

St Paul's Evangelical Church

The Messenger

Edition 8 Volume 4
August, 2020

From Pastor Steve's Desk

This month there is an extended article from Mary Kay

To our church families: I am continuing on my course of relating to you what God was doing within the heart and soul of this particular mother as she reached the stage of life that also coincided with raising tweens and teens. I want to make two comments before I start. One, this time in my life spread out over what is commonly called "mid-life" in a person...a time I saw this crisis occurring in others around me, but FELT and LIVED it myself. I am only trying to relate my story. Which leads me to the second comment. I do not feel, and so hope no one of you reading this feel, judgement from me in any way. God chose to create us human...and with that we each have human frailties...I have also never seen God chose to take away all those human frailties no matter how "great" a follower of Jesus a person becomes (and some do look like saints...but I doubt they would say so!). I will bring up the topic of divorce in this "letter" because at one point in crisis it was put to me more than once that I should choose that option. I believe it takes two to make a long lasting marriage...but we live in a world where it only takes one to get a divorce, and we live in a world "where men and women's hearts" are far from knowing God and often far from even caring what He might think if He exists. (Jesus told the Pharisees who tried to trick him with a question about divorce that God gave Moses instructions on divorce "because He knew men's hearts were hard.") My own father-in-law suffered a cruel divorce for ugly reasons as a young man before he met Steve's mother. I have never known who said what to him, but I know he felt that Steve and I judged him poorly for this. We never talked about it. We didn't feel that way, and it still hurts in some ways to know that he carried this to his death. The scripture is clear that SIN Kills. Every kind of SIN kills anything around it. Sin is about rebelling against what we know God to have said. It is not really about stumbling and bumbling through life without light, knowledge or insight and then finding out we are on the wrong course and coming to Jesus for cleansing and help and forgiveness...but still living in a world bashed, wounded and dying from the effects of sin. I hope you can hear me on this.

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Church Events

August 9th - Evangelical Association
Special Offering

August 16th - Communion
Family Night @ 6:00/
Homemade Ice Cream/
Ball Games

August 17th - Board Meeting
@ 6:30

August Family Night (Softball/ Ice Cream) Host/Hostesses:

*Barry and Sandee Eschenbrenner
Jennifer Long
Seth Rohrbach
Andy and Kacey Clay
Nick and Katie Smith
Nicholas and Teresa Schoenthal

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Written August 2002

Marriage in God's thinking is often about something other than what we women tend to think when we enter into it. God, in uniting a man and woman in marriage, intends the new entity to grow into something new, unique and more than each individual is, or could be alone. In gifting you with a partner, God has given a broken, imperfect man as YOUR perfect gift. You have only this one life of opportunity to build into that person whom you've been given. You can look at the negatives—the habits that drive you nuts...you can let these become huge until you convince yourself (or more correctly, the enemy convinces you—because this is a spiritual battle being waged in our homes!) that you can't stand it anymore and ANYTHING would be better than what you have. Or, you can choose to look at the things you like, can respect, enjoy...and move alongside your mate to enhance what is best in him. This is a choice we generally have to make. It is a self-sacrificing choice. But God did not create marriage to enhance what is unique about ONE; He created marriage to build something NEW.

Everything I have ever experienced and know first-hand about marriage lets me know it is sometimes just really hard work and it is overwhelmingly stressful. I think it is important for one to understand and acknowledge the amount of stress one lives with, and it is important to know when one needs relief from the effects of stress and how to receive this. Marriage at different times also results in different amounts of stress...it is never the same always. This is my lead-in to the next related topic.

This issue is difficult for me to speak to, as there is a lot of misunderstanding about it. It is however almost universal I have found, to one extent or another in men and women of faith—even through the ages. I have listened or read countless women recounting their lives who are desperate to change their situation in hopes of ending the pain they currently experience and feel they cannot bear up under any longer. Many conclude from the depths of their pain, that God has failed them, that He doesn't care, that the pain has no purpose or end. These conclusions are in direct contrast to what God clearly tells us about Himself and his working in the Bible, but they seem supported by the strength of the emotional pain women bear at times in their lives. God has given to me throughout my life an unshakable conviction that all that He reveals about Himself in the Bible is truth. The emotions, experiences and circumstances of my life have always been filtered through the grid of His Written Word. What I'm going to share with you has been experienced with this single foundation as bedrock for me.

For years I have struggled with depression. (You will note, this letter was written in 2002—and I still live with many symptoms of depression...many of which I have no internal radar to detect.) I have always been a “glass-half-empty” sort of woman—which was GREAT when I practiced nursing—when planning for the worst and being ready for it let me safeguard entire floors of patients. Clinical depression has nothing to do with being a “glass-half-full” or “glass-half-empty” person. It also often has little to do with how we FEEL. There is a proverb that says: “The heart (meaning the seat of our emotions) is deceitful and desperately wicked.” This tells me that I cannot believe my emotions to be revealing to me the truth of my circumstances. I must rely on God's Word to tell my heart...and my soul what is true. Here I want to insert a list of symptoms of clinical depression which assist a clinician in making this diagnosis, and I want to say that though I have been an RN since I was 23 years old, it took me until I had every single symptom on this list and they all were screaming so loudly into my life I could barely function that I became aware I had a problem called “clinical depression” and needed help!

Depression (this is a recently updated list I obtained from Mayo Clinic and the National Institute of Mental Health) is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and/or loss of interest. Also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression if it affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and sometimes you may feel as if life isn't worth living. More than just a bout of the blues, depression isn't a weakness and you cannot simply “snap out” of it.

Symptoms:

- Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, emptiness of hopelessness*
- Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration even over small matters*
- Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities*
- Sleep disturbances including insomnia or sleeping too much.*
- Fatigue and lack of energy, so even small tasks take extra effort.*
- Loss of appetite and weight loss or increased cravings for food and weight gain.*
- Anxiety, agitation, restlessness*
- Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements.*
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or self-blame.*
- Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things.*

Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal thoughts or attempts/suicide.

Unexplained physical problems: headaches, back pain, digestive problems without a clear physical cause and/or that do not ease even with treatment.

A note related to clinical depression: Although depression may occur only once during a person's life, people typically have multiple episodes. During these episodes symptoms occur most of the day, nearly every day.

I do want to get to my point in writing this and how it relates to what I have written already. It is generally understood that at least to some degree too much unrelieved stress in one's life often leads to symptoms of depression. In my own struggles with depression, my feelings often told me (and sometimes professional counselors advised me): "you need to change your situation," "Steve is your problem...you need to separate yourself from him," "leave your marriage," "leave your job," and more than once my feelings told me "you need to END this!" I listened to this input through the grid of God's word...what He said about me, about marriage, about life...and it just didn't fit with changing my circumstances through my own measures. It could be tempting to "fix things my own way", but through it, God's quiet voice always pointed to hope that He had something better for me...He could do better work than that. And He has. My life has certainly not looked in the past 20 years like I would ever have expected. God has not relieved me of my disabling symptoms of clinical depression. Most of the time I "feel" pretty good...if I take my medication. But then, some days, I feel awful...and have to be quiet, stay to myself a bit (trying very hard not to make Steve or others pay the price of how I feel.) Sometimes I wonder if I had been more awake and alert to what stress was doing to me physically, could I have avoided this problem. But, then, you know, I look at my life--or try to--from a God-perspective...and I know He has this. He has this for me. He has this giving me empathy and understanding I would never have otherwise. He has this for me so that I turn to Him; I know even exhausted on my bed my soul turns to Him and He loves me, He has me. He has had His plan for me since before He created me...and I don't think my life has taken any crazy turns from that. I do not know what He has ahead for me, but I do know He has my every day, and I can fully trust Him--every day!

A Call to Prayer

Someone has said, "God's work done God's way will never lack God's resources or God's blessing." That is true—but it is important to know that "God's Way" always requires us to pray first and then to respond in obedience to God. It begins with prayer—we can do a lot of things beside pray, but we can never do anything until first we pray. With that in mind, I want to invite you to join me in a single, focused prayer based on Jesus' saying, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the LORD of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." Mt. 9:37-38 I believe that as Jesus looks at Jamestown and the surrounding area, He sees that the harvest is plentiful, but what is lacking is workers. But the workers can't be recruited by men (or pastors) but called into the work by the LORD of the harvest. Those who do not 'see' the potential harvest of men and women, boys and girls for Jesus will not pray, but those that begin to pray for laborers/workers will begin to see that their friends and neighbors and relatives are searching, wanting something that they can only find in Jesus. Those individuals are the harvest field. As you pray, you will begin to see the need with increasing clarity.

Join me as we pray for our community, for God to raise up workers to represent Him. Pray for workers—as you pray, pray for individuals that He will call into a ministry for children, Sunday School, VBS (when we have it next summer), camp, and WWJD. Pray for individuals that will have a heart for teens—to work for Jesus caring for Middle Schools (in the Middle School Youth group we need teachers that will rotate in instruction, food prep people, activity planners, musically inclined people that will incorporate song into the Wednesday evening time).

Will you join me in prayer, remembering, "God's work done God's way will never lack God's resources or God's blessing." And God's work begins on our knees in prayer. Join me.

The fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much. James 5:17

Memory Verses for August

Be working on this important verse from James *Let everyman be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to wrath for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. James 1:19-20*

Be working on this verse as a family. Blessings.

From Our Missionaries at Healing House

Family and friends of Christina Abbott and David Graham came together May 30th at House of Prayer Family Church to celebrate their commencement from The Healing House and New Beginnings program. Executive Director Heather Gieck shared scripture from Zech 4:6 in her opening remarks where the Lord says through Zechariah, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit". Addressing Christina and David she continued, "You have returned to your homeland, the heart of the Father, now fellow citizens of the Heavenly City not made by hands, now members of the Household of God. Both have been given the highly difficult task of rebuilding your lives in Him while leading others into a life of change." Christina and David both have been serving in leadership roles in ministry.

Guests and fellow Healing House residents shared of the impact Christina and David have had in their lives and the lives of many others. They expressed admiration for Christina's perseverance to come to the ministry, her journey to reconcile with her family and choosing God through every difficulty. Many told of David's servant's heart, his devotion to the Celebrate Recovery ministry, and his ministering to residents and suffering people he encounters.

Christina gave her testimony of seeking the Lord while in prison and her heart changing. She shared

her attempts to start a new life after prison that didn't work out, then making her way to The Healing House. She quoted several scriptures that anchor her and reflect her journey. Christina has a desire to help other mothers to "break the chains of addiction, for the courts and the Division of Family Services to recognize true recovery. I want to help break the chains of addiction everywhere." She added, "The Lord is amazing. I never thought I could live life sober. He has saved me and given me a new life and a new heart with a new spirit." Christina thanked everyone who has had a part in her new life, especially her children.

David spoke next and shared, "I'm here today because of the Cross and the blood of Jesus Christ. I have victory because of Him and His grace. Today I am part of the Royal Priesthood and I give glory to God for what He has done with my life and the lives of those around me... I have experienced a complete psychic change and an epiphany. I am recovered." He expressed gratitude for the people God has placed in his life, naming several mentors, pastors, those attending and most importantly, Jesus Christ. David closed with these encouragements: "...Somebody, somewhere is depending on you to do what God has called you to do....Our thoughts and our spoken words, negative and positive, are extremely powerful and amazing. They are life changing for ourselves and others."

St. Paul's Evangelical Church Board Meeting

July 20, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Don Gerlach and opened with prayer led by Pastor Steve. Those in attendance were Don Gerlach, Debi Baumert, Pastor Steve, Mark Oerly, Mark Rohrbach, Lisa Porter and Sandee Eschenbrenner.

The Secretary's Report was presented and approved as written. Motion to approve was made by Lisa Porter and seconded by Debi Baumert.

The Treasurer's Report was presented and approved. Motion to approve was made by Debi Baumert and seconded by Mark Oerly.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mark Rohrbach advised that the three Certificates of Deposit mentioned in June's meeting have been renewed for 15 months at 0.9%.
2. Don reported that he is waiting for an estimate from Tom Bollinger regarding the overhang and fascia board repair. In the event he does not hear within several more days, he will contact another contractor. Also, the spotlights ordered for the front of the church have not yet arrived.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mark Rohrbach presented the July bills. Motion for payment of same was made by Mark Oerly and seconded by Debi Baumert.

2. The Board has received some comments regarding the rehangng of some or all of the banners previously displayed in our sanctuary. After some discussion, it was decided to ask for the congregation's ideas and suggestions. Several alternatives would be to display them in the hallway or in the Fellowship Hall or hang several and alternate them periodically.
3. We also call to your attention that we have been rearranging the items in the altar area from week to week. It is the Board's intention to provide photos of the different arrangements and let the congregation decide the final setup.
4. The Board also discussed the Festival of Sharing Special Offering originally scheduled for August 9th. With reference to the March 2020 minutes, we remind the congregation that we are investigating several recipients of Special Offerings. As responsible stewards, our goal is to proclaim Christianity, honor Christ and promote the gospel. Therefore, we are currently postponing the previously announced offering for Festival of Sharing and will designate the August 9th Special Offering for the Evangelical Association. The motion was made by Mark Rohrbach and seconded by Mark Oerly.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

Pastor Steve presented his monthly report including mileage, some expenses and August sermon topics. He advised that he is able to visit with more shut-ins now, but not those in nursing homes. He will be conducting a private graveside service for Walter Strein on Friday, July 31st.

Don advised that our next Board Meeting will be held on Monday, August 17th at 6:30 PM.

The motion to adjourn was made by Debi Baumert and seconded by Lisa Porter. The meeting was closed by reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sandee Eschenbrenner, Secretary

Upcoming Events:

- August 9th Evangelical Association Special Offering
- August 16th Communion
- August 16th Family Night/Homemade Ice Cream/Ball Games
- August 17th Board Meeting

August 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Family Night Host/Hostesses: Softball/Ice Cream						1
*Barry and Sandee Eschenbrenner Jennifer Long Seth Rohrbach Andy and Kacey Clay Nick and Katie Smith Nicholas and Teresa Schoenthal						
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Danny Haldiman						Jeremy Haldiman Tricia Schaffter
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Evangelical Association Special Offering Alan Bieri Ralph Reimler			Evis Stauffer			Anne Derendinger Teresa Schoenthal
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Communion Family Night Softball/ Ice Cream 6:00 p.m.	Church Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m.	Dianne Marshall		Abraham Heimericks		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
			Brenda Haldiman Calvin Schlup		Charles Eschenbrenner Doug Selby	Hannah VonderHaar
30	31					