



3timbers CHURCH

JUNE 2022

ISSUE 8

*Connecting
people to the
transforming &
redeeming love
of Jesus Christ
through*

*PASSION,
POWER,
and
PRESENCE*

~~~~~

**WORSHIP WITH US!**

**SUNDAY 10 A.M.**

**In the Upper Room at  
NATE'S STUMBLE INN**

**15409 S 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET  
BENNINGTON, NE**

**OR**

**FACEBOOK**

**SEARCH FOR**

**THREE TIMBERS CHURCH  
THEN 'VIDEOS'**



## *Equip & Engage - Continuing On...*

3tc family,

As we enter summer and all that it brings, let us take time to reflect on how God has provided for each of us personally and for the church corporately.

I am reminded of a story in 1 Kings 17 when Elijah and the people of God were in the midst of a long drought and finding water and food would become a huge, life altering problem. But God is good and told Elijah this in 1 Kings 17:4 "You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there." Do you know that is exactly what happens, because God directed the ravens, they brought Elijah bread and meat in the morning and evening. The key phrase is "God directed," which shows the sovereignty of God over all things, ravens, people, the church and you and me. If God can direct a raven to bring bread and meat everyday to feed one of God's people, He can direct our lives and the life of the church.

We are in need of "God's direction" in our lives, in our country and in our community because we know that the sovereignty of God is greater than the plans of people. God always provides for His people, personally and corporately, and Three Timbers is a shining example of that. We asked God to provide opportunities for us to "Equip & Engage" this year and help people go deeper, and God has. From a Sunday school teacher to life group coordinator, to life group host families, to youth bible studies, God has brought all that we need. We prayed God would provide opportunities for our men and woman to go deeper and get more equipped for ministry, and God did not disappoint. Our men's retreat was a huge success and the Choose conference coming in October for the Soul Sisters is shaping up to be life-changing event for our community.

Our culture is suffering through a spiritual drought and is need of God's sovereign provision, and I believe God isn't using a raven this time, He is using you and me, the church. We have opportunities to help people become refreshed with the hope of Jesus through numerous opportunities coming this summer and fall. Our men will be going to a Storm Chasers game on July 8 for a time of food, fun and fellowship, and we will be announcing our fall men's ministry plan soon with a brand new study for guys to go deeper. Our back-to-school bash will be on Friday, August 12, as we show another movie as part of our Friday Night Flix series for the community. We will have games, food, fellowship and more as we point toward our time of prayer over all our schools on Sunday, August 14, after worship.

As you can see, we have so many opportunities to become equipped in knowing God's Word so we can engage our community, country and culture with the hope of Jesus all because "God directed" it to be so. Praise God for His sovereignty over all things, the ravens, the church and you and me.

Blessings,

*Pastor Jeff*



## Equip & Engage - Continuing On

### Pray & Go Sunday - by Van Wrenn



Pray & Go Sunday was a rousing success as three groups of members ventured into the Bennington community on a sunny, warm and calm day during worship to experience what Pray & Go was all about. Leaders walked the groups up and down a short route and led the groups in prayer for the homes that they passed. Door hangers were left to let the homeowners know that 3tc had prayed for them. Members who elected to stay in worship were lead through a prayer series focusing on prayers for the community, leaders, friends and family.

Pray & Go is designed to be a **low touch but high impact program**, lifting up our community in prayer. By simply walking down a block, lifting up a simple quick prayer to God for those in the home, leaving a door hanger and moving on to the next house, 3tc is bringing to God those in our community that may need his love and attention.

#### FAQs:

- **But what do I pray?** Simply ask for God's blessing on the home and those who dwell there.
- **Do I pray out loud?** No, it is a silent prayer to God.
- **Do I need to ring their doorbell when I leave the hanger?** No, just leave the door hanger that lets them know that we prayed for them.
- **But what If the homeowner is out and asks me what I am doing?** Simply let them know that you are with 3tc and praying for them. (Sometimes they may even ask for a specific prayer!)
- **What block or area should I start in?** Start in your own neighborhood, then select an area of Bennington not already covered.
- **How do I track what homes I have prayed over?** We have an app for your phone where you can record which homes you have prayed for. (see below)
- **How do I know if someone has already prayed for this block?** The app will tell you if the block has been covered or contact Van Wrenn for more information.
- **Where do I get the door hangers?** We have them at the information tables in worship and also at the Ministry Center.

The app used to track Pray & Go is called Encounter Outreach. It is available on the church's website: [threetimbers.org](http://threetimbers.org). Click on this picture on the opening page to get all the information to download to your smartphone.





## Equip & Engage - Continuing On



Summer... a time to slow down, enjoy the sunshine, catch up on reading, and savor the tastes of locally grown produce (maybe from your own backyard). Or summer... a time to run kids to sports practices and games, fit in the family vacation, catch up on home and garden projects, and stay up way too late because it's still light out and there's no school the next day. Regardless of which scenario your summer resembles, life happens and life groups are here to support you.

Life groups at 3tc have recently been supporting each other during sickness and surgeries, disappointments and celebrations, graduations and birthdays. Even though some life groups are taking a break this summer, their members know they can still count on each other.

Some groups are meeting through the summer while others are having social events instead. You're not too new and it's not too late to join a group - some are still finding their groove and new ones are forming.

Contact Lori Liffing (402-618-5892) to find out more information or to get plugged in. You can also send an email to [info@threetimbers.org](mailto:info@threetimbers.org).

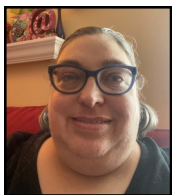


Life Group in Van & Cindy's backyard, clockwise from lower left: Cindy, Sara, Rob, Sara, Ray, Heidi, Connie, Debbie and Kevin. Picture by Van

*Being part of a Life Group has been wonderful for Connie and me. We always felt comfortable and welcome at Three Timbers but not like we really belonged. Our involvement in Life Group has changed that. We feel a much stronger connection to the family at Three Timbers.*

*Anyone who is looking for a way to get more involved should consider joining a Life Group.*

*- Dave Burgers*



### "Good Morning 3tc! How has your week been?"

Does that sound familiar?? If it does, you may have joined a service live streamed on Facebook with our online greeter, Heidi Hirschbach.

Heidi, one of the founding members of Three Timbers Church, has just recently found her niche in our church family. She saw a need & stepped up to fill it. "My entire life I've been a multitasker. Who knew that all of those years of multitasking could actually be God equipping me for service in His church?" said Heidi.

After Covid quarantine, when we started meeting in person again, Heidi noticed that as time went by, the online attendees were not getting what they needed to feel like a valued part of the church. So, Heidi stepped up & started greeting the online community.

She was already taking notes & found that by using her multitasking skills, she could share these notes with Facebook. Eventually, Heidi added more & more to her interactions. She started greeting, asking for prayers & praises, posting the songs & lyrics, relevant Bible verses, sermon notes, website for prayer requests, & even some weekly announcements.

Heidi knows that people are counting on her & enjoys the responsibility. Our online attendees really appreciate her notes & feel more welcome having her there to engage with them.





## Children's Ministry - Continuing On

Garrett Worner [garrett@threetimbers.org](mailto:garrett@threetimbers.org)



### Happy Summer from all the kids at 3TC!!!

Wow, it is so hard to believe it is summer already!

**What a blessed last couple of months it has been for the Treehouse kids!** Branches finished off the school year strong on Wednesday nights with an average of 18 kids being there every week! The kids continue to have a blast learning more about Jesus AND how to go out and show His love! By the kids living this truth out, we have had quite a few new kids come because the Treehouse kids are inviting their friends!!! What an amazing thing to witness! Children living out the Great Commission!

**Speaking of being witnesses for Jesus,** the kids were also involved at worship with our friends at [Ridgewood Senior Living](#) and showed His love by having children's church at the front doors and decorating the sidewalks to let all the residents know how much they are loved by us and by God!!!

**Oh, but that is only the tip of the iceberg.** The Treehouse kids then brought His love to the whole community during [Bennington Daze](#)! This time by being on the 3TC float in the parade; handing out candy, singing songs about Him, dancing, and, of course, soaking the people on the streets with their super soakers!!! Sunday morning continued with the Community Worship Service with about 40 children getting together to worship, get to know each other, learn more about sharing Jesus with their friends and play games with new friends!! Talking about witnessing the Church of the future! Praise God!!

**Want more? Put this on your calendars!** August 8-12 we will be having 5 Day Club at the 3TC Ministry center!! What is this? It's like Vacation Bible School only scaled back a bit in size but huge in fun, games, making new friends, worshipping and learning more about Jesus!!!

**We will follow up this awesome week with a back to school bash with all the fun stuff!!** Food, games, music, bounce house and the street being shut down so we can all watch a movie together....that's right!...Friday Night Flix! Make sure to have your kids bring all their friends and if you don't have kids or your kids are grown, make sure you invite all your friends with kids and even without kids... **Just invite everyone!!! They won't want to miss it!**

Keep an eye out in your emails for more info on this and an **Ice Cream Social** we are planning in **July**.

**Speaking of email, if you are not on the mailing list or you would like to be kept in the loop, please send me an email at [garrett@threetimbers.org](mailto:garrett@threetimbers.org) to be added!**

### Bennington Daze Parade



*Uplifting! Energized! Love of the Lord was flowing out yet again by 3Timbers during the annual Bennington Daze parade. This year was supercharged with music and dancing by Lorrin, Sabine, and Britney. Candy and blessings were bestowed upon onlookers.*  
~ Ann Marie



## Youth Ministry - Continuing On

Britney Scheetz [britney@threetimbers.org](mailto:britney@threetimbers.org)



### *Lots of things are happening for Pursuit this summer!*

We have kicked off our youth summer Bible studies. We have multiple people leading different groups. All of our Bible study leaders are equipped to lead, and now each of them are out engaging students. I am blessed to co-lead one of these groups and sit in on another.

The **High School girls** are talking about bad girls of the Bible. If you are a reader, I encourage you to pick up this book by Liz Curtis Higgs. This author brings the Bible to life. I love sitting in my living room with these girls talking about women in the Bible and relating it to our lives.

The **Middle School girls** are studying God Girls. I get to sit in on this Bible study and watch one of my high schoolers lead.

The **boys** are diving into the teachings of Jesus with another leader.

Not only do we have these groups in community engaging in the Bible and with one another, but we also have other activities and events happening this summer too.

**In June**, we are engaging in a follow-up event with City Light and Campus Life to connect with students in Bennington. We had a great turn out at Bennington Daze and wanted to do a follow up event to connect with more students. We invited the middle schoolers to a park day, and the high schoolers to a lake party in hopes that some of them will plug in with a Christian community if they are not already plugged in somewhere. Also, in June, Pursuit is on a mission to impact the Kingdom. We have high school students going out into Omaha to serve the community around them on a local mission trip.

**In July** we are gathering together to stay in community and engage students. Weekly we will not only have our Bible studies equipping students, but we will also combine with the other youth programs in Bennington for Ultimate Frisbee on Wednesdays from 10am-12pm at the fields behind the Bennington high school bus barn to engage the students. On Mondays, the high schoolers can join us for Sand volleyball. In July we will have a Hawaiian Night for high school and a Summer Party for middle school.

**In August** we are getting ready to go back to school, and what better way to prepare for school than a Back-to-School Bash? August 12<sup>th</sup> we will have a Back-to-School Bash filled with food, games, activities, and a Friday Night Flix. August 28<sup>th</sup> all the youth ministries in Omaha are getting together for One Night to worship God together.

*Be praying for our Youth this summer as God works in their lives and the lives around them.  
So far, I have got glimpses of what God is up to. We would love to have you partner with  
us by praying for this ministry and for our students.*







## Worship & Creative Arts Ministry - Continuing On

Grant Riesen [grant@threetimbers.org](mailto:grant@threetimbers.org)



***The beautiful thing about making this year's theme "Equip & Engage" is that it's an ever involved process. You can't truly hit a finish line when your goal is to consistently equip disciples and engage the body of Christ.***

From a worship and tech team perspective we've had a lot of opportunities to equip internally so that we can better engage the congregation in worship. Since the last newsletter, [we've successfully implemented new in-ear monitors, click tracks, a new presentation software and have greatly lessened our dependence on music stands.](#)

We're still working on developing a full roster for the worship and tech teams, so please continue praying for depth on the teams so that our current volunteers can have the occasional reprieve and so that we can continue to **equip** those that would like to use their talents to serve God by serving his church.

Additionally, along with working to better engage our own church body, the last few weeks (at the time of writing this) have provided incredible opportunities to engage with the universal church outside of our own four walls. On Memorial Day Weekend we had the incredible opportunity to worship with our friends over at the [Ridgewood Senior Living](#). It was an incredible experience worshipping with the residents and (in my opinion) the congregants of our church did an incredible job showing the love of Christ to the folks that live there. The following week we were able to take the lead on the music for Community Worship for [Bennington Daze](#). This opportunity allowed us to worship musically alongside the folks from Crossover Church to help lead the universal church in Bennington in praising our God.

Over the past several months, we've been challenged as a church, as leaders, as a worship/tech team, and as individuals to aim to equip and engage those in our lives. But if I was really to decompact how **YOU** could equip and engage alongside our worship/tech team, I'd do so by issuing these challenges to you.

### **1: Continue to pray for the leaders of the church.**

- We know you all do an incredible job of doing this already but it's something that is desperately needed continuously. Pray for God's vision for his church to be obvious to us and for his wisdom on how to implement his vision.

### **2: Don't be afraid to ask your leaders questions.**

- I promise you if you ask any person on our staff and session what they need help with or prayers for they'd be able to rattle off a few things.
- Additionally, if you want to know why we do what we do, please ask us! I had a conversation not too long ago with someone in our church about the Worship Team and it was such an awesome experience to be able to share a little bit more about the inner-workings of what happens every Sunday.

### **3: Don't be afraid to volunteer.**

- If you're not volunteering anywhere yet, believe me when I say that the Spirit is calling you to volunteer! It says in 1st Corinthians: *"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work."*

[The Spirit has uniquely equipped each and every one of you to strengthen his Church. You'd be surprised when you find out exactly how fulfilling it can be to utilize the gifts God has given you for his Kingdom.](#)

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank my Worship & Tech teams. You all are truly a blessing to me and to Three Timbers and I am extremely grateful for each and every one of you.

Engaging...

Ridgewood Senior Living Worship Service



Ridgewood  
SENIOR LIVING



Bennington Daze

Community Worship Service



THREE TIMBERS CHURCH

CROSSOVER CHURCH

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



CONTINUED NEXT PAGE





## Equip & Engage - Continuing On

### Bennington Daze, continued...

If you haven't been to Bennington Daze, let me tell ya, you are missing out! What a great excuse to get together and be in community. So, if you happened to miss this year, allow me to catch you up on what went down.

Friday night Three Timbers Church Bodies gather to impact the kingdom. They partner with other churches who are all repping the Lord God. The youth leaders drag out the 9-square, set up the spike ball, and prepare to connect with students. The men's ministry pulls out the ice cream and grabs a scoop to serve the community the heavenly delicious dessert. Mr. Garrett and Lorrin walk around giving out suckers to everyone they see. Three Timbers is equipped to engage their community. Two lines a mile long - not only for ice cream, but also for 9-square - stands, waiting patiently. There at the front of the lines, in the lines, outside of the lines, and behind lines stands kingdom builders serving and connecting with the people of Bennington. Because of these kingdom builders, people who are not connected with a Christian community, start asking questions about 3TC.

Saturday kicks off with a pancake feed and a farmer's market. Let me tell ya, the pancakes, delicious. Oh, and the cookies I bought from a youth student at the farmers market, AMAZING! This, however, was not the best part about Saturday.

People flooded the sides of the street, and for what? A parade. Who doesn't like a good parade? Better yet, who doesn't like being in a parade? I spent too much time at the farmers market and knew if I wanted to make it to the Three Timbers float, I was going to have to hurry. I started to run. Then I started to sweat and decided to fast walk. I ran a bit, then walked a bit all the way until I saw those 3TC flags. I boarded the back of the truck, and saw not only children from the children's ministry, but also youth students from the youth ministry.

The truck began to move, and we were off. Music cranked; we were dancing our hearts out. Devious grins crossed the faces of the kiddos in the trailer with the water guns. TIME. OF. MY. LIFE. Let me tell ya. Church Clap came on, and for anyone who does not know the church clap, look it up or ask me about it, and I will show you. Basically, a heart pumping, blood moving, line dance. People from the crowd clapped along with us. Being on the Three Timbers float in the parade was probably one of my favorite floats I've ever been on. This was definitely a highlight of my weekend, but the weekend was not over yet. That night a few of the youth gathered to watch another student's dance recital. That student hippped and hopped all the way across that stage!

Sunday marks a day where we were able to come together as one body of Christ in Bennington, Nebraska. Three churches gathered together in unity. All three glorifying the Lord and worshipping the Lord with one another. Pastor Jeff unfortunately was sick and could not make it. I was blessed to step in for him. The other kingdom workers from the other churches were amazing. Each one kind, and each one doing their part to partner with God to build the kingdom. Grant combined our worship team with another church's worship team flawlessly. Yes, a few technical difficulties at the beginning, but Grant and the other volunteers found a way to work around it. Mr. Garrett had multiple volunteers helping with children's church, and a good thing, too, because there were 40 kids in total who attended children's church that day. Three Pastors sat on stools and were able to talk about God's word together. What a great experience to witness God's children from different churches coming together to worship Him as one. After the community service was over, everyone packed up to go home, but not everyone was done being in community quite yet. A life group met for lunch and kicked off their new series. Then a Student had a softball game that I got the privilege in going and cheering at.

Yes, Bennington Daze was a very busy weekend filled with laughter, games, activities, community, and most importantly the kingdom of God coming together. If you missed it this year, mark it on your calendars for next year. You won't want to miss it two years in a row. Oh, and if you want to do the church clap with us in the parade next year, let me know; I will teach you the moves.



Recap by  
Britney







## Financial Corner - Continuing On Rick Blunk, Business Manager



### Financial update

|               | <u>Actual</u><br>As of 4/30 | <u>Forecast</u><br>As of 4/30 |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Contributions | \$74,598                    | \$66,165                      |
| Expenses      | <u>(\$82,127)</u>           | <u>(\$88,472)</u>             |
| Net           | (\$7,529)                   | (\$22,307)                    |



### As you will note we are ahead of forecast!

On Vision Sunday several things were presented which would include:

- ⇒ We are blessed with strong reserves, so we have plenty of time to turn around recent financial challenges.
- ⇒ As far as revenue, we were forecasting sustaining the improvement in giving in 2022 reflected in the second half of 2021. So far so good.
- ⇒ To reach breakeven for the year, we roughly need to exceed forecast by 10% through some combination of contributions in excess of forecast as well as expenses coming in under forecast. Through April we are giving ourselves an opportunity to achieve that improvement! Praise God. As a reminder, the forecast for 2022 was for a bottom line of (\$26,222).
- ⇒ We are a church which receives most of our contributions the second half of the year and specifically in December. As a result, while so very thankful and blessed for the start to the year, it is with recognizing there is work yet to be done.
- ⇒ Expense-wise we are running at levels which are below what we spent even 3 years ago. So thankful for opportunities to control costs.
- ⇒ Summers are always a challenge and a drop off in giving was apparent in May. The summers are a busy time with lots of travel, family events, etc. However, please don't forget Three Timbers Church during this stretch!

*Hebrews 13:16: Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.*

Thank you to everyone for your support of spreading the gospel through the ministries of Three Timbers Church.  
Let's keep the momentum going.

**UPDATE!**



AmazonSmile Charity Lists is a meaningful and easy way for you to **shop and donate items directly to charities in need**. Simply find the charities you'd like to support, add items from their lists to your cart, and check out – it's that easy.

**There is no difference in the price you pay for your purchases!**

AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of your eligible Charity List purchases to your selected charity, **at no extra cost to you**.

**Support Three Timbers Church by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)**

As of June 2022, the Amazon Smile  
deposit to three timbers church:

**\$1466.83**



Thank you for choosing 3tc!



## Equip & Engage - Continuing On



### **Equip/Prepare and Engage/Action by Bonnie Boone**

*Equip and engage to me means, be ready for action. This covers many fields: scouting, teaching, constructing, and traveling, too. But in this instance I'm referring to sharing Christ's message of salvation with others.*

*As a young adult, I did not fit into this category--at all. But as a young mother I realized I needed lots of help and asked God to be with me. I got involved at church, bible studies and community. I learned my thoughts are certainly not God's, nor my ways either. AND God's purpose for my life is His, not mine.*

*Over the next few decades I've grown in my Bible knowledge, one of the biggest being God's Word speaks to us, in truth, where we are in our Spiritual journey, i.e., what I needed to raise four children versus dealing 24/7 in a pandemic with a retired spouse. Still working on this. But without God's leading, I can let worldly issues bring much stress into my life.*

*So "equipping" to live a life seeking God's purpose is learning God's Word and time for prayer, plus encouragement and support from other believers.*

*"Engaging," serving the Lord, is submitting to His will and having His Word in my heart; being able to share with others God's love, purpose and salvation.*

*Mychal Judge, NYFD chaplain who died on 9-11, carried this prayer in his pocket: "Lord, take me where You want me to go; Let me meet who You want me to meet; Tell me what You want me to say; and Keep me out of Your way." A prayer I try to think of often.*

*This past year in studying Daniel and I & II Peter, these words spoke to me and I carry them in my heart:*

*Daniel 2:20-22 "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; He reveals deep and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him."*

*I Peter 2:9 "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."*

*They speak to me of who God is and what He gives me. Blessed beyond all I can fathom.*



*When I think of Equip and Engage, I think of being equipped with the word of God through church attendance, life group meetings and other fun activities within the church. Then taking that "equipment " and sharing it with our families, our work environments and anyone we meet in the community.*

*– Cindy Wrenn, Session Elder, Life Group Leader*





## Equip & Engage - Men's Ministry



### MEN'S RETREAT

May 13-14

Camp Rivercrest

A recap by Dave Burgers

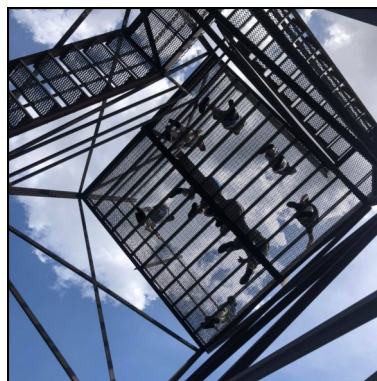


On May 13-14, 9 men and 2 sons met at Camp Rivercrest for what will hopefully be the 1<sup>st</sup> of many retreats. We had a terrific time getting to know each other and diving into what Men of Faith are supposed to be.

Our first night we met and ate supper together, then explored what it means for men of faith to be fearless. After a video session we talked about what our fears as men are for our families, and how with the Lord's help we can overcome them. After a good opening session we all went to a campfire where we continued to get to know each other and have s'mores. Then we retreated to our cabins for a restful (?) night's sleep.

Saturday morning we had breakfast at the dining hall, and then went to the lookout tower. Most of us climbed to the top 5 stories up and enjoyed the view. We then went back to camp and into our 2<sup>nd</sup> session where we learned that men of faith are to be tender. We talked about our relationships with our wives and children and how we are to love and respect them in a godly way. After more good discussion we went to the zip line! It is approximately 300 feet of pure adrenalin, down a gully through the trees. We all had several opportunities to make the run, with some taking advantage of it more than others. One member of our group even earned the nickname Zippy! After lunch we had our final session on how men of faith are to be thankful. We talked about what it truly means to be thankful and how to show it.

The very best thing about this retreat was getting to know each other as brothers in Christ. We all feel a common bond and have pledged to be there for each other in prayer and support. I strongly encourage those who couldn't make it to take advantage of upcoming opportunities to just be with likeminded Men of Faith.





## Equip & Engage - Continuing On

### Disciple or Beggar? Which one are you...today? by Sara Mitchell



As I sit down to write this today, I'm struggling with pulling my thoughts together in a cohesive way that would make sense. Yesterday, a horrific tragedy occurred in a small Texas town. Jeff has asked us to "cry out to God." Yes! We're begging Him, in the midst of this evil, to be our hope and refuge, our ever-present help in times of trouble. (Psalms 46:1)

At the beginning of May, God tapped Grant to come to the pulpit. He put Acts 3:1-10, the story of Peter healing the beggar on his heart. When I come to worship, I know that God puts the points of the sermon that I most need to hear at the forefront. What I heard, loud and clear was: "What is my testimony?" and "An abundance of Grace has been given to me, so that I might pour that out onto others." I need to be sharing what God has done and continues to do in my life with others. I'm really ok with the doing His work part, but speaking it out loud is so very hard for me. I need to get over that! After all, what am I afraid of? Rejection? Embarrassment? How can I be embarrassed to share God's all-consuming Love? Why should I be afraid of rejection when I've been welcomed as a child of God?

As I wrestled with Grant's convicting words, I came across a post from a Facebook group that I've followed for some time. Jay's Healing Journey is a community of prayer warriors that have come together to lift up Jay and his family. As a 19-year-old college freshman, Jay was in a terrible motorcycle accident that resulted in a severely compressed spinal cord and subsequent paralysis. Jay's mom, Pricilla has cried out to God and begged her fellow believers to come alongside her family. After Grant's sermon, this post was even more powerful. It so clearly speaks to the beggars and the disciples. He wants us to share our testimony. He wants us to come to Him in prayer. He wants to use each of us, regardless of our brokenness. We serve such a great God!

I'd like to get share the post that had me thinking about my testimony and why I should be sharing it. It's a bit long, but I think you'll find it well worth the read! After all, on any given day we're both the Beggar and the Disciple.

<sup>1</sup>We have taken the days we have been home since our trip to Cleveland to try and absorb all that we learned and experienced while there, and to give Jay some privacy as he contemplates his decision. But tonight, I want to tell you about Chris.

Not my Chris. The other Chris. I don't know his last name....he's just Chris. We met him in our Cleveland hotel the first morning of our stay when we went down for breakfast. Let me insert the fact that Tuesday was hard. Extremely hard. I think we were all quite nervous about the assessment to be done on Jay. Travel wasn't easy. By the time we got to our hotel 12 hours after leaving Brownwood, including two flights on two different planes and the craziness of the Chicago airport, Jay's muscles were so tight, uncooperative and painful. The hotel has mistakenly given away their handicap accessible rooms, so our reservation had not been correctly honored. I found another hotel and tried to convince Jay to make the change, but he was so tired, he insisted we just stay where we were. When I awoke Wednesday morning, I prayed before I got out of bed. Honestly, I told God that we needed some encouragement, 1 Reprinted with permission from Priscilla Monson given the stress and fatigue we were all feeling. We readied for the day, and Jay went down to breakfast a few minutes before Chris and I did.

As Jay was at the buffet, a young black gentleman that works at the hotel came up behind him, put his hand on Jay's shoulder, and said, "Well, I see that you are a living testimony, just like I am." Jay turned to the man and introduced himself, asking what the man meant by his comment. In return, the man...Chris...told Jay his story. Chris had been heavily addicted to cocaine, heroin, and Percocet simultaneously. He had also been the victim of a couple of gunshot wounds as a result of his drug habit and life on the streets. He had been placed into a nursing home and told that both of his legs were to be amputated. He pulled up a pant leg and showed Jay the wounded lower portion of one leg that was still healing from horrible infection and decay the drug use caused. At the point that he was told he would lose both legs, he ran away from the nursing home in his wheelchair. He said he did not know where he was going...had no plan...but only desired to run. He ended up on the far side of Cleveland with no help, no one to call, and no answers. At that moment, He looked to the heavens and begged God to be real and to help Him. God answered. Today, Chris has recovered with the exception of one lower leg, but he will eventually be fully healed. Both of his legs were saved. He now lives for the Lord and willingly shares his testimony. After telling Jay the details of his story, he then told Jay that Jay, too, was going to tell his testimony and would walk again, because the Lord hears those who serve Him.

We went on to have a very successful day with the Trial Administrators who did the testing on Jay, resulting in Jay's acceptance into the program.

As we left the hotel on Thursday morning, Chris and three other hotel employees surrounded Jay, hugged him and prayed for Him.

Sometimes it seems that God doesn't hear us. Sometimes we wonder if our prayers simply go unanswered. Sometimes we don't recognize the work that God is doing, whether it is visibly evident or not. And sometimes, God answers the most basic prayer we offer....a simple, "Lord, show us you are here" plea....in such an obvious display that we are left speechless. Speechless.





## Equip & Engage - Continuing On

(Continued) Disciple or Beggar? Which one are you...today? by Sara Mitchell

That has been our state for the last few days. God used a former homeless drug addict, a physical therapist, a biomedical engineer, an electrical engineer, a mathematician and a computer scientist on Jay on Wednesday (the last five of which comprise the FDA Test Team). We never saw a medical doctor. The testing is overseen by a physician, and a surgeon who has worked with this team for the last twenty years, performs their surgeries. But the team itself is comprised of incredibly inventive, intelligent and passionate scientists. Fascinating. Perhaps the most fascinating part of the story is that the homeless drug addict was used as effectively and urgently as the scientists were. And that is God's standard operating procedure, isn't it? To take the lost, the broken, the sin-filled, the undesirables....and use them as His disciplines. Chris...the new Chris, not my Chris... was as strong a disciple to my family as Matthew, Mark or any of the original twelve disciples could have ever been. And Chris made as much of an impact on us as the collective science team did. God hears you. If you pray, if you cry, if you moan, if you sit and stare and find yourself unable to utter a single sound....

God hears you. He will answer you....every.single.time. His answer may come in an immediate, obvious way. It may come through other people. It may seem to take ages to come. And sometimes it comes in silence, which is often taken as a lack of an answer instead of the answer that it is. But He answers. One of the most beautiful answers I have ever received was in the form of a down-and-out, drug addicted, homeless man who wondered if God was real. God saw Chris, and I saw God through Chris.

If you are wondering what God looks like, I can tell you that on some days, he has beautiful dark skin, large eyes that shine with both compassion and the glaze of hard living, a slight limp on a leg that has remaining decay, and a slight delay in speech. He is absolutely beautiful.

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with permission from Priscilla Monson

**What a testimony! What boldness! Yes, I need to reach out and share my faith, encourage others, and share Jesus.  
If I don't, who will? Will you?**

~ Sara

To help you equip and engage...

## Find your Spiritual Gifts

Go to [threetimbers.org](http://threetimbers.org) - click on the GET STARTED button on the opening page.

**"What God has called you to do He has gifted you to do, and what He has gifted you to do He has called you to do."**

**"It has been said, 'Career is what you're paid for, but calling is what you're made for.'"**

Source: ChurchGrowth.org



Have you **moved?**

Do you have a **new phone number?**

Have you opened a **new email account?**

Are you **new to 3tc?**

**So we can keep you up to date, please keep us up to date!**

**Let us know if you've had changes to your contact information:  
[rick@threetimbers.org](mailto:rick@threetimbers.org) and [newsletter@threetimbers.org](mailto:newsletter@threetimbers.org)**

*Stay Connected...*



## Equip & Engage - Women's Ministry

### Soul Sisters

Soul Sisters was based on the Bible verse from Romans 12:10: "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourself."

Soul Sisters was created for women to have a place to participate in great fellowship with wonderful women. We have been going strong for at least 4 years. Some of our past activities included numerous book clubs, summer bible studies, game nights, craft nights and other relaxing events.

If you would like to participate in any activities, all women are welcome. Always feel free to bring a friend! If you want to share ideas or have a suggestion for an event let us know!

**June's event** was a great success! We enjoyed bingo, bagels and fellowship! A good time was had by all! See photos below!

**July:** Lake Fun - Join us for brunch at Timber Lodge Lake, 267th and Maple, Waterloo. Details soon!

We will be co-hosting (with other Bennington Churches) a "Choose Hope" event on Saturday, **October 22<sup>nd</sup>**, 9:30 - 12:30, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Bennington.

#### Bagels & Bingo...



### Upcoming "Choose Hope" Event...

#### *Choose Hope* Women's event!

Saturday, October 22nd, 9:30 - 12:30

Faith, fun, time with friends...and chocolate!

Featuring: Laura Pedersen, Sioux City; Rachel Scott, Omaha; and Jill Miller, Sioux City

Worship, storytelling, laughter and God's Word!

Tickets only \$25 - purchase online now at [www.chooseministry.com/tour/](http://www.chooseministry.com/tour/)

All are welcome - bring your friends!







## Equip & Engage - Continuing On

### Lovingly Nagging Me Into Action by Pam Mitchell

My current favorite song is *The Commission* by Cain. Although the lyrics are soft and loving, they are also commanding, and the message is clear: *Go tell the world about me; I was dead but now I live. I've got to go now for a little while, but goodbye is not the end. Sound familiar?*

In one of Britney's recent sermons, she repeatedly reminded us that we have a job to do: share our testimony. I will lean in to one point in particular here. She had taken a survey to see what keeps people from sharing the Good News with others. What she discovered was interesting, but not really surprising. We - and I include myself - have a fear of offending others or being rejected by what we say, we are afraid of being asked a question we can't answer, we don't want to make waves or create controversy. Because I can relate to all of this, I want to share an experience I had just before the quarantine in March of 2020.



Pam engaging with Carol  
before Carol's summer trip.

I had set off to Famous Footwear to buy some shoes for my granddaughter. As I reached for the door to go in, a young couple walked up ready to go in, too. The young woman was in a wheelchair, and the young man was not only pushing her chair, but he was carrying a sleeping toddler. I held the door open and found them quite surprised by this small action. He was so grateful and said people rarely do that for them. I was caught a little off guard by that, but shared that I was happy to do so and went on my way.

*Can I be direct and say God is a nagger. Yes, He nags; at least he does me. Often His speaking to me comes in the form of nagging feelings and nudges, like pay attention! And I was getting that feeling.*

As I looked for my granddaughter's shoes, I noticed the little boy was awake now and the family kept circling the merchandise but not making any selections. I said I noticed and I was getting a nagging feeling, but my mind went to a place that Britney had mentioned from her survey: I thought about offering to help them, but what if I had misread the situation? What if they didn't need help? How embarrassed would I be if I offended them? With those thoughts in mind, I headed for the door with my bag with every intention of leaving to avoid any of the above. But, God doesn't make mistakes, and He's not into misleading us. I literally put my hand on the door to leave, then knew I couldn't. There was no doubt that, like it or not, God was providing this opportunity and He wanted me to take it.

So, I mustered up all my courage (lovingly equipped by God) and walked over to the couple. I took the direct approach and said, "I don't want to offend you, but could I buy you some shoes today?" Even though I felt strongly that God had nudged (pushed!) me to do this, I expected the worst. Oh, ye of little faith. The young man was instantly grateful! "Why would you do that?" he asked. My response? "I just wanted to share God's love with you today." Sounds a little sappy, doesn't it? But that is how it went down. And he asked if he could give me a hug.

They graciously accepted my help, but that wasn't the end of the story. They picked out a couple of pairs of shoes and some socks and we went to the register. While paying, I could hear the man on the phone telling his mother what was happening. I felt myself smile. Then the woman asked me if she could share her story with me, if I had time. Of course! She explained to me that she had had another young son- Gabriel - who was tragically murdered the year before. Oh my gosh! I felt such pain for her! The toddler with them was the younger brother of that son. She said she felt Gabriel had brought me to them that day. My heart was touched with such emotion. They repeatedly shared their gratitude, and we parted with hugs. I knew I would never see this family again.

I can't claim to have shared the words of the Good News with them. Actions don't tell the whole story of what God has done for us; the words ARE important! But don't underestimate how many doors can be opened with a gesture. My interaction with this family that day may have been one of many orchestrated in their lives by God. In that intimate moment, I felt so touched by that family, and I was the one who was grateful for having faced my fear. It became part of my story, too. *But you know, It's not as scary to engage when you are passionate, and you can only be passionate when God is the center of your life. Be bold! Don't miss those nudges. I rather like it that I have a Heavenly Father who nags!*





Three Timbers Church

P.O. Box 282

Bennington NE 68007

*When finished with your newsletter, please consider sharing it with someone else!*