

# WORDS FROM THE WILDERNESS

Establishing a Prayer Team To Share God's Heart to Reach the Lost

## Moving Day!

"Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." My friends and partners, it has been quite a week. But I am pleased to report, to the glory of God, that as I write this newsletter, Stephanie and I are successfully and safely moved to the gulf coast (well, successful assuming that the moving truck arrives with our stuff intact tomorrow!). The past week was a whirlwind, with an incredible, Spirit-blessed installation and commissioning service in Gulfport last Sunday, then back to Chelsea to load the moving truck and close on the house. And by Friday night, we were back to Mississippi, where First Presbyterian Biloxi is graciously allowing us to move into their manse (parsonage) until we find a house to buy in Ocean Springs.

It is a surreal thing to watch a crew of guys load everything you own in this world onto a truck, with box after box stacked on top of each other. As I watched this week, I was reminded of a similar day, just over twenty years ago, when our kids were babies and we were loading a truck to move to Tennessee for my first pastorate. On that day, we loaded and stuffed the truck full, closed the door, and locked it all inside. And then Stephanie, along with some of the girls from her youth ministry

discipleship group, loaded our babies into our car and drove to Tennessee ahead of me, leaving me to follow behind the next day in the truck with all of our belongings and possessions. And, as I stood next to the loaded down moving truck and watched Stephanie and the kids drive away, I heard what is as close to an audible voice from the Lord as I have ever heard in my life. He said, "Notice this. Don't miss it. Take it in: Everything you own is on this truck....and everything that is valuable just drove away."



## It is a lesson and a voice I need to remember and "hear" again as we start our time in Ocean Springs

Moving is stressful. Goodbyes are hard, and often filled with tears. That has been the case for me the past few weeks as we connected with friends and dear brothers from my time in Alabama. It is a hassle to sell our house, and now we have to find a new place to live — and in the meantime, despite FPC Biloxi's generosity, we are technically "homeless." Why do it?

The simple answer, being made abundantly clear all around us, is that God is so evident in this new call, already going ahead of us, arranging providential meetings and conversations, already making incredible connections as we begin to spend time with the lost on Government Street, or with Christians who may be part of the core group of this new gospel community we hope to plant... He is so at work, how can we not go?!

But there is more — Maybe it is good to sell a house every now and then. And to pack up all your belongings in a truck. And to watch it all drive away. Because it reminds us that this world is not our home. And that, because the gospel is true, we can all be “waiting for a better country” and trusting that God has “prepared for us a city.” (Hebrews 11:13-16)

That is why we are coming to Ocean Springs — First, because of a belief that God is so powerfully in this, and that He is going to do something in people’s lives that reverberates for eternity. It will not be easy (nothing of value is). There will be opposition (our enemy does not cede territory easily). But our God is on the move — and He is preparing a city. And so we pray that as part of that, we (together with you, our partners) will have the chance to see God take the stuff of this earth and move it into eternal fruit of heaven.

## So what happens now (in April)

This first month “on-site” is still going to have lots of busy coming and going:

- I am preaching three pre-Easter sermons this week at a church in Hattiesburg, and hoping to use that time toward connections, partner recruiting, and support raising for the work in Ocean Springs.
- Then I have the privilege to preach the Easter sermon at First Presbyterian Biloxi next Sunday.
- After that, I am going to be part of a church planting / renewal conference in Memphis, again seeking partners and support for what God is doing in Ocean Springs.
- And finally, after all of that, Stephanie and I are returning to Birmingham the last week of this month to load my mom up from her apartment and move her down to a senior living community on the coast. She is excited about the move, but it will be a lot of adjustments for her as well.
- All these are great opportunities — But wow, that’s a lot!



## So would you pray for us in the coming month:

- In the middle of all the scheduled things, and all the unboxing that is coming, we look forward to starting to meet with some families whom God may be calling to be part of the core group starting this new church. Please pray for us as we start to connect, get to know their stories, and share the story of the vision for what we pray God will do to reach lost people in Ocean Springs.
- I have already had some first forays into the art and music “Government Street” district in Ocean Springs. We were there last Saturday, and it was incredible how God was bringing conversations

with people to us. Please pray for me to be able to begin to make lasting connections that I can build on in coming months, toward building a “parish” of people whom I can evangelize and pastor toward the gospel.

- If you have not yet given, would you pray and consider giving toward the goal of launching us into ministry on the coast? We are so close to 100% support raised, and new partners and investors are joining our team. Please pray about how God would have you be a part of what He is doing.
- To give, use the QR code to the right, or visit <http://give.pcamna.org/to/1749>
- Checks can also be sent payable to "Mission to North America"  
PO Box 890233  
Charlotte, NC, 28289-0233.  
Please write “Mark Horn, Ocean Springs Church Plant” on the memo line.
- And finally, more information for all of this and updates on our Ocean Springs journey can be found at our website: [www.PlantHopeOS.org](http://www.PlantHopeOS.org)!



**Thank you, dear friends. We love you. And may God’s Spirit work in to you to take earthly things that are passing away and bless you with the fruit of grace and the gospel, for eternity!**

**A closing encouragement:**

It’s the two of us together and we’re putting on the mileage  
And we both feel lost  
But I remember what Susan said  
How love is found in the things we’ve given up,  
More than in the things that we’ve kept

And ain’t it funny what people say  
And ain’t it funny what people write  
And ain’t it funny how it hits you so hard  
In the middle of the night.

And if your home is just another place where you’re a stranger  
And far away is just somewhere you’ve never been  
I hope that you’ll remember,  
I was your friend

– Rich Mullins