

The Brethren Baptist Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Representing a Church of the Brethren and an American Baptist Church, January/ February Issue, 2023

A THRILL OF HOPE, THE WEARY WORLD REJOICES

We're moving into 2023 together. Some of us wondered if we'd live to see this year. Some have struggled to feel hopeful with the direction the world is going or has gone.

As Jesus followers, we are people of hope.

When I say “We are people of hope,” this doesn't mean that in every waking moment we *feel* unwavering hope. If we feel hopeless sometimes—as I confess I do—that doesn't mean we have failed as Jesus followers, nor that we are disqualified from following Jesus.

I read this quote recently and it rang true for me: “People speak of hope as if it is this delicate, ephemeral thing made of whispers and spider's webs. It's not. Hope has dirt on her face, blood on her knuckles, the grit of the cobblestones in her hair, and just spat out a tooth as she rises for another go.”

I wrote a four-part series for my blog titled “Fighting for Hope.” It helps me to remember that hope is not some mood that strikes us or doesn't, and if it doesn't there's nothing we can do about it. We fight for hope when we suffer depression. We fight for hope when we suffer addiction. And we fight for hope when we're tempted to become cynical.

Following Jesus gives us hope because we know, we *know* that what we can see right now is not the whole story. Yes, the evidence before our eyes may look bleak. But listen to the words of this carol:

“Long lay the world, in sin and error pining / 'til he appeared, and the soul felt its worth / A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices / for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn”

The sin, the error, our self-destructive tendencies, the cruelty we see around us, the discouragement we feel in our own hearts, these don't get the last word.

Even the frightening global crises, such as the war in Ukraine that threatens to erupt into other conflicts, or the environmental damage and shifting global climate that looms, do not get the last word.

Jesus does.

And Jesus' word to us is, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.” (John 15:9)

We believe that God loves us—all of us—beyond measure, and we root our hope in this knowledge. We care for children suffering poverty by giving Angel Tree presents not because we imagine that will solve their poverty, but because it gives us a small way to convey, to them and to their parents, “God really does love you.” We support our local schools generously because we know that education is a key to empowering people to rise out of poverty—which is justice, love in its most pragmatic (and public) form.

We are loved, and therefore we can smile at strangers and if they sneer at us, we can pray for them, their pain, their loneliness, whatever has caused them to distrust our kindness.

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A Thrill of Hope, the Weary World Rejoices continued-

We are loved, so we can risk offering our friendship, knowing that if those we befriend let us down, though it *will* hurt, it won't change that we are loved. "Nothing can separate us from the love of God." That is our hope.

If you feel discouraged, if you feel your hope dwindling, and especially if you feel hopeless right now, take a step back. It's understandable that you are weary. I'm not suggesting you have no reason to feel this way. I'm here to remind you—literally, I am here with you on this journey to remind you—that what looks hopeless now is not all there is, God is with us, and God's love for you will outlast everything else. Yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

May we know and *share* God's love, and the hope that gives us, in 2023.

Pastor Mike

WHAT A YEAR IT'S BEEN

Another year is ending, and a new year will begin soon! Where did the time go? We have so much to be thankful for!

- 100th Anniversary Celebration — The 100th anniversary was an amazing event in the life of our church, and over one hundred people came together for the celebration. We sang songs of the early church and shared stories about the physical building and sacrifices and commitment required to make this dream become a reality. During our time together we recalled stories of the many scores of missions and missionaries coming out of this church.
- The sale/transfer of the building this year to Trinity Church went as smoothly as we could have hoped for with a bit of transitioning for both churches. Trinity recently had a architect from England meet with their congregation to discuss how the building might be remodeled to support their vision for ministry.
- Our budget for 2023 is set for the coming year, but it will take WBBC a year or more to discover what it means to be this new form of our congregation and what is required financially.

- Our Moderators, Church Board members and Commissions will continue to serve in their positions through 2023. Important work before our leadership and congregation includes prayerfully discerning where God is leading this congregation, what type of pastoral leadership is needed, what can we afford and how we best organize and structure ourselves for our new walk with God.

- Thanks to Jeremy Bemis (Trinity) and Joe Roy, we got our media center set up. The meeting room will help us do video streaming of conferences, education, and virtual connection with our denominations and other churches.
- Pastor Mike Rumley-Wells has agreed to remain our Interim Pastor for another three months. We hope to decide if now is the time to call a settled pastor. Will it be half-time or three-quarter time?

Thank you all for your work on behalf of God's kingdom and your dedication to Wenatchee Brethren Baptist Church United.

We are looking forward to another year serving in the ministry of Jesus Christ!

Joe and Colleen
Co-Moderators

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Our Shut-ins:
Carolyn Storme
Darlene Uhrich

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

14th Merry Roy
31st Diane Stober

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2nd Evelyn Eikenberry
7th Virginia Crawl
10th Barbara Miller
24th Jay Stockwell
27th Warren Eikenberry
28th Dan White



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

6th Dennis & Betty Radke's 50th
9th Don & Barbara Miller

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

22nd Dave & Karen Whitley





A Christian's Guide to Planet Earth: *Why it Matters and How to Care for It*

by Betsy Painter

This book is an invitation to engage with nature and the Creator in a biblical way. Each of the book's eleven chapters covers a specific ecosystem, describing its function within our planet and the problems each faces. Each chapter also explores biblical themes and lessons to awaken the reader to appreciation of our Maker's creativity and provision. The chapters each close with practical tips of how we can make a difference, choosing a few tips to put in practice and build on them from there.

The beautiful illustrations help to explain the science in each chapter and increase our sense of wonder and appreciation for God's handiwork. The author is a conservation biologist and currently a student at Yale Divinity School.

Creation Care Team

ANOTHER CHANCE

The Spirit of Christmas lingers on. If you missed the performance of **All is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914**, you have a second chance to see this inspiring and moving true story. The actors sing without accompaniment and speak words from the letters and speeches of those who experienced this miracle during World War I.

The second weekend of the December performances were cancelled because of illness in the cast and an abundance of caution for the health of those attending the play. The rescheduled performances are at the end of January (Jan. 27, 28, and 29). Tickets will go back on sale to the public January 7th. If you purchased tickets for one of the postponed performances, those tickets will be honored.

May Peace Prevail on Earth.

MISSIONARIES AT WORK

Katrina and Kyle Williams, our American Baptist missionaries to Thailand and Myanmar who we have supported since 2015, have begun the process of applying for visas to return to the field after six months in the US visiting churches and settling their oldest son into his first quarter at college.

Here is what Kyle writes:

We have had such a wonderful time catching up with so many of our churches and individual partners over the last 6 months. We are grateful and thankful for the time we have had in the States but getting "back home" sounds good...this process means trying to convince authorities to let you live in their country....I approach this with a certain level of anxiety. There is the initial application. Then there is our arrival at the airport which requires officers to approve our wish to enter and reside a second time. Thirdly, officers will visit us at the office to check on us from time to time. Then every 90 days we are required to check in with these same officers....Foreigners like us are often looked at with skepticism by immigration officers. But it often causes me to look at immigrants in our own country with a lot of grace and compassion....pray for our anxiety, our ability to speak fluently with these officers, and that we would be a light to them.

On the other side of all the paperwork and anxiety is a wonderful opportunity to share Jesus' love with amazing people...we are looking so forward to our return.

(For security purposes we don't share specifics publicly but are happy to zoom or write privately when requested.)

If you would like to donate to the William's mission work, you can log in to International Ministries and give.

2 CENTS WORTH OFFERING

Sunday, February 26

The 2 Cents Worth Offering is where every person sets aside 2 Cents for every meal every person eats in their home to go toward world hunger and the Heifer Project.

Until we can meet in person again, please send a separate check for the 2 Cents offering. Thank you!



