

PLAIN VALUES

DRY POINT SOLUTIONS

IT'S ALL ABOUT CHOICES

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THE FLAVOR OF STUPID

FLEAS



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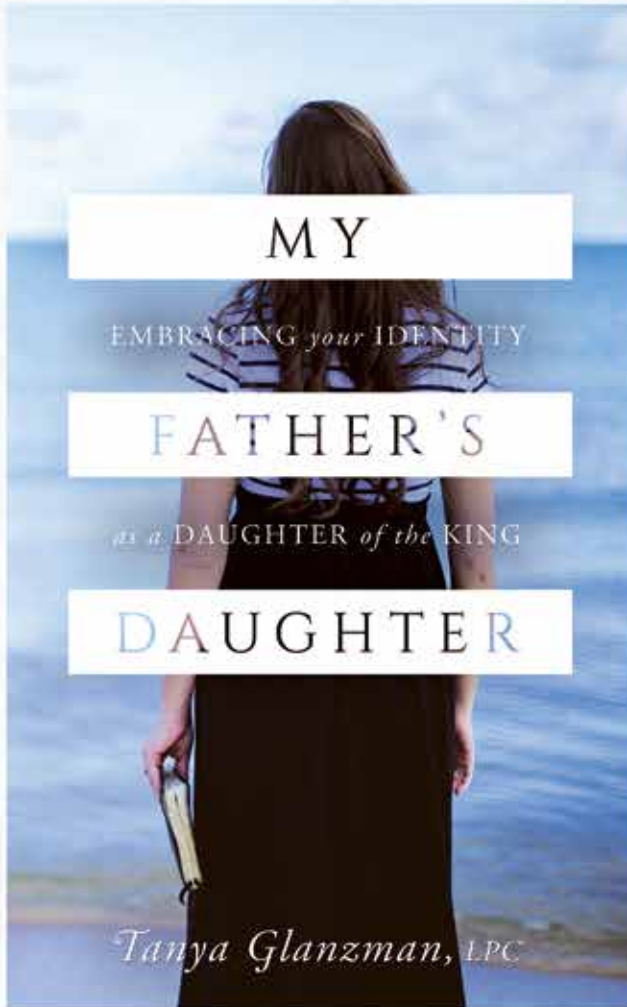
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So if you're tired, worn out, and weary, exhausted from trying to figure out this life on your own, I invite you to invite Him into your life. He has been excitedly waiting for this very moment. Like a joy-filled new Father, His heart swells with love for you. Run, Daughter. Run full speed into the arms that have been waiting to hold you and begin living in the peace, healing, and joy for which you were created. It's simply a decision to accept the gift that has been offered to you. The gift of being loved the way you were created to be.

~ Tanya Glanzman, LPC

excerpt from My Father's Daughter



PLAIN VALUES

Finding Joy in the Simple Things

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THE FORMALITIES

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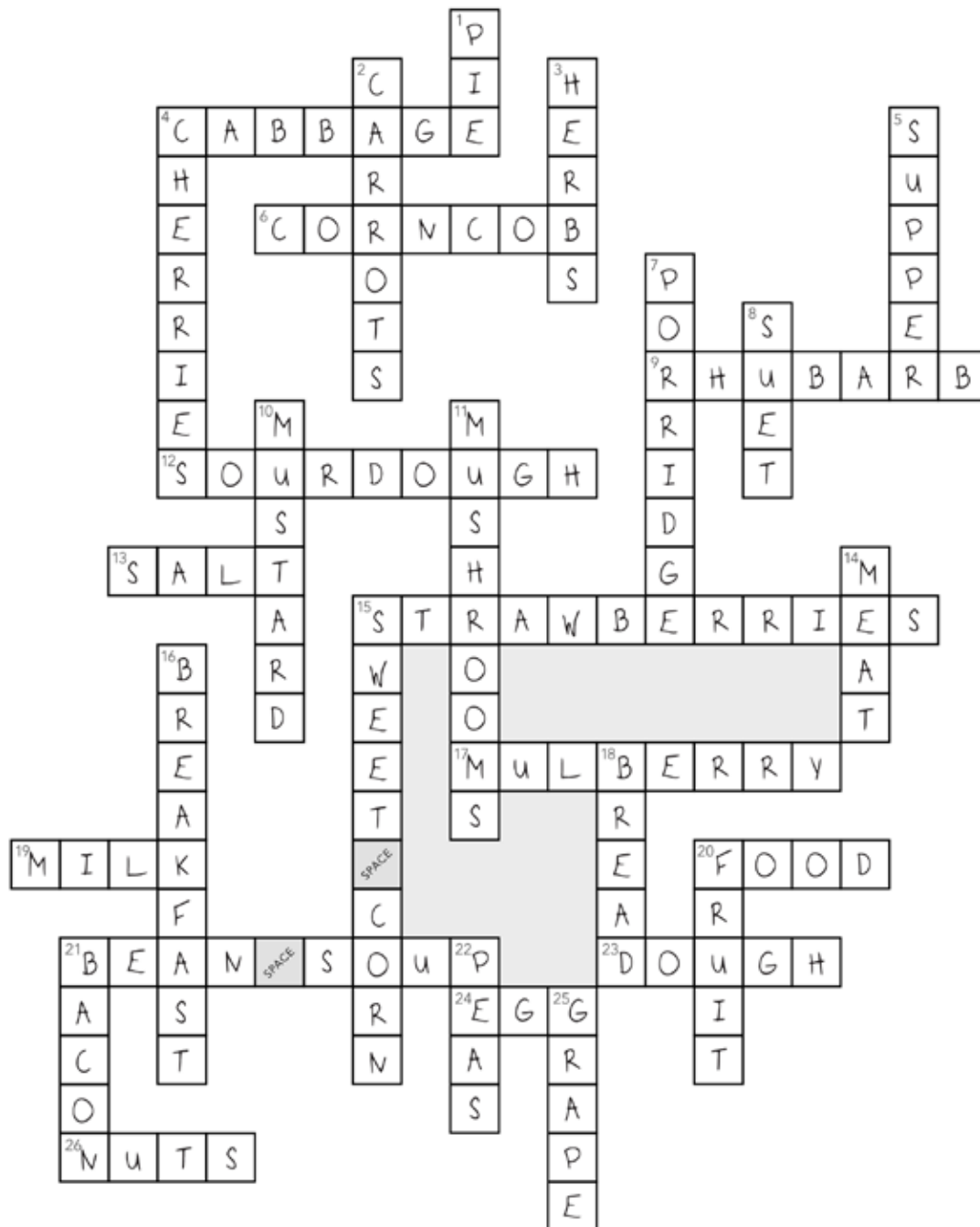
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Flea problems tend to be worse in the late summer and early fall because the populations have had time to grow.

THE PLAIN PAGES

This new section of *Plain Values* is devoted to showcasing local goods and services to our readers. Each reader will enjoy one of four editions, depending on where they live. Our hope is that the "Plain Pages" can be a resource in finding local businesses to assist you in your needs as well as in your wants. // between pages 34 and 35

CROSSWORD ANSWERS *from* LAST MONTH



Please accept our apologies for accidentally omitting the answers to the *Old Dutch Words Crossword Puzzle* from the July issue of *Plain Values*. Isaac, our graphic designer, has made amends with our crew by providing them with donuts. He is unable to send all our readers donuts, but trusts that you'll forgive him anyway.

MESSAGE

from the

PUBLISHER

words by: **MARLIN MILLER**

Last month, we looked at the wonder of the mycorrhizal network built into the underground and invisible root system of trees. I was reading Isaiah the other morning, and a passage in chapter 44 conked me on the head like an apple falling from its branch.

In what seems to be a slightly sarcastic comment, God lays out a scenario and asks us to consider what might be misguided. If you allow me, I will paraphrase it for you. God asks us to imagine this picture: A man goes out in the woods, cuts down a tree, and brings it home. He cuts it in half and roasts his dinner over one half of it. He carves the other half into an idol, bows down to it, and says, "Save me."

Then, in verse 18, God says, "They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand."¹⁹ No one considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, "Half of it I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat and have eaten. And shall I make the rest of it an abomination?

Shall I fall down before a block of wood?" ²⁰He feeds on ashes; a deluded heart has led him astray, and he cannot deliver himself or say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

Did you catch what God did right there? He basically equated an idol with a lie. When I saw that connection, I thought first of our culture and how many lies we are pushing on each other and ourselves. My mind then went to my own life... what are the idols and lies I believe every day without realizing it? What about you? Are there blocks of wood in any area of your life?

As always, may you find joy in the simple things. //





words by: Elaine Tomski



“What are you going to be when you grow up?” Tim Troyer’s father asked him this question when Tim was barely four years old.

Without hesitation, Tim answered, “I’m gonna be a blacksmith.”

Tim’s dad did not expect a young boy living in the Philippines to know anything about blacksmithing, but curious to discover Tim’s thoughts, he asked, “What does a blacksmith do?”

Tim’s answer: “Well, he puts something metal in a fire and makes it hot. Then he hits it with a hammer and makes something.”

Last month, we discovered that Tim was raised in a missionary family and founded The Reckoning International and Forest of Hope. He serves with many others to help people make a life and a living. Tim is always open to opportunities to share God’s love. He even pastored in the Sugarcreek, Ohio, area for nineteen years. Still, the desire to be a blacksmith, which God placed in Tim’s little-boy heart, never went away. Like his mother, he enjoys making things with his hands. So, one day, grown-up Tim decided to make a knife.

“I never intended to be a knifemaker. I just wanted to make one knife for myself.” Then, Tim needed to make another knife to correct the flaws in his first one. “Number two was better, but I wanted to try again for a good result.” While making the third knife, Tim began

receiving requests from other people to make knives for them. Tim said, “Sure! That’s how I became a knifemaker. And, lo and behold, I ended up being a blacksmith!”

WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND?

Tim thought it odd for a pastor to make knives, but remembers, “After I started, and got better at it, I became really fascinated with it!” One day, Tim was driving alone in his car and thinking about how much he loved his weird hobby. Then he spoke out loud, “Lord, I want you to know, if there’s anything I can do with knifemaking to bless your heart or further your purposes, I put it on the altar. Take it.” Immediately, Tim felt silly for saying such a thing to the Creator of the Universe. After all, Tim was just an amateur knifemaker. “Then,” says Tim, “I didn’t hear a voice, but I received a clear message to my heart, saying, *That’s precious to me. You’re offering me your heart and your passion. Never discount that.*”

Then, Tim recalled the biblical account of Moses in Exodus 4. “God came to Moses, and Moses felt incapable, like he was not valuable enough to play a part in God’s purposes.” He had many excuses for God. Moses was insecure about his speaking abilities. He thought Pharaoh would not believe him. Moses felt sure Pharaoh would not believe the message was from God.

“And the LORD said unto [Moses], What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod” (Exodus 4:2).

Tim says, “God used what was in Moses’ hand to accomplish miraculous deeds and free his people from slavery. The stick in Moses’ hand was the same stick used to separate the Red Sea and allow a victorious exodus for the Hebrew people.” Tim realized God could use what was in his hand, too, and remained open to the possibilities.

Now, Tim has been making knives for over twenty years and teaches others how to use their hands to create knives. Jesse Miller, Stelyn Raber, and Jordan Chumney work with Tim at Sugarcreek Forge. Together, they create custom products, collaborate on projects, and teach others how to become knifemakers and great leaders. They offer opportunities and change lives.



A FEW STEPS IN THE PROCESS
OF CRAFTING A KNIFE

ANOTHER MOSES

In 2014, a possibility became a reality when Tim met a modern-day Moses with the last name Tenywa. Although Tim was reluctant to use the time and energy, a persistent voice helped him see God’s plan. That voice was Melissa Herman.

Melissa has an agricultural degree from Ohio State University and serves as a full-time soil scientist with The Reckoning International. Since 2013, Melissa has been helping people overcome poverty through opportunity by working with farmers in Uganda and Kenya. Tim says, “She does a lot to advance our agri-based projects.”

One day, Tim was weary and ready to leave Uganda after a Forest of Hope visit. He had pushed through jet lag, packed tons of effort into several twelve-hour workdays, and was facing a two-day trip through three airports to get home. Suddenly, *ding*, a text message came through from Melissa.



**TIM REALIZED GOD COULD USE
WHAT WAS IN HIS HAND, TOO,
AND REMAINED OPEN TO THE
POSSIBILITIES.**





"Hey, on your way to the airport, I want you to stop and meet this professor. He's a great guy I met at Ohio State."

"I don't want to meet anybody right now. I'm tired and icky. I don't think I can even be nice."

"You're going to meet him, you're going to be Christlike, and you're going to be nice. You can stop and have a cup of coffee with him, and then you can go home."

"Okay!"

Soon, Tim was shaking the hand of Dr. Moses Tenywa, head of the agriculture department for Uganda's largest university. Dr. Tenywa was a Ugandan native who had gone to Ohio State on a scholarship and returned to his country with a doctorate in agriculture.

While conversing about cows and the professor's opportunities at Ohio State, Tim also learned Dr. Tenywa had founded a small church in his village and was deeply concerned about the fatherless young men unable to find jobs. Tim reports the unemployment rate in Uganda, for people age thirty and under, is a whopping 63 percent.

Dr. Tenywa gave the young men small jobs such as yard work to do around the church, but they needed real employment. Dr. Tenywa told Tim, "We don't really make anything in Uganda anymore, but hundreds of years ago we were known as blacksmiths. We want to make knives, but I don't know anything about making knives. Last week, I prayed, 'Lord, help me find someone who knows how to make knives.'"

Tim was stunned. "I about fell on the floor! It was a really cool, divine appointment. I thought, *Look at what*

**"WE DON'T
REALLY MAKE
ANYTHING
IN UGANDA
ANYMORE, BUT
HUNDREDS OF
YEARS AGO
WE WERE
KNOWN AS
BLACKSMITHS"**

God is doing!" And sometimes, God speaks through a persistent woman named Melissa.

Tim explained to Dr. Tenywa that he was a knife maker and knew what the young men needed. Tim said, "I'll come and teach them."

THE FORGE

Once Tim was back in Ohio, he sent funds and emailed plans for a forge to Dr. Tenywa. Tim told the professor to begin gathering charcoal, a truck's brake drum, and several other items on a list.

On his next trip to Uganda, Tim brought board members from Forest of Hope to visit Dr. Tenywa so that more preparation and planning could take place. A couple of months later, Tim says, "I returned with some friends who could help me with the teaching."

The forge is set up in the village of Bamba, located just north of Uganda's capital, Kampala. Since there is no source for high-carbon steel in Uganda, the knives are made from recycled car parts. "We forge them out of Land Rover leaf springs and coil springs."

According to the Jake Hoback Knives website, "The forge was started in a wooden shack with a tin roof, an anvil, hand tools, and some fired-up young men. Over the last few years, they have worked really hard to hone their skills and move toward being sustainable as a business." The forge team outgrew a second workshop and currently operates in a permanent brick open-air building four times larger than their last one. Bamba Forge's new home includes a secure office, a training room, and a dining room for the guys. In addition to the forge area, a portion of the new building houses a sawmill.

With Bamba Forge now a 501 (c) (3) organization, Tim works with Ugandan leaders to provide livelihoods. “We want our relationship with the people of Uganda to help advance their communities and create opportunities for people who would not have hope otherwise.” Even the employees at the hotel where Tim and his friends stay while in Uganda are more hopeful. When Tim shows them the knives created by the team at Bamba Forge, they proudly inquire, “These were made in Uganda?”

THE GUYS

The Bamba Forge team members are gaining knowledge and skill. “But,” says Tim, “for me, it’s more about the people. When we met Sam, he basically had his pants, shirt, and flip-flops.” He slept on a bench and had not worked for several years. Tim told Sam, “God loves you. It’s not God’s will that you feel adrift and have nothing to do. God has a plan. We want to teach you how to make knives.”

It must have been God’s plan, indeed. According to Tim, “Sam took to knife-making as a duck takes to water!” In a short time, Sam moved through the many levels of skill required to be a talented knifemaker. Learn and practice. Learn and practice. Learn and practice. The artistic qualities seemed to come naturally to Sam. Tim says, “It’s like the difference between being a cabinet maker and a woodcarver.” Seeing Sam go from just having clothes on his back to having a small place to live, some animals, and working at the forge confirmed the purpose Tim and his partners held for Bamba Forge. “Sam became really good at it! He is now married and has a child. He’s a skilled man.”

Ivan is not just another guy at the forge. He has a history not one of us would care to claim. Ivan has no idea who his father is. His mother abandoned Ivan when he was only six weeks old, leaving him at her father’s house, never to return. Thankfully, his blind grandfather raised Ivan to the best of his ability, and Dr. Tenywa helped Ivan find his way to Bamba Forge.

One day, while Tim’s knifemaking buddy from Chattanooga, Tennessee, demonstrated knifemaking to Ivan, the young man’s tears dropped onto the blade. Ivan said, “This is the first time anyone has taught me to do anything.”

Ivan’s mentor revealed that his mom also had given him away at birth. The sting of rejection had pierced



LOCALS AT BAMBA FORGE SHOWCASING
SOME OF THE KNIVES THEY CREATED

both of their hearts. After tears came the hugs.

Ivan cried, “I don’t know what to do. I feel like a big kid. I don’t have anyone to show me how to have a family and be responsible.” But now, Ivan is becoming a man with the help of new father figures and his brothers at Bamba Forge.

Martin’s story also holds tragedy. As a young boy, Martin was diagnosed with sickle cell anemia. Martin’s dad determined to provide medical treatment for his son and made the mistake of borrowing money from loan sharks. When Martin’s dad couldn’t pay back the money, the loan sharks came around. Tim says, “They came and beat up Martin’s dad and Martin.” His dad did not survive the beating, so little Martin grew up homeless, eating out of the trash heaps.

Professor Tenywa invited Martin to the Bamba Forge family. Tim says, “Martin was only seventeen or



eighteen when we met him. He was quiet, didn't smile, and had only three years of education. Having adult males around who loved him, little by little brought Martin out of his shell."

The guys taught him, teased him, and put him into fun-loving headlocks. They made him one of them. In response, Martin gained his true value. Martin said, "I never could say I'm anything. I just felt like a nothing. Now, I'm a knifemaker."

Along with the anemia, Martin had asthma. Tragically, a couple of years ago, Martin died from an asthma attack. Tim and the guys of Bamba Forge paid for Martin's funeral and went to his home village to pay their respects. Tim says, "Knowing Martin and watching him grow had a big impact on all of us. Our product isn't about knives. It's about transforming lives."

One of the young men who worked at the forge is the oldest of seven children. When his parents died, he became the father of six siblings at the age of sixteen, working any jobs he could find. Although this young

man dreamed of attending college, he sacrificed his dream to care for his family. He even helped one of his siblings gain a scholarship to attend college.

CHARACTER TRAINING

Bamba Forge is a place where boys become men. "We do a lot of work to train and develop good, plain values in our people." It's about relationships. By partnering with others to teach values, we give value to life. "The forge guys meet weekly to study values from the book of Proverbs." They learn forty different principles, all coming directly from God's true Word. The lessons prove to develop character in the young men who lack such training from a father. The following are a few examples of the Proverbs learned and the values they teach.

Attitude: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (Proverbs 17:22).

Proper Thinking: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).



Restraint: "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Proverbs 13:3).

Productivity: "Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox" (Proverbs 14:4).

Generosity: "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse" (Proverbs 28:27).

Criticism: "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding" (Proverbs 15:32).

In addition to the young men developing individual character as they practice these values, there is also a more vibrant work environment, a brotherhood. "At Bamba Forge, the value is experienced, not just spoken over them," says Tim. "They love it!"

The goal for Bamba Forge is to become self-supporting. Tim says, "We're not there yet, but we're making good progress toward that end. One way to improve business sustainability is to diversify." In addition to making knives, Bamba Forge has launched a welding operation and added a sawmill in their new workshop. "We bought a sawmill and had it shipped to the forge in Bamba." The forge guys will cut boards from the trees of Forest of Hope, supporting both ministries.

Tim says, "Widows plant trees to help orphans go to school and orphans cut the trees into lumber to make them more valuable. We can sell the boards for more than we can sell the tree. That's a value add."

Tim shared that on their last trip to Uganda, "We were able to meet a guy who owns a tannery. We bought leather to make sheaths for knives. I bring home these knives to sell here." Bamba Forge will soon have a sales opportunity through www.knivesshipfree.com. "We have a large company that wants to buy our knives and sell them for us. It's just on the horizon."

CHANGING A LIFE

"It only takes a little to change a life." Tim Troyer has witnessed this reality over and over again. Maybe it's the reason he remains passionate about heeding God's direction and using what is in his hand. He understands the dignity of loving another human being and connecting them to the Lord. It's plain and simple. Generosity is shared.

God generously shares His provision with His people. God places what He purposes into our hands, and then asks us to use it for good. It's true. When we love God, He gives us the purpose, provision, and ability to love others.

So, what is in your hand? Why not use it to change a life? //

*If you would like to support life change for orphaned and at-risk young men in Uganda,
please use the following address:*

TIM TROYER, SUGARCREEK FORGE

P.O. Box 527 // Sugarcreek, OH 44681 // (330) 763-4786

Bamba Forge knives can be viewed on the Sugarcreek Forge Facebook page. No access to the internet? No problem. If you want to purchase a knife, simply mail Tim a letter, include your mailing address, and request Bamba Forge knife information. He will gladly mail you a price sheet and ordering information.

And Now For Something Completely Different...

INSTANTLY FREEZE WATER

What if someone told you that you can turn a bottle of liquid water into ice in a matter of seconds? Would you believe them? With the summer heat now fully upon us, we hope you enjoy this summertime trick as much as we did.

- 1 Take a bottle of **Purified** Drinking Water and let it sit on the counter for four hours, or until it's room temperature.
- 2 Place the bottle in the freezer for 1.5 - 2 hours.
- 3 Remove the bottle very carefully so you don't agitate the water too much and place it onto the counter. When you're ready, lift the bottle and smack it on the counter with a decent amount of force. Watch as the whole bottle of water turns into ice instantly!


Please note that the water must be purified. There are a lot of factors that play into this trick working correctly; if your first attempt doesn't work, don't give up! Try again - perhaps try leaving the bottle in the freezer for a bit longer.



WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN?

Using purified water is the key to this trick. When water freezes, ice crystals start their formation around particles in the water. Purified water is free of all these impurities; therefore, ice crystals have nothing to start forming around. This allows the liquid water to reach temperatures below 32°F (the normal freezing point of water) without freezing. When you smack the bottle on the counter, you create little bubbles in the water that allow ice crystals to form around. Since the water is super-chilled, once ice begins to form it spreads incredibly quickly throughout the bottle until all the liquid turns to ice.





DRY POINT SOLUTIONS

It's embarrassing! It's frustrating! Your child is ashamed to tell you that, yes, it happened again. You find yourself discouraged, having to wash soggy sheets and pajamas... AGAIN. It is a burden that affects not only you, but also your child. Sleepovers and camp are out because their friends will find out, and the teasing is cruel. You've tried it all, and it just hasn't worked. It seems there is no solution in sight!

Enter Dry Point Solutions. Dry Point Solutions is dedicated to helping families just like yours. Their success records go back over sixty-five years, correcting hundreds of thousands of bed wetter's from ages four through sixty-five.

They use a natural solution without the use of medication that gives you freedom from costly night diapers and the daily washing of bed linens.

Did you know this serious problem afflicts 15–20% of children between the ages of four to sixteen in the U.S. alone? It is also estimated that 2–5% of adults still wet the bed. Good News! If you

"You must get to the root of the problem. Bedwetting is merely a symptom of a greater issue. Many adults who struggle with this issue have been helped through the Dry Point Solutions program."

or someone you love is struggling with bedwetting, you are not alone. Take heart, Dry Point Solutions can help!

Here is one such success story:

"My husband and I wanted to say thank you for helping our son Chris. We'd tried everything for 5 years to get him dry and nothing worked. Then my sister-in-law read about your company and we called. In three short months our son became dry and he's like a new person. It's wonderful – he's more outgoing, and his self-esteem is higher than it's ever been. Thank you so much for everything. You have two very grateful parents and one very happy little eight-year-old in your files."

You must get to the root of the problem. Bedwetting is merely a symptom of a greater issue. Many adults who struggle with this issue have been helped through the Dry Point Solutions program. As a child, the supposed "cure" was done incorrectly, and as a result, they have problems wetting later in life.

The primary cause of Nocturnal Enuresis or Bedwetting is abnormal, incorrect, deep sleep! It is not their fault they are sleeping too soundly. Abnormal deep sleep keeps the enuretic (bedwetter) from getting up and going to the bathroom when necessary.

"The incorrect sleep may cause micro-sleep or tiredness during the day, which can translate into a lack of concentration and ADD/ADHD symptoms. These symptoms can occur because the child is not obtaining quality REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep needed to concentrate and function properly."

At Dry Point Solutions, they care! They never want your child to be humiliated, embarrassed, feel ashamed, or have to fear being discovered. Dry Point Solutions is

there to help.

"Simply put, we are here, first and foremost, to help you understand what causes Nocturnal Enuresis."

"It has been a great relief to have our daughter no longer wetting the bed. I felt there had to be a solution somewhere. After reading about your company, I felt that you were the only ones with any answers and hope for us."

We put our faith in your program and it was successful. The only problem I could see was that she was a deep sleeper. She did not have any other physical or emotional problems that would cause her to wet."

I was happy to find out that there was a solution and we weren't left with maybe one day she will grow out of it. She is an obedient girl and wants to do what is right and will follow directions as is told. She didn't always feel like doing some of the procedures, but she did what she was told and consistently followed the program."

After completing each phase, she was always excited to be through it and anxious for the end to be declared "DRY." We were glad that she was able to do it in such a short time. We can see that her brain needed some prompting and learning to help her achieve dryness."

We felt right about the program, we did it and it worked. We are thankful to Dry Point Solutions for helping our daughter achieve dryness."

THEY ARE UNIQUE! They are the only in-home enuresis correction company. The program at Dry Point Solutions is entirely interactive. It is managed step-



by-step from the very first consultation until dryness is achieved. Each bed wetter is given a personal Case Director who will be with you every step of the way. "Your Personal Case Director analyzes your pattern of bedwetting and develops individual directions to assist you in achieving a dry bed as quickly and thoroughly as possible."

"I wanted to express my DEEPEST gratitude to you for helping my son. This program worked so well for him he graduated in less than a year and is still dry.

I had struggled with the bedwetting and what to do to help him. We had done EVERYTHING the doctors had suggested and nothing worked. I am so grateful I found the Dry Point Solutions program. I will suggest you to everyone I know, and have suggested you to the doctor I have, and will suggest you to any other I ever come across.

I cannot really put into words how I felt when my son was dry for the first time. Thank you so very much."

You and your child will be thrilled when they wake up DRY every day! Dry Point Solutions would love to have the opportunity to work for you and your child, so they can sleep better and more normally. Dry Point Solutions will make a difference in your child's life by boosting their confidence and enhancing their self-esteem with the use of proper correction.

They operate the business as a ministry, and he prays corporately for each family daily. According to Jeremiah 29:11, God has a definite plan and purpose for you and your family.

Through many years of working with individual families, They have seen lives changed as the burden of bedwetting has been lifted from them. //

Call or write Dry Point Solutions today!

The friendly staff will be happy to help you.

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It's all about **CHOICES**

words by: **FERREE HARDY**

Dear Readers,

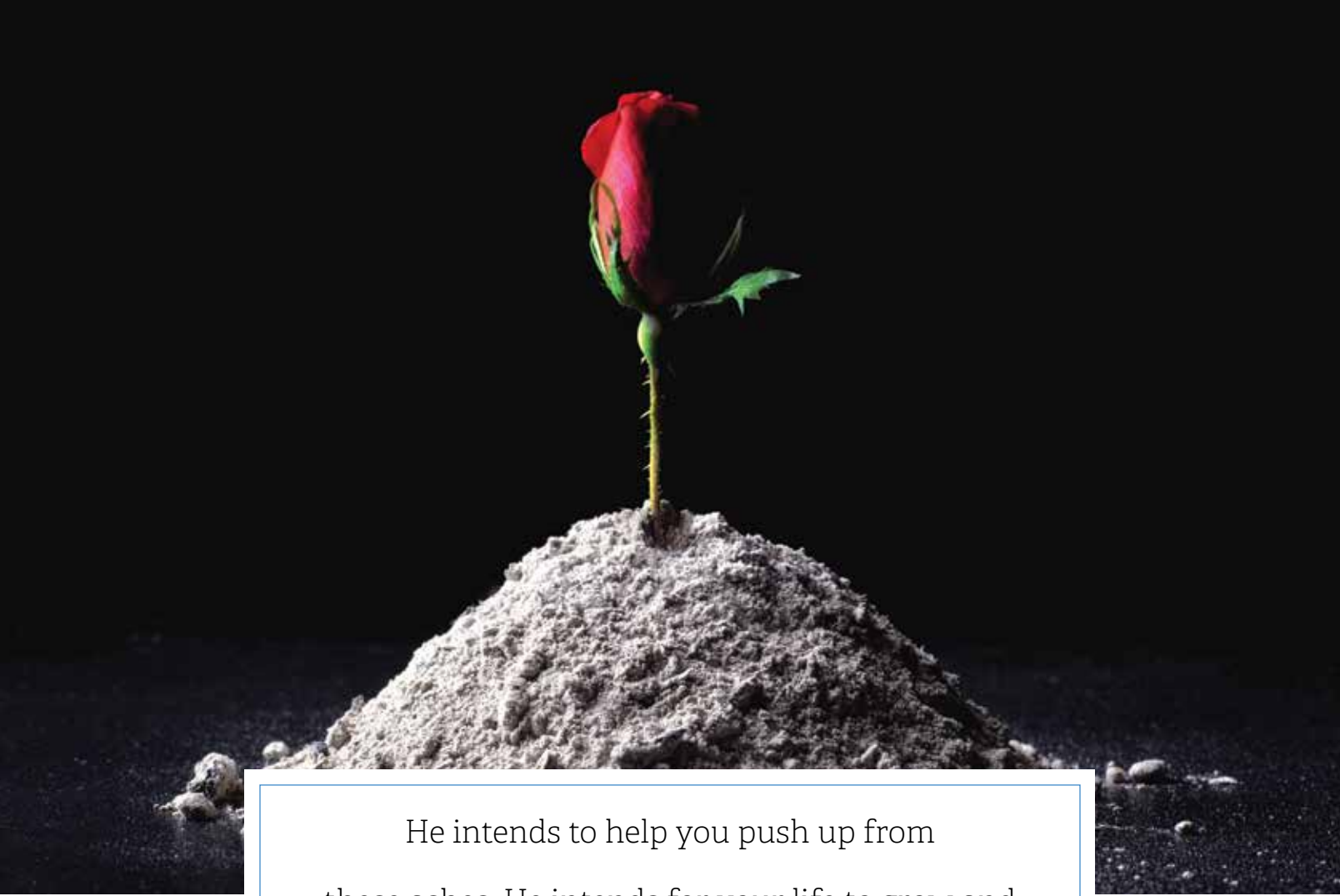
I don't think people realize that when God ordained marriage and declared in Genesis 2:24 that "the two will become one," He meant it. A husband and wife growing together over the years really do become "one." But what happens when one-half of a marriage dies? It hurts! I often hear the widow or widower say, "I felt like I was cut in half."

I felt that way too. Didn't you? I pictured in my mind that there'd been a terrible accident, and half of me was lying on an ambulance gurney. The other half was gone. I was in shock, helpless, and bleeding to death. "Oh God, how could You do this to me?" I cried.

But today, as I look back, I can honestly say with the writer of the hymn, "Amazing Grace "...I once was lost, but now am found..." Let me assure you: the pain of loss doesn't have to last forever.







He intends to help you push up from
these ashes. He intends for your life to grow and
bloom in a unique and wonderful way.

I don't write for widows because I'm still grieving; I write as a sacred privilege God has given me to serve you. To tell you that God loves you. He intends to help you push up from these ashes. He intends for your life to grow and bloom in a unique and wonderful way.

As God gently nudges you along this path, I think you'll learn what I've learned about survival and happiness: it's all about choices.

As I lay on that figurative gurney, feeling cut in half, I had to work through a difficult decision about my widowhood—it could either be a gurney where I was a trauma victim, or it could be an altar of sacrifice and worship. Romans 12:1 says, “... offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

There was no changing the fact that I was a widow, but as a new widow, I could choose to be a

helpless victim, or I could choose to worship God by living “holy and pleasing to God,” as the Scripture said. Trusting God’s way, not my way. Choosing to set aside my complaints, arguments, and grumbles about widowhood didn’t come naturally. Sometimes the choice really was a sacrifice.

It was hard to allow God to have His way! But over and over again, that's what it boiled down to. I would have preferred my own death instead of my husband's, but God was asking me to live; to live without my husband, and to live for God. I finally made the choice to say, “Okay.” That was the best I could muster, just “Okay.” Not a single “Hip hip hooray!” But that's all God asks of us—simple surrender.

Have you made that choice yet? For many Christians, it's a huge struggle and a secret wrestling match with God. Sooner or later, in my opinion, there

comes a day when life gets a little easier because God's made you a little stronger. You grow, you become whole, and a new chapter of life begins. It's pretty amazing!

Today, I still make choices. We're never over them, you know. The past few years have brought me personal struggles and challenges I could never have imagined. On the days I'm tempted to crumple, give up in despair, or kick myself, saying, "If only I'd done this or that..." or, "If only Bruce hadn't died..." I choose to ask the following questions instead: "Does God love me? Does God know about my horrible situation? Is God in control? Is God with me?"

No matter what I might feel or think, I've made the right choice because the true answer to each of those questions is "Yes." The reality is this: Yes, God loves me. Yes, God knows. Yes, God is in control. Yes, God is with me.

I take a deep breath. It's another surrender time. But by this time, I've learned that deep joy is on the way. I look at my life in light of eternity, and do you know what? I realize I've so much for which to be thankful.

- My husband Bruce is safe and secure in heaven. He still loves me. I'm not glad he's gone, but I'm truly thankful that I was married to him for twenty-two years.
- I'm thankful I'm not a victim on a hospital gurney. Instead, my life is on a holy altar, and I am free to live, worship, and please God. I don't have to grieve forever. I can breathe again. And love and laugh and sing.
- God is in control. He never fails or makes mistakes. I'm so thankful for the relief of knowing my husband's death was not a surprise or mistake to God.

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- When there were times I wanted to die, I didn't, because God knew He'd make me whole.

I pray that you, too, will discover it's all about choices. Yes, God loves you. Yes, God knows your very thoughts. Yes, God is in control of your circumstances. Yes, He is with you... There's so much to be thankful for. Surrender and trust with a simple "Okay." //

Until next month,

ferree ♥

ADDRESS CHANGE! To learn more about widowhood, order a copy of *Postcards from the Widows' Path – Gleaning Hope and Purpose from the Book of Ruth*. It's a gentle, biblical guide for widows that has many saying, "This is the best I've ever read!" Contact your local Christian bookstore or mail a check for \$14.99/copy (paperback, 248 pgs.), along with your address to: Ferree Hardy, 122 Breckenridge Dr., North Augusta, SC 49841. Allow 2 – 3 weeks for delivery. Free shipping for all *Plain Values* readers! www.WidowsChristianPlace.com



HOMESTEAD ROOTS

words by: **MERISSA A. ALINK**

We are gearing up for bug season here... mosquitoes, ticks, and creepy crawlers! It is good to be prepared with a natural solution to help fight off these pests. Here is the natural, simple, easy, yet effective mixture that I will be mixing up and using for myself and my family. This homemade Bug Spray is easy to put together—you will need just a few basic essential oils. Here's the recipe that has been working well for us!

HOMEMADE BUG SPRAY

INGREDIENTS

- 2 T. Water
- 4 T. Witch Hazel
- 4 drops Thyme Oil
- 4 drops Lemongrass Oil
- 4 drops Lavender Oil
- 4 drops Peppermint Oil

Mix all ingredients together and place in a spray bottle. You can find small spray bottles in the travel section of most stores. These work perfectly for this spray and are an especially nice size if you want to carry the spray in your car or purse when you are out and about.

When you are ready to use, spray over skin or clothing.

I hope this will help you have a BUG-FREE and BITE-FREE season!

Lemongrass is somewhat photosensitive, so make sure you are wearing sun protection as well if you plan on applying this spray directly onto your skin, or just leave the lemongrass out of the mix entirely. Do not use this spray on young children, since it contains peppermint oil.





PLATYPUS

The Mystery Mammal



words by: **KARIN VIET**

From an acorn-size egg hatches a mysterious creature with a duck-like bill, beaver-like tail, and reptile-like stance. It's a bird! It's a reptile! It's a—platypus!

Around four months of age, the young platypus ventures out of its dark burrow, which is sometimes as long as 65 feet, into the Australian fresh air. The furry platypus is an adept hunter. Its front webbed feet expertly paddle through the cold waters, while the hind feet and tail steer. The flat tail also helps it dive deep.

Since flaps cover its eyes, ears, and nose, how can the platypus find food? Its bill is equipped with sensitive electroreceptors, pinpointing prey like shrimp and crayfish as the platypus digs through mud and pebbles. With its catch stored in cheek pouches, the platypus comes up to the surface to grind the food between its toothless jaws.

DIVINE DESIGN

The Europeans who first encountered the platypus late in the 18th century were puzzled about how to classify an animal with mammal, reptile, and bird features. Some even disregarded the



patchwork platypus as a hoax. Early studies labeled the platypus as primitive until discovery of the intricate design of electroreception, which enables the platypus to sense electrical currents from the muscle contractions of the animals it hunts.

If the platypus evolved, we would expect to find transitional forms in the fossil record. Yet platypus fossils, which have been found as far as South America, vary little from their modern counterparts. The only difference is that today's platypus has degenerated from the early, more robust platypus. Recent evidence shows that platypuses lived at the same time as dinosaurs, a finding that fits perfectly with the creation account.

The platypus is Ken Ham's favorite animal:

Every time an evolutionist looks at the platypus, I think God smiles! Think about it. It has a bill like a duck, a beaver-like tail, webbed feet like an otter, hair like a bear, claws like a reptile, lays eggs like a turtle, and has poison like a snake!¹

FUN FACTS

- The platypus and the echidnas (spiny anteaters) are the only monotremes, an order of mammals that lay eggs.
- The male platypus can deliver venom through a spur on its hind ankle. This venom may kill animals like dogs and is very painful to humans.
- The platypus is generally nocturnal and is a hardworking animal, spending about 12 hours each day searching for food. Dives for food can take about a minute before the platypus comes up for air.

After learning about the platypus, perhaps your evolutionist friend will acknowledge the Creator's design. But don't stop there! The God who reveals himself in creation also reveals himself in his Word—the Bible. Take your friend on a tour through Romans. Here are a few highlights to share: Romans 1:18–32, 3:19–28, 6:23, 10:9–10. Pray that God's kindness would lead many to turn to Jesus as the only Savior from sin. //

[1] Ken Ham, "Platypus Gift," Answers in Genesis (blog), September 25, 2006, <https://answersingenesis.org/blogs/ken-ham/2006/09/25/platypus-gift-a-reminder-of-creation/>.

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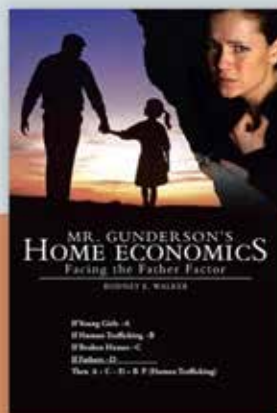
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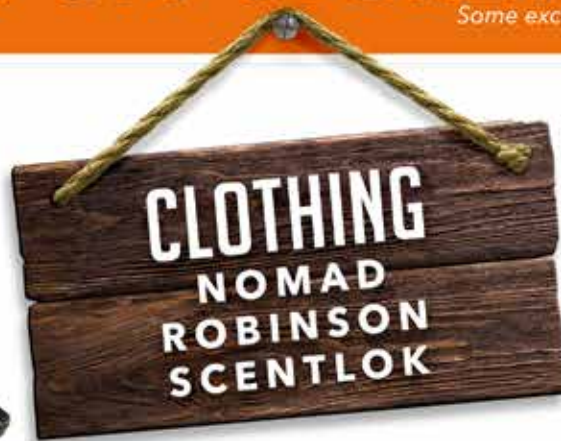


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Affordable Healthcare Partners

WORDS BY: ELLIE ZUMBACH

Affordable Healthcare Partners (AHP) has a mission to improve and protect the health and quality of life of the individuals and communities it serves. It does so by providing quality, affordable, and convenient primary care. Founded by nurse practitioner Krista Michener, AHP is a self-pay clinic for adults and teenagers ages thirteen and up.

A self-pay clinic does not accept insurance because patient health is the bottom line instead of insurance prices. While working in Canton at a family practice, Michener kept seeing two hardships for people that didn't have access to insurance. The first was that many would put off any medical care until something catastrophic happened because they couldn't afford it. The second was that self-pay patients never knew what their visit would cost and were often paying more than they should have.

"It shouldn't take something tragic for people to access healthcare," Michener explains. "When healthcare practices have contracts with insurance companies, there are contracted rates. Practices don't have flexibility in what they charge people who don't have insurance because doctors have to charge at least a certain percent of the insurance's contracted rate. This isn't fair to people who don't have insurance. They are paying more because their care provider does business with insurance companies, so they're still essentially doing business with an insurance company."

Every morning, Michener prays in her closet, and that was where God prompted her to start a self-pay clinic in her hometown. She began thinking about Wooster and all the people working in hard-labor manufacturing jobs who may not have access to insurance or have very high deductibles. Many Amish and Mennonite clients who pay cash are caught up in a confusing medical system that doesn't meet their specific needs.

"We should be able to set up an appointment with a local care provider and know exactly what it will cost," Michener says.

Now Michener has a practice that offers structured pay so patients never have to guess what they'll pay. A routine visit will cost \$80. Telehealth is \$60. House calls are available for those who are homebound due to age or disabilities and start at \$120 plus mileage inside Wayne County and \$150 plus mileage outside Wayne County. Mileage is calculated at \$1.50 per mile round trip from AHP's location at 2056 Portage Road in Wooster.

Office visits can include regular sick care, routine physicals, pap smears, and more. Michener also wants to help people find the best prices on prescriptions. She has a lot of experience with the elderly, people with disabilities, and those with mental health issues.

"My main passion is taking care of mental health in primary care and treating the whole person," Michener says. "I may be starting small, but I think a lot is lost with high-tech healthcare. Providers have gotten away from taking good patient histories

and performing physicals because they are relying so much on technology. They aren't listening to people. Testing is so important, but most of my best work as a nurse practitioner has come from listening to my patients."

At AHP, mental health is just as important as physical health. An individual's health affects not only themselves but also their family and everything they do. Michener and her team want to educate others that the body and the mind can't be separated and help them get rid of the shame associated with getting help for mental well-being. When someone feels fear, the whole body reacts.

"We take care of the body to calm the mind, but by taking care of the mind, we can help heal the body," Michener explains. "Some may think their affliction is a matter of faith, but God loves us and wants us to use the resources that are here to help so we can live fuller, happier lives and take care of our families."

The team at the clinic also has a special heart for those with special needs.

"My heart for that comes from many different places." Michener has five children of her own and is in the process of adopting a boy in need of special care. "We are all children of God, and everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and taken care of. I have seen personally from my job in Canton how living in poverty can impact those with special needs, especially if they don't have family."

So the most critical things for someone with special needs are having someone who loves them, having a healthcare environment where they feel safe and comfortable, and having the healthcare provider take sufficient time with them and their family.

"Everybody's quality of life matters, and other practices are set up to take care of able-bodied people," Michener says. "We need to help the people who can't help themselves."

All these thoughts put together helped create the Affordable Healthcare Partners.

"It took a lot of prayer and an act of God to remove all the things that kept happening that would have stopped this business from coming to pass," Michener shared. "The number of times I prayed, 'This was Your idea! You have to make this work!' There were so many times it almost didn't happen."

But with grace and perseverance, the clinic opened on February 28, 2020, and is now open to new patients. Michener asks her community to reach out and tell her what they need and what she can do to provide the best care she can!

"I am trying to reach people that aren't getting healthcare right now because it isn't easily accessible. My job is to convince people they are worth getting taken care of and to trust me that I can help them with their primary care needs," she finishes. "It's why I do what I do. I want people's lives to be better."

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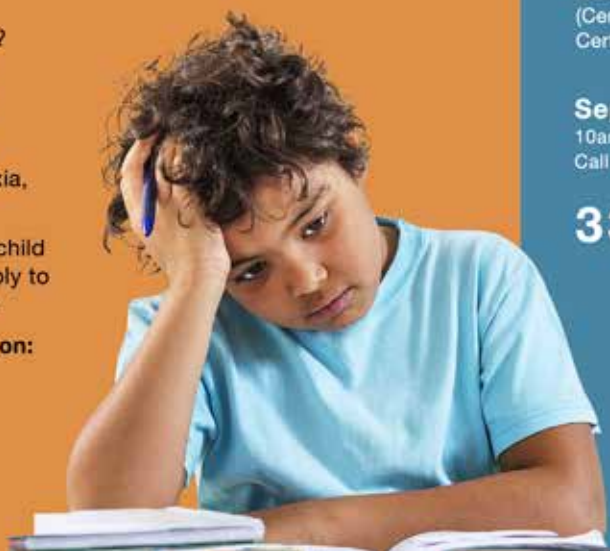
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Hochstetler, IA

"I had restless leg syndrome for 6 years. The medicine was not helping anymore. It had gotten so bad that I was unable to sleep at night and would have to walk the floors constantly at nights. I didn't know what to do. Someone called and told me about the Nexalin ad. I called and set up an appointment. I did 20 sessions in my home. Within two weeks all my symptoms had disappeared. Four months later I still have no symptoms."

Olsen, MN

"Our child was having multiple seizures, as many as 12 a day. She was being treated by a medical university, which put her on seizure medicine. The medicine had negative side effects and offered no relief from the seizures. Our child had stopped growing, and we were becoming very worried for her health. We learned about Nexalin Therapy from an ad, and called to schedule treatments. She did 15 sessions and as early as the next day stopped having seizures. A month later she was still not having seizures. We took her back to the university, and they took her off all the seizure medications. She is still seizure-free and growing like crazy."

Bontragers, IA

"I had massive anxiety and heard voices all the time. As a 20 year old, it became so bad that I could no longer live at home and had to be away from the family. My brain stayed confused. I was on five different strong medications and felt tremendously drugged. I went through the Nexalin treatments twice. For the first time, I am off all my medications, have more energy to work, and am extremely happy."

Byler, MO

"At 45 years old, I have spent my entire married life on Zoloft and Prozac. I feel like I have missed out on so much with my children growing up and have never felt mentally normal. I've been through Nexalin treatments three times and for the time have stopped all medications. The terrible fear I would feel in the mornings and the anxiety I would feel through the day are gone."

Miller, VA

"I was a 20-year-old schizophrenic; hearing voices most of my life. I went through 3 sets of Nexalin treatments, and have been able to cut my medications down to half. For the first time, I have a bright, positive outlook on life."

Chris E, MO

"My anxiety and depression had stopped me from working most days. I was the highest dose of medication that was allowed. After treating with the Nexalin, I have stopped all my meds, sleep soundly all night and am back to work."

IN

"I enjoyed doing chores and gardening with my husband, but I had gotten so stiff in my neck and shoulders and my legs hurt so bad I couldn't work outside anymore. I treated with the Nexalin, and my neck and shoulders are completely normal, and I can run like I did when I was young!"

MO

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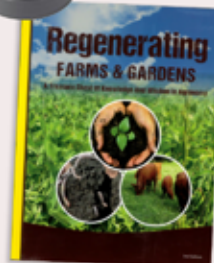


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Mt. Hope Dental

WORDS BY: DR. MYRIAM RABER, DDS

When my husband, Philip, and I moved to Ohio after six years as mission optometrist and dentist in my native country of Haiti, we lived in Mt. Hope for the first year. We rented a house from Paul Yoder right on State Route 241 at the entrance to Wayne Dalton. Paul would half-jokingly say that Mt. Hope needed its own dentist and that we should start a clinic in the same house he was renting to us. At the time, our four children were very young (ages two to eight), and opening my own dental office was only a dream.

Good family memories from Mt. Hope



- Being able to walk to a wonderful breakfast (or any meal) at Mrs. Yoder's, or a quick soft-serve cone at the Health store.
- Not having to force our two younger children to wear shoes around town. Where we lived near Leogane, Haiti, the children rarely wore shoes.
- Walking to the various interesting sales at the auction barn.
- Our four-year-old son hopping in Paul's buggy and asking him which of the buttons/switches made the buggy go... I guess he thought the horse was just an ornament.

Opening a practice in Kidron

Fast forward six years, and the children were all attending Central Christian School in Kidron. Phil had started an optometry practice in Kidron. It made sense that when the time came for me to start my own office in 2007, we would join our resources by working out of the same building right across from the children's school.

Back to Mt. Hope

Since living in Mt. Hope, that little bug planted in my ear by Paul Yoder about a clinic in Mt. Hope never went away. As time went by, I needed a succession plan for my patients. Small towns are a wonderful place to practice, but the tendency is for new dentists to stay in the big city. I want to see the dental service we provide in Kidron continue beyond my time, so I figured that one day I would need to have two dentists replace me. With two offices and the fact that Raber Dental has also served the Holmes County Training Center since 2007, we could even accommodate three dentists.

Two years ago, I started inquiries about potential locations that could be converted/built into a dental office. Then Paul Yoder came through again and alerted me that Al and Edna Yoder were putting their place up for sale! I hated to see the beautiful yard and the old barn vanish, but we needed a parking lot.

Today, we are excited to open an office in my original Ohio community, where people are so friendly and supportive. Of course, Mt. Hope has grown and changed, and it is almost the big city. This is why we have added a covered bicycle/E-bicycle parking station in addition to buggy and car parking.

Dr. Tae Hwang joins the practice



During our second child's junior year in high school, a Korean exchange student named Tae Hwang started attending Central Christian School. I got to know Tae through my daughter and the school. At one point I was asked, along with others, to participate in a "Careers in Health Care" symposium at the school. Tae approached me and said he wanted to become a dentist. I mentored him along the way, and today I am so proud of him and his achievements! Having been a foreign student myself, I know that a very high bar is set for foreign students to be admitted to dental or medical school.

"Dr. Tae" graduated from Central Christian School, class of 2012; Goshen College, Class of 2016; and University of Michigan School of Dentistry, Class of 2020. Dr. Tae has moved to Mt. Hope to live for at least the first year out of dental school. Both Dr. Tae and I will work at both offices. The plan for the first year is for the Mt. Hope office to be open Tuesday through Friday and the Kidron office to be open Monday through Thursday.



How we are addressing COVID-19

It is a bit daunting to be opening an office in a time of uncertainty. However, Dr. Tae and I both believe that God is in charge and has a plan no matter what is going on in the world.

At both Mt. Hope Dental and Raber Dental, we always like to go the extra mile. After much research, we took additional steps to protect everyone from both infections and unnecessary chemicals. We installed ultraviolet light disinfection units inside our heating and air-conditioning ducts. We have No-vaeus non-chemical ultra-low-energy plasma technology filters—imported from Ireland—in our waiting room and treatment room areas. We also use the Eco One technology to make electrolyzed water (using only water and salt) to sanitize the entire office, including the waiting room and bathrooms.

Dentistry is no stranger to infectious illness. Outside of a hospital or outpa-

tient surgical room, dentists are leaders in infection control. We make protecting our clients and our workers a top priority. The primary reason governor DeWine immediately shut down dental offices for all but urgent care was to reassign our masks to front line health care delivery during the crisis. In outpatient health care settings, dentists were the biggest consumers of masks.

Dentists were already doing everything that was needed to prevent infection inside their office. With this pandemic, we have added some extras as required of ALL businesses by Ohio law.

Schedule your appointment today

We are excited to be back in the Mt. Hope community. We are a full-service dental office at both the Mt. Hope and Kidron offices. Call to schedule your appointment today. We look forward to seeing you!

We are excited to open an office in Dr. Myriam's original Ohio community, Mt. Hope, where people are so friendly and supportive.

Dr. Raber working in Haiti from 1995–2001 wearing the same protection that is now required due to COVID-19.

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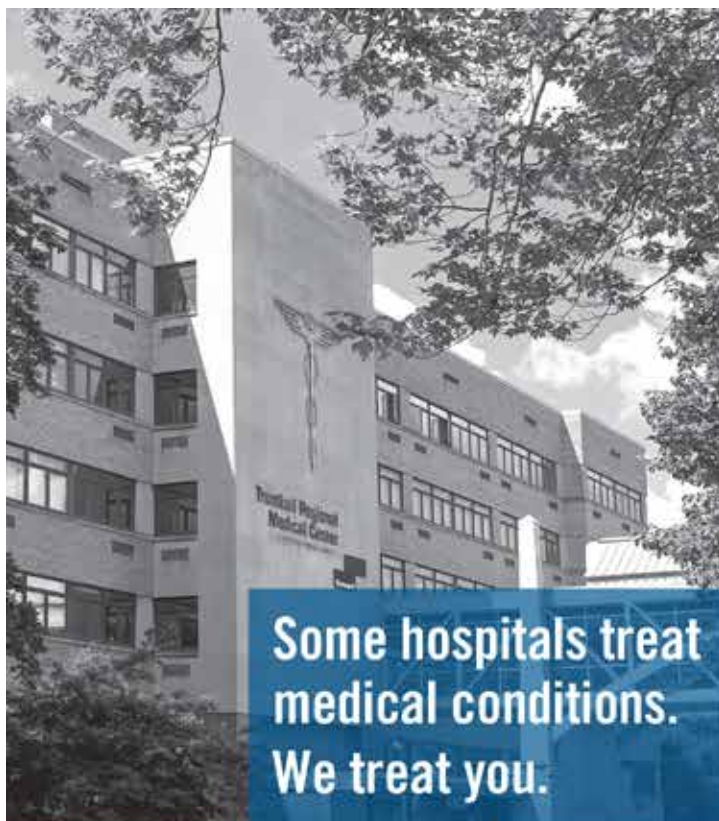


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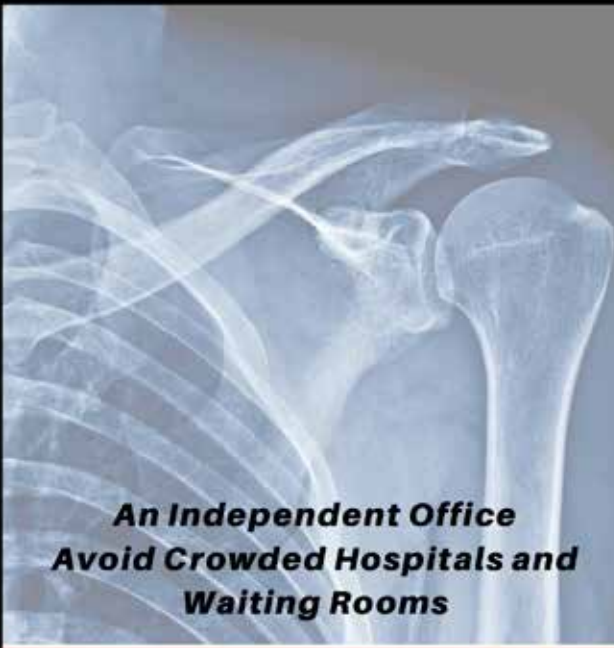
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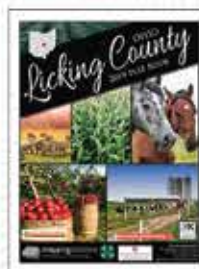


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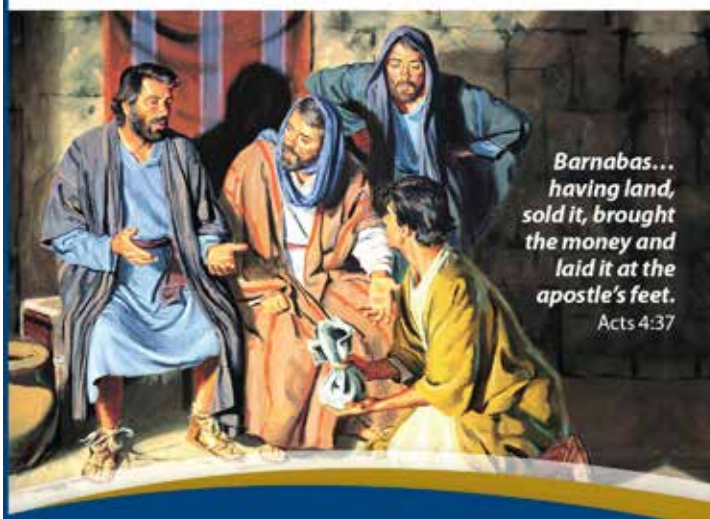
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In fact, they were so impressed by the results that they each referred in friends for treatment in the first three weeks!

Patients have flown in from as far away as Alaska, California, and Canada, too.

Frankly, when you look at the outcomes of back, neck, and joint replacement surgery, it's understandable that almost EVERYBODY wants to avoid going under the knife.

Well, now there is an option called the CTX Method that's a revolutionary program that works to restore patients' lives by reducing pain and getting to the cause of the problem.

How It All Started

Over a decade ago, Dr. Russ began treating some of the most difficult cases of spinal arthritis, degenerating discs, neuropathy, and knee and hip pain by using technology.

Now, after treating thousands of patients, it has changed the way many are thinking about treating their pain.

You see, the average pain patient either gets better in a few short weeks or DOESN'T. Chiropractic helps many, many patients. So does physical therapy. Even just lying down, resting, ice, or over-the-counter pain pills help many.

For the rest, it can mean a lifetime of day-in, day-out, nagging, looking-for-the-nearest-place-to-rest kind of pain. For others, the inability to work, drive, or take care of themselves. And pain pills, lots and lots of pain pills... So much so that in our corner of the world, "pill mills" started popping up everywhere (and eventually led to the opioid drug crisis).

When patients get tired of popping pills or fear getting addicted and need a way out, then they may resort to surgery! (sometimes exploratory, always invasive!)

If you've never been there or haven't talked to a patient like this, it's an eye-opening experience!

But now, with the CTX Method programs, Dr. Russ' patients are experiencing results like THIS:

"My activities have been severely limited by extensive nerve damage. I have been all over this area trying to find someone who could treat me and give me some relief. I had heard of Dr. Schroder through the internet. I would recommend Dr. Schroder to ANYONE at ANYTIME for his treatment modalities... The pain levels have been markedly decreased... in just the short time I've been here." -Dr. Ben Goldberg, Retired ER Physician

"I started a 5-week program and felt relief after the 1st treatment. Now that I have completed the process, my back is virtually pain-free and feels the best it has in over 15 years." -Eric G.

"Hello, my name is Perry, and I am from Kentucky. I've been to hospitals for the last 9 years with neuropathy in my feet and none of them could tell me what caused it or what the cure is. I came here to Dr. Schroder and I didn't think that he was going to be able to do anything either, but I've been with him for 2 months now and the feeling is coming back in my feet, the color is coming back, the swelling is gone out of them, and I've lost 60 pounds. I am doing really well!"

"I came to Dr. Russ three years ago for severe sciatica nerve pain. I went through therapy and three years later I still have not had any pain in my sciatica." -Carol Rhea

"I was diagnosed with a prolapsed disc at L5-S1, which caused a great deal of pain. Within, probably, four weeks, I was beginning to be pain-free and at the end of six weeks I was totally pain-free, able to return to work and function in full capacity." -Deb W., Nurse

"My last resort consisted of knee replacement. Your non-surgical treatments have been one of the best things that ever happened to me. I would recommend your treatments first and foremost to anyone."

-La Vaughn Remenar

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If you are still undecided and would like a special report on Avoiding Back, Hip, or Knee Surgery, you can call either office and request it to be mailed out right away!



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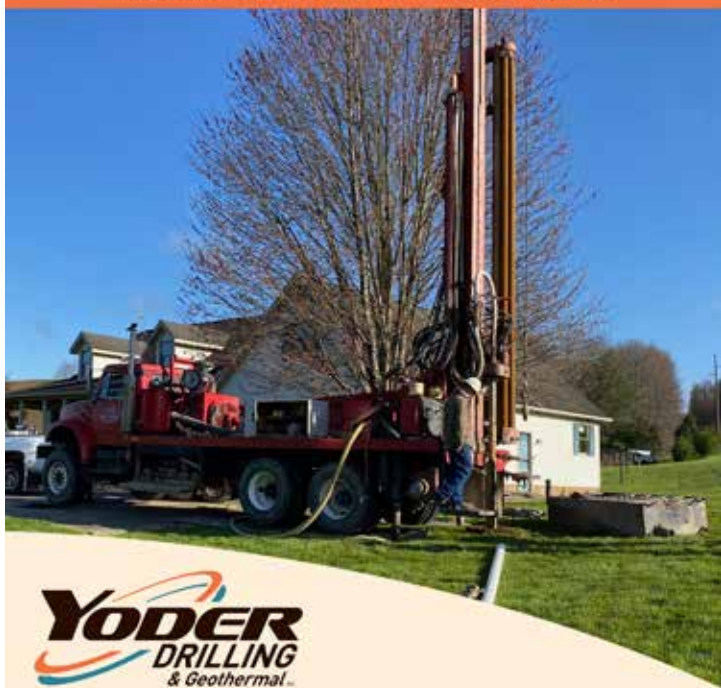
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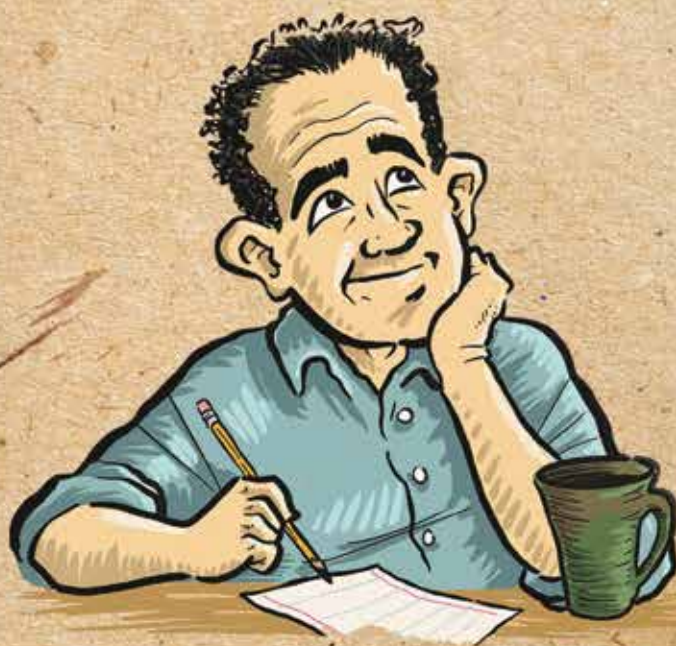


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#WEEKLY WORSHIP THOUGHTS

ENHANCING YOUR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



THESE THOUGHTS BELONG TO:

JEFF POLEN

If found, please give to your local worship leader.

#WeeklyWorshipThoughts

written by: Jeff Polen

There is something absolutely beautiful about the church coming together to worship God on a regular basis. I say "regular" because most churches that I am familiar with meet weekly, but I have visited many churches overseas that meet on a daily basis. I am even aware of churches that meet every other week. I am not sure that the actual amount of time between meetings is nearly as important as the fact that it is an agreed upon, clearly communicated, and regular coming together of the body of Christ.

The Holy Spirit-inspired writer of Hebrews seemed to think that this meeting together was important.

Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **not neglecting to meet together**, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25, emphasis added)

The meeting together is important! We should by no means neglect it. However, I have said it before and I will say it again: You don't have to be at church to worship God.

This truth is so important for us as worshipers. I am big on corporate worship. I cannot stress enough how important corporate worship is for us (or to God, for that matter), but corporate worship is at its absolute best when private worship is also a regular reality. In the case of private worship, I would use the word "regular" to mean "daily."

When I traveled overseas as a missionary, I had the experience of being in a nation, predominantly of a different religion, during their holy month. The adherents of this particular belief celebrate their holy month by starving themselves throughout the day and breaking their fast each night when the sun goes down. One of my friends who practiced this religion invited me to participate in the breaking of the fast one night, so I went. I wasn't very hungry, because I had been eating throughout the day, but I thought it would be a neat experience. What I witnessed was, quite frankly, disturbing.

A dozen or more people were gathered around a banquet table, staring at the feast before them with bulging eyes, twitchy hands, and rumbling bellies. As soon as the sun went down and the call to break the fast rang out through the city, fingers began flailing, and food went flying everywhere! I kept my own hands back (mostly out of fear that they would be mistaken for food in the midst of the madness), but my friends devoured every last bit of food on the table. Even if I had wanted to participate, I would have had to jockey for position. A few minutes later, with sauces and shreds of chicken stuck to their hands and mouths, my friends sat down and reclined deeply into their chairs, completely stuffed.

Is this a picture of our corporate worship settings? Do we come so starved for the things of God, so desperate to dig in for ourselves that we become oblivious of those around us? Or are we so filled by other things (like I was) that we don't really even participate at all? Perhaps we just stand back and watch with intrigue and curiosity.

There is a better way. Jesus reminded his disciples to pray for their "daily bread." As worshipers, we should be praying for our "daily bread" and regularly meeting with God on our own. We don't have to "fast" from God and then try to stuff ourselves during corporate worship. God is with us and is available to us all of the time—every single moment of every single day. Let us regularly taste and see that the Lord is good!

Still, when we come together, we should come hungry for God to show up in ways that only happen during corporate worship. Let's not allow ourselves to be so full of other things that we are indifferent towards God. Come hungry... but not starved.

~ excerpt from Chapter Twenty, "Come Hungry, Not Starved"

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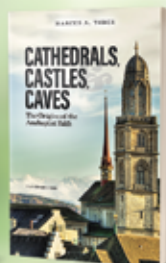
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A WALK

TURNED STEEPLY

UPWARD

words by: **NORITA YODER**

The walk begins easily, through a grassy meadow on a picturesque farm east of Zurich, Switzerland, in the foothills of the Alps. Follow the path for a short distance, and the way becomes increasingly rugged and the climb turns steeply upward as it enters a forest. The destination is a cave named Täuferhöhle, or “baptism cave,” a large, spacious cave located near Zurich, Switzerland, with natural waterfalls covering the mouth of the cave. Each year visitors make their way in a sort of pilgrimage to follow the footsteps of those who, in an attempt to escape persecution, worshiped in secret at this site 500 years earlier.¹

THE TÄUFERHÖHLE NEAR
ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



It takes little imagination for the mind's eye to picture people like Margret, who we met last month, easing their way through the predawn darkness towards the cave. It was a perfect hiding place. From the opening, the forest can be seen beyond the waterfalls. Human voices melded with the sound of the rushing water. All the finest cathedrals in Europe with their stained glass windows could not compete with this cathedral of earth and water and light.

The scene of meeting secretly for worship in caves and forests and behind closed doors was increasingly played out across Europe by those who practiced adult baptism. Anabaptists, or those who practiced adult baptism, believed the church should consist only of adult men and women who voluntarily chose to follow Christ and were committed to holy living. Therefore, the baptism of infants “was not the cause of their disavowal of the state church; it was only the symbol of the cause.”² Adult baptism was the symbol by which an adult expressed their belief in Christ and entered into the church. It was an early belief in the separation of church and state and ripped apart a social fabric in place for 1,200 years. In the minds of the magistrates, this endangered both the church and the state. For this, Anabaptists were hated and persecuted by Catholics and Protestants alike and were forced to flee and worship in secret.



The percentages of women who were arrested for Anabaptism is higher than among other groups persecuted for religious beliefs and tell us that women were more central to the Anabaptist movement.³ Thirty percent of Anabaptist martyrs in the *Martyrs Mirror* were women, but in some regions, court records show women were nearly half of those arrested as Anabaptists.⁴ In the Tirol region of Austria from 1525–1531, forty-six percent of Anabaptists arrested were women.⁵ Since Anabaptists attempted to conceal their activities from authorities, we know only some of the women. They often come to us through lists of names in court records, and these were women for whom something went wrong.



The high number of women involved in Anabaptist activities connects to a view of the “priesthood of all believers.” Rebaptism carried with it the idea that those baptized were all “priests” with equal ability to hear the Spirit of God. Therefore, all believers could interpret the scriptures and receive direct revelation rather than



Patient John Roycroft
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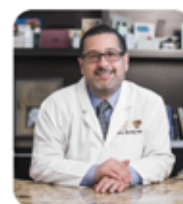
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Dr. Carlos Bautista



going through a priest. Since, in Christ, all believers are "priests," Anabaptist women were more nearly "companions in the faith, mates in missionary enterprise, and mutual exhorters in readiness for martyrdom," than among other reforming Protestants.⁶ This belief in a "Priesthood of all believers," characterized their actions and their worship services.

The sense of equality that arose from this teaching broke down the boundaries between the social classes of rich and poor that were firmly in place in their world. Two deacons and their deaconess wives, Katherina Wiedenmann and the wife of Laux Kreler, are clear examples of how Anabaptists broke through the strict boundaries between rich and poor and labored together as deacons in the Anabaptist group of Augsburg, Germany.

Katherina Wiedenmann was the wife of Simprecht, a poor cobbler in Augsburg listed as a "purse-keeper" for the congregation. The activities reveal they were deacons, and Katharina's name comes up most often as the one handing out food and goods to those in need. She distributed food to needy Anabaptists, housed

fleeing refugees, harbored leaders in hiding, and held secret meetings. In at least one instance, she helped to pass along a pastoral letter sent to "the women of Augsburg by Galthas Berchtold."⁷ With all the activity, their cobbler shop provided excellent cover for people coming and going without causing suspicion.

By comparison is the unnamed wife of Laux Kreler, a wealthy and connected goldsmith in the city. The Krelers labored along with the Wiedenmanns as deacons in the Augsburg congregation. It is clear they were tapping other sources and providing their own monies, which were then distributed among needy Anabaptists who were fleeing. They illegally housed leaders in hiding such as Leupold and Dorfbrunner, along with Anna, the wife of imprisoned leader Sigmund following his arrest in 1527.⁸

While the Krelers and Wiedenmanns labored on an equal level in the church, Simprecht complained that the poor Anabaptists such as themselves were called to court and tortured while the magistrates ignored the wealthy Anabaptists. When arrested, Simprecht was beaten out of town with rods and Katharina was led out of town in



EUROPEAN MAP SHOWING THE TIROL REGION OF WESTERN AUSTRIA AND THE CITY OF AUGSBURG, GERMANY

exile, unable to return to their home. The connections of the wealthy Krelers gave them warning so they could flee unharmed to the city of Strasbourg. Nonetheless, both the Krelers and Wiedenmanns labored together in the church and fled their homes for the sake of their faith.⁹

If both poor and wealthy women were involved in Anabaptism, so were women in all stages of life. Especially poignant are the accounts of pregnant women. Two such women were Anna Gasser of the Tirol region and Susanna Doucher of Augsburg.

When the Peasant War broke out in the Tirol region in 1525, Anna's husband Hans was one of the leaders. By 1528, they became involved with the Anabaptists who traveled into the area, but their involvement in the Peasant War did not help them. By the end of the year they were arrested twice in connection with Anabaptism. At the second arrest, all those arrested were to be beaten at the pillory.

Pregnant women were often released until after the birth, then taken to trial. Since this was the second

arrest, Hans was sentenced to execution while Anna and her friend Mairin were to be beaten publicly, though both were pregnant. Contrary to normal procedures Anna was then held in prison, where she suffered a miscarriage. She was later released; however, she lost custody of her children. Here is a woman in the middle stages of her life, her husband executed, herself pregnant, publicly beaten, and most likely tortured while pregnant. She loses all of her children including the miscarriage in prison. Yet, she still held to her faith in Christ rather than recant. She fled alone, leaving her children behind, and most likely lived out the remainder of her life in Moravia.¹⁰

Susanna Doucher is another such woman who could have been found making her way through a forest to worship outside the city of Augsburg in February of 1528. She was the pregnant wife of a wealthy sculptor in the city. Baptized sometime in 1527 against her husband's wishes, she immediately began attending Anabaptist meetings while also housing and caring for a poor Anabaptist widow.

It was in the Doucher home that several hundred Anabaptists gathered on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1528, and here the police made a large raid, arresting the eighty-eighty who did not escape. For her involvement, Susanna was sentenced to be branded on both cheeks (a typical punishment), and banished from the city for life. Unlike many others, the council took pity on her, ostensibly since she was pregnant but more likely since her husband was a public figure and not an Anabaptist. They forewent the branding and permitted her to be led from the city in irons to humiliate her, but permitted her to return at a later time.¹¹

These women crossed social boundaries and age barriers. Maids shared with noblewomen, and the wife of the cobbler broke bread with the wife of the knight and wealthy goldsmith. This was not the result of a special economic or social teaching; rather, it was a result of Anabaptist theology that saw the kingdom of Christ as made up of those who personally chose to follow after Christ. In this kingdom, there was an equality that superseded the Protestant reforms of Luther and Zwingli or the temporal structures created by the earthly kingdom.

These women were both peasants and nobles, mothers and wives, and former nuns turned Anabaptist. They were elderly and youth, those whose husbands were part of the movement, and those whose husbands did not support them. They spread the Gospel, held meetings, carried messages, fed the hungry refugees, and harbored the fugitive outcasts fleeing from persecution. For this, they were arrested, chained in their houses, branded on their faces, cruelly tortured, and martyred. Many died for their faith, and through their persecution or death we hear their voices today. They were women making thoughtful choices for the care of their own souls, though it often cost them their families and lives. //

If you wish to hear more historical stories like this, please call or visit the Amish & Mennonite Heritage Center. We offer guided tours of "Behalt" - a 10 ft. x 265 ft. cyclorama oil-on-canvas painting that illustrates the heritage of the Amish and Mennonite people from their beginnings in Zurich, Switzerland, to the present day. Behalt means "to keep" or "remember." Hours: Mon-Sat 9:00-5:00. Location: 5798 County Road 77, Millersburg, OH 44654 (near Berlin). Please call (330) 893-3192 for more information or to schedule a tour.

NORITA YODER IS A HISTORIAN AND THE ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE AMISH & MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTER.

[1] A personal visit to the Täuferhöhle in 2001 was a profoundly moving experience.

[2] Bender, Harold, "The Anabaptist Vision," in *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, ed. Guy F. Hersherberger (Scottsdale PA, Herald Press 1957), 47.

[3] Merry Wiesner, qtd. in Sherrin Marshall, *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe: Public and Private Worlds* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989).

[4] van Braght, Thieleman J., *The Bloody Theater or the Martyrs Mirror of Defenseless Christians*, trans. Joseph F. Sohm. (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1938).

[5] C. Arnold Snyder and Linda A. Huebert Hecht, ed. *Profiles of Anabaptist Women: Sixteenth-Century Reforming Pioneers* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press: Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 1996), 75, 142.

[6] Roland Bainton, *Women of the Reformation in Germany and Italy* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1971). See also George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000).

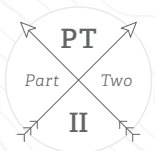
[7] Snyder and Huebert Hecht, 89.

[8] Ibid, 88-91.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid, 140-155

[11] Ibid, 85-86.



THE FLAVOR OF STUPID

words by: **TORRY MARTIN & DOUG PETERSON**

"Okay," I said, but inside I'm thinking it was easy for him to sound so logical and reasonable over the phone. He wasn't the one with a great big black bear outside the front door—a bear that was staring at our cabin like it was a McDonalds' drive-through and I was the Happy Meal he wanted to order. Or from my perspective, an Unhappy Meal.

But I obeyed Rob's command. Setting down the phone, I grabbed the pepper spray from the spice rack. Acting swiftly before I had time to think about how much danger I faced, I pushed the refrigerator back, hurled open the front door, raised the can of pepper spray...and sprayed myself directly in the face.

In my panic, I had aimed the nozzle the wrong direction and taken a face full of pepper spray.

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

It felt as if my face were on fire. Or I had dipped my face in a pan of hot oil while bobbing for apple fritters. Pure agony. I stumbled around the kitchen, my hands clamped over my eyes, and I managed





to bump into every pot, pan, and cabinet. Blinded, I knocked over a chair and then smacked into an entire dish strainer of glasses and plates, bringing it crashing to the floor. Believe you me, I forgot all about the bear.

I also forgot that Rob was still on the phone, which I had set down. Rob was driving home, and when he heard my screams of pain, he assumed that the bear was in the process of shredding me to ribbons.

So Rob floored the accelerator and raced for home at 90 miles an hour—maybe faster.

Pepper spray also causes an immediate release of the contents of a person's nose, so snot was flowing like a fountain. (Sorry, but that's the only way I can think to describe it.) I used my hand to wipe my nose, and in the process I just spread the oil-based pepper spray all over my face. My eyes also swelled so badly that I could hardly open them with my fingers. Still, I managed to feel around in the freezer blindly and locate ice cubes to put on my eyes. I briefly considered using a carton of ice cream for relief, but I knew it would go straight to my hips, not to my eyes. (I'm an emotional eater, remember?)

Still bumbling around, I desperately tried to catch my breath because when I screamed and opened my mouth, I had swallowed some of the pepper spray, and it was burning. The pepper spray also made my throat go numb, making it difficult to breathe, and I started wheezing and gasping.

Still on the phone, Rob thought he was hearing me take my dying gasps.

I plopped down at the kitchen table, and I was holding the ice to my swollen eyes, still trying to breathe, when I suddenly heard the cabin door swing open and SLAM against the wall.

That's when I remembered—the bear!

In my pain and panic, I had completely forgotten all about the bear. It had pushed open the door and was preparing to devour Leg of Torry, heavily seasoned with pepper spray. Then I heard a voice.

"Torry!"

It was a talking bear?

"Are you okay?"

And the bear sounded just like Rob. "Yeah, I guess so," I said.

With my swollen eyes barely able to open, I made out the blurry image of Rob standing a few feet away.

"Well...where's the bear?" he asked.

"I dunno. I guess all my screaming and flailing must have scared it off. Hey, this pepper spray really works on bears, doesn't it? Although if I had designed it, I would have had the nozzle face the other direction."

This story taught me an important lesson, beyond the most obvious one (when you pepper spray a bear, make sure you have the container pointing in the right direction). It taught me about the importance of the Bible in my life.

Okay, I realize that pepper spray and Scripture don't seem linked at first glance, but my encounter with the bear made me think of the Bible as a weapon—a very powerful weapon that God has given us. It's like our divine pepper spray for life, and the directions are pretty simple if we just take the time to open the pages and read them. Unfortunately, many of us keep our Bibles (our pepper spray) on our bookshelf (our spice rack), and we have no idea how to properly use them. As a result, we wind up being blinded by our own blundering ignorance.

So take your Bible off the bookshelf, open it up, and get familiar with the content that God has provided. I guarantee that if you do that, the next time you're under any sort of spiritual attack, you'll save yourself a bear of a time. //





THE CANINE CORNER

FLEAS

words by puppy expert: **DR. TERESA HOXWORTH**

A timely topic to discuss is fleas and flea prevention. In my experience, fleas have not been much of an issue in a typical “kennel” situation, because in these environments, there is no place for the flea eggs to live and the dog’s exposure to fleas is minimal. As more people raise larger dogs and as the outdoor requirements for dogs are changing, more people have been putting dogs in outdoor runs on grass. Therefore, I am beginning to see more dogs and puppies with fleas.

Flea problems tend to be worse in the late summer and early fall, probably because the populations have been able to grow throughout the spring and summer. To prevent flea infestations from building up, it is very important that you closely monitor your dogs, and if a problem develops, treat it quickly.

First of all, to help you identify them, fleas are small, reddish-brownish insects that hop, not fly. If an animal has a lot of fleas, you can easily see fleas crawling around on the skin if you part their fur. I commonly find fleas around

the head and neck area and just above the tail head. If an animal has just a few fleas, it may be difficult to find the adult fleas just by parting the hair because they move pretty fast.

If you see black particles that look like pepper in the dog's hair coat, this can also be a sign that your dog may have fleas. If you put these black particles on a white paper towel and wet it, you will see the water on the paper towel turn reddish. These black particles are flea feces, and the red is from the digested blood the fleas have ingested.

Another easy and helpful way that you can check for fleas on your dogs is to use a flea comb. It is a very inexpensive, fine-tooth comb that will pull fleas and flea feces out of the hair coat and help you quickly determine if your animal has picked up fleas. Use the comb on your dogs as you bring them back into the kennel from the outside run. Not all animals are allergic to fleas, so just relying on them scratching is not an accurate way to diagnose if an animal has fleas.

In addition to causing some animals to itch, fleas ingest your dog's blood. If a severe infestation is present, some animals, especially puppies, become anemic (have low red blood cells). If an animal ingests fleas while grooming themselves, they can also develop a tapeworm infection where you will see small white worms, about the size of a grain of rice, pass in the dog's stool.

The flea life cycle consists of egg, larvae, pupa, and adult. This is important to understand, especially when we discuss treatment. You will need to remember that some treatments are only target adult fleas, but there are likely eggs, larvae, and pupae still in the environment that can become sources of infection for your dog. All



the life stages can survive for some length of time off of a host. The adult fleas can survive at the right conditions for around two months without a host animal. Also, one adult flea can lay up to fifty eggs daily, so you see how quickly flea populations can multiply.

Treatments for fleas will need to be done on a regular basis if a flea infection has developed, instead of just one treatment where you kill only the adult fleas.



CLOSE-UP OF AN ADULT FLEA,
ACTUAL SIZE = TWO MILLIMETERS

The eggs, larvae, and pupa will continue to hatch and develop and grow into adult fleas, so don't think your treatment isn't working; you need to break the entire life cycle of the flea, and this will take some time, usually three months. It also helps if you treat the environment where the dogs spend most of their time because you can decrease the other stages of the flea life cycle and prevent them from hatching into adult fleas.

There are many treatments available for fleas on your animal and for their environment. They range in effectiveness, ease of use, price, and safety for you and your animal. Older flea control methods such as powders, dips, shampoos, and flea collars may still be effective and are inexpensive, but tend to be messy and only effective on adult fleas.

Older style flea collars tend to control fleas only around the neck of animals. However, there are some newer collars where the medication from the collar is absorbed into the body and is more effective against fleas. Collars may also become less effective if the dog gets wet frequently.

If you are using flea powder or shampoo, you may need to reapply powders frequently or bathe your animals daily to have effective control of fleas. Dips can be messy and toxic to dogs and also to the people dipping the dogs. Newer sprays and topical "spot on" applications are long-lasting, easy to use, and safe, but are also more expensive.

Remember to check if the product you are planning to use is safe for pregnant and nursing females. Don't forget to also treat the environment in which the dog lives. I recommend discussing your particular situation with your veterinarian and determining the best flea control program for your needs. //

DR. TERESA HOXWORTH IS A VETERINARIAN AT DANVILLE VETERINARY CLINIC IN DANVILLE, OHIO.

FUNDS *and* BENEFITS

// ANNA SCHWARTZ BENEFIT FUND

A fund has been set up for Anna, age 24. She has been to multiple places because of mental illnesses and is currently residing at Heritage Home. She also has multiple hospital bills and not much income. Any help would be appreciated. Thanks in advance. Make checks payable to Anna Schwartz Benefit Fund, Bank of Monticello, Canton Branch, PO Box 250, Canton, MO 63435-0250.

// DAVID AND RUTHIE RIEHL FUND

David and Ruthie Riehl, a young couple with six children, are struggling to make ends meet. David is off work and requires ongoing treatments due to breaking both arms in a job-site accident. He is also dealing with Rocky Mountain Disease, which is very painful, and Ruthie was in an auto/buggy accident, incurring back injuries. Please pray for the family. Make checks payable to the David Riehl Fund, The Gratz Bank, PO Box 159, Gratz, PA 17030.

// ARLEN AND WANDA MULLET FUND

A fund has been set up for Arlen and Wanda Mullet. Arlen, 31, fell at home and fractured several vertebrae in his neck. He is currently paralyzed from his chest down. They are facing large medical and rehab expenses. They have two children, ages 2 and 7. Thank you for your prayers and support. Make checks payable to Mt. Hope Charities Inc. Po Box 19, Mt. Hope, OH 44660. Attn: Fairview West Church.

// URIAH AND LIZZIE HOSTETLER FUND

A fund has been set up for Uriah and Lizzie Hostetler. Their 5-year-old son has acute leukemia and is going to Akron Children's Hospital every other week for chemo, blood tests, and blood infusions, staying anywhere from one day to over a week. This will be ongoing for 2-3 years. All contributions and prayers are greatly appreciated. God bless you. Tax-deductible donations can be made to Mt Hope Charities, Inc., Po Box 19, Mt Hope, Oh 44660. Attn: Hostetler NE District #134-1.

// ROSANNA LAPP FUND

A fund has been set up for John and Rosanna Lapp. Rosanna has been diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer, and medical expenses are very high. Any prayers and donations will be appreciated. May God bless you. Make checks payable to Rosanna Lapp Fund, Jersey Shore State Bank, 3635 Penns Valley Road / PO Box 66, Spring Mills, PA 16875.

// JOHN MARK AND MICHAEL HERSHBERGER FUND

A fund has been set up for John Mark, age 10, and Michael, age 15, sons of Ben and Rosanna Hershberger. They were both diagnosed with Fanconi Anemia. John Mark had a bone marrow transplant on May 20, and Michael is treating alternatively at this time but will still need a transplant. Costs are high. Thank you for sharing. God bless! Make checks payable to John Mark Hershberger Fund, The Commercial & Savings Bank, PO Box 136, Charm, OH 44617.

/ PLEASE NOTE /

If you are conducting a fundraiser to assist with medical or hardship expenses, please let us know and we will be happy to feature it for one month at no cost. Funds must be payable to a bank, church, or charitable organization.

GOOD STUFF

WITH KEVIN BILLE

Hey, what's the good word!

Attitude: the capacity to stay positive and optimistic despite the circumstances. I want to take a dive under the hood with this topic and see if any of you need a tune-up.

If we have a positive attitude, we think optimistically, hopefully, and cooperatively, and our behavior reflects this thinking. If we have a negative attitude, we are resentful, uncooperative, and cynical in our thinking and behavior. Which attitude do you typically possess?

Attitude is a value closely associated with success or the lack thereof. Typically, mediocre teams consist of players or employees that are negative, believe things are never their fault, or have bad attitudes. Great teams, however, have extremely positive people, and that's contagious. They choose positive thoughts and behaviors and are constantly optimistic in every circumstance.

Attitude requires a couple of things. First, our attitude is our choice. When we accept responsibility for our attitude, we can see every experience as an opportunity to learn and grow. It is not always easy to be hopeful and positive, but we get to choose.

Next is control. We must take responsibility for filtering the input from our environment. We need to step back, take an honest look at positive and negative influences, and control them. We can limit the time we spend in the presence of people with poor attitudes, and we can work to rid our lives of our own negative habits.

Finally, there is contribution. Positive people are generous people. They see the good in others because they look for it. They encourage people who are down, compliment others, share affection, and give credit to others. The more we share positivity with others, the more we reinforce it in our own lives.

Certain things will hinder you from having a good attitude. Let's start with blame. Blaming others makes it

difficult to have a positive attitude and gives control of our situation to other people and circumstances. We blame our attitudes on fate, experiences, parents, relationships—even God. When we blame outside forces, we lose the power to impact our own lives, let alone the lives of others.

Another hindrance is fatigue. Exhaustion can strip hopeful people of their positive perspective. Without proper rest and rejuvenation, we will find it difficult to maintain a positive outlook. And I don't know about you, but I tend to be a little cranky when I'm hungry.

I've found two exercises to be very beneficial in my life. The first one is a gratitude journal. Every morning, write down three (or more) things for which you are grateful. This will have a great impact on you and your attitude. The second one is the "No Complaining" challenge. The goal is to not complain for twenty-four hours straight. Good luck; this one is tough for me, but my complaining goes down significantly when I do this.

It is essential to have the right attitude and approach to your life and work. When you see the good, look for the good, and expect the good, you find the good and the good finds you.

So, ask yourself where you are not seeing, looking for, or expecting the good in your life. One place you could start is simply by adjusting your own attitude.

Now that's GOOD STUFF! //

Thank you to Lodestar Guidance for inspiration.



Please feel free to reach me anytime with your thoughts at kevin@plainvalues.com or:

Plain Values

Attn: Good Stuff with Kevin
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