

THE WINDOW

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

October 2021

INTO THE DEEP by Andy Hamer, Pastor

After months of discernment, I'm happy to announce West Hills' new Strategic Priority:

Deeper relationships are vital to future discipleship and mission. Go Build Relationships

Maybe you're wondering, "Don't we already do that?". The West Hills Mission Statement encourages us toward, connecting with God, others and the world. And one of our five Values is, authentic relationships. So why this focus on relationships now? What's the story here?

First off, this was a long, thoughtful process that involved all of our Ministry Teams, Session, and Staff. As individuals and groups, we brainstormed, questioned, reflected, and prayed. We regularly checked in with our hearts, even as we challenged our heads. At many points in the process, we asked ourselves, "What is arising?"

One night later in the summer, something bubbled up that we just couldn't seem to shake. Our Elders and some staff had gathered to identify key characteristics of our church's life and history. During that conversation we realized that we had questions about whether authentic relationships remained central to our identity. Was it just a part of our past, or something we lived out in the present?

Community, the real sharing of faith and lives, is an essential piece of our faith and of any Church. But community isn't automatic. Each church has their own levels of success and failure with community. WHC has had a lot of historical success in this area. Consider WHC's early adoption of small groups or even the longstanding practice of "checking-in" at the beginning of most meetings. Consider also the way people felt welcomed into the West Hills community regardless of their family struggles, divorces, or addictions. WHC was a community for people who struggled with sin and its effects; people like me and you. For

some, this wasn't just your welcome to WHC, but also your welcome to faith in Jesus Christ.

Given the above, we were surprised this summer when relationships kept bubbling up into our discernment process. Many of the other major themes we considered seemed to hinge on this idea of deeper relationships. Beyond that, we kept circling back to a gritty truth: the last five years had damaged our sense of the life-giving community that Jesus wanted his disciples to experience. (John 17:13-23).

Recent years have reminded most honest churches that it's hard for communities to disagree – about leadership style or direction, about how we apply the Gospel to our everyday lives, or about how we make sense of extraordinary events. Tectonic shifts in our daily experience have formed cracks in our cultural assumptions. In these gaps we catch glimpses of hidden potential and hidden sin. It will be months and years before we fully understand what all this means for us and about us. One crystal clear lesson is that change and uncertainty are extremely difficult for human beings and their relationships with one another.

Also clear, as it has always been, is God's intention that we should love one another – even to the point of reconciling immense differences. We have as our quintessential example God's steadfast love, strengthened by time and adversity. In the face of human mistrust, anger, and indifference, God's love continues to blossom. Many of us have experienced this tempering in our oldest and closest human relationships. We move from fullness, to friction, to hurt, to reconciliation, to new fullness. This type of deepening of our

INTO THE DEEP, continued

relationships with God and each other is just one example of what we may accomplish as we double down on our congregation's historic focus on relationships.

Our two-year aim to deepen relationships inside and outside of our congregation is truly strategic. We have hopes for our church, some of which started in our past and are flowing toward our future. We want to move forward as an intergenerational church, and we desire to be both evangelistic and compassionate to the needs of the world around us. Today, all of these require next level relationships. In this rapidly changing time, we need relationships of care, encouragement, and mutual learning that span age and cultural boundaries. This is especially true for our youngest generations who highly value relational authenticity. Vibrant relationships are essential to our faith and our future.

Considering that our aim to build and deepen relationships is a 'soft target', how would we define success? Perhaps the nature of our focus will actually shift the way we measure success. For example, we might find it valuable to measure:

- Not just the number of Bible facts we know, but the number of people who know us well enough to help us understand what it means to really live-out the Bible.
- Not just the time and dollars we donate in mission, but those who have connected relationally in mission as actual, "mission partners".
- Not just the number of young families that we see on Sundays, but also the number of those families whom we actually know. We might also consider the ways they have challenged us, helped us grow, and received our gifts in return.

Just imagine what we might experience after two years of intentional focus on relationships. Picture yourself walking out of the sanctuary on Sunday morning. How many more people might you feel comfortable talking to? How much more of their stories will you know? How much of your own story of faith will have been impacted by that old

acquaintance, or this new prayer partner, or that child with the chocolate chip cookie remnants on her sleeve? Beyond that, imagine a congregation made up of people who see evangelism not as a number but a face – a community where mission means people with names and dreams.

In all we do over the next two years, deeper relationships will be the theme song playing in the background. This is an all-church focus, but it really sings at the individual level – one relationship at a time.

SPIRITUAL CORRESPONDENCE

by Jana Prescott



So I say unto you: Ask... seek...knock... For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; if you knock, the door will be opened... So, have any of us asked anything of someone we know, or someone we're seeking, or just anybody who seems to be knocking at our door? Or have any of you been seeking something or someone you can't find? Could they be outside, knocking quietly at your door? I'm sure we all have moments like that. Well, this person you can't seem to find could just be Jesus, knocking on your heart, seeking entrance. He wants to let you know how much He loves you and how much He is seeking your love in return. So, go ahead, open your heart to Jesus. Love Him and listen to what He has to say to you.

October 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 October - Livestreaming and in-person worship service @ 10 a.m. Following the service join us for fellowship outside in the garden area. 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 outside
- * Youth 406 Journey Groups meeting in-person and outside
- * "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

Thursday Mornings - Women's Bible study meets at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel. The Serendipity Bible study of the book of Genesis continues

October 4 - Pickleball League begins (7 weeks)

October 8-10 - Women's Silent Retreat at St. Benedict Center in Schuyler, Nebraska

October 10 - Congregational Meeting following worship service

October 20-23 - Family Photo Sessions for new church directory. If you haven't made an appointment yet, please call the church office 402-391-8788

October 21 - 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!

October 24 - Servant Sunday - We will assist our Westgate neighborhood and West Hills members with yard clean up from 12:30-3:30 p.m. To volunteer, contact Peg Shirley at 402-980-2650 or call the church office at 402-391-8788

October 26 - Men's Social at Sean O'Casey's Pub (2523 S 140th Ave, Omaha) at 6 p.m. All men are welcome; invite a friend and stop by!

STEWARDSHIP 2022 by Matt Huck, Elder of Stewardship

Stewardship season is here again. (Yea!!!) It's that time of the year when we will be sending out stewardship pledge cards and begin working on the West Hills 2022 Operations budget. At times we can see stewardship season as a monetary burden or nuisance. When I was growing up, I always hated when it was time for the stewardship sermon. Last year, the stewardship team wanted to make stewardship something we think about all year long. We also wanted to demonstrate how stewardship is sharing our time and talents and not just a monetary commitment. On the 3rd Sunday of the month we have members of West Hills share a stewardship moment. In the stewardship moment we hear how members are using their time and talents on their journey with the living Christ.

The last 2 years of the pandemic have been a difficult time for everyone. As a church, West Hills has seen a lot of changes to how we minister and do "church". We have had to change how we do the sharing of joys and concerns and stewardship/collection. Passing microphones for joys and concerns and passing the collection plate are not somethings we should be doing during the pandemic. We've adjusted to new processes for how to do stewardship during worship. We now have stewardship boxes at the back of the church, we can give online, and we have seen an increase in giving by mail. West Hills, you have been faithful in your giving.

If you want to dig deeper and have access to a bible app, search for stewardship in the app. My bible app has multiple reading plans for stewardship:

- Stewardship Of Work
- Stewardship Of Life
- Stewardship Of Leisure
- Stewardship Lessons From God's Steward Leaders
- Stewarding God's Kingdom

If you don't have a bible app, you can also search the web for these these titles and pick from multiple results for each of those topics.

Once again this year we will be sending out pledge cards and stewardship postcards. We will also have the opportunity to return the pledge cards and postcards during the service on Stewardship Sunday. When you get your pledge card and postcard in the mail, please take the time to prayerfully consider what you 2022 pledge can be. Also, take the time to fill out a postcard and share where the Lord has led you to use your time and talents.

So this year, help me turn stewardship into a monthly celebration of our journey with the living Christ.



A **SEASON** TO HARVEST AND A **TIME** TO PLAN...

by Mike Overby, Elder for Finance

Welcome to Fall everyone! We now begin to look at harvest season here in the midlands with great anticipation for bountiful results. For farmers this is a time to reflect on the hard work undertaken in planting, caring for the crops in fields and to evaluate the results. Some actions I'm sure went well, some call for improvement, with each used to plan for the next growing season. In Ecclesiastes 3:1-15, Solomon expresses God's timing for everything ... a season for every activity under heaven. God has a plan and timing for everyone individually and corporately. The latter holds true for WHC. We (your Session, your staff, your Finance team) are entering 'a season' to follow His lead and develop an operating budget to support our ministries for 2022. To help us plan for and get us to 2022 it may be helpful to share with you where we are at today. With this as a background below you'll find a brief summary from West Hill Church's Operating Fund for year to date results through September 30, 2021:

WEST HILLS CHURCH				
Operating Fund Results				
Period Ending - September 30, 2021				
	Sept YTD <i>Budget</i>	Sept YTD <i>Actual</i>	over/(under) YTD <i>Act to Bgt</i>	2021 ANNUAL Budget
Pledged Revenue	540,290	503,947	(36,343)	843,000
All Other Revenues	28,107	36,200	8,093	47,287
Total Operating REVENUES	568,397	540,147	(28,250)	890,287
Total Operating EXPENSES	729,168	672,675	(56,493)	990,287
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(160,771)	(132,528)	28,243	(100,000)
Extraordinary Revenue				
Reserves available due to PPP Loan Forgiveness	100,000	100,000	-	100,000
NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(60,771)	(32,528)	28,243	-

NET Operating Cash Available, as of September 30, 2021 is \$172,409 (balance available after adjusted for known current liabilities and funds approved by Session for select projects)

Highlights and Observations:

- 2021's ANNUAL BUDGET was approved as a 'balanced budget' with the inclusion of the benefit of a \$100,000 loan under the federal PPP program supporting COVID relief needs. This was a one-time grant (as the loan obligation was forgiven earlier this year).
- Our GIVING, as defined as "Pledged Revenue", now stands at a (\$36,343 or a 6.7%) shortfall against the 2021 budget and down (\$93,637 or 15.7%) over the results in 2020.
- OPERATING EXPENSES are \$56,493 below the Budget. While this is favorable, it does reflect some timing delays in certain known expenses to be paid in the near term and does also reflect some changes and/or delays in planned expenses impacted/associated to COVID as we resume fully reopening church activities.
- YTD results show a (\$132,528) core operating deficit.
- AFTER factoring in the \$100,000 PPP Loan Forgiveness, a net operating deficit (\$32,528) is evident. This deficit is expected to increase and has required use of funds from operating cash reserves.
- Historical giving and as budgeted again for 2021 resides in the month of December to reach our budgeted break even projection.
- 2022 BUDGET process has begun. This process has several moving components and is subject to change. However, under the assumption that we reach a giving level in line with our 2021 budget, WHC operating fund will need to target roughly a \$100,000 or approximately a 11% cut in its operating expenses. This will impact all ministry areas going into 2022.

So... some closing thoughts for all of us; prayerfully consider your giving over the remainder of the year, prayers for discernment for the leadership teams during this challenging time of planning are welcomed, and last while the timing is important to this task let us all come to discover, accept and appreciate God's perfect timing in all aspects of our lives.

The above will be a part of the discussions at the upcoming congregational meeting scheduled after service on October 10th. Should there be any questions to the above please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly or at mcoverby9@cox.net or contact Mike Alfieri at mikea@whcomaha.org

INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY - SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW, PART 2 by Jessica Scheopner, Director of Family Ministries

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."
- an African proverb

At West Hills, we are *On a Journey*... Not an errand. Not a boondoggle. Not a wasted trip. Not a solo circumnavigation of the globe. It's a Journey... with the Living Christ. Please notice the word "with."

A journey is long. At West Hills, we want to go far, so we go together - with God, and with other people. This journey is no quick, solitary dash into the grocery store for a couple of items. This is a saunter - a ramble - complete with conversations, amazing views, new discoveries, and companionable silence. So who are we going with?

In September, we took a look at [the DNA structure of intergenerational ministry at WHC](#). This month we'll explore some reasons to seek out travel companions spanning all the ages and stages of life.

It's Biblical.

No matter where you are in life, God has blessed you to be a blessing - relationally - to other people who are on the spiritual journey. Talk about these things wherever you are - as you walk along the road or build connections over the foosball table.



In Exodus 18, Moses is visited by his father-in-law, Jethro, who was an experienced leader in his own community. Jethro helps Moses to see and correct a leadership mistake Moses was making. This counsel from an experienced older leader benefitted Moses and the Israelites. It also was fruitful for Jethro, as he was able to see his own

earned wisdom used to make a meaningful and effective change in the way Israel was governed.

In Deuteronomy 6, Moses tells God's people to pass on their shared faith to the younger generations. He charged everyone who was there - and that was the entire nation - to pass on their faith by talking about it during the normal activities of daily life. It wasn't a command to set up a program, but a charge to build relationships and talk together about the most important thing while simply doing life together with younger generations.

In Luke 18, Jesus (whose traditional Hebrew education came as a result of Moses' charge in Deuteronomy 6) makes it clear that it's not just the young people who benefit from those relationships. When we spend time with people, we tend to become more like them. That charge in Deuteronomy 6 is meant to help all of us grow in our faith together as we talk about the heart of God's love for us while we hang out together in our homes, or as we take a walk or share a meal or sit at a ballgame together.

It's practical.

We all have gifts to give and receive. Intergenerational relationships offer great opportunities for this. Young people need cheerleaders - and coaches - in their corner.



If we were biologists, we might notice that intergenerational relationships tend to work in a uniquely symbiotic way. Young people need savvy,

INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY, continued

caring, consistent guides and cheerleaders in their corner while they navigate new experience after new experience. When older people walk with those younger people, they are living proof that the trial is survivable. They also have the satisfaction of making a lasting investment in a younger person's life by using the gifts they picked up as they went along that rough patch of road for the first time. Similarly, young people often bring energy and experiences that increase vitality for everyone. They can help to spur us all on and revive us when we're in a tiring part of the journey.

It's an example.

As Christians, we have a unique message to carry to the world. Intergenerational relationships are one of the eye-catching ways that we at West Hills carry the message. When we each use our gifts and strengths, we encourage each other with a living example of God's love.



The world is segmented and fragmented, separated and divided. As Americans, and possibly as descendants of pioneers, we pride ourselves on our independence and individualism. But the message of hope and love that we carry is different than what the world offers. The church is designed to deliver God's message in a unique way, too. We are called to be an illustration of the beauty and unity of God's family. When we come together as a group of beloved individuals bringing our unique gifts to God's shared table, it represents the best of what it means to follow Jesus. It's warm and welcoming – a beautiful example of God's love.

It's delightful!

God intends for us to have fun on this journey; intergenerational relationships can multiply the joy for everyone! God wants us to have fun with one another!



On a long journey, it's important to be able to laugh together, to take in the beautiful scenery, to stop and dip our toes in the creek, or to watch kids playing along the path. God wants us to have joy On the Journey with the Living Christ...connecting with God, others, and the world.

Next month we'll highlight some ways to experience the benefits of intergenerational ministry. If you want to explore ways to begin building relationships with people who are older or younger than you before then, email jessica@whcomaha.org to talk and listen for a way that fits your gifts and interests.

Whispers, Wiggles, and Wonder in Worship

It is a joy to our West Hills family to gather with all generations to worship Jesus. We believe that God put wiggles and giggles in His small image bearers, and He is neither offended nor distracted by sound and movement, but delights in their presence. So do we! If you find your young child needs a little more space and the cry room is under use, an adult can accompany a child/children to the large room in the nursery. The worship service will be livestreamed and you're welcome to stay until they are ready to step back into worship.

ENJOY THE RIDE!

by Deb Johnson, Deacon of Practical Needs



Some of my favorite memories are riding in a classic car with my mom and dad on a Sunday afternoon. It was nice to be able to take a leisurely drive to different locations with the antique car club. Sometimes we even got to cruise along with the top down. Later in life, some of my favorite memories are taking driving vacations across the U.S. with my husband and our three children. There are many interesting conversations that happen when you have a 3 year old, an 8 year old and a 19 year old in the car for 9 hours.

I've come to realize time spent in the car can be a wonderful way to show God's love to others. Not only are you meeting one of their needs by providing a ride, but you are also providing a listening ear as you travel and you're providing a spiritual need by bringing people to church.

There are several members of our congregation who can no longer drive, but still long to be active members of West Hills. Hebrews 10:25 says, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." We are looking for volunteers to pick up some of our members on Sunday morning, bring them to church and then take them back home. Let's make sure we are showing God's love through this important ministry. If you would like to help, please contact Deb Johnson at: 402-960-8967, or call the church to volunteer. You are going to church anyway so why not bring someone along!

Hebrews 6:10: "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them."

SEPTEMBER *Session notes*

- The Building and Grounds committee has had conversations regarding the prioritization of money budgeted for Building and Ground from the Operating Fund.
- The new member class will be two weeks instead of 4 weeks and will be starting up soon.
- There is interest in supporting an Afghan Refugee family. They are seeking help with a job opportunity and providing household items like furniture.
- Several of the new class of deacons, elders, and nominating committed have been slated.
- Boyd Dingman has offered to build a horseshoe pit in the east lot with the help of the Men's Ministry team.
- Approved holding a Congregational Meeting on October 10, 2021, following the worship service for the purpose of presenting how the pandemic has impacted the budget, the new Strategic Priority, and to hand out proposed changes to the WHC Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.
- Approved holding a Congregational Meeting on November 21, 2021, following the worship service for the Election of Elders, Deacons, and members of the Nominating Committee and to approve the Proposed Changes to WHC Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.

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

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, OCT. 10

following the worship service
in the sanctuary and on Zoom

CONNECTIONS by Connie Huck, Deacon of Caregiving Ambassadors

At the end of June, our youngest child got married. He is the last of our kids to marry (we've had three weddings in just under two years). It's exciting to witness young love and when your kids find that person that totally gets them and helps them feel whole, especially when they share a strong faith in God. At the reception, there never seems to be enough time to visit with the guests who have attended. My mother's youngest brother and his wife represented my parents' generation for our family. My mom has been gone almost four years, and my dad has now been gone for ten months. When it was time for my aunt and uncle to leave, I became very emotional. Due to Covid-19 and their own health concerns, they were not able to attend my dad's funeral, and we have not seen them in almost two years. It took me several minutes to regain my composure after they left.



Since then, I have thought about why their departure affected me the way it did. My aunt

has been awesome about calling me to check in after my dad's death and sending cards or texts. I think I realized how much that connection meant, especially during my grieving period. Over these last months of the pandemic, I have thought a lot about how the lack of connection has affected me. Just like seeing my aunt and uncle recently, I had the same feelings of emotion when I got to see our West Hills family for the first time. We've been through a lot without the physical connection of this family, but now that we can be together again, what a reception and celebration! When both of my parents passed, I received a few booklets on grieving from the church. While the booklets were helpful, what touched my heart the most was the notes that came along with them. They were great reminders that I was loved by God and His people.

As a deacon of Caregiving Ambassadors, it helps to understand those feelings of isolation and connection. There are still many of our members who cannot attend in person and our Caregiving Ambassadors are great at reaching out. Currently we are working to help them become better at using some new technology that can aid in their connections as well as planning for some events later this year. On any journey, there are days when we reflect on where we've been. What has meant the most to you over this time? Where do you see us heading? How can we be better communicators with each other and show God's love? This family of West Hills is here to support each other and show His love to one another.



For information about
Stephen Ministry, contact:

Cathy at 402-301-9434
rcvcav85@gmail.com

Laura at 402-490-0974
meyersla@cox.net

THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE STUDY by Gloria Zinn

In the early days of 2000 I was working full time and had, I thought, little time to attend a Bible study group. However, my daughter Beth continually asked me to join her at West Hills for the Thursday Morning Bible Study, so I made time. Unlike some in that group I did not know many stories or characters from the Bible. I have always attended church, ever since I could walk and talk, but there were never Bible study groups or classes offered at my church. I always relied on the Sunday morning sermons to teach me about the Bible. However, as I began to attend Bible study every Thursday morning, I found I was becoming more curious about some of these stories and people. I wondered why Abraham was chosen by God, surely there were others at that time, and who was this Melchizedek character? I found that the sermons I was hearing were helpful, but did not provide the answers I was looking for. I began to study the Bible on my own, but it was the formal Bible study program on Thursdays that really gave me the specific information I had been interested in finding. Although reading my Bible gave me lots of information, it was in this community of others that real learning began to take place. The Bible began to come alive through the questions, answers and shared research from others.

After I retired in 2010 I was asked to help teach the Thursday Bible Study class with three other ladies. That required more research on my part when it was my turn to teach. After a few years West Hills was experiencing some big changes, and the three others I had been teaching with were gone, as well as a couple of pastors. I couldn't find anyone to share the teaching responsibilities with me, so I met with Bill Bowers, the Interim Pastor to discuss this dilemma. Thursday Morning Bible Study at West Hills had been in existence for many, many years and it would be a big disappointment for many of the ladies who had been coming every Thursday for a number of years to find it had been cancelled. Pastor Bowers suggested using the Serendipity method of Bible Study, something I had never heard of. One of West Hills previous pastors, Dick Meyer, had been part of a large team of pastors throughout the United States who had written the questions for this method of studying the Bible. Pastor Bowers also said his wife had been facilitating the Serendipity Bible Study at another church and had excellent feedback about its success. So we started this method in the Thursday Morning Bible Study and found it was well received

and a wonderful way to dissect the Bible! The facilitators were volunteers from the members of the Bible Study who were interested in presenting one or two chapters of whatever book in the Bible we happened to be studying. Facilitating a lesson wasn't comfortable for everyone, which was fine. No one was expected to volunteer for a lesson unless they were so inclined. Discussions from the questions asked became a lively interchange of ideas and sharing research conducted by some of these ladies, and the Bible began to speak to us as it related to our current world and our lives. We were all on the same path, a clearer understanding of God's Word, given over 2,000 years ago. It was a time of exploring and growing along with the opportunity to make new friends.



Looking back over the last several years of my involvement in the Thursday Morning Bible Study program I feel very blessed to have been given the opportunity to grow, with others, in understanding and learning more about God's Word. This has increased my own faith, which has helped me through so many obstacles over the years. I thank God we have a church that believes and supports all the wonderful extra studies and programs offered to help each one of us gather the tools needed to understand and live the way God is directing us. With so many challenging changes in our world today, participating in a Bible Study class or attending one of the many programs the church is offering, seems more important now than at any other time. As stated in 2nd Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

I pray you take advantage in 2021-22 to attend the Wednesday or Thursday Morning Bible Study in the Chapel at 9:30 a.m., or attend one or more of the wonderful programs our church is offering this fall. Not only will you meet someone new, but your faith will undoubtedly be blessed.

WORSHIP REWIND by Kevin Gibson, Director of Worship and Music

On Sunday, September 19, Kansas City artist Dylan Mortimer was our guest speaker in worship. He shared about his faith in God, even in the midst of battling cystic fibrosis and undergoing two double-lung transplants. Below are some photos from the worship service and comments from some of our members.



"As I walked into the sanctuary and an usher handed me the beautiful bulletin, I knew this would not be an ordinary Sunday service. This was confirmed when I noticed 5 young men with brass instruments about to begin playing - such inspirational music!"

"The speaker, Dylan Mortimer, had an extraordinary message for us all. Praise God in all circumstances. Thank Him for our wondrously designed bodies and for the very air we breathe every minute of every day. And trust Him at all times in all circumstances. I especially enjoyed the Q&A time after the service. I loved hearing from Dylan and his wife how God brought them together and how they've trusted and followed the Lord all through the two lung transplant surgeries. His artwork is pretty incredible. It's hard to imagine creating a huge wall size art piece using gallons of glitter! He made it sound easy!" Ginny Lakin

"Dylan beautifully intertwined biblical passages, science and art with his failing lungs and subsequent surgeries and healing. The combination of God's word, art and his ultimate recovery was powerful and awe inspiring, providing hope to others facing the gravest of circumstances. Dylan truly is a miraculous survivor and passionately praised God, his medical team, his wife and others for their angelical qualities, all gifts from God, with hope and inspiration for others." Rob & Janet Laughlin

"I thought it was the most uplifting service we've had for some time. I felt the presence of the Lord throughout the service. It was a joyful service! Dylan Mortimer had an amazing testimony that was not really about him, ultimately, but about the Lord, the source of his hope." Judy Nelson

BIBLE QUIZ compiled by Gloria Zinn

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BIBLE?

1. **Who was Manoah?** A. The wife of Enoch
B. Samson's father C. Noah's wife D. One of the Old Testament Prophets
2. **Who did God call to deliver the Israelites from the Midianites?** A. Samson B. Elisha C. David
D. Gideon
3. **Which of the following is not one of the ten plagues God sent to Egypt to influence Pharaoh to free the Israelite slaves?** A. lice B. turning wine into blood C. boils D. flies
4. **Who was pushed out a window by an eunuch?**
A. Jezebel B. Tamar C. Salome D. Delilah
5. **Who was the author of Ecclesiastics?** A. Paul
B. Solomon C. David D. Samuel
6. **Who was Abraham's father?** A. Terah
B. Melchizedek C. Nahor D. Ephron
7. **Complete the following from the Beatitudes:**
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for A. theirs is the glory of God B. they shall find riches
C. theirs is the kingdom of heaven D. they shall find joy
8. **Who was Keturah?** A. Esau's wife B. One of David's daughters C. Judah's wife D. Abraham's wife
9. **Who is the opposite of Satan?** A. Jesus
B. Archangel Michael C. God D. the anti-Christ
10. **In what book in the Bible can I find a story about dry bones coming to life?** A. Zechariah
B. Ezekiel C. Malachi D. Obadiah
11. **Why in John chapter 5, verse 4 is missing in so many Bibles?** A. thought to be an unimportant part of the story B. accidentally omitted by the scribes C. thought to be a superstition D. mistaken interpretation of the Hebrew text
12. **What was placed into the Ark of the Covenant?** A. a jar of manna, the 10 Commandments and Moses' staff B. the 10 Commandments, a symbol of the 10 plagues that freed the Israelites, a jar of incense C. the ten Commandments, Aaron's staff, a jar of manna
D. the ten Commandments, the first 5 books of the Bible (Torah), a golden bottle of wine

(answers on the back page)

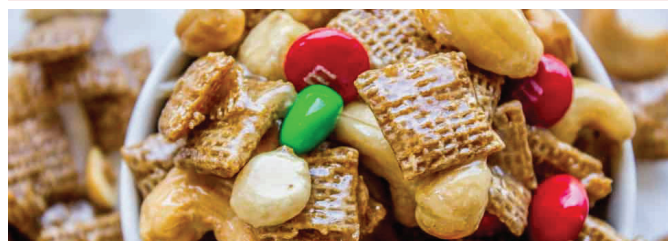


These beautiful fall days mean it's almost time for Servant Sunday!

On Sunday, October 24, from 12:30-3:30 p.m. we will be working at homes in the Westgate neighborhood helping our friends with outside yard work. We will also be at some of our West Hills members' homes doing the same type of work.

If you haven't signed up to volunteer yet, be a blessing and contact Peg Shirley at 402-980-2650 to get your name on the list. We're looking forward to serving with you!

RECIPE OF THE MONTH by Maralee Gifford



A Treat During the Husker Games!

Sweet Chex Mix

1 box honey nut chex cereal
1 can honey roasted peanuts or cashews
M&M's plain and peanut
Popcorn - 1 microwave bag (plain or buttered)
popped
1 paper sack from grocery store

1 cup light corn syrup
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 stick butter/margarine
1 teaspoon vanilla

Cook above ingredients in pot on stove until boiling
In paper sack put in chex cereal then pour in above mixture - Shake the bag

Put filled paper bag in microwave for 3 1/2 minutes taking out to shake every 30-45 seconds.
Put contents of bag on a baking sheet to let cool.
Mix and serve.

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

Why did Abraham sin with his wife's maid and never ask for forgiveness?

Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 16-17:21, 21:1-14

This great question challenges us to consider how we read the Bible. We can usually understand more about a biblical text by considering its context:

- **Culture** - Polygamy was a common practice in the Ancient Near East. In the Bible God upholds some cultural practices, stands against others, and some practices God gradually shifts his people away from over the centuries. Although God's original intent of monogamy seems clear with Adam and Eve (and it was eventually reaffirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19:1-9), God seems to have allowed the cultural practice of polygamy throughout most of the Old Testament period.
- **Surrounding Texts** - As we read other Old Testament narratives that include polygamy, we find a common thread: it usually results in

heartache, broken relationships, and bloodshed. Even if Old Testament Law doesn't spell out polygamy as a sin, biblical examples of polygamy usually result in negative natural consequences – just as it does in the passages above.

- **Genre** - The passages above are narrative; they exist as part of a story. They're descriptive and not prescriptive - the inspired writer won't just flatly tell us what to do or believe. The lessons we learn will mainly be drawn from our conclusions about what happens to the characters, etc. Additionally, we only get part of the story. The writer chooses what to include based on what she/he believes is most important for the reader to understand. In this case, instead of focusing on repentance, the writer emphasizes how God fixes the mess created by Abram and Sarai
- **Overarching Biblical Themes** - We can also consider how this passage might fit into the larger biblical themes of Covenant Relationship or Redemption

Taking all of the above into account, we might conclude that in these passages from Genesis the inspired writer wants us to notice how God brought about his plan of redemption through covenant relationships with people who display faith and faithlessness. Unfaithful human choices lead to misery, but God's covenant love and grace will continue on to fulfill his promises.

For those who want to go a step deeper into this question and others like it, you might try reading, [How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth](#) by Gordon Fee.

WEST HILLS WORK DAY VOLUNTEERS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK!



FALL FUN FEST by Maralee Gifford

A big **"THANK YOU"** to the Men's Ministry at West Hills for cooking up the yummy hot dogs and hamburgers for the Fall Picnic on Sunday, September 26th. It was a beautiful, sunny day for the gathering outside the north entrance in the parking lot after Sunday's service. The canopies, tables and chairs provided an inviting area to enjoy the food and fellowship while listening to music and games being played.

The most popular part of the picnic, however, was the Ice Cream Truck where old favorites and new delicacies were available. It took everyone

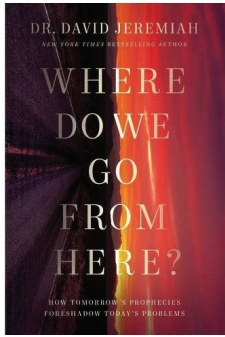
back to their childhoods when the Ice Cream Trucks would slowly go through neighborhoods playing their music and whetting our appetites for their special ice cream treats. It was a wonderful special addition to the picnic.

The old saying "a good time was had by all" really applied to this special gathering.

(Also want to thank all those behind the scenes who cooked, served, shopped, put games together and set up for the occasion. Couldn't have done it without you!!)



DVD STUDY SUGGESTION



Dr. David Jeremiah's bestselling book, **"Where Do We Go from Here: How Tomorrow's Prophecies Foreshadow Today's Problems,"** has now been made into a CD or DVD series for studies in small groups.

As mentioned in the original book, the DVD series speaks to today's headlines of modern plagues, social tensions, economic crises and depression.

Jeremiah shares with the viewer what God has to say to us about the days we are currently living in. According to Kindle books, the idea for the book, and later the DVD series, came to him following an interview concerning his book, "Is This the End?" when he was asked 'So where's the hope?'

Jeremiah said he has never forgotten that question and decided that "all my prophetic writing should be infused with hope." DVDs in the series include: Socialism, Globalism, Pandemic, Economic Chaos, The Falling Away, End Times People, Cancel Culture, Spiritual Famine, Jerusalem, The Triumph of the Gospel.

The first section of the series is entitled, "Where Are We?" This portion of the series features modern stories and our cultural movement.

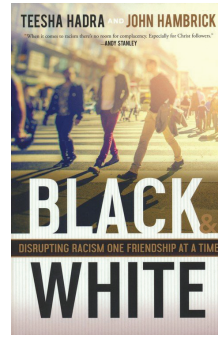
Section two studies the question, "What Does it Mean?" and focuses on scripture and how current events fit the prophecy.

"Where Do We Go From Here?" concludes the series by speaking of application and practical ways for living with hope and courage.

Dr. David Jeremiah is an American conservative evangelical Christian author, founder of Turning Point radio and Television Ministries and senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church, a Southern Baptist megachurch in El Cajon, California, a suburb of San Diego.

suggested by Debbie Chadwick

BOOK SUGGESTION



"Black and White: Disrupting Racism One Friendship At a Time" by Teesha Hadra and John Hambrick is a book that will be part of a study in the new year facilitated by Gary Anders and Bob Drake.

This book expresses the view that "Working against racism is part of what it means to call Jesus Lord and Savior. Racism is opposed to God's desire to be reconciled to God." (p. 142)

The very heart of this book is simply acknowledging that when building relationships with individuals of other races, we are not solving the racial problem but instead gaining understanding regarding the cultural divide in our society.

In other words, if we RISK creating friendships with those who are different from us, it might just change OUR world and how we see things. But first we must be willing to take that RISK.

The authors, Teesha Hadra, a young black woman and John Hambrick, a sixty year old white attorney, bring their personal experiences to the table in a manner which may help the reader consider their own role in healing racism.

The reader will learn about:

1. Subtle ways racism is alive and well in 21st century America.
2. How to get involved in what God is doing to disrupt racism.
3. Show the reader how to take steps to obey God's will to join in disrupting racism.

Teesha Hadra has a law degree from the University of Florida, where she practiced law for seven years before joining the ministry team at Buckhead Church in Atlanta in 2013. In 2016 she began working on a M.Div. at Fuller Theological Seminary. She currently serves as the Executive Pastor at Church of the Resurrection, an Anglican Parish in Los Angeles.

John Hambrick is an ordained Presbyterian pastor who earned an M.Div. degree from Fuller Seminary and a doctoral degree from Columbia Seminary. Hambrick currently works at Buckhead Church, the urban campus of North Point Ministries.

suggested by Debbie Chadwick

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



OCTOBER

1-Arlo Grafton
Kaitlyn Barnes
Kenneth Kopperud
Luke Freeman
2-Sunny Lundgren
Briann Bailey
Dan Freeman
Diana Dingman
Trish Mathia
Dale Obermiller
3- Bob Jirak
Owen Boyd

6- Bill Spiecker
7-Aeden Madigan
Fred Picavet
9-Mack Hanna
10-Larry Wagner
12-Ginny Lakin
David Loewens
13-Peggy Kelley
14-Helen Jacobsen
Shay Bailey
17-Katrina Thede
18-Ben Sedivy
Mariel Oftelie

19-Darcie Dingman
20-Tom Backer
21-Aaron Schaffer
Bill Heise
24-Anita Evans
26-Marilyn Grafton
Joyce Bunjer
27-Charlie Wenck
30-Megan Bailey
Tracey Mason
31-Gaylen Vermilyea

NOVEMBER

1-Rod Hansen
2-Beckett Dunn
Judy Schnabel
3-Ella Loewens
5-Claire Neil
7-Bruce Workman
Dorothea Brady
Carolyn Reeves
Bonnie Bender

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