

The Connection

Volume 5, Issue 3, March 2007

from Pastor Mike...

John Fisher is an author whose writings I have become acquainted with. He has brought insight and encouragement to my soul. Here is a recent piece entitled "An Eye-Opening Encounter" that reminds me that we all have a story to tell and that you do not have to be perfect to share the message of hope found in Jesus Christ. In fact it's imperfect people God uses the most. Enjoy!

An eye-opening encounter

By John Fischer

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to tell anyone who's interested how you came to know Jesus. It's all about a personal encounter. Once you know Christ, you introduce him to others through your own story. This notion that so many Christians and non-Christians have that our mission is to dazzle folks with how much better we are is not only ineffective, it is untrue.

This is precisely the kind of wrong thinking that keeps people from telling their story. "Who am I to tell someone about Jesus," the rationale goes, "when my own life is in such a mess?"

The absurdity in this kind of thinking is the fact that no one, especially Christians, will ever have it all together in this life. The fact that we aren't good enough should be the whole point of our message. We tell people about Jesus because we know, better than anyone, how much we need him. When people throw our own inconsistencies up in front of our faces, that is just another oppor-

continued on page 3

Life Hurts, God Heals

by Melanie Clark

As a Christian adult, my life has been forever changed by Celebrate Recovery and the power of Christ's love. I am a shining example of how God will take our toughest hurts and turn them into our greatest ministry.

For about a year and a half, my husband and I ran from the call to facilitate a teen recovery group. How could we possibly help other kids when we feel like we are losing the battle with our own? Well, when God wants to use you, sometimes answering is all you can do.

This teen group is meeting on Sundays at 4:00 pm to see God's miracles happen. Life Hurts God Heals is an eight step, Biblically-based program, for teens ages 13-18, who, like most of us, are dealing with hurts habits, and hang-ups. Our prayer is that kids in the Walla Walla Valley who may be feeling hopeless can find peace and a new reason to smile through the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Roy and I were blessed to be sent to Saddleback Church in California, where this program was founded. We had the opportunity to meet with Megan Hutcherson, who shared her wisdom, energy, and stories about how this program really changes lives!

We are very grateful, not just for the chance to go see this program first hand, but for the opportunity to work with some great kids here at home. Please pray that this program becomes exactly what God intends it to be, an outreach for teens to hear His word and feel His transforming love.



**Miracles
Happen**

Mission Prayer Warriors

Missionaries seek to come along side the people they serve so that they can be the hands of Jesus to those in need, but they can't do it alone. Through intercessory prayer for missionary families we can tap into God's unlimited resources so that we can stand with these missionaries — ready to fight, in full armor, the war that is waging for lost souls around the world.

Hear these words on the importance of prayer from missionaries Mark and Kim Agrellas:

"Being on the mission field in Guatemala gives us a whole different perspective on the importance of prayer. Suddenly we are thrown into a world that is way outside our comfort zone! It would be easy to focus on the much greater risk of physical danger we and our children face in Guatemala. Yet, God's Word tells us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces of wickedness (Eph. 6:12). As we work each day to share the love of Christ in this hurting world, we recognize how much the enemy wants to disrupt us — through frustration, danger, discouragement, lack of support, and exhaustion. On a daily basis we are absolutely dependant on the power of prayer from our supporters back home. In addition to releasing God's power over our lives and our mission, it is an incredible encouragement to us, just knowing you are lifting us up in prayer!"

A mission Prayer team meets every Sunday night from 6:30-7:30pm at 1010 Reser Rd. Everyone is welcome to join in. Call 526-5445 for more information.

Newsletter Deadline

If you have an upcoming event you'd like to promote, faith story or poem you'd like to share, or anything else that pertains to the life of the people of Blue Mountain Community Church, please consider writing a small article (300 words or less) and submitting it to the newsletter. The deadline for articles is the second Wednesday of each month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

PASTOR'S CAT

from Pastor Sharon

This particular story just made me laugh and think of Pastor Mike. Every time I think about it, the vision of that poor cat just amuses me to no end. Hope the story leaves a bright spot in your day. Whoever said the Creator doesn't have a sense of humor?

Dwight Nelson recently told a true story about the pastor of his church. He had a kitten that climbed up a tree in his backyard and then was afraid to come down. The pastor coaxed, offered warm milk, etc. The kitty would not come down. The tree was



not sturdy enough to climb, so the pastor decided that if he tied a rope to his car and pulled it until the tree bent down, he could then reach up and get the kitten. That's what he did,

all the while checking his progress in the car.

But as he moved the car a little further forward, the rope broke. The tree went "boing!" and the kitten instantly sailed through the air — out of sight. The pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the neighborhood asking people if they'd seen a little kitten. Nobody had seen a stray kitten. So he prayed, "Lord, I just commit this kitten to your keeping," and went on about his business.

A few days later he was at the grocery store, and met one of his church members. He happened to look into her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food. This woman was a cat hater and everyone knew it, so he asked her, "Why are you buying cat food when you hate cats so much?"

She replied, "You won't believe this," and then told him how her little girl had been begging her for a

continued on page 7

continued from page 1

tunity to tell our own story of how Christ has forgiven us on the cross and how much we need his salvation every day. So instead of being a threat to our witness, our faults and shortcomings are the very things upon which our witness hangs. If we were perfect, we wouldn't need Jesus.

When I think of the essence of our statement as Christians to those who haven't come to know Christ yet, I always think of the blind man that Jesus healed by covering his eyes with mud and telling him to go wash in the pool of Siloam (John 9:1-34). When the religious leaders got wind of it, they started to question the man extensively – wanting to know who healed him, how it happened, where the man who healed him was now, and even asking his parents to verify whether their son was in fact born blind. When they came back to the man and pressed him with questions a second time, accusing Jesus of being a sinner for doing work on the Sabbath, the man replied, “I don't know whether he is a sinner ... But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see.” (John 9:25 NLT)

That's the essence of the message: “I was blind, and now I can see; I was lost, and now I am found; I was guilty, and now I'm forgiven; I was alone, and now I have a friend.” It doesn't take a perfect life to spread that message – just someone who has had an eye-opening encounter with the living Christ. Regardless of intellect, position, status, or wealth, the message for everyone will come down to this: “I was blind, and now I can see.”

Let me encourage you to share your story! The Celebration of Easter is also a fantastic time to make an invitation to someone to come to church. Who is it that God wants you to make an invitation to? Ask Him to direct your heart.

Love, Pastor Mike

Missionary Moments

By Zelda Kelso

Webster defines “missionary” as a person commissioned by a church to propagate its faith or carry on humanitarian work. That makes teachers to children of missionaries, who are so desperately needed around the world, our missionaries.

After teaching at Christian Academy of Guatemala for 7 years, Tod and Kathy Wood felt the need to recruit teachers for MK schools all over the world.

In spite of the incredible opportunity to minister that CAG provides for teachers, most MK schools face a huge turn over of staff (30-50% each year)! They have come back to the United States so that they might reach teachers for missionary schools.

Tod has been able to network with a number of MK schools, all of whom are requesting assistance with recruitment. He is organizing their information, so he can begin networking with teacher contracts here in the states. He will be presenting a workshop focusing on educating teachers about the possibilities to serve MKs abroad.

Tod hopes not only to recruit from these teachers, but also to expand his contacts by invitations to share at their respective schools or at teacher groups and eventually Christian Colleges to open up communications with students preparing to become teachers.

If you are an educational provider, have friends who are, or would like to join with them in this ministry, you can learn more at teachabroadministries.org. You can make a difference. The classrooms are plentiful, but the informed teachers are few. Please pray that teachers will respond to the needs of Missionary Kids all around the globe.



- 12 Gary & Diane Miller
- 15 Daniel & Cheri Rockwell
- 19 Larry & Martha Lee Bussell
- 21 Steve & Kathy Nelson
- 21 Wayne & Marcella Welch
- 22 Rick & Neosha Guse
- 26 Herb & Karen Smeed
- 27 Joshua & Brianna Branscum
- 28 Scott & Marcia Napier



**Birthday
Wishes to:**



- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|-------------------|----|---------------------|
| 1 | Deanna Aichele | 12 | Tansen Branscum | 19 | Michelle Montgomery |
| 2 | Humberto Miranda | 13 | Lucas Larreau | 20 | Bethany Voss |
| 3 | Bill Saager | | John Ordway | 21 | Timothy McEuen |
| | Michael Swenson | | Curtis Voeks | | Kyle Miller |
| 6 | Leslie Culbertson | 14 | Bob Benfield | 22 | Linda Reyburn |
| | Penny Knight | | Joshua Voss | | Barbara Taylor |
| 7 | Dee Haun | 15 | Bette Durham | | Jack Wallace |
| 8 | Mike Jones | | Barbara Parker | 23 | Jeraldine Emerick |
| | Laura Schulz | | Harold Raugust | | Jeff Neissl |
| 9 | Amy Bond | | Jesse Williamson | 24 | Bradley Nelson |
| | Penny Filan | 16 | Zenada Voss | 25 | Rod Harmon |
| | Nicholas Nelson | 17 | Cindy Stewart | 26 | Caiden Leamy |
| 10 | Ty McEuen | | Ashley Wallace | 27 | Betty Hurst |
| | Ed Stites | 18 | Wanda Augustine | | Rebecca Hoppen |
| 11 | Gabe Delong | | Chelsea Cook | | Sharon Loar |
| | Shari Greiner | | Cheryl Drumheller | 28 | Bob Stewart Jr. |
| | Ryan Tackett | | Ed Gossen | 29 | Mary Blanc |
| | | | | | Gail Silva |
| | | | | 30 | Brandon McNeil |
| | | | | | Karli Plucker |
| | | | | 31 | Janice Davisson |
| | | | | | Don Redman |
| | | | | | Cager York |
| | | | | | Barbara Kinman |
| | | | | | Wanda Rogers |

Weekly Events

Sunday

GriefShare 3:00 PM
 Middle School Group 6:00 PM
 Marriage by Design 6:00 PM
 Sunday Night Live 6:00 PM
 Prayer for Missionaries 6:00 PM

Monday

Health 2007 7:00 PM

Tuesday

Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM
 Boy Scouts 7:00 PM

Wednesday

Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM
 High School Group 7:00 PM

Thursday

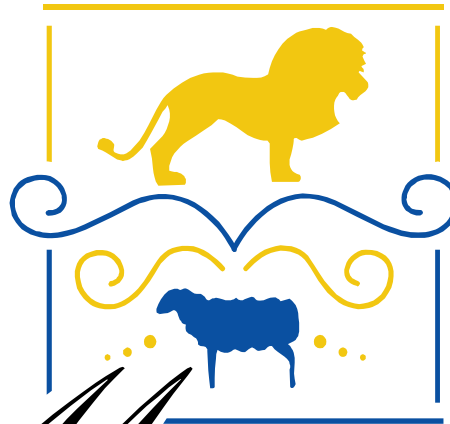
Worship Team Rehearsal 7:00 PM

Friday

Celebrate Recovery Dinner 6:00 PM
 Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

Saturday

Financial Peace University 10:00 AM



March

Monthly Events

- 1 SAMS 10:00 AM
- Celebrate Recovery Leaders 7:00 PM
- 8 Board of Elders Meeting 6:30 PM
- 9 Family Movie Night 7:00 PM
- 10 Men's Breakfast 7:30 AM
- Revolution 7:00 PM
- 11 Daylight Savings Time Begins**
- 13 Quilter's Guild 6:00 PM
- 14 Missions Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 15 SAMS 10 :00 AM
- Building & Grounds Commission 7:00 PM
- 17 3D Inc Cafe 7:00 PM
- 19 The Ark Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 22 MOPS 9:00 AM
- CE Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 24 Revolution 6:00 PM



Special Days

- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 20 First Day of Spring



From Your Administrative Pastor

*I really like John Fisher's Purpose Driven
Devotional from February 22, 2007. Enjoy!*

— Pastor Dan

"We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies." (2 Corinthians 4:8-10 NLT)

These verses are what I call the fine print of the Christian life. When you sign up, you sign up for this, but unfortunately, not too many people read that far into the contract, and not enough leaders point it out. So when bad things start happening to us, we think something went wrong with our faith. Not necessarily. In fact, it's an honor to think that your faith is worthy of being tested.

It's a reverse spiritual principle that nonetheless is true: We get beaten down so that Christ might rise in us. It's the whole idea God has of avoiding confusion. See, he doesn't want people confusing human power and achievement with his power and what he is achieving in and through our lives.

If all Christians were super-Christians, people would be impressed with them. As it is, God wants people to be surprised at us, not so much impressed – surprised that we can keep on believing, given what has happened to us. Surprised at us – impressed with God. That's the way it should go.

It's important to know this so that the things that happen don't throw us into a tailspin. Paul wrote in the passage above that troubles, confusions, knock-downs, and drag-outs are all to be expected in a life of faith, and they are not just something to suck it up

and endure, they are what will actually release the power of God in our lives. We encounter death-like experiences so that Christ's life-like nature may clearly be seen in us, despite what is happening.

This is God's strategy for ministry through us. There is no other way for it to be done. His strategy is his power and strength through our weakness – his life through our death. This doesn't just happen to some Christians; it happens to us all if we desire to be effective in our faith.

So don't forget to allow the troubles you face to springboard you into finding God's purposes even in this. He had this planned all along. It's even in the contract!

Calling the Church Office

We have upgraded the telephone system at the church. Each person now has voicemail, so you can leave any one of the church staff a message. At night you will be able to leave a message or a prayer request. Please be patient with us while we adjust to the newer equipment.





Celebrate Recovery

by Gary Stewart

Celebrate Recovery Inside

Adopted by more than 3500 churches in the past 14 years, it is currently being used in more than 50 prisons around the country. In a New Mexico prison system test, less than 10% of inmates in the voluntary program of **CR** were back in jail a year later. That is much better than the usual recidivism rate of 65 to 75 percent.

The response to our CR Inside has been excitement and overwhelming gratitude. The group has grown to about 15 men and has to split to 2 groups for their step study!

The following is a poem, Catch Twenty to Heaven, written by an inmate who is about to be released and is asking prayer for his new start.

Just became the third day of two thousand seven
Exhausted, searching of a way, to enter into heaven
Trusting and believing God, Jesus died for my sins
Yet when He lifts me up is when my trouble begins
A catch twenty two, please let me try to explain
Nothing causes me to seek the Lord like misery and pain
The times in my life when I have hurt the most
My heart so eager to accept the Holy Ghost
Actively praying, seeking out His will for me
Demons unburdened my soul once again free
Following his instructions right down to the letter
Things around me become good, my life so much better
Then I become proud, so fond of my new life
Look how "I've" overcome, endured through such strife
Praising me — not God, the Devil starts to connive
"Good Christian, here, take the wheel, you can drive"
"Why thank you kind sir" I've got the bull by the horns
Forgotten about Jesus already, "what crown of thorns?"
I've steered away from God, I'm already corrupt
Never seems to take long, before the same problems erupt
What has to be done before I can remember?

Praise God every day, January through December

...Todd Morton

continued from page 2

cat, but she kept refusing. Then a few days ago, the child had begged again, so the Mom finally told her little girl, "Well, if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it."

She told the pastor, "I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees, and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you won't believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten suddenly came flying out of the blue sky, with its paws outspread, and landed right in front of her."

Never underestimate the Power of God and His unique sense of humor!

The Moral of the story: God always answers prayer and sometimes He will use extraordinary methods to bless His children.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

It's coming!! On Sunday, May 6, get ready for an evening of musical celebration, fellowship and food. We're having a hymn sing! Plan to join us for congregational singing as well as a variety of special music. For more information, contact Richard Easton or Elissa Stites. . . and watch for further details in future newsletters.

Newborn Care Needed

A couple in our church is looking for infant care beginning in August, weekdays 6:45 am to 4:15 pm. Retired seniors and experienced parents particularly encouraged. Call the church office for more info 529-1212.

With joy you will
draw water from
the wells of
salvation.

ISAIAH 12:3



*Our purpose is to help people become
passionate followers of Christ by:*
Loving the Lord
Lifting the Lord
Learning the Word
Living to Glorify God

Our Ministry Team

Senior Pastor — Mike Hinrichsen
Administrative Pastor — Dan Huntley
Children's Pastor — Sharon Wiles
Student Ministries Interim — Adam Hinrichsen
Worship Interim Pastor — Richard Easton

A monthly publication of **Blue Mountain Community Church** 928 Sturm Ave., Walla Walla, Washington 99362, (509) 529-1212, www.bluemountainchurch.com, Editor: Julie Caton, bmccbulletin@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions: The second Wednesday of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. Unsolicited materials welcome.
© 2006 Blue Mountain Community Church.