

THE WINDOW

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

November 2021

by Carolyn Grice, Temporary Associate Pastor

I read this article recently and thought I would share some things that stood out for me. Joys and concerns should be an integral part of worship. It not only provides the opportunity for a testimony of the need for God as well as where God has blessed us, but we get to share it with others for support and caregiving through our prayers for them. Here is an excerpt from the article.

The roller coaster of joys and concerns

by Rev. Julie Raffety | *The Presbyterian Outlook*



“Despite the chaos and unpredictable nature of joys and concerns, it just might be the purest moment on Sundays. They are often messy, but God welcomes them all. Why wouldn’t God? After all, our Creator invites us, messy people, into relationship. Joys and concerns also request participation whereas so many other elements of worship seemingly get by without it.

I am always amazed at the boldness of our kids who raise their hands to pray for a family member in need. And there is something so beautiful, vulnerable, and sacred when we speak these requests aloud before one another and the Holy Spirit and our voices crack

or our eyes water and we are joined together in our humanity. For that is what church is all about, isn’t it? It is a human gathering before God, a reminder that we call upon Jesus for thanksgiving and for healing and strength.

We are all broken; we are all in need; we can all relate. And, like so many churches, our joys and concerns create our prayer list throughout the week where we independently pray together for those we love until we meet again on Sunday. And, like so many churches, we are faithful in doing so. Because God is in all of it. We are human, and in this time of worship we recognize our humanity and call out for the Divine. What could be more worshipful than that?”

From our Book Of Confessions, A Brief Statement of Faith we read,

“In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

As we begin our season of thanksgiving, it’s more important than ever to appreciate the power of prayer in our lives. Prayer comes in all shapes and forms and sizes. We have one thing to remember . . . Just Do It! Pray!!

Presbyterian Outlook. (2021). The roller coaster of joys and concerns.

<https://pres-outlook.org/2021/10/the-roller-coaster-of-joys-and-concerns/>

AN AWAKENING by Rick Mason, Elder of Spiritual Formation & Discipleship

About 15 years ago, I wandered into West Hills Church hungry for spiritual renewal. I had always thought of myself as a Christian, even though I hadn't attended church in the previous 25 years.

I grew up Catholic in a very staunch family. I served as an altar boy, attended Catholic school, and learned the discipline of being a good person. I followed this regimen through my college years. But as a young adult, I no longer understood the point of going to church, thinking that being a good person was good enough (I bet you've never heard that one before). Not long after that decision, I remember periods of desperately seeking something more than the life I had. Still, I couldn't find that one thing that would complete me. I tried the usual - new cars, new locations, new friends, new endeavors, but they all seemed to fall short of a purpose in life.

Fast forward 25 years, and I'm at West Hills. For the first year I attended, I found my way in and out of service with the only desire to achieve my one hour of commitment I remembered as a child. I honored God for that hour, but the rest was my time. Then one Sunday, for a reason unknown at the time, I decided to attend a class.

Wow, was I way out of my comfort zone! The class was "How to Be a World-Class Christian," facilitated by Kathy and René Padilla. My mind is not so sharp anymore, but if I recall, my classmates were Ken and Jane Powers, Jana Prescott, Julie Burgess (and maybe Steve), and Pam Moore. I was made to feel comfortable, despite not knowing a thing about the Bible.

Fifteen years later, and despite a two-year absence, I rarely missed a Sunday class in that time. Am I a biblical scholar - hardly. But, taking that risk has led me to understand my relationship with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. So many have encouraged me to grow in faith and understand my gifts, including the ultimate gift of Grace given freely through the sacrifice of Christ. This knowledge has led to freedoms knowing the Love of God is all I need. And, let's not forget the friendships made along the way.

The Spiritual Formation and Discipleship Committee are Gloria Zinn, Julie Zimmerman, Jane Loeck, Karen Jarvis, Trink Traudt, and Doug Stout. This group works diligently to offer classes that

will challenge you in a comfortable (at your own pace) setting. Hopefully, these classes will help deepen your faith and broaden your knowledge of biblical principles.

Come! Join us in our class offerings. Take the uncomfortable risk to grow your faith. Remember the unknown reason I mentioned earlier? I have now realized the Holy Spirit opened a door, inviting me into a proper relationship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Come! **You will be glad you did.**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is breathed by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work."

SPIRITUAL CORRESPONDENCE

by Jana Prescott



*"Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."
(Matthew 11:6)*

Have you ever tripped? For me, tripping has become a physical habit that I need to really be careful of doing. Do you think Jesus is telling us to watch our physical being as we go forward step by step? Or is He actually telling us all to pay attention spiritually, as we keep our freedom given by the Spirit?

God is giving us all we need. We need to quit letting any blind spots keep us from letting the Holy Spirit shine in us and fill us with all we need to live the lives He has given us.

"When you believed, you were marked in Him with the seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession..."
(Ephesians 1:13,14)

November 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. Here are notable activities this month, in the life of our church, seeking to connect us to God, others, and the world.

Sundays in November - Livestreaming and in-person worship service @ 10 a.m. Following the service, join us for fellowship in Geneva Lounge. For those not attending in-person, we welcome you to watch the service by livestream at: whcomaha.org/live

Discipleship Opportunities Sunday Mornings @ 9:00 a.m.:

- * Crosswalk Kids meeting in-person and in the lower level
- * Youth 406 Journey Groups meeting in-person and in the youth chapel #406
- * "What If Jesus Was Serious?" book study continues in the chapel

Wednesday Mornings - Women's book study meets at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel. This study is on prayer and from the book called "The Sacred Echo" by Margaret Feinberg

Wednesday Evenings - Women's book study meets at 5:15 p.m. in the chapel. This study is on the book "Everything You Need" by Dr. David Jeremiah

Wednesdays - 406 Youth Group meets at 6:30 p.m. in-person and in the youth chapel #406

Thursday Mornings - Women's Bible study meets at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel. The Serendipity Bible study of the book of Genesis wraps up Nov. 11 and on Nov. 18 the study of Exodus begins.

Nov. 7 - Daylight Saving Time Ends. Move clocks back one hour.

Nov. 7 - Afghan Refugee Informational Meeting in the chapel following worship

Nov. 10 & 11 - Decorate stockings for Chili and Caroling recipients

November 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. The food will be taken to the Stephen Center to be enjoyed by many!

Nov. 21 - Congregational Meeting following worship service to elect Elders, Deacons and members of the Nominating Team.

Nov. 24 - Thanksgiving Eve Service and Pie Fest at 6:30 p.m. Please bring a pie to share! Whipped topping will be provided!

Nov. 28 - Hanging of the Green Service at 6 p.m.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO START A SMALL GROUP?

by Sheryl Overby, Deacon of Groups

It was January 2020, COVID-19 had just been found in China, Megan Markle and Prince Harry left the Royal family, and I was on Facebook reading about the drone sightings in Western Nebraska. It was at this time that my husband Mike and I were determined to get involved in a small group at West Hills to develop deeper relationships with others.

We found three other couples who were also "empty nesters," and we started to meet two times per month with our focus on doing a book study, prayer, and occasional social events. What a time to start a small group! Who knew what the rest of 2020 would bring? Who knew we would stop going to church in person? Who knew we would only see faces through a computer screen? Fortunately, our small group continued to meet via zoom when the "lockdown" started. What a blessing it was to have meaningful conversations and support for each other during this time. Our small group kept me connected to West Hills Church as my "church in miniature" since I was not attending worship/seeing others in the church building on Sundays.

Historically, West Hills Church has encouraged and facilitated all members to be involved in a small group. The goal of the small group ministry is to encourage participants to develop deep relationships with others so they can grow, learn, live, and worship with each other. Our most crucial mandate for small groups is to meet the members' needs and maintain healthy group dynamics. Everything else is pretty flexible.

Groups members can decide how they want their small group to be, but generally we recommend a few things. The total number of members is between 6 and 12, and they have something in common. There is equal status among members, and leadership duties are shared or divided fairly among members. The focus or purpose of the group can be educational, support, social, mission, or a combination of these elements.

There are several ways to get involved in a small group at West Hills. You can reach out to one of the small group deacons or other members to see if there is an opening in an existing group. You can initiate the development of a new small

group by gathering friends or acquaintances or by attending the Sample Small Group, which will start in January 2022. The purpose of a Sample Small Group is twofold; first, to experience a "Sample" of group life with only a four-session commitment, and second, to learn healthy group dynamics.

The deacons for Small Groups are here and available to help you or your small group. We have video and written resources and can even offer in-person coaching to make your group the best it can be. Please reach out to us if you need anything and watch for more information on the Sample Small Group in January 2022.

Sheryl Overby, sloverby@cox.net, 402-680-9338

Other group deacons are:

Candy Glasgow, donandcandy3@cox.net, 402-415-3586

Mary Jirak, rjirak2@cox.net, 402-658-1032

Thanksgiving Service

Wednesday, November 24

6:30 pm

Following the service we
will enjoy pie!

Please bring a pie to share.

WHY I FEEL CALLED TO SERVE

by Don Glasgow



Candy and I have been serving lunches with others from West Hills at the Omaha Street School once a month for about 17 years. I felt called to volunteer after I retired from public school teaching. I heard John Parsons, the director, speaking at a West Hills Men's Retreat at Camp Calvin Crest. The Omaha Street School is an alternative high school for students who have not found success in a traditional school setting. The OSS is often a last chance for at-risk students to receive a high school diploma. When I visited the school, I could feel God's spirit amongst the staff. My volunteer application turned into a 5-year commitment to teach science. We now have many volunteers from West Hills who serve at the school.

SEPTEMBER *Session notes*

- The Elders completed discussion of the book "Joining God, Remaking the Church, Changing the World".
- Men's Game Day has been set for March 5, 2022.
- Approved the motion to accept the revised Elder for Finance Job Description.
- Briefly discussed a developing conversation amongst WHC Ministry Teams about the possible benefits Christians might gain from understanding the implications of recently revealed racial disparities in Nebraska prisons.
- Approved a motion noting that Session revisited the creation of the discussion forums to productively address pertinent issues and has shifted the focus to the strategic priority of building deeper relationships which are vital to future discipleship and mission. Go Build Relationships!
- A Congregational Meeting will be held on November 21, 2021 following the 10:00 a.m. worship service for the purpose of electing Elders, Deacons, and members of the Nominating Team and to approve the proposed changes to WHC By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation.

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

HEARING ASSISTANCE - Now Available During Worship! by Maralee Gifford



We're happy to announce that beginning Sunday, November 7, hearing assistance devices will be available during our worship services. Initially, we can accommodate four people who need assistance. If needed, we can add up to eight more units.

You can check out the listening devices at the soundboard in the sanctuary. This system can be used by individuals who wear hearing aids and by those who aren't. If you're interested in using a listening device, you can even stop by the church during the week to learn how they work and try one out. Contact Kevin Gibson at kevin@whcomaha.org or call/text at 816.517.8270.

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW, PART III

by Jessica Scheopner, Director of Family Ministries

For the past few months, we've been exploring the reasons we have long practiced intergenerational ministry at West Hills Church. If you missed one of these posts, you can catch up on the definition and history of intergenerational ministry at WHC [here](#) and the reasons it's important for our church family's growth [here](#). *Our strategic priority nails it, too:*

**Deeper relationships are vital to future
discipleship and mission.
Go Build Relationships!**
[with people who are younger and older than you].

We grow together when we spend time together. That's how we build deeper relationships. So how can we spend time with people who are in a seemingly different place in life than we are? It's quite simple, but it takes a little effort: **We need to go where they are.** *As the timeless philosopher Winnie the Pooh says, "You can't stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes."*

What do we do when we go where people of other generations are?

- We might share a hobby or a learning experience.
- We might play a game.
- We might serve with a mission partner.
- We might attend a class, play, concert, or sporting event.
- We might share a meal.
- We might do a project together.

But don't miss this: *the activity really doesn't matter.* No matter what outward thing we are doing together, the real, inward activity is to listen with empathy and intention. We listen with suspended judgment and solutions. We just listen to the person's heart and let them know we care. **That's it.**

Another leadership magician, **Walt Disney**, reminds us: "the way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." Here are some easy ways you can get started or go further in building relationships with people who are older or younger than you:

Easy Sunday wins:

1. Look around the sanctuary for someone you don't know yet and go meet them.
2. Hang out in the Geneva Lounge for a few minutes after worship.
3. After worship, linger a few minutes in the Geneva Lounge to meet or talk to someone of a different generation. Ask them a question AND a follow-up question.
4. Greet them again the next week.

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW, PART III, continued

Spend a little more time:

- Go to a kid's sporting event, concert, recital, or play. Call the church office if you'd like help making these connections.
- Send a note to someone whose gifts or talents you've noticed.
- Invite neighbors, friends, or family members to come with you to Cookies and Cocoa on December 10 (or if you prefer, come ready to join a table with another household).
- Worship online in the nursery once a month to be a welcoming presence for families with young children.
- Host a small group of InterVarsity college students for dinner in your home.
- Learn names and faces using the new church directory. And if you didn't get your picture taken yet, call TODAY to be part of this easy, free way to build community!
- Sign up for Servant Sunday next spring.

Challenge yourself even more:

- Consider joining the upcoming short term intergenerational mission trip.
- Join the all-ages leadership team that plans and leads VBS.
- Invite a family or small group of people of different generations to meet for lunch together after church.
- Let the church staff know you're interested in mentoring a child, teenager, or young adult.
- Let the church staff know you'd like to build a relationship with one of our homebound members.
- Join an intergenerational small group or Bible study (many of our groups and studies are already intergenerational!)
- Plan to be part of the next West Hills ~Church Family~ Camp.

MOST IMPORTANT: Have fun building relationships as you get to know and understand people of all generations in our WHC family, your neighborhood, and our community at large. God made this beautiful church family and wants us to ENJOY fellowship with Him and with one another!

We want to celebrate our growing West Hills Church relationships. Please call the church office or email jessica@whcomaha.org to share a story about your intergenerational friendships!

BIBLE QUIZ compiled by Gloria Zinn

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BIBLE?

1. Can you name the Fruit of the Spirit (found in Galatians 5:22-23) which is missing from the following list: love, joy, peace, forbearance, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
2. Which Biblical said: "But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."
A. David B. Jacob C. Abraham D. Joshua
3. When God asked for a prophet to be sent to His people, who said, "Here am I; send me"?
A. Isaiah B. Ezekiel C. Samuel D. Jeremiah
4. Which prophet served for 40 years as God's spokesperson to the southern kingdom of Judah and its capital city, Jerusalem?
A. Obadiah B. Jeremiah C. Ezekiel D. Isaiah
5. Which one of the four gospels was written especially for a Jewish audience?
A. Mark B. Luke C. Matthew D. John
6. When Jesus asked His disciples "Who do people say the son of Man is?" which disciple said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."?
A. Peter B. John C. Matthew D. James
7. What was the longest recorded "sermon" Jesus ever gave?
A. While feeding the 5000 B. When teaching his disciples C. When giving the Beatitudes D. When teaching the Pharisees
8. Which son persuaded Jacob to let him take his brother Benjamin to Egypt for more grain?
A. Judah B. Reuben C. Simeon D. Dan
9. Which prophet accurately foretold the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel?
A. Jeremiah B. Isaiah C. Ezekiel D. Amos
10. Who enabled and accelerated the growth of Christianity among the Gentiles?
A. Peter B. John C. Paul D. Jesus
11. What did Job call his friends when they tried to console him?
A. "faithful friends" B. "loving friends" C. "faithless vipers" D. "miserable comforters"
12. What do the four horsemen of the apocalypse, described in the Book of Revelation, represent?
A. beauty, health, war, death B. conquest, war, sickness, death C. conquest, war, famine, death D. beauty, sickness, war, revival

grateful grab bags

sign up at whcomaha.org for your take-home project.



We hope this fall fun will provide a way to deepen a relationship with someone, to cultivate hearts of gratitude and generosity, and to celebrate God's grace as you count your blessings together through the activities tucked inside these kits!

Sign you for your take-home kit today at whcomaha.org until November 21.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

by Maralee Gifford



4 large pork chops (1 - 1 ½ in)

1 tbsp. olive oil – divided
1 tbsp. paprika
2 tsp. onion powder
2 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
1 tsp. oregano

Drizzle 1 tbsp. oil on pork chops.
Mix seasonings – sprinkle on top of chops on both sides

Oven 400 degrees – Bake 18 minutes – Put 1 tsp. butter on top – Cover -- Let rest for 5 min.

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF STEPHEN MINISTRY by Laura Meyers

In 1975, Dr. Kenneth Haugh, a pastor and clinical psychologist in St. Louis, Missouri, found there were so many pastoral needs within his congregation that he couldn't keep up with the demand. He decided to live out the Bible passage in Ephesians 4:12, "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ," and Stephen Ministry was born. Today more than 600,000 people have trained as Stephen Ministers (laypeople who provide care to those who are hurting). More than one-and-a-half million people have received care from a Stephen Minister in a formal one-on-one caring relationship. Millions more have been touched by this ministry in informal ways.



Stephen Ministry also has a long history here at West Hills, dating back to 1981. That is 40 years of successful ministry here at West Hills. For many of those years, it was thriving. Currently, however, we are in a season of rebuilding this fantastic ministry:

- We currently have 13 trained Stephen Ministers in our congregation. Many have also completed Leadership Training.
- Of those 13, we have two active Stephen Ministers willing to be "linked" with a Care Receiver to provide a structured one-to-one caregiving relationship.
- We have had two "linkings" this year and are working on a third. One linking was with a member of our congregation, and the second was with someone outside of our church.
- We also have two active Stephen Minister Leaders.

I would like to personally thank everyone who has been praying for our Stephen Ministry here at West Hills, as our prayers have been answered. I am excited to report that we are currently training five new Stephen Ministers who will receive a total of 50 hours of care ministry training. By the end of their training, they are well-equipped with the principles and skills to provide high-quality, Christ-centered, emotional and spiritual care to others. We will continue to provide training opportunities in 2022. Let us know if you feel you may be called to this ministry.

Yes, I have a personal passion for this ministry, and I would love to see it succeed for another 40 years. But more importantly, Stephen Ministry is the epitome of relational ministry and aligns perfectly with the church's new strategic priority of relationships. A Stephen Minister shares one-to-one relational ministry with someone when they need it the most. Stephen Ministry is meant to be offered outside of the church as well. It is a proven tool to spread Christian love into the community. It has so much potential to reach out beyond our four walls. Stephen Ministers also build a special bond of Christian community and camaraderie within the group itself. Ask one of our current SM's in training – we really stretched them to explore their feelings with the group on Saturday in our last training session.

Please don't let our numbers fool you. We may be small, but we are mighty! If you are wondering if a Stephen Minister could be beneficial for you or a loved one, please contact any pastor or someone on the Stephen Ministry leadership team. God always provides, and we will connect you with a Stephen Minister.

Cathy Voshell, phone: 402-301-9434,
email: rcvcav85@gmail.com

Laura Meyers, phone: 402-490-0974,
email: meyersla@cox.net

ASK THE PASTOR

In this newsletter segment we will include a question from the congregation and the response from one of the pastors. To submit a question, email it to: info@whcomaha.org

Q: If God knows our future, why pray?

A: This question reminds us that although prayer is a basic piece of our faith, we sometimes feel confused or uncomfortable with its practice.

Getting right to the heart of the matter, Jesus tells his disciples to bring their needs to God in prayer – even though the Father already knows their needs, (Mat 6:8-13, Luke 11:1-13)! Why?

Throughout the Scriptures prayer seems to affect change. Consider the prayers of Abraham, Moses, or even the early church, (Genesis 18:22-33, Exodus 33:12-23, Acts 12:5-12). Prayer is one way that God invites our participation in his mission to redeem the world. The vastness of this responsibility might overwhelm us if we forget that the Spirit guides us in how to pray (Romans 8:26-28), or that prayer is the expression of a relationship, i.e., if prayer is 'talking', then it is also 'listening'.

In his earthly life, Jesus prayed regularly. He was more closely connected with the Father than any human in history, and as result, he was powerfully successful in participating in God's mission. Jesus' connection to the Father was maintained through regular listening and talking. The Gospels are a highlight reel; they don't record every moment of Jesus' life. Yet Jesus' prayers are often mentioned – Luke alone records 10. In these prayers we see Jesus making requests for his needs, but also spending time alone with his Father. Prayer, as practiced and taught by Jesus, is both effective and relational.

Response provided by Pastor Andy Hamer

Each month our pastors attempt to briefly answer your tough questions. They would be happy to continue these conversations with anyone, and or to provide further biblical and theological resources.

2022 Stewardship Campaign

Thank you to everyone who submitted your 2022 pledge cards in the past two weeks! To date, we have received **83 pledge cards!** Your commitment to regular giving is an important element in ministry planning for the coming year.

As a reminder there are several ways you can participate in this important process by bringing your pledge card to worship with you Sunday and dropping it in the collection box, mailing your card to the church via the USPS, or pledging online at the West Hills website using this [link](#).

THANK YOU for your prayerful consideration and continued faithfulness to West Hills!



ADVENT IS AROUND THE CORNER...you may want to note these dates



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL GUIDE Sunday, November 28

The theme of our Advent season this year is But Wait...There's More! Once again, we're publishing an Advent Devotional Guide with devotions written by our congregation. This guide will be available on the first Sunday of Advent - November 28.



HANGING OF THE GREEN Sunday, November 28, 6:00 p.m.

Experience once again the awe and wonder of the coming of Christ in this participatory, family-friendly service that helps mark the beginning of the Advent season. Together we will add the finishing touches to the decorations in our sanctuary.



COOKIES & COCOA Friday, December 10, 6:30 p.m.

Enjoy a night away from the hustle and bustle of shopping, parties & get-togethers - but let us do all the work.

We would love for you to join us for a night of family fun, delicious snacks, games & decorating cookies to celebrate the season of Advent!

MEN'S NIGHT OUT by Daniel Patrick O'Reilly

Well, hello, fellow West Hillians. If you happened to be walking by Sean O'Casey's Pub on the evening of Tuesday, October 26 (who does that?), you might have heard some familiar voices coming from within. *Twenty-six men from West Hills came for prayer, food, fellowship, friendship, and -- beer!* We thought about advertising the event as free grace and beer. However, that seemed a little deceptive as grace is free, but beer is not.

After this Covid winter (spring, summer, and fall) and this Husker football season, we were ready for an evening of male bonding and spirituality. No agenda, just getting together. I know what you're saying. C'mon Dan, isn't male spirituality

an oxymoron? Yes, when the rubber meets the road, it's usually the women who are the spiritual leaders. Yet, Christ calls men to be leaders in their churches as well. It's definitely a challenge for me. Well, Christ never said it would be easy to follow him (Matthew 16:24), but He did say it would be worth it (John 10:10).

Watch for future men's ministry events coming soon. You can go to www.whcomaha.org and click on Events to see what's coming.

As our church moves forward, the future's so bright; ya gotta wear shades. Stay safe, stay hopeful and stay healthy. See you in church!

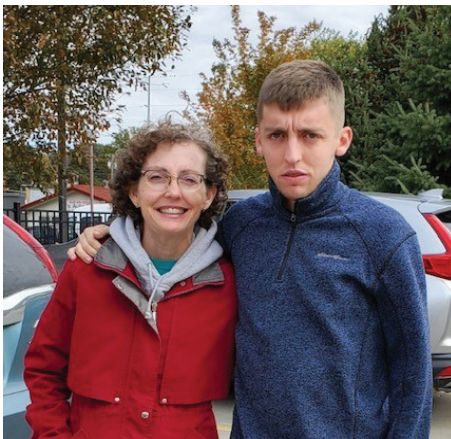


FALL SERVANT SUNDAY by Peg Shirley

Servant Sundays are such a unique mission event at West Hills. We hold Servant Sundays twice a year. The **spring event** is for our neighbors in Westgate, and the fall event is for our neighbors and our West Hills members who need a little extra help.

Mother Nature didn't cooperate with either event this year, as she rained out both servant days. Yet, that didn't keep our outstanding, caring servants from serving. For our fall event, we visited

18 homes and completed the jobs. Many of these are families that we serve each year. We had nine team leaders, and they are a true blessing to all of us. They check in with the homeowners to see what work needs to be done, and then they work with their teams to ensure they have everything they need to complete the job. We also had 55+ volunteers work at the sites. We are so thankful for our wonderful congregation who wants to get out and serve our neighborhood and our congregation.



IN THE STORMS OF LIFE, JESUS NEVER LEAVES by Jane Loeck

This devotion was written by Jane Loeck for the women's silent retreat in October to be used during an optional meditation time. We thought you might enjoy it too!

Mark 4:35-41 Jesus Calms the Storm

³⁵That day when evening came, He said to His disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."³⁶Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷A furious squall came up, the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher don't you care if we drown?" ³⁹He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. ⁴⁰He said to the disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" ⁴¹They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!"



We are in a boat with Jesus. Our lives and situations in this crazy world can be compared to that of the fearful disciples in the boat. Think about it -- we're either heading into a storm, in the middle of a storm, or have come out of a storm! The Christian life is full of stormy seas.

In this passage we see the turmoil of the disciples in contrast to the power and peace of Jesus. The disciples are going about their business doing God's will. They get into the boat and just want to get to **the other side**. Then here comes the unexpected storm! We, like the disciples, forget the words of Jesus and panic. Instead of choosing faith over fear, we often choose fear over faith. We may even accuse Jesus of leaving and not caring!

The sudden storms of life make us wonder, like the disciples, where is Jesus? Complete faith and trust in the Father is needed in times like these.

Sometimes the Lord's silence in our storm feels like He's asleep on a cushion in the boat! Yet, it is all part of His design to strengthen our faith and fulfill His plan. Life's storms are an opportunity to learn. The boat we're in is a test of our faith; there are lessons to be learned in the storms.

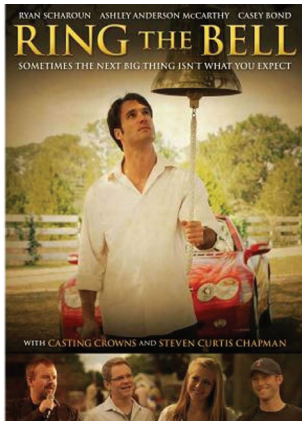
Jeff Stott in his "Truth Applied" online devotion writes that when a person comes out of a storm they are not the same. They view both self and Jesus differently because of what they have learned in the storm. Not all storms come to disrupt. Some may clear a path **to better see the other side**. We should view storms as an opportunity for God to display his sovereignty. *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33)

Our hope is in Jesus even in today's unstable world. He is with us in every kind of storm. He does not abandon us in our struggles — **HE NEVER LEAVES**. Nothing can separate us from His loving presence. Jesus has promised His presence for all time. *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matthew 28:20)

Just as He did for the disciples in the boat, Jesus promises us His peace and presence. He gives us His Holy Spirit. Even when we don't realize it and think He's asleep on a cushion in the rear of the boat, He is with us! Jesus is in control of the storm, giving us His grace, provision and protection.

Leslie Gould states, "Sometimes God calms the storm but sometimes He lets the storm rage and calms His child." When the storms of life rock our boats, call on Jesus to calm the storm. Let your wind die down and be completely calm as you sail with Jesus.

DVD STUDY SUGGESTION



The Dove Family-Approved DVD, "Ring the Bell," is a religious movie reminding us that "sometimes you need to step out of your comfort zone and see exactly what HE has to offer."

When talent scout Rob Decker arrives in Middleton, he is looking for high school student

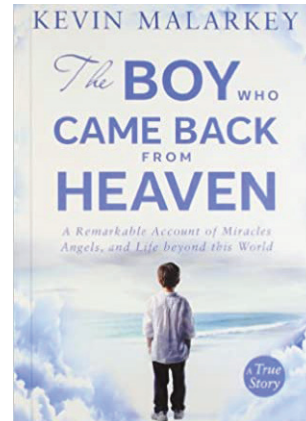
Shawn Hart, the top major league baseball prospect in the country. Decker hopes to convince Hart to skip college for the major leagues, making Decker a very wealthy man. However, the community makes it clear to him that "GOD has called them all to higher purposes." What Decker learns from the "locals" helps him turn from his cynical lifestyle and see for the first time that everyone has talent. "But how it is used depends on the choices one makes and that there is nothing better than love, forgiveness, and grace."

Another change agent for Decker is Dailey Cook, who heads up the home for orphan boys where Hart currently resides. She and her brother disciple the boys at Cook Ranch for a life following Jesus.

This 96 minute DVD stars Ryan Scharoun as Rob Decker and Ashley Anderson McCarthy as Daisey Cook. Grammy Award winner Steven Curtis Chapman also stars in this DVD as Pastor Steve.

suggested by Debbie Chadwick

BOOK SUGGESTION



"The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven" is a New York Times Best Seller by Kevin and Alex Malarkey. It is the true story of six-year-old Alex, who was paralyzed in a car crash in which his father, Kevin, was driving. Alex was the first child to receive the "Christopher Reeve" surgery which

allows him to breathe independently without a ventilator.

According to Tyndale House Publishers, –"When he (Alex) finally awoke from a two-month coma, he revealed something amazing: he had spent time in heaven with Jesus, while unconscious, and had come back with astonishing revelations about what he had seen, heard, and experienced."

Much of the book is told from the perspective of Alex's father, Kevin. As the parent, Kevin's emotions are intense and honest. Although he wants to erase the car accident and its aftermath from their lives, his faith demonstrates belief and persistence, ultimately revealing the power of prayer in any health crisis.

Kevin Malarkey is a Christian therapist with a counseling practice near Columbus, Ohio.

As of the publishing of this book in 2010, Alex Malarkey can stand for an hour at a time, with assistance from a special harness, and can walk on a treadmill while others move his legs. Alex believes he will walk on his own again one day.

suggested by Debbie Chadwick

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



NOVEMBER

1-Rod Hansen
2-Beckett Dunn
Judy Schnabel
3-Ella Loewens
5-Claire Neil
7-Bruce Workman
Dorothea Brady
Carolyn Reeves
8-Scott Julich
Hannah Weller
9-Juliana Scheopner

10-Catie Scheopner
11-Denise Dolezal
Corrine Wenck
12-Virginia Pickett
13-Bonnie Aden
Nicole Burns
Ginny Jansen
Rick Reeves
14-Bethany Bailey
15-Charissa Wells
19-Jana Prescott
22-Kelly Briggs

23-Mary Jirak
Cheryl Stout
24-Julianne Gill
25-Jeff Smith
26-Kayden Kopperud
Donna Peterson
Doug Stout
Cleo Snyder
27-Tricia Freeman
28-Kyle Grossoehme
30-Todd Curran

DECEMBER

1-Candy Glasgow
Zoe Dozier
5-Wayne Moore
6-Sue Carson
7-Izzy Mercer

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