



PazNaz
May 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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Transformed is a magazine publication of First Church of the Nazarene of Pasadena (PazNaz). It is designed to highlight the Church's stories of personal transformation. For a complete overview of PazNaz, their beliefs, and ministries, please visit the website www.paznaz.org.

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The Next Chapter
of God's Goodness

from Bob Kelly

I believe that our lives are like books with many chapters. Some with laughter, and some with sorrow. However, I also believe that in these many chapters of life, the Lord is always there to guide us. In reflecting on the past 72 years of my life, I know without a doubt, the Lord never left me, even when I may have left him.

I grew up in San Gabriel with a loving mother, father, and sister ten years my senior. Raised Catholic in the 40's, we attended the San Gabriel Mission, and at that time the Mass was almost all in Latin. Even though I went to Mass every Sunday with my parents and sister, I never felt a close relationship with Christ. My sister had a strong influence on my growing up years, and making sure I went to church was very important. However,

at fifteen, I started to question my faith when she married and moved out of our home.

Soon after I graduated from college, I was drafted into the Army. On November 22, 1963 (the same day President Kennedy was assassinated), I was inducted into the Army. Once again when I fell short in my faith, the Lord was present in my life. My unit, the First Infantry Division, was the first to be deployed to Vietnam in 1965. Due to a glitch in the deployment date from September to October of 1965, I was within 30 days of being discharged, and I was not sent with the unit. Back on the post, we read the *Army Times Daily*. In the first week after hitting the beach in Vietnam, over half the unit was either killed or badly wounded. I also found out that my C.O. was badly wounded. I was his guard and would have been right by his side. Once again, the Lord had me in the palm of his hands and under his protection.

I married Linda in 1968. We were married for 11 years, and after being diagnosed with cancer in 1978, she passed away the next year. With her strong faith in the Lord, and through our marriage, I started to gain mine back. I also have a beautiful stepdaughter, Nancy, from that marriage.

In 1980, I met Betty and we were married in 1981. I will never forget our first date. Betty asked me, "Bob, do you go to church?" I said, "No!" "Well," she said, "I go every Sunday to the First Church of the Nazarene in Pasadena, and if we are to continue this relationship, you will go, too." So, I did. I firmly believe the Lord led me to PazNaz that year. From the first Sunday I attended, I fell in love with Pastor Lee and the church. Not long after, I became the President of my Sunday School class and remained in the position for 17 years.

Life has had its ups and downs over the years. However, through it all, I know the Lord has always been there to guide my way. Proverbs 4:11-12 says, "I will guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. When you walk, your steps will

not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble."

In September of 1981, just a few months after Betty and I were married, the company I had worked for for almost 25 years (Market Basket) was sold. I was out of a job. Betty's faith never failed, but I have to say that I was having a hard time with mine. Several Sundays later we were in a worship service. I remember the day as if it were yesterday. Pastor Lee asked for all who were going through a very difficult time in their life to stand for prayer. I thought, not me! I am not going to stand up with all these people looking at me. However, the Lord had a different idea. I still can't explain it, but something grabbed the back of my shirt and pulled me up. I was scared, and Betty and I just stood there and cried. Two weeks later, I was employed by a bank in Altadena, which started a banking career that lasted until my retirement in 2002. Betty and I had 20 beautiful years together and I am blessed with two more stepchildren, Rod and Lyndy. Betty passed away in July of 2001.

In 2002, I felt the Lord's call becoming stronger in leading me toward my spiritual gifts. I started volunteering in the PrimeTime Ministry, which led to going on trips and helping Pastor Ridge Ireland when needed. I continue to enjoy helping with Church in the Park, *In His Image*, serving as a greeter, ushering, and counting tithes and offerings as more ways to serve the Lord.

I have learned through the Lord's calling that we need to be good stewards within our community. Over the past four years, I have been a member of the Disaster Team of the Red Cross and help out with blood drives in the area. I've volunteered in elementary

education through Junior Achievement and, during my working years, I started a banking program through my work at Webster's Elementary School in Pasadena.

I have learned that by following the Lord's guidance in regards to helping others, we become the ones who are blessed. What a pure blessing PazNaz has been in my life. Psalm 40:1-2 says, "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand."

Seven years ago, Pastor Ridge gave me four tickets to an Angels ballgame. At that time, Pastor Fred Bates was the Pastor to the Singles Ministry at PazNaz. I invited Fred and his wife to go with me. The extra ticket went to Charlene, a lady I had met a few weeks earlier, and a beautiful friendship with a beautiful lady began.

The next chapter of God's direction and goodness to me is just around the corner.

- Bob Kelly

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Compassionate Ministries' Annual

COMMUNITY PARTNER

WORK DAY

FRIDAY, MAY 10

**Free Organizational Dinner
6:00 pm in Gilmore Hall**

SATURDAY, MAY 11

**Work Day at Various Locations
8:00 am with Community Partners**

Bresee Foundation

Child S.H.A.R.E.

Elizabeth House

Foothills Pregnancy Resource Center

Harambee Ministries

Neighborhood Urban Family Center

For more information and to RSVP for the dinner, please contact Pastor Joe Halbert at jhalbert@paznaz.org / 626.351.2421, or stop by the PazNaz Compassionate Ministries' table on the patio on Sundays after the service.





Not Less Than Anybody Else

by Leslie Moreno,
In His Image Assistant

Spring semester of last year, I was taking a class from Professor T. Scott Daniels as part of my Masters of Divinity program at APU. One week he decided to have class at PazNaz, and the class was given a tour of the church campus. I knew about the church and had been on campus before for outside events, but this was the first time I had heard about or explored what happens at PazNaz. At one point, as we were walking across the courtyard, I remember making a short prayer to the effect of, "God, if you ever want to give me a job here, I think I would be okay with that." I was only half-serious; at the time I had a job I was mostly happy with, and the only reason I would call it a prayer instead of just a fleeting thought is that I directed it to God. By the day's end, I had forgotten I prayed it. Three months later, I was hired as the Ministry Assistant for Special Needs/*In His Image*. Moral of the story: Be careful what you pray for, although, in my case it worked out pretty well.

Since coming to PazNaz, people will often ask me if special needs ministry is what I want to do with my life. I generally answer, "It's not where I foresee myself in the future, but I cannot deny that it is exactly where God wants me right now." I have learned so much about what it means to love, to have compassion, and to minister to the least of these. It has taught me what it means to really need each other and why community is so important to God.

Honestly, I had never thought about special needs as something I wanted to do at all. It was the thing that my older sister, Shawna, does. For several years she worked as a director of a daycare center for special needs children, and in February her family grew with the adoption of my fifth nephew. Memphis is an amazing 5-year-old who has several physical and mental disabilities. To me, Shawna was the one with the patience and compassion. I was the one who wanted to be cool, I wanted to fit in. I wanted to have a life that no longer included people associating me with the "weird kid."

I have an older brother named Alex. When we were little, he was

my best friend, but once we were both in elementary school, I started to realize something, Alex was weird. He was different from the other kids his age, and people were starting to notice. By junior high, I was used to the questions. People didn't generally ask with their words, but you saw it in their faces, in the way they reacted to us. I was the girl with the weird brother. You couldn't have a conversation with him because he didn't like to socialize. He tended to wander and pace; I felt like we were constantly losing him when we went out places. He had ticks that were obvious. He had a hard time learning in school and, when his schedule was thrown off, life was hard. Alex has autism. Autism is a condition that has a wide spectrum, the severity and way it affects people varies so broadly it can affect each person differently. My brother falls into a category that is considered high functioning. If you see him from afar, you might not know that he is different from anyone else and, in many ways, he isn't. At 26, he has a full-time job working at an animal shelter. He always did seem to prefer animals to people. He can drive a car, he has friends, and he likes video games, movies, and writing stories in his spare time. Alex loves church and is one of the most faithful congregants I have ever met. I am proud of my brother but that does not mean it was always easy.

Growing up, it was sometimes hard to be Alex's sister. It was painful for me to come to the realization that my older brother was never going to be like other people's big brothers. It was frustrating to constantly feel the need to speak for him to other people, even in our own family. I was one of the few people he would have an actual conversation with, and I was often put in the role of mediator. It was frustrating to feel

like so much of my family's time and attention was always devoted to Alex and, in the process, I seemed to just disappear. It was hard to be labeled by other kids as weird by association. Let me be clear, I am not making a play for pity. I was by no means the perfect sister. There were many times growing up when I was embarrassed of Alex and would purposely separate myself to avoid being associated with him. There were many times when I would lose my patience and temper. There were moments in which I desperately wished he would just be like everybody else. But he isn't like everybody else.

For one thing, he is better at figuring out complex puzzles and patterns than most of the population; he scores nearly off the charts. That is actually something generally associated with autism. The deficits individuals with autism experience in certain realms are often made up with incredible intelligence and capabilities in another area. People such as Albert Einstein, Andy Warhol, Lewis Carroll, and Nikola Tesla all had autism. Alex is also one of the most perseverant people I have ever met. One year, he decided he was going to read *The Lord of the Rings*. It took him nearly an entire year of reading every day to get through those three books, but he never gave up. He is an Eagle Scout. He has a gift with animals. At his job, he is assigned to all the unadoptable dogs because he is so calm, they rarely do anything but love him. My brother is not like everyone else, but he is *not less* than anybody else. The people involved in the ministry I work with are not like everyone else, but they are just as special.

The children and adults who are involved with *In His Image* constantly amaze me. One of the kids I know has highly intelligent

conversations with me and is able to communicate his feelings better than most adults. Another little girl is the most incredible kindergartener I have ever met. Her artistic capabilities far extend her years. Another little boy has yet to come to class without a smile on his face and always tells me how much he enjoys laughing. Most of our students receive more joy from the small things in life than I often do with my innumerable blessings. It is not all flowers and sunshine. Drop by any Sunday and you will find one room of loud, mostly organized chaos, and across the hall another room of quiet, mostly organized chaos. A morning without a meltdown is a morning of unparalleled success, and that is simply two of the 168 hours that make up a week! There are challenges, but there is much to be gained. Some of the biggest things God has taught me over the past several months are what it truly means to be humble and the great ways that God uses what the world would deem unusable.

"But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong."

1 Corinthians 1:27

- Leslie Moreno

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Give Me Something I Can Use

An Article from David Mimms



Surviving A Big Wave

Finesse or Total Wipeout?

My wife goes on a lot of the women's retreats. That kind of stuff isn't my cup of tea (pun intended). Marshall (a buddy of mine and fellow Men's Ministries attender) and I were talking last year about how good a Men's Retreat *could* be. Our thought was that men don't like retreats because they are basically a women's Bible study with a male speaker. We both agreed that we wouldn't normally go on a men's retreat. A good retreat needed a special location – far enough away that you are actually *getting away*. A good retreat would *not waste our time*. A good retreat would have *lots of options*, so the men who wanted to socialize could do that, the men who wanted to rest could do that (during breaks), and the men who wanted to delve into the Bible deeper would have opportunities to do that. Also, a great retreat would include a mix of generations.

MEN'S RETREAT

May 31 - June 2 | \$145 or \$205
Palomar Christian Conference Center

In my quest to find a topic or theme for the retreat, I spent several months doing some research. Although they didn't know it, I have been asking my male friends certain questions to help me determine a theme. My research told me that men wanted a topic that would give them tools to use in life. Here are some recent comments:

Friend in his 20s

"At this point in my life I should be saving money to buy a house and start having kids, but I'm not

ready for that yet. I'm not financially stable for that. I go on Facebook and see friends who have purchased houses and had babies, and we're not there right now. I just got married, and I didn't realize how different it is living with a person and sharing a bed and bathroom. I don't have enough space. And now I think about picking my towel up off the floor. Don't get me wrong, she's wonderful, but I'm living with a female who is a lot more particular about things than I am. It's not something I'm used to. It would be nice to be able to talk to other people who are going through the same things I'm going through. When I talk to people who have recently gotten married, we all have about the same situations. For someone who has been married for a long time, they have gotten used to it, but for me, I'm just getting started, and it would be nice to talk to someone who's been there."

Friend in his 40s

"Raising teenagers is very difficult – setting boundaries and then having them always test those boundaries. You're not always sure how to react in certain situations. As a parent it's difficult to know what to do. Other families and friends will have situations that will be similar to yours but not exactly. I know that personally if I had a person who I could have gone to for advice or wisdom, that would have helped me get through situations. I think it's a matter of working together with their pastors and friends and establishing guidelines about expectations. And there are consequences for their actions. Even as a parent, it's difficult to restrain yourself. It's hard to know how hard to come down on them. And then to add another element

to it, each child is different. One of our teenagers got into a situation that led to a car accident. As it turned out, it was something that was preventable. It was a situation they chose to be in that created that moment. I think it is important to gather information about situations that you might encounter and situations other parents have gone through because it's good to think about how you would deal with a situation before you are in the middle of it. It's helpful to think about how your friends dealt with things and see the outcome. And it's usually good to work through things before you HAVE to work through things. Sometimes the moment didn't turn out well for the child and sometimes it doesn't turn out well for the parent. Loving discipline is very hard. If you go into the teenage years without knowing anything or don't ask anyone about anything, you're going to have a tough road ahead. The more information you have moving forward, whether it be elders, teenagers or babies, the more information you gather will help you to form your type of action."

Friend in his 60s

"Other than asthma and sight, both my mom and mother-in-law are very healthy. Mentally, my mother-in-law is getting early stages of dementia. Her memory is leaving, and she often doesn't know where she's been. We just went through a situation with her where we needed to move her into a retirement home. We needed to get rid of her car but that was difficult because that meant less freedom for her. The decisions were not easy.

As for my mom, she is not quite there yet, but her sight is leaving, and she doesn't drive anymore.

When her sight really deteriorates, she will need to move from the house she's been in for 45-50 years. This kind of stuff puts a big strain on the family – my wife and I, and all the siblings. It's especially difficult for my wife and her sisters. They can't agree on things and often are going in different directions."


For me, I think I'm still young – I'm 52 – and I've had wave after wave after wave of stuff hit me. My first "wave" was in my 20s but I'm guessing I'm no different than any other man at church. I'm going on this retreat because I want to learn about dealing with overwhelming situations or even the little situations. I think the same principals would apply to life's big curveballs and small curveballs. If you've only had a few problems in life, you're fortunate. Experience has proven you're either going into a situation, in the middle of a situation, or coming out of one. It would probably be wise to go on the retreat so you can get some tools to help you.

I would think there's a high school student who is graduating this spring, and they have no idea what college they're going to or even if they'll go to college. They might go to a trade school or they might have NO IDEA what to do. There's probably a man out there whose wife was just diagnosed with cancer or Alzheimer's. Overwhelming things hit us all the time. Don't tell anybody, but between you and me, going on a Men's Retreat was very low on my bucket list. However, I'm very excited to see what God is going to teach me and a hundred+ other men from PazNaz.

**- David Mimms
2013 Men's Retreat Organizer**

In my quest to find a topic or theme for the retreat, I spent several months doing some research. Although they didn't know it, I have been asking my male friends certain questions to help me determine a theme. My research told me that men wanted a topic that would give them tools to use in life.

An Interview with Emily Denney



"Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre; with the lyre and the sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn. Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord."
Psalm 98:5-6

One of the most gifted musicians who volunteers her talent in the Sunrise Orchestra consistently throughout the years, is clarinetist Emily Denney. All of us share unique experiences in our conversion and faith walk with the Lord from which we all can learn. Recently, I asked if Emily would share some of her story with us. Showing just a little bit of reluctance, I was able to persuade her. Thank you, Emily!

Alan: Emily, can you share some of your family history?

Emily: When I was born, our family lived in a little town with a population of 100 called Netawaka, Kansas. When I was in the 2nd grade, we had little musical instruments. They were called Saxettes, but they were like tonets or song flutes. I just took to it and excelled. My father was a musician; he sang tenor in a barbershop quartet. He recognized that I had some talent, so one day he took me to see the band director at the high school, and he showed me all the instruments that there were and helped me to decide that I wanted to play the clarinet. I did show some early talent! As I went on through school, I went to a state music contest and got a #1 rating, so I was recruited by several colleges wanting me to come! There were scouts out from as far away as Oklahoma, believe it or not! I couldn't believe it. I decided to go to Kansas University, which I'm very happy I did, and got my bachelor's degree. After graduation I went to Tulsa, Oklahoma to play in the symphony.

Alan: Can you share some of your spiritual journey?

Emily: I was baptized as a baby. My parents took me to Sunday school from an early age. We went to the Methodist church, and I went through the junior high and high school clubs and all those things. But when I got to college, there just wasn't any need for it anymore. I felt there was no need for it; I was doing fine. I didn't have time, for one thing, and I was probably out so late on Saturday night, I couldn't get up on Sunday morning anyway.

I really didn't know the Lord. I knew all the Bible stories and all the history, but I didn't know the Lord. When I got to Tulsa, playing in the symphony and working, I met my husband through some mutual friends. He was from Tulsa, and was an OB/GYN resident. We got married shortly thereafter and came out to Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital for his 3rd year of residency. That's how I got to California. Both of our kids were born at Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital. While we were there, another resident and his wife who had been medical missionaries invited us to Hollywood Presbyterian Church. I was eager to go, but my husband had no use for it; he did not want to go. He went a couple of times and then wouldn't go back, but I continued to go. By that time, David (our son) was there, and he went to Sunday school and various things. They always had these cards they passed out, and one day I checked the box that said I'd like someone to call on me. Well, this dear lady, who I still know, called on me and

she was like the “Hound of Heaven.” She would NOT give up on me. She babysat David, she called me, she took me places, and she had us over for Sunday dinner. She just absolutely enfolded me with her love.

She invited me to go to a weekend conference one time. I don’t know how I got to go because my husband just really wouldn’t babysit, but I did go. It was February 1959 and, while I was there, the Lord got ahold of me, and it was that day that I accepted the Lord.

Well, this person, Peggy, kept on with me. She had Bible studies in her home which she taught. I would go, and there were other ladies from the area. And then we moved to Arcadia, and I lost touch with her for many years. For a long time after we moved, I was going to Lake Avenue Church, but I wanted to play in the orchestra and other things, and they were actually hiring people to do what I could do. I had a friend that was going to PazNaz, and she said to me, “They have an orchestra over there, why don’t you go over and play there?” Well, as soon as I walked in the door, I just felt these arms of love around me. Larry Rench was conducting the orchestra at that time.

Since I retired, I’ve met many ladies who are musicians, and I’ve gotten really involved with Tuesday Musicale and the St. Cecilia Club. I also play in the Pasadena Community Orchestra, the Claremont Symphony, the Crown City Symphony for the past 12 years, and then at church. So I was just all set with my music. I was retired, and I was doing what I loved to do. And then one day I heard the doctor say, “You have cancer.” And everything changed.

* * * *

Emily was diagnosed with breast cancer in October 2012, had surgery November 2, and has just finished her follow-up treatments of chemotherapy. She has medication she takes daily now and for the next five years.

* * * *

Alan: Can you share some of your recent health challenges?

Emily: Of course, all my wonderful plans came to a stop when I heard the words, “You have cancer.” I had four sessions of chemotherapy and,

for another year, I have to go every three weeks for just one kind of chemical, so I still have a very long way to go.

But I’ve had this devotional book, and early on I found Zephaniah 3:17, “*The Lord your God is with you. He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you. He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing!*” That meant so much to me. I found it many years ago and returned to it when I heard those words, “You have cancer.” My kids were with me and it was like, okay, this is a whole new thing you’re going to go through, and the Lord was with me. I’ve had no fear, and I had no pain with my surgery. People around the world literally have prayed for me—Becky (my daughter) in Seattle and all her friends, Dave (who lives in Azusa) and his neighbors and friends, my Bible Study class, this church, our orchestra—absolutely—and the little Sunday school class we have. The prayers have sustained me. On the days when I felt so sick I could hardly get out of bed, I knew I could trust the Lord to bring this to the right conclusion. He has a reason for this. He has a purpose in mind. His plans are not my plans, that’s for sure; or my plans aren’t his plans. His ways are higher than I could ever think. So that’s where I am now, just pushing on, wanting to get back into things.

Alan: With the cancer that you’ve dealt with so far, has that changed the way you look at priorities or your relationship with God, or impacted your faith in other ways?

Emily: You have to say, “Lord, I trust you. Nothing happens to me that you don’t know about or hasn’t passed through your hands.” This passage from my devotional, *Praying Through Cancer*, was really special to me, “How grateful I am that I can relinquish my anxious heart into your trustworthy and loving arms. You are the God of hope, and nothing can touch me before it passes through your hands. Lord, you make me stand firm in Christ. You have placed your seal of ownership on me. You have put your Spirit in my heart as a deposit,

guaranteeing what is to come.”

Alan: For those going through a similar crisis that you’ve gone through, do you have any words of encouragement or advice?

Emily: My advice is: Trust the Lord; He knows what he is doing. We don’t know the outcome, but he does. One of my prayers was, “Teach me what you want me to learn from this—patience, letting people do things for me (which I’m not used to).” I’ve gotten cards, flowers, letters, good wishes, and phone calls from people who’ve gone through what I’ve gone through, calling to encourage me. And now I know that I can call other people. I just heard of a friend of mine who started chemo last week. She’s a violinist, and I’m supposed to play with her in June. It’s iffy, but we’ll see. So I can call her and encourage her. So you pass it on.

* * * *

One of the key things I learned from Emily’s story is how God used Peggy in such a dramatic way in her life. We can thank God for the “Peggys” that God has placed in our lives, those who continually pray for us and care for us even while we push them away. It also encourages and challenges us as Christians to continue to reach out, sharing our faith and loving those around us at the risk of being put off and rejected. Emily thanks God every day for the Lord sending a “hound of heaven” to invite her to give herself to the Lord. We could all pray that God would help us to do the same.

- Pastor Alan De Vries

The background of the entire poster is a dark wood-grain texture. A vertical strip of a lighter, golden-brown wood-grain texture runs down the center. A solid black horizontal band is positioned in the upper third of the image, containing the main title text.

**SATURDAY
EVENING
WORSHIP**

5:00 pm

meguiar youth center

free childcare