

Vol. 12, Issue 7, July 2023

connect



CELEBRATE
FREEDOM

★ INDEPENDENCE DAY ★

JULY

2023

**Can't be here
in-person?**

Join us live Sundays
at 9 & 10:45 am
on Facebook, Imbc.tv,
or our LMBC app.

2nd

morning services



Communion Sunday

REMEMBERING HIS SACRIFICE

4th

Offices and campus closed



*"So if the son sets you free,
you will be really free." John 8:36*

Also this month:

7th

**PrimeTime Celebrates
America**

- 6 pm, Renaissance Room

Menu: Hamburgers, hot dogs,
and all the fixings. You bring:
veggie, salad and dessert. Sign
up with Vida or Blanche, or by
calling the church office (304-
736-7676).

9th

**Guest Speaker: David
Wingett**

- 6 pm, Worship Center

Freedom is something
we enjoy and celebrate
here in America, but the
missionaries we send out
to foreign lands often find
their freedom challenged.
Read pages 14-15 for a
recent example.

Other calendars:

Rooted (Bible)

pg. 13

Lewis KIDS connection

Visit lmbc.org/lkc or
ask to join our
Facebook group

*We are looking for volunteers who would like to serve in our
K-3 age range once a month in the first and second services on
Sundays. If you are interested, please contact the church office
or Rebekah Shaffer at r.shaffer@lmbc.org.

***Sunday Mornings
WC lower level**

2: We are saved by faith in
Jesus
9: Jesus calmed a storm
16: Jesus healed and forgave
23: Jesus healed sickness
30: Jesus fed many people

**Weds @ 7pm
in the FLC**

5,12,19: Summer Break
(No LKC)
26: **Popcorn & Movie
Night**

**4th Thursday
from 4-5:15 pm
@ Ebenezer**

27: Bible Club



SUMMER '23 JULY



REFUEL
STUDENTS



12

MEET ME@BVILLE PARK
BARBOURSVILLE PARK SHELTER #9

19

SUNDAES ON WEDNESDAY
STUDENT MINISTRY BUILDING

26

USHARE NIGHT
STUDENT MINISTRY BUILDING

SAVE THE DATE!

Prayer Lab: July 27
(Refuel does not meet on 7/5)

Follow us on Instagram!

@refuelstudents

REFUEL STUDENT MINISTRY | WEDNESDAYS @ 645PM IN THE STUDENT MINISTRY BUILDING
LEWIS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH | [LMBC.ORG](https://lmbc.org) | 5385 W PEA RIDGE RD, HUNTINGTON, WV 25705

LET MY PEOPLE GO

In the Book of Exodus, God sent Moses to the most powerful man in Egypt (Pharaoh) to preach a message of deliverance, freedom, and liberation. The nation of Israel had been in slavery to Egypt for 430 years (Ex. 12:40). God called Moses and told him, “Say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Israel is My son, My firstborn. 23 So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn” (Ex. 4:22-23).

In v. 22-23 we see three major truths:

Truth #1: “Israel is My son, My firstborn.” Israel is God’s chosen son with all the rights and privileges of the firstborn (v. 22b). By the way, this is the central theme of the Old Testament.

Truth #2: God wanted His Son (Israel) set free. In v. 23a, God commanded, “So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me.”

The phrase “let My son go” in v. 23 is one Hebrew word שָׁלַח shalach and is also translated as “release” or “set free.” Now keep this in mind, this is the message, and this same message is repeated throughout the book of Exodus. God wanted His people set free from Egyptian bondage. In fact, the message “Let my people go”

or Set my people free is found 10 times in the first ten chapters alone (See 3:18; 5:1; 7:16; 8:1, 20, 21; 9:1, 13; 10:3, 4). God gave Moses only one sermon, and he preached this same sermon over and over again to Pharaoh and the magicians (the learned men of Egypt). Keep in mind, the message never changed. It was a message of freedom and deliverance.

Truth #3: If Pharaoh refused the message, God would kill his firstborn son.

In the second part of v. 23, God told Pharaoh, “But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.” The firstborn was the direct descendant of Pharaoh’s throne. By the way, this wasn’t a popular... feel-good message. God’s men must be willing to preach the Word, the hard stuff, the unpopular message that goes against the grain of secular culture. The message of judgment and Hell is never popular. We cannot cave to culture or political correctness. Truth is truth, and only truth could liberate Israel.

Please keep in mind, Pharaoh would not release Yahweh’s “son,” Israel. He “refused to let him go.” Therefore, Yahweh would “kill” Pharaoh’s metaphorical son, namely, the Egyptians as a people, and even his physical firstborn son, thus proving His sovereignty. As we move through the story of freedom, notice the message of liberation.

First and foremost, this story of freedom begins with “The Message” (v. 1). In Exodus 5:1, “Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’” The question begs to be asked, who is this specific Pharaoh? Most scholars believe, if the exodus occurred in the first half of the 13th century BC, the evidence seems to point to Rameses II as the Pharaoh of the Exodus.¹ But just how powerful was the Pharaoh of Egypt? He had power over who would live and who would die. For example, in Exodus 1:15-22, Pharaoh proclaimed a message of death. In fact, the only message of Pharaoh

was bondage, slavery, and death.

“Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; 16 and he said, “When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.” 17 But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. 18 So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?” 19 And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.” 20 Therefore, God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21 And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. 22 So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, “Every son who is born you shall cast into the river and every daughter you shall save alive.”

As you can see from reading Exodus 1:15-22, the Pharaoh had power over life and death and was even worshipped like a god (false god). This same Pharaoh wanted to kill all the male Hebrew children. In fact, Pharaoh’s plan included the Hebrew midwives (thank God they did not cooperate), and his plan extended to every Egyptian citizen to throw all Israelite male children into the Nile River. His goal was to slow down the miraculous, prolific growth of Israel. Consequently, he preached a message of death.

On the other hand, the beautiful message of Yahweh included life, liberation, and freedom. We see a striking contrast between the lifeless message of Pharaoh and the liberating message of Yahweh.

¹Kitchen, K. A. (1996). Pharaoh. In D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman (Eds.), New Bible dictionary (3rd ed., p. 913). InterVarsity Press.

The first contrast we see between the message of Pharaoh and the message of Yahweh is a contrast of authority. The struggle between Pharaoh and God is real. It's a battle for supreme sovereignty. The war began in the Garden of Eden and concludes with Satan being cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20). The conflict is for ultimate rule.

Go back to our text in Exodus chapter 5. In the second part of verse 1, the Bible says, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel." Now keep in mind, this was NOT the message of Moses or Aaron. It was the message of THE Lord God. "The Lord" is YHWH (יהוה, yhwh), the personal name of Israel's covenant-keeping God (Old Testament), and is often called the "Tetragrammaton" based on the Greek for "four" and "letter."²

Nevertheless, Pharaoh refused to submit to the authority of God. He defiantly said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go." (v. 2). Wow! Pharaoh immediately questioned the authority of Yahweh, "Who is the Lord?" Who do you think you are telling me what to do? Second, he questioned the Word of Yahweh, "that I should obey or hear (shama) His voice." Notice specifically the phrase "His voice." Pharaoh is referring to the authoritative voice of Yahweh. Pharaoh refused to submit to God's voice (Word). Third, Pharaoh confessed, "I do not know the Lord" or acknowledge (yada) the Lord. And finally, he rebelled against setting God's people free, "nor will I let Israel go." So, the struggle for rule continues. Who is sovereign? God or Pharaoh?

How did God establish His rule in the Book of Exodus? How did God deliver Israel, "His firstborn Son," from slavery in Egypt? What was the purpose of the ten plagues? God told Pharaoh, "But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go" (Ex. 9:16-17). While Pharaoh continued to

exalt himself against Israel, God used Pharaoh as a toy "that I may show My power in you," and the results were God's name would be declared not just in Egypt but "in all the earth." So, God displayed His mighty power through the ten plagues (also called the mighty acts narratives). God intentionally (purposefully) "raised Pharaoh up" to show His mighty power. And God will ultimately accomplish His prophetic plan/feat through the ten plagues, even the death of the firstborn. God explained to Pharaoh the purpose of the plagues. He said, "I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth" (Ex. 9:13). Ah ha! Here's the tension, the rub, or the conflict. Who is your authority? Who is God? Pharaoh or Yahweh? Who is your King? Pharaoh or Yahweh?

“ God had a plan to demonstrate His glory, and His plan ultimately included Pharaoh so that the world would know Yahweh is God.

Up to this point, there's one message from God: "Let My People Go." There is only one message. A message of freedom and liberation. Nonetheless, Pharaoh consistently refused to "Let God's people go" and worship Him. He comes to the verge of release, but then He relents and refuses to liberate God's people. It took ten plagues, not just one, but ten. God had a plan to demonstrate His glory, and His plan ultimately included Pharaoh so that the world would know Yahweh is God. Exodus 10:1-2 speaks about God's ultimate purpose. He told Moses, "Go into Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the LORD."

According to the Lexicon, the word "that" shows purpose and intent:

v. 1b "that I may show"
v. 2a "that you may tell"
v. 2c "that you may know"

But how does the story end? God did "show." Israel did "tell." The people did "know." God's purpose and plan were not only executed in the exodus. God's purpose and plan were fulfilled in the exodus. In the first nine plagues God "showed His liberating power" through Pharaoh (Ex. 9:16). It was clear. Yahweh is THE Star of the story. God won! But what about the tenth and final plague? Now keep in mind God prophesied (foretold) the death of the firstborn (Ex. 4:22-23). Was this prophecy fulfilled? YES! In Exodus 11:1, The Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward, he will let you go from here. In verses 4-7, Yahweh said, "About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again. But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." The prophecy of the death of the firstborn was fulfilled. In fact, "At midnight the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock" (Ex. 12:29). But the children of Israel like an army "went out from the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:41, 51). God kept His Word. He delivered Israel "His firstborn son" and indeed killed Pharaoh's firstborn son.

In closing, we need to remember God is King, not man (Pharaoh). God is sovereign. Furthermore, God liberated Israel. Leaving Egypt was not the work of Moses, Aaron,

or Pharaoh. Leaving Egypt was THE work of God. And finally, every follower of Jesus Christ should serve the Lord with gratitude for the freedom we have in the Person of Christ.



by Tim Yates

Tim Yates is an assistant pastor who oversees the Life Groups at Lewis Memorial. Tim and his wife Myra grew up locally and graduated from Barboursville High School. Both Tim and Myra are multiplying small group leaders and thoroughly enjoy their role as trainers and equippers for the glory of God. They have a passion for making disciples and mentoring small group apprentices.

² Shields, M. A., & Hawkins, R. K. (2016). YHWH. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, L. Wentz, E. Ritzema, & W. Widder (Eds.), The Lexham Bible Dictionary. Lexham Press.

THE HISTORY OF FREEDOM

4 things the Bible Says About Freedom

The writer answers the question with four ideas that stem from the Bible and the history of God's people.

1. People have been searching for [liberty/freedom] for thousands of years.

The quest for freedom is a theme found throughout the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Just three chapters into the story of God's creation, humanity gave up its freedom by choosing to rebel against God. From that time forward, the perfect freedom God created in the Garden of Eden was gone, and the long-term effects were both physical and spiritual.

The Old Testament of the Bible records how God's people lost their physical freedom time and again as various empires overtook them (most notably the Egyptians, as recorded in the book of Exodus).

The loss of physical freedom was often tied to spiritual disobedience, like worshiping false gods. But time and again, the one true God forgave His people and rescued them. When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He was foreshadowing the arrival of Jesus Christ, who came to free humanity from sin—the spiritual slavery that leads to death.

Today, many people are living in spiritual slavery without realizing it. They chase false gods of money, success, personal comfort, and romantic love—only to realize they still have an emptiness that can't be filled by any of those things.

2. God's answer to our loss of freedom has always been Jesus Christ.

When Jesus began his short period of ministry on the earth, He announced He was the One that God's people had been waiting for since the fall of humanity. He did this by reading a particular passage from the book of Isaiah—a passage his listeners knew was referring to the Messiah, or the Savior of the world.

The words had been written hundreds of years earlier and spoke of a new freedom that was coming in the future. When Jesus stood up to read, He was saying the future had arrived. Liberty would come through Him.

*"And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,
'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me*

In an article posted by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the author poses this question: "What is "liberty," exactly? Is it freedom based upon the country where you live, or can it have a deeper meaning?"



*to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives*

*and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'*

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing'" (Luke 4:17-21, emphasis added).

3. Jesus came to free us from death, sin, and anything that enslaves us.

The core message of the Christian faith—the Gospel—is that Jesus Christ rescues us from the slavery of sin and offers true freedom in this life and beyond. This is what Jesus said:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). The Good News—the best news ever—is that faith in Jesus frees us from the death we deserve for sinning against God. It frees us from the punishment that would be inflicted upon us at the end of our lives for the evil things we've thought and done.

While Christ followers still battle with sin, they are no longer slaves to it. Through the power of Christ, His people can be set free from the bondage of greed, vanity, pride, pornography, addiction, abusive behavior, gluttony, selfishness—and any other sin under the sun.

Here's what Jesus said about the freedom He offers:

"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).

"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:34-36).

4. God gives us freedom to choose our own path.

God created human beings, not robots. We don't have to accept the freedom He offers us through Jesus Christ. He gives each person the free will to accept or reject His salvation. But the Bible warns that hell is a real place where real people end up when they knowingly reject the truth.

Likewise, those who choose Christ are not forced to obey Him at every turn. But God makes it clear: the best life is one that's devoted to honoring Him. As the Apostle Paul explained to some of the first Christians:

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be dominated by anything" (1 Corinthians 6:12).

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

Final thoughts on freedom

From cover to cover, God's Word points to freedom in Christ. And God doesn't leave us wondering how to grab hold of the freedom He offers. It starts with acknowledging our brokenness—and admitting we are slaves to sin. And it ends with choosing Jesus and following Him daily. Only He can break the bonds of slavery and lead us to true freedom, now and forever.

REFLECTIONS ON FREEDOM

One may not normally equate freedom with life in a Muslim country. Yet from 1999 to 2001, I lived and worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco. I spent the majority of my time in a small village near the base of the High Atlas Mountains working with girls and women on literacy and income-generation projects. While I was certainly sensitive and mindful of the culture and religious norms of where I lived, I was free to do many things I do in the United States such as travel, shop, and visit friends.

While these types of freedoms are certainly to be desired, the most gratifying freedom is found in Jesus Christ. His freedom includes freedom from the penalty of sin. Paul states in Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” His freedom also includes not being bound to the Law, but living in His grace (Romans 6:14). Unfortunately, I would not have this freedom until 2007, when I believed on the Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, I believe God used my time in Morocco to teach me several truths.

First, recognize that God is pursuing us. I am humbled at the thought that God was pursuing me even when I was completely surrounded by Islam. Hearing the “call to prayer” five times a day over the village loudspeaker was a constant reminder of this fact. He is pursuing a relationship with us (John 3:16) and further pursuing us to maintain fellowship with Him through time in prayer and reading His word (James 4:8). I have come to realize that fellowship with Him each morning is by far the sweetest part of my day.

Second, cherish your Bible. During my last days in Morocco, I purchased a variety of souvenirs. I even bought a copy of the Quran, the religious text of the Islamic faith. I hate to admit it, but I owned a copy of the Quran before I ever

owned a copy of the Bible. Again, I say cherish your Bible. Spend time in it daily. His Word not only freed me, but it provided the moral compass that I was craving my entire life. Psalm 119:105 declares, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

Third, embrace the privilege of telling others about Jesus. A vivid memory from living in Morocco was people’s fervency to invite me to consider the Islamic faith. These invitations were done casually but with warmth and sincerity. They genuinely wanted me to have what they had. As believers, we too, should also want others to have what we have – Jesus, the one true God. Consider the precious picture, painted in words, by the Apostle Paul, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” Romans 10:15.

As I reflect upon freedom and what it means, I believe the Bible says it best, “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:36. This fact should prompt us to honor Him with all that we have and to share the good news that only He saves.



by Julie Tritz

Julie Tritz, Ph.D., has been a member at Lewis Memorial Baptist Church since 2009. She enjoys serving in the children and nursing home ministries. She also serves as the sixth-grade teacher at Covenant School in Huntington.

WHAT WE'RE READING

I recently started reading a book that focuses on what the author refers to as “two-word worries” and the two-word answer, Heaven Rules. While I haven’t read the entire book yet, I know it is a book I needed ‘for such a time as this.’ It’s a book we all need because we all need to be reminded and learn to respond to the unexpected troubles of this life with the truth-filled and powerful phrase: “Heaven Rules.” In other words, God is in complete and perfect control. If you’re looking for a heavenly perspective that will help you stand firm when battling the earthly perspectives of life’s struggles, this is a must-read! - MaryEllen

Dr. David Jeremiah had this to say about the book -

In her latest book, Heaven Rules, my friend Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth honestly addresses the two-word worries that are sometimes all it takes to upset and overwhelm us --

Treatment options, work layoffs, election season, pandemic spikes, family trouble, and car repairs.

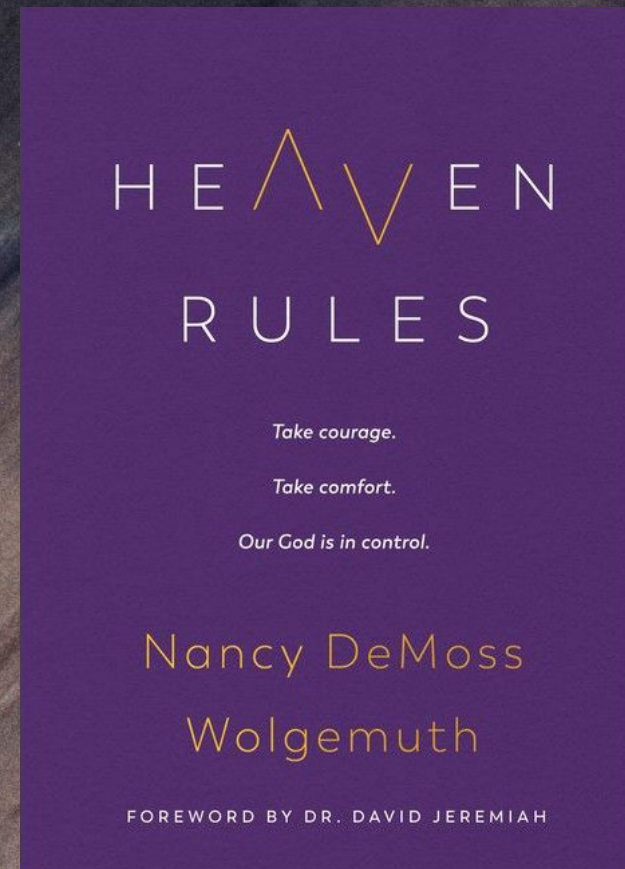
They take up so little room, just two little words, and yet they can fill the whole day, the whole house, our whole life with anxiety and fear.

But Heaven Rules is the two-word answer for every two-word worry.

Heaven’s rule is God’s rule: His rule over nations and nature. His rule over renegade viruses, cancer, and concerns about your marriage, your kids, your job, and everything else. The Bible says God is personally and purposefully involved in all that’s taking place here on earth. Heaven is ruling, always ruling.

Using the timeless book and example of Daniel as a guide, author Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth reveals how seeing our life and world through the lens of Heaven’s rule can shield us from panic and give us renewed hope and perspective. It’s a book we all need to read!

I hope you will choose to see your life -- and our world -- through the biblical, hopeful lens of Heaven Rules. The book offers encouragement, inspiration, and guidance ... so that even when troubles come, you are ready and resilient, with God’s peace ruling in your heart.



Take courage.

Take comfort.

Our God is in control.

Nancy DeMoss

Wolgemuth

FOREWORD BY DR. DAVID JEREMIAH

LESSONS FROM PROVERBS

By: Pastor Lemming

“Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.” (Proverbs 11:2 NLT)

This is a tough one, and it certainly doesn’t come naturally to any of us. Humility is possibly the greatest need of mankind, aside from the need-to-know Christ in salvation. But you can’t even know Christ until you humble yourself to acknowledge that you are a sinner in need of Christ’s help. Humility is not walking around with drooped shoulders, always talking about your past failures or poor performance. That’s pseudo-humility because it draws attention to yourself so people will notice you. Humility doesn’t seek out attention! Basically, it means acknowledging that you need God’s help and that you can’t live without it! True humility also acknowledges that everything you have and everything you are comes from God as His gift to you. The humble person turns any praise or recognition received back to God because He’s the One that made it possible anyway. Consider these thoughts: Humility causes us to place ourselves under others so that we can lift them up instead of lifting up ourselves. Humility means even if you get used at times by others, you refuse to use others in a similar manner. Humility won’t engage in petty arguments in order to prove the other person wrong and itself right. Humility tries to recognize what other people need and seeks to quietly meet that need when possible. Humility understands a spouse’s weaknesses/struggles in order not to aggravate or exploit them. Humility acts as a peacemaker when relationships are difficult and troubled rather than stirring up more trouble. Solomon says that apart from humility, you can’t be wise! The reason is that the humble ask for help, which is something the proud will never do!



Humility is possibly the greatest need of mankind, aside from the need-to-know Christ in salvation.

CREATION EX NIHILO

Theological Word of the Month

This partial Latin and partial English phrase refers to the fact that God created the universe out of nothing. Hebrews 11:3 says, “By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen is not made out of things that are visible.” Prior to the creation of the universe, there was nothing. God did not create the universe out of pre-existing material because there was none. Humanity can be extremely creative, but we cannot create like God. We can take the materials that have already been created to create something. Why is this important? Because the world seems increasingly bent on trying to show that God had nothing to do with creation. The latest push is toward Artificial Intelligence because if you’ve been keeping up with the news, Artificial Intelligence is learning how to create itself. Some scientists even go so far as to say that it’s mimicking evolution. It would appear that evolution is thinking about making a comeback; though evolution never really left in the first place, its influence has permeated our culture now more than ever.

God indeed created humanity from the dust of the earth – from already created elements (Genesis 2:7). However, we must remember that there is one definite difference: God breathed into mankind the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Scientists have tried and continue to attempt to replicate the creation of humanity, whether through cloning or new technological and scientific advances. Still, they will never be able to replicate the breath of God. The amazing observation we can make is that the God who created the universe out of nothing is the same God who breathed life into mankind; no other created thing has received the breath of God, only humanity, and that is what makes humanity unique and distinct and un-re-creatable (if that’s even a word).

One of my favorite quotes comes from Martin Luther, who aptly brings this doctrine off the shelf and places it within reach. He says, “God created the world in six days out of nothing; maybe when I am nothing, the Lord God will create something out of me.”

ROOTED

Grow in your faith by staying rooted in the Word of God. Your Spiritual Yearbook can be found at the merch corner in the main lobby.

- 1st Psalm 27
- 2nd -
- 3rd 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12
- 4th 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 5th 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
- 6th 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28
- 7th 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12
- 8th Psalm 130
- 9th -
- 10th 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12
- 11th 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
- 12th 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5
- 13th 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12
- 14th 2 Thessalonians 3:13-18
- 15th Psalm 119:9-16
- 16th -
- 17th Daniel 1:1-21
- 18th Daniel 2:1-30
- 19th Daniel 3:1-30
- 20th Daniel 4:1-37
- 21st Daniel 5:1-30
- 22nd Psalm 119:33-40
- 23rd -
- 24th Matthew 5:1-12
- 25th Matthew 5:13-16
- 26th Matthew 5:17-20
- 27th Matthew 5:21-26
- 28th Matthew 5:27-30
- 29th Psalm 119:41-48
- 30th -
- 31st Matthew 5:43-48

MISSIONARIES OF THE MONTH

IN ASIA & OCEANIA

Robert & Lisa Gunter, Australia (Deaf)

SECURED L. Family, China

SECURED D. Family, India

SECURED J. Family, India

SECURED D. Family, Israel

SECURED K. Family, Kazakhstan

Josh & Sarah Wager, Micronesia

SECURED G. Family, Middle East

John & Mihyon Humphrey, New Zealand

Phil & Jan Smith, Papua New Guinea

Doug & Becky Sisson, Philippines

Joel & Stella Madasus, Saipan

Tim & Charlene Miskimen, Thailand

The “G” Family News Life on the mission field doesn’t always come with the same freedoms we enjoy here in America.

Construction

In our last letter, we were in the process of moving and getting ready to build our new home. Finally, at the end of February, I and 4 other men made a trip to the community, where all our stuff would arrive via boat. When all of the stuff arrived, the whole village came out to help us carry everything up the steep embankment. It was an amazing sight! The hoard of people made short work of hauling all our stuff, including the wood for our house, up to the construction site. I was so thankful that my friend and I didn’t have to do all that work by ourselves. Many of these people had also helped us a few days before clearing the land where the house would be built.

That same day the carpenters arrived and began building our house. Before the first day was over, they had already put in the posts for the house and gotten everything squared up and ready for putting on walls and the floor. The carpenters only had 4 days to build, and we were doubtful that it would all get done before they left. But, by the end of day 4, all the major things were finished. There was a lot to do still, but the roof was on, and all the walls were up. Thankfully, one of the carpenters decided to stay to finish some of the last things that needed to be done, like the screens, outhouse, my office, a septic tank, plumbing, and a few doors and shelves.

Challenges

Right before my family arrived, a government nurse showed up and was shocked to see a huge fancy house on the community property.

MISSION FOCUSED

For full updates, go to Imbc.org/missionary-updates

(These communities are typically off limits to outsiders, except with special permission either from the community (which we have) or from the government). When she saw our house, she quickly turned to her boat driver and said, “Pull out your phone and video this.” She then came up and told us how we had no right to be living in the community. She said I’m going to report you to the government organization that is responsible for these people”. Sure enough, after that, we had about 5 more visits from different government workers, other nurses, and the government agency responsible for the communities. The last time they showed up, the chief of the community and dozens of others from the community came to our house to support us. However, the government workers were very nice and even seemed to be friends with one of the elders in the community. One of the workers asked for our documents, explaining that they had to register us and that we should have done that, and that it was “sort of illegal” what we had done (coming to the community without informing their agency first). We thought she was simply putting down our info so that the agency could be informed. We gave her our documents, and she put the information down, then she asked us to just sign below, so we did. However, shortly after they left, we read the document. It said, “I agree to remove my house and all my possessions from this community in 30 days”. We were all dumbfounded. I quickly let our leadership know what had happened and sent them a copy of the document we’d signed. As it turned out, we had to come out to the city to sign some papers allowing our lawyer to work on this case and help us out so that we hopefully won’t lose our house, and will be able to continue living in the community. So the helicopter came and took us to town, where we signed all the papers and sent them to our leaders.

Now we’re in town, planning our next steps. There’s a good chance I will be going back to get the most valuable things out of the house so that they don’t get taken. Please be praying that God would give us peace in the midst of this craziness and wisdom in making our future plans.

Please Pray ...

1. That the lawyer will get things figured out so that we’ll be able to stay in the community
2. That we’d be able to go back to the house and remove valuables before anything happens
3. That God might keep our house safe from those who might want to take advantage of the opportunity to get some free stuff
4. That we’d be able to get some much-needed rest while here in the city
5. That God would be at work in the hearts of both the people we’re serving and the people who wish to do us harm
6. That God would be giving us wisdom in dealing with this situation and that we’d know what stuff to take out of the house and what to leave
7. That God would give me safety in traveling to the community to get some of our stuff before June 12, which is the deadline for us to remove our stuff
8. That the people would not lose hope that we’ll come back and that if it’s the Lord’s will, we’d be able to return to the community soon
9. That God would help us continue to be faithful to study the language of the city, especially if this process takes a long time

Thank you for standing behind us through prayer!



God certainly blessed the Operation Christmas Child (OCC) ministry in 2022! Combined with those collected from partnering countries, OCC was able to send nearly 10.6 million shoebox gifts to children worldwide. This year, OCC celebrated the 200 millionth shoebox distributed since the start of the ministry in 1993!

For those who have been a part of this ministry in any way, you already know what an impact this can make, as each shoebox is a gospel opportunity for children to learn about the most precious gift, which is the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

There will be multiple opportunities to participate in the upcoming months. Check the Connect magazine monthly for details about collections, packing parties, drop-off dates and more. You can also join the LMBC Operation Christmas Child Facebook Group, where you can stay up-to-date on all current OCC events.

Many stores are currently having back-to-school sales, so now is the time to shop for school supplies. We are in need of the following:

- pens
- pencils
- pencil sharpeners
- erasers
- crayons
- glue sticks
- colored pencils
- markers
- scissors
- solar calculators
- single-subject notebooks

If you run across any deals on any other shoebox items (personal care items, small toys, coloring books, etc.), feel free to bring those as well.



Shop online and have the items delivered directly to the church by using this QR code to go directly to the LMBC Operation Christmas Child Wish list.

QUESTIONS?

For additional information or other ways to help, contact Terri Thompson, our New OCC Coordinator.

terri.hager@aol.com
304-360-0849

DIFFERENCE MAKERS

SERVE GOD SERVE OTHERS

Visit lmbc.org/serve to find specific needs and see where you can serve here at LMBC.

YOU MADE AN ETERNAL DIFFERENCE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!



joined the children each evening via video, sharing their ministry with the kids. They will be using

100% of the offering to pay for their second Pidgin literacy program. They are teaching people of all ages how to read and then giving them a Bible in their language. Additionally, there are no children's programs in the local churches so they are also using the offering to purchase AWANA curriculum for local churches and then will be training the workers on how to use the curriculum so that they can teach children that God loves them.

VBS Results

Your prayers made a difference. In June, we put out a plea for prayer warriors for both our LKC VBS and our Backpack VBS. The Lord heard your prayers and answered with 16 salvations during our LKC VBS and 15 baptisms. The largest nightly attendance included 186 kids and we also had our largest preschool group ever, with about 70 children. We will not have the totals for the number of salvations and baptisms from the Backpack VBS before this Connect is printed, but we know that God is working and look forward to sharing this total with you in the future.

Not only were there many salvations and baptisms, but the annual offering competition between the girls and boys during our LKC VBS raised more than \$2,267. We are still counting ... but we can tell you that the offering is being used to support missionaries Phil and Jan Smith and their work in Papua New Guinea. The Smiths

OCC is back

It is officially OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SEASON! Many of you have already been making a difference by shopping, dropping off donations, and preparing boxes for the annual OCC Drive. However, there is still much to do, and the more the merrier, or as my grandmother would have said, "Many hands make light work." So be sure and check out page 16 for all of the details. Let's make it our biggest year yet! Remember, every box is an opportunity for children and their families to know the love of Jesus!



TAKE A LOOK AT THE LATEST FAMILY NEWS

Bereavements

- Mary Ball, Joyce Adkins and Carlos Ball, Jr.'s mother
- Kenny Prevatte, Ariel Bashore's grandfather
- Bernard Sark, Rachel Patton's grandfather
- Della Simpkins, Pam Woodard's mother

New Members/Baptisms

- Lew Symmes (Baptism)
- Gabrielle Chapman (Baptism)
- Audrey Criss (Baptism)
- Owen Dishman (Baptism)
- Quinn Eddins (Baptism)
- Mikayla Howerton (Baptism)
- Benjamin Justice (Baptism)
- Addilyn & Peyton Lane (Baptism)
- Jayce Kiser (Baptism)
- Elin & Knox Mallory (Baptism)
- Skylar Robinson (Baptism)
- Jaylin Ross (Baptism)
- Sophie Wilson (Baptism)
- Annie Yeager (Baptism)

Staff Birthdays

- Mary Lemming (4th)
- Rebekah Shaffer (26th)

Ways to Give:



Offering Boxes
in the Auditorium



Imbc.org
or our App



By mail

LOOKING FOR A STARTING POINT?

How to join our community of faith

Are you looking for a church home?
Would you prayerfully consider whether God
may be leading you to our family of believers?
If you are ready, follow these simple steps:

1st Baptism



Trust in Christ and
follow Him in believer's
baptism.

2nd Register (pick 1)



In Service: scan the QR
code on the pew in front
of you and let us know
you would like to join.
Online: imbc.org/register
Call: 304-736-7676

3rd Discover



Check out the
information in the
visitor packet you
received when you
registered with us or
visit imbc.org/what-we-believe to learn
about our core beliefs
and more.

4th Experience



Come to the next
Starting Point on
Sunday, Aug. 20
at 4:30 pm in the HIS
Way Cafe (SMB), where
you'll meet with our
Pastors to begin your
membership experience.
Call: 304-736-7676
Pre-register: imbc.org/starting-point

WANT TO JOIN A LIFEGROUP?

Come grow with us **Faded group names are on Summer break*

SUNDAYS @ 10:45 am

Through the Bible (S104) Jared Blankenship
Wall Builders (S100) Steve Bragg
Cornerstone (S102) Tim Koletka
Maranatha (Renaissance Room) Chuck Daniel

TUESDAYS @ 1 pm

Fearless (S100) Estep/Wyrick

@ 6 pm

Life Together (HIS Way Cafe) Tim Yates

WEDNESDAYS @ 10 am

Encouraging Friends Ministry (I12) Kate McMullen

@ 6:30 pm

At Home with the Word (Tardy Home) Steve & Vicky Tardy
It's Always Something (S100) Chuck Daniel

@ 6:45 pm

Abundant Life (L108) Gary McMullen

@ 7 pm

Selah (L114) Nathan McClay
Friends of God (Renaissance Room) David & Mary Lemming
Friends of God 2.0 (Northside House) Sargent/Ball
Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren (F206) Bob & Kim Brown
Rooted in Christ (Barboursville Park) Jonah & MaKayla Howerton
Every other Wed Whosoever (L112) Sargent/Fry

FRIDAYS @ 5:30 pm

Believing, Belonging, & Becoming (HIS Way Cafe) Thurman Lowder

SUNDAYS @ 10:45 am

Journey with Him (L110) Hale/Tritz

MONDAYS @ 6 pm

Daughters of the King (S100) Rebekah Shaffer

TUESDAYS @ 9:30 am

Kingdom Seekers (Tardy Home) Tardy/McMullen

@ 10 am

At His Feet (S100) Beth Jenkins
Sewing for God's Children (L104) Barbara Keaton

WEDNESDAYS @ 7 pm

First Wed. of July/Aug only 4Ever His (L107) Leah Adkins
Women of God (F205) Hager/Bashore
**Embrace Grace (L106) -for single pregnant ladies* Angela Cantley

THURSDAYS @ 10 am

Women of Strength (HIS Way Cafe) Mullens/Foreman

WEDNESDAYS @ 10 am

Westridge Wisdom (S100) Jeremy Shaffer

@ 7 pm

Men of Truth (HIS Way Cafe) Steve Bragg
Iron Sharpeners (L110) Matheny/Miller

SUNDAYS @ 9 am

Willing Workers (L108) Richard Sexton
Young at Heart (L114) Bill Blankenship

FRIDAYS @ 11 am

Life Group (Victory Place Apartments) Charles Logan

ADULTS (COED)

WOMEN

MEN

SENIORS

Connect is the monthly news and
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Making disciples who
live and love like Jesus

5385 W. Pea Ridge Rd.
Huntington, WV 25705
304-736-7676
[Imbc.org](https://imbc.org)

SUNDAY WORSHIP
9 & 10:45 am (watch live
at imbc.tv)

WEDNESDAY BIBLE
STUDY
7 pm

CONNECT STAFF:
Senior Editor,
David Lemming
Executive Editor,
Angie O'Dell
Content Editor,
Mary Ellen Black
Graphic Designer,
Matt Waller

Read previous editions
of Connect at
imbc.org/connect



CELEBRATE
FREEDOM

—
★ INDEPENDENCE DAY ★