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## Do You Hear God's Whisper

By far the most commonly checked box on our Response Card is "*I want to grow spiritually.*" While that response from people can mean anything from wanting greater Bible knowledge to feeling mature as a Christian, I believe the real cry is the desire to hear God speaking into their lives. Does God still speak to us? Hebrews 1:1-2 say, "

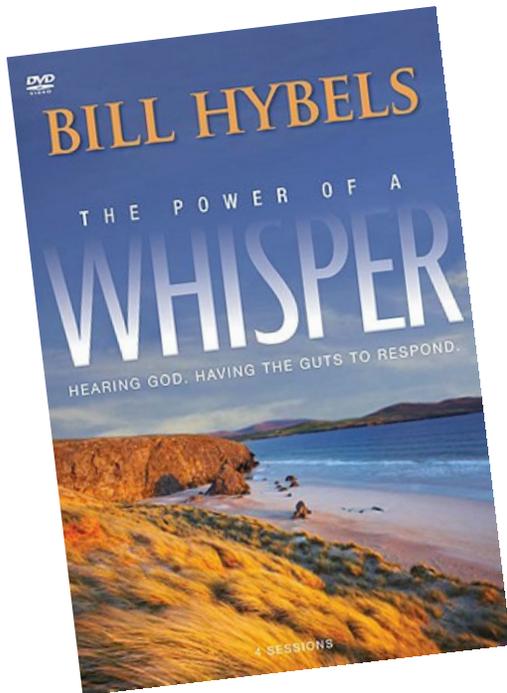
*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us through His Son..."* Jesus said, "*My sheep listen to my voice...*" (John 10:27).

The Bible is clear that God hasn't stopped speaking to us.

Why don't we hear God speaking? Our problem is we so fill our lives with the clutter of activity and noise that



our hearts are drowning out His voice – and that is something we need to change because the critical point to experiencing God in our lives is knowing clearly when He is speaking. In fact, if we don't know when God is speaking, then we are in trouble at the very heart of our Christian life.



We're starting off the New Year in the best way possible, learning to hear – and I hope, experiencing – God's voice through a special all-church journey called ***The Power of a Whisper: Hearing God; Having the Guts to Respond***. While we will spend some time learning **how** God speaks, the real purpose of this journey is to know **that** God speaks to reveal Himself, His purposes and His will to us, and to become attuned to **when** God is speaking.

I want to encourage each of you to get into one of the many small groups that will be instrumental in this journey. We will have in-home groups throughout the week and one available on Sunday mornings during the Bible study hour.

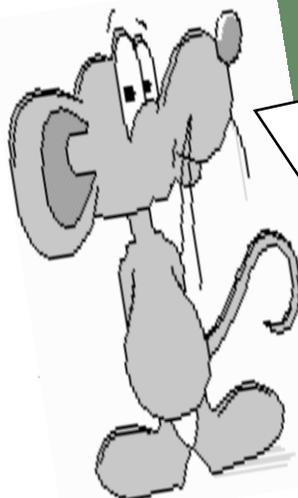
Blessings,

*Bill*

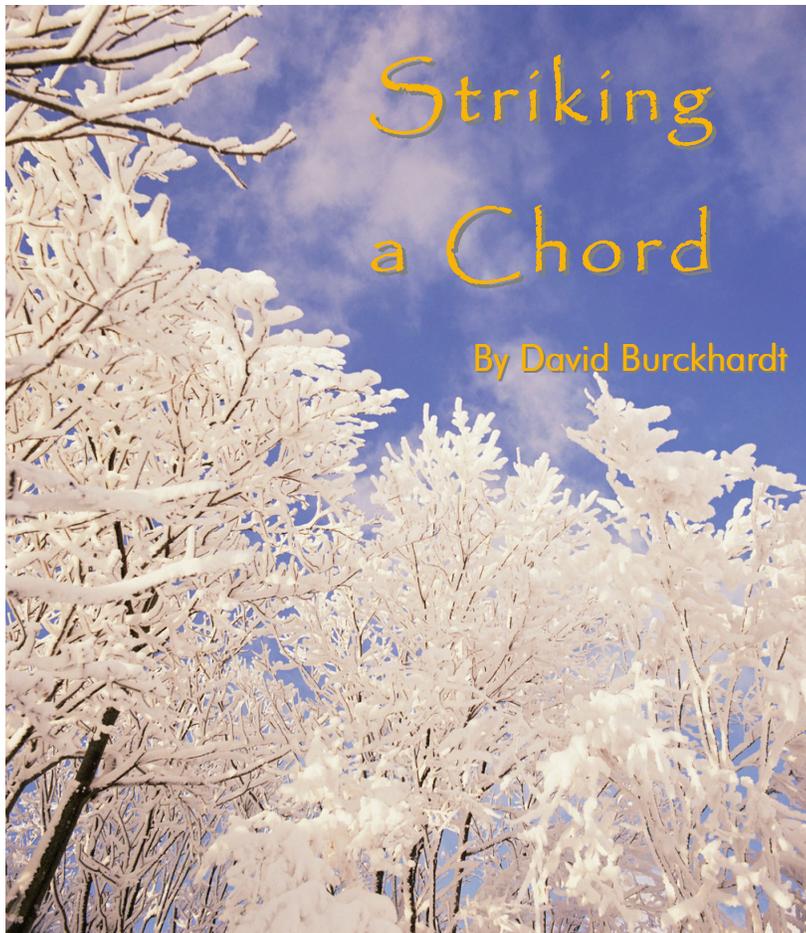
This four-session video-based study will help you learn to direct your everyday steps according to "whispers" from God. Every Christ-follower will learn how to live with one ear perpetually turned to heaven and how to meticulously obey ever syllable of input received. With your participants guide you will learn how to discern the "voice" of God from other voices that vie for your attention, how to invite His input into your daily routine, and how to "practice" His presence and how to allow heaven sent input to direct your life toward making a kingdom-oriented difference in this world.

#### This Four-Part Journey Includes:

- |           |                                 |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Session 1 | The Whisper-Led Life            |
| Session 2 | Divine Input for the Day-to-Day |
| Session 3 | Practice, Practice, Practice    |
| Session 4 | Wide Open for Good              |



*Witness to the truth  
you already know and  
more will be given  
to you.*



...Our advent and Christmas season came to an end on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Nineteen of our Celebration Singers shared *What a Story!* to young wards at Preston Correctional Facility in Ione. What a blessing for us...and hopefully for those men. Most are in transition to a new facility as Preston closes in 2011. Then, on the 18<sup>th</sup> we were able to share carols with shut-in's and others. I will say that the highlight of our visits wasn't our cheerful, exuberant singing. No, it was the children! Our shut-in's wanted to hold, touch, and cuddle every child we had with us! Good lesson learned by yours truly! We wrapped up our season with the presentation of *What a Story!*. I want to say here that I appreciate every musician and singer who takes the time to rehearse and attend the Christmas eve service on the 24<sup>th</sup>. There's something magical about low lights and candles!

Come join us on Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup> as we launch our Celebration Singers late-Winter, early Spring season. We will present the Easter drama, *Bow the Knee* on Easter Sunday. Come join us on the 5<sup>th</sup> as we introduce the musical to our singers. /djb

## *Caroling & Cocoa*

December 18th was a dark and rainy night, but it didn't dampen the spirits of those of us who braved the rain and went out to sing Christmas carols to some of our homebound folks.

All who went were blessed and the feedback we've received indicates that those we sang for felt blessed too. One thing we were reminded of during our journeys was that a caroling expedition is not complete without taking along some of our little ones. Time and time again we saw that that the people we visited were entranced by the presence of the children and wanted to touch or hold them.

We sang old familiar carols and most of the people we visited soon joined us in the singing, and seemed to enjoy the opportunity to once again raise their voices to the Lord with their fellow church members. In addition to our own members, many others joined us at the rest homes so we were able to reach out to a good number of people.

We were unable to visit everyone we had intended but the following folks were visited and appreciated seeing us: Max Kell, Herman Weller, Margaret Thrift, Oleva Winterberger, Alpha Litz, Jessie Highland, and Iva Tritchler. Each of them blessed us as we sang and visited with them. I was particularly impressed with Iva who sang every song with us and knew the words by heart. It was obvious from the glow on her face that she was having a wonderful time.

After singing we returned to the church for soup, sandwiches, hot apple cider, hot chocolate and Christmas cookies. The food and fellowship warmed our bodies and our hearts. Thanks Pastor David for being an inspiration to us and the Worship team for helping in this endeavor. As well as all who came out to support us.

Betty Raiford

The **Big Apple Adventure** is coming this Summer. We are making plans and expect to make a great impact on our church and community.



### Our Bible School Dates July 6-10

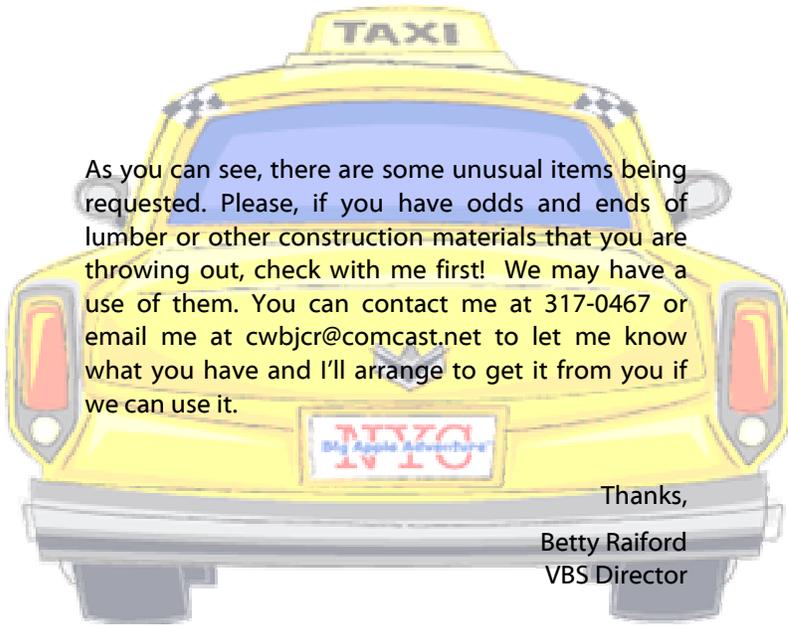
We have some very specific needs and things that we will be collecting for Bible School.

First and foremost we ask for Prayer! For those who are currently beginning

to plan, and for the workers God is calling out—to be aware and responsive to His calling. Be sure you are praying for what He would have you to do, too! Our leaders will be contacting potential workers soon.

Then we need **Stuff!** Yes, I mean things that you can donate or loan to us that will help with our decorating and teaching needs. There will be more information on this as time goes by, but for now, I have a few items I want to mention specifically.

	Park-type benches
	Large cardboard boxes. Large appliance size.
	Artificial turf
	Chain link gate or fence section
	Street lamp
	Disposable pie pans
	Garden cart
	Metal trash cans



As you can see, there are some unusual items being requested. Please, if you have odds and ends of lumber or other construction materials that you are throwing out, check with me first! We may have a use of them. You can contact me at 317-0467 or email me at [cwbjcr@comcast.net](mailto:cwbjcr@comcast.net) to let me know what you have and I'll arrange to get it from you if we can use it.

Thanks,  
Betty Raiford  
VBS Director

# El Camino Baptist Church

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## Whispers Small Groups

<b>Sundays</b>	9:00 am <i>Whispers</i> on Campus Bible fellowship Group
	5:00 pm Home Bible Fellowship Group Lathrop Home
<b>Tuesdays</b>	6:30 pm <i>Whispers</i> Home Bible Fellowship Group Elson Home
<b>Wednesdays</b>	6:30 pm <i>Whispers</i> on Campus Bible Fellowship Group (Suite B)
<b>Thursdays</b>	7:00 pm <i>Whispers</i> Bible Fellowship Group Diridoni Home
	7:00 pm <i>Whispers</i> Home Bible Fellowship Group Jenkins Home

## January Activities

Jan 8	Women's Ministry Tea
Jan 23	VBS Team Meeting and Potluck
Jan 30	Family Day@Church with Potluck

## For More Information

Visit our website at [www.elcaminobaptist.org](http://www.elcaminobaptist.org)