

Reflections

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A newsletter for Hillview Baptist Church

Image is Everything

By: Pastor Norm

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Lisa Laflamme, heir to the CTV News throne, was recently released from her contract. The issue was not her age, but the fact that she would not dye her hair; she wanted to appear as she is. Big mistake! In an image driven society her employer, Bell Media, said they wanted to “go a different direction.” What Bell Media wants to project is a younger image, or at least not an old one. Image is everything it seems.

Some years ago there was someone at Hillview Baptist Church who used to play the organ every Sunday morning as prelude music. When Hillview started sharing the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, he was released from his ministry; he was told that organ music projected the wrong image. Since when has

the Church been called to be image based or image driven? The answer is... always! However, the image we are called to project is contrary to what our culture promotes. The Church is, and always has been, called to reflect the image of Christ.

Jesus made people His priority; he was never concerned about public opinion. Jesus ate with pharisees and prostitutes. Jesus always made time for people who needed His touch. Jesus said that if you’ve seen him, you’ve seen the Father. When people see Hillview Baptist Church may they see Christ in us. That’s the only image that really matters.



Lisa Laflamme

Why Bother with Bible Studies

By: Kurt Redschlag



It is significant to note that in the description of the various spiritual activities that characterized the life of the early church (Acts 2:42-47), the very first one mentioned was that "they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching . . .". This young church's first priority was not to elect

various church officers, was not to formulate a church constitution, was not to establish a building committee, was not to set up a budget. What they felt they needed more than anything else was to immerse themselves in the Word of God (still only in oral form in their day) so they could bet-

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Why Bother with Bible studies

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ter understand and respond to its teachings (Psalm 119:1-2, 5). Indeed, knowing and living by God's Word is foundational to the growth and spiritual health of the church - both then and now.

Sadly, biblical illiteracy is all too prevalent among Christians today. Many Christians simply do not take the time to read, study and meditate on the

Word of God (Psalm 1:2). And without spending quality time in God's Word, the Holy Spirit cannot use its truths to feed and nurture our souls, to guide and direct us (Psalm 119:105), to instruct and inform us (John 16:13-15). Listening to a sermon on Sunday morning is most valuable, but by itself is not sufficient for bringing believers to full maturity in their faith. It is absolutely crucial that Christians spend time with God and his Word. We therefore want to strongly encourage

the people of Hillview Baptist to avail themselves of the various small group Bible studies and the adult Sunday School class that will be offered again this fall. (see page 4 for more information ed.)



A Bible Study for Women

By: Colette Rhodes

Miranda Snook and I took on leadership of Ladies Bible Study in Fall 2021. From September to December 2021, we studied Psalm 119 (on RightNow Media) over zoom. While it

"OUR DREAMS OF A MULTI-GENERATIONAL GROUP WERE REALLY COMING TRUE"

was better than nothing, we missed coming together in person and enjoying the group dynamic without all the technical difficulties.

From January to March, we studied "A Friend in Me" which was about intergenerational supportive female friendships. In March, we finally began to meet in person again at the church. During the zoom sessions, we had gotten a couple new members and it was fun to see them face to face at last! And unexpectedly, we had a couple of brand-new faces as well. Could it be? Our dreams of a multi-generational group were really coming true. Some of us were single and just embarking on the adventure that is adulthood, some had toddlers, some had teenagers, some had adult children and grandchildren! The variety of experience and perspective has been a blessing over and over.

Life gets busy and sometimes people can't make it but there are about a dozen of us that I would call regulars now.

The "A Friend in Me" study prompted us to begin our "Ladies' Meet-Up"—on the first Wednesday of every month. We invite all ladies of Hillview to meet us in the fireside room to make and deepen our friendships. The tea kettle is always on when you walk in and there is a selection of desserts and snacks. (*which they do NOT share with the men, which I am sure is unbiblical ed.*)

In April 2022, we started our study of Jonah (also on RightNow media) and finished it in June, right as things were getting crazy for the teachers and plans were ramping up for the summer. Throughout July and August, we have not done a study, but met at a different person's home for a chat and catch-up. It has been great to stay in touch in a more casual atmosphere and hear about each other's summer adventures. One evening after a tiring day of cleaning up after two human tornados with sticky fingers (aka my children), I went to Christine's absolutely gorgeous condo for our group's weekly summer chat. As we were leaving I said, "Oh I can't wait until I can have a tidy, beautiful place with no fingerprints!" and Marcy said, "But

you will miss your little children and wait and wait for them to call and visit!" I love the little reminders like that. I just love our group!

Starting in September, we plan to begin a book-based study called "Significant - A Study of Women in Jesus' Genealogy". If you have interest in joining us for ladies' bible study, which happens Wednesday evenings at 7pm at the church, feel free to contact Miranda Snook or myself. Or if you would rather just hang out once a month, hope to see you on the first Wednesday of every month for Ladies' Meet-Up!

Editor: I am thinking that I should switch from the men's study of Revelation and all that confusion to the woman's study on the women in Jesus's lineage. I did some research and there are six women involved -Sarah, Leah, Tamar (Judah's wife) Rabab, Ruth and Bathsheba. The author goes into detail about each woman's story, focusing on their weaknesses, strengths and struggles. Sounds way more interesting than trying to figure out "the millennial maze" of Revelation.



The Men Tackle Revelation (with Pastor Norm as Quarterback)

By: Wayne Baker

The men's Bible study has been going for several years, even before Pastor Norm arrived at Hillview. Currently the men are studying the Book of Revelation. We began with a study of the major traditions of interpretation. There was some discussion of what is meant by "Taking the Bible Literally" a term much disused in de-



nouncing conservative Christians. My late father was a bomber pilot in World War 2. Now most will conclude I said he is dead, but there is nothing in that sentence saying so. Taking something literally does mean accounting for idioms, sarcasm, symbolic language, and many other factors.

So too it does with literature found in the Bible. The Book of Revelation is difficult because it uses several forms of literature, and language forms as it brings us its message.

First, the Book is called the Revelation of John. This is incorrect, it is the Revelation Jesus gave to John. There are seven letters early in the scripture and these should be interpreted as letters with symbolic imagery. Our study discusses these issues, thereby helping us to recognize what forms are used, and how these forms impact on our understanding of that specific passage. Some interesting discussions have occurred because of the scriptures we are investigating.

In addition to the study, we occasionally take time to have a party or social event. We have had a movie night, a potluck with the ladies Bible study, and other social events. We even had a mothers day breakfast prepared by the men for the ladies of the church. Who knows, maybe this year, we will participate in some challenging mission projects. All men are welcomed to join us and become part of the study. We

meet every Wednesday evening at 7pm in the church's library.

Editor: just to add to Wayne's article. Revelation is fascinating but also the most frustrating book in the Bible. It is simply not user friendly. Why would John write something that is almost incomprehensible. I feel that way about Shakespeare, iTunes and soundboards. However participating in something that is challenging can result in a feeling of accomplishment once the goal is reached.

In some ways Revelation is a simple story of good versus evil. A fight between the Lord and Satan with the winner predetermined. Our goal is to learn more about the book, and what it tells us about God. The book should not be ignored because it is complex and problematic.

In June we interrupted our study at Chapter 2, versus 17. When our study resumes, it will begin with John's fourth letter. This time the letter is to the Church at Thyatira. John condemns the Thyatiran Church for allowing a wicked woman to remain part of the congregation. She was leading other Christians into immorality, including some pagan practices (2:20). To learn what happens next - the Bible study will have the rest of the story.

August Barbecue



At the August barbecue, Lynda Lee brought Brownies to the party. They were so good that we asked for the recipe. At first Lynda was hesitant to share but after Katie mentioned knowing the Pastor, she decided it was better to cooperate. 😊

Our thanks to all the volunteers that organized the event.

Our Favourite Brownies

(Uses a cookie sheet)

1 c Margarine or Butter	1 1/2 c Flour
2 c White Sugar	1 tsp Salt
1/4 c Cocoa	2 tsp Vanilla
4 Eggs	

- In a saucepan melt the margarine.
- Remove from heat; add sugar, cocoa and eggs and beat together.
- Add flour, salt and vanilla.
- Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees and bake until it smells good (about 30 minutes).

Source: "Chocolate Cake and Onions...with Love"; Compiled by Marilynne E. Foster; Copyright 1976; Beaverlodge, Alberta, Canada: Horizon House Publishers

You Should have Come to Hear

By: Bill Holmes

Yes, you should have come to experience and participate in something wonderful and totally unexpected, at least from my perspective. There was a "Hymn Sing" at our Church on Sunday, August 28. To be totally honest

**" PASTOR
RICK ACTING
AS REFEREE
AS NEEDED"**

Joy and I would never have considered attending a music service that only included hymns, but they needed a

semi-competent soundman . Joy, taking pity on me, decided to keep me company. It can be so lonely up in the sound booth.

The service was led by Rick Foster. I believe he is a pastor at Ellerslie Road Baptist Church. The pianist was Wendy McLennan. Her fingers seem to

know every song as danced over the keyboard. Our very own Kurt Redschlag provided a short homily on hymn number 67. Kurt described a sequence of historical events that resulted in the creation this beloved hymn. Events that only God could orchestrate. Kurt also explained that sometimes he feels like a musical instrument, specifically an organ. It was a perfect analogy.

The songs were selected by the congregation, with minimal brawls among people requesting their favourite song. Rick acted as referee as needed. To hear "It is Well with my Soul" sung by over 130 people with parts and harmony was an absolute joy. In fact, the congregation took over and Rick simply stepped back and listened. But the absolute highlight of the evening was the song requested by Carol Brewster (age 9) and her friend Sophia Joseph (age 7 1/2 - the 1/2 was very important to Sophia). The girls hollered for "He's Got the Whole World

in his Hands". It was sung with joyous enthusiasm by everyone.

And finally there was a men's trio consisting of Rick Foster, Dale Hufnagel



and Burt Harsch. Their voices blended effortlessly as they sang "I've Got a Mansion".

The evening concluded, as Baptist convention dictates, with food and lots of it. **The next songfest event is Sunday September 25 at Ellerslie Road Baptist Church at 6 pm.** This Hymn Sing will include the use of an organ, which probably means Kurt will once again be rolled out too.

Fun Times with Ezekiel

By: Bill Holmes

The adult Sunday School class will be resuming on September 18. We will be studying Ezekiel and, yes, it is an actual book of the Bible. It is, perhaps, the most confusing and visually flamboyant book of the Bible other than



Revelation. The book is full of symbolism, visions and ruin. Sounds similar to the MCU (i.e. Marvel Cinematic Universe)!

Dr. Jerry Sheppard will teach this class. Dr. Sheppard is a member of Greenfield Baptist Church and is Professor Emeritus with Taylor Seminary. He taught courses on Biblical Hermeneutics, Introduction to the Old Testament, Isaiah, Biblical motifs and Hebrew plus many others. Obviously he knows his stuff. He will attempt to explain Ezekiel in terms that hopefully we will understand and appreciate. He will outline the significance of the book and the reasons it should not be avoided just because it is unusual and rather disturbing.

Ezekiel has three major themes – threats against Judah and Jerusalem, actions against foreign nations and prophecies of hope. In addition, you could argue that Ezekiel has a direct relationship with Revelation because they contain similar imagery and

prophecies. Dr. Shepard will probably explore these themes and attempt and also go beyond the more familiar stories of the watchman, the dry bones and the visions of destruction.

In our increasingly secular and so called progressive society, Ezekiel describes an almighty God ready to pronounce judgment. The book helps us to understand sin from God's perspective and that we, as a people, are accountable. Perhaps just as Israel was judged and punished by God for breaking the covenant, we too will also experience God's discipline. For the Hillview men, there is a bonus - having knowledge of Ezekiel may help us understand Revelation. That is reason enough to attend!

A Letter



Dear Editor,

I am glad to learn that Hillview is starting up a monthly newsletter. When you asked me if I could provide a personal update, I thought it would be a great way to reconnect with Hillview and give a bit of an update on how things are going so far for me.

As you know, I started a new worship ministry position at NewLife Community Church in Lloydminster last May. Lloydminster isn't a big city, but hav-

ing grown up in rural Alberta, I've come to realize that it isn't small, either. The toughest part is finding a good place that has musical gear (the closest Long and McQuade is the one I used in Edmonton!). Overall, though, it has been a neat place to move to. I've come to know the town decently well and have been able to find some of the best restaurants and bubble tea spots.

My time here at NewLife has been great. I've been able to get to know the people here; I spend most of my time with the worship team and the young adult's group, which I have been leading. It has been a pleasure to lead the people here, and it's been a rewarding experience to be able to use all that

I learned while in Bible school and serving at Hillview.

In August, Neil and Krista came to NewLife for a Sunday service. It was a great chance for me both to tell them how things are going for me and to hear about Hillview, too.

I hope that, going forward, your newsletter can be a useful medium for ministry at Hillview. We do have one here at NewLife, and we use it both as a means for connection and edification.

Grace and peace, Ben Lien



Livestream - Friend or Foe

By: Greg Beleslotis

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Since the early spring of 2020, Hillview Church, along with many other churches, began making their Sunday services accessible through live stream. This movement was prompted by safety measures and restrictions in response to the covid health crisis that came upon us and others throughout the world.

Several people, including myself, regard this live stream access as a blessing. We are fortunate with today's technology to overcome physical barriers and be part of a worship service with others by virtual means. Those who appreciate this livestream access include people who cannot always be part of in-person worship services due to their own personal circumstances. They may have specific health issues like myself that make live stream services a more preferable option for at least some, if not all, the time. Alternatively, they may have other issues preventing them from being at church such as a lack of transportation or being a caregiver.

The live stream service has not been without its hiccups in terms of tech-

nical issues. Sometimes there is a lack of volume through stretches of the live stream. In other cases, there is freezing on the video playback. The technical team responsible for the live stream is aware of these issues and from my viewpoint, work diligently to address them. For this I am grateful and hope to see the live stream option remain indefinitely.

I am currently unaware of specific channels or procedures for voicing these and similar concerns but trust that the technical team will put them in place or make us aware of them if they have not done so already. I ask that those who do have and want to express such concerns, do so graciously keeping in mind that much of the technical team are non-technical experts volunteering their time to make the live stream access possible.



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Sitting in a
church on
Sunday doesn't
make you a
Christian
anymore than
sitting in a
garage makes
you a car!



Sept 11: Coffee is on! Please join us after the service for coffee and fellowship!

Sept 18: Potluck Sunday! Last names starting with A-Q please bring a large main dish to share. Last names starting with R-Z please bring a dessert to share. Thank you.

Sept 18: Adult Sunday school starts - see story on Page 4

Sept. 25: Hymn Sing at Ellerslie Baptist Church - 6pm

Coming Soon - Bible studies

Actual Grade 4 exam question: Why are there rings on Saturn?

Because God liked her, so he put a ring on her.

Editorial Comment - An Effective Newsletter

By: Bill Holmes



It was last spring when Pastor Norm asked me to produce a newsletter for our Church. After intensive and lengthy deliberations with Joy we decided to give it another try. Actually, the first newsletter I did for Hillview was published way back in December 2016. It took this long for the Pastor to recover and suggest a mulligan - a technical golf term for a "do over". Pastor Norm is very familiar with that term.

As background information - Joy and I have been attending Hillview since 2016. We visited many other churches but Hillview was a perfect fit for us. Like Goldilocks - not too big and not too small, with the standard uncomfortable pews and full of wonderful people.

I have many years of experience as a newsletter editor at two entirely different churches. The biggest challenge associated with doing newsletters is the stories themselves - identifying possible stories, asking people for contributions and handling the rejection. Colette's response was not typical - "sure, I can do that", is tomorrow ok?" I was so shocked that I was speechless. And then the story arrived just as she promised.

The purpose of a church newsletter, from my perspective, is to tell the sto-

ry of Hillview Baptist Church and the people that are the Church. Hopefully, the newsletter will be fun, interesting and informative. That it will help the congregation to get acquainted, to establish connections, to inform, challenge and provide opportunities for dialogue among readers.

So with those goals in mind, if you have a story to tell, a cartoon, a joke or a story idea, please let me know. And don't worry about any deficiencies in spelling, grammar or other related issues. Joy and me is skilled and do fix.

We are already planning for an October issue. The submission deadline is Monday, September 19. After this second edition, some people will complete a comprehensive assessment to determine whether or not to continue with the newsletter.