

NEWSLETTER

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

by Jenn Esbenshade

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Wisdom for Everyday Life	2
In Loving Memory	2
LT Highlights	3
ELC News	3



This newsletter belongs to all of us. Your input is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to submit articles to the editor.

Editor: Judy Nguyen

Mission Statement

As we encounter God's heart of love, our hearts are made new by God's Spirit. We invite people to experience Christ's love, welcoming each one into a caring fellowship, serving Christ with our gifts and resources.



There was a period in my life where I moved every one to three years. Every new move brought change and I do have to admit at times it was quite exciting to experience something new and different. As Wade and I talked together about our future and where we would go after Guatemala, we decided that we wanted to go "home". We made a choice to put down our roots and stay awhile. Now here we are eleven years later still in the same place.

In all of our journeys we have periods of upheaval. God is moving and perhaps making us move. Sometimes this means physically moving, while other times it may be spiritual. There is change and there is something new. These can be times of excitement and wonder because it is often quite evident that God is at work.

But what about the times when we stay put? I have been wrestling with this question a lot lately. What does it mean to be in a place and find contentment and joy being there? Maybe it's not new. Most likely it could be the same, ordinary thing. Is God still working?

One of my favorite places to go when I was at Messiah College was a bench that sat right by the Yellow Breaches Creek. Inscribed on the stone-slab seat was "Like a tree planted by streams of water". This comes from the very first Psalm that describes a person who delights in God's word as a "tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither" (verse 3).

What is that tree like? The roots must go down deep, not only to support the heavy yield of fruit, but also to

draw water deeply from the ground. Even when there is no rain the tree still thrives with abundance. It can reach to the heavens and spread out wide its branches.

What an image for us! There is something beautiful about putting down those deep roots. When we root ourselves in God, we too grow strong and don't wither in times of trial. I think many of us have related this image to our relationship to God.

But what about our relationship with each other? What does it look like when we put down roots with a faith community? I would hope that this would mean that we support one another and build each other up so that we can stand tall in our faith, yet also allow ourselves to grow out into new places. I also hope that we could draw deeply from one other to nourish ourselves so that in times of drought we do not wither. As a community we extend our roots down deep and grow ever upward and outward.

So how does this happen? First, we need to be committed to one another to give that time and space for growth together. We also need to trust one another and trust that the God who loves us abundantly more than we can imagine is at work in all of our lives doing a "new thing" even when we are staying put. And of course a little faith, hope, and love never hurts either.

Are we ready to grow those roots deeper - together? Are we ready to reach up to heaven - together? Are we ready to spread out wide our branches into our community - together? For we are a community of trees planted by a Master Gardener who has amazing plans in store.

WISDOM FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

BY PAUL MARTIN

PSALM 119

VV 89—96

OUR ENDURING FAITH

Your word, O Lord, is eternal. (v 89)

Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth and it endures. (v 90)

Your laws endure to this day. (v 91)

The theme of this section of the psalm seems to be endurance. These verses refer to God’s creation, God’s word, and His faithfulness. These attributes of God have existed from

the beginning of time, still remain today, and will continue to exist throughout all the generations of mankind as long as the earth endures; and beyond into eternity.

These attributes of God remind us of the eternal existence of mankind. While our sojourn on earth is but a few years, we too will exist/endure forever in another world after we leave this one. How can we be sure? In His word (which will endure forever) He promises that eternal endurance.

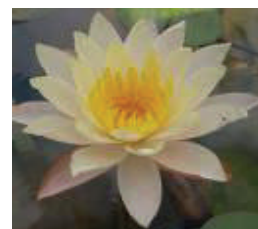
Just as there will be a new heaven and a new earth; so we in a new body (that will endure forever) shall live in that glorious place prepared for all those who love Him and keep His Word.

PRAYER

Lord, we thank you that as we live in this world of constant change and uncertainty, we can be assured that your eternal Word will endure forever. And by its promise we too will live forever in your enduring presence. AMEN

IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering those in our church family who went to be with our Lord in a previous March.



Ida Lefever
March 17, 1979

Howard McGinnis
March 12, 1984

Katie Rutt
March 21, 1984

Betty Sauder
March 5, 1986

Bertha Shirk
March 2, 1987

Raymond Smith
March 13, 1991

Lydia Musser
March 29, 1994

Erma L. Spangler
March 2, 2001

George Frank
March 19, 2002

Lester M. Weaver
March 13, 2010

Edna Bowman
March 15, 2011

LT HIGHLIGHTS

BY JENN ESBENSHADE

Witness Commission – The LT approved the addition of Peg Jackson to serve as the at-large member on the Witness Commission. The LT also approved an updated Missionary Support Team policy and MST chair job description.

Worship Commission – Guidelines were updated and approved to include all those who are involved in worship, not just praise team members. Those involved are now accountable to the

Worship Commission and the LT. Dave and Heather Helmuth were approved to lead worship on April 27. They will also host a midweek training session for those who help in worship.

Visitation Committee – The committee continues visiting people from our congregation. There is a desire to explore a greater level of community care perhaps among Community Life, House Fellowships and the Visitation Committee to meet more visitation needs.

In this interim time the committee will continue in the same way but will look toward the new pastor to review the quantity of visits.

House Fellowships - In the spring there will be a new regrouping of intentional house fellowships that will meet for a limited time and which will seek to encourage more relationships and community building.

EARLY LEARNING CENTER NEWS

BY PEG JACKSON

Hello from the Early Learning Center. We continue to have the same theme as last month with the weather. The confines of the church are still challenging for the children and staff. We did get out a couple of days to play in the snow piles and the children did not want to come back in. We are looking for March to be our answer and hopefully the cold cold weather leaves soon. We had our beach day on February 11 as it was snowing. I hope you enjoy the pictures of all of the fun. The children enjoyed it as we turned up the heat and filled a pool with water and played with beach balls.

We continue to invite community helpers to come and visit and we also plan to walk to the local ones when the snow melts. If you have a job that you would like to share with the children please contact me so we can schedule a time for you to share. As we teach the children about Jesus it's hard sometimes to help them understand some things like faith, forgiveness and love as these are not things you can see. I recently read about a father whose son was always getting into trouble and apologized when confronted. He knew his parents would always forgive

him. Finally the father took him to the garage and picked up a hammer and nail and told him to hammer the nail into the wall. Then gave him the hammer and told him pull out the nail. The father said when you do something wrong it's like pounding in a nail. Forgiveness is when you pull it out. The boy said he understands that. Then the father asked him to take the hammer and pull out the nail hole. That's impossible he said you can't do that. So each time you do something wrong we forgive you but you do leave a scare behind. This example has helped me to understand forgiveness. As over time I see how you can fill in those holes that are left behind as you move on. However if you continue to need forgiveness it makes the process that much harder. I hope some of you can relate to this as I have.

Pray for the center as we continue to serve the children in our community and their parents. Also pray for a good state inspection that will take place in the next month as it was postponed from last month due to the weather.



