunday in Lent	2/21
2nd Sunday in Lent	2/28

## Pastoral Prospective on [prayersForMelissa.com](http://prayersForMelissa.com)

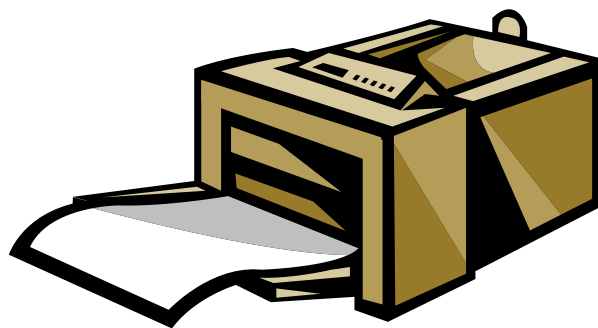
As I write this, I am realizing that today is my father’s birthday. My Dad would have been 89 years old on this day. A day in which I find myself facing one of, if not the most challenging trials of my life, ever.

Seven weeks ago today, my beloved, sweet Melissa was recovering from acute renal failure and we were being given a preliminary diagnosis of possible ovarian cancer in her abdominal area. Six weeks ago today, her oncologist informed us that this was instead not only stomach cancer, but an unusual, very rare and highly aggressive form already in its late, advanced stage four. As you may imagine, this was devastating news to be delivered, especially for our family with six children, the eldest in college and the youngest age six.

In our prayer life together and individually through the past several weeks, we have been blessed with ears to hear in the spirit some timely words of encouragement listed in the upper left column. You need

## A Festival of Preaching for Filling Us Forward in Faith

As we find ourselves now in a strange, yet undiscovered territory never ever before traversed by such as us, I am reminded of a conversation I had a year ago with pastor Art in which we discussed the idea of having a festival of preaching—a series of sermons delivered by various persons of and/



News that is pressing... of which we’re pressed to hear... and then, News that is reforming, restoring, renewing News for the new year

to know that Melissa and I have gone from praying, asking God to please heal Melissa, to thanking God for the healing we are now already witnessing in Melissa.

At our most recent follow-up visit two weeks ago with her oncologist, we were amazed, realizing how remarkable it is that she is still with us. A week ago, she had energy enough to attend part of our daughter Hannah’s swim meet competition, rooting for the Trojan team to “win one for Momma ‘E’!!!! :)”

No matter what the outcome, our prayers continue to be that God be glorified and faith be increased among us. I remain steadfast in this new season of faith to minister to my wife and family, first and foremost to the glory of God. My family and I thank God for you, each one and all for the love, care, support and compassion we share and experience together as we forge ahead with the challenges of this new year in the Lord Who heals us of all diseases. To God alone be all the glory. In Christ, *Pastor Rex*

or for the congregation—to celebrate a diversity of styles of proclaiming the Word of God and for the equipping of the saints to exercise their gifts of preaching to the glory of God. While I wouldn’t have thought of or chosen the circumstances and occasion for this to occur, it is both fitting and necessary in God’s

sovereign providence for us to welcome many preachers to the pulpit for the next several weeks. Please join me in receiving Todd Myers, Dr. Raymond Williams as Director of the Wabash Pastoral Leadership, and Rev. Katherine Rieder among others on following Sundays as the Lord blesses and keeps us filled...