



The Monthly Heartbeat

The Hope in Christ Church Newsletter

November 2017 Issue

Embrace

Enfold

Encourage

Equip

Exalt

To Fear or Not to Fear, That is the Question

By Pastor Scott

Recently I have become aware of my propensity to fear. I fear poverty when I am old. I fear not being liked. I fear being viewed as a failure. I fear being a bad father and causing my children to stumble and run from the faith. I fear that I am not preparing my children for real world. I fear...

Fear is a bigger part of my life than I ever thought. If you are like me, we can put on a big façade and act macho and self-confident, and there are plenty of times when those feelings are ripe and over-blossoming. But there are also plenty of moments, even hours, when fear is in the driver's seat of my life and my decisions.

Recently I have been reading and studying 1John for our sermon series. In chapter 4, the apostle John declares,

*“There is no fear in love,
but perfect love casts out fear.”*

Now I know that the passage goes on to speak about judgment and loving others and such. But for me, the question arose, “How is my understanding of the Heavenly Father deficient such that I fear these things instead of trusting in his goodness and grace?”

In wrestling to find an answer to this question, I offer you my insights into my life. Maybe they will be of service to you and your personal reflection. My fear of old age poverty has to do with not trusting that God is watching out for me. I believe the lie that if I don't watch out for myself, then no one will. But that is a bald-faced lie. God is clear in the Scriptures that He is the one who protects us. *“Some trust in chariots, some trust in horses” and some trust in their own abilities,* but the psalmist reminds us *that we should trust in the ‘name of the Lord our God.’*

He is a loving father. So when I sense fear about my future, I am learning to turn back to the Lord praying, “Our loving, providing, caring, concerned Father...overpower me with your love.”

When I fear that I won't be liked or that I will be viewed as a failure, I trust the opinions of people more than the declaration of God. He has said,

*“You are a cherished possession, a pillar in
the house of God, a holy nation,
a people belonging to God.”*

All of these titles come from the Word and when I base my value or success or even my appeal to others upon their opinions, I am trading the truth of God for a movable, ever-shifting set of expectations. Scripture calls this shifting sand. And so the fear of how I am perceived must give way to the truth of who God says I am. And so I pray, “Lord, let me care more for you and your kingdom than for the fleeting thoughts of others.”

When I fear that I am causing my children to stumble or not be prepared, again I am finding that my fear is rooted in a performance mentality with the false idea that I can actually lead my children to God and make them into the people I want them to be. In my saner moments, I realize the insanity of such a declaration. Only God can shape the heart and lead people into his presence. I can certainly hinder that but ultimately it is about God working in the heart of a sinner to draw them to repentance and to prepare them for the works of service he has already determined that they should do in his world. And so I pray, “Shape them in spite of me for you alone can do the work that I fear I am screwing up.”

Ultimately, what I am realizing about my life is that my fears are driven by a failure to understand and comprehend the great love God the Father has for our world and us.

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His love, his concern, his desire, his purposes will always be good.

As the Heidelberg catechism reminds me, **“God...so rules [our world] so that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty, all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but from his fatherly hand.”** (HC 27). Fear believes the lie that God isn't a father and He isn't in control. But faith stakes its claim upon the truth that God is a good, good father and He is in complete control of whatever things come my way. That truth overcomes fear by reminding me of the perfect love of the Father for his children. And when I focus on this, truly fear is driven away for 'there is no fear in love.'

The Story

By Brian Koning

Many great stories start with,

...Once upon a time...

Those stories usually involve valiant princes who do battle with evil, fire-breathing dragons, damsels in distress who need someone to save them from some desperate situation, and other hair-raising dangers that a hero faces on each page of the story.

But, as we all know, the pages of the Bible are filled with a better story. A bigger story. It's better because this story is real.

And it didn't start 'once upon a time;' it started before there was time. In this story, there are real princes, real evil powers, and princesses that do, indeed, need saving. There are real powers, sometimes even invisible powers. There are real battles, and some people really live, and some people really die. But here's the crazy part: the whole story of the Bible is only one story. And you are a part of the story. You have been before time even began. Your name, if you believe Jesus is who He said He is, is written in the Book of Life. The best part of the story is that a loving, just, good, gracious, Father; a perfectly Holy Spirit; and the Son who purchases sinners like you and me from certain death are in total control of the story. They have been since before time began, and they will end the story with an ending that's better than anyone can even imagine – with everyone seeing how marvelously thrillingly perfect they are in every way. And you, right now, even though you aren't the most important part of the story – you are playing an important role in the story, whether you want to be or not.

So, buckle up for the journey. Hope in Christ Church is about to embark on a 31-week epic adventure together beginning in January. Each person in our church will be able to have a copy of the book “The Story.” The Story is an abridged chronological Bible,

that divides Scripture into 31 chapters. In this church-wide, 31-week journey through the book, our prayer is that we deepen our understanding of how our story fits into God's story. Each Sunday, Pastor Scott will be preaching on the portion of Scripture that we read in our homes during the week. Here are some of the details:

WHY: The Vitality Team, in looking at our recent Pulse Survey results, recognized that areas of weakness in our body include Biblical literacy and evangelism. We found this program to be something that meets both of those opportunities for growth head-on. How awesome to say that our whole congregation has read through the Bible! And we're hoping that you, as a congregation, find opportunities to make this a time of growth in your evangelistic efforts as well.

WHO: Everyone in our body is encouraged to participate in the weekly readings, but of course, there is no obligation. The chapters (one per week) are short enough that around 5-10 minutes per day will be enough to keep up. Not only do we hope all of our current church family participates, but the Vitality Team hopes that you'll use this a great excuse to invite some of your friends, neighbors, and coworkers to church! Ask your acquaintances if reading through the Bible happens to be on their bucket list. Ask if they'd consider making it a new year's resolution. Find out if your non-churched friends are curious about how all of the stories in the Bible fit into one cohesive story, from start to finish. Many churches who we've talked to and heard from have said that attendance goes up because people are drawn to the narrative of the Bible's single storyline. Be in prayer now, already, and ask God to lay on your heart those folks who He's preparing already to hear the Good News that's all about Jesus.

WHEN: Kickoff will be January 2018. We'll ask you to start reading or listening to chapter 1 of The Story, which is only about a dozen pages long, on Monday, January 1st. Pastor Scott, Lord willing, will preach on this section of Scripture on the first Sunday of the new year, January 7th. We plan to skip a week or so for Easter, and the 31-week series will carry us through till August.

WHERE: Not only will The Story be a part of Sunday mornings at church, your weekly chapter readings at home, and even listened to in your car, but we also plan to dig a little deeper during the adult Sunday School hour (thanks for leading this, Herm!), and we'd encourage you to consider making it the topic for your small group as well.

HOW: Your elders will be coming to you over the next couple of weeks to find out which version of *The Story* you prefer. Audio CDs are also available, and the *You Version Bible App* has it available at no cost on your digital device as the 217-day (31 week) reading plan called '*Engaging God's Story*.' You'll receive your copy in mid-December.

We look forward to seeing how God more closely aligns our hearts with His heart as we make this journey together!

Preaching Series

11/5	Antichrists, 1 John 2:18-27
11/12	Battling Sin by Abiding in Christ, 1 John 2:28-3:10
11/19	What's Your Spiritual Paternity? 1 John 3:11-24
11/26	Cultivating Spiritual Discernment 1 John 4:1-6

Greeters Schedule

11/5	Lisa Oppenhuizen, Helen Bowman
11/12	Don & Elaine Snapper
11/19	Jay & Avis Kaemingk
11/26	Del & Pat Bosman

Cookie Schedule

11/5	None needed
11/12	Alice Brakke, Tricia Bravener
11/19	Elaine Brouwer, Lisa DeSalvo
11/26	Denise Doezeema, Faye Hop

Serving Assistants

11/5	Abee, Chantel, Kylie
11/12	Clara, Amber, Faith
11/19	Caleb, Mattea, Amariah
11/26	Maggie, Zeke, Michal

Prayer Room

11/5	Jen Roberts
11/12	Ev Kooistra
11/19	Terry Vander Woude
11/26	Herm Laninga

Offering Schedule

11/5	Kingdom Advancement Fund
11/12	Kingdom Advancement Fund
11/19	Outreach Fund
11/26	Kingdom Advancement Fund

Ushering Schedule

11/5	Deloris Perry, Elaine Snapper
11/12	Don Knutson, Ken Wick
11/19	Len Vander Woude, Lou Kooistra
11/26	Joe Pruitt, Helen Bowman

Children & Worship

11/5	Bekah Roberts, Ali Laninga
11/12	Jen Roberts, Amber
11/19	Dan Obbink, Kylie
11/26	Diane Button, Mattea

Sunday School Schedule

11/5	Jolene Skovron, Ida Richards
11/12	Jolene Skovron, Ida Richards
11/19	Jolene Skovron, Ida Richards
11/26	Jolene Skovron, Ida Richards

**Not Able
to Serve When
Scheduled?**

*Please call someone
on the list and make
a plan to trade dates.
Thank you for your
help!*





November 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9:45 Women's Bible Study 7pm Elders Deacons	2 6:30am Men's Support 7pm Men's Bible Study, Praise Team	3	4 10am-3:30pm ActsNow Conference
5 9:30 Worship & Communion 11:00 Sunday School 6:00 TAG	6 6pm GEMS	7	8 9:45 Women's Bible Study 7pm Council	9 6:30am Men's Support 7pm Men's Bible Study, Praise Team	10	11
12 9:30 Worship 11:00 Sunday School 4:30 Jesus Gathering	13 7pm Friendship Class	14 6:30pm Boer's Bible Study	15 9:45 Women's Bible Study	16 6:30am Men's Support 7pm Men's Bible Study, Praise Team	17	18
19 9:30 Worship 11:00 Congregational Meeting	20 6pm GEMS	21 "Heartbeat" Newsletter Deadline	22 9:45 Women's Bible Study	23 9:30am Thanksgiving Service	24	25
26 9:30 Worship 11:00 Sunday School 4:30 Roberts Group	27 7pm Friendship Class	28 6:30pm Boer's Bible Study	29 9:45 Women's Bible Study 7pm Worship planning team	30 6:30am Men's Support 7pm Men's Bible Study, Praise Team		

Happy Birthday!

2 Nathan Boer
3 Evelyn Kooistra
5 Marilyn Kaiser
8 Dave DeSalvo
11 Christine Speyer

11 Zeke Roberts
13 Lou Kooistra
14 Mitch Senti
16 Grace Roberts
17 Karen Smith

18 Clara Skovron
20 Deloris Perry
21 Mike Button
21 Amber Obbink
28 Elisha Senti

Global Perspective and Engagement

By Don Recker

"Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all peoples!" Psalm 96:3

"...You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Let's focus briefly on one of the ten "Healthy, Missional Markers" on the Vitality journey to which we've committed ourselves as a congregation: "Global Perspective and Engagement."

One doesn't have to argue the reality of global perspective afforded by the 24/7 saturation-electronic-media. Tune in to any electronic source – internet, tv, radio – and you'll be alerted to the latest information from the ends of the earth, especially the bad news! Often, global information is featured more prominently than is regional and local information. It is increasingly difficult to find information on what's happening in Bellingham and Whatcom county while information from far away countries gets spot-light focus. Our media-oriented times have done much to shape and sharpen our global perspective.

For all the global perspective we have acquired, global engagement still seems beyond the everyday world reality of individuals and a small Christian congregation. But just as global perspective is part of our everyday world as individuals and a congregation, so too should be global engagement; given the fact that the resource which will change-the-world has been given us by the Holy Spirit: proclamation and teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I want to point us to a half-dozen of the many Christian ministries that, with our support, are being used of the Lord for global impact and then point to three ways in which our support of these kinds of ministries is of vital benefit to our faithful use of resources entrusted us, the growth of the Kingdom and Church, and Christ's miracle-transformation of individuals and communities around the globe...

First, three ministries dear to the heart of our denomination:

Back to God Ministries International, supported through HICC's "Ministry Shares" contributions. Daily short-wave Christian preaching and teaching in nine languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, & Spanish.

Resonant Global Missions, also supported through HICC's "Ministry Shares" contributions. Upwards of 150 field missionaries in 30+ countries: Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Kenya, So. Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Nepal, New Guinea, Philippines, Belize, Dom. Rep., Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Bangladesh, Cambodia,

Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Romania.

World Renew, International CRC Diaconal ministry funded by offerings & donations apart from CRC "Ministry Shares." World Renew's "Disaster Relief Services" coordinates short term team efforts in areas hit by natural disasters in which volunteer crews comprised of about 20 people give up to 3-4 weeks' time/labor in the immediate aftermath of tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and fires as well as needed work farther along in the restoration process.

Three global mission endeavors close to Hope in Christ Church's missional heart:

Project 92 - Based on Isaiah 9:2 – "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." Training and support of indigenous missionaries to unreached people-groups in: India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, & Nepal.

Kids' Town International -Ministry to abandoned children in Romania, India & Nepal

International Christian Response – Christian mission in areas where western missionaries cannot openly conduct ministry.

How can we support these and other Christian global missions?

1. *Regular Prayer Support*
2. *Regular Financial Support*
3. *Occasional Short-term Mission Team Volunteer!*

Contact information to expand support you can give:

Project 92

8769 Vinup Rd
Lynden, WA 98264
www.project92.net

Kids' Town International

119 N Commercial St # 165
Bellingham WA 98225
www.facebook.com/KidstownIntl

International Christian Response

P.O. Box 611
Lynden WA 98264
www.christianresponse.org

Back to God Ministries International:

6555 West College Dr
Palos Heights, IL 60463
info@BackToGod.net

Resonate Global Missions

1700 28th St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407
www.crwmm.org

World Renew

1700 28th St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407
www.worldrenew.net
info@worldrenew.net

Deacon's Digest

By Rockelle Ruiter

Thank you to all who donated to Interfaith's Winter Warmth Coat drive. Coats and other cold weather items were distributed throughout Whatcom County during the month of October.

Thank you also for your generous donations to the Educational Building remodel. As of October 4, \$7371 was received toward the project.

Please plan on attending the congregational meeting on Sunday, November 19 after church during the Sunday School hour.

Giving in September 2017

	<u>Sept</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$ 4,600	\$ 40,772
General Fund Offerings	\$19,846	\$161,108
Rent / Utilities Income	1,589	21,235
Total Undesignated Income	21,435	182,343
General Fund Expenses	(16,240)	(181,866)
Income Over(Under) Expenses	\$ 5,195	\$ 478
Total 2017 budget, including ministry quotas		\$ 222,173
Year-to-Date Budget for 10 months		\$ 185,144
Total Undesignated Income		182,343
Income Over (Under) Budget		\$ (2,801)

Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 17,500

Cascade Connections has partnered with Haggen Food and Pharmacy and KISM for the Third Annual Hamster Ball on Friday, November 17, 2017.

The Hamster's Ball



Cascade Connection's mission is to empower individuals with disabilities to enhance their

quality of life. The Hamster's Ball will raise funds to assist people with disabilities to both live and work in our community. Donations to be auctioned off are greatly appreciated. For more information, call 360-714-9355 Ext. 110 or visit HamsterEvents@ccsite.org

2017 Holiday Bazaar

Mark your calendar for Hope in Christ's annual Holiday Bazaar on November 17 and 18. Friday hours are 4-8 and Saturday from 9-5. Make a dent in your Christmas shopping with beautiful hand-made goods of all sorts and great products from a variety of vendors. Take your knives along to be sharpened by Ken as you browse. Chili and hot dogs, along with coffee, hot cider, and cookies, will be available.

If you are able to donate items for the bake sale and/or are willing to work at the sale for a few hours, please sign up in the foyer or contact Ruth Stadt. Tables are still available if you have items you would like to sell. Contact Rockelle Ruiter to reserve a table, or pick up a form from Marjie in the church office during office hours.

Items of Interest from October's Council Meeting

By Joe Pruitt

Members Present: Pastor Scott Roberts, Jerry Hop, Joe Pruitt, Rockelle Ruiter, Avis Kaemingk, Michael Boer, Terry Vander Woude, Don Recker

Joshua Lee was a guest at the meeting, with discussion regarding evangelism to international students. Joshua talked about his evangelism experiences and desire to reach out to Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College and Bellingham Technical College, and plans to pass out gospel tracts.

Vitality Renewal Process: The Strategic Ministries Planning Team (SMPT) will be presenting "The Story" Congregational Bible reading endeavor to the congregation. Books are on display in church foyer.

Discussion of ministry shares and decision: It was moved and seconded that Hope in Christ Church pays the full ministry share of \$17,500.00.

Family promise of Whatcom County: Hope in Christ Church intends to participate as a support church. Plans are in process for forming a team.

Portables: Providence Christian School is interested in taking the three- room portable.



Children's Christmas Program

The Hope in Christ Church Children's Christmas Program,

"Emmanuel—God with Us,"

will be held on December 17th.

Dress rehearsal will be Saturday, December 16th from 10:00-11:30.