

Doorway to Hope

The Newsletter of Hope Church, P.C.A.

Our Vision: Training People for L.I.F.E

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Revive Us, O Lord

In the 1987 Oscar winning film, *Babette's Feast*, a Lutheran pastor lives with his two daughters in a fishing village in Denmark. Martine and Philippa, named after their father's theological heroes Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon, grew up hearing these words from Psalm 85:10 in the King James Version as their father led a communion service.

*Mercy and truth shall meet together;
righteousness and bliss will kiss one
another.*

As the time of worship would end, Psalm 85 was used as a perpetual reminder that true reality in the New Jerusalem is coming; therefore eschew and avoid worldly pleasures, for this world is wicked and vain. Thus, the whole community lived a life of faith under a grey cloud of discipline. Bland meals, grey and black clothes, and solemnity adorned each face. No profanity or feasting. Martine gives up the possibility of bliss and being kissed, choosing a lifetime of poverty and service. Philippa has a heavenly singing voice but refuses the temptation to move to Paris and rise to fame. As time passes, the Reverend dies and the community is left to carry on the mantle of piety and sober faith, following Jesus while enduring their daily bread. Literally. Their regular meals included stale-ish bread boiled in water. Boiled bread soup was the tasteless symbol of their drab ingratitude toward their good God, the Giver of every good gift.

As you can imagine, the death of their beloved spiritual leader left not only a void and so, like Israel in Judges, the folks reverted to their old disagreements. Communion became overshadowed by loud bickering between church members. Faith, friendship and faith crumbling together. Steadfast love and faithfulness had become strangers. Righteousness and bliss were enemies. This small church needed renewal: a powerful and joyful re-discovery of the grace given to sinners at great cost to God Himself.

Friends, something happens when Christians follow Jesus for a long time. To use Jesus' own words, we become lukewarm (Revelation 3:16). We lose the joy of our salvation. Words that ought to lead us to clang cymbals and joyfully dance with Miriam and Moses at being included in God's great redemption (Ex. 15:21) fall on deaf ears. The desire to praise God in front of others fades. Prayer becomes intermittent or rare outside of church. Bible reading is a chore due to lack of interest or too much familiarity. Jesus' loved ones in the church become an-

noying. God's steadfast love and our faithfulness become estranged. Enter the God of Psalm 85.

First order of business. Is this you? It will be. The fact that the Psalms include a prayer for spiritual renewal means that the saints of old discovered that they got bored with Divine beauty and the blood of the lamb slain for sinners. Our study of Judges alone is proof of that. The Hebrew Bible is divided into three parts: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings (Luke 24:44). The Psalms begin the section called the Writings (which includes the great examples of faith like Daniel, Job, Esther and Ruth along with the Proverbs). These particular books are interested in showing and telling us how to live in a covenant relationship with God in heaven while we are still suffering and sinning on earth. Therefore Psalm 85 is a gift to you and me, recognizing that the intensity of our faith waxes and wanes. We will need to ask and wait for



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spiritual renewal! And we have the most beautiful promise at the end of the Psalm. God *will* answer our prayer. Psalm 85 ends with one of *the most* satisfying descriptions of God's desired harmony between heaven and earth. Just imagine a world wherein God's Presence and rule, our morality and the material world are in a perfect eternal embrace. And you can get in on that hug from heaven that will chase sorrow and sighing and sin away, even now on earth.

How does the Psalmist move from feeling God's righteous anger to the heart-melting joy of God's people? First there's a **remembering** of God's mercy in the past (vv. 1-3). Second comes a **request** for God to turn from anger to mercy in order to bring revival (vv. 4-7). Third, there is a determination to listen for God's **reply**. He will speak peace to His people and His glory will dwell in the land. Fourth, we are invited to meditate and delight in the **reconciliation** of all things together.

Let's feel the power of the estrangement between heaven and earth. Spiritual renewal is pictured as a coming together of strangers: steadfast love and faithfulness. Righteousness and peace (shalom). In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight--a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be.¹ Peace is the way things ought to be, under God's rule! Yet, God's continued loyal love towards His people is met with unfaithfulness. God's righteousness and grace rains down from heaven and we only produce thorns and thistles.

Picture the father from Jesus' famous parable in Luke 15. The father sits down to eat a meal with his sons, only his youngest is off in the far country. An ordinary meal eaten with the ungrateful and grumbling eldest had to

be a joyless affair. A gray cloud of precise discipline followed the eldest wherever he went, providing an illusion of faithfulness. Even as God's steadfast love and our attempted faithfulness come together at a dinner table they are still at odds. Jesus makes that clear at the end of the story. For the fatted calf has been killed, the youngest has come home and the feasting has begun—and the eldest brother arrogantly refuses His Father's love and generosity. He won't eat, because he hates his brother and his father. Faith, friendship and fellowship crumble.

Babette is a refugee from Paris who moves in with Martine and Philippa after dear old dad dies. Unbeknownst to the now aging sisters, they have had a world-renowned chef serving them boiled bread soup and fish each day. Then something surprising happens. Their servant won the lottery in France, a large sum. 10,000 francs. These poor ladies assume that Babette's good fortune means she will leave. Before going, she plans to serve a meal to the floundering faith community. There will be 12 guests at this feast.

The table is extravagantly set, complete with multiple wine glasses for each course. All the guests are dressed in black as if at a funeral, except for one, a depressed general who has realized that all of his worldly success has left him lonely and miserable. The meal begins. And each bite and sip shocks the general. He is joyfully tucking in, while the 11 around him are afraid to enjoy it. But as wave after wave of generosity and food come, the hardness melts. Those who bickered begin to laugh and confess sin together. Sour faces give way to smiles. And then the general stands up and gives a memorable speech rejoicing in God's grace:

...that which we have rejected is poured upon us abundantly. For mercy and truth have met together and righteousness and bliss have kissed one another!

As the meal ends, the guests pour out with bellies full and hearts ablaze with

joy. Forgiveness has filled their stomachs. And they sing with great joy of the coming New Jerusalem. Back in the kitchen, the sisters express their gratitude to Babette and prepare to say goodbye. To their astonishment, they discover that Babette spent everything that she had on this one meal. A gift of extraordinary grace. That's what it took to bring joy and healing and restoration.

We have something better than the Psalmist. A meal that was served to 12 guests, the apostles. Only this Passover had no lamb served. Just the host, Jesus. To every guest's astonishment, this Jesus broke his body and shed his blood, so that we might be guests at the meal where righteousness and peace kiss. God's loyalty and human faithfulness finally meet together in the person of God's beloved Son. And He shares that with us! That which we have rejected (God's kindness) is poured out on us abundantly.

What do you do with this lavish generosity coming down to us in a preview of the great feast at the end of all things, when we commemorate the marriage of heaven and earth? We follow the One who sacrificed for us. As the Psalmist says, Righteousness went before us. His footsteps make a way (Psalm 85:13). We don't just bask in His goodness, we serve Him by walking in His footsteps, serving others as we have been served.

Summer at Hope Church is a time when we cold New York State folk warm up. Let me encourage you to spend some time eating and drinking with your neighbors and with each other, hosting or attending. Grace tastes too good to be hoarded. For when faithfulness springs up from the ground, it's not just for us. It's also for our neighbors (Psalm 67). They need to see you enjoy the grace of Christ set before you. God may turn and revive both of you together.

Who are you planning to pour out grace on this summer, in order to build community and faith and friendship in Christ?

¹Conelius Plantinga, Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin

If you are an avid reader, you might think this title is a bit too close to Mitch Albom's popular book from 2000 to be accidental. Actually though, the title just describes my Tuesdays as they really are so there is no attempt to just borrow a catchy title. I pretend no resemblance to Mitch as a writer but my Bob needn't take second place to Morrie, or anyone else for that matter. Even if you get BOB's name backward you still have BOB and Morrie can't come close to that trick. Anyway, just to avoid controversy, let me change the title to **EVERYONE NEEDS AN ELDER—make sure you have one!**

Some of you know Bob Hornlein well and probably others, relatively new to Hope Church, may not know Bob. Bob is really part of a two-some called Bob and Myrtle. Myrtle is keeping company with God in heaven and Bob is still serving here on earth for a while, in particular at the Good Shepherd Care Facility in Saratoga. I think the best way to describe Bob is as a prayer waiting to happen. That makes him a valuable resource for God's kingdom work, wherever he is. His body has seen a lot of mileage and is showing signs of wear and tear but his inward man is still growing and being renewed daily.

So where do I get the familiarity of referring to him as 'my Bob'? Glad you asked! I started hanging out with Bob and Myrtle back in the 90's as he was my Shepherding Elder at Hope Church.

- Idea 1—Once you get a solid Shepherding Elder don't let go! We worshipped and worked together in ministry at Hope for years and for several more years we enjoyed fellowship in a small group on Friday evenings.

After Myrtle went to be with God and help get heaven organized, Bob and I met for breakfast and prayer in Schuylerville on every other Thursday for several years. (Thursdays with Bob were great but never developed into an article but they did increase the prayer activity in Schuylerville.)

- Idea 2—Once you get a Shepherding Elder, don't let him be unemployed! When driving became difficult for Bob we had a few months where we didn't meet regularly and I forgot Idea 2, but God reminded me and arranged for us to start meeting again at Good Shepherd. Now Tuesdays with Bob are the high point of my week, along with Sundays.

So what does a typical Tuesday look like for me and why is it such a blessing? Often it starts with a coffee and bagel somewhere in Saratoga. (Warning—beware of parking in an unloading zone as the cost of coffee and a bagel there can increase to \$35.) Often I get to spend an hour or more with Bob at the Good Shepherd where we talk, pray and sometimes listen to music or watch a film on bird migration. I myself am a younger Shepherding elder (83 years young) so much of our conversation is concerned with continuing to learn how to engage God's sheep as under-shepherds in ways that will help them be **grounded in the gospel, growing in grace** and at the same time **going** into the marketplace, public square, and workplace with the good news, along with wherever else sheep, branded or not, are liable to stray. The job is difficult (actually impossible in the flesh), so our time always ends with prayer to make sure we are tapping into the resources God provides for countering the wiles of the evil one along with his

companions, the world and the flesh.

- Idea 3—Although Bob is a bit advanced in years he is in no hurry to get done praying and he has only drifted into a nap mid-prayer once; so if you want to pray with him settle in and enjoy his wisdom. He is great at rehearsing whatever we have talked about to make sure it is going to glorify God and that is more important even than breaking for lunch.

When I picture our time together it causes me to chuckle a bit. It always ends with a threesome and two of the three are old and flawed even on our best days, hard of hearing and seeing, a bit stooped but not stupid, prone to napping whenever our eyes are closed. However, the third person of this trio is King of the universe, the ancient of days, the Holy One who is extremely busy ruling over a rebellious world with grace and power. He is never too busy to listen patiently to his sons and daughters and remind them of the challenge to walk worthy of their calling because He has paid a great price to move them from darkness to light. Bob understands that and works tirelessly to promote kingdom work at Hope Church with the challenge of bringing light into the Ballston Spa community, even in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

If you don't have someone to pray with you, you might want to experience Bob's wisdom while you still have a chance. He is almost always at home (Good Shepherd). Even if he is sleeping just knock and walk in. If you go on Tuesday you might run into me for a bit. Wisdom, dressed in working clothes, sometimes involves hearing aids, oxygen

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tubes, and walkers. These things might dupe the casual observer into thinking ‘nobody is home’ but that is not the case. As Job learned, don’t be fooled by external appearances: “And to man he said, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.’” (Job 28:28) Get yourself an elder and hold on! I will share mine. Remember someone needs to care for elders even as they have cared for you.



Snapshot on Children’s Ministry
By Melanie Combs

CAMP H.O.P.E. Update

*Ed. Note: Jim (known as “the sage of Hebron”) worshipped with us for many years with his wife, Lori. He is an unforgettable teacher of the Bible. (You’ll find him quoted in our newsletters!) We are still in his big heart, and he prays for us and serves the Lord in multiple capacities, especially in the Washington-Saratoga-Warren County areas.



Are you ready to get WILD ABOUT READING!?!?!? Well, the Camp Hope staff is, and we’d love for you to come on the adventure with us. We have another wonderful year of reading, games, crafts, and fun lined up. You can be a part—in fact we NEED you to be a part to help this year’s Reading Camp program to be a success. Here’s how you can help:

1. We have a couple of teacher **aides**, but could use more.
2. We have a **food** coordinator, but she needs help with planning, purchasing, preparing and serving.
3. We have a **games** coordinator, but she needs help with planning, preparing and executing the games.
4. We need a **craft coordinator** and a **team** to help plan, prepare, set up, deliver crafts to each class.
5. We have a **nursery** coordinator, but as she’s also the nurse, we need staff to help in the nursery.
6. We have a **Registrar**, but she could use help with follow-up calls, follow-up emails and general running of errands during the week.
7. We have a **Building Team**, but they need help with planning, building, putting things together here at church, taking things apart after the program, etc.
8. We need volunteers to help put flyers up in local businesses.
9. We need volunteers to make food for the picnic.
10. We need volunteers to decorate, set things up, take things down, come to the end-of-Camp-Week picnic to meet and greet, etc.
11. We need volunteers to come to our work days (which will be posted on our board and in the bulletin).
12. **We need your prayer!**

There are SOOOOO many ways you can help be a part of the Camp HOPE team. If you are interested in any of these things, please talk to Melanie Combs. You are welcome to any general meeting. You are also welcome to curriculum meetings but it’s mostly teachers talking about what we are going to teach. Meetings will be posted in the bulletin as well as on the Camp HOPE bulletin board.

Summer is almost here! The school year is winding down and we are winding down the Sunday School year as well. June 16 will be the last day for Sunday School for this spring. Thank you so much to our amazing Sunday School teachers: Pat VanVoorhis, Jill Galarneau, and Hannah Mailloux (now MacPherson) for another wonderful year of teaching our young ones. Children’s Church will continue throughout the summer. Thank you to our dedicated volunteers for that. If you are interested in teaching Sunday School in the fall or in becoming a Children’s Church volunteer, please let Melanie Combs know. We are looking for a new Sunday School teacher for the fall to teach the K-2 age -group.



[Continued from the April 2019 edition of **Doorway to Hope**, in which Fred recounts the story behind our beloved hymn, “It Is Well With My Soul.” Fred began his article with an account of the origin of the words to the hymn, written by Horatio Spafford shortly after the tragic deaths of his four daughters. We now include his conclusion.]

The music composed for “**It is Well with My Soul**” by Philip P. Bliss, in 1876 was named “Ville du Havre” after the ship on which Horatio and Anna’s daughters lost their physical lives. First published in Gospel Songs No. 2 by Ira Sankey, it would require many pages to tell the Bliss story, so we have left all but a few specific details for another day.

Philip P. Bliss was born July 9, 1838 in Rome, Pennsylvania and died on December 29, 1876 in Ashtabula, Ohio. As noted earlier, he wrote the music for “It is Well with My Soul.”

Mr. Bliss was born with a melody in his heart. Philip’s father, Isaac Bliss, was a dedicated Christian man. The first spiritual recollections that young Bliss had of his father were the daily family prayers. These prayers were ingrained upon his childhood memory and would follow him throughout life. His father was also a lover of music and it was through his father that he developed a passion for singing.

In 1858 he was appointed a teacher in the Rome, Pennsylvania, Academy where he met Lucy Young, who would become his bride on June 1, 1859. She was a poet from a musi-

cal family and greatly encouraged him in developing his musical talents. She was an earnest member of a Presbyterian Church which he then joined.

The Blisses moved to Chicago in 1864 when Philip was 26. It was here he began to conduct musical institutes and became widely known as a teacher and a singer.

For the next eight years, between 1865 and 1873, often with his wife by his side, he held musical conventions, singing schools, and sacred concerts under the sponsorship of his employers. He was becoming more popular in concert work, not yet directing his full efforts into evangelical singing. He was, however, writing a number of hymns and Sunday School melodies and many these of were incorporated into the books, *The Triumph* and *The Prize*.

One summer night in 1869, while passing a revival meeting in a church where D. L. Moody was preaching, Mr. Bliss went inside to listen. That night Mr. Moody was without musical help for the singing and Mr. Bliss was aware of it. The singing was rather weak. From the audience, Philip attracted Mr. Moody’s attention. At the door, Mr. Moody got the particulars about Mr. Bliss quite quickly and asked him to come to his Sunday evening meetings to help in the singing any time he could. He further urged him to give up his business and become a singing evangelist.



During the winter of 1873 Moody again urged him in a letter from Scotland to devote his entire time to evangelistic singing. Mr. Bliss was facing a time of decision. At a prayer meeting, Mr. Bliss placed himself at the disposal of the Lord, and he decided to lay out a fleece. A gospel team was born.

On Friday, November 24, 1876 Mr. Bliss sang at a ministers’ meeting conducted by D. L. Moody in Chicago’s Farwell Hall. Over 1,000 preachers were present. A favorite song that was sung was *Are Your Windows Open Toward Jerusalem*. Also, he introduced to the gathering a new song that he had just written the music for...*It is Well With My Soul*.

Mr. Bliss spent the Christmas holidays with his mother and sister at Towanda and Rome, Pennsylvania, and made plans to return to Chicago for work with Moody in January. A telegram, however arrived asking him to return sooner in order to take part in meetings advertised for the Sunday following Christmas. He wired a message, “Tickets for Chicago, via Buffalo and Lake Shore Railroad. Baggage checked through. Shall be in Chicago Friday night. God bless you all forever.” He decided to leave his two little children, Philip Paul, age 1 and George, age 4 with his mother.

On December 29, 1876 he and his wife took the Pacific Express. The train was struggling along in a blinding snowstorm and was about three hours late on a Friday afternoon. Eleven coaches pulled by two engines were creeping through the huge drifts, approaching Ashtabula, Ohio. Passing over a

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Spa Christian Update

Mandy Kergel <>

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trestle bridge that was spanning a river, the first engine reached solid ground on the other side but everything else plummeted 75 feet into the ravine below into the icy water. Later, it was determined that flood waters had weakened the bridge.

Five minutes after the train fell, fire broke out. Fanned by gale-like winds the wooden coaches were ablaze. Mr. Bliss succeeded in extricating himself and crawling to safety through a window. Finding his wife was pinned under the ironwork of the seats, he returned into the car, and gravely remained at her side, trying to extricate her as the flames took their toll. All that remained was a charred mass. It was stated that no trace of their bodies was ever discovered. For days it was not known who were among the dead, as there had been no passenger list. It was tabulated that out of the 160 passengers there were only 14 survivors. Later, official sources said 92 died. In most cases, there was nothing to recover.

Faith, no matter how great, does not spare us from adversity. This writer believes it can truly be said, in the words that Spafford penned and Bliss blessed with music, **“It was well with their souls.”** May it be so for each of us. Not because of any merit of our own but simply because of the love exhibited in God’s atoning grace through Jesus Christ our **LORD**. In all situations let us praise His holy name.



Dear Hope Church Families and Friends,

It’s hard to believe that we are already into the final stretch of the school year! God has been gracious this year and has provided in so many ways, using some of you as His hands and feet. Thank you to the many of you who have shown us love over this school year, both financially as well as physically. It was a delight to serve along side of you at the work day a few weeks ago. The weather may not have been perfect, but we sure got a lot done.

I’d say the highlight of this year was to see our students enjoy showing “Love In Deed” to one another, as well as to their community. We collected blankets and socks for Code Blue, did a book drive for the Ronald McDonald House, had a month of random acts of kindness, cleaned the school building, went to the Saratoga West Apartments to do crafts with the residents there, collected food for the food pantry, and did various things for family members. The students are looking outside of themselves, seeing ways to love others with their actions, and it is delightful to watch. One kindergartener was even heard saying to her sister at home, “Thank you! That was showing ‘love in deed!’”

By the time you read this we will probably already have enjoyed our Field Day, which is scheduled for June 3rd (weather permitting). This is always an exciting time to play and enjoy one another outside. Our End of the Year Celebration will take place on Wednesday, June 12th, from 9-10. Anyone is welcome to attend. The day following is the last day for our staff, which will end with a luncheon to bless and honor Laurie Slater, who is retiring. She did not want a huge fuss made over her, so this luncheon is an intimate affair, but we will be expressing our appreciation in the form of an album of memories, cards, photos, and just general love from families who have been touched by her in the past. Additionally, we found out that Laurie and her family are planning to take a trip to the Grand Canyon for her retirement. We would like to give her a financial gift to go toward this trip. If you would like to donate any money towards this, or would like to send us any items for the memory album, please send them to the school office, attn: Mandy Kergel.

The final item I’d like to mention is an invitation to our annual Gala, which is taking place on the Mohican cruise ship on Lake George, on June 28th. If you would like to learn more about it we have extra invitations in our office, or you can contact us at (518) 885-0508 or office@spachristian.com.

Enjoy every moment God has for you today! We look forward to continuing to serve the LORD together with you. You are always welcome to stop by and see what is going on. I’d love to see you and catch up! :)

Blessings,

Extend God's Hope

A Huge Thank You to Hope Church from YoungLives! By Juli Bickley



Since October, YoungLives Club has been meeting at Hope on the first Tuesday of each month. Over the course of this amazing first year, three teen moms and their children have arrived for dinner and a fun evening with YoungLives mentors. Dinner and childcare have been provided by YoungLives volunteers, including Jill Galarneau and Bethany Thompson. In addition, the Southern Adirondack YoungLives group joined us in May and possibly will in June. Our goal was reached in that throughout the year the moms have been loved on and the Gospel has been presented. In October, one mom stated that any discussion of God was too overwhelming, but by April she declared that the word "repaired" described how she now felt in regards to what Jesus has done for her.

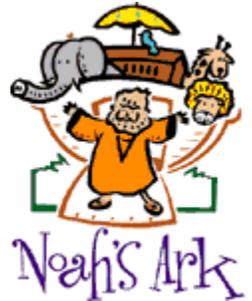
At the core of YoungLives ministry is relationships. Our team of mentors have spent countless hours with these moms hanging out over meals, driving to appointments, discussing life over the phone and more. However, the highlight of the month has been gathering together where the children can be cared for while we enjoy Club! Thank you, Hope Church, for providing the space for us to do that this year!

Juli Bickley
Capital District YoungLives Coordinator

Sharing the Ark By Sally Jenkins

Last fall the elementary Sunday School class taught by Jill Galarneau decided to enlist the help of the congregation and send several boxes of gifts to the Emerson family in Central Asia. Shipping to that part of the world is risky and expensive at best but off the boxes went and the entire family was blessed and encouraged.

Recently Naomi shared with her Mom how the Lord has used one of those gifts to open a door of opportunity to share with one of her neighbors. One of the gifts sent was a Noah's ark complete with a number of the animals. The neighbor upon seeing it commented to Naomi that they had that story in their holy book, the Koran. She wondered how the Emerson family knew this story and Naomi shared with her that it is in our holy book as well. The neighbor, finding this interesting, asked if she could borrow this book (in Uzbek) and take it home and read it for herself. Of course the answer was "yes".



God once again showed that he can use the simplest of things to point to His goodness and grace. The prayer now is that this woman might continue to read the book (our holy book) and be touched by the Lord of the Universe.

*I have set my bow in the
clouds, and it shall be a
sign of the covenant
between me and
the earth.*



Genesis 9:13, NRSV

Foster Loving Relationships

Following in His Footsteps...

The Ladies' Retreat: May 16-17
By Rae Whitehead

Though the seventeen-or-so women at our retreat decided unanimously that "What happens at the retreat stays there!" (in response to a game we played entitled "What no one here knows about me"), we came away with lots to share and mull over—and with new and renewed relationships. The Cornick home is **made** for ministry! Terry said that she and Jim planned it that way. It is large, open, beautiful and set on the banks of the Hudson River, with trails abounding. Some of our women spent Friday night there, while others arrived in time for the continental breakfast on Saturday featuring fruit, bagels, and Kirsten's scones. (Food throughout our retreat was delicious and abundant!)

Our speaker arrived at 10:00. Well-known and loved by many of us, Marilyn Merry in her later 80's is as sprightly and calm as ever. (She had just returned from ten days in Ireland!) I remember Marilyn as a mentor. She is a veteran teacher and superintended Sunday School at Hope in the early 80's. She did teacher training and taught a class on hospitality. (She and Jack usually left church with guests in tow.) They left Hope in the late '80's to begin a "church plant" which became Redeemer Reformed PCA in Queensbury.

Marilyn has followed her Lord from the time of her conversion 69 years ago. The path has been thorny and rough at times, and the waters have been deep. Forgiveness was crucial to her development as a Christian as she faced the memories of neglect and abuse in her childhood and teen years. The forgiveness bar is high: "He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9), so who are we, to withhold forgiveness? Truly, she found that "love bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Marilyn exhorted us to "love deeply from the heart" (1 Peter 1:22), with all our heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:39), and to love our enemies (Matthew 5). We are to love "as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her." (Ephesians 5:25).

Marilyn found that with forgiveness, the burden of the bitterness of abuse was lifted. Forgiveness set her free to serve as she raised a family and taught in multiple capacities even while dealing with breast cancer. She became a woman of prayer, and the suffering that God allowed in her life produced in her a "harvest of righteousness and peace" (Hebrews 12:11b) and the qualities described in 2 Peter 1:5-7.

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Ladies' Retreat

by Kirsten Whitehead

The theme of this year's ladies' retreat was **Follow in Jesus' Footsteps**. It was led by Marilyn Merry, who was a member of Hope Church, with her husband, Jack in the early '80's. I jotted some notes down from her which I'd like to share with you! The verses that she chose are very appropriate and I would encourage you to look them up.

There were six main key words. The first was **love**, "the most important thing." Love never fails to conquer selfishness; it does not insist on its own way. It waits for God to transform a person and gives us another chance when we fail. When we choose not to love, we become an obstacle in God's way. If we choose, we become a tool. Love covers a multitude of sins.

The second key word that she mentioned was **forgiveness**. Ephesians 4:32 tells us to forgive as Christ forgave. It's extremely important. Bitterness hurts more.

Next was **prayer**. Jesus took time out to pray (Luke 6:12 and Luke 5:15-16). Prayer is one of our greatest privileges as God's children (Philippians 4:6-7).

The fourth key word was **servanthood**. Our attitude should be like Jesus' (Philippians 2:5-8). Matthew 20:26-28 tells us that if we want to be great, we must serve. Isaiah 58:7-9 gives ideas how to serve by saying "...share your food; provide...shelter;...clothe." Marilyn said that our faith needs exercise and if faith doesn't have an outlet, it's spiritually dead. Examples of serving are teaching Sunday School, jail ministry, VBS, and the list goes on. Francis Schaeffer says that hospitality is costly. It is costly to have a sense of community. **The Gospel Comes With a House Key**, by Rosaria Butterfield, is a good book to look into.

After prayer, fellowship, food, and quiet time/walk, we all gathered together again to continue to listen. The fifth key word was **suffering**. Isaiah 53 describes Christ's suffering. In Mark 8:31, Jesus predicts his suffering. Philippians 1:29 tells us we are to suffer for Him. We all suffer in one way or another. But God promises "...the glory that will be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18) In spite of our suffering, we are being renewed daily and are achieving a weighty eternal glory (2 Corinthians 4:16-18). Do not be troubled, Jesus says to His disciples (John 14).

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Foster Loving Relationships

(Continued from page 8)

Marilyn exhorted us to resist Satan with the Word of God, to put on the armor of God described in Ephesians 6, as she had to do as her medical missionary son escaped violence in West Africa with his family, only to see his wife die of cancer a few years later. Marilyn encouraged us to “stand firm” (1 Peter 5:9-11) and to meditate on God’s Word as she did as she helped her husband through his last years. She reminded us that meditating is ruminating: chewing and re-chewing, as a cow chews its cud.

So we came away from the our weekend together **refreshed** and encouraged to follow faithfully, forgive freely, pray diligently, serve joyfully and overcome triumphantly—through the power of the Spirit working through and among us.

Thanks to Marilyn for sharing with us the fruits of her “long obedience in the same direction.” We’re thankful for her openness, her steadfastness and courage, and the fruits of the Spirit that God has grown in her through tough times. May God continue to bless her in every way!

We thank the Cornicks for their generous hospitality! And we thank the organizers of the retreat: Terry, Sally, Melanie, Kirsten, and Jill G! We learned a lot, and we sure had fun, too!

(Continued from page 8)

The next key word was **overcoming**. There was a lot said. Isaiah 14:12-14 describes Lucifer’s story. Satan tempts us in our minds. Ephesians 6:10-17 is the Armor of God section. We need to put it on to protect our hearts from the enemy who masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). We need the whole armor of God! Then we will be able to resist the enemy’s attacks. Satan is called a serpent, dragon, and lion. When we resist him, Satan always flees. We shouldn’t run away; we need to resist (1 Peter 5:9—11).

Finally, Marilyn encouraged us to **meditate** and the example she gave was that it is like a cow chewing its cud. Some words to describe meditating are reflecting, musing, and pondering (see Psalm 119:97-99). We constantly need to be renewing our minds (Romans 12:2).

We are thankful for Marilyn to come and share her wisdom with us at the retreat!



Extend God's Hope

Hello everyone! We have been here for about 3 1/2 years and this is my first time writing in the newsletter! It's also about a book—which is a little ironic because I am not the reader in our family. I maybe finish two or three books in a whole year. (I don't even want to know how many my husband reads in that time.)

During our vacation over Easter break I read the book "**The Gospel Comes with a House-key**" by Rosaria Butterfield. In it she depicts how Radical Christian Hospitality is part of her every day life that she shows to both believers and unbelievers.

I've always thought Nate and I were good at hospitality. (During seminary we would make about ten pizzas for pizza nights at our 500 sq. ft. apt. that we managed to squeeze thirty people into!) This book was so challenging because it presents a different way of looking at hospitality than what I'm used to. My understanding of hospitality was inviting someone over for a meal. When they show up, your dishes from the day have been done, the kid-induced stickiness has been wiped, table set, floor swept, living room picked up, bathroom scrubbed, the meal is almost done, etc. Usually they stay for 2 hours and then we get back to our "regular" schedule and



stickiness. I'm guessing this is the understanding most of us in the church have! Invite someone over, present your best, then when they leave you relax back into your normal.

Butterfield challenges this thinking by presenting the idea of making radical hospitality a lifestyle—not just a two hour event once a week. It's inviting people to be part of your life, family, and your home (whether it's been cleaned or not). It's being real with people and loving and showing grace

Radical Hospitality

By Bethany Thompson

and pointing them toward Jesus when they are real with you. Some examples given in the book are so simple! Walk your dog with the neighbor and invite her in for tea afterward. Going grocery shopping at a store that's inconvenient (hello Trader Joe's)! Send a text to someone or a couple of people and ask if they need anything. These daily interactions and inviting people to share life and space set up a foundation for you and your family to be a safe place for someone—which in our post Christian world are few and far between.

This is so hard for so many reasons and we can make so many excuses! I don't have time, I'm not going to make a difference, my kids are too crazy, my house isn't clean, I didn't get groceries, I'm not a people person, etc. I have absolutely used most of these excuses!

One of our goals (Nate read this book too) is to intentionally practice this radical hospitality with both our church family and our friends in the community. We want people to know where our cups and silverware are, where we keep the spare roll of toilet paper, and for the kids to know where the "coolest" toys are in our house! We hope that being intentional about inviting people into our life and showing them Jesus will encourage deep relationships being formed, encouragement, love, trust, and a safe place for people who feel beaten up.

We realized that with the school year ending our church fellowship events are also slowing down. Sunday school and small groups will both come to an end for the summer. We want to encourage fellowship of believers and give opportunity to welcome unbelievers as well! On Sunday afternoons we are planning to open our home to

whoever wants to stay for lunch and into the afternoon with no end time. We want you guys to be part of our family! We want to know you guys and we want you to know us! We are so excited to do this!

We also believe that hospitality and relationship building is a big part of sharing Jesus with people. We want the relationships with our unbelieving friends to point them to Jesus! We think this could be an amazing opportunity to include our community. We are planning to invite our friends from the community to join us Sunday afternoons and would love for you to invite yours as well!

I would encourage everyone to read **The Gospel Comes with a House-key!** I found it so helpful and challenging. If anyone wants to read it together and talk about it as we go, let me know! I would love to read it again! If we had enough people interested, we could figure out a time to have a little discussion group!



There's a Place for You!

Feasting with Friends

To gather joyfully is indeed a serious affair, for feasting and all enjoyments gratefully taken are, at their heart, acts of war.

In celebrating this feast we declare that evil and death, suffering and loss, sorrow and tears, will not have the final word.

So let our feast this day be joined to those sure victories secured by Christ,

Let it be to us now a delight, and a glad foretaste of his eternal kingdom.

Bless us, O Lord, in this feast.

Dear Friends:

Jim has spoken often of his congregational family at Hope Church. However, your thoughtfulness and generosity exceeded our expectations and touched us deeply.

It is difficult to find the words to express our gratitude for your kindness and support during this sad and emotional time. We are grateful for all you have done for us. As we struggled with the loss of our mother, your sincerity, warmth, and the coordination of the catering for the reception following the funeral meant a great deal.

Knowing that we were not alone indeed helped us during this challenging time. Thank you for being there for Jim and the entire Farinacci family.

Please make sure the entire congregation knows how appreciative we are of such a great outpouring of support.

With sincere thanks,

The Farinacci Family



Fellowship Luncheon
Immediately after Worship

Sunday, June 9th
Come and Bring a Dish to
Share

**DOORWAY TO HOPE
STAFF**

Sally Jenkins, Nate Thompson, and Rae Whitehead

WEDDINGS

Our very own Hannah Mailloux was joined in marriage with Christian McPherson on Saturday, May 18th. on the beach in Florida.

Two weeks previous the ladies of Hope were able to send her off with a farewell/bridal shower at the church where we were able to bless her as she starts off on her new life.

Their address is 313 Racetrack Road NW, Unit 5407, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547.

**Best Wishes to Hannah and
Christian!**



BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Brian McKeon
- 7 John Turner
- 8 Samson Thompson
- 8 Bradley Childs
- 8 Nicholas Cutler
- 10 Micah Bodine
- 14 Jill Galarneau
- 15 Jack Peroha
- 17 Naomi Emerson
- 20 Sandy Mailloux
- 20 Teddy Perkins
- 20 DeAnna Smith
- 23 John VanVoorhis
- 27 Marybeth Gibbins
- 28 David Brumagin
- 30 Jim Cornick

ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Roderick & Febe Layug
- 4 Jonathan & Kara Cutler
- 6 Paul & Jill Miller
- 7 Dan & Naomi Emerson
- 10 Brian & Hellen McKeon
- 19 John & Pat VanVoorhis
- 26 Claude & Donna Terrell
- 26 Jack & Mary Peroha



**Next Doorway to Hope
Deadline is July 15th.**

**Hope Church
Presbyterian Church in America
206 Greenfield Avenue
Ballston Spa, NY 12020**



June Calendar