

July 1, 2011

Dear Beloved NDs,

Loving greetings in Christ! Patt and I hope this letter finds each of you, your spouses, children, and grandchildren doing well and enjoying a good summer. As each summer approaches, I remember New Directions trips because summer was a major time of outreach for us. From Maine to Miami, we covered it all-- "*Takin' it to the Streets!*"

Looking back at those years, I am always amazed at how *radical* we really were – and very much “ahead of our time”. Unknowingly, we were pioneers in the areas of discipleship and evangelism through a contemporary, interracial, and interdenominational musical ministry. God graciously taught us so much that we still draw from to this day. In many ways, what we experienced together set the trajectory of the rest of our lives. And most importantly, some of our life-long friendships were forged “on the bus” as we *traveled together...ministered together...lived together...learned together...laughed together...cried together...and matured together.*

Some of you have suggested that there should be a lasting history written about what we experienced together in NDs. Whether you were in the group under our leadership or under the leadership of other couples and individuals, we agree that we should have a record to celebrate God’s goodness to all of us.

So, this letter is to ask you to help write a book about the history of the NDs. And it is not meant to be the “JL & Patt Williams Story”. It is *your story*. It is “*our story*” together. The book may possibly be titled “**A New Direction in Ministry**”, but your title suggestions are welcomed as well.

Here is what I would lovingly request each of you to write a brief account of:

- WHEN you were in the NDs
- HOW you became involved
- Any special MEMORY
- How your time in NDs impacted your life
- What principles or values you still carry today from those years

In addition, we would love for you to send a current picture of you and your spouse, children and/or grandchildren—whatever combination!

Please fill out the attached form and return it in the enclosed envelope by **August 31**. Or, you can write your own memory in any form you are comfortable with and email it to me at [jl@jlwilliams.org](mailto:jl@jlwilliams.org), and send pictures as an attachment.

We’d like to have the book printed and ready for distribution on **December 31, 2011** (*please mark your calendars!*) which will coincide with the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party that Patt and my family are having for me!

Frankly, I am amazed and awed to still be alive and as active as ever for the Kingdom – “from Alamance County to around the world!”

And lastly, please take a few minutes and look over the enclosed list of “lost alumni”...we need your help to “get the word out”! If you know the whereabouts of any of these alumni, please let us know. We’d appreciate any and all contact information that you have, including email addresses.

Thanks so much for helping us compile this history. It will be a wonderful “living legacy” for our children, grandchildren, families, friends, and the Body of Christ locally and globally.

In His Faithful love,

*JL & Patt*

PS: Patt and I have just finished writing a book entitled “**A Strategic Paradigm in Missions.**” One chapter deals with the early pioneer ministry of the NDs that helped to make this “strategic paradigm shift” in ministry that God has graciously used in many countries around the world for the last 40 years. This particular chapter has some fun pictures from those early pioneer days! And writing that chapter reminded me again of the need to capture our unique spiritual pilgrimage that continues to this day and hour!

PSS: We have just received the sad news that another ND alumnus, Vivian Summers, has gone home to be with Jesus. “Viv” was a faithful singer and soloist with NDs throughout her high school years, and she will be greatly missed. Please be in prayer for her family and loved ones. She now joins several of our other ND alumni who are “with the Lord”:

- Charles Alston
- Paul Smith
- Drew Love

If you know of any other ND alumni who have passed away, please let us know. This is another reason we want to get the ND history documented in a book with as many personal testimonies, memories, and antidotes as possible!