

Words of Faith

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Faith blasts off at VBS 2018 and sails ahead to 2019!

By Jocelyn MacGregor



Vacation Bible School 2018 has come and gone, and whether you were able to volunteer this year or not, we hope you participate by praying over the impact this ministry continues to have upon our neighborhood and larger community. Here are a few of the stats and experiences, but the question already on the leadership's mind is: who will you bring next year? Dates have been set for July 8-12, 2019, and the nautical theme (think Sir Francis Drake) is already rolling through the minds of a few artists, set designers, and lighting specialists. As you plot your course for the year, be asking what persons of short stature will God place in your path for His good purpose? No, it's not too soon, and yes, while last year you may have heard the call for volunteers in the springtime from Space Commanders Heidi Bone and Rachel Moore, for next year, already in late summer,

the work of arranging an exciting voyage has already begun. It's already time to start the effort to fill the ship's roster, gather our next crew of (already and soon to be) believers into this fantastic voyage, and prepare these dear young people to celebrate the adventure and experience the detailed kindnesses of God's abundant love!

Consider asking others who were able to volunteer for their specific stories, to gain first-hand, real understanding as to the value of this ministry and the needs for next year. Rather than reproducing an "After-Action" report, with exact numbers of participants, (the week averaged 138 students per day, 68 volunteers, we won't even try to sum up the volunteer hours, etc.) the intent is to draw you in to this evangelistic opportunity. You are necessary, perhaps more than you know, for this somewhat exhausting ► 8

Elementary Sunday School program

By Kimberly Reis



It is astoundingly difficult to believe that we walked our daughter, Maggie, down to the two-year-old Sunday School classroom almost 14 years ago! Peering through the open crack next to the door hinges, we would regularly check on her to make sure she was feeling secure and obeying her teachers. Mrs. Dorothy Proctor and Mrs. Denise Welch were so gentle with us as new Sunday School parents. I am positive they coached Doug and me through the experience far more than they needed to ever help our Maggie! Thank goodness they have so much wisdom in navigating that first-ever year of Sunday School, helping both the children... *and their parents!*

Maggie went to the first-grade class, and then to the second-grade class. Before long, she was eagerly walking downstairs by herself, coming back an hour later to enthusiastically comment how nice Mrs. Chiou and Mrs. Llewellyn were, or how fun Miss Jennifer German was, or how kind Mrs. Jack

was. Aubren related to us charmingly convoluted stories about overseas missionaries from the assembly time with Mrs. Lawty. No matter – she obviously learned two simple truths: missionaries have daunting jobs, and God remains forever faithful.

It was reassuring to hear from our own children that they not only enjoyed Sunday School, but just as importantly, that they learned something new about God's Word. Aubren would show us her good coloring on her worksheet and then we would ask, "What was your lesson about in Sunday School today?" She could relate it clearly because some great Biblical teaching had obviously occurred the hour before. As a parent, I have always been so grateful for the Sunday School program here at Faith. Doug and I have been reassured by the fact that the girls were *learning* about Christ during that hour.

Recently, following the stepping-down of Sunday School superintendent, Mrs. Hilary Kvale, after her 10 years of skill- ► 15

People I have known

Ian Hamilton

By Rev. Dr. Rob Rayburn

“We took a special train for soccer fans.... It is the sort of experience one must share with a Christian friend!”

It has been some time since the last installment in this series was published, enough time indeed to have prompted the thought that it might be better to consider the series finished and to begin again with something else. But I had always planned to include an article on Ian Hamilton, my friend of many years and a man I greatly admire, and I didn't want to complete the series without having done so. Ian is worth an article also because some of you know him, more or less well, through his several visits to Tacoma through the years or through encounters with him in Scotland and England as part of the biennial Covenant High School church history trips to Great Britain. You will not remember him, as Florence and I do, as a much younger man, a seminary student, as he was when we first met him in Edinburgh in September of 1975. Ian had met and become friends with my sister and brother-in-law, Bronwyn and Steve Leonard. Steve, a Covenant Seminary graduate, was completing a Masters at Edinburgh University. When we arrived in Scotland, before traveling up to Aberdeen, we spent several days with the Leonards in Edinburgh. It was then they introduced us to Ian.

I can't remember how often we saw Ian during that first year; he was still completing his seminary studies at Edinburgh University's New College, one of the divinity schools of the Church of Scotland. But a year later he came to a congregation of the Church of Scotland in Aberdeen as a pastoral intern and our friendship blossomed. We had him to our apartment for meals, he and I enjoyed Bible studies together, and he worshipped with us on the Lord's Day evenings at Gilcomston South. He was, as we were, an admirer of William Still, the pastor of that avowedly evangelical church and the undisputed leader of a circle of evangelical pastors who labored in what was already then a decidedly liberal denomination. It was during that year that we discovered that we shared a similarity of outlook and became fast friends. Interestingly, while we made many friends during our three years in Scotland, Ian is one of the few whose friendship has endured as a real force in our lives. For that, I remain immensely grateful to God.

Ian was raised in an unbelieving home. His father was a Glaswegian laborite, a working man and a socialist by conviction. I remember sitting in the Hamilton living room in Glasgow one evening and Ian's father telling me, with a twinkle in his eye, "Ian's problem is that he thinks manual labor is a Spaniard!" Ian was a university graduate, had by then completed his seminary degree, and would later go on to do further graduate study. This was something new in the Hamilton family. Ian had become a Christian during his university days and almost immediately, in the providence of God, had become associated with that sturdy group of Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) evangelicals who were in those days still a considerable force in the church.

In any case, during the remaining two years of our sojourn in Scotland, we enjoyed Ian's friendship tremendously. I remember he and I attending a World Cup qualifier between Scotland and what was then Czechoslovakia at the old Hampden Park in Glasgow. Soccer stadiums of Great Britain in those days were still terraces. Most spectators stood; there were few seats. They held immense crowds, but they were nothing like the palaces in which Britain's top teams and England and Scotland's national teams play today. You could feel the back of the man in front of you – there were few women spectators in those days – and the front of the man behind you (very likely partially inebriated already). We took a special train for soccer fans back to Aberdeen that night and by the time we reached our destination, our coach resembled a scene from Dante's *Inferno*: drunken men who had vomited profusely fast asleep, some on the benches, some on the floor. It is the sort of experience one must share with a Christian friend!

Following our departure for the United States, Ian went on to graduate school, taking his MPhil from Edinburgh University in 1979. His Masters' thesis on the inroads of liberalism in 19th century Scottish Calvinism could and should have earned him a doctorate, but he left the program sooner than the doctorate required to take the pastorate of the Ayrshire town of Newmilns, located some 25 miles south of Glasgow. He would remain there for 20 years conducting a

ministry quite different than would be familiar to Presbyterian pastors in the United States. Because he was the minister of a parish of the national kirk, he was the town's pastor, whether or not the townsfolk ever attended services on the Lord's Day. Through the years, Ian came to know virtually everyone in the town and conducted hundreds of weddings and funerals, always with an eye to gospel witness. Because it was the town's church, Ian also had a spiritually divided congregation, with perhaps the majority of his parishioners being people who had only a tenuous claim to be genuine followers of the Lord Jesus. But among his folk were also a number of splendid Christians who loved and appreciated the faithful ministry of their pastor.

Before his arrival at Newmilns, he had met and married Joan with whom he was to have four children, two sons and two daughters. Their son, David, is remembered here for having spent a year among us while studying at the University of Puget Sound. A wonderful family, Florence and I were able to meet Joan and their youngest children for the first time in 1984 when we traveled from Amsterdam, where I was enjoying a sabbatical at the Free University, to spend a week in Scotland in the early spring. Seeing Ian and meeting Joan were primary reasons for the trip!

In 1999, Ian left Newmilns and the Church of Scotland to pastor a new Presbyterian church in Cambridge, England, a move that surprised a number of his friends who knew Ian to be a Scot through and through! And, as I had discovered during my years in Scotland, the more Scottish one was, the less interested in England he was! I once remember Ian saying that he wouldn't cross the street to see the Queen! But Cambridge offered many attractions. The small Presbyterian denomination, of which the congregation was a part, revered the Bible as the Word of God as the Church of Scotland no longer did. Instead of being the only evangelical minister in his presbytery, he would be able to devote some time to the mentoring of young ministers. As it happened, the mentoring of young men who came from all over the world to earn doctorates in theological subjects at the University was to become an important legacy of his Cambridge

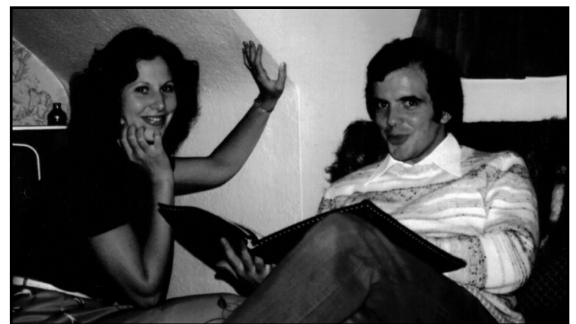
years. Cambridge was, and remains, a center of the world's intellectual life, an ideal place to have a strong preaching ministry.

American Presbyterians also came to appreciate Ian's theological convictions, his impressive knowledge of John Calvin's life and writing, his pastoral wisdom, and his personal geniality; for these reasons and others, Ian has traveled "across the pond" frequently through the years. A trustee of the Reformed publishing house *Banner of Truth*, he has preached at their conferences, lectured at American seminaries, taught for Ligonier, and occupied a number of American pulpits.

I suspect that many people who hear Ian preach come away with the feeling that they had been carried back in time. He certainly does not sound very like the preachers that fill PCA pulpits today. His is a reverence, a gravity, and even an oratorical style of a day gone by, very like that of the exceptional Scottish preachers under whom he sat when first a Christian: especially George Philip of Sandyford Henderson Church in Glasgow, George's brother James Philip of Holyrood Abbey Church in Edinburgh, and William Still of Gilcomston South Church in Aberdeen.

In my mind Ian is an outstanding representative of the very best of the Presbyterian ministerial tradition: a godly man, a learned man, an eloquent preacher, a faithful husband, father, and pastor; committed to the rich theological tradition of the Presbyterian/Calvinist church but, at the same time, wide-spirited and ready to acknowledge both weaknesses in his own camp and truth and godliness in believers who cannot dot our theological "I"s or cross our theological "T"s. Ian is an encourager, a modern Barnabas. He certainly has been a great encouragement to me through the years! I thank God for such a friend through so many years of my life and for the example that he has set for me as for so many others. ♦

"Ian is an outstanding representative of the very best of the Presbyterian ministerial tradition."



Florence and Ian in our Aberdeen apartment (1977)

My journey

by Barbara Simpson

Over these past two years I have seen much of God's faithfulness in the midst of trial. Both of my parents and my Dad's parents lived well into their late 80's, and I naturally assumed it would be much the same for me. Then in 2012 I noticed a slight weakness in my left hand. Over the next four years the weakness increased and in 2016, I was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

I think most people are familiar with ALS. It is a disease with an unknown cause and no cure that causes the nerves to the muscles over which we have conscious control to die. As the nerves die, the muscles atrophy or waste away resulting eventually in the loss of the ability to move, swallow, speak, and breathe. The diagnosis was devastating and changed everything for us. Even though my hopes for the future were gone and replaced with fear, dread, grief, and discouragement, I never doubted God's sovereignty, love, faithfulness, and power.

Initially, I grieved the death of the dreams and expectations we had for our lives. I dreaded the likely future that was before us here on earth. At



Mike and Barbara Simpson are long-time members of our family here at Faith Presbyterian Church

times, I still mourn as the losses accumulate, as I give up another activity I love, and as my world becomes smaller. A friend pointed me to a John Piper quote: "Occasionally, weep deeply over the life you hoped would be. Grieve the losses. Then wash

your face. Trust God. And embrace the life you have." I know that these are wise and true words. Embracing my present life has been slow but it has been possible. While at times I still struggle with discouragement and disappointment, at the same time, I know the Lord is faithful, showing me truth, upholding me, teaching me, comforting me, encouraging me, and enabling me to live with confident hope in Him. This is all of the Lord! As the months have passed, God by His grace, has strengthened and helped me using a

variety of means to bring me safely to this point.

First, there are the prayers of my family, and brothers and sisters in Christ. Knowing that they are praying has been a great comfort and encouragement. The Lord's work in my life is an answer to those prayers. Without those prayers, I wouldn't be doing as well spiritually as I am. Also, there are my own prayers. When I pray I can bare my soul to the Lord, plead with him, and he will not turn away. Knowing that he listens and wisely provides is a real comfort to me.

Second, there is God's word and the *truth* and *facts* found in his word. The *truth* of Romans 8:28 is certain—"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." He *is* sovereign. He *is* holy. He *is* just. He *is* merciful and good. These are all *facts* about his unchanging character. Then there are the *facts* of Christ's death for my sins, his resurrection, my salvation, the Holy Spirit's comfort, and that Heaven awaits. The Lord and Heaven are nearer and more immediate with more certainty, comfort, and hope in His word and my future. Matthew 6:34 is a verse I repeat to myself. "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." The *truth* of this verse defeats my anxiety. In the midst of my struggle, God strengthens and enables me to live today and leave the future in his hands.

Third, there is fellowship with my brothers and sisters in Christ. The conversations I've had and the ordinary times I've spent with friends and family doing ordinary things have encouraged me and brightened my days.

Finally, I have found the greatest encouragement, comfort, and peace in worship. The fact that when we worship we are in God's presence, near to Him, hearing His words, speaking truth to ourselves and to Him, and speaking to Him in prayer comforts my soul. Worship brings Heaven closer and turns my eyes and heart to truth and eternity rather than this finite, sinful world. I need weekly worship!

A few months after my diagnosis, I realized I had a choice before me. I could spend the rest of my life here filled with bitterness, anger, dis- ➤

Being the gospel to our girls

How should we interact with the young women in our church when we see things we think are inappropriate or offend us? It is so easy to be critical and it is so hard to be gracious. Proverbs 25:11-12 reminds us, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver. Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reproof to a listening ear.”

I asked several moms for their advice and it all boiled down to this: if you don’t have a relationship with someone, you have not earned the right to speak into her life. We need to separate what is sin and what is preference. What is sin should only be addressed by the girl’s mother or someone very close to her. Our responsibility is to show love, interest in her activities, and model what true Christian women look like.

One woman had excellent advice, “If a girl’s appearance is troubling to you, the very first thing you should realize is that the appearance is, more often than not, just a surface-level symptom of a much more deeply rooted issue in the heart. So many of these conversations about girls’ appearances seem to center around making the symptom go away so that everyone can pretend that the heart issue doesn’t exist. She needs *life* spoken into her heart. She needs a safe place to

unpack her insecurities, to confess her sins, to wrestle with stuff that most people in faith circles don’t even discuss in polite conversation. The first step, before a word is uttered to her about anything at all, is to pray for wisdom and discernment. Pray that God would reveal the root of the problem and surround her with people who can speak life into the dark places and help her. Her heart must matter more than her looks, and she has to know and experience the reality of this if anything is going to change at all.”

How can we speak truth into girls’ lives? How can we be the gospel to them? We begin by being curious and interested in her circumstances and life. If we notice a girl who is troubled, we can go out of our way to get to know her.

We can also be the gospel to the girl’s mother by engaging her compassionately, listening to her, refraining from advice unless we are familiar with the situation, promising (and keeping the promise) to pray for her and her child(ren), continuing to pursue her and ask how she is doing.

It can be awkward to interact with our teens and young women when we don’t know them well—especially when we suspect they are struggling. So the most simple advice is to look her in the eye, smile, say “Hi, I’m so glad to see you.” ♦

by Dawn Darby



“Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”
Proverbs 16:24

Journey, continued

◀ courage, or preoccupation with finding a cure, or I could trust God and strive to live by faith, being thankful for each day. I chose the latter. As I’ve grieved losing those abilities that give me joy here, I have reminded myself that the joys of Heaven await and far outshine all earthly joys. Now I don’t look at death without Heaven and eternity beyond.

In the last two years there have been many unlooked-for blessings from the Lord both materially and spiritually. How God has used my three short years in the Army almost thirty-five years ago to provide me some benefits from the VA still amazes me. I marvel at God’s kind, gracious providence. Another blessing is having three of our four children so close. We have their help,

the pleasure of their company, and much conversation. Then there is Mike’s earlier-than-expected retirement allowing us to spend each day together. We are just beginning to get used to that! ☺ Finally, I’ve had the privilege of seeing my faith, a gift from God, at work as I’ve looked at death and dying. All of these gifts from first to last are from the Lord. “So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (Corinthians 4:16-18) ♦

The Isaiah 58 solution

by Jonathan Nichols



How does a church member, like you, find the most appropriate ministry opportunity to serve local people in need? If, for example, you have a burden to serve people with addiction issues, can you easily identify some local Christian ministries which would be glad for your help? Or if you were looking for a way to volunteer for a Christian ministry on a Tuesday night, would you have an index of ministry opportunities that are needing help on that specific day of the week? On Sunday, June 10th, Faith Presbyterian launched a new initiative called Isaiah 58. “If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday,” (Is. 58:10) The purpose of the initiative is to facilitate and encourage the connection of church members to local opportunities to serve widows, orphans, immigrants, refugees, and the poor in like-minded ministries. A training component, C3 Ministries, seeks to equip people with the knowledge and skills they might need to more

effectively meet the needs of the poor and marginalized. The connecting component creates an inventory of our Faith Presbyterian ministries with other local ministries raising awareness through tools such as the (forthcoming) website and ministry fairs such as we enjoyed on June 10th.

Getting out of our comfort zone and into Christian service often shows us that we need to grow in order to succeed at serving well. Has relating to and serving people outside our circles sometimes felt overwhelming to you? Have you ever plunged into a ministry, felt overwhelmed, and wished for someone to come alongside to discuss some of the dynamics that make relationships and ministry challenging? Much of the training component of Isaiah 58 will be fulfilled by C3 Ministries (Care and Comfort, in Community), a new Faith Presbyterian ministry debuted at the Isaiah 58 fair by Andrew and Sandy Milton. C3’s purpose is to explore practical ways to give care and comfort through relationship building, entering into grief, understanding poverty, and recognizing status. The trainings for C3 Ministries are to be held quarterly and provide practice in care and comfort skills critical in any ministry or relationship. Please contact Andrew Milton for more information (amilton1000@gmail.com).

The connecting component of Isaiah 58 has begun with an annotated inventory of Pierce County ministries by Deacon Nate Shelden. This “Community Resource Guide” goes a long way toward informing Christians of local needs and encouraging service. Additional ministry fairs, Sunday school sessions, and a website are planned to further enhance those connections. In the long term, the Isaiah 58 initiative seeks to reach out to other churches and invite them to activate their own congregants through the Isaiah 58 connecting and training tools. In turn, Isaiah 58 will feature and connect the outward-facing ministries of their church to other churches such as Faith and provide additional training as appropriate. While learning more about local kingdom work and activating Christian service, an exciting benefit of Isaiah 58 will be to grow relationships between churches—working, learning and loving across congregational and cultural lines. ♦

Member Changes

January to July, 2018

Additions to Membership

(includes people joining our church and children moving from child to communicant membership status)

Marie Seifert, 1/28
Jonathan Kamke, 2/11
David Lind, 3/18
Kaylee Aown, 3/25
Jacob Isenberger, 4/15
James Sheridan, 5/6
Annika Whaley, 5/27
Ian and Jocelyn MacGregor family, 6/3
Flynn Downie, 6/24
Barbi David, 7/29

Baptisms

Christian Bellarts, child, 1/14
Abigail Fahling, child, 1/28
Clara Hemmings, adult, 2/11
Luna Murphree, child, 2/25
Abraham Skrivan, child, 6/17

Deaths

John Pribyl, 1/14
Rose Halinen, 6/24
Minda Starr, 6/25

Marriages

Joe Burke and Elissa Hastings, 6/16

Poetry corner

Reflected Glory

Christina Sullivan

The rich dark green, the even deeper brown,
The silent stillness, all except the sound
Of higher emeralds rustling, as the breeze
Descends from heaven to stir the maple trees.
What mind could know before these came to be,
What eye of the imagination see,
And whose the ear that heard this gentle sound
Save His, whose beauty does the senses crown?
And if the *made* is all we hear and see,
Then, think what must the mighty Maker be?
So, look and know the beauty of the world
And taste and see the goodness of the Lord!
—The earth declares the glory of our King
And with the echoes of His beauty rings! ♦

Time's Truce

Abraham Sullivan

On timeworn books the golden sunlight falls,
Ten thousand dusty tomes within these walls;
And down the rows of reds and greens and golds,
These books the wisdom of the centuries hold.
Here Socrates and Plato lie interred,
Each page is yellowed; faded are the words
That echoed once through halls of ancient fame--
Here Cicero, who Cataline once blamed.
Here men who empires built upon their thoughts,
In power struggles locked, they fiercely fought.
But now close friends and sharpest rivals meet;
The marbled covers touch and greet;
In close proximity they're forced to cease;
Between adjacent books there must be peace.
Once men before them shrank in quaking fear,
With adulation men their words would hear.
But now these men, though called by scholars great,
Are here consigned to moth-eaten fate.
Into these halls there enters not a one;
The only one to see them is the sun. ♦

Summer Camp

Bonnie Payne

There was a man this summer past
Was chaplain of the camp of youth.
And every day and for an hour
He broke the bread of life and truth.

They listened well and then they played
He joined them there as well.
He gave himself to be their friend
This man named Hugh Wessel.

The last day came, he bid them come
If they were want to pray.
To his surprise they stood in line
For few would say him nay.

Praise the Lord in joyful measure!
Who can trace the Spirit's power?
He who brought these kids for pleasure
Gave the man of God this hour.

From this summer changed forever
Will the Lord a leader grow?
We can only hope and wonder
Ours to marvel, not to know. ♦

*(Hugh Wessel is an MTW
missionary in France.)*

Faith blasts off

1 ◀ endeavor, to bring in, bless, and follow up with the adventurers who mean to follow Christ.

In the spirit of our baptismal vows, this ministry means the encouragement of our covenant children. Those who are familiar with the stories, hymns, faces, and architecture of our community experience the extraordinary value of VBS's transformation of our people and place in order that younger students might hear the stories differently, know and love more than just the few adults who routinely teach Sunday school, shave down calloused expectations, surrender their world of issues to Another and, in short, encounter Christ afresh. The motivation to invite their friends into the thrill of the unfolding story is scarcely containable and friends outside of our covenant bonds are asked to join in the only story that grants true value to their own.

In comparison to VBS 2017, this summer's space program saw a swell in attendance of children with no home church, many of whom did not know whether they even had a Bible in their home; ten Bibles were handed out to meet that need! Also, children representing thirteen other community churches attended. While this answered the prayer to share our faith with the outside world, it also put real stress on the group dynamics in the individual classes. This necessarily means a call for more volunteers, greater structure and smaller, more intimate group sizes for VBS 2019 a must. Also, figuring out the follow-up with these families is a real desire, not only keeping the kids engaged, but also welcoming the parents into our community to disciple a new walk with Christ. Will you consider writing a note to an unchurched attendee, or even dropping off cookies or some other treat?

Already hinted at, but requiring further detail, the weight of this project cannot be carried by



one, or even a small group of members. True, some take on more responsibility than others, but the blessing of such a large program is the demand for intersectional participation and communication. The band, comprised both of middle school and high school students and led by Commander Khalia Bentson, did a wonderful job of leading worship, songs my children are still singing to one another a month later. Do you know the specific giftings of the individuals you sit beside on a Sunday morning? Would it bless you to see Christ's body at work in such a tangible manner? This week binds those participating together in mission, drawing out talents of art, music, story-telling, game organizing, snack construction, and nurturing leadership and service, just to name a few. If you could not envision a role for yourself this past summer, let me guarantee there is one, and the easiest way to know that is to pray for and seek the students themselves.

While the long game is always Heaven, this ministry is a very real part of our short game, an immediate goal for a covenantal community looking to both build intimacy in its own walls and extend her arms round those who would otherwise never darken her doors. We, knowing ourselves to be lost but for the pursuing shepherd, run like the Samaritan woman, from the well, into town, only to say, "Come and see, [the God-man, who saw me, knew me and did not look away. He knows you too]. And perhaps, in this year, those faced with such an invitation will say, "Let us see for ourselves." Look around you, look up, look low, look forward and behind, and pray for the eyes to see who you and perhaps your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will reach for, sharing in our matchless adventure. All hands on deck! ♦



Onward, upward: Graduates share future plans

by Abraham Sullivan



Haylee Darby

Haylee loves "...any physical activity that gets me moving and outside." This includes mountaineering, rock climbing, hiking, trail running, biking, and weightlifting. Haylee says, "As Christians, I think we ought to be some of the best environmental stewards. I hope to use my passions for the outdoors and nature to glorify God in whatever capacity I can and draw my passion back toward Him and His creation." This helps inform her plans to study Environmental Science and Resource Management at UW Seattle, where she will attend Green Lake Presbyterian Church. For the long term, she wants to work outside as long as she can, and is considering pursuing jobs in mountain guiding, wildland firefighting, search and rescue work, and trail building and maintenance. She says, "We will see where the Lord takes me!"



William Darby

William went to Covenant College and graduated with a degree in Computer Science with concentration in Cybersecurity. He minored in music. This next year, he is staying in Chattanooga, TN, working and volunteering at the nonprofit Expression Engine. He explains, "Expression Engine is focused on teaching music theory and instrumental experience to underprivileged children in the East Lake Community of Chattanooga, as well as teaching children about Jesus and Christian values."

**Other graduates to whom we heartily wish our best are Spencer Gross (Covenant College), Roy Martin (Masters, University of WA), Daniel Matsuda (Bates Technical College), Sean Wynn (Bates Technical College), and Yelezaveeta Woodard (Covenant High School).*

Abigail DeGraaf

Abigail attended Covenant College and was a Theatre major. She is currently in Covenant College's Master of Arts in Teaching program for the next year, nursing hopes of landing a job teaching theatre and acting for pay. She continues to love to read, watch movies, and ski.



Ian DeGraaf



Ian enjoys reading biographies, playing soccer, hiking, journaling, playing grand strategy games, and adds, "Some might call me an avid putt-putt golfer." He says that Covenant High School taught him, "...the importance of discipleship and the

immensity of my sin and realizing how hard it is to be good." Ian plans to go to Covenant College next and study History, Business, and Music. While there, he will be "...seeking to continue the cultivation of my faith, as well as trying to be a good friend and brother in Christ to those around me."

Ian Jimmink

Besides schoolwork, Ian enjoys hiking, writing, reading, dancing, gardening, and volunteering at Better English on Sixth. Faith Presbyterian has been greatly blessed by Ian's writing abilities as he wrote the Christmas Program play and Easter play for the Sunday School. He plans to take a year to save up money for studies in



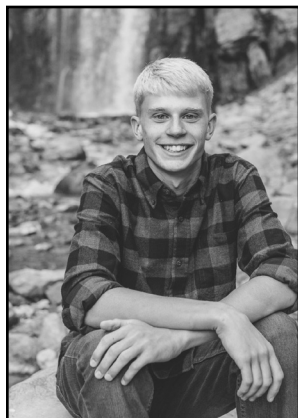
aviation maintenance at Clover Park Technical College. Eventually, he plans to work as an airplane mechanic while he studies to be a missionary pilot.

Mackenzie Knight



Mackenzie is heading to the Honors College at Montana State University, double majoring in Education and Nutrition. She plans to get involved in a local church and one or two of the Christian clubs in the school. She also can't wait for the hiking, cross-country skiing, backpacking, and academic opportunities that await.

Evan Kvale



Evan enjoys playing his guitar and reading. Next year, he will begin studying for his Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Culture at New Saint Andrews College. As for the long-term future, he's not sure yet where God wants him. He says, "For now, I'll

use my gifts to study hard."

Nathan Lawty

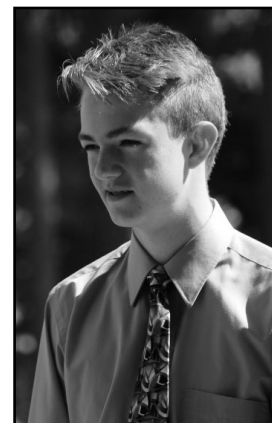
Nathan will be heading to George Fox University, planning to study to become a nurse or doctor. He says, "That way, I can heal people's bodies with my work while healing their souls with the gospel." He describes himself as a huge theatre nerd, and he loves music, singing, playing the piano, and even composing music. When asked about a long-term plan, Nathan



replied, "I don't have much of a long-term plan. If my life through high school has taught me anything, it's that God will take whatever plan you have, and show you the hard way that it is meaningless compared to His plan for your life. Because of this, I've learned not to put too much stock in my own plans, but rather trust in God's."

Nico Roberts

Nico Roberts loves soccer, cello, fishing, and being outdoors. He recalls, "One of the most important things I learned (and am still learning) is the importance of a servant's heart. I saw this firsthand in the example set by Mr. Hannula and Mr. McLin." This fall, he will begin studying Computer Science at the University of Washington (Tacoma). Long term, he hopes to work in the technology field, live in Washington, and make frequent trips to Alaska.



Abraham Sullivan

Abraham loves reading biographies and old books (his favorite being Iain Murray's volumes on Martyn Lloyd-Jones), playing the piano, listening to classical music, and being with his family. He has long felt a call to ministry. In fact, as a toddler he referred to himself as "singing man," viewing the most significant part of the pastor's job as leading hymns. That said, as he's grown, God has continued to lay on him a heart of compassion with a recognition of the immense responsibility of pastoral work. Abraham will attend Hillsdale College in the fall, studying for a degree in his long-favorite subject, history, which he hopes to use to encourage future congregants. Eventually, he plans to go to seminary, study for a doctorate, and serve as a pastor.



Malachi Tamminga

Malachi will attend George Fox University this fall and is planning to study mechanical or biomedical engineering. Malachi loves reading, 3D printing, making art, and composing on the piano. Someday, Malachi hopes to move back to Washington and work as an engineer and raise a family. ♦



Meet your neighbor

Introducing Mary Moseley

by Jennifer Sullivan

Have you noticed the flowers and trees lately? One has only to step outside and view the variety of color and form to be awestruck by the creativity of God's work. When put together, those individual marvels form a complementary garden in which a nourishing space is created. Well, even more, one has only to step outside their church pew to notice the amazing variety and beauty growing right here in Faith Presbyterian Church! And as it's a shame not to take a minute to stop and smell the actual roses right outside our own front door, it'd be a shame not to take a minute and meet your neighbor! This new series intends to cultivate that space. So, sit back a minute and take a moment to Meet your neighbor!

A recent transplant here at Faith, Mary has taken root and graced us with her life for the last couple years. That time has been enriching for her and her daughter and son-in-law, Emily and Brien Downie, who already attended Faith. Recently, she has begun a difficult season with a serious cancer diagnosis. But as Mary says, "There's a lot of life before that. This is just the last part of the story."



Mary Moseley

Mary's childhood held a dash of the Von Trapp music camps mixed with Holiday Inn! Her parents owned two inns, one for snow-birders in Florida, and one for the summer in New Hampshire. Her family, along with much of the staff, traveled back and forth seasonally to run the two establishments, enjoying the changing scenery themselves. The guests enjoyed daily-hosted activities like square dancing, tennis, golf, and movie viewings. The children, including Mary and her older brother, were treated to organized games and crafts. She looks back at those years as enchanted. She even made a transatlantic ocean voyage to England during which they were called to dinner by a bell melody. Growing up, her parents took them to church regularly. Though their belief in God was real

and unquestioned, a deeper understanding of Christianity wasn't voiced in the home.

Changes came for Mary as she approached high school. Mary's father passed away when she was twelve, and the business was sold. Her admired older brother went to boarding school, and Mary prepared to follow him there for her own high school years. A working farm as well as multi-faceted high school, Mary's new school provided a complete array of interesting growing opportunities.

We had farm chores, as well as other hands-on skills outside of school classes. I have always valued music, especially live music. My high school had an excellent choir. Even though I was not a solo performer, I loved being a part of it. Our amazing music teacher directed us in a yearly Messiah performance that drew people from all over New England to attend. We also had a fantastic student orchestra that would pull in a local professional trumpeter to play the trumpet score for the concert.

Unfortunately, Mary also heard things at her school that undermined her faith. Without deeper roots, she accepted the new idea that there is no God. Moving to California after graduating, she continued drifting away from her roots. She started college there, finished in New York, and went back to California as an adult without real faith or direction. Meeting an old acquaintance from her high school opened the door to the next phase of her life. Introduced through him to a small Bible-based, non-profit organization that sought to make the world a better place primarily through school programs, she found herself drawn completely into the group. This brought both the best and the worst parts of her story. The best was that she was led to the Lord through the woman in charge of the operation! She also met her beloved husband here, who was involved with this mission, and they had their children, Jonathan and Emily. However, what she did not realize at the time was that this group was not a healthy nourishing place but had become the tool of a controlling leader whose influence brought much harm as it pulled people into a lifestyle which took on the aura of a cult. Mary's

family was damaged. Her husband took his life when the children were young. She continued working with the group, but through a timely dream, God called her to leave. Her family would find healing through a long and hard journey.

Mary moved back east to be near her mother. During this time, she began to experience the effects of having been so manipulated by those who claimed to be working for God. She felt shattered as a person, and her children were reeling. Jonathan eventually moved back to California for college and was wonderfully helped by a Catholic cousin who mentored and centered him. He eventually found his pace in a career pursuit and maintained a relationship from afar. Younger Emily struggled at home and then in boarding school, as she tossed about emotionally and in lifestyle. Moving to California, Emily was running hard towards darkness when God called her into His marvelous light! But that is part of her story.

During that time, Mary had been praying for her kids from afar as she moved on, attended a good church, and worked as a secretary at a software firm in Boston. Because of the distance relationally and geographically, she was disconnected from the full reality of the experiences of her beloved children. But God was about to bring healing to their lives through a move here to Washington, where Mary came to live during retirement.

Through the last couple years, God has brought beauty from ashes in the flowering relationship between Mary and her adult children and their families! Living close by has opened the means of going back, recognizing, communicating, and most of all, giving to God all the turmoil this family went through. Now their relationship is marked by a joyful new song. Mary felt welcomed and tangibly cared for by her new church family here at Faith. She loves to worship and sing and has joined wholeheartedly into both, to the blessing of many. Mary has been reading in Jeremiah and Hebrews simultaneously in her Bible reading plan. Some of her favorite verses are from Jeremiah 31 and are repeated in Hebrews 8! As she read those verses to me, they

seemed like a stamp on her family's life. They talk about the faithful love of God through Israel's long, mixed journey, and the joyful redemption God will bring from that which is too strong for His people.

I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow. There is hope for your future, declares the LORD, and your children shall come back to their own country. I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Now, Mary faces an unexpected turn in her journey. Not long ago, she began to feel strange symptoms and was advised to check it out. The startling result was the discovery that she has cancer throughout her body. With such a diagnosis, surgery is not an option, so she is undergoing chemotherapy, not as a cure, but a hopeful retardant to expand the one-year timeframe she has been given. Her son, Jonathan, and his new wife, Alicia, have moved up to spend this time supporting Mary and enjoying their refreshed relationship. If you know Mary, her calm face of this final trial will have made an impression on you. As Mary says:

"The Lord is faithful. God is the same in His character. I am not just filling time right now, I am still growing and learning through the cancer. That gives me the opportunity to be a person of more encouragement to others, and that is an upward-thrusting thing."

Mary is one who continues to bloom and give glory to God no matter the season! There is so much more that could be told—but this was only a short stop to "smell the roses." People are fascinating! Talking with Mary was so encouraging to me, and another reminder of the amazing work God is doing right here in our own back yard. ♦

"The Lord is faithful. God is the same in His character. I am not just filling time right now, I am still growing and learning through the cancer."

Ask a pastor

Answers by
Rev. Dr. Rob Rayburn

The "Ask a Pastor" column considers selected questions submitted by congregants. If you would like to participate, please submit your question either by email to editor@faithtacoma.org or to the labeled box in the red narthex.

Question: I noticed that our Easter evangelistic sermon did not mention Hell. Is it appropriate to discuss Hell with the lost who we are trying to win for Christ, or does it make us guilty of trying to scare them into salvation?

Answer: I ordinarily do not mention Hell in an Easter sermon or in virtually any sermon with an evangelistic emphasis. Any hearer who had a genuine interest would probably understand that the need for God's forgiveness presumes the threat of punishment, but even to mention that punishment then requires careful definition and a clearing away of typical objections and the main point of the sermon has thus been hijacked. I notice, for example, that the Apostle Paul in his preaching – both to Jewish and Gentile audiences – did not make a practice of elaborating the consequences of unbelief. As the Puritans used to say, "Catch them with honey." Hell can more easily be explained and justified once the heavy-laden have come to Jesus to find their rest.

Question: What does the term "church discipline" mean, and how is it exercised in this church? If someone is publicly disciplined, are we supposed to avoid social contact with him/her?

Answer: "Church discipline" is the Christian term of art for the variety of censures that, according to the Bible, might be imposed by the elders of the church in response to the sins of church people; sins that have come to light and rise to a particular standard of seriousness. Almost all Christian churches are committed to church discipline, though, to be sure, that commitment is very often honored more in the breach. Of course, we are all of us always sinning by commission and omission, but the Bible knows the difference between sins that are the private struggle of a believing man or woman, the sins that Christians and the church must endure with reflective attention, and the sins that are "scandals," the historic term for sins so serious that they require formal censure. Whether such censures are made public is determined by a variety of factors: whether the sin is public, whether it has directly affected others, how the sin was discovered, and, most important, the quality of the sinner's repentance. One can read the lengthy explanation of the practice of church discipline in our Presbyterian Church in America in its *Book of Church Order*, chapters 27-46 (now online at <http://www.pcaac.org/resources/bco/>).

Admonition, the lightest censure, is a for-

mal rebuke administered to the sinner by the elders. It may or may not be made public. Excommunication is the most severe censure, the casting out of the church of an unrepentant church member. Excommunication is imposed only at the end of a long process in which every effort has been made to recover the offender to repentance and new obedience. Such censures are taught in the Bible to be sure, famously in Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, but when all the available biblical data are collected, it is obvious that a great deal of freedom of action is granted to the elders and a great deal of biblical wisdom is required of them. The same sin may in one case require public censure and in another not depending upon several factors, most notably the judgment of the elders regarding the repentance of the sinner. It is in the case of excommunication that, in the words of the Lord Jesus himself, we are to treat the person as we would "a tax collector or sinner."

Question: As someone who faces on-going pain, how much should I avoid the use of opioid painkillers, recognizing that some Christians are called to suffer in this life?

Answer: There is nothing improper in seeking a reduction of pain. When Paul told Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach he was, according to the medical knowledge available at the time, encouraging his young associate to make use of a remedy for his upset stomach. To be sure, modern painkillers pose a risk of addiction (and, of course, at a certain level, the loss of mental acuity). The extent to which believers may risk addiction in the management of pain depends on many factors that must be assessed by doctor and patient. It is one reason why it is important to find a doctor one can trust! At the end of life, to be sure, the concern for addiction and even the fear of the loss of one's mental powers may well be trumped by the need for pain management. People differ in their ability to tolerate pain. I know Christian folk who endured great pain at the end of their lives precisely so as to maintain mental acuity to bear witness of their faith to their loved ones, to pray, and to reckon with the approach of death. Not all believers are capable of such acts of the will. The great fear of opioids nowadays is addiction after all need for pain management is past. This must be avoided and can be by careful use of the drugs, by taking care not to overuse them, and by the strict imposition of accountability. ♦

Sunday School program, continued

ful leadership, the baton was taken up by Mr. Adam Skrivan and myself. Last spring, the Sunday School Elective Program benefitted from almost 20 congregants happily stepping forward to teach everything from candle making, to bird house building, to the geography of the Holy Land. We then reaped the joys of an Easter play. Overseen by Mrs. Miriam Shelden, written by Sunday School program “graduate” Ian Jimmink and directed by a fellow graduate, Abraham Sullivan, the reenactment starred our own Covenant children, acting out the joyful story of the Lord’s resurrection.

As we find the “dog days” of summer upon us, parents, children, and teachers are thinking more and more about school beginning in September. After 25 years of faithful instruction, both Mrs. Evelyn German and Dr. and Mrs. Perkins have now retired. We enter a new phase in our church’s Christian education, and welcome new partners into our classrooms.

During the Isaiah 58 Involvement Fair on June 10th, an **additional** 16 congregants stepped forward to directly assist in some capacity with our church’s Sunday School program! From listening to memory verse recitation, to substituting, to helping with Promotion Sunday, to general teacher support, it was so very encouraging to witness such a strong number of you step forward and say, “Yes, this ministry of our church is very valuable to me, and I am willing to lend a ‘shoulder to the wheel’ to make it possible!” Thank you to each and every one of you who have recently signed up to educate the next generation of faithful believers in Christ! Our society is in dire need of these young Christian leaders.

Over the summer, Adam and I reviewed our K-8 Sunday School curriculum and refined the memory work program. If you have any questions, concerns, or encouragement to share, please feel free to contact Adam or myself. **We want to support the teachers, inform the parents, and encourage everyone related to this good work.**

If you are new to our church, or if your children have now graduated from our elementary Sunday School program, I thought it might be helpful to review who is currently involved in making that hour between the first and second services possible for our Covenant children.

We sincerely thank the members who are, Sunday after Sunday, faithfully teaching our children about the Lord, His written word, and His church around the world.

We look forward to Christ’s provision for us all. We trust fully that He will continue to be faithful to us as we follow His command to “bring up our children in the way they should go” (Proverbs 22:6). ♦

Elementary Sunday School Superintendent: Mr. Adam Skrivan

Elementary Sunday School Coordinator: Mrs. Kimberly Reis

Opening assembly (3-years through K): Mrs. Amy Lawty

Closing assembly (1st through 4th): Mrs. Jennifer Sullivan

2-year-olds: Mrs. Dorothy Proctor and Mrs. Denise Welch

3-year-olds: Mrs. Sandra Chiou and Mrs. Jane Lewellen

4-year-olds: Mrs. Debbie Mellott and Mrs. Kim St. John

Kindergarten: Mrs. Janet Jack

1st and 2nd grade girls: Mrs. Becky Wilson

1st and 2nd grade boys: Mr. Max LeFebvre and Mr. Zach St. John

3rd and 4th grade girls: Miss Constance Heermann

3rd and 4th grade boys: Mr. Joe Burke

5th and 6th grade girls: Mrs. Beth James

5th and 6th grade boys: Mr. Craig Jimmink and

Mr. Jonathan Nichols

7th and 8th grade girls: Mrs. Dana Isenberger and

Mrs. Annika St. John

7th and 8th grade boys: Mr. Kirk McMillian and

Mr. Jason VanGilder

Better English on Sixth ESL Sunday School class:

Mrs. Kathy Lewis

New volunteers from the Isaiah 58 Involvement Fair

Teaching Sunday School: Mrs. Carol Pribyl, Mrs. Amy Allen,

Mrs. Kathryn Schuster

Substitute teaching: Mrs. Carol Pribyl, Mr. & Mrs. Doug and

Janie Davey, Mrs. Hilary Kvale, Mrs. Barbi David, Mr. Jonathan

Kamke, Mrs. Hae Soo Lee

Listening to memory work recitation: Mrs. Kathy Case,

Mrs. Janie Davey, Mr. & Mrs. Bob and Kathy Sommerville,

Mr. Noah Shelden, Mrs. Wendy Kvale, Mrs. Alisha Bennett,

Mrs. Hae Soo Lee

Assisting with Promotion Sunday: Mrs. Paige Price,

Mrs. Barbi David, Mrs. Alisha Bennett

General teacher support: Mrs. Hae Soo Lee

Sunday School electives: Miss Charlotte Jimmink,

Mrs. Wendy Kvale

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Study group: ethnic relations

by Ian Jimmink

With the questions of racism and equality so long a topic in the greater American experience now at the forefront in PCA discussions, members here at Faith have begun to tackle this difficult issue. The special Sunday School class on “The State of the Disunion” and later, Rev. Jason Davison’s talk at the Men of Faith Spring Breakfast, served to introduce and begin delving into the subject of racism. However, the issue of race and injustice, a persistent player in the life of the Church today, obviously requires a more permanent way for the members of Faith Presbyterian to engage it.

Several months ago, Ruling Elder Jerry Savage initiated an Ethnic Relations Study Group which began meeting during the Sunday School hour each week (excepting Genesis 39 Sundays). Dedicated to discovering the truth about ethnic relations in our community and our church, this group,

numbering around ten people per week, adopted a dynamic course of study. They began by studying the history and issues of racism in America (focusing on the African-American experience) and now plan to shift focus to our church in particular, hopefully finding ways to bridge racial barriers more effectively.

To learn about the history of African-Americans, the study group began reading through and discussing *Before the Mayflower* by Lerone Bennet Jr., a history on the subject written at the time of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. However, shortly before the August Sunday School vacation, the group decided to transition their studies to contemporary issues. For this, the members began studying *Heal Us Emmanuel: A Call for Racial Reconciliation, Representation, and Unity in the Church*, a book on the race issues of today from a Christian perspective. The chapters are written by various authors, all teaching

elders of the PCA.

In the last two classes before the summer break, the group discussed some specific questions about race relations in Faith Presbyterian Church. This included tossing around ideas about how to gauge the sentiments of congregation members on the issues and finding ways in which to interact as a church with Christians of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The future plans of the ethnic relations study group are indeterminate at the time of this article’s writing. This group may take a more active role in our church family’s life. It also may continue to change its study focus as new facets of the racial relations question come into the spotlight. Whatever unfolds, we can be grateful for a group dedicated to carefully considering and acting on one of the most serious issues facing the American church today. ♦