

MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER

MAY THEME: DECONSTRUCTING FAITH

WHAT IS DECONSTRUCTION?

Deconstruction is taking a hard critical look at the ideas, practices, traditions, and beliefs of the contemporary Christian faith and determining whether or not they line up with the practices, traditions, and beliefs of Jesus.

May Fighter Verse — James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

OUR WORSHIP

IN-PERSON

LIVESTREAM, FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE @ 11:00AM
Www.centralbaptistnyc.org
Adult Sunday School 9:45AM via Zoom
Dial in phone number: 646-558-8656

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Newsletter Staff — Oversight: Pastor Robert Casteline
Sharrata Hunt, Paulette Igharo with Special Thanks to Tanya Glenn



May 8

MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Join us as we honor our mothers with care packages.

MAY 14
9A-12PM

SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER SOUL FEEDING

Join with us as we prepare 100 bagged lunches with a prayer card to give out to the community.

**CALL THE CHURCH TO SIGN UP
BY MAY 11**

MAY 26

3:00-5:00PM

**JOIN US AS WE PREPARE BAGS OF
TOILETRIES TO GIVE TO OUR
VETERANS ON MAY 28**

**SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER
CALL THE CHURCH
(212) 724-4004
BY MONDAY, MAY 23
NO LATER THAN 6PM**

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT



MAKE SPACE FOR VETERANS TO SHARE THEIR STORIES

By Mel Baars O'Malley

U.S. Army chaplain

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2017

Not all veterans are injured or ill, but all have a story to tell, says an Army chaplain who works with wounded soldiers transitioning out of the military. As Veterans Day approaches, take time to listen and be present.

For the past year, I have served wounded, ill and injured soldiers as the chaplain of the Warrior Transition Battalion in Fort Carson, Colorado. Though our unit rarely has casualties, grief and loss are common among all my soldiers. They come to our unit because they suffer from myriad issues that almost always make it impossible for them to remain in the Army.

Many are struggling with post-traumatic stress because of combat or other disturbing experiences. Others are battling cancer or learning to live without the use of legs or arms because of amputation or paralysis. As the chaplain, I accompany each soldier in his or her journey of healing and help each discover that despite physical, emotional or spiritual wounds, hope persists.

In one way or another, all my soldiers are dealing with major losses and the prospect of more to come -- loss of health, career, life dreams and a future they once imagined. Much like older people facing retirement, they go through a grieving process. But unlike soon-to-be retirees, these soldiers are still young, in their 20s and 30s, and their losses are likely deeper and more profound.

They still have more life in front of them than behind, but their service has made them feel older than their years. It has accelerated their aging. Whether a permanent back injury from jumping out of too many airplanes or systemic arthritis from years of carrying equipment on foot over miles, many of their physical wounds will never fully mend. That's why emotional and spiritual healing matters so much.

Often, the chaplain is the first person a soldier turns to when he is facing adversity or when she is struggling with depression or even thoughts of suicide. It would be easy simply to pass such people along to the mental health experts or someone else with more credentials, but that act, by itself, misses the point. Soldiers come to the chaplain

because they want spiritual guidance or just to be heard and validated, not because they are looking for a pill or to be labeled with an illness.

Church members often ask me how best to reach out to veterans, especially as their numbers grow and many of the programs meant to assist them prove inadequate. Anyone who has been wounded -- physically, emotionally or spiritually -- knows that healing is not a linear process. It follows no timeline. Most soldiers I work with leave the Army still needing support so that they can continue to get better. It will be up to other communities beyond the military, communities such as the church, to pick up where the Army has left off.

Not all veterans are wounded, ill or injured, but each has a story that he or she is waiting to tell. As Veterans Day approaches and our country honors those who have served in the military, make space for veterans to share their stories.

It's OK to thank a veteran for his or her service. But better yet, take the time to listen and to be present. There is no more meaningful way to say thank you.

Source: <https://faithandleadership.com/make-space-veterans-share-their-stories>

The Rev. Dr. Mel Baars O'Malley is a major in the U.S. Army and serves as community chaplain at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. She served as chaplain at Arlington National Cemetery and was deployed for one year as a chaplain at the largest detention facility in Afghanistan. A Presbyterian minister, she has a B.A. from Duke University, an M.Div. from Duke Divinity School, an M.A. from the University of Cape Town, and a D.Min. from Erskine Theological School.



MEMORIAL DAY
REMEMBER AND HONOR

May 28

SERVING OUR VETERANS
Today we honor our
veterans by distributing bags of
toiletries.



SEEK THE LORD Isaiah 55:6-7

Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.

Let the wicked forsake their ways and
the unrighteous their thoughts.

Let them turn to the LORD, and he will
have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will
freely pardon.

The book of Isaiah tells the history of God's relationship with Israel in prophetic form. In 66 chapters the prophet Isaiah recounts Israel's sinful past, God's impending judgment, and Israel's future restoration. The first 39 chapters of the book of Isaiah prophesy doom and gloom for Israel. God had done so much for the nation; he rescued them out of Egypt and gave them a land of their own. But as soon as God established Israel as a nation, they began to reject God's plan and purposes and began to do things their way. God gave instructions Israel disobeyed. God said go left Israel would go right. Almost from top to bottom everyone in Israel seemed determined to do things their way.

Israel was that child who thought they knew better than their parents, the child who wouldn't listen. So, in response to their waywardness, God let Israel experience the consequences of her disobedience. The very same nations that Israel aligned with, the nations that Israel called friends and allies, the nations that God warned Israel not to go in league with, would be the very same nations who would abuse and subjugate Israel. And the false gods that Israel had trusted in were unable to rescue Israel. Israel would be carried off into exile because the people thought that they knew better than God.

The second part of Isaiah chapters 40-55 is told from the perspective of the exile, the period during which Israel, would experience the repercussions of not listening to God. But Isaiah 40-55 does not gloat over Israel's suffering, rather the

second part of Isaiah offers Israel hope and a second chance. Isaiah 55:6 picks up on this theme of God giving Israel a second chance, where the prophet Isaiah extends an invitation to the people of God to come back to God. Isaiah exhorts the wayward people, those who had backslidden to "seek the Lord," and then to "call on him." To seek God in the Old Testament either meant to pursue God for information or to pursue God for his presence. You can either run after God to see what you can get from God or run after God for God. Israel's history with God was one where they pursued God just for his blessings, the things that came from God's hands; now Isaiah is asking Israel to pursue God for a relationship.

By inviting Israel to seek and call on God, Isaiah presupposes that when Israel pursues God, and calls out to God, God will be there, and God will hear. Deuteronomy 4:29, says, "***But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.***" And Jeremiah 33:3 says, "***Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.***" The good news is that when you seek and call out to God, God won't be hard to find.



Isaiah

by Jean-Louis Ernest Meissonier

But there is a sense of urgency in the invitation of verse 6. God will be there, but God will not be around forever. Isaiah leaves open the possibility that Israel will want to return to God and not find Him, therefore the time to seek and the time to call is now. Like my wife always tells me when she sees a pair of shoes that she likes on sale, "I can't wait till tomorrow to get them, because the shoes might not be here tomorrow." And for Isaiah the opportune time to accept God's invitation to return, to seek and to call out to God is now because tomorrow you may look, and God won't be there.

In Luke 15, Jesus tells the story of a man who was throwing a party and he invited all his friends to come. Free food, open bar, good music, you name it this party had it. But for whatever reason his friends didn't want to come, so instead, the man sent his servants out into the streets and his servants invited people he did not know to come to his party until all the seats were taken. And the point of the story is this when God invites you, you better come. You don't want to show up and find that there is no more room left for you.

Verse 6 extends the invitation and verse 7 describes the theme of the party. The prerequisite to receiving God's gracious invitation is that the person who accepts turns completely away from his way of doing things and surrenders totally to God's way of doing things. Isaiah says in successive lines in verse 7, that the person who comes to God must forsake his way, forsake his thoughts, and turn to the Lord.

Ways and thoughts deal with a person's plans and desires. They encompass all of what we want out of life. To forsake has to do with a total rejection and abandonment. What Isaiah is saying here is that the person who seeks God and calls on the Lord rejects all behaviors, beliefs, assumptions, priorities, and plans that don't involve God. The person who pursues God makes a decisive break away from all past friends, past way of doing things, and of past philosophy of life that don't glorify God. Isaiah is not saying that turning to God means becoming religious fanatics, what he is saying is that turning to God means that we are willing to surrender everything for the sake of God.

And Isaiah leaves no room to compromise in this; there is no trade off, no give and take. It is absolute and decisive. You don't say to God, listen I will do things your way this time but next time God we will do things my way. When we seek and call, we forsake and turn at the same time there is no other option.

For about a two-month period after I completed my undergrad degree and before I went to seminary, I moved back into my mother's house. It had been several years since I lived there, and I had developed my own way of doing things and forgot how my mother wanted things done. My mother had several rules: lights out at midnight because she needed her sleep, and no dishes left in the sink overnight. But sometimes I had friends over after midnight and on those occasions when my friend stayed over too late, it didn't matter if we were watching TV, she would come out her room turn off the TV and the lights and remind me it is midnight. Or when I left the dishes in the sink overnight my dish would wake up in bed next to me.

I got so tired of this treatment that I had to explain to my mother you she couldn't treat me like this. I was a grown man. Next day I left the house to run an errand and when I came back and tried to open the door the latch was on. After knocking on the door for about ten minutes, my mother looked through the peephole and said, "Grown men don't live here; only children who abide by my rules." What she was really saying was that my ideas of how her house should be run, my thoughts on what should be allowed and what shouldn't be allowed in her house, were incompatible and were at odds with what she thought should happen in her house. A meeting of the minds was not possible, just conformity and submission. And this is exactly what Isaiah is saying in verse 7 about those who seek and call on God; they don't seek and call on God on their terms and expect God to honor their way and conform to their way of thinking. No! When you seek God and call on him, you forsake your way of doing things and adopt His thoughts and His ways.

**SOMETHING
TO PONDER**
*"Isaiah is
asking Israel
to pursue
God for a
relationship"*



May Birthdays



Happy Birthday!

*May the Lord give you the desires of your heart as you take delight in Him!
(Psalm 37:4 NIV)*

Shelley Fortune	May 1
Natasha Robinson	May 1
Katherine Smith	May 3
Benjamin Johnson	May 4
Evelyn Grant	May 4
Robert Casteline	May 5
Sydney Jones	May 7

Otis Coleman	May 8
Ernestine Jones	May 11
Cameron Keitt	May 11
John Fils-Aime	May 15
Malik Winn	May 16
Isaiah Tejeda	May 17
Marcia Awobuluyi	May 17

Kaleb McFarlin	May 18
Jermaine Bolden	May 19
Raquel Lachman	May 19
Patricia Young	May 22
Raymond George Miller	May 23
Deryck Tonge	May 27
Melanie Fleming	May 30
Georgianna Spann	May 31

Bible Study, Prayer Meetings & Announcements

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY
Join Zoom by Phone: 646-558-8656
Facebook

Prayer Meetings by Phone
Conference Call
Connection
(712) 770-4711
Access Code: 667293#
Monday & Thursday
6-6:30 AM

Mid-Week Prayer:
Wednesday
12:00-1:00 PM
Join Zoom Prayer Meetings
by Phone: 646-558-8656.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY "POWER HOUR"
Sunday, May 15 @ 12:30PM
Join by phone at 646-558-8656

EVENING PRAYER,
Evening Prayer will meet
Friday, May 27 @ 7:00PM
Dial into the Zoom Meeting with your phone
number: **646-558-8656**

**All Senior Ministry Activities are cancelled
until further notice.**

Pray For Our Missionaries

**Our missionaries who serve with
Missions Door:**

Francklin and Nerlie Alexis, Haiti
Felix and Amnerys Abreu, Dominican Republic
Edwin and Liz Colon, Brooklyn, NY
Herode and Edline Guillomettre, Haiti
Duane and Miriam Mansveld, Montreal, Canada
Luis and Azucena Matute, Panama & Costa Rica
Vincent and Maryam Morgan, Brooklyn, NY & Middle
East
Ray and Valerie Ramos, Brooklyn, NY
Marvin and Denise Robinson, Rochester, NY

**Our missionaries who serve with
World Venture:**
Barry and Peggy Owen, Asia

**Our missionaries who serve with United World
Mission:**
Matt and Nicole Paschall, Hungary

**Our missionary who serves with
Urban Life Source Connection, New York City**
Dale Belli

Our missionaries who serve with COMINAD
*(Cooperative Mission Network of the African
Dispersion)*
Brian and Ruth Johnson,
Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean

 Bible in a Year May Reading Calendar		
5/1/2022	Job 4 - 6	Acts 8:26-40
5/2/2022	Job 7-9	Acts 9:1-22
5/3/2022	Job 10-14	Acts 9:23-43
5/4/2022	Catch Up & Reflect	
5/5/2022	Job 15 - 17	Acts 10:1-23
5/6/2022	Job 18 - 20	Acts 10:24-48
5/7/2022	Job 21 - 23	Acts 11
5/8/2022	Job 24 - 25	Acts 12
5/9/2022	Job 26 - 28	Acts 13:1-23
5/10/2022	Job 29 - 33	Acts 13:24-52
5/11/2022	Catch Up & Reflect	
5/12/2022	Job 34 - 36	Acts 14
5/13/2022	Job 37 - 38	Acts 15
5/14/2022	Job 39 - 40	Acts 16:1-15
5/15/2022	Job 41 - 42	Acts 16:16-40
5/16/2022	Psalms 1 - 3	Acts 17:1-15
5/17/2022	Psalms 4 - 9	Acts 17:16-34
5/18/2022	Catch Up & Reflect	
5/19/2022	Psalms 10 - 12	Acts 18
5/20/2022	Psalms 13 - 15	Acts 19
5/21/2022	Psalms 16 - 17	Acts 20:1-16
5/22/2022	Psalms 18 - 19	Acts 20:17-38
5/23/2022	Psalms 20 - 24	Acts 21:1-14
5/24/2022	Psalms 25 - 30	Acts 21:15 - 22:21
5/25/2022	Catch Up & Reflect	
5/26/2022	Psalms 31 - 33	Acts 22:22 - 23:11
5/27/2022	Psalms 34 - 35	Acts 23:12-35
5/28/2022	Psalms 36 - 38	Acts 24
5/29/2022	Psalms 39 - 41	Acts 25
5/30/2022	Psalms 42 - 43	Acts 26
5/31/2022	Psalms 44 - 49	Acts 27

2022 UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

04
JUN

FAMILY GAME DAY
 Let's enjoy some family time with organized games, trivia, & activities.

PAINT & CHAT PARTY
 Join us for an evening of painting & fellowship. You will receive your own canvas & painting kit in which you'll be able to create your own masterpiece. Light refreshments will be served. \$15 Donation

11
JUN

19
JUN

FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION
 Fathers are a very important part of a child's life. Join us as we celebrate them by creating and distributing care packages.

GRADUATION SALUTE
 Congratulations to our 2022 graduates! Let's celebrate them with a ceremony and barbeque as they move on to their next steps in life.

25
JUN

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
 166 West 92nd Street
 New York, NY 10025