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# HOPE HEADLINES

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## Life in the Spirit: Grounded and Growing

*"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.*

*But when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13)*

Two years after we left our congregation in Pennsylvania to move to Kansas, an amazing thing happened in that church: Natalie Clemens was baptized.

At face value, that sounds like a joyous event, but not especially "amazing."

But ... Natalie Clemens has cerebral palsy. She has multiple disabilities. She is confined to a special chair. She has chronic pain. She can do almost nothing for herself. She can't speak. She understands some things and can respond with a few sounds and simple hand motions.

Natalie did not fit the mold of a teenager in a youth group—one who participates in activities, who interacts, who explores the meaning of faith, and the possibility of baptism. She could not write or tell her spiritual journey. She was not capable of a Faith Seekers experience in the usual sense. It was not clear what she understood about Jesus.

The practical question for the church was, "Can Natalie be baptized?" The theological question was, "How big is God's grace?"

Among Jesus' last words to his disciples is the verse printed above. For a long time, he had grounded his followers with his teaching. In his final hours, he gave them a reality test: He couldn't prepare them for everything they would face after he was gone. He also gave them an encouragement: The Holy Spirit would come and **guide** them into all truth. They would be empowered to discern the way forward even where Jesus hadn't given them explicit directions. They would be grounded, **and** they would be able to grow.

So, after Jesus was gone, one of his disciples, Peter, experienced the guidance of the Spirit in a powerful way. At the time, Peter believed that being Jewish was the "normative profile" of a follower of Jesus. But, at the house of Cornelius, a Roman soldier (!), the Holy Spirit fell upon a group of Gentiles/non-Jews (see **Acts 10:44-48**). The Spirit demonstrated God's full acceptance of people who had no Jewish background whatsoever. The Spirit helped Peter grow in his understanding of who could be baptized. God's grace was big enough to extend the church beyond "normative" people.

Our church in PA had experienced "normative" people and "normative" baptism. They had also experienced the Holy Spirit's empowerment to guide and grow the church, even beyond where Jesus had given explicit instructions—just as he promised.

And so, Natalie was lifted in her special chair onto the worship platform. She was asked the questions about her faith, to which she was able respond with some sounds and motions. Then the water poured down over her head. And the pastor pronounced these words: *I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Natalie was baptized ... **because** ... the Spirit **guides** and God's grace is ... **big!**

~~Pastor Dave

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April



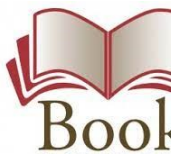
## DISCIPLESHIP COMMISSION NEWS

Discipleship

\*During the month of April, the adult Sunday School will look at the concept of atonement in the series "Why did Jesus die and what difference does it make?" The class is led by Gary Hand.

\*The youth Sunday School class will finish their two-part series on peace on April 3.

\*The Library Committee has updated their guidelines for acquisitions and weeding. Thanks to Marjie Warkentine, Heidi Johnson-Laws & Audrey Unruh for their work and ministry.



## REFLECTIONS OF A SMALL TOWN GIRL

by Mary Ellen Tippin

"Nostalgia – that abnormal yearning within us to step into the time tunnel and recover the unrecoverable"  
Charles Swindoll

This little book may just allow the reader to take a sentimental journey within their memory back to their childhood. The author writes with an uncanny remembrance of the small things that made up her early years in a little town in Iowa. The reader can almost feel her excitement in anticipation of long summer days spent at the community pool, special treats at her nearby grandparent's homes and visiting close by larger towns with all their exotic goods. She elaborates in detail the routine aspects of her family's religious life, her father's milk carrier job, her mother's many responsibilities and talents and her own school activities and other adventures.

This book is a quick read and hard to put down. For those born in mid-century and in small town America it will be relatable. Author Tippin now resides in Newton with her husband, a Kansan and has five grown children. She has also written several children's books.

*\*Review by the Library Committee*



## New picture directory will come!

My hope is to get new pictures of some who would like a new one, and pictures of those who need one starting in June! More info to come!  
*Kim Voth*



## UPDATES

On Easter Sunday, April 17, the gentlemen from the Jeremiah House of Working Men of Christ will be attending our service. We would ask that we save about 12 seats on the south side for our guests that morning.

On Sunday, May 1, Jeremiah House students will be serving breakfast from 8:30 – 9:10. This will serve as a thank you to Hope for our continued support of the Working Men of Christ ministry and also serve as a fundraiser for the ministry. All donations will go to WMOC and will be matched dollar for dollar. Please plan on coming early for breakfast on May 1.

Working Men of Christ thanks everyone at Hope for the generous donations of clothing and other items to their discipleship house here in Wichita. Scott and Fred are grateful for the new pairs of shoes. Thank you to Donna Bradbury for offering Clyde's van for a minimal cost. The van is a welcome addition and is currently being used by the House of Joshua in Topeka. Other needs for our house here in Wichita (Jeremiah) are eight sturdy padded seat folding chairs for our dining room. We can also use new pillows. Thank you again, Hope, for your gracious donations!



## Hesston College Chorale to "shine the light" in Europe and at home through music

The Hesston College Chorale under the direction of Dr. Russell Adrian and Ken Rodgers will present a music program entitled "Shine the Light" at churches in the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and France May 17 to June 7, 2022. The choir will perform a send-off concert at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 13 at Hesston Mennonite Church. A free-will offering will be taken to help offset tour expenses.

The chorale will give twelve concerts in various churches. Tour members will also take in the history and culture of cities such as Amsterdam, Hamburg, Leipzig and Zurich. The trip features visits to important sites in Anabaptist history, as well as visits to important European cathedrals and several world-famous museums. One trip highlight will be a two-day stay in the Swiss Alps. Prior to the trip, chorale members will attend lectures on European history and fine arts by Rodgers. Students will complete written and oral presentations on topics related to the tour.

"We are keenly aware that we're visiting these communities during times of acute stress," said Dr. Adrian. "Between the ongoing Covid pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, people are exhausted, worried and fearful. Music can shine light in the midst of that darkness. That's our hope for this tour."

The 25-voice mixed ensemble is composed of members of Bel Canto Singers and Global Voices that combine on biennial international tours. The performance will include music from a variety of genres, including spirituals, folk songs, and gospel music. Musical interludes will feature soloists and small groups from within the chorale. Tour itinerary, program, and livestream link for the home concert can be found at [hesston.edu/music](https://hesston.edu/music).



### April Reminders...

#### **Worship-April 3**

Worship Leader-Connie  
Scripture-Lowell  
Pianist-Vicki  
Song Leader-Jared S.  
Tech-Michelle J.  
Puppets-Debbie/Ruthie  
Box Opener-Charity

#### **Palm Sunday-April 10**

Worship Leader-TBA  
Scripture-Ruthie  
Pianist-Amy  
Song Leader-Lowell  
Tech-Michelle J.  
Puppets-Ruthie/Arlene  
Box Opener-TBA

#### **Maundy Thursday-April 14**

Worship Leader-Pastor Dave  
Tech-Michelle J.

#### **Easter Sunday-April 17**

Worship Leader-Renetta  
Scripture-Donna H.  
Pianist-Cynthia  
Song Leader-Kendrick  
Tech-Michelle J.  
Puppets-Ruthie/Arlene

#### **April 24**

Worship Leader-Renetta  
Scripture-Lori M.  
Pianist-TBA  
Song Leader-Galen  
Tech-Michelle J.

#### **Worship Prep**

April 3-Joanna  
April 10-Connie  
April 17-Lori M.  
April 24-Ruthie

#### **Sunday school helper-April**

Renetta

#### **SS Superintendent-April**

Cindy

#### **Coffee**

April 3-Chris B.  
April 10-Eldon & Annette  
April 17-Greg & Dawn  
April 24-Gary & Natalie

