

The Loop

SMOKEY POINT COMMUNITY CHURCH | NOV/DEC 2011

Unto us a
Child is
Born
pg4

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Mission to Alaska

Christmas
2011

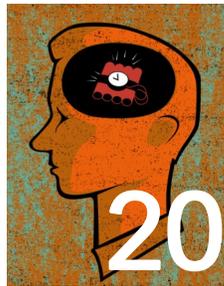
LIGHT

OF THE WORLD

Candlelight Services | Christmas Eve | 2011

3:30 | 5:15 | 7:00

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The Loop is the bimonthly newsletter of Smokey Point Community Church. To obtain your copy, pick one up in the church Lobby. You may also view *The Loop* online at our web site. To learn more about Smokey Point Community Church, visit our web site at smokeypointcommunitychurch.org, or stop by the Guest Services Desk in the Lobby. Send *Loop* questions, comments to theloop@spcc-cma.org.



FROM PASTOR MIKE

A Note From Our Worship & Young Adults Pastor



4 SMOKEY POINT COMMUNITY CHURCH

I love Christmas time. I love it infinitely more since we moved to the Pacific Northwest. I can count on the weather being cold, as opposed to southern heat waves in December, plus there's always a healthy chance for snow (at least up where we live in Stanwood). I get excited just at that thought! Its also true that I'm that annoying family member who starts playing Christmas music on November 1. And while I've never been big into putting up the outdoor lights, this year might change all that. But its not the music or the lights or the store displays that make my heart rejoice this time of year. It is the deep, timeless truths of the Advent that are revisited, renewed and reaffirmed in my heart every year in December. If you'll allow me, I'd like to share a couple with you, and maybe they will renew your Christmas spirit just as they do mine!

There were plenty of babies born in Bethlehem around the time of Jesus' birth, but only one of them was the Son of God and Savior of the world. Scripture says that all this took place "in the fullness of time," and according to a plan that was "from



UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN...

before the foundation of the world.” In Genesis 3, embedded in the Curse God pronounces, is the Proto-Evangelion – the first mention of the Gospel! Regarding the “seed of the woman” and the offspring of the serpent (to whom God is speaking), God promises to put enmity between them such that the serpent’s seed would bruise his heel, and the woman’s seed would crush the serpent’s head. Now, I don’t know if you caught it, but that’s a biological contradiction. The seed is not in the woman, but in the man. This is our first allusion to a virgin birth.

Many people ask today if a virgin birth is even necessary to our Christian faith. The answer is unequivocally “yes!” First, it is the fulfillment of prophecy. We’ve already seen Genesis 3, but there’s also Isaiah 7:14, which foretells of a virgin conceiving a child. Sure, there are “scholars” who argue that “virgin” can mean “young maiden,” but remember that God is giving King Ahaz a supernatural sign. There’s nothing special about a young maiden getting pregnant. There IS something special about it if she’s a virgin! Its so special, in fact, that the prophecy tells that his name will be Immanuel – God with us!

Then there’s the issue of a sin nature. Hebrews 7:26 tells us that

Jesus didn’t have one. When you take into consideration that Romans 5 explains how the sin nature is passed down through the man, it makes perfect sense that Messiah would be virgin born! God circumvented the transmission of the sin nature, and yet allowed the eternal Son to become fully human and the perfect man! Consider for a moment what it would mean had Jesus not been born of a virgin. Without this doctrine, we don’t know who Jesus’ father was. And there is no answer to the question of his earthly lineage that leaves the Gospel intact.

I find myself thinking about the circumstances in which the Messiah was born. It would be like the King of the Universe being delivered in a double wide in Granite Falls. Crazy! And it wasn’t this serene image that’s been seared into our minds – the peaceful baby, laying there clean, looking up at the animals with piercing eyes. Reality check! Dirty stable full of dust and dirt and horse dander! The pungent odor of manure in the air. Bleating sheep all around. And most babies I know cry...

These are the circumstances surrounding the arrival of the Incarnation. Truly humble beginnings for the Word now flesh! And yet, this crying baby now laid in the manger was unlike any other

human before or since. Isaiah 9 tells us that unto us “a child is born, unto us a son is given...” Don’t miss that. The Spirit of God is so deliberate in His Word. There are two descriptors employed in that prophecy about this baby in Bethlehem. The child being born speaks to Jesus’ humanity. He was fully human – 100% man, yet without sin. The son that was given speaks to His divinity, and the gift of gracious redemption that God had now offered the world. Jesus was 100% God. Theologians call this the Hypostatic Union. I call it baffling and scandalous and wonderful! There’s so much more, just not enough room to write it all down! My prayer for you and for everyone that is part of our SPCC family, is that the Spirit of God would give us fresh eyes this Christmas to see the glory of Christ come to earth, and fresh ears to hear the angel songs that echo down through 2000 years of history as we celebrate the coming of our Messiah. And, He who came in fulfillment of His Word to accomplish our salvation, will soon come again to take us to be with Him where He is (John 14)! May it be so! Merry Christmas!

Pastor Mike

IN THE LOOP

What's Happening at SPCC



COMING UP

Knowing God Class

Knowing God is a 10-week adult class exploring the truths of Jesus as our Lord, our Savior, our Treasure, and our Sanctifier.

Whether you are new in your walk with God or a long-time believer desiring deeper growth, this class will strengthen your faith and offer practical help in your daily Christian experience.

The relaxed, interactive format gives an opportunity to explore any questions about God, His Word, and how we relate to Him.

The class begins Sunday January 22 and will be held during the 9:00 AM service in D101.

To sign up, contact the church office or Pastor Tim at 360.659.2844.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Community Closet

This year's Community Closet was a huge success. With your help, SPCC provided clothes for hundreds of kids in our neighborhood. The event was so popular, there were long lines waiting to get in each day before open and we ran out of many sizes of clothes the first day. But SPCC responded to cries for help on Facebook and brought more clothes as the weekend progressed!

We were also able to provide haircuts free of charge for many elementary aged students.

Thank you for all of your donations and support. You've helped make this a better school year for many students in need.

If the Community Closet is a way you would be interested in serving next year, please contact Tamie in the church office at 360.659.2844.



MAY 19—JUN 2

Adult Philippines Mission Trip

An adult missions team will be in the Philippines May 19-June 2, 2012. We will conduct medical clinics in five locations to diagnose/treat medical conditions and share the Gospel. If you have medical experience or simply have a heart to serve, please consider joining us. For more info contact Pastor Tim at the church office or email him at: tim@spcc-cma.org.

WELL SAID

“The price is certainly high for people who don’t know Christ and who live in a world where Christians shrink back from self-denying faith and settle into self-indulging faith. While Christians choose to spend their lives fulfilling the American dream ... literally billions in need of the Gospel remain in the dark” David Platt in *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith From the American Dream*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Annual Meeting

Our next Annual Meeting will be held during all services the weekend of February 11/12, 2012.

THIS SPRING

Evangelism Class

Have you ever felt unprepared to share the gospel with friends and family when the moment presents itself? Do you feel as if you don't know where to start?

Consider being part of our Evangelism Class, beginning this spring. Watch for more details coming soon.



Did you Know?

SPCC has a library available for your use? You can find it in the small chapel and check out books between services on Sunday. Happy reading!

COMING UP

Year-End Giving

In past years, Smokey Point Community Church has had a Year End Goal with a specific project and monetary amount. This year, the Governing Board has recommended not to set a specific Year End Goal, but instead is encouraging anyone who would like to give an additional gift above and beyond regular tithes towards Missions. As we have mentioned recently, both the Great Commission Fund and Smokey Point Missions funds have been struggling. Our hope is to replenish these funds as we

THANK YOU!

Diaper Drive

A great big THANK YOU is in order to all who donated to the Young MOPS diaper drive. Your donation will keep struggling young moms supplied for a long time and Young MOPS are so appreciative of your donations.

ONGOING

Divorce Care

Divorce Care is a special weekly seminar and support group for people who are separated or divorced. It's a place where you can be around people who understand what you are feeling and hear valuable information about ways to heal from the hurt of divorce.

Divorce Care meets Monday nights at 7 PM in Room A101. For more information, call the church office at 360.659.2844.

A CALL FOR

Nominations

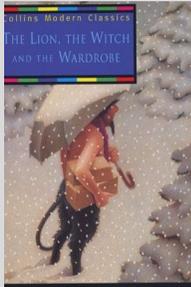
Nominations for the positions of Elder, Governing Board, Deacon, Deaconess, and Nominating Committee are now being accepted. Descriptions of these positions are posted in the Auditorium Lobby for your review. If you know someone you would like to nominate, first seek the approval of that person and then submit the recommendation to the Nominating Committee by sending it to the church office or by placing it in the Information Box located in the lobby by January 2, 2012. Please include your name on the entry.

IN THE LOOP

What's Happening at SPCC

BOOKSHELF

GREAT READS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

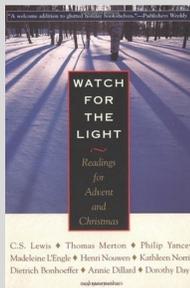


THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE
By C.S. Lewis

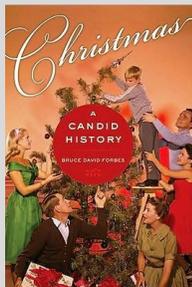
The perfect book to read out loud as a family around the fire.

WATCH FOR THE LIGHT: READINGS FOR ADVENT

A compilation of classic Christian authors on Christmas.



C.S. Lewis • Thomas Merton • Philip Yancey
Makoto Ueda • Henri Nouwen • Kathleen Norris
Dorothy Borer • Annie Dillard • Dorothy Day
and more



CHRISTMAS: A CANDID HISTORY
By Bruce David Forbes

You'll be surprised by the history of the holiday you thought you knew...

RECAP

Fall All-Church Picnic & Baptism

This year at the All-Church Picnic & Baptism, SPCC enjoyed food, fellowship, & celebrated over 35 baptisms! In case you missed it, here's the list of our newly baptized brothers & sisters:

Baptized by Jim

Mikayla Braaten
Ben Johnson
Michelle Padilla
Jose Padilla
Sharon Abel
Lisa Nelson
Kevin Hopp
Roberto Ramirez
Joseph Fisher

Baptized by Bryce

Heather Ulinski
Kaylee McFadden
Beth Miller
Wil Ludemann
Marcy Ludemann
Linda Case
Bill Case
David Maldonado
Mollie Maldonado
Alena Stutsman

Baptized by Byron

Elizabeth Nicodemus
Mary Andrews
Jessica Long
Chris Rasmussen (Joe)
Mike Cifu

Baptized by Tim

Gabe Burdick
Cameron Burdick
Magdalena Smith
Jessica Jones
Kelly Jones
Megan Nichols
Calvin Nichols
Mike Powell

Baptized by Mike

Noah Andrews
Christina Guajardo
Tara Stewart
Tani Duryea
Ashley Edwards



WELL SAID

"...godly is more than Christian character. Devotion to God is more than a warm fuzzy, it is always devotion in action. Devotion is an attitude towards God."

Jerry Bridges in *The Practice of Godliness*

NEW SERIES

Advent Series Begins Dec. 3/4

Our Advent Series on Christmas Carols called "Carols: Unwrapping the Songs we Sing at Christmas" begins December 3/4.

COMING UP

Starting Point

New Around Here? If you would like to know more about SPCC, what we believe, what our mission is, and how to grow spiritually and get involved in the life of the church, mark your calendar for the weekend of November 19/20. For more information, contact the church office at 360.659.2844.

NOVEMBER

Blood Drive

The Puget Sound Blood Center will be having a blood drive at SPCC in the auditorium on Monday, November 14. If you have not given blood in the last 56 days and weigh at least 110 pounds, you can donate this lifesaving gift. Drop in between the hours of 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM.



Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matt 5:16

Once again this holiday season, in an effort to express our love in a tangible way, the SPCC church family will be supporting local military families by giving away free Christmas trees. In these challenging economic times, we hope this outreach brings a small measure of Christmas cheer to our troops and their loved ones. Working with the help of local businesses and Naval Station Everett's Chaplain's office, our *Trees for Troops* Christmas tree lot will provide free Christmas trees to any local active military personnel and their families. The lot will be open November 26th through December 3rd on our vacant property just north of the church.

We're hoping all of you who call SPCC your church home find a way to help make this year's *Trees for Troops* a success. If you missed signing up the first weekend to support *Trees for Troops* in some capacity, you can call the church office or sign up at weekend services on November 12-13. There are many ways to serve, including working at the lot or supporting those who do. You can also contribute financially if you wish. Here are some comments from families who came to last year's lot.

"Thank you for blessing our family with our first real Christmas tree!! - Renee"

"Thank you so very much for the tree. This makes the Christmas season so much better, especially with my husband deployed." - Lauren

"Thank you so much. In these hard times, your generosity puts a big smile on our faces. Calley & Lane"

Last year, over 200 volunteers helped launch our first annual *Trees for Troops* as we gave trees to over 170 military families. If you know of someone active in any branch of military service, please let them know we'd like to bless them with a tree, NO STRINGS ATTACHED! Please join us in this year's *Trees for Troops* as we shine the light of God's love to our community.



HOW TO DEVELOP SPIRITUAL EYES

AN UPDATE FROM STEVE RICHARDS

The follower of Jesus engages in something every day that many non-believers find utterly absurd- Christians trust their lives, their relationships, their possessions, everything, to Someone they cannot see. While

this seems unreasonable to the non-Christian, it is at the heart of what it means to walk with Jesus by faith. Jesus anticipated this issue when He said "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have *not seen* and yet have believed" (John 20:29, emphasis mine). Jesus promises His

blessing to those who believe in Him even though they have not seen Him with their physical eyes. As we mature in Christ, our ability to trust what we see through the eyes of faith must grow stronger than our trust in what we see through our physical eyes. *This is not easy.*

When I was laid off from SPCC last November, due to a financial crisis, what I saw with my physical eyes had all the potential of “freaking me out!” The job market was very poor because of the economy, job openings were few in churches, and I was over 60 years old! While the church was amazingly generous with three-

Here’s a question for you: “What person in your life do you trust most?” “Why do you trust them more than others?” Let me guess. You trust that person more than others because your experiences with that person over time has taught you that they are worthy of your trust. In other words, you trust best those whom you know best. You already see my point. You will never learn to trust

emphasis mine). In the midst of the crisis Moses faced, he saw God . . . the God who delivers . . . with his spiritual eyes. His spiritual sight overpowered his physical sight with the presence of the Jehovah God he knew he could trust.

The only way I can advise you to develop spiritual eyesight is to; first, surrender your entire life to Him who is Lord. “You are not your



“When I was laid off from SPCC last November, due to a financial crisis, what I saw with my physical eyes had all the potential of “freaking me out!”

month severance and extended insurance coverage, I was still looking at a job market that said for someone my age and in my profession, it would take a minimum of 6 to 9 months to find a job! Yikes! Additionally, we could assume our small savings would be gone within several months following the end of the severance pay.

That’s the bad news, now here’s the good news! I have been a Christian for many years and God has been my Teacher in the “school of faith” for about as long. If I were the teacher in this school, I would have given up on me years ago! Learning how to really trust God seems to be on the scale of learning nuclear physics!

God until you have invested time getting to know Him. How do you get to know Him?

The Bible teaches “. . . anyone who comes to him [God] must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him (Heb. 11:6). The Old Testament saints mentioned in Hebrews 11 had great faith because they were convinced that God existed, and they sought Him earnestly, and received some of His rewards. Their spiritual eyesight had become stronger than their physical eyesight. Look at what Moses saw that delivered him from paralyzing fear. “By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible” (Heb.11:27,

own; you were bought at a price (Cor. 6:19-20). Second, be willing to obey Him at any cost. And, third, spend much time in God’s Word as in His presence; not just to know about Him, but also to meet with Him in the Word. He will take you through experiences that will build you spiritual eyesight.

When I was laid off, God gave me the ability to see His provision of a job. My role was to trust Him, to trust what He showed me with my spiritual eyes, no matter what I was seeing with my physical eyes.



Steve Richards was a pastor at SPCC from 2002-2010.

CHILDREN'S

Ministries



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

The Discovery Club is sending boxes of Christmas gifts to children around the world! The whole family can participate & learn from this fun and important Christmas project.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Operation Christmas Child brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations worldwide through simple, gift-filled shoe boxes and evangelistic materials that tell the Good News of God's Love. Join our Discovery Club Kids as they work toward the goal of sending **125 hope filled shoe boxes** this November to children just like them all around the world.

TO FILL A BOX...

Purchase a pre-decorated *Operation Christmas Child* shoe box for \$8.00. This purchase covers the cost of the shoe box itself (\$.50) and the cost of shipping the box (\$7.00) as well as an additional \$.50 to help cover the cost of those who can only afford to fill a box, but not cover the shipping.

Determine whether your gift will be for a boy or a girl, and the child's age category: 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14. Print or cut out the appropriate boy/girl label by downloading the artwork from the www.samaritanaspurse.org website or using a label on the OCC brochure and tape it to the top of your shoe box.

Fill your shoe box with gifts. Use the gift ideas to the right to fill the shoe box with a variety of gifts that will bring delight to a child.

Drop Off. Place a rubber band around each closed shoe box and drop it off in one of the collection boxes that will be located in the Lobby of the Auditorium, B Building, A Building and Children's Chapel at weekend services November 12th and 13th or at Discover Club on November 15th.

Thank you for helping us reach our goal of providing 125 or more shoe boxes to Samaritan's Purse and helping share the Gospel to children around the world this Christmas! If you have questions please contact Ms. Diona at 360-659-2844 ext 2230 or diona@spcc-cma.org. Additional information about Samaritan's Purse can be found at samaritanaspurse.org or by picking up a brochure at the information area in the lobby.



For more information about *Operation Christmas Child*, visit the Samaritan's Purse website at www.samaritanaspurse.org/index.php/OCC/ or contact Ms. Diona at 360-659-2844 ext. 2230 or diona@spcc-cma.org

FILL YOUR BOX...

1

TOYS

small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch A Sketch®, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky®, etc.

2

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

pens, pencils and sharpener, crayons or markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.

3

HYGIENE ITEMS

toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

4

OTHER

Hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps; sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries)

5

A PERSONAL NOTE

In a separate envelope, you may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. (If you include your name and address, the child may write back.)

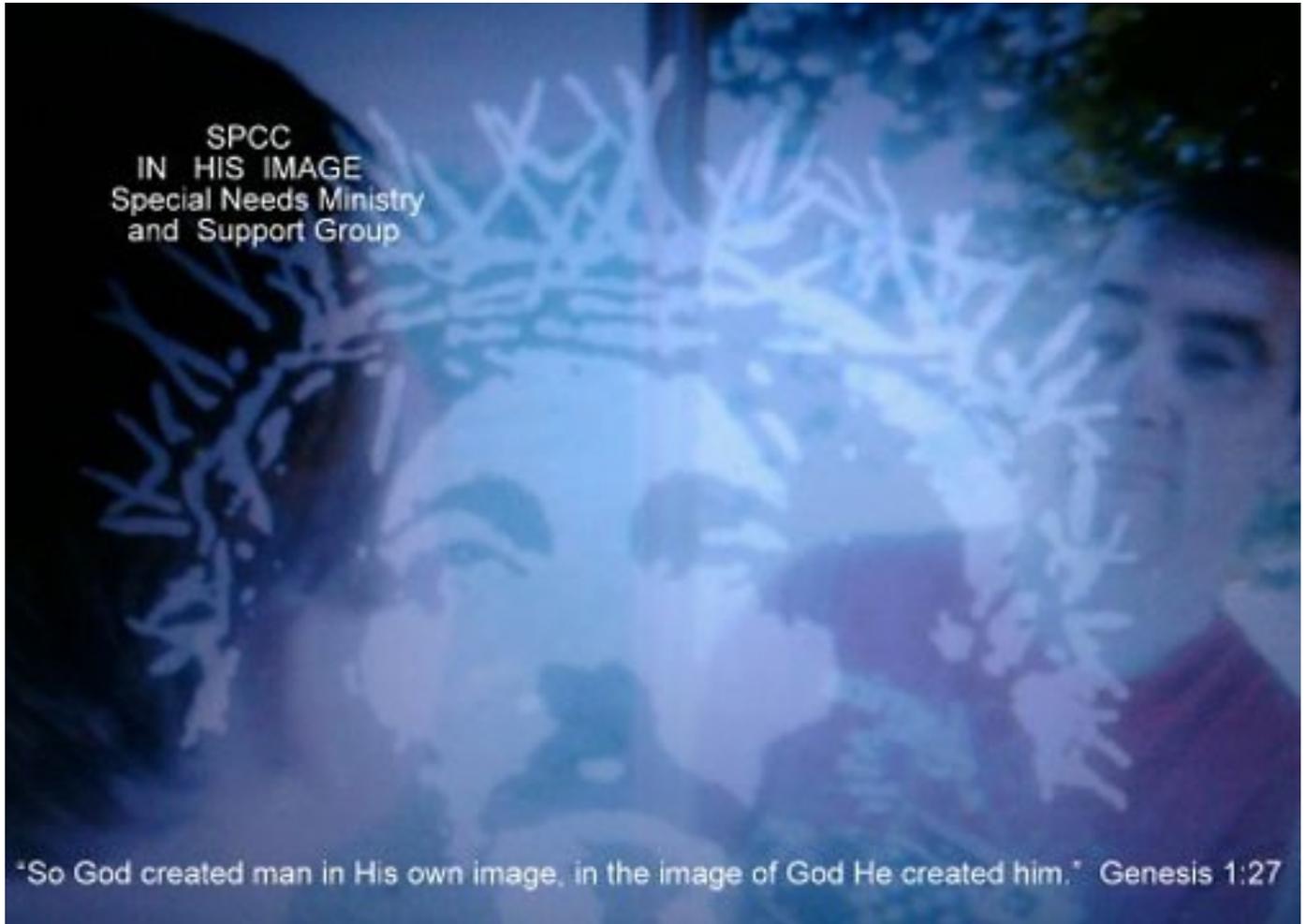
6

DO NOT INCLUDE

Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate or food; out-of-date candy; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans

IN HIS IMAGE

Ministry Update



IN HIS IMAGE MINISTRY

HOW IN HIS IMAGE MINISTRY WAS BORN

God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him...

In His Image is a support ministry for individuals, families and friends with special needs. *In His Image* began in 2005 as God had two women meet weekly... simply to pray. I had been loving and teaching SPCC's Kindergarten program for about eight years when I asked if our training could include special education. Gerrie, my supervisor at the time, authorized asking a couple public educators attending SPCC if we could set something up. I found three willing participants but then at some point, I dropped the ball.

Nearly six years later, one particular Sunday I had *three* separate people approach me with *three* different requests or concerns regarding their or other children needing special assistance in several classrooms. *Did I need to be hit over the head with a hammer? That did it!* Miss Sharon was also

Sharon and I began meeting weekly for prayer at Couch's Coffee Nook (ahhh, the good ol' days when we were still open...).

During our first meeting Sharon suggested, "Let's start with a list of the families who might benefit and any professionals who might assist with information, teaching or leadership."

Later, we were given the go ahead to have our first meeting.

Ministry! There were a few churches with one in place and we were well on our way to having the privilege to be part of one here! Come join us!

Look for following issues of *The Loop* to learn how God provided community outreach events, an adult Bible study for those of us with special needs and areas where they are serving, and more!



“One particular Sunday I had three separate people approach me with requests or concerns regarding their or other children...*Did I need to hit be hit over the head with a hammer? That did it!*”

teaching at SPCC so we talked and prayed over these issues that day.

I was also serving on the SPCC Governing Board so I first met with Pastor Jim, next presented these concerns at a board meeting:

“Every child is reachable... every child is teachable and our classrooms are requiring additional provisions and training to support students with learning challenges so that they might better know Jesus. We would like input from our families and any members whom are professionals in the various fields of education, speech pathology, occupational therapy and such...”

Sharon had spoken to the newly retired Arlington School Dist. Child Psychologist, Sue Robinson who said yes to leadership and soon thereafter we met Marilyn Baker who had worked in specifically related fields, giving her yes to leadership. Wow! God is good and He already had His ministry and His plan in motion! We four were off and running!

Further encouragement was offered as Sue and I attended Joni Eareckson Tadda's first summit in Pasadena. We discovered there was actually such a system as we were attempting to develop AND it had a name: Special Needs

IN HIS IMAGE MEETS THE THIRD WEDNESDAY AT 6:30 PM IN THE SMALL CHAPEL.



Lindy Couch helps run SPCC's In His Image Special Needs Ministry. They meet the third Wednesday @ 6:30PM in the Small Chapel.

STUDENT

Ministries



A REPORT FROM THE PHILIPPINES

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE—by Mallory Van Der Meersche

I know this is something typically more well-seasoned adults say, but time just flies by! It seems like it was just yesterday that I was sending out support letters for the high school Philippines Mission trip and now it's been nearly 2 months since we've been home. To be honest, I've talked about those 3 ½ weeks countless times but I haven't written that much about it. But, I'll share my experience with you to the best of my abilities!

Here's a brief overview of what our team accomplished. From the get go, we knew that the majority of our time there would be spent on a work project at the HECA center that we would be sleeping/living at.

The HECA center is a 20-acre piece of land our church purchased to develop into a camp facility, seminary and center for large gatherings for the local churches. Our team's project was to make a short road (by hand) from the main road to the center. Hard work, but well worth it. We visited local schools to share testimonies, put on skits, and sing some worship songs for the kids and teachers. We also had a one day outreach sports event for the local youth

“Sharing the Gospel isn't always as scary as we think it will be.”

where we held basketball and volleyball tournaments, had dinner, put on skits, performed some songs, and concluded the evening with a message Byron had prepared. Needless to say, we were typically kept pretty busy.

Any trip requires a fair amount of preparation. This trip was no different. Most of us had to go through the process of getting a passport, various vaccines, write out our testimonies, and raise about \$2,400. It felt tedious at times but when the day came for us to get

on the plane we were all more than ready to go!

One highlight of the trip for me was the conversations I had with some of the people there. There were SO many that I treasure, but one really sticks out in my mind. This conversation happened the night of our all day outreach. Byron had just given his message and everyone on the team had little discussion groups they were leading where they went through the gospel with youth. I had already finished with my group, but since other people were still in their groups I began to play with some little girls I had gotten to know earlier on the trip. After playing a couple of games we started talking about the message. After we had talked for a while, I asked them if they had any questions. They thought for a minute then asked



why Jesus was born. That spurred on a pretty good talk that lasted for a few minutes. Feeling encouraged, I asked them if they had any more questions. This caused them to think for a little bit. After about a minute or so one of them looked at me and asked “Why are dwarves so short?”. Completely out of the blue. The mind of an 8 year old is a curious place.

It made me realize something. Sharing the gospel isn't always as scary as we think it will be. That's something God really showed me while I was in the Philippines. If

you ask God for an opportunity to talk to others about Him, He will always honor that request whether you're on a Mission trip or in your neighborhood. Believe me, I know from experience. Not only will He give you the opportunity, but the words to speak. My conversation with the girls didn't end with me leading them to Christ, but even through the dwarf question I was still able to talk about how God makes each one of us differently. I may not have been able to help them pray the Sinner's prayer, but I have to remind myself this...we don't bring people to God; He does. We are merely tools. 1 Corinthians 3:7 “So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.” AMEN. All we are required to do is to tell people about Jesus and pray that they come into a relationship with Him. Through this relatively short trip, God did great things. He brought people into a relationship with Him through our Outreach event. He protected us from spiritual warfare. He opened our eyes to what real poverty looks like. He showed us His love through the people we met at the different churches we visited. However, God's greatness didn't end after those few weeks. God has and can do just as much here in Washington as He did in the Philippines. You don't have to travel thousands of miles to let God use you. Be willing to step out of your comfort zone and speak about the love of Christ to those who haven't come to know it yet. Plant a seed, and leave the results to God. He's big enough to take care of it.



Mallory Van Der Meersche is part of High School Student Ministries at SPCC. She is a senior in high school.

MISSIONS

Update

John & Margaret Lewis make a tiny Alaskan village a personal mission.
By Stacey Johnson

FLIGHT



18 SMOKEY POINT COMMUNITY CHURCH

John and Margaret Lewis have attended SPCC for the past nine years. Their involvement includes teaching Celebrate Freedom classes, involvement in a Life Group, along with other Bible studies and prayer groups. John is also a pilot trained through Mission Aviation Training Academy (MATA) in Arlington. The couple also has a heart for missions.

God brought about a unique opportunity to fly to KAKO Bible Retreat Center in the Yukon Delta area of Alaska and share the Love of Christ with the native people, specifically the Yupik Indians. "Our experience with Celebrate Freedom was an excellent teaching tool for the Alaskans," says Margaret. "We went expecting to do projects for the villagers, but discovered that more than anything they needed our time, encouraging, singing hymns, praying and just being friends." John and Margaret did some repair work in homes and at the church, and helped KAKO with some

go back to Alaska and use the education she's now getting.

"It was a privilege to share the God we know, and pray with the people," says Margaret. John was very honored to fly the Mission Aviation Training Academy airplane back with a seasoned pilot. This also gave him the opportunity for additional training. The couple is seeking prayer and finances for the projects next year. They want God to show them the length of time they should spend there.

"We hope to be there from the end of May through September, but we are willing to stay however long the Lord wants us there," says Margaret.

There are many families in need in the Yukon. One family lost their fish house when it was swept away in the river. They need the house to live in while harvesting and smoking their catch. Another family is in need of a steam house. The natives use these to help soothe their joints in the hard climate. Also, an ATV, which is the

"You have to be flown in. There is no television, so there is an abundance of time to pray and study God's Word."

Margaret. "Our newer friends are developing their love for Jesus and they could not express enough how important it is to have us there to strengthen them." The Lewis' give you John 15:12-17 to sum it all up.

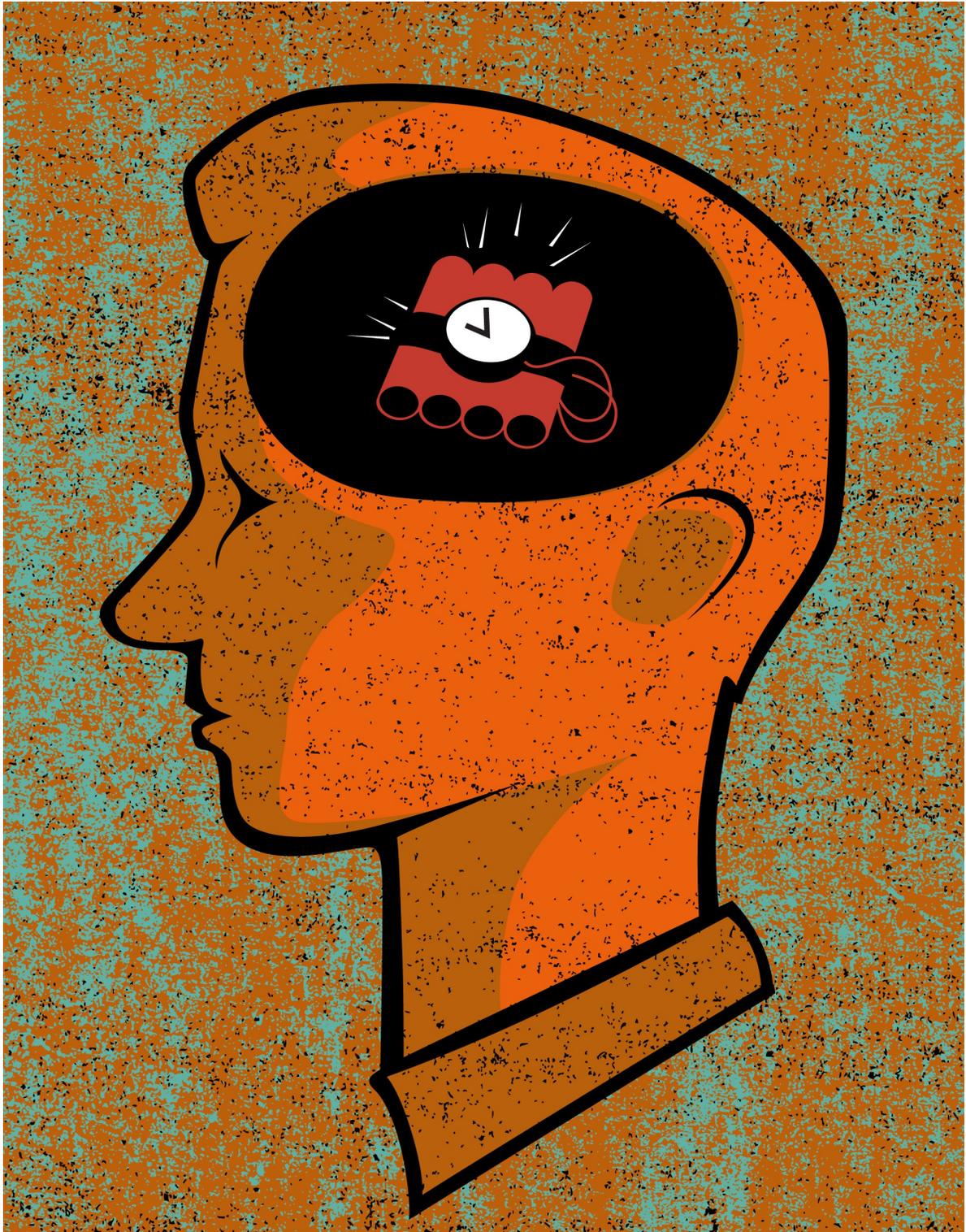
"This is my commandment that you love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what so ever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; But I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bring fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that what so ever you should ask the Father in My Name, He may give it to you. These things I command you, that you love one another."

"We went expecting to do projects for the villagers, but discovered that more than anything they needed our time encouraging, singing hymns, praying and just being friends."

projects as well. "There are no stores to run to in the Alaskan bush," says Margaret. "You have to be flown in. There is no television, so there is an abundance of time to pray and study God's Word." Margaret even finished her AA degree while there, and hopes to

main source of travel within most villages, is needed for the Pastor. The Lewis' ask for more than financial support, they ask for your prayers as they seek to help the newer Christians in the village. "Our service would not have been possible without them," says

John and Margaret Lewis work with the Mission Aviation Training Academy. To learn more, visit www.mata-usa.org.



WHAT'S DOGGIN' YOUR SLEEP?

CAN UNDEALT WITH ANGER AFFECT YOUR SLEEPING HABITS?

20 SMOKEY POINT COMMUNITY CHURCH

Last night the unthinkable happened. My 6 month old pooch, Kita, decided to disturb a perfectly good night of peaceful sleep. I wish I could say it was the late night pizza, or the afternoon cup of coffee that kept me awake, but no, it was my furry canine. Yes, to my disappointment, I was let down by “man’s best friend”. Instead of bedding down in our

backyard for a quiet night at the McFadden Motel 6, she decided to go out on the town, like a little party animal. All through the night, she interrupted the darkness with fits of barkness.

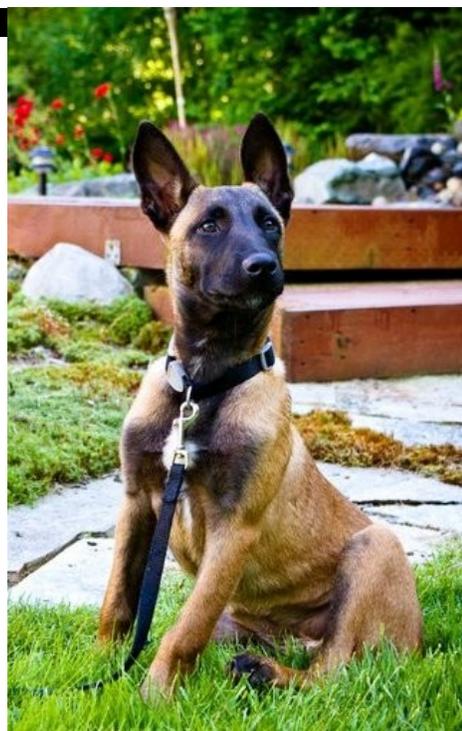
“What if, what’s doggin’ your sleep could be dealt with biblically; resulting in a peaceful, restful, good night’s sleep? How would your day and your outlook on life look different?”

backyard for a quiet night at the McFadden Motel 6, she decided to go out on the town, like a little party animal. All through the night, she interrupted the darkness with fits of barkness.

Certainly there must have been good reason to fill the air with her vocal abilities. I even got up, peeking through the blinds to see if there was an intruder; a bear, a mountain lion, a raccoon. I would have even been comforted by seeing the neighbor’s cat, but all

was darkness. Was there something out there, an unseen reality, perhaps whiffed, sniffed, or detected through the acute senses of my backyard bouncer? I would like to think that there was really a perfectly good explanation, more than my dog expanding her vocal range.

I imagine that many of us forego a restful night’s sleep due to a variety of reasons. It is a common human experience to toss and turn



through the night, not only due to indigestion, worry, anxieties due to pressure from upcoming projects and assignments, or even a review of the events of our day that may have left some residual concerns. But have you ever thought that perhaps a habitual fitful night, lacking restful sleep, might be due to anger?

More and more, scientific and medical researchers are finding that a significant number of serious diseases are not only

related to our lifestyle choices, but also linked to our emotional processes. Chronic anger is one of those emotions that have been linked to a variety of ailments. God did not create the human body to accommodate long-term anger. No wonder He clearly tells us in Eph. 4:26, “Do not let the sun go down on your anger”. Yes, not only will anger interrupt your relationships, but can also disrupt sleep patterns, keeping you from the rest you really need, and your body’s recovery.

Is it possible that there might be something out there in the darkness, the reality of anger that perhaps is disrupting your sleep at night? Would it be worth your time and effort to investigate this further? What if, what’s doggin’ your sleep could be dealt with biblically; resulting in a peaceful, restful, good night’s sleep? How would your day and your outlook on life look different?

Celebrate Freedom is excited to offer a class titled “**Dealing with anger, yours and mine**”, to help you investigate this whole issue of anger, in order to help manage one of the emotions that God allows us to feel. Maybe it’s time to invest in getting a good night’s rest. Classes are on Thursday evenings, 6 – 8:45 PM. For more information, please contact Pastor Bryce at SPCC, 360.659.2844.



Pastor Bryce McFadden oversees Celebrate Freedom, our recovery ministry. Email him at Bryce@spcc-cma.org for more information.



living an
**EXTREME
LIFE**

**SPCC reacts to our fall
all-church series.**

Each fall, we've made it a practice to unite our focus on a single theme with an all-church Sermon series and Life Group study. During the eight weeks of this year's Extreme Living weekend message series, over 400 of you have participated in the companion Life Group study. Life Group members have used this weekly study guide as part of their daily study time & have discussed selected study questions in their weekly meetings. Hopefully, God has used the past eight weeks to increase our appreciation for Jesus as our greatest treasure and future hope. If you've seen God use this series to accomplish some things in your life, we'd love to hear about it! Following are some comments from Life Group leaders and members.



YOUR THOUGHTS

Life Group Reflections on Extreme Living

“Each of us have been forced to ask questions about what it means to live radically for Christ and what things in our life are getting in the way of us seeing Christ as our greatest hope and treasure.”

SURVIVING TO THRIVING

"As a life group we look forward to September every year because of the all church study. The connection for us of the weekend services to our mid week get-together really helps saturate our week in a Biblical theme as a group. For us as a "young family life group" it is a temptation to get caught up in the craziness of school starting, work loads increasing, shorter days to get out of the house as a family. The pull for us is to live for the now, put all our attention in the immediate issue. The Philippians study has given us the powerful reminder that the only way to go from surviving to thriving is to live with Christ as our treasure and hope. The Biblical questions in the study have confronted our group with how we tend to seek lives of comfort rather than sacrifice. It is refreshing to learn about and understand God's truth from His word, and be called to act."

Life Group Leader

24 SMOKEY POINT COMMUNITY CHURCH

USING OUR TIME WELL

"This Philippians study has really been used by God to challenge our Life Group to think about how we're using our time in this life. Each of us have been forced to ask questions about what it means to live radically for Christ and what things in our life are getting in the way of us seeing Christ as our greatest hope and treasure. It's really been a blessing to talk about & to see God work in each of our lives so tangibly as a result of this study."

Life Group Leader

UNCOMFORTABLY DEEP

"I really like this "Extreme Living" Philippians study. The questions are uncomfortably deep, and tend to penetrate directly to my heart. These are good qualities, and I often really need to search my soul for how close I am living to God's word and plan for me, and how much of my own

fears and insecurities get in the way. Too often studies like this have "safe" and "correct" and "easy" answers that are given and agreed upon by the group. This study asks for specific details or events and really drives each lesson from the scriptures home. I am truly amazed at God's limitless love for me, despite my own nature. Even more, it is studies like this, using perfectly referenced scriptures, with such an open and honest Life Group, that truly display the magnitude of God's grace."

Life Group Member

EXTREME LOVE

As I was working on my lesson "Living Harmoniously", God showed me His love in a new way. It made me look at the way I love others and brought a flood of tears. I suddenly realized that my relationship with family needed some extreme help. I became aware of how often I look at the way a certain family member lives and how wrong their sin is,

Share what you're learning. If you'd like to give God credit for something He's done through this year's study, email us your comment at spccpublications@gmail.com and we'll post these anonymously in the next issue of the LOOP.

“I suddenly realized that my relationship with family needed some extreme help. I became aware of how often I look at the way a certain family member lives and how wrong their sin is, expecting them to simply stop instead of just loving them unconditionally like God loves me.”

expecting them to simply stop, instead of just loving them unconditionally like God loves me. God showed me I was judging others. I'm always trying to fix everyone else instead of stopping and asking God to show me where I need to change. It was when I actually stopped at that moment in tears, that I truly began to sense and RECEIVE God's love for myself despite my own sin. It wasn't just words written in scripture, it became very personal. I could then look at my family member and love them UNCONDITIONALLY. I don't ever want that extreme growing moment to be forgotten. I want to put it into practice daily, not only for my family member but for every relationship God puts in my life. It gave me great joy to learn something I thought I already knew because it is God's way, not mine, and that is how to truly love others.

Life Group Member

LIVING LIKE I BELIEVE THEM

For me, this study has allowed me to

stop and think on a few truths that I have always known, but not necessarily lived like I believed them. One truth being that God loves me, really loves me! That I matter to Him and He treasures me, like no one on earth has ever done or could ever do. That even though I am a sinner (and will continue to sin), He sacrificed His son for me and totally wiped my slate clean. The fact that He delights in me, finds joy in me and wants to “hang out” with me is really mind boggling, but none the less the truth. Another truth is that He has “secured” my place in eternity with Him. I have a pre-paid ticket to Heaven! Nothing I can say or do will make that ticket any better nor can I do anything to lose that ticket. It is mine to keep. Therefore, (love that term!) because I am secure in God's love and His gift of salvation is mine forever the last truth is...I do not need to be validated by others here on earth. God has already validated my worth. So what does that mean for me? I believe it frees me up to be humble, to think of myself less and others more. To be ok in serving without getting a thank you, to minister to the ungrateful, to put

other people's needs before my own. Do I do this all the time? No, but I am His work in progress.

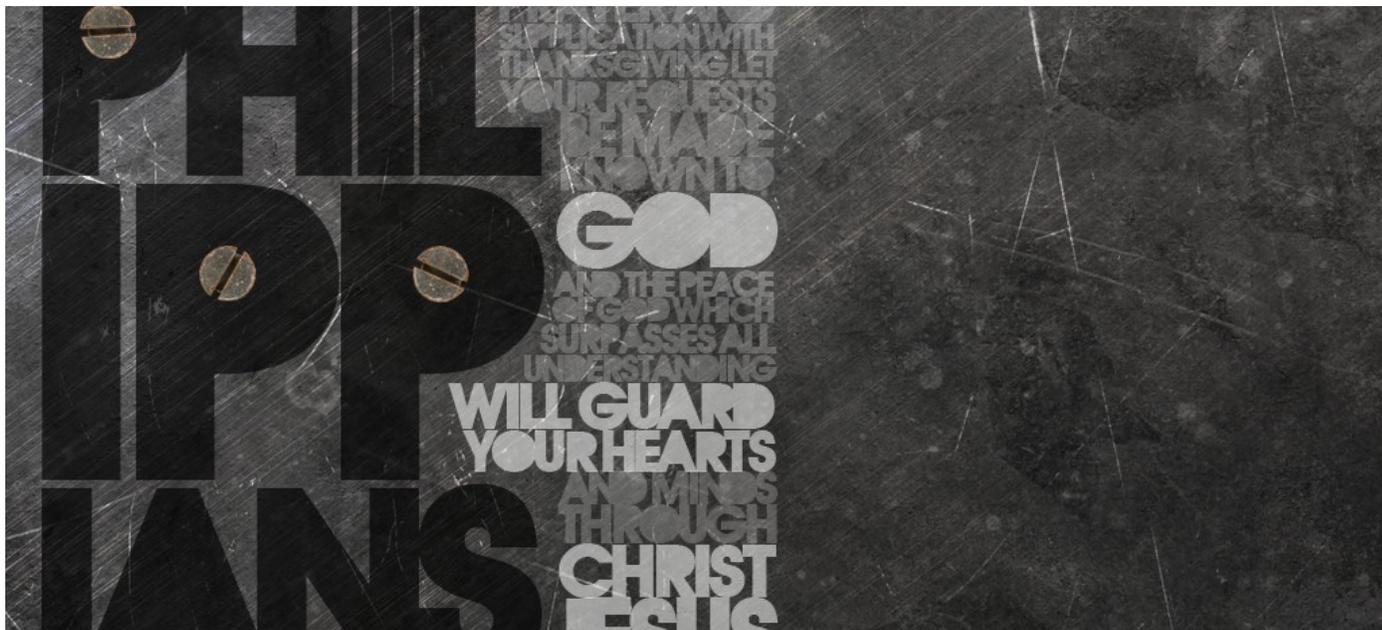
Life Group Member

Wondering what all the talk is about? If you missed this year's all-church study, be sure to download the study book smokepointcommunitychurch.org under weekend worship/current series. You can also listen to sermons you missed online.



YOUR THOUGHTS

Life Group Reflections on Extreme Living



A LETTER TO SPCC INSPIRED BY THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

Smokey Point Community Church,

As we have been reading through Philippians together, I have been encouraged to find myself feeling the same way about you all that Paul feels for the Philippian church.

As a result, I have decided to write all of you a letter expressing my love and gratitude for you all. This letter will be following the ideas Paul expressed to the Philippian church that I also share with SPCC. Just to be clear, I AM NOT PAUL! Please do not think that by writing this, I am trying to put myself into the same role as Paul. I am simply a person who has been captivated by the love of our Savior. A person who loves all of you and wants to share that love for you in a way that you might find encouraging.

I thank God daily for the way that He has used the people at SPCC in my life. Without faithful witnesses to Jesus here at SPCC, I would not

have been exposed to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ found at the foot of the Cross. I am eternally grateful for the way that God has used all of you in my life. I pray for all of you as I joyfully come to the Father of all mercies each day. And I know our Father because you have been faithful witnesses to Him. There are few things that bring me more joy than watching you continue to grow and mature in your devotion to the God who calls broken sinners into His Presence.

With many of you, I have had the privilege of partnering with you in the gospel. I can remember a year ago when we decided to give away a bunch of Christmas trees to military families who were in need.

As a response to the free, undeserved gift of knowing Christ that you have received, I can remember the countless responses from people who were touched by

the free gift you offered. I remember the stories of some of those people who received Christmas trees coming to our doors on a Sunday morning. I know of many people who came to know Jesus for the first time because of your faithfulness to care for those in need. I am confident that there is many more who experienced the grace of God in a tangible way through the love of Jesus that they saw displayed in your lives. And that was a year ago! We get to do this again!

I cannot wait to see people's faces as they are blessed in a practical way because of the love that you will display this winter. We will hear more stories of people being brought from death to life because they saw the Risen King at a Christmas tree lot. These powerful relational bridges God will use in a mighty way to share the message of forgiveness offered in the sacrifice

of His Son. Eternity has been changed because of how God used your faithful service last winter, and eternity WILL be changed this winter when God uses you once again.

However, He has not only used many of you in the past to witness of the Saving Grace offered through Jesus Christ, He displays His glory in you each and every day. I see it every Wednesday night. I see it when youth group volunteers pour out their hearts and souls into the lives of the young people in our church. These volunteers show the next generation what it looks like to follow Jesus. As faithful servants, they come alongside those who are hurting and broken. Even as I am writing this, I can feel emotion take over me as I think about the world that many of our young people are immersed in. And many adults are speaking life into the dry bones of our young people. They point empty hearts to a God who fills beyond all we could ask or think. Broken people, saved by grace, are stepping into a broken world, with the power of the Holy Spirit, to show young people that there is a better way to live.

A way to live that begins with God. Begins with God doing something. Doing something extraordinarily undeserved. An undeserved saving that only God can offer. He offers to a broken and crooked generation. A broken and crooked generation who are hopeless. Hopeless on their own. A generation that finds hope in the Father of the broken.

A Father who allowed His Son to be broken. For them. I have seen so many volunteers, in tears and

personal sacrifice, preach that message to the young people in our Church. Now that's the gospel at work!

I have seen God radically change the lives of the volunteers but, and as importantly, I have seen junior high and high school students come to know and follow the God of the Universe. I have seen them follow Him with everything they have. I have seen them own their faith and use their grace-given gifts in the lives of the people

“Words cannot properly express this. Kids. Brought from death to life. Saved. By Grace. For good works. Works that are not temporary, but eternal.”

around them. Words cannot properly express this. Kids. Brought from death to life. Saved. By Grace. For good works. Works that are not temporary, but eternal. Now, this is incredible. This is worth living for.

This is how God has used many of you while you have partnered with Him in the gospel, and I know that this is not only happening in the youth.

There are many young adults who are breaking free from the cares of this world and are finding themselves consumed by the Kingdom of God.

Many adults have committed to joining life groups. These adults are realizing that being a Christ-follower is more than just a title. It

is more than just another thing you add to your life. But they have realized that following Jesus demands our hearts, souls, and minds. It means not settling for a lukewarm faith. It means being a very different, holy, kind of people who are captivated by the free grace that came at such a high price.

People in our church are faithfully loving the little ones in our church, and there are children who have come to know the God that knit them together in their mother's womb. These little ones have a shamelessly innocent affection for Jesus, and I cannot wait to see how God will use them in their neighborhoods, schools, and world. God will use them to turn their campuses upside down for the gospel. We will be having some little 4th and 5th grade evangelists on our hands! And as these little ones grow up to be mommies and daddies, God will use them in His church

in ways that we could never have imagined because they will have a love for Jesus that is deeper than the previous generation's. And this will happen because for some reason God uses His holy, redeemed people to do an incredible work! He will use the seeds you have sown in their lives at this young age to draw the next generation even closer to Himself. Sincerely, God has knit my heart with you SPCC.

Your Brother,
Joe



Joe Woodard is a member of SPCC and a long-time intern and volunteer in Student Ministries

MINISTRY NEWS

Notes from SPCC Ministries

MILLTOWN UPDATE

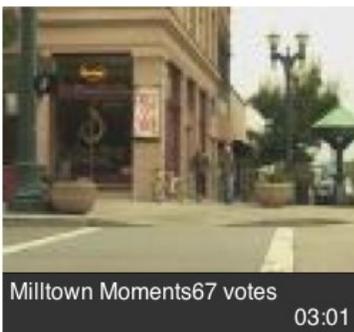
FROM PASTOR JEFF FEINBERG

“We’re understanding more everyday that our ability to advance the gospel flows in direct proportion to our ability to love one another.”

Milltown is growing. In the last few months we’ve had a baptism, seen new members join our community, seen old members reaffirm their commitment, and seen roots being put down all over town. We’ve also had the pleasure of developing a necessary Kid’s and Family ministry for our Sunday services. We’re presently studying the Exodus and being reminded just how much our God sees, hears, knows and remembers us—no matter big or small. Like all 20-month-old toddlers, we’ve had our fair share of growing pains too. It’s been interesting to grapple with that great tension and balance between missional focus and learning how to truly love and care for each other as we go. We’re understanding more everyday that our ability to

advance the gospel flows in direct proportion to our ability to love one another. Please pray for us as we learn and put this into practice daily.

Additionally there is more transition on the horizon—we will soon be moving to the basement of Bethel Baptist [Hoyt and Everett Ave] for our weekly worship services at 6p on Sundays. Our current facility is being sold and Bethel has graciously invited us to share their space. Please pray for our new relationship as we transition. We’re grateful for the process we’re in, the journey we’re on, and the mission we’ve been given. We think of you at SPCC often in our prayers and are continually encouraged by your support and faithfulness.



Milltown Moments67 votes

03:01

Want to ‘Experience Everett’ with Milltown? Log on to www.experienceeverett.net and watch the “Milltown Moments” movie created by member Garrett Hunt for the Experience Everett movie contest, sponsored by the City of Everett.. Join Brad Heyne as he rides his bike home and runs into friends at some of his favorite Everett places.



EMPTY NESTERS

NEW YEARS IN “NEW YORK”

Please come and join us on December 31, 2011 for fun and fellowship to celebrate New Year’s Eve “in” New York.

Please bring your favorite games and snacks (share those leftover holiday snacks that you want out of your house before your New Year’s resolutions begin). At 9:00 PM we will celebrate the incoming New Year in New York. For those who would like to get home before the crowd hits the road, feel free to leave.

Those who really like to celebrate New Year’s Eve can stay on to celebrate New Years in Chicago, Denver, and even Arlington! The celebration continues until everyone has gone home to sleep until 2012.

For more information on the Empty Nesters ministry & events, contact Wendy Strickler at 360.659.2845.

Want to Learn More? Forgot that important date? Remember, you can always visit www.SmokeyPointCommunityChurch.org to download calendars, the latest issue of the Loop, Sermons, Lifegroup Resources, and more!

LIFE GROUPS

RESOURCES LIBRARY

The online resources for Life Groups have recently been revamped! Log on to smokeypointcommunitychurch.org and go to Get Connected>Life Groups>Life Group Library to find a list of categories with recommended resources. If you find one your group is interested in, be sure to contact Pastor Tim before you order. If you would prefer to look at the resources before ordering, stop by the church during office hours Monday-Thursday or during services and take a look at the Life Group library in the A Building.

CALENDAR

The Life Group calendar is available to download at smokeypointcommunitychurch.org>Life Groups>Life Group Calendar.

JOIN A LIFEGROUP!

If you're a regular attender at SPCC and have yet to join a Life Group, now is the perfect time to get connected! During the next several months, leadership at SPCC will be working to start several new Life Groups, making plenty of space available for everyone. For more information, contact Pastor Tim at the church office: 360.659.2844.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

BREAKFAST RECAP

A huge thanks to all who attended and served to make the women's fall breakfast a wonderful event.

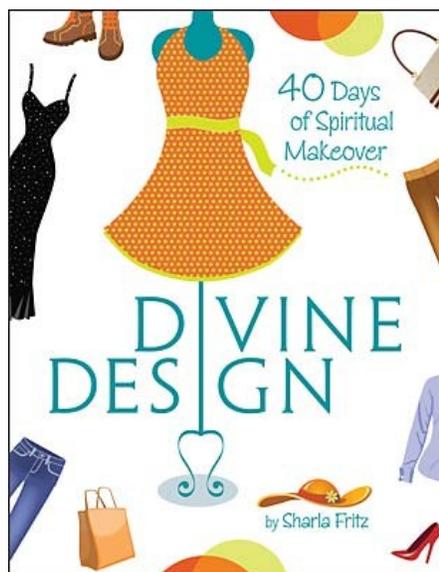
It was such a blessing to hear from Jamie Thompson as she spoke about how God is writing the story of our lives, and the story begins when we say yes to him despite our fears. She shared wonderful examples of what this adventure looks like and how God pours out his love for us in the midst of it.

It was a sweet time of fellowship and fun. It warmed our hearts to see many familiar faces as well as new ones, so thanks to all who stepped out and joined in for what God had for us. If you missed out we would love to see you at the next event to be held on Friday, February 17th.

SAVE THE DATE

Be sure to save the date for the women's retreat coming up May 4-6, 2012.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: WHAT'S NEXT?



Women's Bible Study and Fellowship will be finishing up the church wide Philippians study soon. On November 17, we will be starting a new study called Divine Design by Sharla Fritz.

This eight week study will take us through January, as we will take breaks during the holidays. You can sign up now by calling Dawn Stoelting at 360.403.3370 or email Darrcie Inman at darrcie@gmail.com. WBS meets on Thursday mornings from 9:30 to noon. We hope you can join us!



LOOKING AHEAD

Celebrate Freedom	Thursdays @ 6:00 PM
Blood Drive	November 14
Starting Point	November 19—20
Trees For Troops	November 26—3
New Sermon Series Begins	December 3—4
<i>"Carols: Unwrapping the songs we sing at Christmas"</i>	
Knowing God 6-week Class	Beings January 22
Annual Meeting	February 11—12
Missions Emphasis Week	February 18—26
Eagles Wings Banquet	March 9
MOPS Auction	March 23
Good Friday/Easter	April 6/8
Membership Class	April 15
Women's Retreat	May 4—6
Adult Philippines Trip	May 19—June 2



Can't remember that class date and time? No worries. For the most current info, our website, smokeypointcommunitychurch.org is the place to go. Listen to a sermon, send a prayer request, read articles, and more....

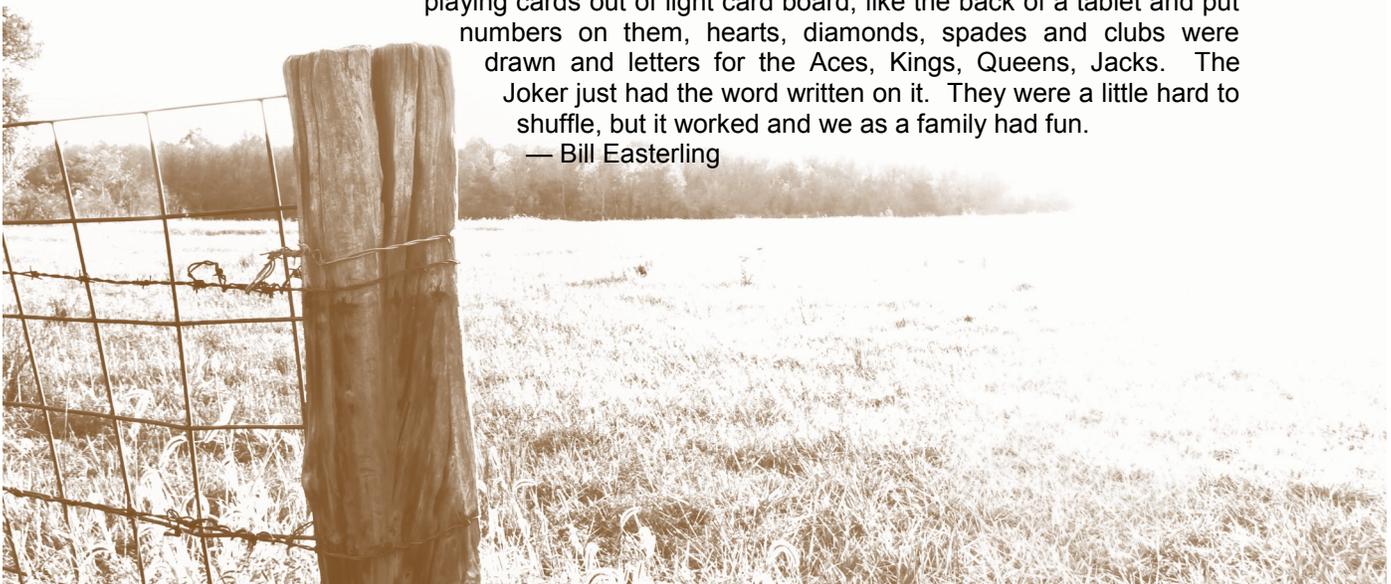
IN CLOSING Christmas Memories

from the livewires

Christmas Eve was always special. We would go to town and sing Christmas songs through the neighborhood before going to candle light service. Christmas Eve 1976 started out the same. We put on our dinner in the crock pot, turned on the outside Christmas lights and headed for town, windows down, singing at the top of our lungs. We sang, went to church, and drove home and had dinner remembering past Christmases. My son kept hinting that he sure hoped he got a tackle box. The kids and I had saved our pennies and his tackle box was under the tree. This was going to be a great night, just us. We always seemed to have extra people joining us on Christmas Eve, but not this year. Just us. The house was too hot so we opened to front door and there stood Scott. He had been kicked out again. 'No,' I thought, 'No extras!' But I said 'come in Scott, have some dinner.' We played some games and the time came to open presents. I quickly made up a box for Scott. My daughter passed out gifts. 'Wait a minute,' I thought, 'there is a pile in front of Scott.' Everyone had taken one of their gifts and put Scott's name on it. Now came the moment we had all been waiting for. My daughter brought my son his tackle box. He walked over and gave it to Scott. Why would he do such a thing? Well, he had a family that loved him a lot and he thought Scott needed something special on Christmas. Scott reminds me of that night in 1976 often. He still has the tackle box and the New Testament we gave him. By the by, my son got his tackle box for his birthday in January. - Ginger Stanley

I remember in the days of the Great Depression, one Christmas we made our own checker board and checkers. We made the board out of a piece of cardboard and checkers by sawing an old broom handle in little slices, and blacked half of them with ink, and left the other half plain, thus we had our game to play. We also made playing cards out of light card board, like the back of a tablet and put numbers on them, hearts, diamonds, spades and clubs were drawn and letters for the Aces, Kings, Queens, Jacks. The Joker just had the word written on it. They were a little hard to shuffle, but it worked and we as a family had fun.

— Bill Easterling





New Around Here? If you would like to know more about SPCC, what we believe, what our mission is, and how to grow spiritually and get involved in the life of the church, mark your calendar for the weekend of November 19/20. For more information, contact the church office at 360.659.2844.