
HOPE HEADLINES

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My Friend Harry

On May 16, Cynthia Loganbill concluded an important Sunday School class based on Dennis Edwards' book, *What is the Bible and*

How do we Understand It? Among his helpful suggestions, Dr. Edwards encourages readers of the Scripture to pay close attention to the literary and historical context of each passage, as well as the genre (that is, the particular kind of biblical literature we are reading).

In my first pastorate there was a wise and compassionate older gentleman named Harry. He was a deacon, a position of spiritual leadership in the church, and one he had held for many years. I appreciated his counsel and insight on many occasions.

One of Harry's most fervent concerns was the Christian family. He saw many cultural influences working to erode the Christian home and felt that the right teaching and nurture of the church was essential to stem this tide.

Harry understood that the structure of the Christian family was commanded in **Ephesians 5**, with the husband as the head of the wife and the wife subject to her husband. This was God's design for our benefit and, as Scripture, it was an arrangement valid for all time. Harry's passion was sincere, and he was passionate about reminding me. He felt the church should be very deliberate about teaching God's timeless design for the Christian marriage and home.

For a while I mostly listened to Harry and affirmed what I could and did not try to interject other perspectives. I knew he was dissatisfied with me that I was not more forth right about the "headship" of the Christian husband, especially considering how the Christian family was being threatened.

Finally, I decided that the next time Harry brought up his concern, I would raise some questions. So, after church one Sunday, Harry began with "the husband is the head of the wife." I said, "And Harry, how are your slaves doing?" He said, "What?! Slaves?! That's ridiculous!" I responded, "Well, you've been saying that the arrangement of the Christian family in **Ephesians 5** is God's timeless design. That passage actually continues

in chapter 6 [the *genre*, by the way, is called a "household code"], where it teaches about several relationships in the home—not only husbands and wives, but parents and children, as well as masters and slaves. If this is God's timeless design for the Christian family, I'm wondering how your slaves are doing?" Harry said, "You know we don't have masters and slaves anymore." I said, "That's right. Thank goodness. Slavery was part of the context of Ephesians. It's not part of our context. Likewise, the husband as the head of the wife is also part of that context and need not be part of ours. Ephesians commends an arrangement for the Christian family in a certain social stratum, and appropriate to the first century Roman Empire." I went on to say that what I find "timeless" in Ephesians is not *hierarchy* but *partnership*, based on *mutual submission*, as explicitly mentioned in the thematic verse that begins the section on family: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (**Ephesians 5:21**). This also matches the non-hierarchical, non-subordinate relationship between husband and wife in **Genesis 2:18-25**, who they are called *partners complementary to each other*.

Professor Edwards is correct: Context—historical, literary, genre—is indeed essential to consider whenever we read and apply the Bible. It's challenging, because we will never fully understand the cultures or languages of the ancient world from which our Scriptures come. And that's why Edwards adds this additional encouragement for readers of the Scriptures: *Be humble, prayerful, and collegial learners*. We humbly subject ourselves to the Holy Spirit, so that we may discern, the best we can, what is timeless and what is time-bound.

~~Pastor Dave





DISCIPLESHIP NEWS FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE.

ADULT CLASS: Let's Talk About Race

Recent events, like police-related deaths of people of color, subsequent protests, trials of police officers, COVID-related anti-Asian violence, educational and justice initiatives, and other circumstances have added new energy to the struggle against racism in the United States. Please come to listen, learn, and share experiences. Pastor Dave will facilitate. Each week prior, you will receive a Zoom link for those who wish to join on-line.

YOUTH CLASS will meet on June 13 & June 27.

PRESCHOOL CLASS will meet each Sunday during June.

Our summer Sunday School break will be the month of July and the first several Sundays of August.



Hope Mennonite Church Protocol Update

Effective: May 30, 2021

Vision Council is happy to announce the next phase in re-opening related to COVID 19 pandemic restrictions. Hope Mennonite Church will be open for all activities to both internal and external groups. All groups and activities must follow the protocols identified below while using the church building and grounds. Vision Council asks for your cooperation and self-monitoring in adherence to these guidelines.

- **Masks:** Masks must be worn while in the building. Exceptions can be made for groups under 10 where everyone is vaccinated and there is consensus among the members to remove masks.
- **Social Distancing:** 6 feet social distancing will be maintained, including the chair placement in the sanctuary.
- **Kitchen:** The kitchen is available for use and must be cleaned and wiped down after use.
- **Nursery:** The nursery is open; however, it will not be staffed by volunteers. Parents are welcome to use the nursery and asked to supervise their children and wipe down the nursery after use.

- **Singing during worship:** We will return to singing, with masks on, one song during the worship service. We will sing the final song of the worship service, the sending song, which will afford anyone the opportunity to exit the sanctuary if they are not comfortable with being in the room during the singing.
- **Choir:** The choir is approved to practice and perform, following guidelines of wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and limiting practice/performance to less than 30 minutes indoors or 60 minutes outdoors.
- **Greeters:** we will return to having greeters at the church. Greeters will maintain social distancing (no shaking hands), welcome attendees to service and provide details on what to expect with the service as well as directions on COVID protocols.
- **Ushers:** Ushers will return to the service to continue an atmosphere of welcome and service support.
- **Coffee:** We will return to coffee during fellowship. It will be served outside, either in the memorial garden or front entrance so that as masks are able to be maintained indoors.

The church office will begin reaching out to gauge interest in participating in the support activities such as greeter, usher, and coffee preparation. These activities will resume as we are able to secure members comfortable to serve in this role.

Vision Council will continue to review the guidance monthly and modify these protocols as the situation warrants. Vision Council also acknowledges and affirms the varying levels of comfort among the congregation and welcomes all to worship in the manner that is most comfortable for each person. We will continue to offer concurrent worship service so that those who are most comfortable worshipping at home will be able to participate and join us for Worship and Sunday School.

If you have questions regarding these protocols. Please email Vision Council at moderator@hopemennonite.org or call Michelle Jantz at 703-344-8822.



- Congratulations to Kyle Kasitz! He was a member of the Maize South golf team that placed 1st at regionals and 3rd at the 5A State tournament.
- Our choir director, Kendrick Weaver, will be the new music teacher at Nickerson beginning this fall. The good news for Hope is that he will direct our choir one more year.



Family Promise



Hi all! Please join us for our *first* **Graduate Reunion Picnic!**

We will be inviting all of our Graduates and their families from Family Promise, our volunteers, and staff to celebrate summer and fellowship!

Please use the Google Form below to **RSVP for the picnic by June 2nd!** Please share with your fellow Family Promise volunteers!

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nzcq8kwW_z25SQHfn5V2xwUFH7skJ4TjnN7OHml1SY/edit?usp=sharing

This will be a wonderful time to reconnect with families we have hosted in the past. It will be a super fun time together. Everyone is welcome!!

~~Amy Bellar

June Reminders:

Greeters and Coffee schedules will start June 6, but the schedules won't get done until the week of May 31. So please be on the look out for those schedules if you have said you would be willing to help in this time of Covid.

Worship Leading

- June 6-Connie
- June 13-TBD
- June 20-TBD
- June 27-TBD

Scripture Reader

- June 6-Brad
- June 13-Joanna
- June 20-Lee
- June 27-Donna B.

Pianist

- June 6-Amy
- June 13-Laurie
- June 20-Ruthie
- June 27-Vicki

Tech

- All June-Galen

Communion Servers

- June 6-Connie; Jason

Outdoor service-June 13-weather permitting

Worship Prep

- June 6-Joanna
- June 13-Lori M.
- June 20-Lori M.
- June 27-Ruthie

Mower

- June 6-Randy P.
- June 13-Travis
- June 20-Jim B.
- June 27-Dave Z.

Zoom Host

- All June-Michelle J.