



Dr. Lawrence Lacher



## A Tale of Two Caves

Over twenty years ago, when I had the opportunity to visit Israel, we visited the church in Bethlehem that is built over the place that is believed to have been the birthplace of Jesus. I was surprised to learn that the stable that Jesus was born in was not a wooden stable like we often imagine. It was not a barn, or a horse shed, or anything that we would normally refer to as a stable. The problem is, there is not much wood in the hills surrounding Jerusalem. Most of the area has been deforested by years of armed conflict. Most of the buildings, in fact, are made of stone. There are very few wooden structures at all. So, when Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem to discover that there was no place for them to stay, they were led to a cave, that was part of a cave system that housed animals, stored goods, and a crying newborn, who was wrapped in stable cloth and laid to rest in a feed trough that had been hollowed out of a large stone. From that cave in Bethlehem, came the One who would be the presence of God in the world, bring light, life, and renewal to broken people—salvation.

Lately, I have been reading The Passion Translation for my devotions. In Luke 23:50ff

*There was also a member of the Jewish council named Joseph, from the village of Ramah, a good hearted and honorable man who was eager for God’s kingdom to appear. He had strongly disagreed with the decision of the council to crucify Jesus. He came before Pilate and asked permission to take the body of Jesus for a proper burial, and Pilate granted his request. So he took the body from the cross, wrapped it in a winding sheet of linen, and placed it in a new, unused tomb chiseled out of solid rock.*

I don’t exactly know why it hit me in that moment, but it occurred to me that Jesus began his life in a cave and ended his life in a cave, because there was no other place for him. Simply due to the kindness of strangers, a place was made for Jesus to rest. Both places carved out of solid rock. And out of both caves, came God’s presence that was sent into the world to bring light, life, and renewal to broken people—salvation.

As I thought about these truths, I began to think of the word CAVE itself and how it stands for many of the gifts of God to the world.

C= He came, He comes, He conquers, Compassion, Care,... (What comes to your mind?)

A= Atonement, Authority, Answers, ... (What else comes to your mind?)

V= Victory, vicarious, Vine, Violence (there was violence that surrounded Jesus both times), ... (What else comes to your mind?)

E= Everlasting Life, Enters our life/heart; Jesus is the End of all things; He is our everything... (What else comes into your mind?)

There is one other cave that I want to talk about before I am done. It is found in Luke 23:23

*But the people and the high priests, shouting like a mob, screamed out at the top of their lungs, “No! Crucify him! Crucify him!” Finally their shouts and screams succeeded. Pilate caved in to the crowd and ordered that the will of the people be done.*

Pilate’s cave is cold, dark, and empty. He caved into the will of the crowd and ordered the crucifixion of a man that he knew was innocent.

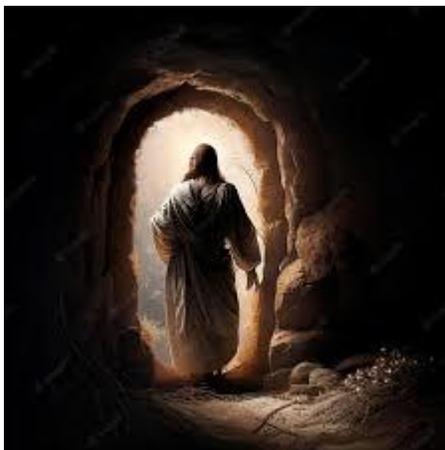
Pilate’s response to the crowd puts us all on notice. While Jesus came to offer life, life, and healing in the world, there will always be those who try to shout down our confidence in him. If we are not careful and sure in our own belief about him, we can find ourselves bending to the will of the crowd. His two caves can be our victory in this world and the one to come, or our cave can cause us to lose all hope, respect, and miss out on the things that Jesus can do in and for our lives.

Will you be one to cave or will you be changed by the one who came out of the cave to bring you light, life, and salvation?

Dr. Lacher



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## Introducing our new Womens Ministry Director for NM



Debbie Birdsall

Co-Pastor—El Paso

The road of her life took many twists and turns, eventually leading her to serve as a missionary in South Korea with her husband, Joe, for six years. She arrived back in the United States in 2019 and subsequently was led to El Paso to serve as co-pastor alongside her husband at Trinity CON in 2022. She completed her master's degree in October 2022 and will be ordained in July 2023. Debbie has three adult children and three grandchildren living in various parts of the world. Debbie, affectionally called "Debbie Mama," has served women in several countries. From 2010-13, she was co-director of Celebrate Recovery in Pennsylvania, teaching and counseling women through various life difficulties. While in Korea, she led women's retreats in China, Australia, and Korea, walking alongside the journeys of missionaries and foreigners who reside in those countries. Debbie also supported the women in her church in Cheonan, South Korea through counseling and Bible study. Once arriving back in the U.S., Debbie was offered the position of women's pastor at Denver First Church. Although short-lived due to her calling to El Paso, God created a plan for growth, love, and discipleship for women in every stage of life. Because she desires to empower women to reach the potential God has planned for their lives, Debbie has mentored many women during this period. She looks forward to serving the women on the New Mexico Nazarene District.

## Introducing our new Camp Executive Director



We are excited to announce that Rev. Preston Benson has accepted our offer to become our new camp executive director. Preston will be joining us on June 15 and Michelle and their family will be with us by the end of July.

The Benson family is excited to join the Bonita Park Team. We have desired to serve in camp ministry and hoped our journey with God would afford us a place to serve as a family in the camp setting. We recognize the importance of camp ministry as a place to meet with God with increased clarity.

Michelle and I have served in the Nazarene church for upwards of 25 years as pastors for adults, families, youth and children.

Preston worked has as a prison administrator/supervisor for 25 years and retired from the Federal Prison in 2019.

Michelle has worked as a educator, worked for Marriott and as a pastor she has been actively engaged in camp ministry.

Preston and Michelle Benson



**Kids Camp July 12—14**

**Teen Camp July 17—21**

**New Mexico District Conventions and Assembly Schedule:**

**Friday July 21—1:00pm—5:00pm NMI Convention (Angus)**

**Friday July 21—7:00pm Ordination Service (Armstrong Tabernacle) Reception to follow at Angus**

**Sat. July 22—8:00am—Noon District Assembly (Armstrong Tabernacle)**

**Sat. July 22—2:00pm Prayer Pond Ceremony— Family Camp Begins**

**Sat: July 22—7:00pm Mission Rally (Armstrong Tabernacle) NMI Reception following in Morris Center**

**Monday July 24—1:00pm—5:00pm NDI Convention (Angus)**

**FAMILY CAMP— Featuring Dr. Norman Moore -Dr -Carla Sunberg and Adams Voice. (Continues through Friday July 28 noon (See the attached flyer)**



NM District Young Adult Conference  
June 2—4th  
At Bonita Park!

**Onward**, the NM district young adult conference is scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>.at Bonita Park This year's theme is Expanding God's Kingdom: One Heart at a Time. Join us for fun and fellowship as we learn about sharing the word of God! Cost \$120 per person, includes room and board. Contact Nathaniel Pfeifer to register

Pfeifernathanielo@gmail.com

719-251-8673

**Up Coming Important Dates for the New Mexico District**

**June**

**ONWARD Young Adults Conference June 2-4th**

**30th General Assembly in Indianapolis June 9 - 16**

**July**

**NYC in Tampa July 5-9**

**Childrens Camp July 12-14 Wed through Fri**

**Senior High and Jr High Camp July 17-21 Mon through Fri (See flver)**

**NM Conventions and Assembly July 21-22 Bonita Park**

**Family Camp July 22 -28 Bonita Park**

**August**

**NBC zoom with Board of Ministry Aug 18**

**October**

**Mid-Year Meetings Oct 19-21**

# Kids Camp 2023

## Campfire Stories



July 12-14

Kids \$150  
Counselors \$130

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN AT [NMNAZ.COM](http://NMNAZ.COM)

### [Kids Camp 2023](#)

This years camp will be Wednesday to Friday  
Start firing up the Excitement with your Kids!!



WORLD QUIZ  
JUNE 10, 2023



I AM STILL LOOKING FOR SCORE KEEPER

Arthur Pacheco

# come join team bonita

2023 SUMMER STAFF WANTED!

\$1,000  
BONUS for  
10 weeks  
worked!

## Bonita Park camp is hiring!

Spend the summer serving others through guest activities like rock wall, high ropes and zip line along with housekeeping, grounds work, working in the kitchen, and dishes. Don't miss out on an opportunity to grow spiritually and develop lifelong friendships, memories and skills.

1/2 summer, all summer, and internships are available

Age ranges: 14-114

14&15 must live with family

16+ may live in staff housing

For questions, email or call Phil Jones:  
phil@bonitapark.com or 575-336-4404

scan here for  
our application



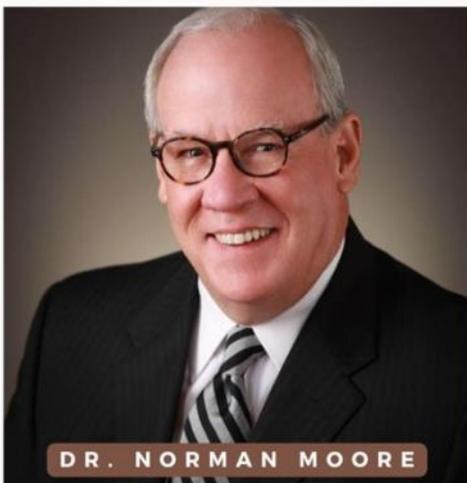
apply online at [www.bonitapark.com/get-involved](http://www.bonitapark.com/get-involved)

# New Mexico District Family Camp 2023

SOMETHING OLD • SOMETHING NEW

## July 22-28, 2023

SATURDAY-FRIDAY



CONTACT US TODAY  
TO MAKE A RESERVATION:  
575-336-4404  
INFO@BONITAPARK.COM

# KNOW BEFORE YOU GO TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY!!!!!!



THE 30<sup>TH</sup>  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY  
& CONVENTIONS

9-16 JUNE 2023

INDIANAPOLIS  
INDIANA, USA

[nazarene.org/generalassembly](http://nazarene.org/generalassembly)



LOVE YOUR  
NEIGHBOR  
9-14 JUNE 2023

[Love Your Neighbor | General Assembly 2023 \(nazarene.org\)](http://nazarene.org)

General Assembly participants are encouraged to bring the following



## BRING WITH

GOAL: 2,000 SCHOOL PACKS

### NMI DELEGATES

plastic pencil boxes  
crayons (about 24 per pack)

### NYI DELEGATES

glue sticks  
#2 pencils

### NDI DELEGATES

rubber erasers  
blunt-tipped scissors

### GA KIDS & QUIZZERS

wide-rule spiral notebooks  
2-pocket folders with metal prongs

### LYN PARTICIPANTS, CONVENTION DELEGATES, OTHERS

bookbags (large enough to hold a folder)

[nazarene.org/generalassembly](http://nazarene.org/generalassembly)



**[Visit these links for all of your General Assembly questions and Daily schedules:](#)**

**[Homepage | General Assembly 2023 \(nazarene.org\)](http://nazarene.org)**

**[NDI | General Assembly 2023 \(nazarene.org\)](http://nazarene.org)**

**[NMI | General Assembly 2023 \(nazarene.org\)](http://nazarene.org)**

**[NYI | General Assembly 2023 \(nazarene.org\)](http://nazarene.org)**



July 5—9 2023

**[NYC 23 – Nazarene Youth Conference](#)**

Here is the home page for NYC. Find all sorts of information along with short videos for your church and teens as they all get ready to send their youth and Go!

TEEN CAMP 2023

teen camp 2023

\$230 @ BP

imago dei

july 17-21

megan pittman

# NM DISTRICT TOUR OF ISRAEL TRIP 2024



New Mexico District  
Church of the Nazarene

Sept 7th-17th 2024

# TOUR OF ISRAEL

A WORSHIP PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

## Where the Bible comes alive...

Join us as we travel the Holy land and spend time learning about historic Biblical sites from Reuven Zusman; a very experienced, educated, and certified tour guide in Israel. We will also be led in worship by Dr. Larry Lacher whose study, passion, and leadership of worship will come alive in new ways for you at these incredible sites.

**\$5,500**

PRICE INCLUDES

- ✓ Airfare
- ✓ Hotels (Double Room)  
(Dan Panorama, Leonardo Plaza)
- ✓ Ground Transportation
- ✓ Tour Guide
- ✓ All Admission Fees
- ✓ Breakfast and Dinner  
at Hotel
- ✓ Farewell dinner
- ✓ Tips

## SITES INCLUDE\*

- ✓ Jaffa
- ✓ Caesarea-by-the-Sea
- ✓ Mount Carmel
- ✓ Jezreel Valley & Megiddo
- ✓ The Sea of Galilee
- ✓ Capernaum
- ✓ Tabgha (Loaves and Fishes).
- ✓ The Mount of Beatitudes
- ✓ Beit Shean
- ✓ Baptisms in the Jordan
- ✓ Cana of Galilee
- ✓ Nazareth
- ✓ The Dead Sea
- ✓ En Gedi
- ✓ Caesarea Philippi
- ✓ Golan Heights
- ✓ Jericho
- ✓ Mt of Olives
- ✓ Upper Room
- ✓ Israel Museum
- ✓ Dead Sea Scrolls
- ✓ City of David
- ✓ Garden of Gethsemane
- ✓ Kidron Valley
- ✓ House of Caiaphas
- ✓ Pool of Bethesda
- ✓ Pilate's Judgment Hall
- ✓ Via Delarosa
- ✓ Church of the Holy Sepulcher
- ✓ Masada
- ✓ A Day of Leisure in Jerusalem
- ✓ Plus More

ONLY 30 SLOTS AVAILABLE  
\$100 DEPOSIT DUE BY SEPT 30TH, 2023

CONTACT: TIM THARP

[timtharp82@gmail.com](mailto:timtharp82@gmail.com) or 505-822-0000

\*visits may be changed if circumstances require