



Mission Possible Words of Hope

It is our great pleasure to prepare Mission Possible each month. We appreciate your cards, letters, and support. We know the transition to Text Behind has not been great. We too miss the expediency of the Postal Service and the delivery of physical mail. No worries, we will continue to get this newsletter out for as long as we are able. We've gone to black and white to save money, and it might be tardy from time to time due to website challenges, but we are committed to getting it out. We are going forward. Just as all of you are. Forward in the strength, peace and presence of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

In Exodus 14:13-16 NRSV we read that "Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward."

This is one of my life verses. It reminds me to put aside my fears, anxiety, and doubt and to keep it moving. A Coach I revere once told us, "You've got an excuse if you want it. Or you can get up off the couch and do something about it." When I worry too much this verse helps me to remember not to discount GOD. No matter my problem, GOD is bigger than it.

Years ago, during the height of the Cold War, in 1980, USA hockey, composed mainly of college players, was preparing to face the Soviet Hockey Team in the medal round. During the same time the Soviet army was invading satellite countries, their hockey team was dominating international play. They won the Olympic gold medal in 64', 68', 72', and 76'.

USA Coach Herb Brooks' speech inspired his team to pull off the greatest upset in sports history: "Great moments are born from great opportunity, and that's what you have here tonight, boys. That's what

you've earned here tonight. One game; if we played them ten times, they might win nine. But not this game, not tonight... Tonight we stay with them, and we shut them down because we can. Tonight, we are the greatest hockey team in the world... Their time is done. It's over. I'm sick and tired of hearing about what a great hockey team the Soviets have... This is your time. Now go out there and take it!"

In other words, "get up off the couch and do something about it." How do we do this. By staying close to GOD and remembering GOD's promises. If we stick with God, he will prepare us for the challenges ahead and when everyone else is panicking, He will give us a confidence and assurance that can only come from Him. Moses and the Israelites remembered. So can we.

Obstacles can block our vision of success. We can get up off the couch or bunk and overcome our circumstances by focusing our eyes on HIM. We can choose to encourage each other and step out in faith. With all of Moses' credibility and leadership on the line, the people saw Moses go stand on a rock and hold his hands up over the water. This must have seemed an irrational move to the people and even to Moses. Yet, Moses had Faith that God would show up, and He did! The Red Sea parted, the Israelites crossed, and the Egyptian army perished.

Let's Pray: Father God, amid the storms of our lives may Your Holy Spirit guide us and help us to remember and remind each other that the trials of life shrink when compared to You, our loving and powerful Lord.

Blessings,

Tom

Praise and Prayer



Mighty Father, we are weak and You are strong. We praise Your Holy Name and thank You for all blessings great and small. You are the truth and light that is our guide through all things!

We call to You, Dear Lord, to bring peace and healing to all who are yearning spiritually, grieving losses, hurting with sickness, and scared with loneliness. Your faithful servant, John, reminds us of the reassuring words from Your Son, Jesus, in the Gospel according to John 16:33, *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."* Help us trust in You and seek You in all that we do.

We especially pray for the healing of those who mourn the passing of Jan, the choir director at St. Luke's church. We pray for all the members of this church who are grieving losses and who are demonstrating courage and patience as they face changes in the future. May God's grace and mercy be with you.

We pray for God's peace and healing for Lorrie as she receives treatment

for cancer and rheumatoid arthritis.

We pray for the family and friends of Kendall Bost, a local Concord teacher and athlete who lost his life in an auto accident recently. May God's comfort sustain you.

We also lift in prayer Vivian and the dedicated ones who supply and support this newsletter for the purpose of sharing Your Good News and Your promise of everlasting life through Christ our Savior.

We pray for all who are isolated from others and struggle to connect out of fear or shame. May God guide you as written in Deuteronomy 31:8, "Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; He will neither fail you nor abandon you."

We pray for an end to violence, hunger, homelessness, poverty, and war. May we live as God intended and as Christ taught us, *"I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."* John 13:34-35

We praise those who offer help and resources to those in need through personal compassion and through nonprofit organizations. We give thanks for those who work to keep peace and order in places where chaos abounds. We give thanks for educators who share their knowledge and wisdom. We appreciate and lift in prayer those who assist in the aftermath of disasters and destruction. We praise leaders who act with integrity, empathy, morals, lawfulness, and understanding when guiding others.

We praise You Lord for the beauty in our world and we are grateful for the gifts of air, water, land, and all natural resources. Help us work toward the protection and preservation of these precious resources.

In Your Holy Name, we pray. Amen

If you have a praise or prayer report, please write to

Mission Possible
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Charlotte, NC 28220



What is Mardi Gras?

Mardi Gras is a tradition that dates back thousands of years to pagan celebrations of spring and fertility, including the raucous Roman festivals of Saturnalia and Lupercalia.

When Christianity arrived in Rome, religious leaders decided to incorporate these popular local traditions into the new faith, an easier task than abolishing them altogether. As a result, the excess and debauchery of the Mardi Gras season became a prelude to Lent, the 40 days of fasting and penance between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday.

Along with Christianity, Mardi Gras spread from Rome to other European countries, including France, Germany, Spain and England.

What Does Mardi Gras Mean?

Mardi is the French word for Tuesday, and *gras* means "fat." In France, the day before Ash Wednesday came to be known as Mardi Gras, or "Fat Tuesday."

Traditionally, in the days leading up to Lent, merrymakers would binge on all the rich, fatty foods—meat, eggs, milk, lard and cheese—that remained in their homes, in anticipation of several weeks of eating only fish and different types of fasting.

The word *carnival*, another common name for the pre-Lenten festivities, also derives from this feasting tradition: in Medieval Latin, *carnelevarium* means to take away or remove meat, from the Latin *carnem* for meat.

New Orleans Mardi Gras

The first American Mardi Gras took place on March 3, 1699, when French explorers Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Sieur de Bienville landed near present-day New Orleans, Louisiana. They held a small celebration and dubbed their landing spot Point du Mardi Gras.

In the decades that followed, New Orleans and other French settlements began marking the holiday with street parties, masked balls and lavish dinners. When the Spanish took control of New Orleans, however, they abolished these rowdy rituals, and the bans remained in force until Louisiana became a U.S. state in 1812.

On Mardi Gras in 1827, a group of

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ALPHA AND OMEGA
BREAD OF LIFE
GOOD SHEPHERD
HIGH PRIEST
IMMANUEL
KING OF KINGS
LAMB OF GOD
LIGHT OF THE WORLD

SAVIOR
SON OF GOD
SON OF MAN
THE LIFE
THE TRUE VINE
THE TRUTH
THE WAY
THE WORD



2/5 Edward L.
2/7 J. Knox
2/9 Avery O.
2/10 Gregory Y.
2/12 Charles A.
2/13 Donald B.
2/16 Randy V.
Del Ray W.
2/17 Tony J.
M. Borst
2/18 Rodney L.
2/20 James M.
2/23 Jerome C.
Myles W.
2/25 Anthony B.
2/28 Douglas H.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Romans 15:13

students donned colorful costumes and danced through the streets of New Orleans, emulating the revelry they’d observed while visiting Paris. Ten years later, the first recorded New Orleans Mardi Gras parade took place, a tradition that continues to this day.

In 1857, a secret society of New Orleans businessmen called the Mistick Krewe of Comus organized a torch-lit Mardi Gras procession with marching bands and rolling floats, setting the tone for future public celebrations in the city.

Since then, krewes have remained a fixture of the Carnival scene throughout Louisiana. Other lasting customs include throwing beads and other trinkets, wearing masks, decorating floats and eating King Cake.

Did you know? Rex, one of the oldest Mardi Gras krewes, has been participating in parades since 1872 and established purple, gold and green as the iconic Mardi Gras colors.

Louisiana is the only state in which Mardi Gras is a legal holiday. However, elaborate carnival festivities draw crowds in other parts of the United States during the Mardi Gras season as well, including Alabama and Mississippi. Each region has its own events and traditions.

Mardi Gras Around the World

Across the globe, pre-Lenten festivals continue to take place in many countries with significant Roman Catholic populations.

Brazil’s weeklong Carnival festivities feature a vibrant amalgam of European, African and native traditions. In Canada, Quebec City hosts the giant Quebec Winter Carnival. In Italy, tourists flock to Venice’s Carnevale, which dates back to the 13th century and is famous for its masquerade balls.

Known as Karneval, Fastnacht or Fasching, the German celebration includes parades, costume balls and a tradition that empowers women to cut off men’s ties. For Denmark’s Fastelavn, children dress up and gather candy in a similar manner to Halloween—although the parallel ends when they ritually flog their parents on Easter Sunday morning.

Mission Possible
Words of Hope Ministries






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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				I Deuteronomy 6:4-5	I Cor. 2:9  GROUNDHOG DAY	Psalm 59:16
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Psalm 18:1-2	Psalm 33:4-5	Proverbs 21:21	Psalm 97:10	Matthew 5:43-45	2 Thess. 1:3	I Cor. 13:1-3
11	12	13	 14	15	16	17
 I Cor 13:4-5	I Cor. 13:6-7	John 3:16	 ASH WEDNESDAY	I John 4:10	I John 3:11	Romans 8:35
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Romans 8:38-39	I John 4:11-12 PRESIDENT'S DAY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Proverbs 17:9	Romans 13:9-10	I John 4:18	Proverbs 14:22	Jeremiah 29: 11-13
25	26	27	28	29		
Matthew 22: 37-39	I John 4:9	I John 3:18	2 Timothy 1:7	Psalm 120:1		