

Mustard Seed

Inspired by Life Lessons from the Psalmist

Scott Swartzendruber

In reading through the book of Psalms, we get to better understand that faith in God encompasses all of life. The Psalmist is very transparent with how his faith in God makes a difference in both the victories and the defeats of life. As a result of his honest sharing, we can all identify with his faith journey that at times is smooth and calm, but then it turns into a roller coaster ride that can almost take your breath away.

I want to share two things I have learned while reading through the book of Psalms that are critical to my spiritual well-being. First of all, the Psalmist teaches me that it is a good thing to “make a joyful noise unto the Lord and to come into His presence with singing.” My Christian life will be more enriched when I take time to offer praise and thanksgiving to God no matter what I am facing in life. Paul and Silas sang while locked up in a prison. They, like the Psalmist, found great strength and help as they sang out their faith to God even though life was not a bed of roses. Something happens to us when we, too, are willing to make a joyful song to the Lord when faced with fears and frustrations. Songs of praise to God bring hope and peace to the bleakest of circumstances.

Secondly, the Psalmist teaches me how destructive it is to worship idols. He teaches that God is in the heavens, unseen but full of power and wisdom, whereas idols are the works of human hands and are useless.

“They have mouths, but do not speak,
Eyes, but do not see.
They have ears, but do not hear,
Noses, but do not smell.
They have hands, but do not feel,
Feet, but do not walk.
And they do not make a sound in their throat.”

Idols bring destruction and no comfort. It is only in God that we have life, love, and a lasting faith.

Because the God we worship is the Lord God who reigns over everything, we can fully trust the Lord in all things. He is our help and shield. We can trust God to carry out His purpose even when we go through the shadows of darkness. God can be trusted to lead us into paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. God’s will prevail in spite of our successes and struggles. He is a great and gracious God who never stops loving us.



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Special points of interest

- We as a church have been blessed with people who are willing to share their talents with us each Sunday.
- February is the perfect time to stop by the library.
- I love studying the books of the prophets.
- They leave their boat, their fish, their nets - everything! - behind them. They simply decide to follow Jesus.

Meet the Worship Team

Haley Bontrager

The many changes in 2015 brings along many new faces to our worship team in 2016. I present to you, the worship team at Kalona Mennonite Church...

On Guitar & Bass: Brian Herschberger- Brian is a staple to our worship team; the only member of the original, original worship team, Brian has done a fantastic job of switching from bass to lead guitar when we needed him to!

On Bass & Drums: Tim McDowell- Tim is another original member of our band. Being able to switch from drums to bass and back again, whenever needed, has shown us few of his many skills. Tim is a fantastic addition to our team.



On Drums: Noah Miller- Noah is a fantastic drum player. As a team we often forget how young he is for how much talent he has. Noah does a great job of finding a beat that fits with our songs. He has done a great job of playing the drums for us!

On Soprano: Angie Lamb- Angie has been a great leader to our vocals. She has always been brave to be the leader singer, when in a decently low range. Angie does a fantastic job of leading us vocally!

On Bass, tenor, and anywhere in between: Joel Schillerstrom- Joel does a fantastic job of adding dimension to our vocals. It brings us all great joy to hear him sing and make melodies that give us chills. Joel is a great addition to our vocal team.

The man behind the sound booth walls: Jonathan Wyse- Jonathan so selflessly spends two hours a week sitting behind the sound booth walls keeping us happy with the sounds we hear coming out of the speakers. Jonathan does a great job of making us sound great! We definitely wouldn't run as smoothly without Jonathan!

And now for the newbies you have been waiting for....

On Piano & sometimes Vocals: Kourtney Yoder- Kourtney is a huge answer to prayer. When Cristina left we weren't quite sure which path to take. A little over a year ago I once heard Kourtney tell someone that something people don't know about her is that she can play the piano. Of course I had to contact her and find out if she would be interested in playing for us. She willingly accepted and has done a fantastic job of fitting into our team perfectly. Kourtney is the wife of Garrett Yoder, the son of Herschel and Rachel Yoder. They reside in rural Joetown.

On Vocals & occasionally Piano: Keri Hochstetler- Keri has been another great addition to our team. When Keri asked if we would like an additional support vocally, I immediately accepted! I have known Keri for a long time as someone with a fantastic voice. I of course was excited when she approached me. Keri is a humorous addition to our team. She has fit in very well! Keri is the wife of Drew Hochstetler, son of Brent and Barb Hochstetler and the daughter of Merlin and Annie Boshart who have recently moved to Kalona from Wayland. The Hochstetlers reside in rural Frytown.

As the Leader of the team I have had many chances to reflect on how fortunate I am to have so many willing members. We as a church have been blessed with people who are willing to share their talents with us each Sunday in order to give us a more meaningful worship experience. Every Sunday our goal is to direct your hearts toward God. These members have proved time and time again that they get up there each Sunday to do just that. I want to thank them all for their efforts and sacrifices that they have given to be a part of the team. I also want to thank the many unnamed members that help us out, whether it's playing for us, running the computer, running the sound booth and most importantly by being prayer warriors; thank you. We look forward to another great year of worship team here at Kalona Mennonite Church!

WHAT'S HAPPENING!!!

Ed V. & Carol Miller

We have returned from our 3 month sabbatical. There is so much to report we decided to make it a quiz this time. So put on your "thinking cap" and have fun.

One statement has no answer. Several statements have multiple answers. If you have questions, ask around.

- _____ 1. Have 4 new great grandchildren (3 girls & 1 boy) in 2015.
- _____ 2. Went Christmas caroling & played Apples to Apples.
- _____ 3. Here from Nicaragua for 2 weeks during Christmas.
- _____ 4. Made a "bajillion" cheesecakes for the holidays.
- _____ 5. Went to the Rose Bowl.
- _____ 6. Moved out of the country ten years ago and still enjoys reading the Mustard Seed.
- _____ 7. Made "Dean's List" at Goshen College.
- _____ 8. Told his mother, "I Love You."
- _____ 9. Went to Indiana with "Souled Out".
- _____ 10. This hunting party harvested 11 deer in 2 hours on opening day of shotgun season.
- _____ 11. Was in the Mid-Prairie play, "Bye Bye Birdie."
- _____ 12. Have been walking on the beach in Texas.
- _____ 13. His college baseball team is going to Florida for Spring baseball.
- _____ 14. Went to Alabama and helped at the "Bridges of Faith Camp."
- _____ 15. Drove an Amish couple to Maryland where the couple adopted a baby.
- _____ 16. Celebrated 80th birthday supper along with 75 guests.
- _____ 17. Was in the IMS play, "Cotton Patch Gospel".
- _____ 18. Visited family in Haiti.
- _____ 19. Went on a two week mission trip to Tanzania.
- _____ 20. Won the billion dollar powerball lottery.
- _____ 21. Has a Chinese friend from Chicago Institute of Technology that accepted Christ.
- _____ 22. Serving in Northern Ireland.
- _____ 23. Lives in Indiana and enjoys reading the Mustard Seed.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Seth Eash | N. Barbara Longoria |
| B. Marlene & Elmer Yoder | O. Dave & Mary Groh |
| C. Ronnie & Fannie Miller | P. Jacob Lehman |
| D. Reggie Hostetler | Q. Grae & Adam Weaver |
| E. Cal Hochstedler | R. Gayle Garner |
| F. Otis & Eunice Yoder | S. Rudi Mucaj |
| G. Wilbur Mast | T. Joya Schrock & Emma Beachy |
| H. Ruby Miller | U. Phil, Joyce & Nick Ropp |
| I. Lauryn Weiss | V. Larissa Wyse |
| J. Jr. MYF | W. Ryan Lamb |
| K. Quinten & Dolores Miller | X. Merlin & Monica Miller |
| L. Kelsey Schrock | Y. Dan Fisher & friends |
| M. Cole Roth & Ed V. Miller | |



OK, that's it for this time. Remember your sweetheart, it's February. Flowers, candy, Valentine card or all three!

(Answers on page 8)

Are You Following Jesus?

Josh Lundberg

The very first thing Jesus does at the beginning of His earthly ministry is find men to disciple and train. Jesus finds a few fishermen, demonstrates His power, then calls them to follow Him. Christ finds His first two disciples in Peter and his brother Andrew. The offer he makes the pair is a very strange and unique offer. *“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”*

Peter and Andrew immediately decide to follow Christ, an act of no hesitation and complete abandonment. They leave their boat, their fish, their nets - everything! - behind them. They simply decide to follow Jesus.

The offer Christ makes is interesting to me. He says that He will make them pursuers of men; he will train and prepare them to intentionally fish for men. They will learn the art of pursuing humans instead of fish. The offer Christ makes is very clear: follow me and pursue individuals.

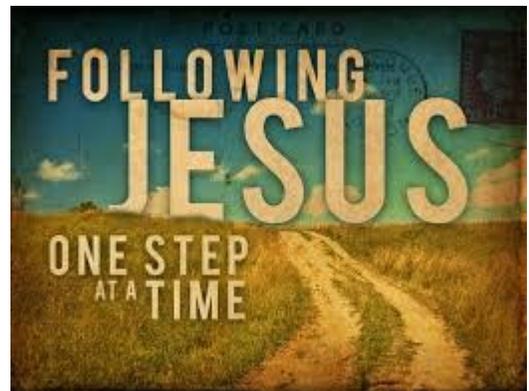
Soon after Christ rises from the dead, He encounters Mary One and Mary Two and instructs the women to go tell His disciples to meet Him in Galilee. The women obey and the eleven disciples show up. Matthew tells us that some disciples doubt, yet all worship Jesus when they see Him. This worship happens before Christ even speaks to them.

I wish I could've been there. Just imagine what that worship experience was like! Did they worship Christ through spoken word? Did they worship through their thoughts in awed silence? Did they weep or simply beam in an overflow of joy? What is amazing is that even though some doubted, they still worshiped.

Jesus wants you to worship Him! Our worship may not look the same for all of us, but the object never changes. Jesus is the only one worthy of your affections, your obedience, and your worship. The craziest thing is that Jesus even accepts worship tainted by doubt. When Christ finally speaks to them, he commands them to go: to pursue humans and make disciples of them.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Christ's first act of ministry is to find disciples, offering them to follow Him and learn to pursue men. His last command to those disciples is to go: pursue individuals and make them into disciples. The disciples training is done. At the end a long internship in which the disciples have seen Christ captured, bullied, beaten, mocked and crucified; after scattering in intense fear and experiencing unbelievable sorrow; after three days of silence then suddenly hearing that Jesus is alive, the disciples meet face-to-face with Christ and He commands them to go. Go and pursue men and make disciples of them. Christ held true to His offer and promise. The disciples were now pursuers of men.



What about you? Have you responded to Christ's call to follow Him? Are you walking in obedience to God's command? If you are an authentic follower of Jesus, then YOU ARE A PURSUER OF MEN - at least, you should be. God's design for His followers is to actively seek others in order to teach them to follow Jesus, too.

Who are you pursuing? Who is your family chasing? Who are we as Kalona Mennonite Church fishing for? If you cannot answer that question, I encourage you to pray and ask God to lead an unchurched coworker, an unbelieving neighbor, or a wayward friend into your life, or perhaps simply recognize that they are already there! Start praying and start pursuing!

Library Notes

Shirley Hochstedler

February is the perfect time to stop by the library, browse the shelves and pick out a good book to read on a long winters night. Finding one that interests you shouldn't be a problem; there are many to choose from. And this time, look for something outside the genre that you usually read. You may be pleasantly surprised!

Jan Karon fans! **Come Rain or Come Shine**, her newest book is now in the library. If the book isn't in, add your name to the reserve list to read it next! Also look for the trilogy by Tracie Peterson and Judith Miller: **A Tapestry of Hope, A Love Woven True, and Patterns of the Heart**. Other fiction titles include **Squared Away** by Cara Putnam, **House on Lookout Mountain** by Jo Ann Brown and the Large Print edition of Donna VanLiere's **The Christmas Note**.

New titles in the Christian Living section include: **Tattered and Mended** by Cynthia Ruchti; **Nobody Told Me** by Pan Stenzel & Melissa Nesdahl; **Jesus Outside the Lines** by Scott Sauls; **Life Together in the Spirit** by John Driver; **What We Believe Together** by Alfred Neufeld; and **The Spacious Heart** by Donald Clymer & Sharon Landis. If you enjoy reading Joyce Meyers: **Seven Things That Steal Your Joy** and **How to Succeed at Being Yourself** are

available. Especially for women: **Trust or Control** by Dorcas Stutzman.

Some very interesting autobiographies have also been added. Check out **Hutterite Diaries** by Linda Maendel; **Why I Left the Amish** by Saloma Miller Furlong; and **Fighting For Our Lives** by Heather Choate.

And we have both the book and the DVD, **War Room**.

For the middle schoolers, there is **My Life as a Smashed Burrito** and **Danger on the Flying Trapeze**.

Picture books include **White Rabbit's Color Book** and **Bears Busy Family**.

If you need a good laugh, check out the Chonda Pierce DVD, **Did I Say That Out Loud?**



Congratulations!

These people have reached a milestone, 50 or more years of marriage, or 80 or more years of life

Don't forget to send a card! The addresses are in your church directory.

Birthday: Otis Yoder..... February 13



In Pursuit

Dawn Wyse

During Bible study a couple of months ago Larry Pickard posed a question about whether or not God would ever leave a church. The discussion that followed was about how God would often in the Old Testament leave a remnant of the faithful when the people of Israel were sinful and turned their backs on God. I want to thank Larry and the Bible study group for gathering together and being willing to discuss things of God together. It has made a positive impact on my life and this discussion in particular has led me to dig into God's Word in a new direction.

After that night of Bible study, I couldn't get the word "remnant" out of my head. Growing up the word "remnant" always had to do with fabric. My mom has always been very creative and does a lot of craft projects. Many of you remember all the beautiful wall hangings that JW's deli used to have on the walls. Every one of them was made by my mom. Mom could make wonderful things from fabric remnants. These remnants were the pieces that were too small for many projects, pieces that some would discard as useless.

So I dug out my concordance and some of my other resources and started looking up everywhere the word remnant was in the Bible. It has been truly fascinating to me and I have barely scratched the surface. My guess is it will take me many months to fully explore this subject. (Unless I can convince Curt that I should quit my job and study the Bible instead). It has become apparent to me that God wants to stretch me, teach me and grow me spiritually through this study. I will try to share some of what God is showing me with you. I pray you will be blessed with this as I have been.

I love studying the books of the prophets. I can hear the groans of many people when I say this, but in the books of the prophets I find God tenaciously working to draw people to Him even when they are fighting Him every inch of the way. God wants us by His side! I also see an overwhelming awesomeness when the prophets write about being in God's presence. I want that to happen to me!! I see the prophets' dedication to doing God's will even when it is really, really hard. That encourages me to take the difficult steps God asks me to take. These are some of the reasons I like the prophets.

The scripture I am focusing on today is the book of Haggai (Don't get scared, it's only 2 chapters) and Zechariah 8. These were written at about the same time.

It is a time when God is drawing the remnant that He preserved back to Him, but they have some choices to make. God tells them to consider their ways, both in Haggai 1:5 and 1:7. This made me think. How often do I consider my ways? It is so easy to fall into routines without making the decision to make something a routine in my life. Every so often it is good for me to take a step back and look at how I spend my time and evaluate it. Then I need to adjust my life based on what I see. For example, I know that over the holidays the "wordbrain" game on my phone used more of my hours than I care to admit.

However, in Haggai, God is wanting the remnant to consider their ways because He knows they are neglecting something that He wants them to have as a priority in their lives. Haggai 1:7-9 says "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord. You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the Lord of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house." I don't know about you but this hit home for me. Is the church and its business a priority for me? In reflection, I know that I work a lot of hours, spend a fair amount of time watching college basketball, reading books and a host of other activities. Which of these things am I willing to miss doing in order to spend my time doing things for the church, God's plans for my life? Or am I more willing to miss the church activities and God's plans for my life because I feel like my job, my "fun" activities, my family, etc. are more important? Do I not believe that if I put God's priorities first that He will provide in the other areas of my life . . . my job, my finances, my rest, my family, my friends, etc?

Haggai tells us that as long as we don't keep God first we will find shortage in other areas of our lives. "Now then, consider from this day onward. Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the Lord, how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to me, declares the Lord ." Haggai 2:15-17

(Cont. on page 7)

(In Pursuit continued from page 6)

Now I realize that this talks of physical things, but I think it also applies to things like peace of mind, lack of worry, a confidence in God taking care of you no matter what the circumstances look like, etc. The issue is that we need to always turn to God. When we don't turn to God as our first option we are off course. God tells us we will be His people and He will be our God in faithfulness and in righteousness. (Zechariah 8:8) He gives us instructions on how to live our lives in Zechariah 8:16-17. "These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the Lord." If we consider our ways and keep our priorities the same as God's priorities and we follow God's instructions/leading in faithfulness and righteousness, then what happens?

I believe Zechariah 8:23 gives a solid clue. "Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a

Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'" Basically, people will be drawn to us because they can see in our lives what a huge positive difference God makes. When we live this way our lives will naturally make other people want to be disciples of Christ. It is the way to live out the great commission. (Matthew 28:19-20). God is the same in the Old Testament, the New Testament, today and always. His message is the same. He wants us all to be drawn to Him and to give Him glory so others may be drawn to Him.



The Eagle and the Snake

The Eagle does not fight the snake on the ground. It picks it up into the sky and changes the battle ground, and then it releases the snake into the sky.

The snake has no stamina, no power and no balance in the air. It is useless, weak and vulnerable unlike on the ground where it is powerful, wise and deadly.

Take your fight into the spiritual realm by praying and when you are in the spiritual realm God takes over your battles.

Don't fight the enemy in his comfort zone, change the battle grounds like the Eagle and let God take charge through your earnest prayer. You'll be assured of clean victory.



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Our Vision is to be a life-giving church: Pre-
sented the life-giving message of Jesus
Christ as Lord
and Savior to the people of the Kalona area
and the world, challenging them to accept
Christ,
worship Him, and serve Him.

Our Mission is to fulfill the Great Commis-
sion: Leading people to Christ; discipling
them in the faith; equipping them to wit-
ness; and sending them out to serve.

Answers to What's Happening Quiz on page 3: 1 K; 2 J; 3 L;
4 Y; 5 U & X; 6 O; 7 S; 8 W; 9 V & P; 10 G; 11 I;
12 B; 13 A; 14 E; 15 F; 16 H; 17 T & M; 18 C; 19 D;
20 none; 21 R; 22 Q; 23 N.