

The Monthly Heartbeat

The Hope in Christ Church Newsletter

June 2019 Issue

Disabilities and the *Imago Dei*

By Pastor Scott

What does it mean to be created in the image of God? This question has been debated through the centuries by well-meaning, sincere, Christians from every walk of society. Some have argued that being an image-bearer means being able to think and reason. Others have argued that it is about ruling and having dominion. Some have posited that it involves having moral reasoning and capacity. Each of the answers that have been given have served to advance our understanding of being divine image-bearers. But are these definitions sufficient? And do these definitions include all people?

A few weeks ago, I was privileged to take a class at Regent College under Dr. John Swinton from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. Aside from the delightful experience of a Scottish accent upon the frame of a Caribbean man, Swinton challenged us to consider carefully the way we define the *imago Dei*, as most of the definitions throughout the ages have excluded those with extreme mental disabilities. Those with extreme cognitive inability are not always able to relate, or reason or express themselves and show that they are 'thinking', at least not in the ways that 'normal' people recognize as meeting the criteria for being alive. Consider Terry Schiavo in the USA as an extreme example, or Nancy Fitzmaurice in the UK.

As a result, Dr. Swinton presented a number of recent scholars who are arguing that those with extreme mental and physical disabilities ought to be euthanized since they are not 'human' and capable of the kind of capacity that most people consider 'normal.' Furthermore, these same scholars are arguing that many apes, chimpanzees and other animal life frequently show more qualities of bearing the 'image of God' than those with disabilities, so society has a moral responsibility to protect the animal and eradicate the non-human.

Oh, the sadness that reigns when scholars seek answers to life's questions, but do it apart from God. So what does it mean to be a divine image bearer? I believe Ephesians 4:24 can serve to help us in answering this question. Paul declares that Christians are to 'put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.' If being in image of God is defined as being truly righteous and truly holy, then a number of interesting things emerge.

Firstly, no one apart from being in Christ is truly imaging God. All are non-human. All are fallen. There is no one 'normal'. Christ is the norm and none of us measures up. Therefore, all of us must be gracious one to another.

Second, imaging God is a matter of grace and grace has nothing to do with cognitive ability, moral reasoning or dominion. Those may be effects of grace, but grace is the unearned, unmerited, reception of God's love in action. He chooses, and so anyone can be an image-bearer if God pours his grace upon them.

Third, righteousness and holiness are terms that have to do with relationships, both horizontal and vertical. Imaging God has a lot to do with relationship, but relationships are more than simply speaking and thinking, they involve emotions and presence. And we have no way of knowing the emotions of others and the feelings that they live with, aside from the inferences that we make upon certain behaviors. But as my son has shown me lately, as he eats a new food and grimaces with a look of disgust, then says, "I love this," my interpretations of certain behaviors are not always correct. Therefore, our imaging of God has more to do with how we relate to the weaker members of our species than with how we think they ought to be relating to us.

If we can remember these things, then we can see that in every person the potential to image God exists, but maybe the more important question isn't whether they are imaging God but whether we are.

Getting to Know Our Church Family

By Elaine Snapper

Denise D has been attending Hope in Christ Church for about 23 years. She was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and attended Ada Christian School. She graduated from Grand Rapids Christian High School and attended Trinity Christian College for two years.

Some of her early jobs were cleaning offices for her mother's real estate company, which was her first paying job. Then she worked for a family water park in Grand Rapids, and then Corrosion Control Consultants & Labs in Grand Rapids.

Denise moved to Bellingham in 1996. She had a temporary job with Kelly Temporary Services until there was an opening in the County Engineers office, and she has worked there for almost 20 ½ years.

Some of her hobbies include reading, sewing, and playing racquetball, and she likes to play games, especially card games.

When I asked her about coming to the Lord, she said that she has always been a Christian. She grew

up in a Christian home and attended Christian schools; but when she moved here, it was a wonderful opportunity for spiritual growth as an independent adult. The first week she attended Hope in Christ Church, Herm Laninga had her go to Ruth Stadt's house for House Church, and she has been meeting with them ever since. She has found the people in our church to be so very friendly and supportive, and she found a real "Washington family" in this church.

Some of Denise's involvements with our church include serving on the hospitality committee, being involved in a fellowship group, serving as an elder, leading GEMS, operating the overhead projector, singing with the praise team, and serving as treasurer.

Denise's plans for the future are to move back to Michigan at the end of May, 2019. She doesn't know what is in store for her. She doesn't have a job yet, but her parents live there. She can live with them temporarily until she finds her own home. She will miss us, and we will in turn miss her. We want to thank her for everything she has done for our church. We will want to keep in touch with her.

Items of Interest from May's Council Meeting

By Joe Pruitt

Report on first year of Family Promise: Ali and Herm Laninga provided a print-out to recap the year. HICC will serve May 26– June 2 at the First Christian Church host site. Ali hopes someone from First Christian will assist her in coordinating. HICC people have been wonderful volunteers.

Book discussion: Chapters 11 and 12 of "What Makes a Leader Great" were discussed. The topic of conversation concerned identifying the actual tasks or practical skills we need to grow or build our church.

Support of incoming council members: Discussion concerned mentoring new council members, shepherding, and getting new members connected. Pastor Scott plans to meet with council members individually on a regular basis to discuss family visits and other areas of service

Building and Maintenance: The team and other volunteers are working on several days in May to replace windows and siding, and painting the ministry house.

National Day of Prayer: Six or seven people attended and it went well. How can we get more people to pray?

Classis Contracta: Exams for two candidates, May 23 at Mountain View Church on Mount Vernon. Dinner is at 6 p.m., the exam is at 7 p.m.

Summer internship: Joshua Currey is arriving on June 3 and returning home August 6. He will stay with the Roberts and the Richards. The congregation is encouraged to welcome and invite him along for family activities and meals.

Northwest Hispanic Ministry Report

By Joe Strong

"Joe, I would never be where I am right now if it hadn't been for you." I was shocked. Yes, I have been helping Jesús for several years now. Yes, I have prayed daily, sometimes many times a day for this man who is in recovery from heroin addiction. Here he was in my car on our way to church last Sunday when he said this. He has been clean for over 100 days. He comes to church with me every Sunday. Jesús still has a long way to go, but each day sober is a victory. Continue to pray for this man and his family.

What a triumphant service our church had on Easter! The young people led the service and the entire Sunday School participated. We have great Sunday School teachers in Lynden. At the end of the program, our worship leader looked at me and said, "I think we just hit a new phase of our ministry." Afterwards, we had a fantastic meal that the women prepared that was over the top delicious.

A couple of weeks ago, Gerardo came to church for the first time. He represents the 5th family that comes from Venezuela. Gerardo, is preparing the way for his wife and child to come soon. Our church is influenced in a big way by these people. The people coming from Venezuela have church experience and many are educated beyond high school. Nilda, just the other day, held a woman's retreat for the women of both the Vida Nueva and the Amor Viviente churches. It touched many of these ladies. It is difficult especially for the women to adjust because they are still struggling with the English language. Pray for these women.

During testimony time, Martina shared that she received a scholarship to SPU. Her two older brothers are attending college as well. Their parents come from very humble stock. Her father never attended school. Attending our church has cemented new ideas and possibilities for this family.

Praise the Lord.

I want to thank all the people who came to our banquets this past month. It is always a joy to show the results of your support via prayer and financial contributions. God is blessing this ministry and many lives are touched.

Continue to pray that God would touch the heart of one or two people who would be willing to be the full time Sunday School teacher/s at our Mt. Vernon location at 4:40 p.m. on Sunday. The children are all in school and speak English. I am thankful for those who presently volunteer for childcare once a month.

(NWHM, 701 W. Blackburn Rd., Mt. Vernon, WA 98273)

Hope in Christ Church Giving in April 2019

	<u>Apr</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$ 1,984	\$ 17,314
General Fund Offerings	\$18,862	\$106,455
Rent / Utilities Income	4,127	13,218
Interest Income - Undesignated	59	135
Total Undesignated Income	23,048	119,808
General Fund Expenses	(18,586)	(95,457)
Income Over(Under) Expenses	<u>\$ 4,462</u>	<u>\$ 24,351</u>
Total 2019 budget, including ministry quotas		\$ 234,133
Year-to-Date Budget for 12 months		\$ 97,555
Total Undesignated Income		119,808
Income Over (Under) Budget		<u>\$ 22,252</u>

Loan Balances:

Classis: \$ 15,000



Show Your Care - Donate New Underwear!

Those coming to the Shower Connect are greatly in need of clean underwear. We are collecting for both men and women; all sizes are needed.

Donation of sports bras for the women would also be appreciated.

A basket will be in the foyer for your donations.

Thank You!

A heart-felt thank-you to the many volunteers that helped us keep our commitment this past week to the homeless families enrolled in Family Promise.

Note:

To those who volunteered to do laundry, the black plastic bags are in the foyer ready to be picked up.

You can return the clean laundry next Sunday.

From the Hospitality Committee

By Ruth Stadt

The Hospitality Committee would like another volunteer or two to join the “ranks” and help out with upcoming events, help serve, and clean up. Just talk to either Lorraine Brouwer, Elaine Snapper or Ruth Stadt if you would like to help us.

Thanks!

Hospitality Gals



Check the bulletins in the coming weeks to find out what the menu will be, and what each will be asked to bring.

Worship Matters

By Jerry Hop

Do you have the desire and passion to use your special gifts and God-given talents in the worship ministry at Hope in Christ?

Change happens in people's lives all the time, so we continue to have openings and opportunities to serve in the Worship Ministry here at Hope in Christ. Currently, we have "just enough" people to fill the worship team spots every week without accounting for sickness or vacations.

One big prayer request is that God would send us more pianists! We appreciate all the time and effort put in by Jan and Melissa, but it would be great to have another pianist or keyboard person or two!

It's been wonderful to see our younger folks beginning to participate in the worship ministry! We encourage even more of you to think about how you can use your God-given abilities in this area. You don't only have to sing or play an instrument. We can always use you "in the background" if you're more drawn to the "tech" side of things. We don't really have a certain age level in mind, but would rather leave it up to you and your parents as to whether you have a relationship with Jesus and you're old enough and "worship-gifted" in a certain area; then you are welcome to join the team (s)!

We offer people of all ages and levels of skill the opportunity to participate in worship. If you would like to read Scripture, offer a congregational prayer, give a testimony, or even give a dramatic presentation, that would be great! We can also use more vocalists, instrumentalists, and tech people. We're not looking for perfection but only a passion for glorifying God!

If you are interested in planning a service or part of one, please talk to one of us on the Worship Planning Team. We are always looking for new and better ways to meet God and glorify him in our worship every week! You are also welcome to at

tend one of our planning team meetings...we usually meet the 3rd or 4th Wed. of the month.

And a huge thank you to all of you currently involved in the worship ministry, week to week and month to month. This ministry could not continue without you!

Please pray for this ministry in our church and ask God if he may be nudging you to consider becoming part of this team ...and then talk to one of us!

Blessings!

Jerry Hop (for the rest of the Worship Planning Team: Melissa, Ida, Mark, Mattea, Pastor Scott)

Deacons Digest

By Elaine Snapper

Our Shower Connect project has been in operation for a few weeks. Recently a canopy was purchased so that we can have some protection against the sun and rain. Volunteers have been signed up for the next few weeks.

A financial request for funds was received from a member of our church, who is planning a mission trip. The funds were granted.

A request from the Red Cross to use our facilities as an emergency shelter was denied, due to our use of available spaces. It was pointed out that our facilities are already committed as an emergency shelter for Sunnyland School.

A dinner with the outgoing and incoming deacons will be planned next month when the schedules of all involved are consulted.

Herm & Ali Laninga's 50th Wedding Anniversary



Tammi, Geralyn, & Matt Laninga invite you to join them for an afternoon of fun, food and fellowship as we celebrate this adventurous, Dutch immigrant couple's 50 years of wedded bliss. Bring your stories, memories and best wishes to share.

This joyous event will take place at the Squalicum Boat House in Bellingham on Saturday, August 3rd from Noon to 3:00 p.m. with a short program starting at 1:30 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP before or on July 1, 2019 by email to adlaninga@gmail.com or hnl130@gmail.com

No gifts please. Your presence will be your gift.

Squalicum Boat House
2600 N Harbor Loop Dr.
Bellingham, WA 98225

Family Promise of Whatcom County Update

By Ali Laninga

Dear Hope in Christ Family,

Today, June 2, marks the end of our 5th week of serving with Family Promise in conjunction with First Christian Church. So again, a great big thank-you to the many volunteers that helped us keep our commitment to the homeless families enrolled in FP. To all those who provided food/snacks, acted as hosts, stayed over-night and agreed to do laundry we gratefully acknowledge your giving spirits and willing service!

We started the week with three families (3 moms and 7 children). By mid-week we added two more families bringing the total to 5 moms and 10 children. We were filled to capacity!

InterFaith Coalition continues to look for ways to raise both the awareness of homelessness and the necessary funds to serve family needs. And you can help us spread the word about FP by participating in the **Camp Out to End Homelessness**. A flyer enclosed in this edition of the Heartbeat includes all the details.

Ali Laninga, HICC Coordinator
Lorraine Brouwer/Herman Laninga, Assistants.



June 2019

Sermon Schedule

- 2 How to Share Your Hope in Christ, Col. 4:2-6
- 9 The Holy Spirit for Everyone, Num. 11:4-29
- 16 The Trinity in Salvation and Mission, 1 Pet. 1:1-2
- 23 Guest Speaker: Joshua Currey, Ps. 1
- 30 The Government of God, Ps. 2

Cookie Schedule

- 2 Donna V, Lisa O
- 9 Deloris P, Joanne S
- 16 Darlys R, Avis K
- 23 Jen R, Jolene S
- 30 Karen S, Elaine S

Serving Assistants

- 2 Grace, Mattea, Zeke
- 9 Michal, Maggie, Kylie
- 16 Abee, Micah, Caleb
- 23 Amber, Faith, Amariah
- 30 Brenna, Chantel, Grace

Sunday School

- 2 Diane, Jen R., Kylie, Rockelle (observer)
- 9 Summer break for Sunday School begins

*Not Able to Serve When Scheduled?
Please call someone on the list and
make a plan to trade dates.
Thank you for your help!*

Greeters Schedule

- 2 Barb & Joe Z
- 9 Ev & Lou Kooistra
- 16 David & Ida R, Junior Jo
- 23 Elaine & Don S
- 30 Ruth S, Joe P

Offering Schedule

- 2 Kingdom Advancement
- 9 Kingdom Advancement
- 16 Outreach Fund
- 23 Kingdom Advancement
- 30 Benevolence Fund

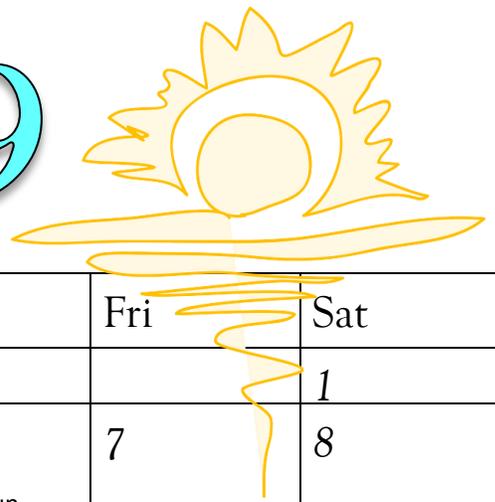
Ushering Schedule/ *Foyer

- 2 Helen B, *Don K
- 9 Elaine S, *Len V
- 16 *Bud B, Joe P
- 23 Lou K, *Ken W
- 30 Clair & *Hildred A

Prayer Room

- 2 Lanny S
- 9 Terry Vander W
- 16 Don V
- 23 Del b
- 30 Chuck D

JUNE 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 8:15 AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship Communion Installation of Officers 11:00 AM Sunday School	3	4	5 7:00 PM Elders Deacons	6 6:30 AM Men's Group 1:00-4:00 PM Shower Connect 7:00 PM Praise Team	7	8
9 8:15AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship 4:30 PM Jesus Gathering 6:30 PM Pentecost Service	10	11 6:00 PM Richards' Bible Study 6:30 PM Boer's Bible Study	12 7:00 PM Council	13 6:30 AM Men's Group 1:00-4:00 PM Shower Connect 7:00 PM Praise Team	14	15
16 8:15 AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship	17	18	19	20 6:30 AM Men's Group 1:00-4:00 PM Shower Connect 7:00 PM Praise Team	21	22
23 8:15AM Prayer 9:30 AM Worship 4:30 PM Roberts Group	24	25 1:00 PM July Heartbeat Newsletter Deadline	26	27 6:30 AM Men's Group 1:00-4:00 PM Shower Connect 7:00 PM Praise Team	28	29

30
8:15AM Prayer
9:30 AM
Worship
Potluck Lunch



Happy Birthday !



1 Len
4 Bud B
6 Georgi L
8 Bill B
13 Jolene S

13 Mattea R
18 Darlys R
20 Wilma K
20 Amariah R
23 Kylie T

25 Paulino E
27 Anne G
27 Lisa O
30 Rockelle R