



PazNaz
June 2013

WELCOME



Welcome to *Transformed Under the Pepper Tree*. In this monthly magazine, you will read stories of how God is changing people's lives at PazNaz, transforming them into the image of Jesus Christ by the power of his Spirit!

You might be asking, "Where can I find information about a specific PazNaz event?" Some information about specific events on campus is found within these pages, but each month *Transformed* is focused on relating stories about what PazNaz is really all about. Rather than programs or events, there are stories about changed lives, stories about people coming in contact with the Savior, and people exploring what it means to become a follower of him. It is exciting to hear what God is doing in the lives of people!

Years ago, Pastor Earl Lee and a group of staff members gathered around a pepper tree located on the northern-most point of what was to become the site for First Church of the Nazarene of Pasadena and dreamed and prayed that God would provide a place where more people could find power for living through Jesus. What began then has been going on for over thirty years as men and women, boys and girls have come into relationship with Christ in significant ways under the shade of that old pepper tree. The mission of the church hasn't changed. May it continue to flourish as people experience the transforming power of Christ.

Blessings,

B. Scott Anderson
Executive Pastor

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Why an Intergenerational Community? Why a Mission Trip Together?

From Pastor Keegan Lenker

These are exciting days for PazNaz! In the midst of looking at what it means to be an intergenerational community and not just a multigenerational one, the opportunities are endless as PazNaz begins to explore what this could mean for the church as a community.

As PazNaz explores this together in the coming days, some have asked how I became so passionate about it and why I see this as so vital for the church now and in the future. It all started with an opportunity and some feelings of discontentment as I watched students wander away from their faith after they had been active participants in ministry at PazNaz.

The opportunity came to PazNaz from the Fuller Youth Institute who wanted to look at churches that were experiencing this discontentment and wanted to see if some new things could happen.

In 2010, PazNaz was given the opportunity to journey for 12 months with several churches from across the country and different denominations, and take an honest look at their own contexts and see where the Holy Spirit is moving. After meeting together, I came back to PazNaz wondering where the Spirit might interject and challenge me to look at a way to connect different generations and get them involved together while doing ministry in the process.



For me, it meant cancelling the mission trip I usually do just for youth and joining the Work and Witness teams. Student Ministries decided to join a trip to Guatemala in 2011 and explore what God is doing there.

The students were not all that excited to cancel what they had always done, but I told them to give me one year and see if it didn't impact their lives significantly. If it didn't, then they could go back to what they had done before.

That first summer the group had their monthly training meetings to allow for a time of preparation, but also a time to establish some relationships. Sometimes on these trips, the youth are expected to do something separate from the adults so they are not a distraction to the other members of the group. I told everyone they would be working together on all the projects. I challenged the adults to get to know the students and visa versa.

Five adults on this trip ate at a different table each day and asked one question, "What's your story?" By the end of two weeks, the students felt as though they were a part of the mission of God as well as the mission of PazNaz.

When the group got home, I was so excited to see these relationships continue. During the Sunday greeting times, the students would go to the other side of the sanctuary to greet the adults they now considered friends. On the patio, people saw these relationships and heard them calling one another by name. The students had no desire to go on a mission trip with just youth anymore.

During the last few years, PazNaz teams have gone to Nicaragua. Each year has provided opportunities for more of these relationships to continue and new ones to develop. As PazNaz prepares for its third trip to Nicaragua this summer, some people may be asking what this has to do with becoming an intergenerational community.

My response would be that this is just one example of what it means to be an intergenerational community. Serving together in

another country is one way to do this, but there are plenty of ways PazNaz can do this here at home too. One way would be to learn to ask the question, "What's your story?" to those you see week in and week out. Another way would be to share a meal with those in your row that you see every week and think, "I should hangout with them sometime."

It is an honor to travel around and speak about intergenerational ministry to other districts in the denomination and share what God has been doing here at PazNaz. The exciting thing for me is I think PazNaz is just getting started in all that God wants to do in the coming days.

Research shows that the chances of a student's faith sticking beyond high school increase significantly if the student/child has a relationship with five adults other than their parents. This tells me that the Body of Christ needs each other significantly to help these percentages increase.

Over the last few years, I have sensed rumblings of discontentment that the future of the church is in big trouble. I hear many people in older generations say that today's kids do not care. I hear kids say they are afraid of the older generations. They feel like they have nothing in common; and therefore, do not need each other. I think the extreme opposite is true. Different generations desperately need each other now more than ever. The communication has broken down!

The Israelites regularly told their stories to one another. They talked about what God had done in their midst, and generation after generation was aware of the faithfulness and goodness of God.

The future of the church is in good hands as you begin to share again the faithfulness of God to one another and share your stories. The

story you have to share matters just as much as the story of the next person. An intergenerational community is more than just older generations and teenagers. It is also teenagers present with children. Each generation matters in this journey of faith. As you practice this together, you will see a renewed work of the Holy Spirit among his people.

In the coming days you will hear of new ways this is becoming a reality for PazNaz. Each age-group ministry is looking at ways to manifest this mindset. Men's Ministries is exploring this idea. Women's Ministries is beginning to think about creative ways to help young women recognize their value in the Body of Christ, and it will be done in partnership with the work of the Holy Spirit. He is your guide.

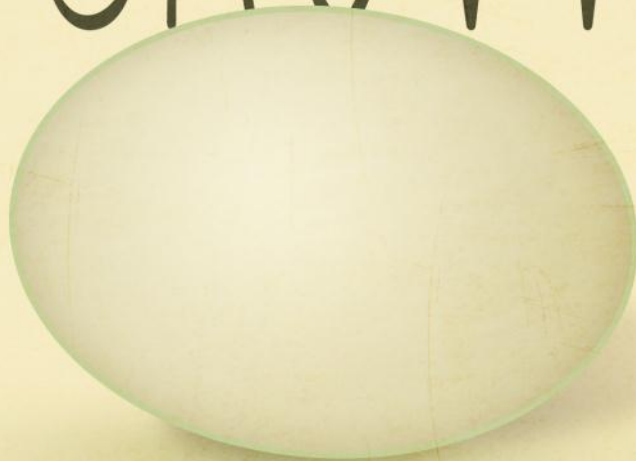
Pastor Daniels regularly closes the worship service with these wonderful words from Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all **generations**, forever and forever. Amen." The options are endless for PazNaz as the Spirit transforms what it means to be the Body of Christ together.

- Pastor Keegan Lenker

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LEARNING TO

GROW



WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT PAZNAZ THIS SUMMER

STARTING JUNE 12 AT 7:00 PM



GODLY

Play

from Jayme Lenker

PazNaz Kidz is committed to helping PazNaz's children grow spiritually and be called Christ's Disciples.

This is achieved by implementing an approach to teaching called *Godly Play*. In a nutshell, this method uses gestures, silence, and small figures to draw children into the story. As you may know, before the written word, the stories of Christianity were told orally and were passed along from generation to generation. This allowed the imagination and wonder of the amazing things that God did for his people to speak to each generation. *Godly Play* captures the attention of others by drawing them into the story, focusing on the movement of the figures to tell the story and not the inflections, knowledge, and mannerisms of the teacher. Using *Godly Play* allows the adult/child ratio to be much smaller. There are only two adults, the Storyteller and the Doorkeeper. The Doorkeeper is the one who prepares the children upon entering the room by asking a simple question: "Are you ready?" Are you ready to take control of your behaviors, to be quiet and listen to the story, and to be able to respond appropriately to the story using a variety of materials in a responsible manner? Children need to take their answer seriously, and if they are not ready, they are welcome to sit outside the storyteller's circle until they feel that they are ready.

As an educator and school counselor, I was never taught how to tap into

the "wonder" of children and their ability to hear from God. I was always shaped to be the "professional" and to let them know what they would be learning, how they would do it, and how they were going to be assessed after the learning took place. My recent encounter with *Godly Play* has changed my approach to teaching ... forever. *Godly Play* uses small figures (manipulatives) and individual needs to create a rich, trusting, non-judgmental, and holy space.

I feel that as a disciple of Christ and teacher of the Word, it is my responsibility to create as thin of a "line" or "space" as possible between us and God. This could be in a formal teaching setting or a casual coffee conversation. But

how do we do this with children? Two things have helped me understand the process by using *Godly Play* as the approach.

First, I have to prepare for *Godly Play* like I have never prepared before. I am not referring to the type of preparation you may think of when it comes to teaching like prepping materials or visuals and being familiar with the content. All of that is extremely important and frees me up for God to break in and do the teaching; but I'm referring to being prepared spiritually. Taking a few moments to breathe deeply in silence and listen to what God has to say before jumping into the classroom, the coffee date, or getting out of bed to greet my children in the morning.

The second understanding is that of *trusting the process*. As a follower of Christ for most of my life, I realize that trusting in God has been difficult for me. It seems that my life circumstances determine the amount of trust I have in who God is and what God is able to do. Telling the story using *Godly Play* is simply trusting that all you have prepared, all of the responses that will come, and the learning and wonder that will take place are exactly what God had in mind.

Each and every time a child enters the threshold of a *Godly Play* classroom they will encounter the following schedule:

- **Getting Ready:** Prepare, slow down, open our hearts.
- **Crossing the Threshold:** Choosing to leave one space for another, coming into the space with fears, joys, and our ability to listen and to speak.
- **Building the Circle:** Extending and receiving a welcome (usually a hug, holding a hand).

- **Telling and Listening to the Stories:** Using story to listen to our own story, providing an economy of words and gestures so that we provide uncluttered and open access to the story.
- **Wondering:** Inviting dialogue with open, honest questions. No fixing, saving, advising, or correcting each other. Striving to put aside judgment and to listen to others and ourselves more deeply.
- **Silence:** Trusting and learning from silence. Silence is a gift in our noisy world. Treating silence as a member of the group.
- **Response:** Paying close attention to our own reactions and responses. Trusting our minds, hearts, emotions, and our hands and body to do the "work" we need to do.
- **Prayers and Feast:** Taking time to express what is most deeply true and important (prayer). Recognizing that feasting (communion) is who we are with (relationships) – not what or how much we get (product).
- **Blessing:** Giving and receiving blessing. Affirming who each person most authentically is.
- **Goodbye:** It is possible to leave the circle with whatever it is that we needed when we joined the circle, and what we receive from God will continue to grow in the days ahead.

Now, I know that those reading this may be saying, "there is no way a 3-year-old would be able to handle sitting and being silent." However, I want to say that there is no better teaching that comes to mind than the teaching I have encountered in and through my children (15 months, 3 years, and 6 years). I believe that God is in

charge, and if you allow the space for him to move among the youngest saints, he will not fail to do so. PazNaz Kids is very excited and blessed to offer *Godly Play* as a weekly Sunday School class for current 1st and 2nd grade students at 9:30 am in the Lower Sanctuary, Room 109. Starting in September, all children ages 3 and up will have the opportunity to join in this teaching on Sundays during the 8:00 am service and for all weekday morning events held on campus (Tuesday's Wee Ones in the Word, Thursday's Positive Parenting, and Friday's Mothers of Preschoolers). We also are excited to offer monthly *Godly Play* for adults starting in June for anyone interested in experiencing this or wanting to know what it means for you to join the *Godly Play* team as a volunteer.

Starting today, try asking good questions that welcome the creativity and space for the Holy Spirit to teach your children. The wondering questions for any story/event can be something like this:

- I wonder what your favorite part is/was?
- I wonder what the most important part is/was?
- I wonder where you find yourself in the story/event?
- I wonder if there could be anyone left out?

Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. - Matthew 18:3

What a wonderful picture of what the Kingdom of God looks like! I know many of us have read this scripture over and over, heard many sermons, and even served in children's ministry knowing that this is very true. Please join in prayer as the volunteers support the children's spiritual journey through *Godly Play*.

- Jayme Lenker

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A Baby SHOWER

FOR THE PAZNAZ & VALLEY CENTER NURSERIES

June 1 - 9

Collecting Items & Donations

Sunday, June 9

Doughnut Reception

9:15 am in the Arms Hall Foyer

Stop by the Women's Ministries' cart on Sundays to get a list of needed items for the PazNaz & Valley Center Nurseries. They are also registered at *Target* and *Babies R Us*. Cash donations are appreciated.



Contact Jayme Lenker for more information at 626.351.2469.

PazNaz Kidz Presents

FAMILY FUN DAY

a picnic for families with kids of all ages!

**Sunday,
June 9**

A fun family picnic with games, a time of fellowship, and getting to know other families! You can bring your own picnic lunch or buy one at the park.

**Following the 10:30 am service at Hamilton Park
(3680 Cartwright Street, Pasadena, 91107)**

**For more information,
please contact Pastor Amber Baker
at abaker@paznaz.org or 626.351.2487.**

A photograph of three people sitting on a wooden dock by a river, looking out at the water and forested hills. The people are seen from behind, wearing a light green shirt, a blue sweater, and a red sweater. The background shows a calm river and dense green trees under a slightly overcast sky.

The *Power* of Presence

from Pastor *Keegan Lenker*

When I was little, a Lenker family vacation usually meant a camping trip of some kind. Some of my happiest times as a kid had to do with the unique smell of an old camper that hit the road for a new adventure in some mountainous location of my parents' choosing.

Whether it was for an extended period of time or just a weekend getaway, there were many experiences with my dad that taught me the value of presence.

Sometimes it was early in the morning or on a walk during the day, but more often than not, we would find ourselves sitting next to a river of some kind. First, there would be the obvious competition of who could throw the rock across the river and hit a particular tree on the other side. Then, there would probably be the competition to see who could get the other one the wettest by throwing the largest rock in.

Yet sometimes there would be no talking at all as we sat and listened to the peaceful sounds of the river as it went along. Sometimes we threw rocks for an hour or so and then we would sit quietly. At other times my dad would offer nuggets of wisdom about what it means to be a man, or I'd listen to him breathe life into me because he was proud to call me his son.

It didn't matter if we were quiet or Dad was

speaking; either way, my dad's presence was a gift to me as a young boy. The power of presence can make all the difference in the world. It is a gift I long to share with my own children. It is the kind of gift that, if continued, is life-giving for future generations.

Several weeks ago I received an email from Beverly Mimms with the subject line, "Putting feet to your sermon." Anytime a pastor gets an email with that in the subject line, you can rest assured he/she will have the attention of the reader.

When I opened the email, I was overjoyed to read about the group who had decided to spring into action and work at being intentional with their relationships at PazNaz. In this particular instance, those relationships were to be unpacked with a dynamic group of retired missionaries living in a location called Casa Robles in Temple City, California.

These younger couples decided to bring the dishes necessary to break bread with each of the missionaries, and the story-sharing would commence. I replied to Bev and asked her to give me a report about her experience.

The evening began with a question to get the conversation going, and eventually the group was divided up to create more intentional sharing. Here are just a few highlights from Bev's perspective on the evening:

"Yvette Rodrigues (Taiwanese native) was paired with Jack and Natalie Holstead and they communicated in Mandarin for much of the evening. Yvette also discovered that her university was just over the mountain from where the Holsteads had ministered in Taiwan.

Ryan and Marisa Magnum were paired with Larry and Addy Garman and, - how about this - Marisa's grandparents went on a Work and Witness trip to the church where the Garmans served! They exchanged email addresses and are going to keep in touch.

Seth and Katie Turner sat with Dave and Maryel Moyer, and forged a connection and a relationship that is primed for blossoming.

Diego Rodriguez was paired with Chuck Gates, and they had a lively discussion that will probably lead to more one-on-one time."

What has blessed my heart most about this experience is the intentionality of this group to hear from those with a story to tell who are a part of the PazNaz community. These times of reflection offer life-giving hope to both parties and become a natural entry point of connection, especially in a larger community like PazNaz. The resulting relationships carry growth potential as both parties can extend themselves and become more deeply connected to the Body of Christ.

Just as my dad gave us the gift of his presence, by being present with and for each other, these wonderful people are extending gifts for generations to come. These gifts cannot survive if they are not passed on.

Each of these retired missionaries has received the gifts of those who have gone before them. As they share, they bestow the same gifts onto these couples, carving their way together in the world. The young couples receive these gifts and the responsibility that comes with them to deliver the

continued legacy of Christ's love and faithfulness to future generations.

Who has shared the gift of presence with you in your journey? Who are you sharing your gifts with now? As the Body of Christ, we are woven together into the story of God. Each of us has been touched by people who have taught us the power of presence in our world.

May you be a people caught up in a life-giving God that invites you to share his gift of love with the world.

- Pastor Keegan Lenker

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REBOOT YOUR RE RELATIONSHIP

RESTORING LOVE THROUGH REAL COMMUNICATION IN A DISCONNECTED WORLD

Saturday, June 1 | 9:00 am - 5:00 pm | Room 249, Reed Hall
Led by **Joe Whitcomb** and **Savannah Ellis**

PazNaz congregants receive the special price of only \$25 per person.

For more information, contact Joe Whitcomb at jwhitcomb@paznaz.org or 310.560.0726.

