

I press on toward the  
goal for the prize of  
the upward call of God  
in Christ Jesus.  
PHILIPPIANS 3:14



From the desk  
of the  
President:  
Joe Croft

We are now on the last section of Paul's "one thing I do" based on Philippians 3:13-14. Just remember, if someone as admired and respected as Paul told us what made him the best Christian he possibly could be, it would be very wise for us to heed and follow. We have covered "forgetting what lies behind" that taught us to not let our past or our burdens weigh us down in our pursuit to know Jesus. Then, in the last newsletter, we discussed "reaching forward to what lies ahead." The three areas of concern in that section were for us to know and study God's word, to have and hone our ministry, and to pray so that the Gospel would be spread more rapidly. As you may remember, prayer removes obstacles that Satan uses to slow or even stop our work in growing the Kingdom. Now, I want to talk about Paul's last thought in Philippians 3:14. He writes, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." I love this verse.

The word "press" that Paul uses in this sentence in the Greek, "dioko," means to strain, to have an intensity of purpose and focus to reach the goal. As we know from studying the life of Paul, he not only spoke those words, he lived those words. He knew that at the finish line, there would be a prize for achieving his goal. That prize as Revelation 11:12 says, "Come up here." We also are familiar with the passage of Matthew 25:23 which says, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Can we even imagine our heavenly Father calling us home and having open, loving arms for our life of obedience for Him? Wow!

We need to keep that picture in our minds daily to focus on the goal and the prize at hand. To say it another way, everything Paul did was in preparation for his next and eternal life with Jesus.

There's a story of a shipwrecked sailor who when he came to, found himself being carried by natives. They placed him on a throne, put a crown on his head, and named him their king. He enjoyed all the so-called earthly pleasures, -wine, women, and song- but one day a month into his reign, he wondered and asked what happened to all the other kings before him. He was astonished to find out that all the kings ruled for one year and at the end of one year they were banished to a lonely, barren island where they were left to die. So, knowing he had only 11 months remaining, he decided to prepare for the remainder of his life; he had workers build boats to travel to the island. He had builders go and build him a mansion, and he had farmers go over and plant crops. So, at the end of the year, instead of being exiled to a barren island, he went to a land of paradise; a mansion awaited him. This sailor prepared himself for the remainder of his days. Paul, once he became a Christian, planned for the remainder of his days. Are we preparing for the remainder of our days? We need to be more like Paul who prepared, strained, and pressed on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. We know this life is like a blink of an eye compared to eternity. Therefore, let us get busy and plan for our eternal home in Paradise with Jesus!

-Be Blessed-  
Joe Croft

He is  
Risen





From the desk of the  
Executive Director of  
Heartbeat of  
Columbiana County:  
Tere Rufener

Many of us from an early age felt drawn to something bigger than ourselves. We participated in church activities, perhaps mission trips, or simply helping those around us. I knew I had a heart for helping others. However, it wasn't until later in life that I realized how God was calling me, which inspired me to prepare more intentionally for His work. This realization led me to a few places such as Heartbeat of Columbiana County, and Northeast Ohio Bible College.

My faith journey began when I was a young adult filled with moments of both doubt and discovery. Like many people, I faced personal struggles--times when I questioned my purpose and wondered where God was leading me. Abandonment was the root, the core to my decision-making. But, it was during the challenging seasons that I felt His presence the most. The trials I faced became turning points, moments that deepened my reliance on God's grace and direction. I held tight to Romans 8:28, "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." I am forever grateful for God's grace and mercy!

One of my greatest blessings is serving at Heartbeat of Columbiana County. Helping at Heartbeat has given me a deeper appreciation for the sanctity of life and the importance of compassionate ministry. We, through Heartbeat, encounter women who are scared, overwhelmed, and uncertain about their future. Many feel alone, with no one to whom they can turn. But it is in these moments that the love of Christ shines the brightest. Through listening, praying, and offering practical support, lives have been transformed. Women who once considered abortion have chosen life for their babies, finding hope and strength in the process. At our pregnancy help center, women are empowered to find truth and clarity to make choices which with they can live. It's a beautiful view of God's grace at work, and I am honored to be a part of it. Through the years, I have learned the power of simply being present and the challenge of speaking truth in love. Sometimes, it's not about having the perfect words to say; it's about showing up, listening with compassion, and letting people know they're not alone. I've learned that

ministry isn't always the grand gestures--it's often found in quiet moments of compassion, prayer, and genuine connection.

My studies at Northeast Ohio Bible College (NEOBC) have expanded my understanding of God's Word and His love. Each class has helped me see Scripture in a new light, making connections I had never noticed before. The courses are rigorous, but they also are deeply enriching.

One of the aspects I appreciate most about the college is the close-knit environment. I have taken classes with Don Cooper; I commend him for his wealth of Biblical knowledge and his deep investment in the spiritual growth of students. He takes time to mentor, answer questions, and encourage students. This support system is invaluable to those who need guidance and reassurance.

Northeast Ohio Bible College also provides support to Heartbeat of Columbiana County by offering space to us for our business office, Cornerstone Parenting Program, and Baby Boutique. A significant event for Heartbeat is our annual Vision Banquet, held every April. The banquet is a time for us to share our mission, celebrate the lives impacted by our ministry, and invite the community to partner with us in supporting women and families in need. Vision Banquets have been hosted on-site at NEOBC for the past few years. This has been tremendous, as it allows us to gather in a welcoming, faith-filled environment without the financial burden of renting a separate venue.

Each year, the Vision Banquet brings together supporters and those whose lives have been touched by Heartbeat's mission. It's an event filled with powerful testimonies, heartfelt worship, and a renewed commitment to serving women facing unplanned pregnancies.

This relationship with the college not only has allowed us to continue our mission, it is a reminder of God's provision and how the body of Christ works together to make a lasting impact. I am grateful for the partnership with NEOBC.

As you know, the journey with Christ is not always easy, but it is always worth it. May I encourage you to step out and increase your treasure of Biblical understanding. God is equipping you. My prayer is that we continue to share the hope and healing that Christ offers in the truth of His word to those who need it most.

**"Study to show thyself approved unto God... Rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15**



**30<sup>th</sup>**

**ANNIVERSARY OF  
NORTHEAST OHIO BIBLE COLLEGE IS  
COMING UP...**

**WHEN: SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2025  
TIME: 1 - 3 PM**

**WHERE: WELLSVILLE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

**WHAT: A CELEBRATION OF 30 YEARS IN OPERATION WITH A  
PERFORMANCE BY THE DAVE MELTON FAMILY**

**AS WELL AS A COMEDIAN: JODY FULLER**

**A COOKIE RECEPTION TO FOLLOW THE CELEBRATION  
COST FREE. HOWEVER, A DONATION BOX FOR THE COLLEGE  
WILL BE SET UP (WE ARE A NON-PROFIT AND OUR FUNDING  
COMES FROM GENEROUS DONORS LIKE YOU)**

**WHO'S INVITED: YOU AND YOU AND YOU...**

**RSVP: WILL BE VERY HELPFUL TO US. PLEASE CONTACT THE  
COLLEGE AT (330) 382 1151 BY MARCH 24 TO GIVE US A HEAD  
COUNT FOR YOUR FAMILY/CHURCH**

**The address for this event is:**

**Wellsville First Christian Church**

**"The Center"**

**305 9th St. Wellsville, OH 43968**

**For parking information visit their website at**

**<https://www.wellsvillefirst.com/>**

**Scroll down and click on the link for parking  
or click on the QR code here.**



**For fall semester 2025 we will be adding two new  
professors.**

**Jason Carnley will be teaching on campus at the  
East Liverpool campus, and**

**Frank Horn will be teaching online.**

**Stay tuned to the summer newsletter for more  
details.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT  
HEARTBEAT OF COLUMBIANA COUNTY  
VISIT THEIR WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.HEARTBEATCC.COM](http://WWW.HEARTBEATCC.COM)**

**Their Vision Banquet for this year will be  
held on April 10 & 11 here at the college  
location.**

**For more information or to register:  
contact them at  
phone [330.386.3999](tel:330.386.3999) or  
email [teresa@heartbeatcc.com](mailto:teresa@heartbeatcc.com)**

**WE WILL BE HAVING A SUMMER CLASS.  
WATCH OUR WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.NEOBC.ORG](http://WWW.NEOBC.ORG)  
AS WELL AS FACEBOOK FOR CLASS  
INFORMATION AND START DATE**

**Are you interested in taking a class here  
at NEOBC?**

**We currently offer morning classes and  
online classes.**

**If we were to offer evening class(es)  
would you be interested in coming?**

**Please let us know by calling us or  
e-mailing us.**



**WE'RE LETTING THE...**



**WE HAVE SOME EXCITING NEWS TO SHARE...  
OUR VERY OWN DON COOPER HAS WRITTEN A BOOK THAT  
WILL BE RELEASED SOON. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR IT.  
ITS TITLE IS:**

**Where Is The Help For Hurt When I Need It?  
WE'LL SHARE MORE DETAILS AS THE RELEASE DATE GETS  
CLOSER. SHARE THE GREAT NEWS WITH YOUR FAMILY,  
FRIENDS, AND CHURCHES!**

**"Study to show thyself approved unto God... Rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15**

# The Resurrection

CHANGES EVERYTHING

Luke 24:36-53

UP FROM THE  
GRAVE HE  
**AROSE**  
*celebrate the resurrection*

THE RESURRECTION  
IS THE GREATEST  
EVENT IN HUMAN  
HISTORY,  
BRINGING LIFE  
AND HOPE TO ALL.

PITTSBURGH PA

5 MAR 2025 PM 1 L



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