

Phone: 541-479-7863

Email: office.faithopc_gp@gmail.com



FAITH
Presbyterian Church

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FAITH FAMILY FORUM II

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE



Pastor Karl Thompson

Have you ever considered what God is saying when he tells us,
“I will be your God and you will be my People.” (GENESIS 17:7)

I will be your God. There is this promise that we will have some possession of Him as our God. This is not saying that we own him, like we own our property, yet He has allowed us to own Him as our God. We can say with confidence, “He is my God!” This is tantamount to saying, “God loves me!” Imagine the brazen statement- He is my God! How could one who is not even dust on the balance (ISAIAH 40:15) have a claim on owning God, or having any certainty that God loves me? There is only one way- because He has promised this in His Word! And that is what it comes down to. We can own Him as God because He has made himself accessible to us through the life, death and resurrection of His Son!

Isaiah 40:15

King James Version

Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

GOOD FRIDAY MUSICAL



Sing to the Lord!!!

We enjoyed a beautiful musical arranged and directed by Kerry Goodwill with the Faith OPC Choir on Good Friday, April 7, 2023.

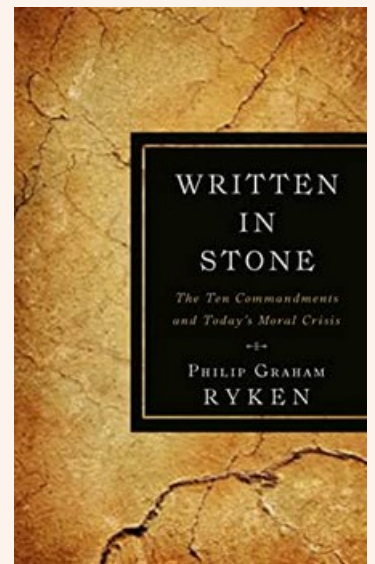




As I gather the pieces of stone with the writing on them, I wonder about how they came to be here. The first stones I found said, “You shall have NO other gods.” Wow, why are there so many pieces? Looks like this stone was thrown down with much anger. As I look through the stone pile, I find another; it says, “You shall not carve any image and worship it.” Why would anyone want to carve something and then worship it? The pile is all over the side of the hill. The pieces are strewn about, look there’s another over there (the ones with the groves and letters). This one is broken across the letters. Does it talk about a name? As I find these pieces, they fit together as if made to fit. I find another with a shape on which the writing seems more intense; something is missing like part of the stone broke hitting the other stones.

Maybe these over here “day keep,” so many, not sure what this stone pile is; the stones are all alike but different from the stones on the hillside. I saw a stone like this up higher on the hill. What is it doing here in this pile with the writing on them? Some of the pieces fit together, but the writing makes no sense. This one is talking about the mother. Look over there; that piece fits with this one which says the father. The first one talked about God; where does this fit with God? Ouch, I stumbled on one that says *honor*, looks like it fits the bunch I now hold.

Written in Stone by Philip Graham Ryken is the book we are studying in the Tuesday Ladies Bible study class. These pieces are part of the current study, and you are invited to the class. Which piece of the puzzle will *you* find?



Here I am Lord, send me.

Ex 32:19 *When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.*

Ex 34:1 *And the LORD said to Moses, “Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke.*

Ex 40:20 *He took the Testimony and put it into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark.*

When she finally had enough, the tears running down her checks, she landed on her knees and then she realized she had never said a prayer before. More tears, then she whispered “Hello God,” more tears, “You probably don’t know me; this is me, and I am so sorry I have not talked to you before.” OK, maybe not the best or recommended start, but she was there on her knees searching for help. If I could see the look through the clouds to see what expression God had on his face, I’d probably see relief and a smile.

“Hello to you too, about time you came to me. I know you! I love you! I have watched you from your birth”. Surprise on her face with all the tears. “If you wanted me, why did I have to suffer so long?” “You did not ask me before.” She responded with crying, “You mean, you were there all the time?” Embarrassed now she realized He saw everything. “Yes,” the Lord replied.

(Continued on page 3)



What a way to meet the Lord Jesus. He meets many this way. When we can't stand the pain of neglect, or physical pain anymore, when we fall to our knees and say *God help me*, He is there with His arms out. Her knees are aching, and she is rocking back and forth while crying. She rests in the arms of Jesus.

Here I am Lord, send me.

PSALM 40:1-2 I waited patiently for the LORD;
And He inclined to me,
And heard my cry.
² He also brought me up out of a horrible pit,
Out of the miry clay,
And set my feet upon a rock,
And established my steps.

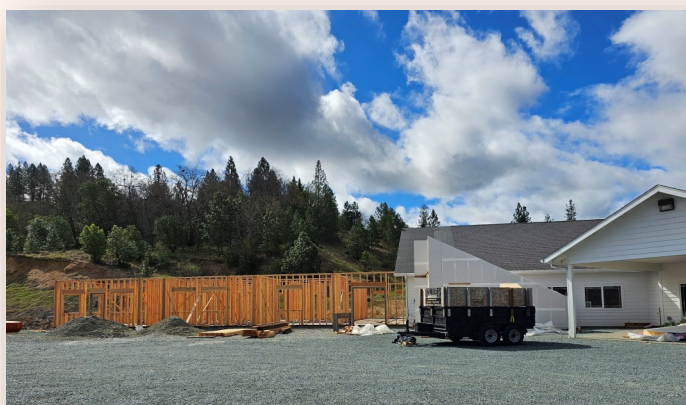
PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

By Karl Thompson

Are you as amazed as I am at the progress the church addition is making. Almost every day something new is going on. Every day it looks more and more like the building it was designed to be. But it is not just happening. Every day there is a group of men, even sometimes several groups of men coming and working on the project. Rain or shine, day in and day out they are laboring to build the church building.

The same is true about the way the Christ is building His Church. All around you, people are working and Christ is building His Church. Some things are happening below the surface, while other things are evident.

Christ, the master builder, is using us to build His church. Every worship service, every conversation, every bit of Christian Fellowship and every example is being used by God to build His church, and we are making progress!



POOCH CORNER



Can you guess the owner of this little cutie? Read the hints and you can turn to the last page of the newsletter to find out who owns this pooch*.

This dog is almost three years old and has never met a person or dog she didn't like. She loves to chase small game and pretty much outruns most dogs. She loves any outdoor activity and is just as content laying in the sun gnawing on a bone. Although, she admits she loves the couch too.

She has velvet-like fur and is sure that's why people love to pet her, but she doesn't mind. Her birthday is on 4th of July and her AKC name is Lady Liberty, very fitting for this all-American pooch.



NEWS FROM RACHEL VANDER WALL



My brother Joshua, his wife Chelsea, and me in Nepal in 2018.

Hi all-

If you are interested in viewing Rachel's presentation on her recent trip to Nepal, [click here](#). You can fast forward on the video to 35:07 to see the start of her presentation.

For those of you interested in learning about, praying for, and/or supporting some of the ministries she mentioned in Nepal, here are their websites:

Sahodar Hospital: <https://sahodaruk.weebly.com/>

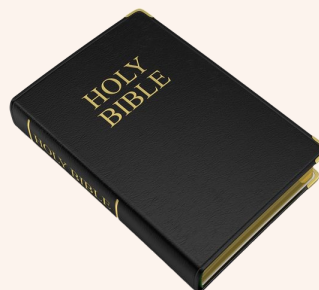
Foster Home for street children in Pokhara: <https://himalayanlife.com/projects/street-children-in-pokhara/>

Pastor in Kathmandu: <https://www.abwe.org/work/projects/gap-nepal-hari>

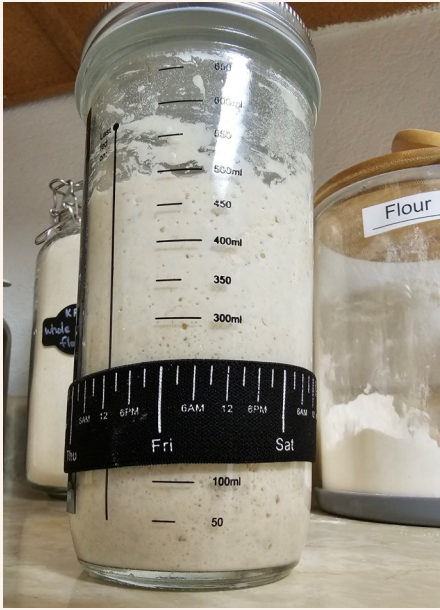
Thank you!

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Rachel VanderWall



SOURDOUGH



For anyone who has created a sourdough starter, my hat is off to you. It takes care and diligence, but I must admit the rewards outweigh the work. It is a learning curve to make a good hard crusted sourdough bread and I have read several books, watched several YouTube videos and practiced for trial and error.



The starter is much more forgiving than I thought, but it takes about three weeks before you can really call it a good, active starter. What a journey this has been for me. Sourdough is so good for you and even people that can't tolerate gluten in regular food can easily digest sourdough. Also, with sourdough it is a natural way to enjoy your bread items.

I have baked sourdough brownies, crackers with discard, and even made sourdough bagels. If anyone is interested in getting starter from me, I'm happy to share. Linda Gay

TEACHABLE MOMENT

By Karl Thompson

Being parents is a scary thing. There is so much that can go wrong so much of the time. When they are babies, you listen to them breath late into the night, or at least I do. When they are toddlers they stick anything and everything into their mouths. When they are young children they can run into the street faster than you can react. As they get older and more independent the dangers only get worse. There is a lot to fear.

But if we parent in fear, we are not going to do a good job. Fear will drive us to extremes. We might be over protective or we might be too permissive- depending on what we fear. We might stifle the child's progress with too many structures, or we might put the child at risk by not bringing the firm correction necessary.

The only answer to this difficulty is to "Trust God and do good!" There are myriad decisions that need to be made every day in caring for children. If we can trust that God is caring for our children and giving us the necessary wisdom to care for our children, we will be God honoring parents.



TESTIMONY OF KEVIN MALONEY

Learning to trust God



In early 1992, we – Linda, my wife, and I – were given the suggestion to listen to the radio rebroadcasts of sermons of Al Martin, a Reformed Baptist pastor in New Jersey. I do not recall the individual or the manner in which we were given this suggestion, but I consider the time in which we heard these sermons to be a watershed period in my life.

I was raised as a Roman Catholic, but ceased any religious practice after high school. For more than 25 years I lived a self-centered life, ignoring God or rebelling against Him. After our marriage, I would, infrequently, attend Sunday worship services.

I was usually uncomfortable at these services; I occasionally thought that something was not quite right in what I was hearing, although I had no Biblical knowledge or basis for these bouts of negativity. I was confused, not quite agreeing, not quite disagreeing.

So, we were given the Al Martin suggestion. I was made/became rapidly aware of the matters that Martin was talking about.

Martin spoke of the one true triune God, sovereign over all. He addressed the utterly sinful condition of man and his depravity, and the consequent impossibility, without Christ, of a right relationship with God, his Creator. Martin spoke using words and descriptions of depravity and of sin which I could easily apply to myself. Although I do not remember the specific Scriptures he referenced, or the words he used, I know that I began to realize that what Martin was saying was unequivocally the truth about God, of sin and man's depravity, of the need to repent of sin, and that Scripture was the foundation for understanding these truths. Scripture described man's state and the judgment he will face, and revealed God's perfect, and only, solution to that state, in the atoning death of Jesus Christ for my sins, as for all believers. God made me His child.

Jesus's question on the cross, to His Father, "Why have you forsaken me?" has been answered, because He, Jesus, by His death on the cross, can now say to each believer, "Do not fear...", "I will never leave you". Jesus had to be forsaken, that I would not be.

Today, more than 30 years later, I continue to seek to understand God's truth, while recognizing I cannot fully comprehend it in its perfection, and will not, even in eternity. The Holy Spirit has yet much work of sanctification to do in me and with me.

I thank God, that he is, in all things, trustworthy, merciful, patient, loving, and that He is my Father.



Albert Martin

[Click on the photo if you want to listen to podcasts](#)



TESTIMONY OF LINDA MALONEY

God saved me through His Word which came in the form of a sermon on holiness in 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1. The Pastor said, paraphrasing 7:1, "God will not live in the cesspools of our lives."

I had professed belief in the Lord Jesus, been baptized, and was teaching children's Sunday School, but I had never seriously thought about sin and God's judgment upon it.

The sermon overwhelmed me, and I knew in my heart I was a lost sinner. When the pastor made an altar call, I did not respond; my pride kept me back. After all, I was a teacher in good standing; I did not need to go forward.

The Holy Spirit would not leave me alone. I was absolutely miserable and knew I had to make it right with God and be honest with the others in my church. So, I tried to make a deal with God (don't ever do this)! that I would go forward if the pastor makes another altar call on the next Lord's Day.

The next Lord's Day, no altar call. Well, I thought, that's that. I don't need to do this; I will keep it to myself. What a relief, and another miserable week.

The third Lord's Day and no altar call. It didn't matter. I went forward, quietly kneeled at the altar...and sobbed. The pastor's wife and a deaconess took me to another room and we prayed. I confessed my hardened heart and asked the Lord for forgiveness. I'll never forget the kindness of these two women; we were there awhile praying together. Oh, the relief of forgiveness. What a foolish person I was, trying to make deals with God.

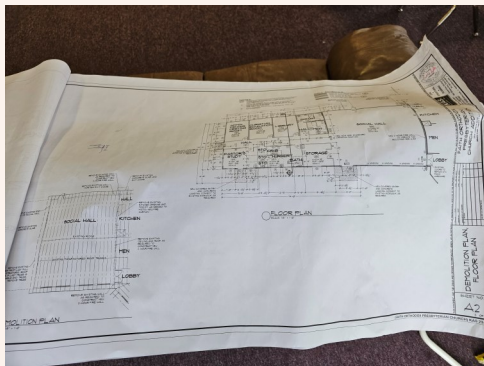
I am thankful that the Holy Spirit brought me to the knowledge of true salvation, repentance, forgiveness of sin, and complete trust and faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

By His grace and mercy, I continue to learn to trust Him as He leads me through the ups and downs of life. I lean upon His promises from the Book of Hebrews, that He is the author and finisher of my faith and that He will never leave me nor forsake me.

Praise God "for His mercy endureth forever".



RENOVATIONS ARE STARTING



Renovations have begun on the new Faith OPC addition and it will be several months before it is completed. Pastor will have an office, we will have a classroom, extra office, storage, and a nursery room. God is so good in giving us this opportunity to expand.

However, we have to put our regular first Sunday fellowship meal on hold, but we would love to see each family invite a few people to their home to share a meal and time together. This grows our bonds more strongly and makes our Christian family an honor to God.

Now that the weather is getting better, maybe some people can plan a picnic at a park. We just want to spend some time together and it doesn't matter the location.

So pick up the phone and make a call and if someone invites you be quick to say, "yes".



CHRISTIAN HEALTHCARE

There are several Christian Healthcare organizations, but neither this newsletter nor Faith OPC is suggesting one over the other but simply offering information for you to do your own research. Just realize there are options.

These suggestions are healthcare alternatives to traditional health insurance. More people are choosing healthcare ministries because they are affordable, and participants get to bear the burdens of other believers. The way it works is simple. These alternative healthcare companies have variations among themselves. Usually, members will have a monthly share amount. Every month the share amount will be matched by an eligible medical bill of another member in the same sharing ministry. Certain companies allow members to interact with other members. However, these insurances do not cover unbiblical medicine; some examples are:

- Abortion
- Medical issues resulting from an unbiblical lifestyle.
- Marijuana
- Pregnancy out of wedlock
- Sex changes

It is suggested that if you look into any of these ministries that you read their biblical statement of faith. These ministries have a monthly fee that can range from \$30/month and up.

“What does Dave Ramsey, a long-trusted expert in business and money management, think about Christian health insurance? Is it a good idea?”

The short answer is it could be, but buyers must beware.

Ramsey’s initial advice to citizens considering Christian health insurance is that they must first and foremost recognize that it’s not technically considered insurance, even though in many ways these organizations operate in much the same way. Christian healthcare plans, as he points out, are not regulated, nor are they “backed up by the insurance commissions risk pools.”

That said, these insurance-like programs aren’t all bad, and according to Ramsey, many have a proven track record of reliability. If shopping for one, he recommends looking for an organization that has been around for a significant period of time; he specifically mentions [Christian Healthcare Ministries](#), which has a good reputation and has been in business since 1981.

In addition to Ramsey’s recommendation, consumers may want to take a look at [Samaritan Ministries](#) (1995), which is a highly praised, long-standing organization within the healthcare sharing ministry community.”

There are three other notable options: [Medi-share](#), [Liberty Healthshare](#) and [Altrua Healthshare](#).

You, as a consumer should review coverage and fully understand what is and isn’t covered. Also, how faith-based is the plan and organization? How long and what type of reputation does the organization reveal?



The Emmons were gracious to share their thoughts on Samaritan Ministries:

Christian Health Share- Samaritan Ministries

By Kathleen Emmons

Samaritan Ministries is a Biblical solution to health care. It is a community of Christians paying one another's medical bills. Ted Pittenger founded Samaritan Ministries International in 1994 as a health care sharing ministry based on Galatians 6:2 to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." As of April 2023, there were 80,811 households as members.

As a member of Samaritan Ministries, you receive a monthly newsletter. You are given the name and address of a fellow Samaritan member so you can send your assigned financial share to help pay their medical bills. Along with your check, you are asked to write a note of encouragement and to pray for them.

When you have a need, other members will be directed to send their shares to you.

You have the ability to choose your doctors (no network restrictions)

Submit your medical bills to SM (sharing starts once a need exceeds a \$400 threshold.)

Fellow members will be directed to send financial gifts and pray.

The maximum amount that can be shared for a need is \$250,000.

Samaritan Ministries is not insurance. You can join any time, and new members are always welcome.

Richard and I have been members for around 20 years. Each month we look forward to sending our share as we know it is going to directly help an individual or family during a hard time in their lives.

To consider joining Samaritan Ministries, go to their website to read more of the details, www.samaritanministries.org is their address.



PRAY FOR OUR SHUT-INS

We always have items on our prayer list and there are so many instances that we need to keep others in our prayers. Let us then keep those that are unable to attend our Worship services-called our shut-ins in constant prayer.

-Pray for Jake and Doris VanderStoel that their health issues can be minimized. They are thankful to the church body that has helped them with doctor's visits and other appointments. They do ask for prayer that all their kids and family will come to know and follow the Lord. They just celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary! Doris sewed clothing (vests for the boys and dresses for the girls) for 21 children, all their family! Now Doris is back to making quilts with Linda Maloney. She keeps herself busy. They are on the lookout for an older sweet dog that needs a home, but are leaving that request in the Lord's hands.

-It was so wonderful to see Ralph and Carol Swanson in the church on Sunday April 16. Sharie and Curt Sommerfeld came out for a visit from warm, sunny Florida and there will be more of their family arriving during the week for a visit. Carol said she sure misses all of us and so happy that she was able to attend church.

-Please keep Marj Robertson in your prayers as she is healing from a broken arm. She appreciates all those who have signed up to help her dress in the mornings and get ready for bed in the evenings.

-Pray for Marlene Schacht who is ill with pneumonia and been staying with her daughter, Heidy.

JAMES 5:16-18

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.¹ **17** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. **18** Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

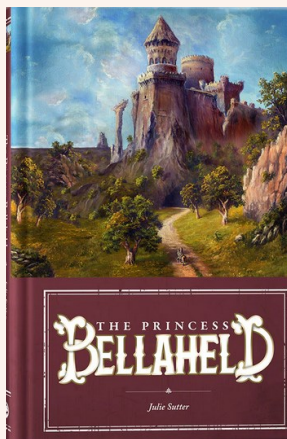
We are back!!! Come join us with the residents of Oak Lane starting May 14th at 1:30pm. We will have a worship service every second Sunday of the month. (masks are not required). Glory to God for this opportunity!

COMING UP

May 4-6 — Ladies Retreat	10am Monday—Stand for Life
May 7— Welcome new members (and enjoy cake)	10am—Tuesday—Ladies Bible Study
May 13 7am—Men's Breakfast	6:30pm—Tuesday Night Book Study
May 14 1:30pm—Service at Oak Lane	Youth Night—2nd & 4th Wednesday
May 20 — Ladies Tea	6:30pm—Thursday Bible Study (3rd Thurs-6pm*)
May 22 6pm — Men's meeting	*6pm—Thursday Food and Devotion night



FROM THE LIBRARY



The Princess Bellaheld By Julie Sutter



January 2023 Frode rated it 3 stars

Goodreads review by Frode Jensen

This book is available in the church library

This is an older book written about a much earlier time. The book was originally published in 1899 by the London Tract Society and was updated slightly and republished in 2021. The story is based on some actual history that dates back to the early 700's. The original title was *Bilihild: A tale of the Irish Missionaries in Germany, AD 703*. It takes place in Thuringia, an area above Bavaria in Germany. This area was largely pagan at the time, but Irish missionaries were coming in as small twelve family colonies to bring Christianity to these heretofore unchurched

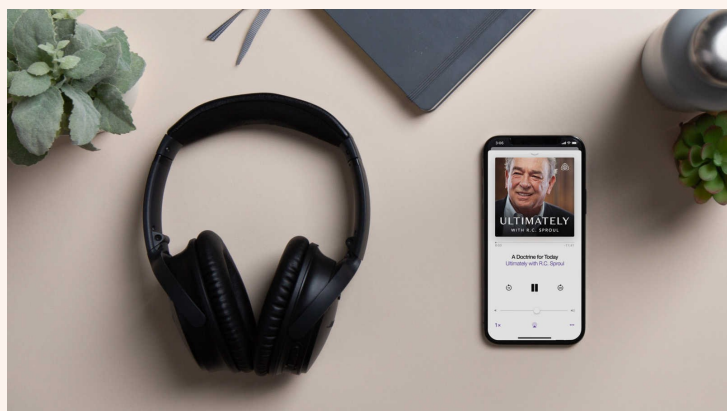
areas.

Bellaheld is a young Christian girl of Irish descent. Her father has passed on, and her mother dies at the beginning of the book. Bellaheld is 16 or 17 and a rather pretty girl. The existing duke of the area is a convert to Christianity; his wife is not. The duke dies, and his son takes over; he is not a believer. He sees Bellaheld and commands her to marry him, which she does. Her mother-in-law hates Christians and plots against them and Bellaheld.

There is a complication of sorts in that a Christian free noble from Bavaria has affections for Bellaheld. Lots of lies are told and believed to some extent by Hedan, the new duke. He is really of two minds and is torn to know just what to believe. There are a few conversions noted, and there are many times when Scripture is either quoted or paraphrased, and those are woven into the story rather well.

This would be a nice book for young girls and boys to read, but older folks can enjoy it also. There is love, drama, and adventure, and the story moves along quickly. It also gives us a window on the spread of Christianity in Germany and the ways in which the Irish sacrificed to make Christ known to the

LIGONIER PODCASTS



Listen to any number of great podcasts from Ligonier Ministries. Whether you have a few minutes or a long drive, you'll find a great informational podcast.

Just click on the photo to choose one.



FAITH 2023 BIBLE ACADEMY

The session has decided to do a chronological approach to the Bible reading this year.

You will be given a chart each week. It will be on the church website, www.faithgp.org, sent via email, and printed off and on the table in the foyer each Sunday. The reading will begin in the Old Testament this year at the very beginning, Genesis 1. Using this plan we will not get through the Bible this year. The reading will consist of about a chapter per day except for Sundays. Sunday will be a review day; you will not have to read anything but your chart. The session is asking you not only to read the Bible but also to react to it. The goal is to get you to think a little about what you are reading. You will find space to write on the chart; we are asking you to do two things; see below.

You will be asked to generate a short thought about the reading, probably 15 words or less will fit in the space given. It can be a summary, a reflection, whatever you decide. For instance, let's say you were asked to read Leviticus 25. It is relatively long being 55 verses, and it covers a lot of material: the Sabbath year, the year of the jubilee, and the redemption of property and of the poor and enslaved in that year. You could make a summary statement about content. *It covered the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee.* You could reflect on the chapter's content. *God gave them specific rules for redeeming property and people. The 50 year redemption is a shadow of Christ's ultimate redemption. I don't think the jubilee system would work today.* You might even ask a question? *How would this affect investing in property in year 48?* The point is to get you to think a bit about what you have read.

The second thing you are asked to do is copy a verse you like. You are not asked why you liked it. Just pick a verse you happen to like for whatever reason and copy it down with the reference, V14 for instance. Sundays are review days. Again, you are asked to write two things. First, look at your chart and make some sort of statement about the reading for the week. Second, pick one of the six verses you had previously copied down. Write this verse in the review section and think about and maybe even jot a note as to why you picked it. At the fourth Sunday evening service of the month, we will talk about your review items, 1st week, 2nd week and so forth. It would be helpful for you to bring your sheets with you to that service. This is an experiment. We think it will take about 15 minutes or so per day to read and fill in the chart. After a time, maybe a couple of months, we will take a bit of time for evaluation of the process. Our desire is to get you involved with your Bible on a daily basis. If you have some other reading plan already in place with which you are comfortable and believe is profitable for you, that's fine; you can continue to follow that in lieu of what we are proposing.

Date	Chapters	Instruction	Notes
1-Jan	Review		Finish 2022 Reading
2-Jan	Gen 1	(1) Write down one thought (2) Copy 1 verse you like.	
3-Jan	Gen 2	(1) Write down one thought (2) Copy 1 verse you	

**Pooch Corner— This sweet girl is Cricket the Whippet owned by Linda Gay.*

A lot of care, time, and effort went into the publishing of this newsletter and we would love to hear your comments, recommendations, and thoughts. Drop us a line at:

office.faithopc@gmail.com

Special thank you to the proof readers, Marylou Hansen and Frode Jensen.

Also thank you to those that took photos and to Sarah Young our new church photographer.

