

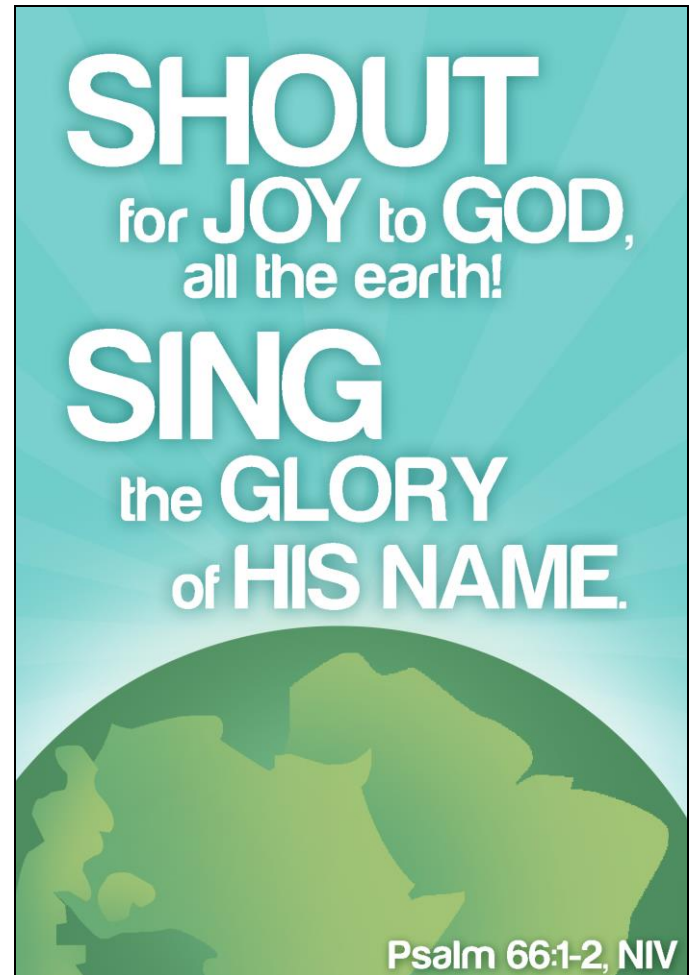
Something Beautiful

By
Janice Straubel

I love my job and thank God for it daily. As an elementary school librarian, I have the privilege of introducing books to children and children to books. This past week I read aloud the book *Something Beautiful* by Sharon Dennis Wyeth. The little girl in the story lives in a rough urban neighborhood. Broken glass, trash and nasty graffiti are outside her front door. On the way to school she passes a homeless lady who lives in a cardboard box, dark alleys and lots of chain link fences. Her teacher that day writes the word "BEAUTIFUL" on the board and challenges them to find beauty: "something that when you have it, your heart is happy."

Leaving school that day she asks various neighbors and friends, "What is your something beautiful?" Answers range from fish sandwiches, jump ropes, beads, and fresh fruit to playing ball, dancing, and making a baby giggle. She arrives home with a different perspective. She scrubs the ugly word off her door, cleans up the trash, and dreams of planting a garden and giving the homeless woman a home. The story concludes with the little girl asking the mom at the end of the day, "Do you have something beautiful?" "Of course," she says, "I have you."

So much of life depends on our perspective and the thoughts that loop through our brains. During an especially difficult time in college, I sought help from a professor who explained that our thoughts are like tire tracks. The more we go over and over the same thoughts, the deeper that memory is entrenched in our memory. Unfortunately, it seems like the negative events get more attention in my mind as I go over and over a hurtful experience. Our memories can be blessings or hauntings depending on our focus.



Since the social isolation of the Covid pandemic, my ninety-two-year old mom has had less new happy interactions with people and more time to ruminate past hurts. Her mind plays the same negative tapes over and over again, and it can be difficult to change the tapes for her. My sisters and I talk regularly about how we can help her and encourage her to see the good and not get stuck in the bad. This is not easily done.

This has been a wakeup call for me to let go of hurts and grudges and stop playing the tapes. The longer the root of bitterness goes unchecked, the harder it is to dig it out. *God doesn't want his children holding grudges.* (Philippians 4:2 Message Bible) I have to throw out the old, negative tapes and daily fill my mind with life-giving, God pleasing tapes.

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“Something Beautiful,” continued...

Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies. (Philippians 4:8-9 Message Bible) Meditating on God's Word and verses like these make me “happy in my heart” and are my “something beautiful.”



Happy Birthday!

Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes.

Joan Hagestad	March 2
Marquita Kimmel	March 5
Hannah Straubel	March 5
Michael Seiboth	March 7
Thor Bernheisel	March 9
Larry Berrill	March 12
John Kimmel	March 13
Randi Herrity	March 18
Donna Westbrook	March 19
Cindy Bills	March 21

Elders' Corner

By Ed MacQueen

Blessings in the Lord. Let me first thank you for your participation in January's Annual Meeting, and for your affirming vote for me to continue serving as an elder. It was a privilege to serve for the last three years, and I look forward to what 2023 has in store. Ken Bills' wisdom, insight and leadership will be missed during his sabbatical!

As late winter turns to spring, the Easter Egg Hunt is on the forefront of our minds. Please join in prayer over next six weeks for the event to be fruitful to the Kingdom of God! I'm reminded of Psalm 127: *Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it.* May our efforts be meaningfully used by God to spread the love of Jesus.

We are working out the details of Trinity International Christian Church's involvement in the Easter Egg Hunt. As the event's attendees have grown in number, especially last year, we are in need of support more than ever. I thank God that He has provided a like-minded group to participate with us, eager to share the message of the Gospel with those who have not heard.

That being said, we will still need the same volunteer support from Windsor Chapel which the event has relied on the past several years! If you worked the welcome table, brought supplies, painted faces, led crafts, gave out candy—please plan on it again this year. Your help is an integral part of making the event possible.

It's our prayer that through the Easter Egg Hunt families will hear the Gospel and believe, meet Christians, and be led to visit/attend Windsor Chapel. And we also hope the kids have a fun, safe time!

Thanks for your prayer in this regard. As always, don't hesitate to let the church body know if there is any way we can support you.



Save the date for Windsor Chapel's exciting annual Easter Egg Hunt, which will be held on Sunday, April 2, at 3:00 pm. Please be sure to invite your family, friends and neighbors! There will be plenty of fun and special treats for children ages 2 – 9, and everything is free! The rain date is on Saturday, April 8, at 3:00 pm. Interested in helping in this rewarding outreach? Speak with Ed MacQueen on Sunday, or contact him by email at e.macqueen1@comcast.net or by phone at 609-751-6584.



Big Heart, but Little Time?

Have you been looking for an opportunity to serve that will fit your hectic schedule? A few hours of your time will be a tremendous help as we plan for our Easter Egg Hunt, one of our most important outreaches of the year. There are various opportunities to assist during the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 2, or on the rain date Saturday, April 8, as we prepare for the big day. Please look over the following list of responsibilities and positions available:

Prior to Event

Candy Bag Preparation
Set up Egg Hunt Areas

Arrange Outreach Materials
Select, Purchase and Arrange Crafts
Purchase Water Bottles (8-ounce bottles-
approximately 200)

Day of Event

Set up Tables, Chairs Outside
Distribute Eggs in Field

Volunteer Positions

Crafts: Team lead and support team
Decorations and Photo Booth: 1-2 people
needed
Candy Exchange Table: Team lead and
support team
Face Painting: Team lead and support team
Balloon Animals
Water Station: 1 person needed
Trash: 1 Person Needed
Welcome Table

If you wish to serve in this rewarding ministry, please speak with Ed MacQueen in person on Sunday, or contact him by email at e.macqueen1@comcast.net or by phone at 609-751-6584.



Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

Faith For the Day

Mental health professionals often stress the importance of being present in the here and now moment as we live our day-to-day lives. These mental health professionals have recognized an important truth in the way the Creator has created His creatures, even though they might be surprised to realize that their position is actually grounded in Scriptural truth.

God Almighty is eternal, without beginning, without end. The I AM is the essence of unchanging being, at all times. He has created us in His image, for unending relationship with Him. Christ died to cover our sins to make that possible. The eternal Holy Spirit dwells within us as the first fruits of an abiding relationship with the Triune Godhead that will be fulfilled in heaven as we spend eternity in His presence.

I am not good at living in the present. Scars from my past tend to make me quite apprehensive about the future, and so I am continually scanning the horizon looking for threats. Many if not most of us spend a good bit of time looking backward in time as we process a myriad of experiences and then forward to prepare for future experiences. But when we do so, we risk missing the here and now (Matthew 6:25-34).

The Apostle Paul and the author of the epistle to the Hebrews both encourage their readers to avoid bitterness. Avoiding bitterness requires us to exercise forgiveness so that we are not bound to past hurts and offenses inflicted by others. The Apostle Matthew records in his

Gospel Jesus' exhortation to not worry about the needs of tomorrow but rather to be seeking God's kingdom in faith.

The Gospels are full of accounts of Jesus living in the present moment as He ministered during His time on earth. One of the most powerful examples is described toward the end of the Gospel of Luke, in Chapter 10. By this time, the Jewish authorities have given Jesus and His disciples good reason to believe that they are looking for a way to get Jesus out of their way, to eliminate their competition, as they see it. In this chapter, Jesus is clearly preparing for His crucifixion as He foretells the suffering that is coming in verses 32-34. But instead of focusing on past conflict with the Jews or on His upcoming suffering, Jesus takes time to bless children—considered insignificant in that culture—to deal patiently with James and John as they asked Him for special treatment, and to heal a blind beggar. Jesus remains present even when there was a good bit in His recent past and upcoming future to think about.

A few weeks ago, I went out in our backyard for my morning time of dog play. It was damp, chilly, and foggy. But as I walked past our miniature Japanese maple tree, I noticed droplets of water clinging to the ends of its many branches, shining. It was truly magical, and I forgot about the dreary conditions and my lack of enthusiasm for the activity. Dog play soon commenced, and by the time I walked by the tree again, the light had changed and the droplets of water, while visible, were no longer glowing. I processed the incident as I collected dogs and tennis balls and went indoors. Had I not taken that blink of time to appreciate our bare but transformed little tree, the Lord would not have been able to bless me with that glimpse of His creative goodness. And once again, I am able to see a cycle of blessing: as I

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“Faith For the Day,” continued...

pay attention to what is before me in the present, I am blessed with glimpses of the Lord’s personal goodness. And that attentiveness strengthens my mental health and the ability to remain in the present moment and see more of what the Lord is doing.

To be alive to the wonder of the commonplace, I thought, that is the very gift of a wildly generous Creator, who ever invites his creatures to contemplate the exuberance of his excellent handiwork. There is a deep and abiding joy at work in this worlds-realm, and we who toil through our lives do often forget this, or overlook it. But look: it is all around! Ceaseless, unrelenting, certain as sunrise, and constant as the rhythm of a heartbeat.

Stephen Lawhead

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or cynthialbills@gmail.com) to continue the dialogue....

WHATEVER IS *true*,
 WHATEVER IS *honorable*,
 WHATEVER IS *just*,
 WHATEVER IS *pure*...
 IF THERE IS ANYTHING
worthy of praise,
 THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8, NRSV

Financial Update

(Through January 31, 2023)

“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want...”

	Actual	Budget
Income	\$13,484	\$18,250
Expense	\$16,649	\$18,260

Windsor Chapel has sent \$2,415 to our missionary partners this year. That is 18% of your giving!



Why Do We Have Daylight Saving Time, Anyway?

The main purpose of Daylight Saving Time is to make better use of daylight. Currently, it begins at 2:00 am on the second Sunday in March, when clocks advance, or "spring forward," one hour. This year the date is Sunday, March 12. Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before sleeping on March 11. This is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Benjamin Franklin first proposed the idea for Daylight Saving Time in 1784 to reduce candle consumption at night, but the first national Daylight Saving Time, known as the Standard Time Act, occurred in 1918 as a way to conserve coal during World War I. Daylight Saving Time took on its modern form in 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson signed the Uniform Time Act.

Forty-eight of the fifty United States currently observe Daylight Saving Time. The only states that do not are Arizona and Hawaii. In 2022, the United States Senate passed the Sunshine Protection Act to end Daylight Saving Time and have the country remain in Standard Time permanently. However, it was not signed into law, so set your clocks ahead or pack your bags for Hawaii!

Asking for the Impossible

By Janet Berrill

I recently made a trip to Connecticut to work on cleaning a condo our renters had left a mess. Not only was the condo dirty, but the renters also left a large number of their possessions behind that I needed to get rid of.

Having sprayed the oven with cleaner the night before, I began first thing on Monday to clean the oven and stove. These were so dirty I don't think I would have like to eat anything cooked there! Even though the oven cleaner did a wonderful job, I still spent several hours cleaning the appliance. During this time, I began to feel a bit discouraged and lonely. Here I was spending so much time and effort cleaning up a mess that wasn't even mine. I found myself wishing for someone to be there with me, helping me clean.

In the sermon on Sunday, the pastor told a story about a young man who had run away from home. He spent years living as a homeless person on the streets. One day he walked up to a man, touched him on the shoulder and asked him if he had a dime. The man turned around, and it turned out to be his father! The father said, "Son, I have been searching for you for years. You ask me for a dime, I've been looking for you so I can give you all I have." As I cleaned the stove, I thought about that story. I also thought about how Beth Moore has said in her studies that we think too little of God. We don't expect much, so we don't ask for much, so we don't get much. God is full of glorious riches He wants to lavish on us, and yet we don't ask big things of Him.

As I thought about this, I prayed, "God, what I would really like is for someone to come here and help me clean. I want someone who will just clean without my having to tell them what to do. Someone who will just work and help me get everything done. I know I'm not going to get it, but that is what I want." That was my prayer. I told God what I wanted, but I didn't believe He was going to give it to me. From my perspective I didn't see how anyone would come and help me.

Later on that day I called friends of mine who had offered to come by and help me move some items I was going to donate to Goodwill. Around 7:00 Ed and Loretta showed up. Loretta had brought me some dinner, so Ed suggested I eat dinner in the kitchen while visiting with Loretta, and he would start working on the stuff in the basement. I assumed he was going to load the Goodwill donations in the truck and take the trash bags to the dumpster. After I finished eating, Loretta and I returned to the basement where I found Ed had been working on cleaning up the other items that I hadn't gotten to yet. To make a long story short, Loretta and I took the donations to Goodwill and made a stop at The Home Depot. Ed stayed at the condo and worked for two and a half hours cleaning up everything that remained. When he was done, there was nothing left in the condo that shouldn't have been there.

At 9:30, on my way to my van to get a map, God reminded me of my prayer for someone to come and help me clean up, someone who would just do it without my having to tell them what to do. This prayer I had prayed in unbelief God had answered! I came back to the condo, and through tears I told Ed and Loretta how God had used them to answer my prayer. I was overwhelmed. I was so thankful to Ed for all the hard work he had done, and I was in awe of my God who loved me and provided for me what I asked for.

We serve a big God. Everything that exists belongs to Him. We love our children with an imperfect love, and yet we want to give them good gifts from our limited resources. God loves us with a perfect love, and He has unlimited resources. Let's stop believing God for little and believe Him for much. He wants to lavish us with His glorious riches, according to His will.

(This article was originally published in August 2008.)

If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:

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