

# *The Monthly Heartbeat*

## **The Hope in Christ Church Newsletter**

February 2019 Issue

### **Looking More Like Jesus, Step by Step**

By Pastor Scott



Have you ever wanted to look more like Jesus, but didn't know where to begin? Have you ever talked with a friend who was seeking advice about how to change an aspect of their character, but were unsure of what to tell

them? This month, we will look briefly at the doctrine of **progressive sanctification** and outline a few steps to consider when seeking to put on the character of Christ.

It is good to define our terms. Exactly what are we talking about? **Sanctification is the process of being made more and more into the likeness of Christ.** It is about putting to death old habits that were formed by sinfulness, and instead, living more and more as the new person that you were created to be in Christ. But it is unlike justification and glorification, which take place in an instant. Sanctification is a process - a lifelong process of fighting against the old ways and putting on the new ways. It is a slow process at some points, and a fast one at others. In an instant God can remove sinful longings, and sometimes he does. But frequently, he calls us to "a long obedience in the same direction," as Eugene Peterson once put it.

It is important to note that sanctification requires a living relationship with Christ. It is his Spirit working in cooperation with our mind, will, body, emotions and desires that brings forth transformation. Without the Spirit working, what is left is simply self-effort, which always falls short and disappoints.

What steps can we take in cooperation with the Spirit to

see the character of Christ formed in our lives and the lives of others? To start, we must remember that change begins in the heart. Proverbs 4:23 says everything we do flows from the heart. Luke 6:44-45 remind us that the fruit we bear in life is a result of what we treasure in our heart. **Therefore, one must reflect upon his/her heart and pray for God to search it; to bring forth the dross and replace it with purity and godliness.**

As we pray and examine our hearts, we are likely to find that there are many areas needing transformation. Likely it will involve some combination of all these areas: words; behavior; thoughts; motivations; and beliefs we have about God, ourselves and the world. (See Eph 4:25-32, Col 3:1-17, Phil 4:8-9, James 4:1-2).

**Once the specific sinful areas are recognized, then we must come to God in repentance. This means we admit to the Lord the faulty areas of our lives.** We don't try to hide them or explain them away. We tell God that we see these broken shards in our life and we admit that this is not what God wants for us. Next comes the tricky part. Are we willing to admit that we don't want these broken areas in our lives any longer? Many people can admit that they are broken, but they like their brokenness. They don't want to give it up. But for real change to come, we must be willing to give up illness to gain health. If we are ready, then we invite God to come and remove the trash and replace it with beauty. We ask God to replace the broken areas with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). If we aren't ready to give up the nuclear waste that is poisoning our witness, then we must admit that to God and beg Him to give us his perception of our situation.

**Finally, we must take concrete steps to replace the old ways with new ways.** The *Spiritual Disciplines*\* are excellent ways of working with God to replace evil for good in our lives. If, for instance, our struggle is greed or selfishness, then the discipline of generosity may be what is needed. We could begin by studying the Word to see what God says about greed and generosity. As we learn, our

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minds will be transformed. Next, we would plan ways to be generous and deny ourselves in the process. Maybe we could choose to meet the need of another person, or volunteer at a local ministry, or find a similar task that would slowly begin replacing the greediness in our life. This is a transformation of our actions. All along the way, we ought to praise God and thank Him for the growth He is working in and through us.

**These steps: examining the heart; confession and repentance; and learning to live and think anew, will bring about change and transformation in our character to become more like Jesus.** These are the steps to sanctification that have most often been practiced in the history of the church.

\*If you would like some resources on the Spiritual Disciplines, consider one of these works:

- Calhoun's Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*
- Foster's Celebration of Discipline (or his other works)*
- Ruth Haley Barton's Sacred Rhythms*

## Family Promise of Whatcom County Update

Dear Hope in Christ Family,

As we enter a new year with hope and promise we are reminded often by various media sources that many in our community do not share in our hopes and promises due to homelessness! The year ended with a very busy and full schedule. There is space for 14 guests in the program and it was filled to capacity and beyond the past couple of months!

Our first year being involved with Family Promise saw many of our members volunteer to fill the various roles required to make this program a success in its first year in Whatcom County. In fact, we learned that several guests have successfully move on to homes and often better jobs, but there is always a waiting list of new families applying to enter the program.

This year we have been asked to join our Host Church, First Christian Church, to support them in hosting our Family Promise guests for the following weeks:

- March 10 – 17
- May 26 – June 2
- September 15 – 22
- December 8 – 15

If you have been trained and would like to participate, please mark your calendar and let us know which weeks and roles (even tentatively) will work for you. If you have not been trained but would like to be involved, let us know so we can arrange training.

Sincerely,

Ali Laninga, Coordinator

Lorraine Brouwer and Herman Laninga, Assistants

## Northwest Hispanic Ministry Report for January 2019

By Joe Strong

He sat across from me in the Burger King devouring the chicken sandwich that I had bought him, with his hoodie pulled tightly around his head. Jesús had been calling several members of our Amor Viviente Church asking for money during the week. He told me that the Department of Corrections had a warrant out for him. Are you using? I asked. "Yes." Jesús is living in a little pup tent in the bushes, in the rain and cold, trying to avoid detection somewhere in Bellingham. "Where would you like to be in 5 years, my friend?" Tears filled his eyes and he didn't say a word. I prayed with him, told him that our church would help him with food and clothes but no money.

The mother was exhausted from crying. Her son had been hit by a car on New Year's Eve. The car had run out of gas on the freeway and when he got out of the car, wham, dead. Maria, a member of our church, had called me up to see if our church would help with the funeral expenses. Maria is like the scout who finds good causes for the money we collect every Sunday. She went with me to the house of the bereaved family. This family belongs to another Christian church. All the women of this church wore dresses that were ankle-length and all had their hair up in a bun. After greeting everybody, Maria sat down with the weeping mother and I looked around and found a young man who said he was the brother of the deceased. Ruben slowly opened up to me and told me that he had just gotten back from a 3 1/2 year spell in prison. I spoke and prayed with Ruben before praying with the mother. Upon leaving the house, one of the church ladies came outside and told me not to trust this man named Ruben because he had been in prison and had used drugs. I thank God that many of the people I work with are just like Ruben. Jesus didn't come for those who are healthy...

The Vida Nueva and Amor Viviente churches are doing will. We had a very good holiday season. Our Bridges of Hope house is once more filling up and the Whatcom County Jail Ministry is beyond imagination. So many men are coming to Jesus. All of the correction officers and nearly all the prisoners know me.

Thank you to Bargains Galore for donating many bags of clothing to the jail. Thank you for your prayers and financial support. A banquet showcasing this ministry will take place this spring. So many lives are touched.

# Getting to Know Our Church Family

## By Elaine Snapper

Alice Brakke was born in Mt. Vernon at the Skagit Valley Hospital. She has an older brother, Pete, who is two years older than she, and he resides in Lynden. Their parents grew up in Holland and emigrated to the United States. Her father didn't know any English, but he gleaned a lot while working for a farmer.

The family moved to Lynden in 1955 when her father purchased a farm in the area. He also sold various kinds of insurance, including life insurance. My husband was one of Bernie Steiger's customers; and just after Don and Nancy were married, they bought a plan of insurance for their family. The plan they purchased covered "twin insurance"; and although they didn't anticipate having twins, they purchased that plan. They had two single births, and then surprisingly enough, when his first wife was giving birth to their third child, they discovered there was another child in the womb. The "twin insurance" they purchased paid off, and there was no charge for the birth of the second child. What a bargain! Their hospital bill was only \$600. So, Don holds a warm spot in his heart for Alice's father, Bernie. The company quit offering that plan. Possibly Don broke the company on that one! Anyway, back to Alice.

Alice attended Ebenezer, and interestingly enough, she had my father's cousin, Miss Margaret De Valois, as her first grade teacher. "Miss Margaret," as she was called, taught school at Ebenezer for 50 years. After completing eighth grade at Ebenezer, Alice continued her education at Lynden Christian and graduated from high school in 1972.

Alice was interested in a nursing career, and she attended Deaconess School of Nursing in Spokane, graduating in 1975. It was a three-year program; and following her graduation there, she attended Seattle Pacific for liberal arts, where she attained her degree in nursing. She graduated from Seattle Pacific in 1979 and worked one year at the Alderwood Convalescent Center in Bellingham. She had a varied nursing career, working at several different places. She was employed by St. Joseph's Hospital for 20 years. Next, she worked at Madrona Medical for about six months and at Bellingham Asthma and Allergy Clinic for about the same length of time. She was employed by Parkway Surgery for about three years, where she worked for Drs. Orville and Keith Vander

Griend, a father and son team, and also Dr. Wreggit. Following that she worked for the Bellingham Surgery Center for seven years. After being laid off, she took on home care jobs for various patients, including our own Jessie Figenbaum.

Alice married her husband, Len, in 1999, at Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Lynden on a snowy December day. Len, incidentally, was my "birthday twin." We were born on exactly the same day. I was there in attendance on that snowy day. Len and Alice were legally separated in 2009, and finally divorced in 2013.

Alice has always enjoyed traveling, and her parents celebrated their silver wedding anniversary by taking their children, Pete and Alice to Holland. They had a good time visiting family there. Alice signed up for a bicycle tour with the Bellingham Parks Dept. and she toured Europe. Some of the countries the group visited included Holland, Germany and England. She went on a medical mission trip to Honduras in 1985 with the St. Luke's Society. She also enjoyed three different cruises to Mexico, the Caribbean and Alaska. Alice was also active in the Bellingham Mountain Rescue team from 1986 – 1990.

Some of Alice's other hobbies include camping, fishing, sailing, and hiking. She loves mystery books, dinners out, and the list goes on. Alice and I became friends through a post high school group that we both attended. I often planned activities for the group, but on one occasion, Alice planned a campout for about ten of our friends near Mt. Baker. We slept in tents, cooked, and did some hiking. The campout ended when we had quite a rainstorm the second night, and two of the guys in one tent about froze. So, we broke camp and all headed for home.

In 2015 Alice took the course to become a parish nurse. Our church is very blessed to have such a caring and competent person taking on this job. She spends many hours as a support person for those with upcoming medical appointments or surgeries. I'm sure some people like Vicki Seim will affirm that Alice spent countless hours with her, to assist with medications and just being an encourager. Alice, we are very blessed you have you fill this need in our church. We appreciate you very much.



# Join Us!

Hope in Christ Church has many groups that meet regularly for service and fellowship. On the back page of the Sunday bulletin, you will find a list of people who are ready to help you find the group that is just right for you. Feel free to call and speak with any of them if you are looking for a place to connect and serve!

Following are descriptions of five areas of service that might be of interest to you: Cleaning Crew, Worship Team, GEMS, Friendship Class, and Sunday School

## Cleaning Crew

*By Don Recker*

A half dozen years ago, the retired-guys' coffee hour group – then meeting at Grace Café – came up with a plan to form a volunteer Janitorial

Crew to take on the weekly cleaning of the worship center and administration building. The deal was that the budget funds ear-marked for Janitorial be redirected to Debt Reduction.

A few years later, the major loan was paid off early. (A relatively little balance on HIC's no-interest classical loan-debt remains.) Once the debt was retired, the cleaning crew wasn't at all inclined to retire because over our years together, the crew had morphed from a temporary cost-cutting task into a fellowship group, no longer chore-focused, but finding our cohesiveness in the relationships formed.

Yes, we still perform a task: clean toilets, vacuum, empty trash, clean glass, mirrors, and door handles but our close interaction together is what has turned a task into a party. Our conversations on-the-job spill over into lunch in varied eateries.

Being retired guys, the life situations associated with that age-group have eroded our members – Bob Plecker, Dale Perry, Victor Johnson, Mark Ireland are no longer with us. More recently, health issues have sidelined Don Vanderpol and Doug Konn, leaving more-or-less regulars Clair Abee, Herm Laninga, Chris Pike, Jan Scholten, Ken Wick, Joe Zylstra, and Don Recker.

Come enjoy coffee and chatter with a dozen present and former HIC guys every-Wed. at 10 (Easy/Over near Trader Joe), then tag-along with the cleaning crew at church 11:15, usually finishing by noon.

You'll receive a warm welcome; we might even buy your lunch!



## Worship Team

*By Jerry Hop*

Has God stirred your heart with a desire to serve as part of the worship team at our church? If you have interest in singing or playing an instrument with one of our weekly teams, we'd love to find a place for you! We are especially looking for percussionists and guitarists.



If musical skill isn't your thing, maybe you have an interest in serving as part of the power point team or sound team. If you have a computer background, serving on the power point team might be a great way to help us. We also have folks willing to train interested persons on the sound board. Both of these roles are integral in helping our services flow with non-distracting excellence.

We try to coordinate a serving calendar for all worship team servants that satisfy people's desired commitment level. For interest in any of these openings, please talk with Jerry Hop (360) 734-9510 or Melissa Koning (360)870-3552.



*By Darlys Recker*

GEMS Girls Club meets the first and third Monday of the month, and an occasional 5th Monday. We start with Praise and Worship at 6:00 and end at 7:30 with a group prayer. From start to closing, our time is packed with lively discussions and activities to encourage and strengthen our relationship with our Creator and Savior and with one another. Visitors and volunteers are always welcome. We have 4 groups from grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-8. Our theme is "Be a Blessing" (1 Corinthians 9:8). There are opportunities to help with snacks, badges (such as knitting, crocheting), leading a lesson, helping with scripture memorization, leading praise and worship, or sit with us and pray for God's blessing on our time together.

## FRIENDSHIP MINISTRIES

*By Tanya Obbink*

The Friendship & Together Classes, bible studies for adults who have varying intellectual abilities, meet on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month from 7:00-8:15pm. We'd love to have you come see what this ministry is about: sharing God's love through His word and through relationship! Feel free to stop by any night we gather, without advance notice. While our evening has structure, it is also informal, so joining or leaving part way through a class would not cause a distraction. The two classes meet in different rooms and have different style lessons. However, we always end altogether with a snack & social time in the foyer for everyone to enjoy. Some areas this ministry that could use help are: 1. transportation of friends to/from class, 2. planning the "special" classes such as the Easter lesson, Christmas program, and service project, and 3. substitute mentors. If you prefer to let us know in advance that you'll be coming, please call or email before that Monday. For more information contact Tanya Obbink. home: 360-738-4718 or email: [friendship@hopeinchristchurch.org](mailto:friendship@hopeinchristchurch.org)

### Children's Sunday School

*By Diane Button*

There are four children's classes that meet on Sundays after the worship service. There is a class for 2nd & 3rd graders, 4th & 5th graders, 6th—9th graders, and "Children and Worship" for 3-5 year-olds.



"Children and Worship" teachers rotate Sundays, and Sunday School teachers have signed up for a 3 or 6-week teaching session. The sign-ups are done in the fall, when Diane looks for teachers to add to the schedule for the year.

Sunday school teachers are still needed for 3 different sessions this year. Would you be willing to teach one of these sessions?

1. March 31, April 7, and April 14
2. April 28, May 5, and May 12
3. May 19, May 26, and June 2

If you'd like to visit a classroom on a Sunday morning to see what it is like, please contact Diane, and she will arrange for you to visit for a few minutes. The teaching experience is rewarding, enables you to get to know the kids of the church, and it's fun! As Children's Ministry Coordinator, Diane would be happy to answer any questions you might have about being involved in Sunday school.

## February Birthdays

- 8 BRIAN KONING
- 8 JOANNE SCHULTZ
- 11 PHIL SKOVRON
- 13 ALEYA CUNNINGHAM
- 15 JESSIE FIGENBAUM
- 17 FAYE HOP
- 17 IDA RICHARDS
- 19 TANYA OBBINK
- 20 JOSIAH CUNNINGHAM
- 26 JEN ROBERTS
- 28 DOUG KONN



# Deacon's Digest

By Elaine Snapper

The deacons have prepared the year-end giving letters and have been distributing them to those in their district. If you have not received yours, contact your deacon.

The deacons are sponsoring a movie night on Fri., Feb. 22, at 7:00 p.m. at our church. The movie, which will be featured is "The Greatest Showman." It is a movie that is geared for children as well as adults. It is a story that celebrates diversity and the importance of embracing all kinds of people. The story is about the P.T. Barnum Circus, and there are lots of show-stopping songs. The deacons will be providing popcorn, M&M's, and beverages. Everyone is invited to attend.

Our church is continuing to bring chili and rolls each Wed. to the Fountain Community Church to serve approximately 40 women. Terry V. W. was just informed that the women would like a change in the menu, and people are invited to bring a crockpot of soup instead of chili if they choose to do so. We were scheduled to bring meals for three months, which would take us through the end of February.

The Discipleship House is up and running and men are moving in. Mitch Senti has informed us that they are in need of the following items. If you are able to meet any of their needs, contact Mitch at 360-392-0289. Here are the items they can use: hand soap, dish soap, dish washer pods, dish cleaning utensils, baking soda, Clorox wipes, hand towels, paper towels, a TV, internet, house phone, laundry detergent, laundry sheets, desk, toilet bowl cleaner, plunger and brush, broom, vacuum, mop, sponges, rags, rubber gloves, shower curtain, coat hangers, beds and mattresses, sheets, trash cans, trash bags, dry erase board, eggs and oatmeal, school supplies, notebooks, pens, journals, photocopier/printer.

Lisa DeSalvo has been working on collecting items for a basket for the Lighthouse Missions fundraiser and also for a basket for the auction of Interfaith.



# Items of Interest from January's Council Meeting

By Joe Pruitt

- ⇒ Building and Grounds Maintenance Team reported that trees were cut down, and carpets have been cleaned.
- ⇒ Vitality Team is thinking of ideas for ways to communicate or share our faith with the community, and to share community faith-related conversations with the congregation to encourage each other.
- ⇒ Worship Team is going well, with young people getting more involved.
- ⇒ Chapter one of "Believe" small group Sunday school discussions went well. More books need to be ordered.
- ⇒ The Women's Winter Shelter (Lighthouse Mission/Fountain Community Church) ministry is going well, but could use more volunteers. We have open sign-up spots in the foyer. They are still averaging around 40 women per night and can use more overnight volunteers. Maybe HICC participants can share experiences or stories with the congregation to encourage participation.
- ⇒ Prayers, thoughts, and ideas were shared for beginning a boys group and a youth group. David Richards is thinking of putting something together for a boys group; two of our teens are working on a youth group.
- ⇒ It was agreed to allow Project Homeless Connect to use our storage space again this year.

## Giving in December 2018

	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$10,288	\$ 10,288
General Fund Offerings	\$21,000	\$ 21,000
Rent / Utilities Income	<u>2,384</u>	<u>2,384</u>
Total Undesignated Income	23,384	23,384
General Fund Expenses	<u>(17,072)</u>	<u>(17,072)</u>
Income Over(Under) Expenses	<u>\$ 6,332</u>	<u>\$ 6,312</u>
Total 2018 budget, including ministry quotas		\$ 234,133
Year-to-Date Budget for 12 months		\$ 19,511
Total Undesignated Income		<u>23,384</u>
Income Over (Under) Budget		<u>\$ 3,873</u>

### Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 15,000

# February 2019

## Sermons

- 2/3 **In Christ, We are Children of God**  
John 1:9-13, Galatians 3:23-4:7  
*Believe* Chapter 5
- 2/10 **The Church is God's Plan for the World**  
1 Peter 2:9-12  
*Believe* Chapter 6
- 2/17 **Biblical Anthropology**  
Psalm 8, Romans 3:23-25  
*Believe* Chapter 7
- 2/24 **Compassion**  
Luke 10:25-37  
*Believe* Chapter 8

## Greeters

- 2/3 Helen Bowman, Deloris Perry
- 2/10 Joe Pruitt, Ruth Stadt
- 2/17 Lanny & Christine Speyer
- 2/24 Joe & Barb Zylstra

## Cookies

- 2/3 Mona Reardon, Darlys Recker
- 2/10 Ida Richards, Jen Roberts
- 2/17 Rockelle Ruiters, Jan Scholten
- 2/24 Joanne Schultz, Jolene Skovron

## Sunday School

- 2/3 Aaron Speyer, Elaine Snapper, Darlys Recker  
Observer: Terry Vander Woude
- 2/10 Aaron Speyer, Elaine Snapper, Darlys Recker  
Observer: Tena Vanderpol
- 2/17 Aaron Speyer, Christine Speyer, Jenn Boer  
Observer: Jerry Hop
- 2/24 Aaron Speyer, Christine Speyer, Jenn Boer  
Observer: Elaine Snapper

## Prayer Room

- 2/3 Denise Doezema
- 2/10 Christine Speyer
- 2/17 Ida Richards
- 2/24 Herm Laninga

## Offerings

- 2/3 Kingdom Advancement Fund
- 2/10 Kingdom Advancement Fund
- 2/17 Outreach Fund
- 2/24 Kingdom Advancement Fund

## Ushers/\*Foyer

- 2/3 Bud Brouwer, \*Don Knutson
- 2/10 Elaine Snapper, \*Lou Kooistra
- 2/17 Helen Bowman, \*Len Vander Woude
- 2/24 Hildred & \*Clair Abee

## Children & Worship

- 2/3 Marjie Herold, Zeke
- 2/10 Jen Roberts, Amber
- 2/17 Diane Button, Mattea
- 2/24 Dan Obbink, Kylie

## Serving Assistants

- 2/3 AnaMaria, Chantel, Caleb
- 2/10 Brenna, Amber, Faith
- 2/17 Micah, Grace, Amariah
- 2/24 Michal, Clara, Kylie

UNABLE TO SERVE  
ON YOUR DATE?  
PLEASE CALL SOMEONE ELSE ON  
THE LIST AND TRADE DAYS.



# February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<b>3</b> 9:30 a.m. <b>Worship &amp; Communion</b>  11:00 a.m. <b>Sunday School</b>	<b>4</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>GEMS</b>	<b>5</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>Richards' Bible Study</b>	<b>6</b> 9:45 a.m. <b>Women's Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Elders / Deacons</b>	<b>7</b> 6:30 a.m. <b>Men's Group</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Men's Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. Praise <b>Team Practice</b> 7:00 p.m. Boys <b>Group Planning</b>	8	9
<b>10</b> 9:30 a.m. <b>Worship</b> 11:00 a.m. <b>Sunday School</b> 4:30 pm <b>Roberts' Group</b> 4:30 Jesus <b>Gathering</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Laniga Group</b>	<b>11</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Friendship Class</b>	<b>12</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>Boer's Bible Study</b>	<b>13</b> 9:45 a.m. <b>Women's Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Council</b>	<b>14</b> 6:30 a.m. <b>Men's Group</b> 7:00 p.m. Men's <b>Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. Praise <b>Team Practice</b>	15	16
<b>17</b> 9:30 a.m. <b>Worship</b>  11:00 a.m. <b>Sunday School</b>	<b>18</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>GEMS</b>	<b>19</b> 6:00 p.m. <b>Richards' Bible Study</b>	<b>20</b> 9:45 a.m. <b>Women's Bible Study</b>	<b>21</b> 6:30 a.m. <b>Men's Group</b> 7:00 p.m. Men's <b>Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. Praise <b>Team Practice</b>	<b>22</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Movie Night</b>	23
<b>24</b> 9:30 a.m. <b>Worship</b> 11:00 a.m. <b>Sunday School</b> 4:30 pm <b>Roberts' Group</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Laniga Group</b>	<b>25</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Friendship Class</b>	<b>26</b> 6:30 p.m. <b>Boer's Bible Study</b>	<b>27</b> 9:45 a.m. <b>Women's Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. <b>Worship Planning Team</b>	<b>28</b> 6:30 a.m. <b>Men's Group</b> 7:00 p.m. Men's <b>Bible Study</b> 7:00 p.m. Praise <b>Team Practice</b>		