
March 2023 Newsletter



Why Are You Weeping?

*“Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).” *John 20:1-17, ESV**

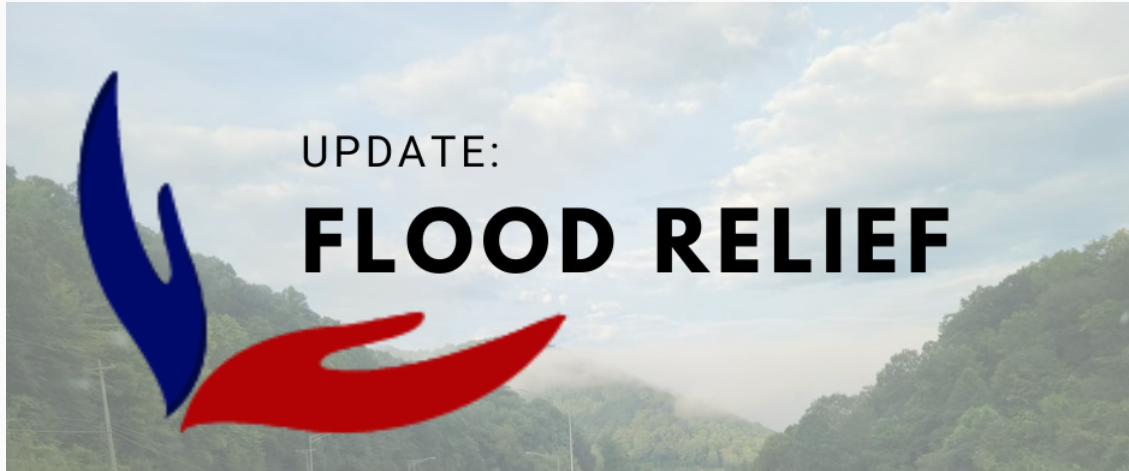
As we approach Resurrection Sunday, I am reminded of a sermon preached by Pastor Michael Marcum at a local church. He taught on John 20:1-17, especially as related from Mary's perspective. The chapter begins in the dark; Mary is visiting Jesus' tomb in the early hours of the morning before the sun had risen. Perhaps it felt more like nighttime to her, as her night was likely sleepless with grief and confusion. Her pain was compounded when she arrived to find the tomb empty, as when two angels asked her why she was weeping, she replied with fear that someone had taken her son's body away. Then in a dramatic, powerful moment, Jesus appears with her and asks her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" However, even as Mary looked upon Jesus, she supposed he was the gardener and asked him where her son's body could be. It was not until Jesus called her name that she realized whom she was speaking to!

Pastor Michael emphasized the question that was posed twice to Mary: in the King James Version, "Why weepest thou?" His sermon was of hope, not given on Resurrection Sunday but as an encouragement to the church in the summer of 2022 after the devastating flooding in Kentucky. He posed this question to the church as way of saying, take heart! Even amidst such suffering, Christ is present. Why weepest thou?

His message illuminated this passage for me in a new way, and I have been pondering it ever since. I have shared my reflections as a devotional with ARO teams in the past, but I think it's a timely topic for this newsletter as well. I believe it is applicable to us as believers in the sense that I know I have had moments such as Mary's. If Mary could miss seeing her own son, Jesus, and confuse him for the gardener amidst the noise of her own internalized struggles, how much more likely am I to miss seeing God at work for the noise in my own life! I can think of many examples in which I, blinded by my own preoccupations, grief, and self-centeredness, have looked at God's hand in my life straight on and still asked Him in prayer, "God, where are you?" It was not until He later revealed His plan or His grace to me by the power of the Holy Spirit that I realized I was, indeed, seeing His work the whole time. This Resurrection Sunday, it is my prayer that I would not be blind to God's work around me, that I could set aside all distractions, self-centered concerns, and burdens so that when God speaks, I will hear Him. If you are reading this devotional as friends of ARO, this is my prayer for you, too.

He is risen!

Salena Lehman,
ARO Academic Director and Campus Assistant

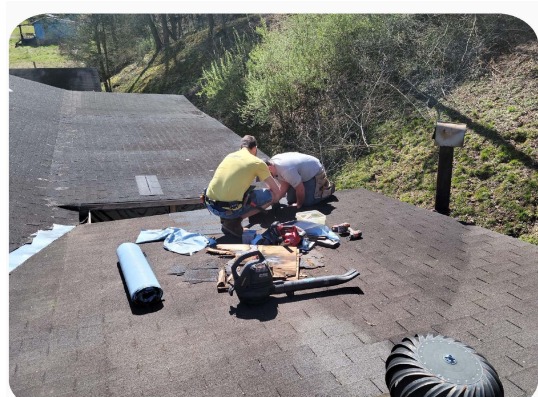


Through ARO and ARO's partner Love Your Neighbor, work is continuing to be done, but much work still needs to be completed, and will continue for quite some time. The need is still great for those to serve the people that were impacted by this flood. If you are interested in scheduling a team for 2023, please email:
dwayne.p.mills@gmail.com



High Pointe Nazarene-Byron Center, MI

ARO had some really challenging work projects this week and this team of men jumped right in and served in many areas this week. Different areas in which this team served was at our local Celebrate Recovery, unloaded a semi trailer loaded with much needed supplies for the ARO Thrift Store, and other projects across campus.





Tim & Kathy Mentink

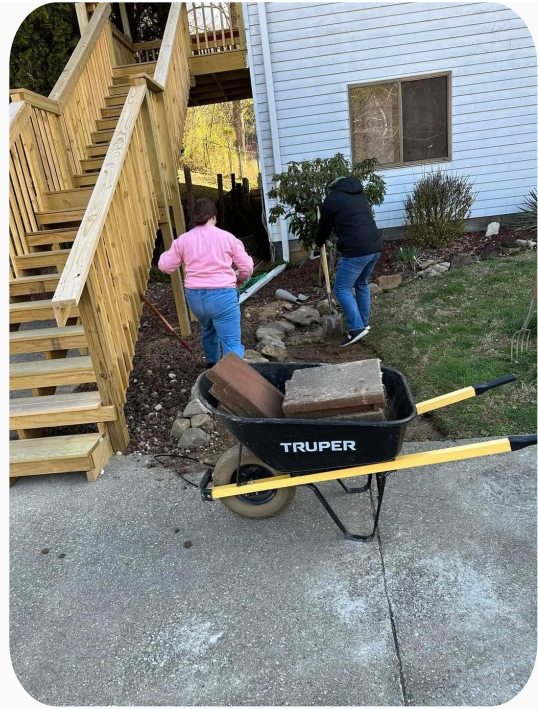
ARO is so thankful for each of their partners! And when you get partners for many years, that is a true blessing!! Tim & Kathy are just that, they come faithfully every year to love on the Martin County community. We are thankful for the work they do around campus and throughout our local community!



Olivet Nazarene University-Bourbonnais, IL & Dordt University-Sioux Center, IA

What a joyous group!!! 27 individuals blessed our community this week and they were busy serving in so many areas and loving our community. What a great time that was had by all. They served in the school systems, home repairs for local residents, projects on ARO's campus, Celebrate Recovery, and more. Please enjoy all the pictures from their time with us. We are beyond thankful for their investment into Martin County. Thank you to all our leaders, and a special shout out to Bob & Marilyn DeJong who faithfully serve with each of our teams!











ARO is a wonderful ministry, highly in touch with the needs of its community and with the value of those they minister to. Their kindness and well-thought-out structure immersed me in both the beauty and the struggles of Appalachia's unique culture. Through the experience, I came to see more clearly how God's hand can work through a variety of people in a variety of ways. Because of my time at ARO, I have become more wise, more compassionate, and more willing to trust in our amazing God.

--Laurel Wayland

ARO did an outstanding job of assigning projects based on the skills sets of those on our team. Their organization is so well-connected and well-respected in Martin County, so we were welcomed with open arms everywhere we went. The opportunity for our students to experience schools, addiction recovery centers, Celebrate Recovery, local businesses and more was truly a testament to the way ARO has invested in their community for decades.

Additionally, Bob and Marilyn DeJong made a lasting impression on our team. The way they came alongside our students and taught them to serve was commendable. They modeled a godly marriage, servant's hearts, a willingness to use whatever resources they have and a deep love for the people of Martin County.

-- Anne Whalen

The community built and shown through ARO was the most impactful community and I am so thankful I got to be even a little part of what they do. They showed our team what true followers of God look like along with the potential that each individual has to be the Lord's hands and feet to anyone around us.

--Amanda Listermann

Trips like this have a way of connecting you with God in a way that you otherwise wouldn't be able. Not only were we able to serve him on a daily basis, but we were also able to pursue him outside of our daily service projects, and really dive into the ways that God is speaking in all of our lives.

--Brock Kant



SPECIAL
ANNOUNCEMENTS

A graphic illustration of an orange passenger van driving on a winding road through a mountain range. The road is black with white dashed lines, curving through a blue mountain range. The van is orange with a white roof and is shown from a side profile. The background is a solid blue color.

**ARO IS IN NEED OF A
PASSENGER VAN! WILL
YOU HELP US?**

The logo for Appalachia Reach Out (ARO) features the letters 'ARO' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. To the left of the letters is a stylized graphic of a blue and red flame or wing. Below the letters, the text 'Appalachia Reach Out.' is written in a small, blue, sans-serif font, and 'Christ's Love in Action' is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below that.

Calling all ARO friends with vehicle connections: ARO is in need of a people mover! Thanks to those who gave during the end of the year fundraiser and the support of our board, we are ready to obtain a 15-passenger van to help shuttle work and witness teams, transport school age students to and from summer camps and ARO VBS's, and open the door to facilitate other programming options we'd like to develop. Would you help us get a great deal? If you have connections to a dealer who would want to give us a discount, a great quality used van your church no longer needs, or are aware of any upcoming grants for ministry vehicles, please let us know!



Our ARO Food Pantry has been busy continuing to help families in our community. We are blessed that we are able to serve the amount of families we have been able to help. We want to be able to continue to serve as many families that grace our doorsteps, but because of this increase, we are asking for donations to our food pantry. If you would like to donate the following items, it would be greatly appreciated:

- Family sized cereal
 - Family sized orange/apple juice
 - Cartons of shelf stable milk
 - Cans of soup
 - Chef Boyardee in cans
 - Pinto beans in bags
 - Peanut butter
 - Jelly
 - Spaghetti noodles
 - Jars of spaghetti sauce
 - hand held can opener's - please no electric can opener's
- *All items need to be within their expiration date*



If you are in the area where Dwayne will be speaking, or want to plan to hear about ARO and how God is moving in the mountains, we would love to see you on the road!

Dwayne's Upcoming Speaking Schedule:

Sunday, April 16 – Spiceland Nazarene – Spiceland, Indiana

Sunday, April 23 – Huntington Nazarene – Huntington, West Virginia

Sunday, May 14 – New Castle Southside Nazarene – New Castle, Indiana

Sunday, May 21 – Columbus First Nazarene – Columbus, Indiana



Nazarene Theological Seminary
Our Executive Director, Dwayne Mills, was the opening speaker for the Chic Shaver Center for Personal Evangelism Conference.



Living Well Nazarene Church–Salem, Virginia
What a blessing to be able to continue to share what God is doing in the mountains with our partners across the country!





Mount Vernon Nazarene University
Dwayne spoke at his alma mater Mount Vernon Nazarene University to speak to classes on Cultural Responsiveness in Health Care.



Broadway Nazarene - Parkersburg, West Virginia
ARO is always thankful to share about the mission of ARO!



Ironton, Nazarene-Ohio
It's always a blessing to be back with friends. We are thankful for the opportunity
to share with this congregation.



Thank you for partnering with ARO to be *Christ's Love in Action*. Thank you for your faithful prayers, service, giving, and trust in ARO! All that has been accomplished would not be possible without you! Will you continue to pray that God would continue to guide us?



Feel free to contact ARO's Executive Director, Dwayne Mills, at dwayne.p.mills@gmail.com



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Contact Us

Email:

arokentucky@gmail.com

Phone Number:

606-298-7470

Our mailing address is:

PO BOX 2147 Inez, KY 41224