

Take a Risk!

A monthly publication from Risk Takers *for Christ*

In this issue...

Listening to the Father's Heart

A devotional
message from
Os Hillman.

- page 2

A Tribute to Keith McCrea

- page 3

Living H2O Initiative Photos

- page 4

Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.



Iceberg, Dead Ahead

by Rev. Dale M. Glading, President

Watching the primary season come to an early and abrupt end, it occurred to me that America is now on a collision course with November 5th, similar to the fate experienced by the RMS Titanic on April 15, 1912. Captain Edward Smith was alerted to the huge iceberg dead ahead, but it was too late to avoid it entirely. And so, despite First Officer William Murdoch's order to reverse engines and steer hard to port, the iceberg ripped a series of gaping holes in the starboard side of the luxury liner below the water line... and it sank to the bottom of the near-frozen North Atlantic in less than three hours, claiming roughly 1,500 lives.



Once thought "unsinkable," the Titanic now lies more than 12,000 feet below the surface in a lifeless nautical graveyard. The only question that remains is will America suffer a similar fate?

In our national pride, we view the United States as a virtually indestructible ship of state and yet, signs of moral and financial decay have become increasingly apparent over the past 60 years. We have gone from the Greatest Generation, which survived the Great Depression and defeated two totalitarian regimes during World War II, to a country adrift and taking on water below decks faster than we can bail it out.

Exhibit A is the redefining of marriage, a

once sacrosanct institution that has served as the bedrock of every civilized nation since the beginning of time. It is now permissible for adults of the same sex to exchange wedding vows, often in a church that sanctions their union. How can legalized bigamy, polygamy, and the marriage between an adult and a "consenting" minor be far behind?

Meanwhile, out-of-wedlock birth, which is the leading predictor of future incarceration and lifelong poverty, is skyrocketing, especially in minority communities where 73% of children are born to unwed mothers. Unfazed, Uncle Sam rewards each new birth with additional welfare benefits, providing that a financially supportive father is not in the picture or the house.

Exhibit B is the endless and unabated slaughter of tens of millions of pre-born babies, most of them sacrificed on the altar of selfishness and personal convenience. Despite *Roe v. Wade* being mercifully overturned by the *Dobbs* decision in 2022, the number of abortions in America has actually increased year over year as per the Guttmacher Institute's findings below.

"In the first 10 months of 2023, there were an estimated 878,000 abortions in the formal US health care system, 94% as many abortions as were provided in 2020 (930,000). Approximately 88,000 abortions have been provided in the formal health care system per month so far in 2023, so with two months of

continued on page 2

Iceberg, Dead Ahead

continued from page 1

data yet to be published, it is very likely that the total number of abortions provided in 2023 will substantially exceed 2020 numbers. The actual increase in abortions is likely even larger than these numbers suggest because these counts do not include abortions occurring outside the formal health care system, which are likely to have increased substantially following the implementation of state bans and restrictions.”

With Republicans losing elections in swing states and swing districts over “reproductive rights,” more accurately referred to as murder-for-hire, I fear it is only a matter of time before the GOP’s knees start to buckle on the issue.

Exhibit C is the redefining of gender, championed by Progressive science-deniers who refuse to accept that there are only two sexes, determined prior to birth and based on something as simple, elementary, and medically-demonstrable as XX and XY chromosomes. Believing the lie, parents are subjecting their gender-confused children to abusive and irreversible hormone replacement therapy and gender reassignment surgery, otherwise known as bodily mutilation. And if the parents won’t oblige, courts and school systems are all too ready and willing to step in and usurp parental rights.

Exhibit D is \$34 trillion in federal debt. Read that again, folks: \$34 trillion of debt, which equates to almost \$100,000 per U.S. citizen and is dragging down our economy like cement boots on a drowning man. Not only is our national debt spiraling out-of-control as spineless

politicians in Washington refuse to rein in deficit spending, but it has left America vulnerable to our enemies, many of whom have purchased our debt and could demand immediate repayment. If they do, our economy will start circling the drain like a tub full of dirty bathwater.

Exhibit E is the debacle at our southern border, where millions - perhaps tens of millions - of immigrants have crossed illegally into our country. Instead of being turned away or apprehended and deported, they have been largely welcomed by bleeding-heart liberals who shower them with free benefits not available to legal immigrants or native-born citizens... just as long as the aforementioned illegals don’t move in next door.

The endless waves of illegal immigrants once came from Mexico as well as South and Central America. Now, more and more of them are arriving from Africa and Asia, including an alarming number of young men from the People’s Republic of China, leaving one to believe that a large-scale terrorist attack is not a question of if, but when.

I hate to sound like a doomsdayer, because until recently I considered myself an eternal, even hopeless optimist. However, the storm clouds gathering over the Potomac provide ample warning that a cataclysmic deluge of Noah-like proportions is coming that only a merciful, benevolent, and long-suffering God can avert.

My fellow Americans, we need to turn back to God. Today, not tomorrow, and not next week. We are living on borrowed time and God’s patience will someday soon be exhausted.

Listening to the Father’s Heart

by Os Hillman

Son, each of my sons and daughters must experience their own personal cross in order to fulfill their destiny; there has to be a death before life can really be experienced. Betrayal is the tool that has often been a catalyst for this process. Even if you voluntarily go to the cross, it usually requires a third person to complete the process. For Jesus, it was Judas; for David, it was Absalom; for Joseph, it was his brothers. You must learn to wash the feet of the Judas’ in your life. That is how you learn true forgiveness. That is how death works life in you.

“For it is not an enemy who reproaches me; then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me; then I could hide. But it was you, a man my equal, my companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in the throng.” Psalms 55:12-14

“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.” Luke 6:27-29

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A Tribute to Keith McCrea

by Rev. Dale M. Glading, President

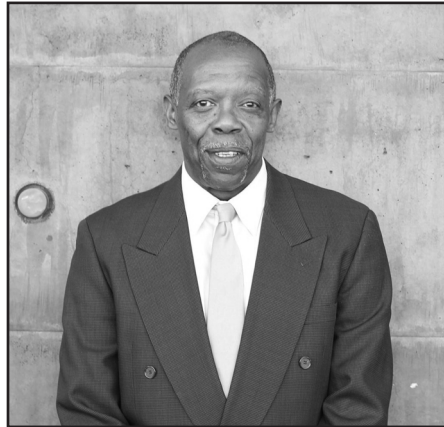
(Rev. Keith McCrea, our Director of Inmate Services, went home to be with the Lord last week. The following is a tribute to a very good and godly man who impacted countless lives, especially those behind bars.)

I first met Keith about 20 years ago when he interviewed for a position with my previous ministry, The Saints Prison Ministry. God had used me to found The Saints in 1987, using the international language of sports as an evangelistic tool to reach inmates for Christ. After our very first prison visit during which eight inmates trusted Jesus as their Savior, we realized that we had an obligation to disciple our new brothers in Christ. And so, we started a Bible correspondence school, a pen pal ministry, and a birthday card program.

Our Bible correspondence school grew to include 2,000 inmates studying God's Word in both English and Spanish, and our birthday card ministry saw us sending hand-signed birthday cards to 24,000 inmates every year. Likewise, our pen pal program had hundreds of participants over the years.

Eventually, God led us to start an aftercare program, ministering to prisoners from six months pre-release to six months post-release. Based on a recommendation from a prison chaplain or social worker, we would help an inmate design a "home plan" so that when he got out, he had a job and a place to live. Our Lives in Transition program also ran a food bank and a free clothing store, and provided transportation such as bus passes, addiction counseling, and spiritual mentoring.

Of the 200 men who went through our program over a four-year span, only 10 of them violated their paroles or committed a new crime. That 5 percent recidivism rate compared very favorably to the national average of 70 percent... and there were two main reasons for our success. The first was Jesus, because the #1 thing we did was point these men to the Lover and Redeemer of their soul. The second reason why our Lives in Transition program was such a success was Keith McCrea.



As an ex-offender himself, Keith knew exactly what these men were going through and the challenges they faced when they got out of prison. He had literally walked in their shoes and so, he knew exactly what they needed. Some men responded well to a loving arm wrapped around their shoulder and others required a less delicate, and more forceful approach. Either way, Keith knew the best way to ensure that these men didn't fall back into the same criminal behaviors.

Keith had a number of lines that he used to share with the men in our program. First, he told them that they had to abandon their "stinkin' thinking" and adopt the mind of Christ. Second, he always knew when an ex-offender was trying to pull the wool over his eyes, "What are you doing trying to scam me like that? I invented that scam," he would say, as if they owed him a commission or a royalty payment for using the same con job.

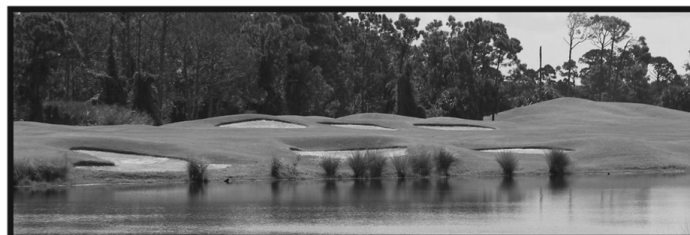
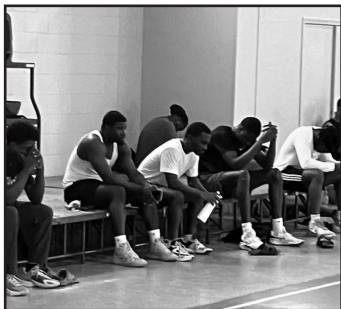
Third, and most importantly, Keith would describe an almost impossible situation that he or someone else was facing before adding with a broad smile, "And then Jesus showed up!"

When I relocated to Florida to launch Risk Takers for Christ and we started sending softball, basketball, and powerlifting teams into prisons throughout the Southeast, I reached out to Keith who was living in Arizona at the time to see if he would be willing to help us disciple the men we encountered. As you can imagine, he jumped at the chance... first as a volunteer and later as a part-time employee. From his home in Phoenix, he would write long letters to inmates in Florida, Kentucky, and South Carolina answering their questions and mentoring them by mail.

About a year ago, Keith suffered a massive heart attack that left him on a ventilator. Mercifully, God took him home last week, ending his suffering for all eternity. I can just imagine Keith telling his version of his homegoing... "And then Jesus showed up!"

I love you, Keith, and look forward to seeing you again in Glory.

Living H2O Initiative Photos



7th Annual Olde Hickory Golf Classic

Saturday, April 20, 2024
Sandridge Golf Club, Vero Beach FL
8 a.m. shotgun start
(Registration, Continental Breakfast &
Driving Range Open at 7 a.m.)

Step back in time for a 1920's era golf tournament featuring Bobby Jones replica golf balls and hickory-shafted clubs. Four-man scramble format including greens fees, cart, unlimited range balls, continental breakfast, buffet lunch, putting contest, prizes, and silent auction. Proceeds benefit Risk Takers for Christ's outreach to at-risk youth in our community.

Participants will be permitted to use their own clubs and balls except for the famed "Hickory Hole," a Par-3 where all golfers will be required to use 1920's era replica balls and a brassie, a mashie, or a niblick for their tee shot! Hickory-shafted putters and replica balls will also be supplied for the putting contest, and other hickory-shafted clubs will be on display and available for purchase as part of the silent auction.

Tournament price is \$100 per golfer / \$360 per foursome. Deadline to register is Friday, April 12th.

To register your foursome (or individual golfers), mail names and full payment to Risk Takers for Christ, PO Box 651421, Vero Beach FL 32965-1421. You can also register online at www.risktakersforchrist.org and pay with PayPal or by credit card.

For sponsorship opportunities, please email dale@risktakersforchrist.org or call 772.539.1826.

We Have a QR Code

Everyone can use a spiritual lift in the morning, especially on weekdays when work, school, and other demands vie for our time and attention... and sap our strength. Risk Takers for Christ wants to help by offering a free weekday devotional message that will challenge and encourage you in your daily walk.



Point your smart-
phone camera at
this QR code to
receive an uplift-
ing devotional
message each
weekday.



Midway Bible Fellowship

Proclaiming God's Truth & Demonstrating His Love

9:30 a.m. - Coffee & donuts

10 a.m. - Worship service

1950 S US Hwy 1, Vero Beach FL

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