

THE WINDOW

On a journey with the living Christ; connecting with God, others, and the world.

August 2025

The Gift of HOPE

By Lisa Backer; Elder for Nominating

Waking up in Quito, Ecuador, this morning, I found myself contemplating all that we as a mission team had experienced here this past week. The word “HOPE” kept bubbling up in my mind, as I reflected on the redemptive way I had witnessed God at work, bringing about a hope-filled future for these precious, previously abandoned orphans and special needs children. How beautifully their faces radiated HOPE! It could not be missed!

As I began my devotions and turned to the daily passage from the Psalms, Psalm 130:5-7 happened to be the Scripture reading for the day. “I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word, I HOPE. . . O Israel, HOPE in the Lord! For with the Lord is steadfast love and with Him is plentiful redemption”. I paused and let those words saturate my soul. Our HOPE, their HOPE, surely is in Him, whose love is constant, strong and steadfast — and whose abundant, redemptive purposes never cease.

As a mission management team, we have been exploring the theme of HOPE — and what it means to embrace HOPE as a focus for West Hills Church at this time. Our conversations have centered on God’s promises in Christ and the ways in which we as a body of Christ could live out our strategic priority of bringing HOPE and healing to a hurting world. Perhaps you too have given this some thought these last few months, as you have pondered Pastor Andy’s sermons and have wondered about their implementation.

The sharing of our HOPE in Christ is a distinct mission, one we are all called to live out day by day — both in our individual and communal lives. It stems from our own experience of God’s love and grace. Hebrews 6:18b-20 (MSG) sums it up so poignantly: “We who have run for our very lives to God, have every reason to grab the promised HOPE with both hands and never let go. It’s an unbreakable spiritual lifeline, reaching past all appearances right to the very presence of God . . .”. And while this HOPE surely anchors us, we in turn seek to embrace God’s desire for us to extend this lifeline to those around us.

The challenge before all of us is to ask of God, how we as members of this congregation might join Him in being a part of this HOPE-filled purpose. To discern how we can best use our God-given talents to join our church community in living out this calling in transformative ways — knowing that the engagement of each one of us will make a powerful differ-

The Gift of HOPE, continued

ence! Leading into this nominating season, my prayer is that as we reflect on our God-given gifts, the Lord would grant us a fresh desire to generously and intentionally use and invest these gifts for His Kingdom purposes. And may our faces in turn radiate with HOPE for all to see!

A Praying Congregation

By Linda Fouts; Caregiving Deacon

Prayer is an intimate part of who we are as a congregation. It connects us to God, ourselves, and one another. Whether whispered in solitude or repeated as a congregation, prayer draws us together with a sense of connection and guidance.

Prayer is woven into the fabric of our everyday lives. It punctuates the day—upon waking, before meals, at bedtime, or whenever the need arises. In times of crisis, prayer can be a source of hope and resilience. In times of celebration, it becomes a channel for joy and gratitude. For many, prayer is not confined to moments of need; it is a continual conversation, a state of mindfulness and presence.

Communities gather in prayer to mark milestones—births, marriages, funerals—or to seek unity and peace. Public prayers can be heard at national events or during moments of collective mourning or thanksgiving. Even in secular spaces, a moment of silence often stands in for the universal instinct to pause and connect with something greater. Why do we promote the practice of prayer? Engaging in regular prayer can foster virtues such as patience, humility, compassion, and forgiveness. The act of articulating hopes, fears, or gratitude can bring clarity and perspective, which reduces anxiety and nurtures our inner peace.

Scientific research has increasingly explored the psychological and physiological effects of prayer and meditation. Studies suggest that prayer may reduce stress, promote emotional well-being, and even contribute to physical health by lowering blood pressure and enhancing immune response. While the mechanisms remain a subject of debate, the correlation between prayer and a sense of purpose, meaning, and community is clear.

At West Hills, we have a formal process to be in prayer together. On Sunday morning, we share with the congregation as part of the worship service during the time of Joys and Concerns. In the bulletin there is a reminder that prayers can be shared by email (prayer-chain@whcomaha.org) and there is a place on the church's website to just click a button to send a prayer request. But it doesn't stop there!

We have a robust and active group of individuals who include those requests in their own personal prayers. Deacons send out notes and text messages to those asking for prayer to acknowledge the request and to let individuals know that we are actively praying for them.

But there's a more personal reason that we at West Hills pray and it's because it is an important part of our relationship with God! Several Bible verses address the need for

A Praying Congregation, continued

prayer and even suggest prayers for specific situations. For me personally I'm guided by these verses:

1. Philippians 4:6-7: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

I long for the inner peace that only God can provide, and I've learned that following the will of God is a critical part of obtaining this peace.

There is an abundance of writing addressing the various aspects of prayer. However, in addition to the academic view of prayer, there is a very personal aspect of prayer. We at West Hills address the personal nature of prayer. . . a moment of connection with each other and God amid the noise of everyday life. . . with the prayer chain and praying for each other. I invite you to participate in this practice! Amen.

An Invitation to Bible Study

By Gloria Zinn

West Hills is very fortunate to offer a number of Bible Study groups for adults. There are various times, both day and night, and a variety of formats. If you have been reluctant to attend a Bible study group because you feel there is a requirement to know more than you already know about the Bible in order to participate, please put that thought to rest. The following are comments from various members of Bible Study groups:

Bob Drake – Tuesday Morning Men's: 80 to 90 per cent of my understanding of the Bible has come from participating in a Bible study group. It isn't unusual during our group discussions over a particular Bible passage, one I may have read many times, and suddenly a light bulb goes off in my head and I see that passage in a way I never thought about! That's just one of the many positive experiences I have had in being in a Bible study group with other men who want to learn and grow in their belief of God and His word. Another benefit are the friendships you build, the Christian fellowship and camaraderie amongst the men is amazingly deep. My experience has been that Bible study groups are very welcoming to new participants. Not joining because of a concern with a lack of knowledge is the opposite of reality and shouldn't be your reason for not joining! Most of our new visitors are "listeners" until they become familiar with the people, and comfortable asking a simple question or two. Like any new experiences in life, growing comfortable in a Bible study group is a process that builds over time. No matter your age, whether you're an "old guy" like me or in high school, join us on Tuesday mornings at 7 am and I promise you, you won't regret it.

Dan O'Reilly – Tuesday Morning Men's: I originally got involved in Bible study in my early 20's when a man persuaded several of my friends to join his cult. When I refused to be part of the cult, he told me I would go to hell and quoted scripture to back up his claim. My lack of Bible knowledge left me with no way to defend myself, so one could say I started to

An Invitation to Bible Study, continued

study the Bible as a form of self-defense! Currently I am in the Tuesday morning men's Bible study where we read the scriptures Pastor Andy will be using on Sunday, and the leader begins our discussions with a question. This tends to take on a life of its own, and no questions are "off the table." I now study the Bible for spiritual growth, a closer relationship with God, and for the sense of community and knowledge. My goal is to learn more about God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus, and for practical, everyday applications to treat people the way Jesus commands me to. I also attend the Thursday morning men and women's Bible study, where we "dissect" specific books of the Bible, and after reading scripture begin discussions on what we have read and learn from these scripture passages. You don't have to be a biblical scholar to be involved in a Bible study, and the benefits are immediate and eternal. Make a commitment to yourself that this year you will increase your knowledge of the best book ever written by joining a Bible study group. You'll get more out of it than studying the Bible by yourself!

Jack Pagel – Tuesday Morning and Wednesday Evening Men's: I attend both the Tuesday morning and the Wednesday evening Bible studies. Tuesday discussion focuses on the scripture for the upcoming service. The Wednesday scripture is a backdrop for topics we face as men. I have leaned into both to provide direction and purpose for living. Now as I join the 'elderly' community, I look back at my life and see the tension of opposites – life as the Bible instructs and life as the world tries to convince us. I rely on these Bible studies to keep me centered, realizing my humanity but trusting in Jesus as my Savior. I devoted a large portion of my life striving for acceptance in the world – work, money, and success. These Bible studies serve to set these aside as now insignificant compared to the prize offered by Jesus through His saving grace. I am uplifted in these studies, surrounded by men of faith, joined in community.

Linda Springsted – Thursday Morning Men and Women's: Bible study is very important to me. The Bible is how God speaks to us and gives us guidelines on how to follow Him. Even when I read a section that I have read many times before, I discover something new and fresh. I love studying with friends and hearing different points of view on the same passage and showing me a new way of looking at things. I look forward to studying with friends, and together learning and praying about God's will for our lives and how to be more like Him.

Bill and Barb Spiecker – Thursday Morning Men and Women's: Barb and I love the people who are attending and through our studies, we learn so much about the Bible. We also learn about the people in the Bible we may have heard about but never learned how they lived. This Bible study is very thorough and informative, and I have learned how to best study the Bible through these Thursday morning lessons. There are also many handouts for further study in a particular area. The discussions from group members have opened our eyes to seeing a familiar Bible passage in a newer light, one we may never have thought of before. As a couple we so enjoy attending this group together.

Grace Burns – Wednesday Morning Women's & Thursday Morning Men & Women's: I have always read the Bible at home, but attending the Thursday Morning Bible study group gives me new insight concerning passages I was either confused about or had a different perspective. Although you are not required to teach any of the lessons, I have enjoyed volunteering to teach one or two of the lessons because while preparing for a lesson I find myself learn-

An Invitation to Bible Study, continued

ing so much more! I also attend the Wednesday morning Bible study group in the Chapel. In this group we often will read a book, such as one written on a specific biblical character like Elijah, whom I knew nothing about, and sometimes watch a video. The book we study usually has questions and answers, as well as related biblical information. We also discuss what we have read or watched, and those discussions are very valuable. In both of these groups, Wednesday and Thursday mornings, I especially love having discussions with other Christians. I always look forward to both of these groups and have made many friends over the years through Bible study groups.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR MEN:

TUESDAYS:

- 7 – 8 am, Staff Conference Room #275, Meets All-Year Long. This group discusses the scripture for the upcoming Sunday sermon. Contact: Greg Schuchmann (gkschurch@gmail.com)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 7 – 8 pm, Staff Conference Room #275, Begins September 3. This group's studies are designed specifically for men and discuss new topics weekly with different leaders for each session. Contact: Rick Mason (rsmason61@gmail.com)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR WOMEN:

WEDNESDAYS:

- 9 – 11 am, Chapel, Begins September 4. This group will study *Love in Chaos* by Bob Goff. Contact: Tracy Enholm (huskertracy@cox.net) and Jane Loeck (jaloeck@cox.net)
- 6 – 7:30 pm, Chapel, Beginning in September. This group will be doing a study by Max Lucado on anxiety with a DVD and workbooks. Contact: LeAnn Schaffer (ls@quality-firstconst.com)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN:

THURSDAY:

- 9 – 11 am, Chapel. Beginning September 11, this group will be studying PARABLES. Contact: Gloria Zinn (gbennett34@cox.net) Anyone who wants to teach a lesson will be given the opportunity but leading a lesson is strictly optional.

We hope you will consider whether God is calling you to be part of a Bible study group this year. You will find friendly and welcoming Christian men and women who have the same goals as you: to learn and apply God's Word to your life.

Bible Quiz *by Gloria Zinn*

1. What is a parable? A) a historical story about something in the Bible
B) an earthly story with a heavenly meaning C) a story to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson D) a story about animals to teach a human lesson

2. Who brought Jesus the boy with the five barley loaves and two small fish which Jesus increased and fed the 5000?

- A) Philip B) Peter C) James
D) Andrew (John 6:8-11)

3. Which disciple said, when Philip told him they had found the Messiah, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" A) Judas
B) Bartholomew C) Thaddaeus

- D) James (John 1:46)

4. Who was the Pharisee who was converted to Christianity? A) Paul

- B) Nicodemus C) Gamaliel D) Simon

5. In which New Testament book does Paul say he was appointed by God to spread the gospel about Jesus? A) Galatians
B) Titus C) Romans D) Colossians

6. What name does Jesus use for the Holy Spirit? A) Special One B) Counselor
C) Provider D) Holy One (John 14:26)

7. Where in the New Testament can we find a verse that tells us "we are God's workmanship"? A) In Romans
B) In Acts C) In Ephesians
D) In Hebrews (chapter 2:10)

8. In which parable is the line: "if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?" A) Parable of the Visitor at Midnight
B) Parable of the Shrewd Manager
C) Parable of the Two Sons D) Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Luke 11:5-13)

9. What Pharisee invited Jesus to have dinner with him? A) Nicodemus
B) Gamaliel C) Caiaphas D) Simon (Luke 7:36-50)

10. In which Parable did Jesus teach his disciples the importance of being prepared for the Second Coming? A) Lost Boys
B) Rich Fool C) 10 Virgins D) Sower (Matthew 25:1-13)

11. Which Parable emphasizes the concept of stewardship? A) Talents B) Shrewd Manager
C) Dishonest Judge D) Two Debtors (Matthew 21:33-43)

12. Who are the "goats" metaphorically referred to in the Bible? A) those who will be separated from God's kingdom during the final judgment
B) those who did not show compassion and mercy to others
C) those who rejected God's teachings
D) those who lack a willingness to be led (Matthew 25:31-46)

August At A Glance

Sundays:

- Worship at 10 am is livestreamed and in-person. Following worship, join us for fellowship in Geneva Lounge. For those not attending in-person, we welcome you to watch the service by livestream at: whcomaha.org/live
- During worship, families with children may choose for their children to attend Bible Time! — a special sermon-time Bible lesson for preschool and elementary-aged children following the Family Ministry Moment, with children rejoining their families after the sermon.
- Youth Group for 6th to 12th graders meets on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month (August 17).
- Young Adult Group meets off-site at 4:00 pm. Contact the Church for more information at 402-391-8788. They generally discuss whatever is on their minds, but also use topics from *Can I Ask That?* by Jim Candy.

Tuesdays:

- Men's Bible study meets at 7:00 am in Room #275. They study the upcoming Sunday Sermon.

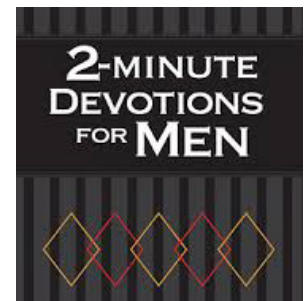
August 31:

- Youth at Worlds of Fun! 6th - 12th graders, looking to spend a fun filled day down at Worlds of Fun? Invite your friends and [click here to sign up today!](#)
- Young Adults at Worlds of Fun! Adults in 20s and 30s, if you're looking for a fun day to get away from the grind join our young adults group the YETIs (Young adults Exploring Topics Intelligently) on a day trip to Worlds of Fun! [Click here to sign up today!](#)

Book Suggestions

By Debbie Chadwick

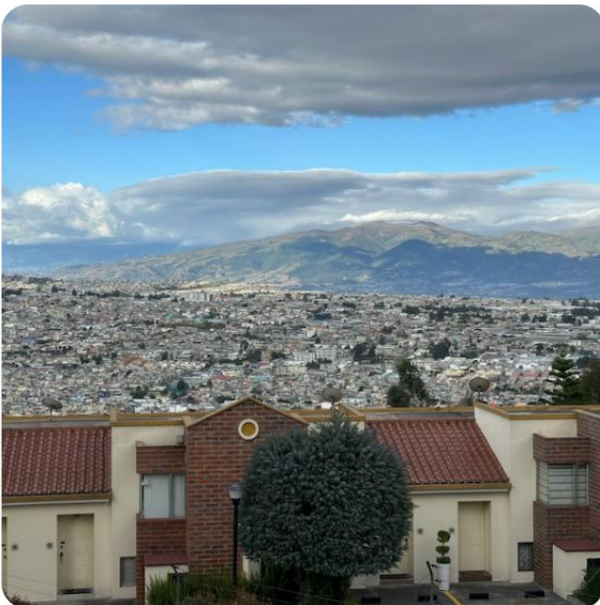
"2-Minute Devotions for Men" provides 100 meditations for a man to reflect upon. According to Christianbook.com, "Relevant devotional themes help men find wisdom for daily challenges, peace in uncertainty, gratitude for life's many blessings, and strength to persevere in hardship". This 128 page book was written to inspire and refresh the reader, as they stop to review each scripture, devotion and prayer.



Memories

2025 For His Children Ecuador Mission Trip







2025 TreeRush Adventure





3015 S 82 Avenue
Omaha, Nebraska 68124
402-391-8788
whcomaha.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS: 1) B & C 2) D 3) B 4) A 5) C 6) B 7) C 8) A 9) D 10) C 11) A 12) A,B,C,D



Happy Birthday!



August

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 - Patti Brownlee | 16 - Stan Parker |
| 2 - Hal Capps | 17 - Hazel Sauer |
| 3 - Wesley Peterson | Randy Green |
| 4 - Sandy Jernigan | 18 - John O'Donovan |
| 9 - Theresa Hamer | Al Jansen |
| 10 - Ken Blatny | 19 - Lloyd Woodworth |
| Bennett Roberts | 24 - Sara Radil |
| 11 - Heidi Cruz | 26 - Sarah Sedivy |
| 12 - Kelley Deases | 28 - Leann Schaffer |
| Luke Burns | Marti Bloes |
| 13 - Fred Morgensen | 29 - Carolyn Bonner |
| 14 - Abby Olson | Stacy Neil |
| 15 - Grace O'Reilly | 31 - Jordan Sauer |

- 31 - Quaid Roberts

September

- 3 - Ted Tromler
4 - Samuel Nodes
Jan Drake
5 - Jack Culek
Luke Weller
6 - Brian Moore
Karen Garvey
7 - Don Anderson
Marilyn Moore
8 - Walt Kunold Jr.

- 8 - David Burns
Karen Lofgren-Anderson
10 - Rachel Roberts
12 - Myrtle Heise
Silvia Avelar Estrada
13 - Rick Mason
14 - Sue Shea

The complete list of September birthdays will be in the September newsletter.