



August 2007

“When you lack hope, you feel powerless to change anything and certain that nothing will change. When you have hope, you are able to see the beauty and potential of every circumstance.”

- Erwin Raphael McManus, “Soul Cravings”

To the Living Hope Church Family:

In September 2006, a young man entered the doors of Crean Hall at St. Francis Hospital, unaware of what blessings, challenges, and circumstances he would be called to embrace. In August 2007, this man finds himself in a similar situation, with one difference – hope for the impossible! I am this man and I have been transformed by the love of Christ through you, the Living Hope church family.

How could one encapsulate a year journey with God and His people? From corporate services to small group discussions in Hope Group, I learned the meaning of humility and brokenness before God. In leading the worship ministry, I witnessed members of a team that were about God’s agenda, not their own. In working with the middle school youth, I recognized the potential of future leaders and world shakers in their own right. In collaborating with the Trenton Peace Movement, I witnessed first-hand the heart of gang members who desire to see peace in action, not simply in words and speeches. If I continue, I could write books on my relationships, experiences and lessons learned.

It has been an honor to serve as your pastoral intern at Living Hope Church. I count it a privilege to meet men, women and children that desire to seek the Lord amidst all of their burdens, challenges and life situations. Each one of you, in your unique way, has strengthened and encouraged my heart to move forward in God and with God. Upon prayer and reflection, I am convinced that the Lord used this internship and ministry experience for His glory alone. It is due to God’s glory that we have the privilege of assembling every Sunday, fellowshiping, learning about Him every day of the week and maturing in the ways of Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 10:31, the Apostle Paul addresses believers about their freedom in God, especially regarding the eating of foods and community. The Word of God says, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it *all* for the glory of God” (emphasis mine). Whether it was a conversation, a greeting, or an act of service, it was for His glory. When I reflect on the relationships built at Living Hope Church, I witness the sheer glory and majesty of our Sovereign God.

In giving Him due honor, never lose hope. For the hope in Christ Jesus can bring a fresh perspective, deliverance, and eternal freedom. You are called Living Hope Church for a reason. I experienced living, breathing hope from your presence alone. I am deeply appreciative of each one of you sharing your lives, your dreams and hopes as we journeyed together for the past year. However, I am excited about the miracles, deliverances, and breakthroughs that you will encounter today and in the near future.

I express my gratitude to the pastors, Julio and Lucy Guzman and their family, missionaries Donnie and Blythe Mason, the Living Hope worship team, the youth and congregation of Living Hope. I also extend my thanks to the churches who have co-labored with Living Hope: Princeton Alliance Church, Edinburg Road Chapel, the C&MA Metro District, and the consortium of churches in the Concerned Pastors and Ministers of Trenton and Vicinity. Furthermore, I appreciate the contributions of the Trenton Peace Movement and its members, the Emily Fisher Charter School, and WIMG 1300 AM for the opportunity to spread the message of Christ on the radio. Above all, I thank the Almighty God for His guidance and direction in all things.

I conclude with the words in the book of Hebrews: “May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Hebrews 13:20-21)

For His Glory,

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