

DOORWAY TO HOPE



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

Grace That Heals and Sends

It was March 2020, at the beginning of the big shut-down. I was listening to a podcast with author Andy Crouch discussing the massive changes that were looming on the horizon. The counsel to leaders across the world about COVID was this: "Prepare for a three-year economic and cultural blizzard. It will be like a small ice-age." By this they meant we will all experience a once-in-a-lifetime event that will likely affect organizations and churches for years to come. (Andy Crouch and Dave Blanchard of Praxis, "Leading Beyond the Blizzard: Why Evrey Organization is now a Startup.")

While we have not yet hit the three-year mark, we have come through a storm as a church family. We have been scattered and regathered. Zoom is now a normal ministry tool. Spiritual life has become an uncomfortable hybrid of embodied and digital life together. For all of us, new habits have been formed over the last couple of years while ordinary church life has been on pause.

Local pastors tell me of similar struggles. Volunteers are hard to come by. Everyone is tired.

The culture wars have resulted in a great reshuffling of the sheep, with Christians finding churches that better fit their political views. Some folks just stopped going to church altogether. There is no going back to normal.

So, what about Hope Church? What is our future together like? In some ways we are still in the process of coming outside after the blizzard to evaluate the damage and determine what needs to be repaired. But as we assess and work to reconstruct our life together as a church, it is critical that we rebuild using the gospel of Jesus Christ. HE is our foundation and our future.

This is why I have been writing in my weekly "Following Jesus" emails about our need for spiritual renewal. We are meditat-

ing on what gospel renewal is, why we need it, how we get it, and how renewal fuels participation in God's mission in making Jesus known across the street and around the world. In particular, we need the gift of a Holy Spirit-led gospel renewal that sets us free to "become absorbed in the love of God and concern for our neighbors." (Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Renewal*)

Simply put, Jesus must recapture the imaginations of our hearts and minds, reshaping our habits and our hopes.

How then does a renewed experience with Jesus and God's gospel launch us into joyful participation in God's mission? Here are two famous examples from the Old Testament:

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After David famously blew it with Bathsheba and the subsequent murder of her husband, he wrote Psalm 51, confessing his horrendous sin and the depths of the darkness of his own heart. He connects the renewing love and mercy of God to participation in God's mission to make Himself known. *"Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you."*

Renewed faith in the God who forgives fueled David's willingness to say, "I will participate in Your work to confront the stubborn human heart. Use me!"

Isaiah, the prophet, is surprised by God's presence when he goes to the temple (Isaiah 6). There he has a soul-crushing vision of his own depravity: *"Woe is me! For I am lost. I am a man of unclean lips and dwell among a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."*

Then an angel brings a burning coal dripping with the blood of the lamb from the altar, touches Isaiah's lips and declares his sin atoned for! Immediately after this, Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord asking, *"Whom shall I send? Who will go for me?"* Isaiah responds with, *"Here I am. Send me!"* Renewed faith in the God of mercy fueled Isaiah's willingness to go preach the gospel to a people who would not listen.

Over time, you will start to see the pattern all over Scripture. Nathanael is graciously seen and known by Jesus so he follows Him (John 1:47-49). The Samaritan woman goes back to a village that alienated her to tell them about the Messiah (John 4). The apostle Paul, formerly Jesus' enemy and persecutor of the church, becomes the champion of the doctrines of grace in the gospel and then plants churches all over the ancient world. In the process, Paul was willing to suffer physically, emotionally and financially to make Jesus known. Experiences with God's acts of grace and rescue lead to a joyful willing participation in God's mission to spread the greatness of Jesus in every place in the world.

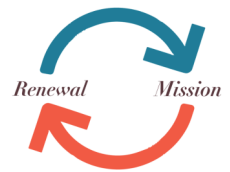
What does participation look like? Consider the wisdom of Galatians 5:6 – *"The only thing that matters is faith expressing itself in love."*

The only thing that matters is faith in Jesus Christ. For through faith, we are justified, loved, adopted by God in Christ. We are given a new identity and relationship with God. We now have a new purpose, a new way of thinking and living in the world.

That faith in Jesus expresses itself in love for God's world. We are sent out to serve, to love our neighbors, to bear burdens, to make disciples, to be an instrument in our Redeemer's hands. The chart below, taken from Serge's discipleship materials, illustrates this well. (Serge Discipleship Lab is a course I took last year. They graciously allowed us to reproduce their materials. <https://serge.org/discipleship-lab/>)

	Renewing <i>The only thing that matters is faith...</i>	Mission <i>...expressing itself in love.</i>
Identity	Beloved (John 17:24)	Sent Ones (John 17:18)
Relational Obedience	Loving God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength (Deut. 6:4)	Loving your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:19)
Purpose in Life	Knowing Christ (John 17:3)	Making Christ known (Matthew 28:18-20)
Response to God's Grace	Grace <i>for</i> you (Galatians 2:20)	Grace <i>through</i> you (Galatians 6:2, 10)

Here's what you will find as you are renewed by faith and participate in the work of making disciples of Jesus. You will make mistakes. You will discover doubts and unbelief in your own heart as you try to persuade others to follow Jesus. You will question your ability to serve God well. But it is our weakness that drives us back to the gospel, back to the only thing that matters: faith in Jesus. And then faith in Jesus renews and sends us back into the world as His instruments of grace.



So this is my prayer for us at Hope Church. May we have a renewed experience with the God of grace in the gospel, that we may all willingly participate in God's mission. Gospel renewal leads to mission. As Jesus told us, *"Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men!"* We have entered Jesus' discipleship lab which is teaching us how to love.

To say yes to Jesus' call to repent and believe the gospel is to participate in the grand story of what God is up to in the world: showing sinners from every tribe, tongue and nation Jesus Christ. Are you in? ..

Pastor Nate



All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Matthew 28:18b-20

Missions Conference

October 21-23 at Hope Church

Hope Church is excited to expand our vision for reaching the lost in our local area, as well as in the world by hosting a missions conference at Hope Church on October 21-23.

There will be opportunities throughout the weekend to hear from the missionaries that Hope supports, as well as others who are expressing their faith through love and extending God's call to the local area and the world. Please plan to attend all or part of this weekend event and invite others to come as well.

Please mark your calendars now for this special weekend! We are also in need of volunteers to help with hospitality for visiting missionaries, hosting the Saturday evening meal, decorations, food preparation, cleanup, and more. Keep an eye out for signup sheets.

If you would like to help with the planning for this weekend or to volunteer for the GRO Committee, please contact Brandon Perkins (call or text 518-466-5259).

Therefore Go...

Experiences in Missions and How They Affect Our Lives

..from Becca Loomis

I lived in the Dominican from 2015 to 2016 as a part-time Spanish and Bible student as well as a part-time missionary and led a three-month-long mission trip for college students in the summer of 2017. In preparation for writing about my missions' experiences and how they affected my life, I looked at weekly blog posts I wrote during those times to gain insight. I knew those experiences greatly transformed the way I view faith and the world around me, but reading those blog posts was even more of a confirmation.

As I'm reading, I'm tearing up. I'm remembering how HARD it was to assimilate to a culture with completely different norms. It meant that every day left me exhausted, even if all I did was chop veggies for dinner or take a walk with one of my students to hear how they're adjusting. I'm remembering the ways I tried to bridge the cultural gap between my students and the community, so our work was impactful long-term. I remember being frustrated when church members from the States seemed to put me on a higher pedestal or glorify mission work, when it felt like I wasn't making any progress spiritually with myself, the community, or my students.

On the other hand, I also remember how much I was searching for God's work in the day-to-day. I saw Him move because I was looking for it. I couldn't rest on comfortability – I had to rest on Him. I was partnering with missionaries who had the same passion as me to be an example of Jesus' love to those who didn't know Him yet, and I wasn't afraid to take risks.

Five years later, I can see how I still take risks and expect God to work, like moving to New York or branching out to work for myself. Because I learned to listen and observe how people live different than me, I see myself less prone to make people “the other”. I learned five years ago that no matter how different I am than someone else, I know we’re both searching for love and purpose, and I still hold that belief today. I still crave to be challenged and pushed spiritually like I was in the Dominican, and I see the value of living closely with others and pushing through conflict, like I did in Costa Rica. I’ll never know the long-term impact I might’ve made five years ago, but I distinctly remember the impact that was made on me.

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exist because worship does not. When this age is over and the countless missions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. Worship, therefore, is the fuel and goal of missions. The goal of missions is the gladness of the peoples in the greatness of God. “The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!” (Psalm 97:1)

~John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad*

...From Becca's Costa Rica blog...

1:00 am – Receive my “good morning” call from the neighborhood roosters.

3:00 am – I'm awoken by my host Mom listening to Christian music and praying with amazing faith and remind myself of just how much I have yet to grow . . .

8 am is really when the day all starts. I unzip my bug net and get ready for the day in the once-closet-turned-room I have. Life in Shirole is always filled with random adventures and work.

Breakfast has become one of my favorites. Usually it involves plantains, fantastic banana pancakes, or beau-

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Therefore Go...

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tiful bread arepas matched with the best coffee in the world! Either getting caught up in conversation with my team member on the trip, or a surprise conversation with my host parents brings me to mid-day. I look forward to those conversations.

10am – 2pm is the prime humid time of the day; I make sure to save my shower time around then.

I might first shoo away some chickens or stray dogs that like to enter the house, but finally, I start my devotions. I snag my favorite blue and white rocking chair and by the time I'm done, I hear a "Rebecca!" come from the kitchen, letting me know that lunch is ready. My host Mom has probably prepared a plate of food for some man wandering around the street, too.

Costa Ricans have three main foods: rice, beans, and chicken. While one may think that it would get boring, my host Mom does a fantastic job at making it different every day.

After lunch, the house turns quiet. This is not common in every house in Shiroles, but it is a breath of fresh air for me, for someone who needs some privacy. The later the day becomes, the more random people come in and out of the house.

5:30 – 6 pm: The sun goes down. By this time, my host family may be watching TV, and eventually I'll help with dinner. I've become the chopper of vegetables in the family, and although I may get tired of it, I try (as much as I can!) to keep a good attitude.

We eat dinner around 8:30 or 9pm. And from there, we talk: family (immediate and extended) members of the community that my family has "adopted" and us, the white gringos that are striving to understand at least half of what everyone is saying, are all around the dark porch chatting until it's time to go to bed.

A day in the life of Shiroles is impossible to explain because it changes. You never know what's going to happen until a couple minutes before or right when something is going on. BUT, I then remind myself of the beauty of spontaneity: we rely on the Lord daily.

Our problem in evangelism is not that we don't have enough information—it is that we don't know how to be ourselves. We forget we are called to be witnesses to what we have seen and know, not to what we don't know. The key on our part is authenticity and obedience, not a doctorate in theology. We haven't grasped that it really is OK for us to be who we are when we are with seekers, even if we don't have all the answers to their questions or if our knowledge of Scripture is limited. — Rebecca Manley Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker & into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life*

Therefore Go...

...from David Whitehead

The year was 1991. The day was June 29, and our adventure began as we arrived at the Hope Church parking lot at 8:00 with four-year-old Jonathan asleep in the car and a crowd of well-wishers to send us on our way. After a round of prayer together, we were off in a van to the airport: Dr. Jody, Jim and Terry Cornick, Judy McQueen, Wendy Hren, Robin Winner, Kimberly Till, and me.

We were headed for Mexico to serve with MTW (PCA's Mission to the World) to build a new church. We'd be working with a congregation of forty people which had been meeting together for three years in a rented building. A plan had been drawn up to build a church that would hold 250 people. Our job was to help put in the foundation, to live and to have fellowship with Mexican brothers and sisters, and to minister to the children with songs.

God blessed me in a personal way through this experience and caused me to want to be more involved in missions. Serving in a country different from our own causes us to see the world in a new way. May God again light a fire for missions at Hope!

In 1975, when David (Whitehead) and I (Rae) visited the small village in NE India, where my grandparents had spent most of their lives, my Grandma Charlotte, who was known as "Dadi" (Grandma) to most of the village, wrote the following:

"Dear Dave, Once you asked what you can do when you get to Karimganj. You can be yourself—a witness for Christ, in your natural behavior and your attitude. You will be among people under the dictates of ancient Hindu law and direction of Hindu priests. They have heard of Christ, His love and His sacrifice. But this does not go as deep as a life, consecrated to living for Him, and with Him. What greater task can one wish for? G'ma C.



Missionaries Presently Supported by Hope Church

Dr. Jody Collinge, Community Health Evangelism (CHE) in Mexico

Dan and Naomi Emerson, World Harvest Mission in Central Asia

Matt and Jenn Irvine, Serge in London, UK

Emad and Michelle Mikhail, Mission to the World, Egypt

Ted and Carolyn Turnau, Global Scholars in Czech Republic

Therefore Go...

...from Melanie Combs

When I think of missions I first think of the conferences the church I grew up in held. We would meet in the public high school's cafeteria on Saturday and watch a video and eat multicultural foods as a missionary spoke to us. The same missionary would often then present more information on Sunday and sometimes even give us the sermon that day. While fun, it was a distant thing to me. I didn't fully connect with the missionary and always looked up to the missionary kids with awe that they would be okay living in another country. Personally, I felt called to be a teacher at a Christian School as my mission and I have never felt God call me away from that.

I have to say, though, when Hope Church announced a team would be going to London for LEAP week in 2002 I felt the Holy Spirit move me to be involved in that. It was WAY out of my comfort zone, but I felt the Holy Spirit encouraging me all the way. The team I trained with, which included John and Sharon Milne, helped me see outside my little Christian bubble I had found myself in and opened my eyes to the wonder of another culture that I would be able to participate in.

Going to London was huge for me. I had never left the country other than a few jaunts to Canada. The experience for the first time of being in the minority when we walked the streets in the predominantly Hindu sections of London was humbling. Visiting a Hindu Temple and seeing the care given to the idols there grieved me. Prayer walks and going door to door stretched me in ways I didn't know God still needed to stretch me. All of this just helped me see that the world was so much bigger than I had thought about. God let me step out of my comfortable rut and see He was working in the world in ways I could only read and wonder about before.

My more recent trip to Kenya, in 2018, opened my eyes even more. I was actually able to live for a bit with a family that generously opened their door for me to stay with them. They made me feel truly a part of their family no matter the difference in skin or hair color. I may have been there to help support the work of the local churches, but I found myself learning from all the people I came into contact with. I also felt humbled and truly blessed with every encounter. Being on roads that I would never want to drive my car on or using toilets that DID NOT have toilet seats helped me realize how truly blessed and comfortable we are here in the US.

These trips opened my eyes to reality. God is the same in the US, in London, and in Kenya. He calls children unto Himself from all walks of life, all skin colors, all socioeconomic statuses, all countries, all languages, all hemispheres. Worship may look different in other places but it is still God we worship. I can't even fully express how these trips changed my outlook on things. I often feel that I can be a better teacher, learner, and Christ-follower because I got to see a glimpse into God's world, not just my "little" world. If you get a chance to do any kind of missions trip, I encourage you to pray for strength and courage and take that chance.

Many times we act as though we are mere spectators at the race. We cheer on those Christians who are in the race, but we ourselves sit on the sidelines and watch. But Paul is telling us that we've been justified, we've been pardoned, and we've been made sons and daughters that we might run! If you're mature, you must think of yourself as a runner, not a spectator. When it comes to knowing God in Jesus Christ, there is no such thing as a spectator sport. We are not justified to sit; we are justified to run.

~Jack Miller, *Saving Grace*

Therefore Go...

...From Pastor Nate

My missionary experience begins with two years of teaching missionary kids on the island of Madagascar (2004-2006). While there I was recruited to assist with youth ministry for local Malagasy kids, missionary kids and students from the International School in Antananarivo. My time here solidified my call to ministry. I arrived with a computer science degree and left ready to live overseas.

I also had the opportunity to lead two teams of college students to Arua, Uganda (summer 2008 and 2009) We were tasked with encouraging the local church to intentionally disciple their children. As team leader, I was asked to preach regularly. My time here pushed me to pursue a seminary-level education. I couldn't teach what I did not know!

In partnership with New Hope in Vestal, I helped lead a team of high school students from Cortland and Vestal to Mexico (2009). It was a trip coordinated on the ground by YWAM (Youth With A Mission). I spent time training the students to share their testimonies and see that God's kingdom is bigger than America.

After I met and married Bethany in 2010, we took a trip together back to Arua, Uganda in 2011 to determine if God was calling us as a couple overseas. We had a local friend, James Mawa, who graciously coordinated some time for me to teach the Bible to rural pastors and leaders. The Anglican church there was eager to build us a house and support their youth ministry.

I believe all of this mission experience is why Bethany and I only applied to churches in the Northeast after seminary. We wanted to be in a place where people don't know Jesus and don't understand the Scriptures. So it is a joy to be able to preach the gospel in Saratoga County. As Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." It took time, but Jesus has been showing me that we aren't told where in the world to make disciples. He just says, "Go and I will be with you!"

When something becomes a deep part of our identity, it captivates us and calls us to action. The drive to share the gospel with others is the result of a fresh experience of it ourselves.

~Serge, *Propulsion of Grace*

...From Jill Miller

When I was in high school (I believe it was 30 years ago this summer), I participated in a summer mission trip to Cherokee, NC. The Whiteheads and a group of teens mostly from Hope Church ventured to the Cherokee Indian Reservation. Our main goals were to run a VBS and help with the restoring or fixing of one of the homes on the Indian Reservation.

A few years ago I was watching a documentary and remember it stating that missions trips (short-term) have little positive effect on the place or people it was meant to; and those participating benefit more. I've thought a lot about this statement. It brought me back to my mission trip and what I remember and what it brought to the people on the reservation. What was most evident or had the quickest foreseeable outcome was the home we worked on. I cannot remember what the home looked like, but just like many home improvement projects, the hot water tank needed to be replaced and there wasn't the money to replace it. So, we pooled our money together to be sure the family had the water tank needed. The result of us sharing God isn't always shown to us, and many times we will never know; only God will know. Should we be concerned about weighing in on who benefits from missions the most? One teen met her future spouse on the trip. For another he was still new to the Christian faith and everything was "aglow". For me, part of it was my work ethic; as the Whiteheads will still tell you today, I was one of the hardest workers on the team.

This trip was also the first time I saw the Smoky Mountains. It was a foggy stop at the border of Tennessee and North Carolina on the way home. I never would have thought I would stop there about 15 years later and realize I had been there before; and now more times since. I've even driven into Cherokee and remember purchasing the only souvenir I still have; a Mexican blanket.

Mission trips may or may not have the impact everyone wants to see, but bring your concerns to God and prayer.

Therefore Go...

...from Pat Turner

"I thank my God every time I remember you." (Philippians 1:3)

The "Hoops and Coops" trip left me in awe at what God was doing in so many lives so far from Ballston Spa. The love of our Lord Jesus had brought our two cultures together to work on chicken coops and basketball hoops.

I enjoyed meeting so many Mexican Christians. My best memory was of a huge outdoor worship service that Dr. Jody took our group to. The singing and worship made me wonder if this might be a little glimpse of heaven. I rejoice at the memory of united voices singing in praise.

...from Kirsten Whitehead

In 1988, I went with four other high school girls and Terry Cornick and Jody Collinge to a village near Mexico City. After take-off, there were tears at goodbyes, but hearts full of anticipation. When we arrived, our bodies had to adjust to the high altitudes as we climbed up, up, up into the hills above Mexico City. Our blood had to acclimate to the lower oxygen in the air! We couldn't drink the water and had to drink Coke.

Sarah McQueen and I were roommates. Our host family, who had no plumbing, camped out on the kitchen floor in their home so that Sarah and I could sleep in the only bed that they had. Their hospitality was impeccable. Both Sarah and I celebrated our birthdays there. A Mexican tradition is to push the birthday person's head into the birthday cake, without warning! That's what happened to us! We sang with a guitar accompaniment and shared the Good News with people there. A Christian Mexican group was there, too. Our service job was to help clear rocks from a site there to prepare a place to build a church. We also had the opportunity to go to Mexico City to sight-see and buy souvenirs. There were lots of VW's there!

I remember gathering at a Christian's house back in Mexico City to regroup and discuss how we had grown spiritually during the trip and how we had been blessed and our eyes opened.

Missions Conference — Schedule of Events

Friday, October 21, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Friday evening we will have a time of sharing from a special speaker as well as a dessert reception to follow, where you can get to know the missionaries better.

Saturday, October 22

8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Saturday morning will kick off with breakfast and prayer time before time with each missionary presenting specifically on their work and a panel discussion. We will have lunch at the church with more time to get to know the missionaries.

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday evening we will have time to share a meal at various homes with the missionaries. This will be a wonderful time to establish and strengthen relationships with those bringing the good news of the Gospel to the local area and to the World.

Sunday, October 23, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The weekend will wrap up with a special missionary Sunday School. Following the worship service we will share a potluck lunch and wrap up the weekend.

Missions in Hymns

Why Musical Verse Contributes to Fulfilling the Great Commission

By Fred Richards

Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.
1 Chronicles 16:23-25



From the earliest days of earthly existence our God has communicated His eternal love to every generation through psalms, hymns and gospel songs. This historically documented communication has occurred throughout time because chosen individuals, selected and touched by the Holy Trinity, could advance God's message of salvation and grace to scores of others,

The scriptures and many secular written works, (since 200 AD) carry the names of Christian Missionaries who faithfully fulfilled the command Jesus gave in **Matthew 28:16–20**. The stories of each such servant would fill volumes and this writer found the study of many of those serving a blessing.

It has been estimated that over 14,400 hymns have been written with many having a message that focuses directly on the mission call. Such songs musically declare the power God provides those committed to His Great Commission work. One example of this has been attributed to Martin Luther. In 1523, he reportedly wrote a missionary hymn based on Psalm 67, titled *May God Bestow on Us His Grace*. It has been called "the first missionary hymn of Protestantism."

Another example is minister/ hymn writer John Wesley, who left his home in England, and on February 2, 1736 arrived in the British colony of Georgia where he, for nearly two years, evangelized both whites and Native Americans. In 1737 he had a **Collection of Psalms and Hymns** published by Lewis Timothy, in Charles-Town, SC. The publication supported his Great Commission approach and salvation-based message he daily delivered. The hymnal had three parts: Psalms and Hymns for Sunday; Psalms and Hymns for Wednesday or Friday (B); and Psalms and Hymns for Saturday (C).

Wesley's central role in the 18th century Protestant revival in the American Colonies and in Great Britain contributed to William Carey's vision for worldwide missionary outreach. Rev. Carey wrote about Wesley's efforts along with many other Christian missionaries in his book **An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens**.

From the many mission-related hymns appearing our Trinity Hymnal, *Take My Life and Let it Be* (page 586), penned in 1874 by Frances R. Havergal, has been selected. This piece is considered the ultimate anthem of surrender for the missionary. Missionaries understand the desperate need of our surrender to the Lord. They will often connect to this hymn because it resonates with their lives. As missionaries, as Havergal writes, "We even need to surrender our will to Jesus. He then will make it His own, and use us in profound ways."

Take My Life and Let it Be

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise. | 4. Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use every power as Thou shalt choose. |
| 2. Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee. | 5. Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne. |
| 3. Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee. | 6. Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee. |

Missions in Hymns



Fred continues: **Frances Ridley Havergal** (1836 – 1879) is the author of the hymn *Take My Life*.... Published in 1874, it originally contained eleven verses. In her time she was considered to be a phenomenal English religious poet and hymn-writer. She also wrote hymn melodies, religious tracts, and works for children. She was viewed as one of the most dedicated Christian women of the nineteenth century,

Frances Havergal was born at Astley in Worcestershire and was the youngest in her family. Her father, William Henry Havergal, was a clergyman, writer, composer, and hymn-writer. Her brother, Henry East Havergal, was a minister in the Church of England and an organist.

Frances had begun reading and memorizing the Bible at the age of four (eventually memorizing The Psalms, Isaiah and most of the New Testament). At seven she wrote her first poems. Several of her mature verses became hymns. In addition to *Take My Life*, she wrote such favorites as *I Gave My Life for Thee*, *Like a River Glorious*, and *Who Is on the Lord's Side*?

Because her voice was lovely, Frances was in demand as a concert soloist. She also was a brilliant pianist and learned several modern languages as well as Greek and Hebrew. In 1852 she studied in the Loui-senschule, Düsseldorf, and at Oberkassel. With all her education, however, Frances Havergal maintained a simple faith and confidence in her Lord. She never wrote a line of poetry without praying over it.

One of the lines of Frances Havergal's hymn says, "Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold." In 1878, four years after writing the hymn, Miss Havergal wrote a friend, "The Lord has shown me another little step, and, of course, I have taken it with extreme delight. 'Take my silver and my gold' now means shipping off all my ornaments to the Church Missionary House, including a jewel cabinet that is really fit for a countess, where all will be accepted and disposed of for me...Nearly fifty articles are being packed up. I don't think I ever packed a box with such pleasure."

It was stated she was often considered in frail health, yet she led an active life, encouraging many people to turn to Jesus and others to seek a deeper spiritual walk. She supported the Church Missionary Society.

Havergal reportedly made this comment when asked what prompted her to write her well-known hymn. She explained: "I went for a little visit at a friend's home of five days. There were ten persons in the house; some were unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians. [God] gave me the prayer, 'Lord, give me all in this house.' And He just did. Before I left the house, everyone had got a blessing. The last night of my visit I was too happy to sleep and passed most of the night in renewal of my consecration, and those little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another till they finished with 'ever only, ALL FOR THEE!'"

Bibliography:

Adapted from an earlier Christian History Institute story.

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Wells, Amos R. *A Treasure of Hymns; Brief biographies of 120 leading hymn- writers and Their best hymns*. Boston: W. A. Wilde company, 1945.

Various internet articles.

— *Frances Ridley Havergal*, Christianity.com

Missions in Books

From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya Book Review from Pastor Jim



Hope Church's GRO committee has been restarted with a great group of folks from our church providing their energy and commitment. Now in our bulletin each month we feature a different country to pray for. In their first year together they have organized our first missions conference in several years. How exciting! Since this newsletter is being published weeks before this conference, I was asked to provide a book review of a book on missions.

The book is **From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya** by Ruth Tucker. Ruth Tucker is the author of several books and has taught mission studies and church history at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Calvin Theological Seminary.



It was first published in 1983, one year after I became a Christian. Prior to that, I knew nothing about missionaries other than that they had to be a bit different to go to some of the places they served. Then in that same year, I began my studies at Bible college/seminary and for the next seven years I had people who wanted to go to those same places sitting next to me in class. Many have become my close friends. This book was my introduction to the studies of missions, technically called "missiology," and it is the first book I would recommend to anyone who would like to dip their toe into this very important world and study of missions.

Here are some of the reasons why I say that:

- ♦ It is easy to read and has pictures! Who doesn't like a book with pictures? You can pick the book up and start it anywhere. Families can read it together. It's entertaining, educational, humbling, and inspiring.
- ♦ The book is a compilation of biographical sketches of missionaries spreading across the scope of church history, from the early church starting in Jerusalem up to the ministry to the island of Irian Jaya in the late 1970's. (Irian Jaya as of 2002 is now Papua.)
- ♦ Missionaries are ordinary people called by the Lord to fulfill the Great Commission of Mt 28. Listen to what the author says in the Preface:

How does one write a history of Christian missions—a history that entails tens of thousands of noteworthy professionals sent out by hundreds of mission societies to every country in the world over a period of some two thousand years? It is an enormous subject that has unfortunately been almost destroyed by historians who have attempted to squeeze too many dates, events, organizations, and names into one volume. But the history of missions is not a compilation of arid facts. It is a fascinating story of human struggles and emotions, intertwined with tragedy, adventure, romance, intrigue, and sorrow.

- ♦ When thinking of missions, familiar names come to mind: David Brainerd, David Livingstone, Hudson Taylor, William Carey, Adoniram Judson. And yet a majority of missionaries were single women who offered their bodies "as living sacrifices" for the gospel. Ms. Tucker generously provides the stories of their sacrifice and journey. And then there are sketches of those other men and women whose names are only unknown to us who lost their lives and that of their families for the call to "Therefore go..."
- ♦ It is cross-denominational. Ms. Tucker summarizes the experiences of a wide range of individuals, churches, missionary societies, and theologies, which allows us to compare and contrast various approaches.

Some of us have been acquainted with the study of missions for several years and others are unfamiliar with the missions movement and the thousands of stories of how the hand of the Lord guided these men and women to be instruments of grace over 2000 years. No matter which camp you find yourself in, I believe Ruth Tucker's book will be a great addition to your library. It has always been within reach in my study. Enjoy!!

H.O.P.E .for Seniors
From Marybeth Gibbins

Wednesday, June 22, 2022 was our opening picnic for the year. The picnic was well attended and we were all glad to be together again as a group.

This group is an active group for those who are age 60 and over. We get together in the church lounge every first and third Wednesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. Each meeting opens with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by prayer. We discuss and plan some of our upcoming events.

A short inspirational devotional is read followed by prayer and prayer requests. Along with some trivia, we usually do a mind-jogger back to our younger days which creates some great conversation.

Our potluck luncheon is around noon. We all sign up and bring something to eat. We never leave hungry. After lunch we wind down the day with our Wii Bowling.

We also are enjoying the challenging game of Chicken Foot. Don't know what Chicken Foot is? Then you need to come and find out!

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING!

On Thursday, September 8th we will have attended the annual county-wide Senior Picnic at the Saratoga County Fair Grounds. This took the place of our September 7th meeting.

On Wednesday, September 21st we will continue with our next meeting where we will bowl our 5th Wii Bowling game towards our tournament.

**Wii Bowling Tournament
and Banquet TBA**

For our Banquet we will be going to a nearby restaurant for lunch and returning to the church for dessert and our bowling award ceremony.

We also try to have a sit-down Thanksgiving dinner and a Christmas Party.
Dates TBA

**Friday December 2nd
The Annual Christmas Parade in Ballston Spa**

We are doing a float this year!
HOPE CHURCH, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We have a church building and a steeple that needs to be mounted on a trailer.

We also need two people to carry our new banner in the parade and two or more people to walk and HAND OUT CANDY!

Thanks! For more information contact Marybeth (518) 423-7105



Children's Ministry By Melanie Combs



I hope everyone had a fun and relaxing summer. We are working on getting ready for the Fall Sunday School Season which starts September 11. More information will be forthcoming in the bulletin. Since the GRO committee is working hard to help us feel connected to missions in the world we will be incorporating missions for the children in Sunday School, Children's Church, as well as the sermon note clipboards during the service. This will hopefully allow the children to feel involved and get a better understanding of what missions is. We have a few volunteers to teach this year so I want to let everyone know how we will be breaking up the classes this year.

For Preschool age : Kirsten Whitehead is willing to work with this group again this year.

For Younger Elementary (grades 1-2): Melanie Combs will be working with this group.

For Middle Elementary (grades 3-4): Leslie Perkins will be working with this group.

For Middle School and High School: Nate Thompson will be working with this group.

We are always hoping for new volunteers. If you are interested in helping with the Sunday School program you can talk to Melanie at any time. There are books that tell you everything you need to teach a lesson. It's a great way to be involved in the discipleship of the youth in our church. Another way to be involved with our youth is Children's Church. We have a rotating schedule so that one person isn't responsible for every Sunday's lesson. The curriculum for this program is easy to follow and you can shadow a current teacher to see how things work. If you would be interested in joining this rotation please let Melanie or Sally Jenkins know. Please be praying for the teachers and the students this year that each Sunday School class would be a blessing and lead children to an understanding of how much God loves them. Thank you.

Pray for Our Children and Teachers as They Head Back to School!

Preschool: Samson Thompson, Home School

First Grade: Tyler Stokes, Ballston Spa
Ezra Thompson, Home School

Second Grade: Teddy Perkins, Galway
Talitha Thompson, Home School

Fourth Grade: C.J. Anderson, Galway
Ryan Bowman, Mekeel Christian
Edmund Perkins, Galway
Jonah Thompson, Home School

Fifth Grade: Elise Twining, Niskayuna

Seventh Grade: Matthias Miller, Oak Hill School

Eighth Grade: Eva Anderson, Galway

Ninth Grade: Peregrine Perkins, Galway

Eleventh Grade: Colin Anderson, Galway
Eben Perkins, Galway

Teachers

Tammy Anderson: School Nurse, Ballston Spa Schools
Melanie Combs: 2nd Grade, Mekeel Christian Academy
Jill Galarneau: Speech & Language, Schenectady
Schools
Jill Miller: Family and Consumer Sciences, Watervliet
Schools
Leslie Perkins: Substitute, Galway Schools

Growth During CORE Training

Eben Perkins



Earlier this summer, as many of you may have noticed, I was away at Northern Frontier for about a month. While I was there, I participated in two different camp programs. The first one is called CORE Training. It is a two-week session that focuses on growing young men's faith and reliance on God through various challenges. This was a really great experience for me. I feel like through the program, as well as simply being surrounded with godly people, I was able to deepen my faith and create a more personal relationship with God. I was lucky enough to be doing the program with one of my good friends, and it was a great opportunity to

strengthen that friendship, in addition to developing friendships with the other guys that were in the program with me.

During the second half of my month at camp, I was on the camp's 46er Trip. On this trip in 2021, I completed half of the 46 Adirondack High Peaks, and this summer I returned to finish the other half. Though this trip did not have the same emphasis on spirituality as CORE Training, it was still present in the nightly devotionals that we did. While I was at camp, my parents would mention to me in the letters they sent that a lot of people in the church had been asking about me and praying for me. Knowing that I was in people's thoughts and prayers meant so much to me.



Thanks for the sunflowers Andersons!



A few of Pat Turner's Chicken Paintings (see pg. 9)

DOORWAY TO HOPE STAFF

Sally Jenkins, Nate Thompson, and
Rae Whitehead

Website: www.hopechurch.us

E-mail: info@hopechurch.us

Retirements

Since our last issue of Doorway to Hope we have had several people from our congregation retire from their full-time careers.

Congratulations to

Stan Trestick
Nancy Trestick

And Jeannine Jeter (retiring this month)

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



September Schedule

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|-------|--|
| 11th | Sunday School/Spiritual Formation Classes resume for the year at 9:00 |
| 14th | Ladies Bible Study begins on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 at the church |
| 16-17 | New York State Presbytery meets in Schenectady |
| 22nd | Cutler's Small Group begins on Thursday evenings at 7:00 at the church |

“When Paul says, "Praise the Lord all you nations, and let all the peoples extol him" (Rom. 15:11), he is saying that there is something about God that is so universally praiseworthy and so profoundly beautiful and so comprehensively worth and so deeply satisfying that God will find passionate admirers in every diverse people group in the world. His true greatness will be manifest in the breadth of the diversity of those who perceive and cherish his beauty. His excellence will be shown to be higher and deeper than the parochial preferences that make us happy most of the time. His appeal will be to the deepest, highest, largest capacities of the human soul. Thus, the diversity of the source of admiration will testify to his incomparable glory.”

“For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.” 2 Corinthians 5:14-15