

Connections

Connecting With Our People!

FEBRUARY/MARCH, 2011

Jim Long

Drummer and Maintenance Man
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STRATFORD HEIGHTS CHURCH OF GOD

Jim Long

Maintenance Man, Media Ministry & Drummer



A lot of our people work quietly in the background, just "doing what needs to be done." They believe in Matthew chapter six where it says that what you do in secret God will reward you openly. Such is Jim

Long.

Jim was born in Middletown to Baptist parents and was baptized at the age of seven in the church. As life happens, his family quit going to church and he backslid at the age of twelve.

During this time, Jim got interested in music, "From the high chair," he says. He played for the first time in the fifth grade and went on into Carlisle High School playing in the marching band, jazz band and concert band. He won several awards and summer scholarships, including the John Phillips Sousa Award. Jim then went on to attend Eastern Kentucky University as a music major. He met Kathy there and they got married.

A few years later Jim was laid-off from his job and did not know what he was going to do. He went back to his roots and started crying out to God for help. Well, God answered and the company called him back to work. This is when Jim got saved all over again. He started reading the Bible and went on a search to find a church that taught the truth. One day on his search he went to South Middletown Assemblies of God and the Daycare woman there told him of Harlan Park Church of God, "That is a place where the Spirit of God is really moving." It was there that he found, under Lane Sargent what he was looking for. He visited the church during the week and met Judy Trent and Carolyn Phillips. Looking around the church he stopped in Ron Medley's classroom to pray, it was there that Scott Murner came in and talked to him and that was all it took. That was 1987.

Jim started out almost immediately, substitute teaching on Wednesday nights. This later evolved into teaching Junior High on Sunday morning and a College Career Class as well. He asked Ken Jennings if he could play the drums one Sunday morning and Ken was agreeable, but

Jim only played once. Later, under Garry Turner he really got involved, starting with an Easter Cantata.

He has taught many of our youth how to play the drums. He helped out in the Food Pantry, going out to pick up food at Shared Harvest. He has driven the bus for the elderly and also to many youth activities.

Jim has been the maintenance man at Harlan Park as well as Stratford Heights. He has had many an opportunity to minister to the youth and be ministered to at Retreats and at many Winterfests. Brother Watkins asked him to speak at other churches as an ambassador for us, talking about our youth ministry and tell what we are doing. He has spoke in Oasis while working with Pastor Ray. Whenever someone would ask him to help he just did, "doing what needs to be done." Early on he ran the Home Cell Life Group ministry with Karlene Bailey. He has also served for many years in the Pastor's Council and been the Chair for twelve years.

He says, "It has been an honor serving on the council." Jim heart's desire is to serve the Lord and his Stratford Heights family. "It has been seven years since Kathy's death and I couldn't have done it without my Stratford Heights family." Jim says. One day he was having a particularly bad day and suddenly the Lord told him, "It is time to stop grieving." He agreed with that and told the Lord that he realized that all that was behind him. The Lord then dropped into his spirit, "She is not behind you, but ahead of you, offering prayers for you and your family." This experience really turned his life around, and helped him to continue on.

His message is, "Seek the Lord and serve Him, love and praise Him while you can because time is short."

A great message from someone who live what he says. One of our many people who work in the background doing what needs to be done. Serving the Lord is many things, come and join us in doing what needs to be done.

A Testimony From Jon and Anne Williman



ANNE

I would like to thank all those who sent me a card, visited me in the hospital, brought meals when I got home, and especially those who prayed for me this fall. I needed those prayers!

I was born with cystic fibrosis, an inherited fatal lung disease. One of the worst things that can happen to someone with this disease is pneumonia, that is exactly what happened to me in September. I had gone into the hospital for surgery to remove a tumor that they thought might be cancerous. Thankfully, it proved not to be, but the day after my surgery I was transferred to ICU with pneumonia.

None of the drugs they tried worked on me and I kept getting sicker and sicker. The machines they had me on were not helping enough, and I knew the next step was to go on a ventilator, which I did not want to do. People with CF often cannot get off these machines and I did not want to spend the rest of my life with a machine breathing for me.

Then one day the Lord spoke to my heart. "Will you follow Me all the way to the ventilator?" What could I say to my Lord but "Yes Lord". I still hoped I would not have to go on one.

A short time later, the doctor told me I had a choice to make. "You can go on a ventilator," she said, "or you will die." I remembered my commitment to Christ to follow Him and I said yes to the ventilator.

Even though I was on the ventilator, my condition continued to go down. All the drugs they tried to

fight the pneumonia with I was resistant to. I was getting closer and closer to death as there was nothing more they could do for me after the ventilator.

It was Sunday and my husband came to church. During the service he prayed in frustration about my condition. He received a word for God that the battle was spiritual and he needed to pray against the Cystic Fibrosis, not the pneumonia. The CF was the strong man with the pneumonia hiding behind it. He went forward for prayer and when he shared the word he had received, Sister Liz confirmed it and they prayed.

That afternoon when Jon visited me in the hospital, I coughed the entire time, which is very scary when you are on a ventilator because it feels like you can't breath. I had never coughed like that before. As Jon drove home that night, he realized that all the coughing was God taking care of the pneumonia.

In just a couple of days, I was off the ventilator and starting my very slow path to recovery. Even

though I ended up in ICU for thirty days and an additional thirty days in the hospital my life was spared by God's mercy.

Two things I learned from this. First, that life is fragile. In early September I was living a normal life; a few weeks later, I was dying. That is why it is so important to have your life committed to Christ and be living for Him, you never know when it is going to end. Be ready and stop putting it off!

Secondly, I found that throughout the whole ordeal, Jesus held my hand. I knew He promised to never leave me, but now I know it even deeper in my heart. I had to walk this road alone, but Jesus was with me the whole time. He never left me and I felt His presence holding my hand.

I feel that someone needs to know this! That this person is going through the toughest time of your life not alone. I believe that is one of the reasons God spared my life so that I could tell that person, **"You are not alone, God will hold your hand too."**

JON

My wife Anne was in ICU at the hospital with pneumonia, on a ventilator and going downhill. Everything the doctors tried to do to stop the pneumonia was not working. She was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis at the age of five and pneumonia and a ventilator were two of the worst things she can face. With CF pneumonia can easily be fatal and one you are on a ventilator it is sometimes impossible to get off it. I was horrified with the possibility of my wife spending the rest of her life, bedridden on a ventilator.

As I was in prayer, the Lord spoke to me in a very direct way and lovingly said, "I assume by your actions, thoughts and the way you are speaking, that the ventilator is much stronger and more powerful that I am."

I stopped immediately and said, "No Jesus is Lord of all." Then God spoke to me and said, "You are

living in total fear of the ventilator and it is beginning to direct your life." At first in my pride I wanted to argue with Him and tell Him it wasn't true, but in my heart I knew He was right. I thought of praying to break the fear, but did not want to say a prayer from my head and not my heart as I had done before with other matters. For my wife's sake, I knew this was too important not to get it done quickly and powerfully.

I made a request to the Lord that I had never done before, that was that I wanted to be able to see the fear leave and be defeated. I knew seeing is not faith and I didn't know if I would get rebuked for my lack of faith, but a flood of relief and joy overwhelmed me as He gently said, "No problem."

As I continued to pray, I began to see a replay of the football movie "The Blind Side" unfolding in my mind. The scene was when a main character, an offensive lineman, pushed a defensive lineman

downfield forty yards and shoved him off the field and over a fence. Only this time the characters were changed. Jesus was the offensive lineman and my fear was the defensive lineman. I watched as my fear trash talked non-stop, but Jesus stood there on my behalf and said nothing. Then as they got into position to start the play, I heard the Lord on the sidelines say in a commanding voice, "Go!" I then watched as Jesus not only drove my fear downfield and over the fence as I assumed He would, but He continued and drove it completely out of the stadium through a large opening at the end of the field.

At that point, I knew I was free of the fear of the ventilator and thanked Him for caring about me that much. I continued to pray for the next few days but was confused because I did not know how to pray for Anne. Should I pray for wisdom for the doctors to find the right solution or pray against the pneumonia? Neither approach seemed to be working. The only thing the Lord would say is, "I have your back."

At church on Sunday morning I was in prayer with a very heavy heart and not really getting into the praise and worship. While I was pleading with the Lord for help, I heard a voice coming in so loud

and clear that I turned around to see if someone was speaking behind me. But everyone was just singing.

I then heard the Lord say, "Pray against the Cystic Fibrosis and not the pneumonia, because the CF is the strong man and the pneumonia is being shielded by it." I began to pray against the CF and went forward for prayer during the service. They agreed with me in the power of the Lord and I could feel it.

That afternoon I went to see Anne in the hospital. She was coughing non-stop, which she had never done before and it was very difficult and scary for her to be coughing on the ventilator.

On the way home, I was troubled by this. It was then that I realized that the Lord had her cough to get rid of the pneumonia. Two days later she was off the ventilator and on the way to recovery.

WHAT A MIGHTY GOD WE SERVE!!!

What a wonderful testimony of God's love and mercy and healing power at work and also, Anne is now driving again. From death's door to back driving when God does things he does it all the way!

55 AND ALIVE

**IS HAVING A LUNCHEON AT THE
WELLINGTON GRILL**

**2450 DAYTON XENIA ROAD
BEAVERCREEK, OHIO**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH AT
12:30PM**



**11th Hour Prayer Watch....
Join the Battle**

**Friday, February 18th @ 7:00PM thru
Saturday, February 19th @ 7:00PM**

**Experience 24 hours
of the reading of God's Word while, Praying,
Fasting and giving of yourself to complete the 3 fold cord.**

**Join Stratford Heights on the front lines to win Middletown for Christ!
The time is NOW!**

**There will be a Praise and Worship Service following, starting
Saturday at 7pm.**

God is calling us to arise!

He wants to take you from where you are
and transform you into what He intends for
you to become.

WOMENS ENCOUNTER RETREAT

March 18 -20

Contact Shannon Bartlett for more information at
513-571-5800.

Or see Missy Anderson.



ENCOUNTER

Matt. 5:15

**...to proclaim
freedom for the
captives and
release from
darkness the
prisoners.
ISAIAH 61:1**



Torchbearers

Our Encounters are a weekend retreat to set
aside time to have a personal life changing
experience with God. To see men set free of
bondages and addictions so they can live
victoriously in Christ.

MENS ENCOUNTER RETREAT

March 25-27

See Dave Anderson or Christian Mays for information.



CALENDAR

FEBRUARY, 2011

TUESDAY FEB. 1

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY FEB. 2

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY FEB. 3

- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY FEB. 4

- nothing scheduled

SATURDAY FEB. 5

- Oasis Banquet--6pm

SUNDAY FEB. 6

- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Grace & Gratitude--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY FEB. 7

- nothing scheduled

TUESDAY FEB. 8

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY FEB. 9

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY FEB. 10

- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY FEB. 11

- nothing scheduled

SATURDAY FEB. 12

- Fusion Band Rehearsal--10:15am

SUNDAY FEB. 13

- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- CE Board mtg--4:45pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY FEB. 14

- MOPS--9:30pm
- 24 To Double--7pm
- Mary's Circle--7pm
- Pastor's Council--7pm

TUESDAY FEB. 15

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY FEB. 16

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY FEB. 17

- 55 & Alive Luncheon--12pm
- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY FEB. 18

- Oasis Sr. High Event--5pm
- Eleventh Hour Prayer Event begins--7pm

SATURDAY FEB. 19

- Choir Fellowship at Golden Corral--10:30am
- Jail Ministry--3:30pm
- Eleventh Hour Pray Event Praise & Worship--7pm

SUNDAY FEB. 20

- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY FEB. 21

- MOPS--009:30am
- 24 to Double--7pm
- Sonshine Circle--7pm
- Women's Encounter Meeting--7pm

TUESDAY FEB. 22

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY FEB. 23

- TOPS--9:30am
- Pizza Delivery Time--2pm
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY FEB. 24

- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY FEB. 25

- nothing scheduled

SATURDAY FEB. 26

- Picture Board--9am

SUNDAY FEB. 27

- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY FEB. 28

- nothing scheduled



CALENDAR

MARCH, 2011

TUESDAY MAR. 1

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY MAR. 2

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY MAR. 3

- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY MAR. 4

- nothing scheduled

SATURDAY MAR. 5

- Dream Team Meeting--9am

SUNDAY MAR. 6

- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- The Gathering Outreach--10am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Grace & Gratitude--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY MAR. 7

- nothing scheduled

TUESDAY MAR. 8

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY MAR. 9

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY MAR. 10

- *WINTERFEST BEGINS*
- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY MAR. 11

- *WINTERFEST*

SATURDAY MAR. 12

• *WINTERFEST*

- Easter Eggs--9am
- Fusion Band Rehearsal--10:15am

SUNDAY MAR. 13

• *WINTERFEST*

- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- CE Board mtg--4:45pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY MAR. 14

- 24 To Double--7pm
- Mary's Circle--7pm
- Pastor's Council--7pm

TUESDAY MAR. 15

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY MAR. 16

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY MAR. 17

- Women's Encounter Meeting--7pm
- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY MAR. 18

- *WOMENS ENCOUNTER BEGINS*
- Missionettes Drama Practice--5pm

SATURDAY MAR. 19

- *WOMEN'S ENCOUNTER*
- Jail Ministry--3:30pm

SUNDAY MAR. 20

- *WOMEN'S ENCOUNTER*
- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- CE Board Meeting--4:45pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm

- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY MAR. 21

- MOPS--09:30am
- 24 to Double--7pm

TUESDAY MAR. 22

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY MAR. 23

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY MAR. 24

- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm

FRIDAY MAR. 25

- *MEN'S ENCOUNTER BEGINS*

SATURDAY MAR. 26

- *MEN'S ENCOUNTER*
- Naomi Circle--8:30am

SUNDAY MAR. 27

- *MEN'S ENCOUNTER*
- Early Service--8:30am
- The House--9:30am
- Morning Service--10:45am
- Altered Rehearsal--12:30pm
- Paradise Players Rehearsal--3:00pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--4:45pm
- Evening Service--6pm

MONDAY MAR. 28

- nothing scheduled

TUESDAY MAR. 29

- Oasis--6:30pm
- Voices of Psalm95--6:30pm
- Encounter Class--7pm

WEDNESDAY MAR. 30

- TOPS--9:30am
- First Place 4 Health--6:15pm
- Exaltation Rehearsal--6:30pm
- Missionettes/Royal Rangers--7pm
- Family Life Night--7:30pm

THURSDAY MAR. 31

- Esperanza--7pm
- Fusion--7:30pm



4419 Nelson Road
Middletown, Ohio 45042
(513) 423-0797
fax (513) 423-4219



Pastor Ray Phillips

www.shcog.com

MISSION STATEMENT

We will passionately embrace God, connect with one another and pursue discipleship into all the world through Jesus Christ!

The Church of God of Middletown, Ohio
Stratford Heights Church of God
4419 Nelson Road
Middletown, Ohio 45042

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP

SUNDAY

Early Morning Worship-8:30 am
The House-9:30 am
Morning Worship-10:45 am
Evening Worship-6:00 pm

TUESDAY

Oasis-6:30 pm
Psalms 95 Rehearsal-6:30 pm

WEDNESDAY

Missionettes & Royal Rangers-7:00 pm
Family Life Night-7:30 pm

THURSDAY

Esperanza Hispanic Service-7:00 pm
Fusion Service-7:30 pm

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