

The Monthly Heartbeat

The Hope in Christ Church Newsletter

May 2018 Issue

When Things Go Wrong...

By Pastor Scott

Your head hit the pillow and everything was peaceful... but you awoke to find that the kids were sick, the dog was weird and everything was going wrong! What happened?! Is that just normal life? Or is there more going on behind what the eyes perceive?

Your mind was on everyday things...but then that unwanted thought came back, the one that could be called vile, evil, or destructive. Where did it come from? What should you do? Ignore it? Try to think of something else? Is it time to seek a counselor, or consider a spiritual intervention?

You may have experienced situations like these, and they confront people often. Sometimes, the flood of bad things seems to come one after another; other times a single event happens and nothing more. When things go wrong in life, we normally ascribe a cause to them. Often, we do this subconsciously. The cause that we ascribe to our troubles affects the kind of solution we seek to restore order. For instance, when the kids are sick, our natural and first impulse is to assume a bacteria or virus is the cause. The solution that follows that assumption is either quarantined rest, or a medical solution based on biochemistry such as antibiotics, steroids, etc.

But is this always the wisest course of action? Are there other reasons why sickness may happen, or for that matter, why troubles come our way? There are at least four reasons given in the scriptures for why troubles come our way. Each of these causes would naturally require a different solution. It is the call of the Christian and the church community to help discern the reasons behind the troubles so that the right intervention(s) can be used. So, what are the reasons behind the troubles we experience?

First, troubles come upon us because of our own personal sin. In looking at the opening pages of Genesis we find

that the world was good and without suffering, death and hardship. It was when Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord and ate from the forbidden tree, that a myriad of troubles entered the world – death, painful toil, broken relationships, sickness. We know this intuitively, for when the alcoholic gets liver cirrhosis, we understand that his suffering is directly the result of his prior actions. There is a cause and effect relationship which can't be changed. Many such troubles in our life are like this. The solution is that repentance is needed, although repentance may not bring the removal or reversal of the suffering.

Second and closely related, are the troubles that come as a result of the sin of others. Adam and Eve's children inherited a broken world full of sin and sinners. Adam and Eve and Abel suffered because of Cain's anger. The righteous in Israel suffered and endured wars, sieges and exiles because of their unrighteous kings. When our suffering is the result of another person's sin, our greatest hope for normalcy is that the person would repent and chart a new course of action. Hence, we pray and confront others, calling them to repentance.

Third, troubles come to us because we live in a fallen world which groans. Creation is in bondage and this bondage brings pain and suffering to the lives of others. Romans 8:19-21 tells us that "creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in the hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption..." This futility, this corruption, is seen every time a hurricane destroys an island, or a landslide buries a village, or sickness strikes. These troubles are the normal part of living in a fallen world. The solution may lie in learning to engineer and control our world so that we can limit the influence of creation's broken nature.

Up to this point, you have probably followed and even agreed with the reasons that trouble comes. Intuitively, people know these things. And so, we make snap, subcon-

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scious decisions that affect the courses of action we take to deal with the troubles that come our way. But there is a fourth reason why troubles come, and this reason clouds the other three and makes discernment necessary but difficult.

In the opening words of Job, Satan comes to God and asks permission to test Job. As this testing progresses, Satan uses the forces of nature, (our third reason for trouble), and the sin of others, (our second reason for trouble) to wreak havoc on Job's life. Fire falls from heaven, a strong wind destroys a house, marauders come from the east. In the second phase of the test, the illness Job suffers is not only caused by a virus or bacteria, it is demonically inspired. Job 2:7 says that "Satan...struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head." And this isn't the only place in the Bible that demonic influence is the reason for physical or mental suffering; the gospels are full of stories like this. The solution Jesus models for healing these kinds of troubles is prayer and fasting. To seek medical help when the root cause is spiritual oppression and attack will not bring healing, it will merely mask the presence of the demonic.

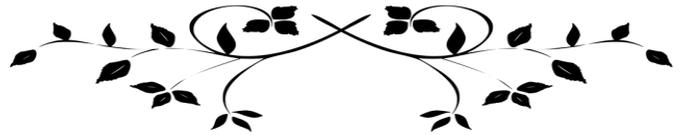
So, what is one to do when things go wrong and trouble comes? Please, don't misinterpret me, I do not believe a demon lies behind every difficulty and hardship we face. The advice I give is not meant to imply that. But since we grew up and live in a world that has largely discounted this fourth reason, it behooves us to provide a prominence of place to it once again and relearn how to properly discern. It is with that caveat that I recommend the following course of action when things go wrong:

1. Pray the blood of Jesus over your life and remind the spiritual world that they have been vanquished at the cross and they no longer have the right to trouble the people of God. In my own life, I have seen troubles fall away, sicknesses cease and persistent poor thoughts and enticements to sin conquered by speaking truth to the spiritual world. (Matthew 12:28-29)
2. If the above doesn't solve the problem, or provides only partial relief, then invite the elders to come, pray, and discern with you what is happening. (James 5:13-15)
3. Carefully reflect on your own life and take stock of areas where repentance is needed. Confess these with another brother or sister and ask for their prayers. (James 5:16)
4. Seek medical and/or psychological interventions.

Each of these steps can be approached simultaneously and do not necessarily preclude one another. Remember we live in a mysterious world, according to the Scriptures, where the forces of good and evil are arrayed against the people of God, and battles are being fought

not only in the heavenly realms but also in our physical world. The casualties and the weapons used will therefore be both physical and spiritual.

So, the next time things go wrong and trouble comes your way, take a step back and consider implementing the four steps above. The testimony of the Church is that you will be blessed for doing it.



Deacons Digest

By Rockelle Ruitter

The Deacons would like to contribute an item on behalf of our church to the Lighthouse Mission's fundraiser auction coming up next month. Is there a person or group interested in contributing something to the auction? Ideas include a themed basket (i.e. baking, cooking, gardening, book lover, coffee or tea, movie night, or come up with your own!), donating a handmade item such as a quilt, woodcraft, or artwork, or perhaps even a weekend or week-long get-away. If you have an item you are willing to donate or would like to put a basket together, please contact Terry Vander Woude or Rockelle Ruitter.

Items of Interest from May's Council Meeting

By Joe Pruitt

- 1) Discussion of the purpose of Council:
 - a. What do we exist to do?
 - b. How do we promote and encourage leadership/council service?
- 2) Building and Grounds Maintenance Report: A couple of trees were removed; some pruned. Windows were washed on upper levels of buildings.
- 3) Strategic Planning Team: Will talk about signage during upcoming potluck, (Apr 29).
- 4) Agreed to continue having someone monitor the foyer during Sunday worship service.
- 5) TAG will meet May and June and break for the summer. Will decide whether or not to continue in the fall.

GETTING TO KNOW OUR CHURCH FAMILY

By Elaine Snapper

This month I'm featuring Nancy and Bruce Cook who have been worshipping with us the past two years. They moved to Bellingham in August 2016, and purchased a brand new three-bedroom house in the Barkley neighborhood.

Nancy grew up in Jacksonville, Illinois, which is in central Illinois, and after graduation from high school she attended the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign. This was a large college with approximately 50,000 students. She majored in Home Economics Education and worked for the Cooperative Extension Service as a clothing and textiles expert for five years. She had a newspaper column called "Just Ask Me" and she was the "Ann Landers" of Home Economics. She obtained her Masters in Adult Education and taught classes. It was at this point in her life when she met Bruce, who was attending the same university. He was a teaching assistant and was obtaining his Ph.D in chemistry. Nancy's sister was one of Bruce's students. When Bruce and Nancy started dating, and he was invited to her parents' home for dinner, he looked up the grade he had given Nancy's sister for chemistry. He noted it was a "C". Fortunately, she was happy with a "C"; otherwise he might not have been in the good graces of Nancy's parents.

Bruce was born in Grand Rapids and graduated from Ottawa Hills High School in Grand Rapids. He went to do his undergraduate at Hope College in Holland Michigan (Reformed Church of America). He majored in chemistry and also had twelve hours in Religious History.

Bruce's grandfather changed his last name from Pannekoek, which means pancake in Dutch, to Cook. He was from the village of Hornhuizen in the province of Groningen in the Netherlands. He didn't care much for the Netherlands as work was hard and opportunities were limited for many, so he changed his Dutch name to the name of Cook when he lived in America.

Bruce and Nancy were married in 1987, and they moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he got a job at Exxon Oil Company. Bruce worked in new technology for making fuels like gasoline and diesel. Two sons were born to them while they lived in Louisiana. Andrew, their oldest son, lives in Naperville, Illinois, where he is a human resources administrator working in downtown Chicago. He is active in a small church plant in Naperville. Their second son, Timothy, will be going to grad school at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and speaks French and Arabic. He is involved in foreign policy work. Neither son is married yet, so there are no grandchildren, but they are optimistic.

Exxon transferred Bruce to work at Exxon Corporate Research Center in New Jersey, so the couple moved to western New Jersey near the Delaware River. Bruce later changed jobs and was employed with BP in Naperville, Illinois where he was to manage BP's refining technology team, but after a time he was ready for a change and they moved to this area so that he could be the technical manager at the BP Refinery in Blaine. Bruce has had the opportunity to travel frequently with the job over the years. He just returned from the Netherlands.

After Bruce and Nancy raised their kids, Nancy taught special needs kids for seven years in schools in both New Jersey and Naperville, Illinois.

Nancy's father is 91 years of age, and he is still driving in Naperville, Illinois. He will drive to North Carolina this year in his brand new Subaru, so he is in great shape.

Bruce and Nancy like to do a lot of hiking. They aren't really fond of the rain, but they don't let it stop them from touring various places like the San Juan Islands and Victoria, and other places around Western Washington. Their sons come up to visit and they go on excursions. Bruce had been a Boy Scout leader for ten years when Andrew was growing up. Bruce also enjoys model railroading and he has been to the Lynden train show. They both enjoy walking in Lynden, where the terrain is flat. Nancy is quite a quilter. Bruce claims she is very talented, and she is also a good seamstress. She sewed her own wedding dress.

Both Bruce and Nancy were elders in the Presbyterian Church in New Jersey, although not at the same time. They said the selection of elders was not done by lot.

Another interesting fact about Bruce is that he has 45 patents to his name, so he is quite an inventor, or possibly you could consider him a chemist. He has invented processes to take sulfur out of gasoline and has developed methods to make diesel fuel run better for engines.

Bruce is quite the historian. He is really interested in history and his family tree.

If you haven't officially met Bruce and Nancy, introduce yourselves. They are an interesting couple. They are relatives to Ruth Stadt; Bruce and Ruth are first cousins through Ruth's father and Bruce's mother.



May Sermon Series

6th Only God Can Bring Life to the Dead

Ezekiel 37:1-4 The Story Ch. 17

13th Faithful in Times of Exile and Persecution

Daniel 1-7 The Story Ch. 18

20th Providence, Pagans, and the Worship of

God Ezra 1 The Story Ch. 19

27th God Will Protect His People

Esther The Story Ch. 20

Giving in March 2018

	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$ 3,719	\$ 12,604
General Fund Offerings	\$16,148	\$ 77,445
Rent / Utilities Income	<u>3,788</u>	<u>9,535</u>
Total Undesignated Income	19,936	86,980
General Fund Expenses	<u>(16,553)</u>	<u>(70,846)</u>
Income Over(Under) Expenses	<u>\$ 3,383</u>	<u>\$ 16,134</u>
Total 2018 budget, including ministry quotas		\$ 224,758
Year-to-Date Budget for 4 months		\$ 74,919
Total Undesignated Income		86,980
Income Over (Under) Budget		<u>\$ 12,060</u>

Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 17,500

Whatcom Community News

WHAT'S NEW

VEHICLES NEEDED FOR NEW WAY FAMILIES: New Way Ministries continues to be in need of reliable vehicles to be used by its residents for travel to work, school, appointments, errands and helping families move toward greater independence. To donate a vehicle, please call Don Kok at (360) 354-4673 or Suzanne Olson at (360) 354-9930. A contribution receipt will be provided.

CANADIAN ROCKIES BUS TOUR: Join other Christian seniors on a visit to the best of Canada's national parks. The tour leaves Lynden on July 10 and returns July 17. Visit the majestic mountain peaks of Glaciers, Yoho, Banff, and Jasper as you enjoy God's beautiful creation along the way from the comfort of a luxury coach. For more information, e-mail Mejeur@gotuliptours.com, call Starla Mulder at (360) 483-9748 or visit www.gotuliptours.com.

LEARN TO CARE FOR THOSE WITH DEMENTIA: Jan Higman and Leslie Jackson from the Alzheimer Society of Washington will educate caregivers on different types of dementia at a talk on Tuesday, May 8, from 2:30 to 4 p.m. at the Northwest Adult Day Health and Wellness Center, 851 Aaron Drive, Lynden. Learn about the challenging behavior of those with dementia and tips and guidelines to manage them. The Community Family Caregiver Support Group meets in Lynden the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month (2:30-4 p.m.), and at Christ the King Church in Bellingham the third Tuesday of the month (1:30-3 p.m.). For more information, call (360) 306-3031 or visit nwadulthoodhealth.com.

CRC NEWS

WORLD RENEW'S GLOBAL VOLUNTEERS: Are you a compassionate, respectful, and adaptable person who would like to volunteer overseas with others who have common interests? With World Renew's Global Volunteer Program, you will get an authentic cultural experience and learn about the deep history and traditions that define the life of an international community. To find out more, email Andrew at globalvolunteer@worldrenew.net.

FOLLOW PAUL'S TRIPS IN GREECE: Travel by motor coach (8 days) and cruise ship (3 days) to sites connected with Paul's second and third missionary journeys, as well as visit other major sites of biblical, archaeological, and cultural interest. Jeff Weima, professor at Calvin Theological Seminary and a leading Pauline scholar, hosts this inspirational tour that runs from Oct. 4 to 16. For more information, contact Weima at (616) 328-3110 or weimje@calvinseminary.edu.



May 2018



Greeters Schedule

- 6 Elaine & Don Snapper
- 13 Don & Tena Vanderpol
- 20 Joe Pruitt, Helen Bowman
- 27 Barb & Joe Zylstra

Cookie Schedule

- 6 Mona Reardon, Darlys Recker
- 13 Ida Richards, Jen Roberts
- 20 Terry VanderWoude, Megan Speyer
- 27 Joanne Schultz, Jolene Skovron

Serving Assistants

- 6 Faith, Micah, AnaMaria
- 13 Amariah, Mattea, Kylie
- 20 Maggie, Grace, Abee
- 27 Clara, Brenna, Caleb

Prayer Room

- 6 Christine Speyer
- 13 Ali Laninga
- 20 Del Bosman
- 27 Lou Kooistra

Offering Schedule

- 6 Kingdom Advancement
- 13 Kingdom Advancement
- 20 Outreach
- 27 Kingdom Advancement

Ushering Schedule

- 6 Lou Kooistra, Joe Pruitt
- 13 Helen Bowman, Bud Brouwer
- 20 Deloris Perry, Elaine Snapper
- 27 Len VanderWoude, Don Knutson

Children & Worship

- 6 Marjie Herold, Mairi
- 13 Bekah Roberts, Kylie
- 20 Diane Button, Ali Laninga
- 27 Diane Button

Sunday School Schedule

- 6 Darlys Recker, Diane Button
- 13 Darlys Recker, Diane Button
- 20 Darlys Recker, Melissa Koning
- 27 Darlys Recker, Melissa Koning

**Not Able to Serve When
Scheduled?**

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

May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6:00 PM Richard's Bible Study	2 9:45 Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM Elders, Deacons	3 6:30 AM Men's Group NOON: Prayer 7:00 PM Men's Study, Praise Team	4	5
6 8:00 AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship Communion 11:00 AM Sunday School 6:00 PM T.A.G.	7 6:00 PM GEMS	8 6:30 PM Boer's Bible Study	9 9:45 Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM Council	10 6:30 AM Men's Group 7:00 PM Men's Study, Praise Team	11	12
13 8:00 Prayer 9:30 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School 4:30 PM Roberts Group, Jesus Gathering	14 7:00 PM Friendship Party	15 6:00 PM Richard's Bible Study	16 9:45 Women's Bible Study	17 6:30 AM Men's Group 7:00 PM Men's Study, Praise Team	18	19 Garage Sale 8AM—2 PM
20 8:00 AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School 6:30 PM Prayer Service	21 6:00 PM GEMS	22 6:30 PM Boer's Bible Study	23 9:45 Women's Bible Study 7:00PM Worship Planning	24 6:30 AM Men's Group 7:00 PM Men's Study, Praise Team	25	26
27 8:00AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship 11:00 AM Sunday School 4:30 PM Roberts Group	28	29	30 9:45 Women's Bible Study	31 6:30 AM Men's Group 7:00 PM Men's Study, Praise Team		

Happy Birthday !

1 David Richards
6 Junior Johnson
9 Elaine Snapper

18 Peter Senti
19 Lanny Speyer
24 Megan Speyer
31 Elaine Barringer