1st **quarter Newsletter**

**What we do at Not Alone Blind Internet Ministry:**

* Provide a weekly devotional podcast message called “You’re Not Alone””
* Provide a Bible study podcast called “Room 4216”
* Serve the 52 Outreach Centers with a newsletter and leadership support
* Provide pastoral care and counseling that comes about from the podcasts
* Raise financial support and awareness for Not Alone Blind Internet Ministry

**Devotional thought from Pastor Dave:**

A Miracle—Often Overlooked

You may have noticed that the readings in church on the Sunday before Lent are always about Jesus going up a mountain with three disciples; being transfigured, speaking with Moses and Elijah, a bright cloud covering them, and a voice from heaven proclaiming Jesus to be God’s son.

What would you have said if you were there?

Peter offered to make shelters for the two heavenly beings and for Jesus.

I think I would have said: “Well it figures. I guess you’re tired of us sinners. That’s why you uncovered yourself to show us who you really are. So Jesus, are you now going back to heaven with your two friends?”

It makes sense, you know.

Jesus had taught on earth; did miraculous things; healed people. And what did people do? Many rejected him. Others argued with him. Still others tried to changed him.

Jesus was Fed up? Who wouldn’t be. So Jesus went up the mountain, tossed off the earthly form, and was going home? Right? well ... NOT JESUS!

One of the most amazing miracles that Jesus did, I think, was to take on human form again and come down the mountain. Jesus came down the mountain!

Jesus came down the mountain, into the valley, a valley of sinful people, with lots of problems. He came down into the valley of the shadow of death. He came down the mountain to go up another mountain where he would die on a cross. Jesus rose from the dead, lives and moves among us, to be with us, Immanuel “God with us”.

In rest of the newsletter I hope you can glimpse how Jesus is with people, in and through this ministry, to help, bless, forgive, and save.

Pastor Dave

The Ministry Is Growing

We are able to track how many times the podcasts are downloaded and listened to. For the eight week period of December and January,

 “Room 4216” podcast had 357 Downloads. The High week for downloads during that time was January 5th with 103 downloads.

 “Youre not alone” podcast had 1684 Downloads. The High week for downloads during that time was December 16 with 223 downloads.

**Are you on Facebook?**

If you go to the Facebook website and type in “Dave Andrus” you will find podcasts of “You’re Not Alone” and “Room 4216.” If you ask to be a “friend” you can get the info and listen or share with others.

**Room 4216 Bible Study Comments:**

We hear from listeners what they would like and need we then try to respond with this in mind. One topic was: “How do I deal with death and loss?” Death and loss happens all the time to everyone. People who are blind however, have very little support or help. This was a helpful study as this is an example from many emails.

 “Thanks to you and Cecilia for this podcast and for being so real about this topic.”

And another:

 “I love all the podcasts in this series, but this one is especially moving. Pastor Dave, your clear, specific and compassionate counsel is, I think, of great help to anyone who has suffered a loss. Cecilia, thank you for having the courage to expose your grief, in its various forms, to all of us. Both of you are a real blessing.

With Love,”

**Blind Outreach Center Update:**

* I send out a news letter to 40 of the Outreach centers each month. In it there will be a devotion and then other items that can be used at a gathering. Gina, in Covington, Washington asked if I might put one of the articles into Braille from the newsletter for her to use at her gathering. I did and she responded:.

“Hi pastor Dave. I received the braille copy of the article about the English language as it relates to blindness. It was funnier reading it in braille than listening to it on an email.

  Take care, Gina.”

Pastoral Care

 As I started this ministry I knew in my heart that as the ministry grew so would the need for pastoral care. This is true in any local congregation. When God’s Word is shared it touches hearts and changes lives. And so it has gone via the podcast sent out.

 I cannot be specific as I will not break confidentiality. In general, however, here are some items that have come up. All of these I have responded to, either on phone or in person. Some took one hours, others dozen of hours.

 1 Logistically, how might a person do specific items within a worship service when blind.

 2 A pastor from an outreach center requests I speak to a person who comes, who has not accepted his blindness; family help; or his place in God’s kingdom.

 3 An outreach center leader who is blind asked if I might speak to a man who became blind when shot 5 times; who is angry at life and God because of his present circumstances.

 4 a blind person who is dyeing of cancer; who does not have a church; who doesn’t know Jesus very well; who asked why this might be happening; who needs to get ready for death.

Please consider partnering with “Not Alone” Blind Internet Ministry to provide hope and restore comfort to those who are blind. If you would like to support this ministry, please donate via PayPal at the website link below or send a check to:

Blind Ministry

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

2141 E. John Avenue

St. Louis, Missouri 63107

<http://not-alone.net>