



# NEW LIFE NEWS

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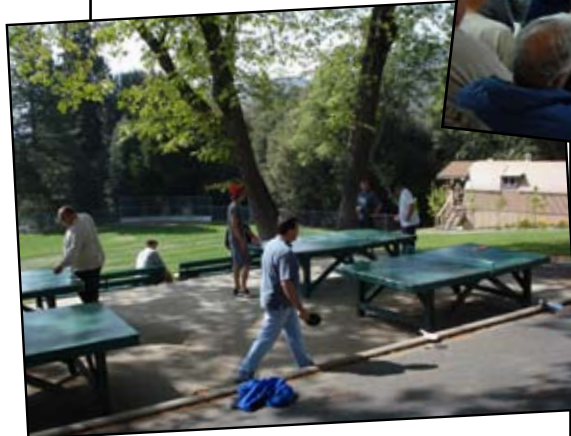
## MEN'S RETREAT

by Andy Craven Photos by John Stasukevich

It is 11:30 a.m. on Friday, May 9. I am carefully packing my backpack. (I was not careful enough.) I want to be sure not to forget anything. (I forgot a pillow and a towel.) I am clearly preoccupied, and wonder why. I ask myself, "Why am I going on this retreat? I would rather be home with my family." I love being with my family. I love all the sounds and smells of home. So why, I wonder, am I leaving them, if only for a night? After much deliberation, I realize I am doing this because by taking this time with the brethren, I will be a better husband and father. By going to this place on Mt. Palomar, I will be strengthened and challenged to be the husband and father that my family needs me to be. And the retreat did just that.

As we sat around the tables with old and new friends, enjoying the food and learning more about one another, I looked around and saw smiling faces. I heard conversations about families and hobbies, theology and personal histories. Amidst all the noise, I felt completely at peace and thought... "heaven is better than this." Amazing.

After dinner we all found our way to the meeting room. John Watt, Jason Neely, Brad Beyenhof, and Reuben Settergren led us in praising our Creator with hymns and praise songs that humbled us and exalted our Father. There is nothing like the full-throated praising of the Lord by a room full of brothers. It is an indelible memory, and again I thought... "I can't believe it, but heaven is even better than this."



*God has grand designs for us, and our personal salvation is merely the starting point of those divine plans.*

The next morning was filled with more praising and teaching. As Dr. Douglas Webster taught through Ephesians, we were challenged to see the "largeness of the worldview God has called us to." God has grand designs for us, and our personal salvation is merely the starting point of those divine plans. Our conversion brings us not only into a cherished relationship with the Lord, but also into a treasured bond with our fellow saints. We have been given an inheritance manifested in relationships within the body of Christ. What a

blessing it was to hear Dr. Webster's teaching.

We finished the day with food, fellowship, fun, and more food. You'll have to ask others about hiking, baseball and ping pong. I only managed a few hours sleep without a pillow and desperately needed an afternoon nap. Traveling down the mountain, seeing God's glorious creation, thinking about the singing, teaching and fellowship, and knowing I would see my family again soon, I smiled and thought... "praise God that heaven is even better than this." ❧

## INDIA, PART 2

by Sherrene David

The Bangalore air was muggy as I stepped off the plane. The streets were dirty, the traffic congested, and the pollution thick. With my fair skin and American accent, I stuck out like a true foreigner and was quickly accosted by people begging for money. The day was already uncomfortable, and we had barely left the airport.

We went to my grandfather's house the same day. He didn't know we were coming and after explaining who we were, his eyes filled with tears. My mom told him that she loved him and forgave him for all that happened in the past because God has forgiven us of so much. His eyes welled up again, and he silently nodded. He asked about her other siblings, and in an emotional turn he asked how her father was. Confused, my mom told him that he was her father, slowly realizing that he had forgotten who we were. It was hard to leave that evening.

The next week was filled with adventure. We stayed on coffee plantations in Chickmagalur for a few days, where monkeys threw figs at us while we were walking through the jungle. We were also able to fly to New Delhi to see the Taj Mahal. Eventually we returned to Bangalore to spend more time with family and do the sightseeing that really mattered. I saw the church my parents were married in, the house my dad was born in, my mom's high school, and a variety of other places I have grown up hearing about. It was incredible.

The entire atmosphere of India is starkly different from America. Instead of a Starbucks on every corner, there are temples and mosques. Cows are literally everywhere, wandering on the roads and even into houses. People are dedicated to feeding good, prepared food to the cows every morning, while their neighbors are starving next door.



*The seeds of the gospel were planted, and we are trusting God's sovereignty with his heart.*

And it is all shockingly justified by the complicated system of Hinduism. It made me grateful that my family comes from the small percentage in India that is Christian.

We visited my grandfather again, and this time he remembered who we were. My mom wrapped a present for his birthday, and his child-like excitement was heartwarming. I gave him a Bible, and he told me he would read it. We left with emotional goodbyes and some much needed reconciliation. The seeds of the gospel were planted, and we are trusting God's

sovereignty with his heart. Although the reconciliation of my family was the expected epic ending of the trip, it was, to my surprise, just the beginning of something much greater. ☪

*to be continued..*

*I sit beside the fire and think of all that I have seen, of meadow-flowers and butterflies in summers that have been.*

—Bilbo Baggins (aka J.R.R. Tolkien),  
*The Fellowship of the Ring*

## THE MAMMINAS

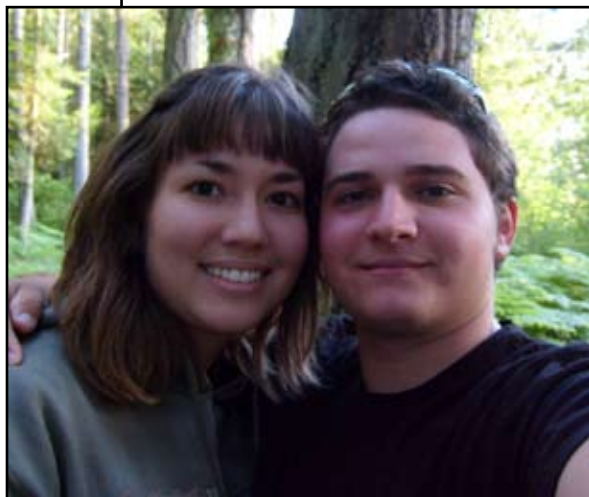
By Lisa Mammina

Greetings from the Mammina household! Dominic and I are so grateful to be part of such a warm, Bible centered reformed church family. So that you can get to know us better, here is a brief history of Dominic and myself.

I met Dominic in 2002 through a home school group we both attended. I spent most of my senior year of high school nursing a secret crush on the cute Italian sophomore sitting next to me in economics class. We lost touch the summer after my graduation, and our friendship might have ended there had it not been for God leading my parents, Dave and Connie Kocher, out of the charismatic tradition and into the reformed faith.

Dominic and I resumed our friendship in 2003 when my parents, younger sister Julie, and I began attending New Life, where Dominic and his father, Philip, had become members two years prior. At the Verdicks' soup kitchen in early 2004 Dominic and I made the decision to embark on the relationship of a lifetime.

After high school I enrolled in a small private college with the goal of becoming an interior designer. However, I soon realized that I could best glorify God by devoting my life to serving a husband and raising covenant children. This attitude garnered me much mockery at the nearly all female art school. Despite my distaste for the "progressive" atmosphere, I persevered with my education and received my bachelor's degree that December. Much to the chagrin of the faculty, I chose to skip the graduation ceremony and attended a lovely dinner with our "Circle of Eight" that night instead.



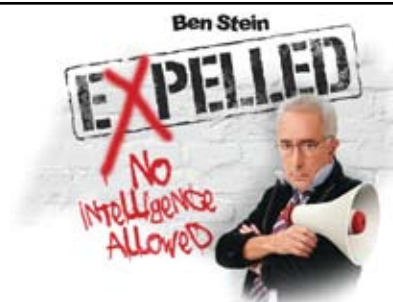
After earning his associate degree at 17, Dominic planned on becoming a Spanish teacher. However, in early 2005, his dad got him a job on a demolition/renovation project, which inspired him to pursue a career in the trades. Our goal of marriage seemed more attainable if he enrolled in the local electrical

union, instead of becoming a teacher saddled with thousands of dollars of student load debt.

Dominic and I were married in June of 2007 and are enjoying married life immensely! I relish my role as a wife and part-time janitor at New Life. Dominic is currently in his third year of the electrician apprenticeship program, and is working with Dynalectric on the construction of a new portion of Grossmont Hospital. We look forward to buying our own home, and raising our future children surrounded by our family at New Life. ☛

*There's only one sure way to tell the weeds from the vegetables. If you see anything growing, pull it up. If it grows again, it was a weed.*

—Corey Ford, in *Look*



## MOVIE REVIEW

By Marilyn Saleny

It doesn't matter whether you believe in the theory of evolution or not, we are all affected by it in some way. More and more scientists, teachers and mathematicians are discovering on their own that our universe is far too complex to have just happened with a "big bang." There must be some intelligent Designer who put the universe together.

What happens to those professionals who hold the view of intelligent design? Why are they opposing Darwin's theory? Just how are we affected by Darwin's theory? How has Darwin's theory affected history and how can it affect our future? Ben Stein's film "Expelled, No Intelligence Allowed," which is rated PG, answers these questions and many more. It is not in all theaters, but is certainly worth going out of your way to see. ☛

*Time in the summer does not seem to move; instead, time collects, or perhaps it might be better said to pool. One of the spiritual lessons of summer is just that: to allow time to pool. To halt in our headlong rush. To be fully in a particular time. To stop long enough to see what lies around us, rather than to be always merely glimpsing.*

—Gary D. Schmidt, Susan M. Felch, editors, *Summer: A Spiritual Biography of the Season*

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. —Galatians 5:22-23

WHAT ARE THEY UP TO NOW?

## THE HOLMLUNDS

by Dave Holmlund

Greetings New Life family! Although there must be many new faces in the congregation who did not overlap with me between 1999 and 2002, it is fun while writing this to think of the many people who blessed me with their friendships (and prayers and hospitality, etc., etc.) during my years as an intern in La Mesa. I can picture many of you reading this in your homes.

The transition from being a bachelor seminary intern to being a married man was made easy by the grace and godliness of my bride Elizabeth and the outpouring of support from the people of New Life who played a role in our wedding in July of 2002. After that we only had a few weeks left in the San Diego area before we left for Grand Rapids, MI, where I began my doctoral studies in theology and Elizabeth eventually did a program in Old Testament. Although we liked Michigan (for example, we joined Ben and Becca Johnson's former church, Harvest OPC), we were open to going wherever the Lord led when it came time to look for a call to the ministry.

That call came early last year when I became a church planter with the OPC in the town of Dover, New Hampshire. Although Dover is in the opposite corner of the country



compared with San Diego, it's much older (settled in 1623) and generally colder (after four months the snow is just now melting). I've found that a southern Californian can enjoy many things about New England. The people are thoughtful and independent, and the most exciting thing is that many believers are starved for solid reformed doctrine after the decline of the Congregational churches here. Pilgrim Presbyterian Church has about ten families, and we have a godly confidence that the Lord can and will bring many more. We've even had some opportunities to do outreach at the nearby University of New Hampshire.

The Holmlund family has seen growth too. The Lord gave us Zechariah in 2005 while we were living in Germany. Ezra came in April of 2007, just as we were moving to NH. Between parenting and ministry, things are a little wild here, but the Lord has been gracious throughout. Whenever any of you are ready for a break from the monotony of life in warm San Diego, we'd love to have some visitors from New Life.

Your friends with fond memories and grateful hearts,  
Dave and Elizabeth Holmlund. 🍷

### FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO AT WWW.NEWLIFELAMESA.ORG

1. Download a sermon.
2. Check the church calendar.
3. Get information on Small Groups.
4. Get missions information.
5. Ask the pastor a question.

Be sure to visit [www.newlifelamesa.org](http://www.newlifelamesa.org).



### ATTENTION JR. HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOLERS!



Join us Wednesdays this summer for fellowship and Bible Study. We're working our way through the Shorter Catechism, and there is plenty of great discussion, music, games and food, too. Meet in the fellowship hall at 7 p.m. We are finished at 8:30 p.m. See you there.

**BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!** The last Wednesday of July and August, we'll get together at the Phillips' house for volleyball, swimming and lots more. This brainchild of Joseph Randall, New Life intern, is sure to be a summer highlight, so plan on coming and plan on bringing a friend. Details forthcoming. Questions? Email Court and Tiffany Patton at [Ekktrina@hotmail.com](mailto:Ekktrina@hotmail.com) 🍷

P.S. If you are not on the youth group email list, but would like to be, see Tessa Tidwell, our Chief Communications Officer!