

JANUARY 2021

# CHRISTIAN CENTER

EQUIP ~ ENGAGE ~ EDIFY

for the equipping of the saints  
for the work of ministry,  
for the edifying of the body of Christ  
Ephesians 4:12

## 1 Corinthians 13:13

***"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three;  
but the greatest of these is love."***

Faith, hope, and love are essential for us today. They will give us what we need to navigate the troublesome times in which we live.

Faith is our trust in God. We need to be continually reminded that He is in control of all things. Nothing can happen in our world unless God allows it. This includes the challenging things that we have faced over this past year - the pandemic, racial tensions, political division. As an example, ***Romans 13:1 says, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God."*** What is reassuring is that no matter who God allows to be in office, He still is the One in control. ***Proverbs 21:1 says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes."*** Isn't that encouraging? We can rest in the fact that God is still upon the throne. He is still in control. We can trust Him.

Hope, ultimately, is that a better day is coming. I think for many of us this past year has caused us to get our focus off of what we thought mattered so much and on to what truly matters. ***Colossians 3:2 says, "Set your mind on things above, not on***

***things on the earth."*** Let's be honest, it can get quite depressing to look at things on this earth. But when we set our mind heavenward, we are reminded of the glorious future God has for us. And as we keep that state of mind, it changes our attitude and outlook on our current circumstances. This hope we have as an anchor of our soul, and it is this hope that we can share with a hopeless world.



Jesus stated that the great commandment is to love God with all of our heart and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love is the fruit that God produces within us. Love molds our heart to care for and to share with others who are in need. How can God use you to be a blessing to those around you? How can you bring hope to a hurting world? I believe it is by keeping our faith in God, trusting Him regardless of the circumstances that surround us, and solidifying our hope in who He is and the promises of His word. Then we will be in a position to be used by Him to spread His love to a world who so desperately needs Him.

May God continue to strengthen and use you for His glory,

*Pastor Steve*



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

BY MARIAN MELLOR

One of the first passages of Scripture that I memorized as a youth was **Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."** Reminding myself of these encouraging verses throughout the years has helped to abate anxiety and to rest in God's care. When making decisions - be they life-altering or "simple" every-day choices - it is important for me to remember that God knows and understands the ramifications of each and every one, and the best thing I can do is to seek His direction and to trust Him. My own understanding miserably fails me, especially in times like we are living through just now, when all manner of opinions pervade nearly every space in our lives. It is refreshing and peace-infusing to stop, take a deep breath, and conscientiously ask the Lord to help me to trust Him through all that is going on, and to help me to live according to His will, which I learn by reading and studying His word, the Bible.

It is eternally important that we learn to trust in the Lord with all our hearts, to acknowledge HIM as we live our lives, and to teach our children and grandchildren to do the same. Otherwise, we end up like the northern kingdom of Israel who, as we have been learning from Steve's recent teachings in 2 Kings 17, followed after the "gods" of surrounding nations, similarly to us following the way of culture without thinking of the outcome, and were taken into captivity by the Assyrians.

Lord willing, we do look forward to incorporating children's ministry back into our Sunday morning service times at some point in the future. Until then, I am super grateful to have them in our midst as we sing in worship together and as Steve teaches as well. We are all a part of the Body of Christ and worshiping and learning together is another great way to share the love of Jesus and the truth of His word with the children.

*Marian Mellor*



YOUTH GROUP | SUNDAYS AT 5:30 P.M.

BY PAUL PALAZEWSKI

**Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."**



The two dozen men in our 7 am Saturday Morning Breakfast and Bible Study have been safely assembling together outside and exhorting one another with a renewed sense of commitment and fervency as we see "the Day" approaching. We realize that the two things that will carry us victoriously through these turbulent times are our relationship with Jesus Christ and our relationships with each other.

Jesus promises that if we abide in Him and His word abides in us, we will ask what we desire, and it will be done for us (John 15:7). What better way to enter into a more intimate relationship with our Lord and Savior than to be prayerfully reading and studying one of His Gospels? So, it is with great expectation every Saturday morning that our men open their Bibles together to the Gospel of Mathew and verse by verse plumb the deeper meanings of the Scriptures. Perhaps it is providential that we currently find ourselves in the Olivet Discourse, studying and debating Jesus' challenging and sometimes cryptic end times prophecies and learning how we are to live alert, self-examined, spiritually productive lives until He returns. We have had some classic iron sharpening iron discussions and more than one brother has expressed his gratitude to be in an environment where he can feel free to express his ideas without fear of condemnation or judgement.

The success of the early church was due to their continuance not only in doctrine, but in fellowship, in the breaking of bread together, and in prayer. (Acts 2:42) That will be the key to our success as well. Satan knows all too well the power of a church bound together in the unity of fellowship and is going to great lengths to disrupt the assembly of believers. But what Satan has meant for evil, the Lord has used for good. Forced to take our meetings outdoors, huddled together under the heat lamps in the predawn chill, the hot coffee and warm breakfast tastes even sweeter, and the bonds of fellowship have grown even tighter.

So as "the Day" approaches our prayer is that we all realize that we need Jesus, and we need each other, now more than ever. United together in fellowship we will walk victoriously through these troubled times. Remember that "a threefold cord is not quickly broken". (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

*Paul Palazewski*



**MEN'S BREAKFAST AND BIBLE STUDY | SATURDAYS AT 7:00 A.M.**



## WOMEN'S MONDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

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BY DEBIE DILLAHUNT

The opening lyrics of the sweet hymn, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" begin like this: "Oh soul, are you weary and troubled? No light in the darkness you see? There's light for a look at the Savior, And life more abundant and free." What beautiful and true words to keep in mind, especially in these troubled times!

In our morning Bible study, we recently finished the book of Philippians. In this wonderful epistle, Paul reminds us several times to rejoice in the Lord. How was Paul able to experience true joy and peace as a prisoner and in the midst of trials? By having a close relationship with Jesus! That may seem so simple, but it's true.

God's Word is filled with encouragement! Even in the darkest times (as in **Lamentations 3:22-23**), the prophet Jeremiah reminds himself (and us!): **"through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness!"** The God of all creation loves us and is faithful! In these challenging times, we can experience hope, joy, and true peace because of Jesus.

It is such a blessing to study God's Word together and to encourage one another in our walk with our Savior! As we soak up what God has to teach us, let's remember to "turn our eyes upon Jesus"!

***"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13***

Love and Blessings,

*Debie*

Even though we miss being together in person, we're so thankful to meet via Zoom. We've developed close friendships as we encourage each other and share what we've gleaned from the treasures in God's Word. We'd love to have you join us!



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OUTSIDE SERVICE ON THE LAWN | SUNDAYS AT 9:00 A.M.

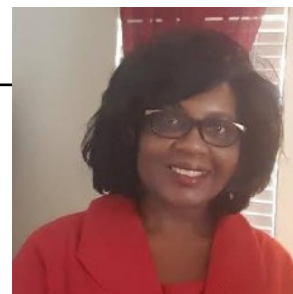
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## WOMEN'S MONDAY EVENING HOME FELLOWSHIP

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BY HELIA MCFALLS

**John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." NIV**



Over the past two months the Women's Evening Bible Study group has been studying "Embracing God's Grace" by Elizabeth George. We are on a journey with Paul in the book of Colossians and are finding through this study that when we embrace the gospel, God delivers us from the dominion of darkness and transfers us into His inheritance of eternal life.

One of the many things Paul emphasized to the Colossians is to hold on to what they have learned and believed about Christ in the face of what is happening in the world. In **Colossians 2:6-7 it says, "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving."** Let us not uproot and give up! We must hold on and become more rooted and grounded, and fully convinced of God's love.

We read in **John 16:33**, what Jesus told the Apostles over 2000 years ago, which holds true today, **"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."** Jesus is using the word cheer to simply mean to have courage or be deeply encouraged. He spoke similarly in Matthew 14:27 when Jesus came walking on the sea during the storm telling the disciples, "Be of good cheer, it is I, do not be afraid."

The Spirit of the living God lives within us and He will teach us how to overcome and how to walk victoriously. We can have peace in the storm, trusting God has a divine plan for it all. Each day, His miracles are all around us, right before our eyes. We simply have to choose to look for them, to pick up His provision, and stay close to His Presence. We were never meant to carry the heavy burden that we face today all alone; we will always fall short, but we can live in and through His power. Let us embrace the peace that Jesus offers, knowing it does not matter what the world is trying to do, all that matters is what Jesus has already done on the cross!

Love and Blessings,

*Helia*



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NEW OUTSIDE FELLOWSHIP AREA BY PLAYGROUND

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