


The Herald

THE CHILD GREW...
AND  THE
**FAVOR OF
GOD**
WAS UPON HIM.

LUKE 2:40

From the Pastor's Desk

Just a Guess

It is just a guess, but I'm quite sure 2020 didn't go as you planned it. Perhaps you're not one to make a long list of New Year's resolutions but all of us have some ideas for what we desire from the year. To say it threw us a curve ball would be an understatement.

But, if like the Apostle Paul, you wrote a goal like Philippians 3:10 which in the Message translation says: "I gave up all that inferior stuff so I could know Christ personally, experience his resurrection power, be in partner in his suffering," Then you had an abundance of opportunity to have this goal amazingly accomplished.

As you look at 2020, do you see how you know Christ better than you did a year ago? Do you trust him more, listen to his heart and word more intently? Identify as His follower more boldly? I hope some of this is true for each of us.

Now we look toward 2021 and some are going "after last year I'm not making any plans!" But again, like Paul, can we set "knowing Jesus better" as a desire, ambition, goal for the year. Of course we don't know what the year will look like but this goal will allow us to take each experience and unexpected challenge as an opportunity to know more of Jesus in our life.

At Little White Church we will continue in the Gospel of Mark on Sunday mornings to experience Jesus touching lives, including ours and learn how to be part of touching lives in His name. We will continue to have classes for all ages as well as Bible studies and events where others can plug in. We are shaping some new men's groups to assist men in becoming godly leaders and fathers. We have a strong Bolt program for elementary children after school on Wednesdays and our Youth Group program that evening. Perhaps these are places you would want to get involved and grow by serving.

So plan to know Jesus more. We will look to provide opportunities and we are confident God will have some unexpected opportunities as well.

Grace,

Pastor Dennis



Our Family Tree

As I write this article Christmas Eve is only two days away. By the time you get to read this 2020 will be over. I can hear the cheers and applause already. It has been a trying and at times discouraging year. I would like to give a big welcome to the New Year with eager anticipation with hope for things to be getting better, but there seems to be even more uncertainty in this coming year than experienced in 2020. Any hope that we may be building up for 2021 is under attack by fear of the unstable political environment and heavily divided country.

The debate about face masks and shutdowns has not only divided the country, but families and even churches. If we are trying to find our hope in stability and comfort longing for things to go back to the way they were, we are at risk of missing out how our God is at work. Our hope is to be in the Lord. If we will keep our eyes upon Jesus as we go through life, a real hope that cannot be extinguished is there. As I look back over the year through the lens of how God is working, I see great and amazing things. Families have been forced by lock downs to be together. Family meals in the home are taking place once again. Father's are spending time with their kids and spouse. People are seeking God in very real ways. We have seen over 30% growth in our church alone with new families moving into the area. Children's church is busting at the seams and we just experienced a wonderful Christmas play with a stage overflowing with kids.

Many of our previous priorities have been blown up and we have been forced to wrestled with what really matters in this life. For these and many other reasons I am thankful for 2020 and what God is doing. We will have political disagreements among us. Some see trials and tribulations ahead while others believe we are at peace. As we move into the new year my prayer is that we as a church put God first, so no matter what comes our way we will stand together as brother's and sister's in Christ. If we stand on the Word of the Lord and seek to bring glory to God, we will be the rock in this community. Let our light shine before others as it says in Matthew 5:16.

Pastor Dennis is always leading us in all situations to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and what He is doing. Do not let 2021 be any different. I am excited and hopeful for what God is going to do in the coming year as I desire for His will to be done and not mine. May we fix our eyes upon Him holding each other up in love by the grace He has given us.

In Christ,

Ben Larsen, Family Life Pastor

Have You Met....?

Adult Name(s): Benjamin and Stephanie Larsen

Children Name(s) and Ages: Lindi (12), Shy (11), Calvin (9), PJ (7)

How did you come to be at The Little White Church and how long have you been attending? I (Steph)

met Marcia Graber in Sioux Falls at an ordination service for my dad and Marcia. We started talking and she said we should check out the LWC. We had been driving from Custer to Rapid each Sunday and was getting tired of the drive! The first Sunday we attended, we met Pastor Ron and discovered that he was good friends with my Grandpa, when they lived in Sioux Falls (small world!). After that first time attending, we knew it was our church home. We have been attending since 2009.



How long have you lived in the Black Hills? We have lived in the Black Hills for 13 years.

List some jobs or careers you have had over the years? Ben was a firefighter for the City of Sioux Falls, Wellness Instructor for STAR Academy, Guest Relations Manager for Palmer Gulch KOA & now Family Life Pastor here at LWC.

Steph was a secretary for a church in Sioux Falls, First Interstate Bank Teller, Manager at the Jon Crane Gallery & now the Office Admin here at the LWC.

Where did you grow up or places you have lived for a longer duration?

Ben grew up in Sioux Falls and Steph grew up in Harrisburg. We lived in Hartford and Sioux Falls when we got married. Then we lived in Custer and Hill City.

Continued on Page 5

Have You Met....? Continued

What is a spiritual story/testimony you would like to share? Ben and I were called out the Black Hills to help start a church in Custer (Crossroads E-Free). We were quickly called out of that church, and felt God was telling us to stay in the area. His faithfulness and provision has (and still is) been so amazing over the years. Our church family has been so amazing in supporting us through many things, most well known has been Calvin's heart surgery and our recent adoption.

In what ways have you been involved in ministry or serving over the years? Ben started as a part time youth pastor in 2009 and began full time in October 2019. Steph is part of the Women's Ministry Team and also an Admin leader for BSF (Bible Study Fellowship).

Do you have any special talents or gifts?

Ben—Plays multiple instruments, patience.

Stephanie—I am very gifted in cleaning and doing laundry. :)

If you could only use one word to describe God, it would be...

Stephanie—Holy Lindi— Love Shy—All-Knowing

Ben— Faithful Calvin— Powerful PJ—Greatest

What biblical figure best describes you and why?

Stephanie—Sarah: She left a land that she was familiar with and family, to go to a new land that she didn't know because God had called them to it. She did make some poor decisions along the way, as I have often done as well. But, she believed God and trusted Him, to fulfill His promises to her.

Ben— Peter: Before and After his denial of Jesus. First part of my journey I was always running ahead of God with only a small picture of what He was asking and not letting Him finish His instructions. And now, I have learned to wait upon Him fully, before acting in haste. I am willing to be bold when others stand down.

Want to be featured in "Have you Met?" Email: office@thelittlewhitechurch.net

Between the BookENDS

Fun Bible Trivia - Joel

1. Did you know that the book of Joel makes no mention of any king or foreign nation (world power)? This means it is hard for Bible scholars to tell exactly when it was written. However, they believe it was written in the eighth or ninth century, BC.
2. Who wrote the book of Joel?
3. You can find the book of Joel in
 - A. the Old Testament, after Hosea.
 - B. the New Testament, before Matthew.
 - C. the Old Testament, after Daniel.
 - D. your Bible's concordance.
4. Joel was a
 - A. Levite.
 - B. prophet.
 - C. tax collector.
 - D. Hollywood director.
5. True or False: A prophet tells what God plans to do in the future.
6. Joel talked about a time in the past when the land was filled with
 - A. milk and honey.
 - B. locusts.
 - C. floods.
 - D. thieves.
7. True or False: The people were upset because their crops had been destroyed by bugs.
8. True or False: God restored Israel's fertile land.

Between the BookENDS—Continued

9. True or False: God told the land and animals not to be afraid.
10. True or False: God will judge the nations in the Land Before Time.
11. Why should the people be happy?
12. Did you know that the term Valley of Jehoshaphat means “Yahweh judges”? Today’s English Version of the Bible translates Valley of Jehoshaphat as “Valley of Judgement.”
13. Egypt and Edom will be punished for attacking
A. The United States.
B. Saudi Arabia.
C. Jordan.
D. Judah.
14. Where will the Lord live when He returns to Earth?

*****Answers on Page 10*****



***Happy New Year and may you be looking UP in 2021!
January Librarians: Cindy Dusing and Georgie Neff***

Focus on Missions– CLM—Mur Anderson

A Thank You Letter to the Little White Church

It was almost 15 years ago that I stood before the congregation of the Little White Church to talk about an exciting adventure that God had invited me on, and I was asking the people here to support me in that endeavor. I was so grateful that the church both collectively as well as many individuals did just that. I was able to raise the support that I needed and was on staff as a counselor for 14 years.

What a time those 14 years have been. I felt so inadequate at times, but God proved faithful again and again. It wasn't easy, and I was pushed out of my comfort zone; however, it taught me to trust and rely on God's faithfulness. There were heartbreaking times, but it was also very rewarding. I was amazed to see God work and mend broken lives. I am humbled and grateful to have been part of God's work at CLM, but it is now time to step back and let others take the lead..

I want to thank you all for being part of this journey with me. So many of you have supported me from the beginning and others came later. I am so grateful to each and every one of you. Thank you again for believing in me and the ministry that is so necessary at this time.

I am not sure what the next chapter holds for me, but I'm certain that it will be filled with what God has in mind. There will certainly be copious amounts of grandma time with grandkids both here and in Texas, and I also know that my experiences at CLM will continue to be used in some way.

So thank you again for all your prayers, monetary support, and encouragement over the years, as I have said many times: it was because of your faithfulness that I have been able to do what God called me to do.

Sincerely,
Muriel Anderson



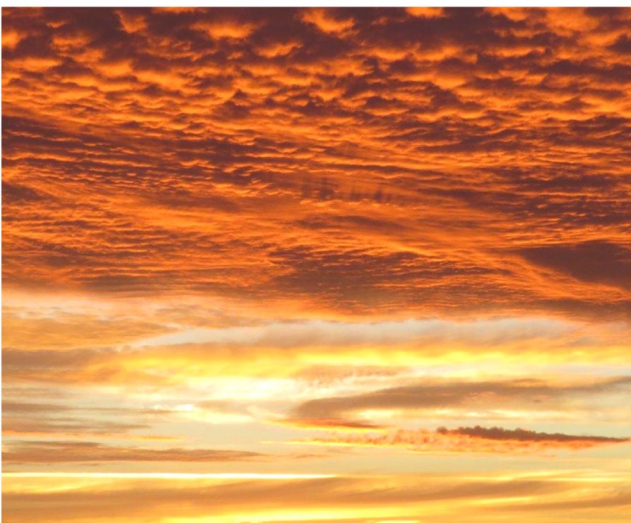
From My Files: Echoes of God's Glory

Roseanne Hilton

In the October and November From My Files articles we looked at how the Triune God in His fullness as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is Creator and Sustainer of the universe, as well as Savior. There is more! The power of the Triune God raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. That same power, that incredibly great power, enables us to live our new lives that bring glory and honor to God and to anticipate our own resurrection.

From Romans 6: Since we have been united with Him in His death, we will also be raised as He was. Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also share His new life. We are sure of this because Christ rose from the dead and He will never die again. Death no longer has any power over Him. He died once to defeat sin and now He lives for the glory of God. So you should consider yourselves dead to sin and able to live for the glory of God through Christ Jesus. (New Living Translation)

From Ephesians 3: Now glory to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May He be given glory in the church and in Jesus Christ forever and ever through endless ages. (New Living Translation)



The song "You Shine," contains the lines "Why should I lose heart, when I know how great You are? You shine, filling us with courage and strength to follow You." *

Let us keep looking to the Triune God and recognizing His amazing power in us that enables us to live for the glory of God. We might at times lose heart, when we instead look at our circumstances, but we can, we must, always return to Him for encouragement and for His strength.

CCLI
You Shine
Brian Doerksen
Integrity's Hosanna Music

Church Body Updates

JANUARY Birthdays

6th Jackie Isakson
6th JT Isakson
7th John Long
9th Buzz Grover
11th Rowdy Isakson
20th Butch Kruse
20th Karen Kruse
22nd John Klimek
24th Marcia Graber
24th Denise Nay

JANUARY Anniversaries

23rd Dick & Betty Lou Kessler
(56 years)

Answers to Joel Bible Trivia — Pages 6 & 7

1. N/A
2. Joel wrote the book of Joel.
3. a. the Old Testament, after Hosea.
4. b. prophet.
5. True.
6. b. locusts (Joel 1:4).
7. True (Joel 1:4).
8. b. repent of their sins (Joel 2:12).
9. True (Joel 2:18-19).
10. True (Joel 2:21-23).
11. False. God will judge the nations in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2).
12. The people should be glad because of what God had done for them.
They will have plenty to eat and will never be hated again (Joel 2:25-27).
13. Did you know that the term Valley of Jehoshaphat means “Yahweh judges”?
Today’s English Version of the Bible translates Valley of Jehoshaphat
as “Valley of Judgement.”
14. d. Judah (Joel 3:19).
15. The Lord will live on Mt Zion (Joel 3:21).



Time 6:30pm

Date: Friday January 29th

Location: The Little White Church

Cost: FREE

Movie: The Apple Dumpling Gang



We are starting a FREE Family Movie Night at The Little White Church for the Community. *It will be the last Friday of each month at 6:30pm showing family friendly movies.*

You are welcome to bring a blanket for kids to sit on or personal camping chairs if you want. We will provide chairs as well.

Popcorn and bottled water will be provided for FREE. Other Concessions will be available for CASH donations or BOLT Bucks that kids earn who attend the Wednesday BOLT program. You are welcome to bring your own drinks and snacks as well (No Alcohol and No Red Juice Please).

Invite your friends and come enjoy a night out with your family.

Announcements

Office & Food Pantry will be closed on Friday, January 1st.
Happy New Year!

Women's Prayer Gathering will meet the first and third Saturdays of each month at 9 am. Join us January 2nd and 16th for prayer!



SHE-Brews (Women's Coffee & Fellowship) is held on the second Saturday of each month from 10-11 am. All ladies are welcome to join us on Saturday, January 9th!

Are you new to our Congregation? Want more info about us or how to become a member? Join us for a Newcomer's Class that will be held on January 10th, 17th and 24th during the Sunday School Hour.

Online Giving Available!

Go to www.thelittlewhitechurch.net and find the "Donate" button to get started! It's easy and secure to use!

*Visit www.thelittlewhitechurch.net
to get updates and information
& Check us out on Facebook!!*

www.facebook.com/Littlewhitechurchhillcitysd/

When you shop Amazon, you can help support the LWC!!
Amazon Smile will donate .5% of your purchase to the LWC.

Go to: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7112412>
to sign up today!

Forgiveness—By BJ Reese

Everyone I know has some attitude or behavior that is born of an experience in their past. It is a natural defense mechanism, designed to protect us from feeling the same pain again. But what happens when that defense mechanism changes . . . and begins to be used as a weapon?

That seems to be happening a lot lately. All around us, anger and division are being fueled by the crises our country is experiencing. Health concerns, political preferences, racial issues, respect for authority . . . everything seems to cause for debate. Even worse, each subject seems to be spawning vicious arguments. At the same time, old wounds are being reopened. Past experiences are being brought up as justification for the anger and bitterness.

Family members are landing on opposing sides of all those arguments. Friends are creating ‘no-talk zones’ – topics which they cannot discuss – in an effort to preserve their friendships. As I watch the drama unfold, the action moves closer and closer to our family.

As it does, I’m beginning to see a wedge being driven between certain people. Words of anger are being spoken . . . words that can never be unsaid or taken back. Bitterness. Hateful comments. Unyielding, unforgiving attitudes. The pain from all of these scenarios is spreading.

Recently, I found myself wondering what purpose it serves. What good does it do for us to keep rehashing some old argument? I wondered. Suddenly, I thought of the Israelites and their journey to the Promised Land. When things grew difficult along the way, they begged God to take them back to Egypt – to the evil they already knew. To the bondage of their past, where they knew what to expect.

God refused. Instead, He let them wander a while and, then, led them into the land He had promised them. He led them forward – to the future – not backward into the past. As this story played itself out in my mind, I realized how it ties to forgiveness.

Forgiveness—Continued

The past holds memories and events that offer to teach us lessons. Signposts which provide guidance: ‘go this way for happiness’ ‘go that way for pain and sorrow’. We are meant to LEARN from the past . . . not LIVE in it.

When we begin to stay there, wallowing in the memory of our misery, we bring dissatisfaction, anger, and bitterness into our present situation. Bitterness then adds its acrid, nasty flavor to every conversation, to every new situation.

The memory has become a weapon. In the bright Light of Love and forgiveness, however, those same memories become priceless tools. They fill us with joy, peace, and a renewed sense of understanding and purpose. They become guideposts which light our way to the glorious promise God has waiting for us. As they do, we even become grateful for their part in our journey.

Which will you choose? Will you allow yourself to dwell in the dark, bitter sorrow of what WAS? Or will you turn toward the brilliant, guiding Light of forgiveness. The good news is this: we all get to choose . . . every single day.



Newsletter Newsletter

A Word for the Year

Every January, some people pray and ask God to provide a word for their year ahead. Friends have shared theirs with me, but I was hesitant to embrace the practice myself. I'd love to receive a word like flourish; then again, I might be like the friend who heard health and then faced many physical challenges that year.

But I tried it for 2020 and heard prepare. My first reaction was that the word wasn't very exciting, which possibly confirmed I hadn't orchestrated it. Indeed, 2020 ended up full of significant, unexpected change for our family, with careers, school, church and friends. Prepare reminded me that amid chaos, God had prepared me for each moment and continues to prepare me for what's next.

Give it a try! Regardless of the word you receive or what lies ahead, you can trust that God loves you and is ultimately in control for 2021 and beyond.

—Janna Firestone



Sufficient for the Day

John Newton (1725-1807), author of “Amazing Grace,” wrote: “We may easily manage if we will only take, each day, the burden appointed for it. But the load will ... be too heavy for us, if we carry yesterday's burden over again today, and then add tomorrow's.” This maxim might be easy to dismiss unless we knew about Newton's troubled life.

Having been pressed into naval service and then slavery, Newton was finally rescued but became a slave-ship captain. He faced abuse, contemplated murder-suicide, suffered a stroke and was caught in a storm. When he cried out to God, the waves subsided, prompting a spiritual conversion for Newton, who became a priest and abolitionist.

We never know how God will transform our sinful past into future good, but we can trust he will. That adds power to Newton's advice, which echoes Jesus' words: “Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matthew 6:34, ESV).



READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

Week 25 □ Proverbs 29-31; 1 Thess 4 □ Song of Sol 1-3; Ps 72; 1 Thess 5
□ Song of Sol 4-6; 2 Thess 1 □ Song of Sol 7-8; Psalm 127; 2 Thess 2 □ 1
Kings 5; 2 Chr 2; 2 Thess 3

Week 26 □ 1 Kings 6; 2 Chr 3; 1 Timothy 1 □ 1 Kings 7; 2 Chr 4; Psalm 44;
1 Tim 2 □ 1 Kings 8; Psalm 30; 1 Tim 3 □ 2 Chr 5-7; Psalm 121; 1 Tim 4 □
1 Kings 9; 2 Chr 8; 1 Tim 5

Week 27 □ 1 Kings 10-11; 2 Chr 9; 1 Tim 6 □ Ecclesiastes 1-3; Psalm 45; 2
Tim 1 □ Eccl 4-6; Psalm 125; 2 Tim 2 □ Eccl 7-9; Psalm 46; 2 Tim 3 □ Eccl
10-12; 2 Tim 4

Week 28 □ 1 Kings 12; 2 Chr 10-11; Titus 1 □ 1 Kings 13-14; 2 Chr 12; Ps
47; Titus 2 □ 1 Kings 15; 2 Chr 13-14; Titus 3 □ 2 Chr 15-16; 1 Kings 16;
Philemon □ 1 Kings 17-18; Psalm 119; Jude

Rest In Peace

One Sunday morning, the pastor noticed little Alex staring up at the large plaque that hung in the foyer of the church. The plaque was covered with names, and small American flags were mounted on either side of it.

The seven year-old had been staring at the plaque for some time, so the pastor walked up, stood beside him and said quietly, "Good morning, Alex."

"Good morning, Pastor," replied the young man, still focused on the plaque. "Pastor Phillips, what is this?" Alex asked.

"Well, son, it's a memorial to all the men and women who have died in the service."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque.

Little Alex's voice was barely audible when he finally managed to ask, "Which one, the 9:00 or 10:30 service?"



525 Main St.
PO Box 385, Hill City, SD 57745
605-574-2426
www.thelittlewhitechurch.net
office@thelittlewhitechurch.net