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THE NEWSLETTER

UP

by Nancy Steuart

Faith stories. Everyone has one. That's one thing I learned while attending the Women of Faith conference in Columbus recently. Stories of the times that God has worked in your life to change you, help you grow. Some people have giant stories of tragedy, loss and 180 degree turnarounds. Some of us have smaller stories of ordinary events made extraordinary by the presence of God. I heard speakers who shared easily, and some who did not have a lot of experience sharing with strangers. It is not easy to share what for some has been a very intimate experience with the Holy Spirit.

This summer during our worship time, we want to create opportunities for each of us to share our faith stories in the safest environment I know of, our church family. So look for some changes, in seating, in format; changes designed to create a more casual, low tech, family oriented place. And be thinking about your faith story. I know you have one.

One of the songs at the conference had these lyrics "Something Big done happened to me/I gotta tell the world about/if I keep it to myself/how you gonna find out about it". We can't keep God to ourselves.

Also, with the choir taking its usual break for the summer, we welcome summer music opportunities-or poetry or dance, or other visual arts. The sign up sheet will be going up soon on the office window.

Pentecost is June 12. We read in the book of Acts, that after the Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the upper room, while they were in Jerusalem, a crowd gathered, and Peter preached to the crowd about Jesus (he told his faith story!). It appears that he is not in the synagogue, and folks from all over the world heard his message. This Pentecost, we are going to let the Spirit blow us out of our church building and to serve and worship in a different way. We have plans to go down near St Raphael's to make our selves present in the community by serving folks in our community. Let's meet at the church for prayer in the parking lot at 10:45am. Then we will carpool down to St, Raphaels for either picking up trash, or packing kits, or stocking shelves. Then we will have lunch there. If it rains, we will have the indoor projects to do! We should be done about 12noon.

DCC Transition Team News

Who is the Transition Team and what are they up to? The Transition Team consists of the Up chair, Nancy Steuart, the IN chair, John Baughman, the OUT chair, Dave Moxley, Pastor John, and Elder leaders, Cindy Williams and Jeri Pendergest. They have been reading and studying the book, Missional Renaissance. The focus of discussions centers around the question "What does the church look like in modern times?" The answer so far is " Sunday morning at 10:45am is not the destination". While the group still

struggles with what the church should be, they know that without change, there is rarely growth; change is difficult; God is still seeking workers for His Kingdom.

OUT

By David Moxley

In our current day and culture, clenched fists and hoarding is often the norm. Christ encourages us to let go and have a spirit of giving. We've witnessed tragedy for so many in the last several weeks, the most recent involving the loss of life and possessions in Joplin, Missouri. The following is a message from Amy Gopp with the Disciples Week of Compassion:

While many of the needs in Joplin are vast, donations need to be targeted. Bottled water and clothing, for example, are no longer being collected, as distribution centers are stocked beyond capacity. We will be working with First Christian and South Joplin to meet strategic needs in Joplin. Donations to the Compassion Response Fund and Designated Tornado Funding will be used not only in the immediate response, but also to support long-term recovery efforts in Joplin, whatever shape those take. [You can always respond online.](#)

Your offering to outreach helps support the Week of Compassion, sending aid to Joplin and many other places throughout the world.

A hands-on opportunity for outreach closer to home would be Habitat for Humanity. They currently have a home under construction in Oxford and they're looking for volunteers. Below is a message from Missy Thompson:

Hello!

My name is Missy (Barger) Thompson. As many of you know, my family was approved for an interest-free home through Habitat for Humanity. For us, this means not having to move away from Oxford to become homeowners!

Our home is under construction at 707 Carter Court, on a new cul-de-sac off of Hester Road.

*Habitat for Humanity is able to provide interest-free homes in our community, in part by utilizing volunteer labor. I am writing to you today to ask for your assistance in making our family's dream a reality. We need the assistance of individuals and groups (age 18 +) who are willing to: **assist in the building of our home, prepare and serve meals for volunteers,** or who can **provide cold water and beverages** on our work days. Work days have been scheduled through August. Please refer to the list below to see where the need is.*

There is more information about registering to volunteer at the website: www.habitat-tristate.org. If you are able to help in any way, please let me know! You can reach me by phone if you prefer at [\(513\) 335-0746](tel:(513)335-0746). Thank you for your consideration! Missy Thompson and family.

Disciples Christian Church has a rich history of reaching out and helping beyond its four walls. Let us prayerfully consider what we are each capable of doing as we carry out God's work here on earth.

JOHN'S JOTS

by Pastor John

As Nancy has pointed out to you in her UP article in this newsletter, the transition team has been reading *Missional Renaissance*, by Reggie McNeal since the 1st of the year. One of his points is the one Nancy has eluded to, "Sunday morning at 10:45am is not the destination." Well, why would he say something like this?

What McNeal is referring to is the fact that for the church, everything in the life of the church centers around worship. Worship becomes the catalyst for everything the church does. But let me share a story from Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch's book, "*The Faith of Leap*" which might cast a different light for us.

"Austin Stone is a church in Austin, Texas (as its name suggests). It was planted by Matt Carter and Chris Tomlin in 2003 with a vision to reach young adults on the local university campus. Due in part to Tomlin's musical gifts and leadership, the church developed an exuberant spiritual vibe based largely on offering inspiring and challenging worship services for young adults. The church grew phenomenally, reaching around 5,000 – 5,500 in weekend attendances in only six years! Talk about worship-led revival!

"Sometime during this period, Matt Carter was diagnosed with cancer, which was surprising for a guy his age and alarming for the young church that he was leading. It was a time for serious spiritual reflection for Matt and the whole team. Matt took extended leave to recover, pray, and seek God for mercy and guidance. While passionately seeking God and his Word, he was constantly confronted with the prophetic passages that called into question the spiritual veracity of worship, particularly when by and large the people were not acting in conformity to God's commands . . . especially in relation to justice and the care for the poor (Isa. 56:1-7; 58:1-14; Jer. 14:12; Micah 6:8; Matt. 15:8). Matt felt that God had utterly nailed him and was asking him to repent and change the church's ways – and this from a church that had built so much on excellent praise and worship.

"Returning to work cancer-free, Matt and the team, guided by missional activist Michael Steward, begin to completely revise the focus of their church around mission to the needy people of the city."

This story demonstrates that mission must be allowed to reshape our understanding of what it means to be the church. Outward is the direction that God is leading the church, including ours. This is not about what is the church's mission, but it is all about what is the *missio Dei*, the mission of God. We ask the question each Sunday during worship, "Where have you seen God?" because we need to see the pattern of God's activity in the world. When we are able to see the pattern of God's activity in the world, then we will be able to understand the *missio Dei* and join God in whatever God is doing.

This *missio Dei* is what we need to become the organizing catalyst for our church. As Len Sweet puts it, "The church does not define its mission. God does. It is God's mission in the world that concocts the church, not the other way around." God has redeemed us and that is why we are in the church in the first place and mission is built into the very purpose of the church because God is and will always be a missionary.

From *The Faith of Leap*, "In the days when people in the West believed churchgoing was a good and decent thing to do, and made assumptions about God from a broadly Christian framework, inviting them back to a church service might well have been an effective form of outreach. Today, we can no longer assume unbelievers are sitting at home waiting for a better worship service to arrive in town. A church organized around worship makes the Sunday

gathering the primary doorway to God, gospel, and community. And while people in a post-Christendom West might be yearning for community, having to enter via the worship service is proving to be somewhat culturally unpalatable for vast tracks of the population.”

When we allow mission to be the catalyst of the church the other pillars of the church, worship, community, and discipleship do not diminish, they are greatly enhanced. We can't be a disciple without mission, and we can't be a community without mission, and we can't really worship if we aren't engaged in the *missio Dei*.

Shalom,
Pastor John

Here are some other resources I have shared with the Transition Team:

Go to www.alanroxburgh.com and click on the heading “30 Days in the Neighborhood”. Toward the right side of the page, you will see the list of 30 different things Alan has shared with his readers to do or read during the 30 days. In that group you will see some interview videos he had with Simon Carey Holt (there are 5 segments; the longest is only 15 minutes)). These are very, very good.

Also, there are audio links that have Michael Frost talking about organizing the church around mission. These are from an event called Future Church. They each run around 50 minutes each. Powerful, powerful stuff. Here are the links:

<http://facingthechallenge.org/audio/FutureChurch1.mp3>

<http://facingthechallenge.org/audio/FutureChurch2.mp3>

<http://facingthechallenge.org/audio/FutureChurch3.mp3>

THE WAY I SEE IT

By Fredrick R. Mouse

May was certainly a very busy month around here! It's been party central here at DCC! This old mouse is grateful for all the crumbs you managed to share with him, especially the cake crumbs! You humans sure know how to do dessert around here!

I must say that these celebrations were indeed bittersweet. We said goodbye to two faithful servants, Carl and Susie Enfield, who left this area to go to Virginia. They will be building a home there in the very near future. This couple will surely be missed around here.

We also celebrated 3 high school graduates, Brandon Durbin, Jacob Vangan, and Ben Longard. Jacob and Ben are planning on attending college out of state and that means we won't be seeing them as much. Our prayer is that they will continue to pursue the life God has for them as they continue their education. My best mouse guess is that they will.

May has seen these changes and others around worship. One thing this old mouse knows for certain, if you are trying to hang around God, you will be very familiar with change.



Until next month, Freddy

SERVING IN JUNE: Jana Brown, Bev Schmidt, Brian Druley, Susan Spears, George Spears, Ben Longard, Mary Longard

PRAYER REQUESTS: Lois Johnson, Chosen, Troops, Kim Vangan, Ron Hurst, Don Gross, Ray Scheffler, Linda Ashbrook, Kathy Baughman, Liz Longard, Gene Thomas

THANK YOU NOTES

My goodness what a farewell service and luncheon, sure would like to believe we are really that special. Thank you Pastor John for the kind words and prayer. We for sure will find a niche to serve when we settle in Crozet and community. I have been thinking about what opportunities might be available for us. And to the wonderful folk who prepared the delicious food a HUGE thank you. It was wonderful. I do like that lemon curd in the cake. God blesses in more ways than we can possibly count.

Blessings,
Susie and Carl

Dear DCC friends,
Thank you so much for the support you have give me these last 4 years. Especially, thank you for your generous gifts that I will be using for college. Please keep me in your prayers.

Thanks!
Ben Longard

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