

THE WINDOW

On a journey with the living Christ; connecting with God, others, and the world.

March 2021

FOR OR WITH by Andy Hamer, Pastor

One of Christianity's most surprising (some would say scandalous) tenets is the idea that the Creator of the Universe actually wants to be in relationship with us. We talk about this a lot in the Church, but sometimes we forget how odd that fact is when compared to other world religions. Why is that? Perhaps it's because relationships are hard for human beings. At one time or another most of us believe (or at least behave as if we believe) that it would be easier to keep religion to a transactional level rather than a relational level.

Let's take for example the workplace environment. Many employer/employee relationships are transactional. We do our required tasks, and our bosses are expected to provide us with compensation. Simple right? Things would get more complex if we were to believe that employers and employees should have close, personal relationships based on mutual appreciation or even love. Just imagining that scenario is difficult for some of us! Personal relationships can be difficult, and at times we might prefer even our religion to be transactional. At that point the Christian faith becomes more about checking boxes or being "good". Our God wants more than that.

Lent is a surprisingly easy time to slip into a transactional mindset. Usually during this season of personal reflection and consideration of Jesus' sacrifice, churches offer more opportunities and experiences. It's a time when Christians can *do* more. Often more classes are offered, or existing groups take up Lenten themes for discussion. There are more opportunities for a congregation to worship and to worship in unique ways. Christians are challenged to take up other practices like fasting, meditation, confession, or prayer vigils. You can actually read about similar opportunities in this issue of the *The Window*. However, the tricky thing about all this *doing* during Lent, is that we can lose sight of the fact that God wants more than acts. Our relationship with God is intended to be personal and not just transactional.

Several times in the gospels Jesus tells people to, "Follow after me." To us that may sound like a follow-in-His-footsteps type of thing. Actually, it's an expression about discipleship – a bond that went beyond the teacher-student relationship. Some translations of the Bible actually replace the phrase, "Follow after me" with, "Be my disciple". Jesus' command here is not asking people to be good, or nice, or moral like he was. It is an invitation to a relationship. Even passages that we often associate with self-sacrifice (and commonly read during Lent), are meant to be understood in the context of a relationship with Jesus. "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) This is not a call to heroic self-sacrifice; it's an invitation to a relationship that holds together through suffering and beyond.

Especially because Lent emphasizes Jesus' sacrifice and death, our actions can easily become less relationally motivated. We sometimes engage Lenten practices as though we are honoring a deceased loved one or a historic figure. Of course Jesus deserves our honor, but Jesus isn't dead. Yes, in this season we are remembering Jesus' suffering and death, but he did rise again. We can engage him *personally*. All of these Lenten practices are meant to be conduits to a greater connection with Jesus. Our prayers and worship are part of a *conversation*. Even when we engage in solitary practices like meditation, we do so because we believe that we are not alone – that God wants to be with us. Our fasting can help us identify with Jesus' sacrifice, but we are also actually *with* Jesus. We engage in these practices not *for* God, but *with* God.

I pray this Lenten season that you find the freedom to engage in a new practice – not because it's right, but because you want a new way to connect with the One who gave everything for you.

HOPE by Dan O'Reilly, Elder for Worship and Music

Well, hello fellow West Hillians. My name is Dan O'Reilly and I am your elder for worship and music.

Well, how about that year 2020, eh? And we're still not through this mess. I remember a little over a year ago when my wife, a nurse, said, this is something new, it is very contagious, no one is immune and it's going to be bad. I remember thinking, like two weeks inconvenience bad? Good grief! Who knew?

I'm hopeful and I think I can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Deb has been vaccinated (I'm jealous) and more and more people are getting the vaccine.



A few weeks ago, Andy preached about Jesus going into the wilderness for 40 days. It kind of feels like we are in the wilderness. I remember thinking that maybe this was just one more way for Jesus to know what we have been going through. After Christ's time in the wilderness, the devil left him and angels attended to him. There is hope.

Following that scripture reading, I turned old bananas into bread. And I wasn't even tempted by Satan. I know, I know, that doesn't count as a miracle.

During our time in the wilderness, are there any positives (probably not a good word when talking about COVID-19)?

We could have curled up in the fetal position and started singing, nobody likes me, everybody hates me, I'm gonna eat some worms. But, no! We chose to keep worshiping God.

I feel like our church is staying strong and I have been pleased and impressed with our worship and music crew's work and response.

I've thought about people who could not make it to church before the virus hit. Being able to watch live or the recorded service is a blessing.

If you missed a sermon, you can go to <https://www.whcomaha.org/> and click on **Previous Services**.

For some wonderful, uplifting music and videos, you can go to <https://vimeo.com/whcomaha>.

The church has set up great safety measures for those who can/want to go in-person.

One more positive. My dog thinks it is absolutely great. We are always home!

Still, I miss my church family. I miss joys and concerns. I miss coffee and donuts... okay, I still have those. Singing at home is just not the same as singing with the congregation. I miss choir. I'm not a real touchy-feely type, but I cannot wait until I can shake someone's hand and just give a hug.

Jeremiah 29:11 – *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

God loves us. God is still in charge. Thanks be to God.

Please be in prayer for West Hills. I hope to see you in church sometime in the not-too-distant future. Stay safe, stay hopeful and stay healthy.

March At A Glance

At West Hills our mission statement . . . On a journey with the living Christ; connecting with God, others and the world, provides us with the framework for how we live our lives. Even though life is different now, and we're connecting in new and different ways, here are notable dates this month in the life of our church.

Sundays in March - Livestreaming and in-person worship service @ 10 a.m. For those who won't be joining in-person, you can go to the website to connect by livestream! whcomaha.org/live

Thursdays in March - Worship in the Wilderness - A 4-week mini worship series. See page 4 for more information. Go to whcomaha.org/events for the weekly video link.

March 7-12 - [Sign up](#) and receive materials to help with Journey Through Holy Week. See page 4 for more information.

March 14 - Daylight Saving Time Begins! We will **SPRING** forward one hour today. See you at church an hour earlier!

March 18 - Sloppy Joe Ministry Drop Off at the church. Come between 10-3 to the north circle drive and drop your cooked sloppy joe meat and buns in the bins located outside.

On or before March 21 - Return completed Journey Through Holy Week projects

Holy Week - Sunday, March 28 - Sunday, April 4 - See page 5 for a full list of opportunities to prepare for His Resurrection!

Order An Easter Lily for Easter Sunday!



You're invited to purchase an Easter lily for Easter Sunday worship on April 4. Orders will be taken March 11 to March 26 and the cost is \$12. You may like to provide the flower(s) in "memory of," in "honor of," or for yourself. Please [complete the on-line form](#) or call the church office at 402-391-8788 to place your order. Sorry, we won't have other flowers to chose from this year, but they will be back next year. Flower(s) may be taken home after Easter Sunday worship or picked up during the week. Thank you!

IN PREPARATION FOR HOLY WEEK . . .

WORSHIP IN THE WILDERNESS

Hello, West Hills Family! This is your worship resident, Anna, introducing a Lenten worship opportunity. This has been a difficult season for everyone, a time of going through the wilderness. With everything that has happened over the past year, I believe it is important for us to have a space to process the emotions that go along with hard times like this, bring those emotions to God, and let Him take them.

In light of this, I will be hosting a **4-week mini-worship series** during March called **Worship in the Wilderness**. Each segment will be 15-30 minutes of pre-recorded music, scripture, and prayer. This will include themes like trust, lament, and surrender. **During each week in March, I will post one segment in Thursday Thoughts and at whcomaha.org. I invite you to join me in this series!**

3 WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK ~ An Interactive Prayer Walk ~

Please help us create and share Journey Through Holy Week! **Choose one, two, or all three ways to participate in this collaborative spiritual opportunity:**

- 1. Build a station post backdrop from a prepared kit.** Call Jack Pagel, [sign up on the events page of the church](#), or email info@whcomaha.org to sign up to build a station or two. Pick up your kit from the North Circle entryway March 7th-12th and return your finished project with your name taped to it by or before March 21.
- 2. Plan an all-ages prayer experience activity to go on the station post following the template we will send you.** [Sign up on the events page of the church](#) or email info@whcomaha.org March 7th-12th to sign up for a spot. We'll send you the scripture and template so you can design a station activity. Return your activity directions and materials or material list by or before March 21.
- 3. Tell people about it. Go early in the week so you can invite others from your own experience.** We believe this will meet spiritual and social needs for people in our West Hills family and beyond, so tell your friends, family, small groups, and neighbors about your own experience at **Journey Through Holy Week**.

*The Journey Through Holy Week interactive prayer walk will be available
Sunday, March 28 - Sunday, April 4 near the North Circle Drive.*

*Please note: if others are present when you are,
please wear a mask and practice physical distancing.*

*~ Watch Thursday Thoughts and social media for special pop-up features
at Journey Through Holy Week. ~*

Holy Week Offerings

HOLY WEEK DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

This eight day devotional guide is an in-house publication written by West Hills folks. Through scripture, devotional thoughts, and artwork, we will fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Printed and digital copies will be available on Sunday, March 21.

SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

ON-YOUR-OWN REFLECTION & MEDITATION VIDEO

This on-demand video is designed to provide moments of reflection and meditation as we remember the death of Jesus and recall his seven last words or sayings from the cross. Images, prayers, music, and scripture all are a part of this online experience to watch at your convenience and at your own pace. This video will be available on Monday, March 29.

JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK

AN INTERACTIVE PRAYER WALK

Come to the North Circle Drive any time during Holy Week for an all ages interactive prayer experience of Jesus' final days and final words. This experiential prayer walk is hosted by Family and Worship Ministries and available Sunday, March 28 - Sunday, April 4, 2021. See page 4 for additional ways you may choose to participate in this activity.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE OF DARKNESS

In this worship service, we retrace the final steps of Jesus prior to His crucifixion. The service includes art, musical meditations, scripture, and a homily. As the service unfolds, candles are extinguished which represent the desertion of the disciples and friends of Christ. This will be one of the most visually striking services of the year. Friday, April 2 at 7:00 pm. In-person and online.

EASTER

Hallelujah, He Has Risen! Join with us for worship on Easter Sunday, April 4, at 10 am as we worship the Risen Savior in-person and online by livestream!

by Jana Prescott



Do you have any songs you love? Songs from a TV show? The radio? An album? From church? Church always has good songs that can be listened to as much as you want! You can replay them over and over again! But what else do you listen to? TV shows? TV movies? Does anyone still have a record player with records to listen to? I think it would have been rather interesting to watch Jesus spend some time teaching His apostles what He wanted them to pass on to their followers by playing them a movie full of Jesus' thoughts. Actually, I think He did. We all get to know what He was teaching us by first of all reading the Bible, which is the best movie He made. And we can take the message He gave to all of us and to our family, our friends, and people we meet by having them watch a good movie we can tell them about. I have seen many movies which may not have obviously Christian titles, but I can see Christ in the midst of it as I watch them. Christ will be visible in every nook and cranny. Hebrews 11:3 - *By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*



Sermon Series for Lent:

March 7	1 John 1:5-2:2
"I Confess"	
March 14	Colossians 3:1-11
"Laying Down & Leaning In - Part I"	
March 21	Colossians 3:12-17
"Laying Down & Leaning In - Part II"	
Palm Sunday	John 12:12-26
"Palms to Wheat; Death to Life"	
Easter	Luke 24:1-12
"Barriers to Belief"	

YOUTH COMMITMENT SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 21, 2021

Thank you West Hills for your support of The 406 Youth! We are so appreciative of the way you invest in the young people of this church both personally and financially.

If you missed Youth Commitment Worship Service on February 21, you can watch it on our website under "Previous Services" or by clicking [here](#).

If you'd like to see the youth activities outlined for 2021, all the details are available [here](#).

If you feel led to give, there are a couple ways to do so:

- mail a check to the church and note "Youth" in the memo line
- give online at whcomaha.org, under "Fund" select "Youth Commitment" from the drop down list.

Again, thank you for support and partnership with The 406 Youth!

GET AWAY TO GET CONNECTED by Jessica Scheopner, Dir. of Family Ministries



What is Family Camp?

It's a time for the church family to get away together for an informal time of fun, fellowship, and refreshment where people of all ages play, learn, worship, and rest.

Why Family Camp?

Intentionally unplugging from daily life makes space to understand and connect

- With God**
- With ourselves
- With family
- With church family

Shared casual experiences make memories and build friendships

Rest, relax, rejuvenate

Start the school year on a firm foundation

It's fun!

** In a 2017 ResourceUMC article, Cindy Solomon writes:

Research reveals that Christian camp experiences can be one major avenue for parents to teach and model to their children the importance of a connection with God.

"Search Institute's study on effective Christian education identified parents and family faith experiences as the number one factor in a lasting faith among children and youth," said Witt. In addition, new research by Jake Sorenson, an outdoor ministry researcher with Sacred Playgrounds, notes that youth who attend a faith-based camp are three times more likely to continue a communal faith practice throughout their lives than those who never participate.

What will it look like?

Each household will have their own private cabin and bathroom at Camp Calvin Crest. Meals and activities will be shared in ways that are appropriate for current pandemic conditions and that are comfortable for the participants.

We will have a blend of structured activities and free time. How you participate will be up to you, but there will be large group themed devotions geared for all ages, times for all-play games and activities, and free time for individuals and small groups or family groups to enjoy some quiet time or other camp activities.

"Extravagant love doesn't need a reason, just a place." -Bob Goff

I hope that Bob Goff is right and that this inaugural Family Camp will be just that place where you will experience the extravagant love of God among the family of God.

**Save the date:
West Hills Family Camp
July 30-31, 2021**

Outtakes from the dinner table when I asked my family "Why Family Camp?"

- Where else can you go hurtling down a mountain bike trail in the name of Jesus?
- Because it's the perfect blend of dirt and holiness.
- Where else can you shoot paintballs at your brother without getting in trouble? (Note: there will not be paintballs at Family Camp this year.)
- Because it's fun to wander around in the woods talking to God.
- Where else does a campfire become a thin place where you sense God in the elements of graham crackers, marshmallows, and chocolate?
- Because it's easier than planning your own.
- When else can you spend a couple of days being silly and celebrating Sabbath with your church family?
- Because kids' faith grows faster when they spend time with other people who love God in His creation.
- Because adults' faith is deepened when they talk and listen about faith with kids.

Update on Jeanton, Haiti by Chris Neil, Mission Team Member

The most recent of the four Haiti mission teams from West Hills had to leave a day earlier than planned because of demonstrations and unrest caused by a drastic and unforeseen spike in the price of fuel. It was unsettling to read the following State Department bulletin as I was resting on the porch in our guesthouse near Maliarette, Haiti on July 9, 2018.

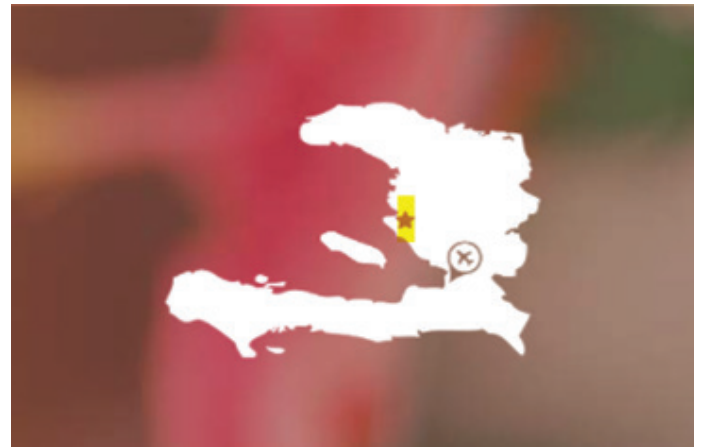


We were all anxious as we left the relatively safe and tranquil surroundings of rural Haiti for the busy, congested, and potentially dangerous city of Port au Prince. With support from The 41O Bridge (<https://41Obridge.org/>), our mission partner, we made the 5 hour journey back to Port au Prince without incident and were transported safely to the airport where we boarded our plane for home.

Unfortunately, the situation in Haiti has not improved much since then. Life is still extremely hard in this poverty stricken country. The government has not made progress moderating high fuel costs, runaway inflation and high unemployment rates. As a result, there has been a steady dose of protests, civil unrest and violence during the last three years. The pandemic has also been difficult on Haiti, although it's been more impactful on the urban areas compared to the more rural parts of the country.

West Hills has worked closely with The 41O Bridge for almost 10 years now. It's hard to believe our very first mission trip to Haiti was in July, 2012 when a group of 25 West Hills youth and adults visited Maliarette, Haiti, for the first time. After the community of Maliarette graduated from The 41O Bridge program in 2019,

West Hills was provided an opportunity to work alongside another Haitian community called Jeanton. Jeanton is a rural community of about 6,000 people. According to the 41O Bridge website, Jeanton has 14 churches, 8 schools and 1 health facility. From the map below you can see Jeanton (see star symbol) is located northeast of Port au Prince (identified by plane symbol in the opening of the claw) not far from the coast.



For those of you not familiar with The 41O Bridge, they are an organization whose mission is to "engage followers of Christ to help people in developing nations lift themselves from poverty, restoring dignity, purpose and freedom." The 41O Bridge is named after 1 Peter 4:10 which says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." The 41O Bridge started work in Africa, but planted roots in Haiti soon after the devastating earthquake that ravaged Port au Prince and surrounding areas in 2010. Today, 41O works to connect churches in the United States with communities in the countries of Kenya, Haiti, and Guatemala.

We found The 41O Bridge's mission and vision to closely align with West Hills' mission philosophy. One of my favorite quotes describing this philosophy of mission is from Tim Dearborn in his book "Beyond Duty". "Christian Mission is not our arrogant pursuit of other people to make them like us. Rather, it is our participation in God's pursuit of all people to make them like Him, and their lives like His."

Like we have in the past, West Hills will highlight our relationship with The 41O Bridge by recognizing 41O Day this April. In past years, we have promoted child sponsorship opportunities,

raised funds for Bibles and livestock and last year, we supported the Covid Restoration Fund.

In talking with our 41O Bridge contacts, they have indicated one of the biggest needs in the Jeanton area is pastor training. Few of the pastors in the area have formal training or instruction and most hold other jobs in order to support their families. It's exciting to announce that pastors from Jeanton will have the opportunity to take part in a multi community pastor training initiative based on the BILD curriculum. 45 pastors and church leaders from three different communities – Jeanton, Piatre and Dejans – will take part in this intensive training. The focus of this training is BILD's "First Principles" series.

The BILD First Principles Series leads pastors in training through a learning process designed to teach critical thinking. The process is based upon the biblical Hebrew wisdom model and on sound, contemporary educational research. This Consistent Study Process (CSP) takes the student through a complete learning cycle. CSP is not ESP---it is not mystically experiencing the text, but carefully and soundly studying the Scriptures. There are four basic steps to this process: 1) studying the Scriptures, 2) consulting the scholars, 3) thinking through the issues, 4) apply the principles and reshaping our lives!!

Please consider making a financial gift to support the upcoming BILD training program in Jeanton. An additional \$5,000 is needed for materials, supplies and staff salaries. Any amount would help make this very important training possible. If you send a check to the church, please note "41O Bridge Haiti" on the memo line. If you prefer to give online, please select the 41O Bridge Haiti option.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for the people of Haiti.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BIBLE?

1. **Who commanded the sun and moon to stand still when the Israelites fought the Amorites?**
A) God B) Joshua C) Moses
2. **What was the name of Hannah's first born son?** A) Moses B) Samuel C) Boaz
3. **Who was named the first king of Israel?**
A) Jacob B) David C) Saul
4. **Who let David down through a window so he could escape from King Saul?** A) Samuel B) Jesse C) Michal
5. **In what city was David anointed king by the men of Judah?** A) Hebron B) Bethel C) Jerusalem
6. **What prophet confronted David over his sin with Bathsheba?** A) Samuel B) Nathan C) Elijah
7. **Who was Absalom?** A) David's son B) David's best friend C) David's grandson
8. **Who succeeded David as king over Israel?**
A) Nathan B) Jesse C) Solomon
9. **Which prophet was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire and a whirlwind?** A) Samuel B) Elijah C) Elisha
10. **Who was the queen who risked her life to save the Jewish people?** A) Esther B) Ruth C) Naomi

(answers on the back page)

You may want to follow our mission partner 41O Bridge on Instagram or Facebook to receive regular updates on the work being done in Haiti, Kenya, and Guatemala.

SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

compiled by Maralee Gifford

In the book of Job, when Job was questioning God, God reminds Job of how omniscient God is compared to Job's very limited knowledge.

In Job 38:24 we read: "By what way is the light parted, which scatters the east wind upon the earth?"

When this was first written nobody ever dreamed of the spectroscope, for it was not invented until 1859. The modern astronomer now breaks up a ray of light from some distant star into bands of color like a rainbow and by these color bands reads the secret of the skies. In its simplest form, the spectroscope consists of two small telescopes with a glass prism mounted between their object glasses.

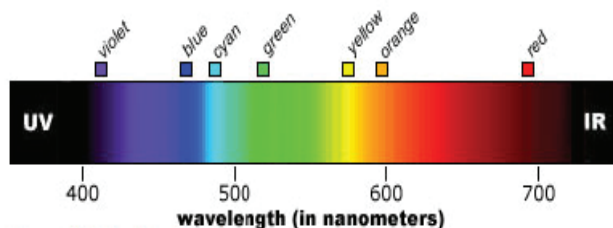


Fig. 1) Visible light – part of electromagnetic spectrum

When a beam of light enters through a narrow slit in the first telescope, its rays are rendered parallel by the object glasses. The parallel rays then pass through the prism, where they are bent or refracted at different angles, and pass out of the prism at different angles, spreading out the colors into a spectrum as the observer sees them through the second telescope. This is what the raindrops in the air do to the sunlight to give us the magnificent rainbow spectrum arching the sky. So it is by the spectroscope, like a pair of giant spectacles, that astronomers read the secret of the skies. The Bible was right all the time- light is parted.

"Sir Isaac Newton studied light and discovered that white light is made of seven colors, which can be 'parted' from the white and then recombined to make white again. Science discovered this in 1650. (Richard Gunther)

Comfort, R 2001 *Scientific Facts in the Bible: 100 Reasons to Believe the Bible Is Supernatural in Origin*, Bridge-Logos Publishers

SMALL GROUP PLANNING

by Candy Glasgow, Deacon for Groups



Your deacons for groups (Mary Jirak, Sheryl Overby, and myself) have spent some time in goal setting for 2021. As with most other areas of ministry at West Hills, the usual format for group meetings has changed. The old way of doing things has not been possible for almost a year, and groups have adapted in various ways: meeting by ZOOM, checking in with each other by phone or email, or simply not meeting. Hopefully within the next few months, it will be safe to go back to meeting in person in homes and getting together (with hugs and high 5s) with those we've missed so much.

While we're waiting (and waiting, and waiting...) we are planning several things that may help and encourage groups.

We are planning some short "refresher" courses that groups might find helpful. Videos will be available on the West Hills website on such topics as group roles, positive listening skills, content your group might study, etc.

In order to encourage existing groups we will research available resources that they may want to use in their get-togethers to make their group the very best it can be.

We plan to pick the brains of group members as to why group membership is important to them, the part of covenant group life that is most meaningful etc. and share that information with the congregation to encourage others to join or start a group.

We have spent much of the last 2 years trying to get a handle on different groups at West Hills. If you are a group member, please let us know about your group. We have information about members of a few groups, but we've found out about others by accident! We just want to know you're out there and reaping the benefits of small group life.

If you are interested in joining an existing group or starting one on your own, please call on any of us for information and/or assistance.

PICKLEBALL 101 LESSONS by Maralee Gifford

On Saturday, February 20, our Director of Worship and Music and Director of Pickleball Operations, Kevin Gibson, arranged to have a Pickleball instructor come to West Hills and teach those who were interested in learning how to play Pickleball. The instructor, Katie Fagan, taught three different classes in the West Hills gym. A total of 13 people participated in one of the group lessons that was offered. It was the perfect place for people to gather for the lessons.

Pickleball is played on a court similar to tennis but about one-fourth the size. It's played with a paddle instead of a tennis racket, and a ball that resembles a wiffleball, but heavier. Because the court is smaller than a regular tennis court, the players don't have to run as much or as far, but it still gives the players a very good workout. Those that signed up had a really good time.

Here are some comments from those that participated in the group lessons.

Greg Schuchmann: "An hour of really great exercise."

Dan Travaille: "It was fun. I liked it. I really need to move more."

Trink Traudt: "It was my first time playing. It was a blast. I would really recommend trying it. It was very creative of Kevin to arrange this."

Heather Hipp: "It's fun and less 'threatening' than other racket sports."

If you'd like to get in on the Pickleball fun, feel free to contact Kevin Gibson at kevin@whcomaha.org or call/text 816.517.8270.



HOMEBOUND PARTNER PROGRAM by Gloria Zinn

West Hills Church offers to our Homebound members the opportunity to connect with another West Hills member in partnership. The Homebound member is referred to as a Care Receiver and the Homebound partner is their Care Giver. Unlike the Caregiving Ambassadors or Stephen Minister programs at West Hills, a Homebound Care Giver has weekly contact with the Homebound Care Receiver, either in person or over the telephone, with a goal of developing a long-lasting friendship. This special friendship is developed over weeks of personal contact and the Care Giver is able, with the Care Receivers permission, to contact the church if there are any needs identified by the Care Receiver. Due to Covid guidelines the majority of our Care Givers have not been able to meet with their Care Receivers in person but only through telephone calls, although a couple of the Care Givers have been able to meet in person within the restrictions of the Care Receivers facility.



Some of these partnerships engage in Bible Study every week, as well as an exchange of life experiences. Since many of our Care Receivers have been in the church from its beginning, or from the last 15-20 years, there are many interesting “church stories” that are shared. The main goal of this vital program is to provide ongoing weekly contact with church members who may be unable to attend church even online since many do not have a computer. They also are given news about the church as well as any information concerning their friends they may not be able to contact.

Isolation has been a very big problem, even before Covid, so it is vital that there is someone who is interested enough to make a weekly visit

or telephone call to these very special people. The majority of the Care Givers always report they receive much more than they give with these partnerships! Currently there are 18 Care Receivers and 10 Care Givers in the Homebound Partnership program, with a couple of Care Givers partnering with more than one Care Receiver.

If you know of someone who would benefit with the Homebound Program or you would be interested in becoming a Homebound Care Giver, please contact Heather at heather@whcomaha.org. There is no formal training, just a love for people and a good ear to listen.

FOOTNOTES FROM THE LIBRARY



Did you know?...

The Soul Café has a new section, which is Black History, and here is a list of the books in that section:

- *Selma, Lord, Selma* by Frank Sikora
- *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn* by Gary Pomerantz
- *Walking With the Wind* by John Lewis
- *A Perilous Path* by Sherrilyn Ifill and others
- *While the World Watched* by Carolyn McKinstry
- *Freedom's Daughters* by Lynne Olson
- *24th & Glory* by Dirk Chatelain
- *Marching for Freedom* by Elizabeth Partridge
- *We Shall Overcome* by Herb Boyd
- *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson

We also have 8 copies of a DVD called “The Great Debaters”.

So stop by and **CHECK IT OUT**. Your welcome to check out books on Sunday morning or during normal church office hours.

TWO THUMBS UP by Heather Hipp

Last month, while celebrating Black History Month, we were encouraged to try a couple local restaurants, and the reviews were great! If you didn't get a chance, we recommend these restaurants with two thumbs up!

Okra African Grill is close to church and may be an ideal location to grab some lunch after worship! Here's what a few people had to share:

The Padillas said "We enjoyed our choices from Okra African Grill. The portions were generous and the steak was so tender. Great flavors!"

Steve and Julie Burgess said "...here is Steve with his jelloff chicken, and my peanut chicken is on the other plate. Both were very yummy! We also shared some roasted plantains, which reminded me of my trips to Cameroon. Four thumbs up!!"

A few of the church staff ordered in lunch one day. **Rosa Norman said** "Yummy, yum, yum! I would definitely order the jelloff chicken again!"

Anna Hollingsworth chose the "build a bowl" item. "I liked it because I could choose what I wanted to go in it because I have so many food allergies. It was great!"

Located at: 1303 S 72nd Street, Ste 101, Omaha

Website: <https://okraafricangrill.com/>



The other featured restaurant was **Big Mama's Kitchen**, a family-owned and operated business specializing in soul food and known for their oven-fried chicken and sweet potato pie ice cream. **Julie Burgess** shared this photo with us with the comment, "Great oven fried chicken." They offer on-line ordering and curbside pick up!

Located at 2112 N 30 Street, Suite 201B, Omaha

Website: <https://www.bigmamaskitchen.com/>



RECIPES OF THE MONTH

FEBRUARY *Session notes*

Recipes this month come from Carolyn Grice, Temporary Associate Pastor, who says she is allergic to cooking but was willing to share these two recipes with us. Thank you Carolyn!!

Cranberry Fluff

1 lb cranberries, chopped
1 c granulated sugar
1 16 oz tub of whipped cream
1 pkg miniature marshmallows
1 c pecans or walnuts
Mix together and pour in mold or bowl.
(You can also add green grapes or pineapples)



Chicken Wings

In a plastic bag take one envelope of dry Italian dressing and add 1/3 cup of brown sugar. Add a little salt. You can also add a little liquid smoke or soy sauce.



Mix. Coat chicken wings. Use a greased pan or aluminum foil on a sheet pan. Spread out wings. Cook at 350 degrees until done.

- Session approved a motion to create a task force to address issues of unity and diversity through discussion forums and/or small groups.
- As people are receiving vaccinations there is a growing interest to attend in person events.
- Pickleball has come to West Hills. The Covid-19 guidelines are being followed.
- The Racial Justice and Reconciliation Task Force encouraged everyone to take advantage of current opportunities with Black History Month.
- Beginning Sunday, February 21, 2021 Carolyn will begin teaching a class on the Confessions of the PC(USA).
- Donations for Youth Commitment Sunday may be made on-line, mail-in, and in-person.
- Journey Through Holy Week Interactive Prayer Walk for Holy Week - Paul Bates, Jack Pagel, Anna Hollingsworth, and others are collaborating and contributing to these stations of the cross led by Family and Worship ministries.

To contact Session, send an email to:
clerkofsession@whcomaha.org



MOVIE SUGGESTION



"**The Stray**" is a 92 minute DVD based on the life of director Mitch Davis.

Davis says that when he rescued their dog Pluto 25 years ago, "We were a young family struggling to make everything work. We had everything; financial stress, career stress, kid stress. But we were a family in the time of dysfunction and crisis."

According to a review in Plugged In, the family was "living the dream" except Mitch's insane dawn to dawn workdays left no time to spend with his family. When Mitch apologizes to his son, Christian, for missing his latest baseball game, the 9-year old boy isn't having it. "You're always sorry because you are never there," Christian accuses. Mitch knows he is right.

Pluto, the dog, brings this struggling family together, repairs a broken father-son relationship, and saves a toddler.

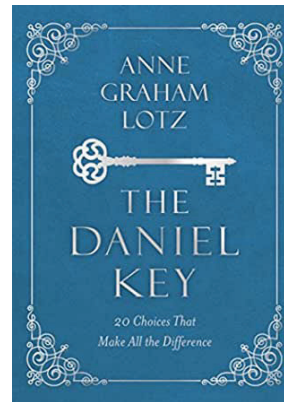
This video will be available in the Soul Cafe in February.

Starring in this video are Connor Corum (Heaven is for Real), Sarah Lancaster, (Chuck), Michael Cassidy, (O.C., Men at Work, and People of Earth). This video is rated PG, and is Dove approved.

Please note: this movie is a tearjerker. :-)

suggested by Debbie Chadwick

BOOK SUGGESTION



"Twenty choices will bring contentment when the world says you aren't enough, closeness born of relationship with God, boldness to share the truth, and peace in times of trial. These choices were made by Daniel, a young Jewish man serving God in a godless society, revered by God, saved from lions. **The Daniel Key** will lead you to a life-changing faith."

The above statement is from Zondervan Publishing regarding the book, "**The Daniel Key**", by Anne Graham Lotz.

This book takes an up close and personal look at the life of Daniel, including the protection God surrounded him with in the lion's den. The Bible reveals to us over and over that Daniel's faith never strayed from God. He was steadfast in his beliefs.

How does our faith compare to Daniel's? Are we steadfast in our beliefs?

Daniel was revered in the lives of those who knew him and in God's eyes as well.

In her book Lotz focuses on intentional choices we must all make in our daily lives which she believes will bring us closer to God, just as Daniel was. Choices such as choosing to trust and obey, to pray, to worship, and to repent. The choices to be courageous and love and to live our lives humbly.

Lotz believes that reviewing and embracing these 20 choices will make all the difference in the world in how we live our lives and how we become closer to God.

Anne Graham Lotz is an American Protestant Evangelist and the second daughter of evangelist Billy Graham and Ruth Graham. She founded AnGel Ministries and has authored 11 books of which her best known is "Just Give Me Jesus."

suggested by Debbie Chadwick

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



MARCH

1-Dwight Rickard
4-Jamie Carlson
5-Jan Richardson
Chelsea Grossoehme
6-Cammy Bridgman
7-Rick Wollen
8-Jane Loeck
John Good Sr.
9-Johnny Dunn
10-Tim Briggs
11-Alex Picavet
Sophia Luethge

12-Jeff DeHaven
Kathy Padilla
Cathy Burgess
13-Kathy Kerkhove
15-Peggy Thomas
19-Chris Neil
20-Kevin Gibson
21-Kathy Cordes
JT Pittack
Verlan Rumbaugh
22-Kathy Myers
Steve Brownlee
25-Kevin Wagaman

27-Joyce Blatny
28-Liam Madigan
David Naderi
Matt Johnson
29-Beth Carlson
30-Nathan Turner
Sherrie DeHaven

4-Doug Thomas
5-Tom Pittack
Tim Schaffer
7-Aniston Barko
8-Dave Richardson
10-Laurayne Hall

APRIL

1-Matthew Bridgman
Ron Wells
3-Connie Huck
Brody Anderson

*The complete list of April
birthdays will be in the April
newsletter.*