



*“The Lord is my strength and
my song...”*

Psalm 118:14

September 2021 Newsletter

“Out of Place?”

How much does the way you *feel* affect the way that you read scripture? And how much does the way you read scripture affect the way you feel?

I was reading our First Testament lesson for the last Sunday in August and I just wasn't feeling it. It felt a little out of place to me. From the Song of Solomon:

“Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;
for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come.”

Sounds like Spring, right? Um... we're moving towards the end of *Summer* now. And I don't *feel* like Spring. I look out my window and I see thirsty leaves. I see brown and yellow and gray. I remember when the flowers came and went a while ago now. Yes, “the rain is over and gone,” but we need it to come back and *soon!*

I *miss* the Spring. I'm tired of the heat. I'm tired of the smoke. I'm tired of the pandemic. “*Arise...*”? “*Come away...*”? I'm sorry but, what are we getting up for? And where are we going? Because I might prefer to stay in bed a little longer.

What do you do when you turn to scripture and what you find is *not* what you were looking for? What do you do when you can't relate? What do you do when a scripture passage feels out of place to you?

Well, I'll tell you what I did... I read it again.
I *still* wasn't feeling it so... I read it again.

Finally, the passage got me thinking about something other than the seasons... it got me thinking about ‘young love’ and how that's an energy that seems to change as one gets older... then I read it again.

I remembered how a lot of people interpret the Song of Solomon as an allegory for one aspect of the kind of love that *God* has for *us*. “Arise, my love... and come away.” What do you need me to get up for, Lord? And where would you have me go? I read it again.

The passage begins:

“The voice of my beloved!
Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.
My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag.”

I thought, *Who is ‘leaping upon the mountains’ these days? Who is ‘bounding over hills’? Even the deer seem fatigued after a long, hot summer. Who is like this? Who...? Besides the Lord?* I read it again.

“My beloved speaks and says to me: ‘Arise...’. If this is God speaking to me, then why is He talking about *Spring*? Does God see how I’m feeling? These aren’t the words I’m looking to hear. They’re out of place for me.

Unless... unless... am I the one who has my seasons mixed up? Am I the one that’s out of place? Does God have something to show me... that I need to see... if I would just *arise...* and *come away* with Him?

How much does how I *feel* affect the way that I read scripture? And how much does the way I read scripture affect the way I feel?

Perhaps scripture is never out of place... perhaps when it feels like that... it’s really just *us*.

So if you go to scripture and you’re just not feeling it... try reading it again. And then, if you’re *still* not feeling it... well... you know what to do.

Grace and Peace
Pastor Jason



- Sep. 1 Pat and Clyde Johnson (59)
14 Gail and John Vanderslik (47)
25 Tiffany and Matt Van De Wal (10)
- Oct. 1 Becky and Roger Matlock (44)
7 Willa and David Bass (54)



Council Notes

Throughout the year, each of the church council members will be introducing themselves to the congregation and letting you know how to contact them. The council members feel that it's important that they are accessible and that you know they value your input.

Member Profile: Bill Nichols

Anita and I joined the church in December of 1981 and since then I have served as the council president four times and at the end of my current term next year, I will have served on the council for 18 years (six 3-year terms). I've also had the privilege of serving as the head usher of the congregation for the past 25 plus years.

My work history has evolved around setting up or running manufacturing plants and working as an executive manager running single or multiple divisions of multimillion dollar corporations.

I have found that being a council member has given me the ability to learn a lot more about the church, how it functions and how it operates as a non-profit corporation. Council members get to learn about all the different committees in the congregation and as such it gives a much better understanding of how each individual committee functions and contributes to the overall church operation and mission. If you have any questions about joining us on the church council, or any input you'd like me to share with the council, you can call our home anytime at 877-4727 or email me at cwnjr@netptc.net



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|-------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Sept. | 2 Gail Hawksworth | 19 Elsa Smock |
| | 3 Dianne Abney | 23 Janet Kieffer |
| | Sandi Carstensen | 26 Bob Miller |
| | 4 Sarah Johnson | 27 Robert Johnson |
| | 6 Larry Smith | 28 Jerry Baldwin |
| | 7 Mary Lou O'Dorne | Patricia Johnson |
| | 8 Lucas Miller | 29 Bob Curran |
| | Jay St. John | |
| | 9 Ruth Conner | Oct. 1 Samantha Farinacci |
| | 14 Judy Reid | 2 Tammy Bartholomew |
| | 16 Tara Ryan | Vicki Burkhalter |
| | | 8 Linda Miller |

Faith & Fellowship

Ongoing Groups:

- Bible Study with Pr. David Sebastian, Wednesdays at 9:30am
- Youth Group (6th-12th grade), Sundays 6:30-8:00pm
- Young Adults Group, on Zoom, times vary
- OLC Women's Group, 1st Tuesdays of the month, 10am
- OLC Men's Group, 3rd Saturdays of the month, lunch at 12noon
- Choir Rehearsal, Wednesdays at 5:30pm

If there is a group you'd like to start up, please call the office or Pastor Jason to discuss all aspects of gathering together.

The drive-thru dinner was a huge success, mostly due to so many willing volunteers in our church! We thank everyone who made this fundraiser dinner possible, not only with the generous gift of time and hard work but by purchasing and/or selling tickets. Because of the generosity of every one of you, we will be giving Manna House a check for \$2,600 which will be used to fulfill their mission "to provide comfort for those in need with dignity so they may know the love of Jesus Christ". If you'd like to know more about Manna House, their website is <http://mannahouseofoakhurst.org/>





IN OUR CONGREGATION:

Linda Beard
Sandi Carstensen
Lois Curran
Arlene Edwards
Mark Emerick
Arlene Fogde
Clarice Forbes
Vivian Hartman
Frank Heilman

Dennis & Stella Higgins
Patricia Johnson
Jan Kieffer
Ann Lesniewski
Miriam Loberg
Melodie Lynch
Chuck Nelsen
Ellie & Tim Nelson

Dora Riedel
Lynn Russell
Ruthann Schiller
Larry Smith
Randy Strunk
Gail Vanderslik
James and Dee Walter
Dale Winther

Please add to your prayers: Gail Vanderslik and family at the loss of her daughter, Angela

FAMILY, FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS:

Ann Lesniewski's daughter-in-law, Cheryll
Father Joel
Carole Johnson's brother, Mike
Trish Nickerson
Mary & Bill Briggs
Lynn Vaughn's son, Matthew
Grant Eyles
Raymond Ressler
Linda Miller's cousin, Heidi
Janet Norman's daughters, Denise & Tina
Bert Dill's daughter, Stephanie Walker
Judy Reid's friend, Greg
the Burkhalter's daughter-in-law, Sarah
Cliff Neufeld's son, Josh
the Bartholomew's sister-in-law, Beverly
Ruby Smith's daughter, Jody
Lisa and Jim Conrad's son, Thomas
Jean & Larry Smith's friend, Peggy Parks
Cheryl Hansen - email request
The Abneys' nephew, John Willoughby

Steve & Edna Norman's brother-in-law, Jack
Suzy Gazlay
Judy Lewis
Arlene Edward's daughter, Theresa
Carole Yandell's daughter, Ellen
Gael Irizarry's sister, Sandy Holz
Sandi Carstensen's brother-in-law, Tom
Sandi Carstensen's sister-in-law, Inge
Rogene's friend, Ann Miller
Therese Righter's son, Hayden
Elvera's friend, Bunny Walthuis
Kathy Bogle's sister-in-law, Ann
Gael Irizarry's cousin, Pete Jara
Matt Van De Wal's grandmother, Dorothy
the Abneys' niece, Roberta
Nancy Baker's friend, David
Linda Champion's friend, Mary McEnery
Elvera's friend, Meta
Nelsen family friend, Shannon
The Champions' friend, Mary Comer

Please add to prayers: the missionaries and Christians in Afghanistan.
Judy Reid's niece, Celeste - relief from pain due to surgery,
pancreatitis
Janice Quistad's cousin, Terry - complications due to Covid variant