

VOLUME LXXVI
October 2017

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF



The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." Psalm 23:1 ESV

*Family
Fall
Festival*

OCTOBER 28, 2017



YOU SAID IT!!!

Submit your comments to our Editor, Jacquie Hinton, about "The Shepherd's Staff;" and, any other thoughts you might have about the publication that you feel will be constructive or interesting to our readers. You may do so by emailing us at:

newsletter@pahrumpcc.com



Like a Child

Being a grandparent is great! I love my grandkids!

Plus, as an added benefit, grandparenting comes with the credentials that allow you to use tried and true grandparent phrases even though everyone already knows them. Like:

If I had known grandkids were so much fun, I would have had them first.

Being a grandparent is your reward for not killing your kids.

The best part about being a grandparent is that when they get into trouble, you just give them back to their parents.

Even though there are benefits to being a grandparent, there are no verses in the Bible admonishing you to be like a grandparent—but there are verses admonishing you to be like a child.

Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God **like a child** shall not enter it. Luke 18:16–17

At times I find myself reflecting on this principle of receiving the kingdom of God **like a child**. Especially when I hear certain things from one of my grandchildren. Here's a case in point:

As our daughter was reading family devotions to her kids one night, they ended up talking about heaven and what it will be like. No doubt there was some discussion about the fact that several of our family members have recently gone on to heaven. 5-year-old Eli was not satisfied with some of Mommy's vague answers to his questions. He finally said, *I wish Nanny could just take some pictures of Heaven and text them to us. Then we would already know what it looks like.*

Obviously, with Eli it is a settled matter that Nanny is in heaven with Jesus. To him, the reality of a place we call *heaven* is no different than the fact that he lives 600 miles away from his Mommy's parents but he can still see it through pictures sent by text messages or through Skype.

The childlike faith about which Jesus speaks in Luke 18 is a faith that simply believes the truth without demanding subjective evidence. It is this kind of faith that Jesus commends.

Childlike faith is an admirable character trait. But **childlikeness** and **childishness** are two different things.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 1 Corinthians 13:11

We should hold on to childlike faith. But we should grow out of childishness.



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Unfortunately, we have a tendency to do just the opposite. As the years go by we usually become more pessimistic—even cynical. Perhaps this is because we have experienced disappointment so often. We've been let down by those we love. We've been betrayed by people we trusted. Some in whom we placed confidence have turned out to be deceivers that have taken advantage of our gullibility. When our painful disappointments are combined with our sinful self-centeredness, we develop an attitude of cynicism as a means of self-preservation. Although it seems justifiable, the truth is that this loss of childlikeness may also translate into a distrust of God. As our hearts harden, we may become less and less willing to believe that what God says is true.

And the counterpart to this lack of faith is an *increasing selfishness*. This trait is childish—that is to say, one of the natural expressions of a child is that of being inherently selfish. We expect children to learn and grow out of this as they get older (although, to be fair, most of the most selfish people I know are adults...).

Jesus isn't teaching that we should be childish, but that we should have child-like faith. Even though people will invariably let you down, God will never do so. There is a sense in which a Christian should become ever more child-like the older he gets. As a maturing Christian, you should question God's ways less and less—you should trust Him implicitly more and more. Take God at His Word! Do what He says with the confidence that even though you may not fully comprehend the *whats* and *whys*, you know He's right and that He will take care of you. Trust Him ...like a child.

Serving the Savior,
Pastor Keith





Evil Twins

If I were to have an evil twin, what would he look like? No, this is not a rhetorical question; I'd like you to think through that. Chances are fair that you pictured my face with darker hair, sharper eyebrows (maybe thinner, come to think of it), and a nefarious goatee. Most of us have been trained by the media to recognize an evil twin when we see one. I'm not an original Star Trek guy, but even I know about Evil Spock. I sometimes think that it's more or less assumed that our heroes or heroines have an evil twin waiting in the wings for the opportune moment to come and wreak havoc. (Bizarro, anyone?)

Even if it's not an evil twin, many stories will employ villains that serve as mirror images for the protagonist. We've heard it many times: "We are not so different, you and I..." It makes for interesting story telling when the antagonist possesses simply twisted versions of many of the qualities of the main character. It evidences the frailty of man's resolve to do what's right and the necessity of some external standard of good and evil to define the morality of one's actions. Unfortunately, I think this typically used plot device may sneakily creep into and then corrupt our understanding of Scripture.

I know I skew toward the philosophical anyway, but I'll give you a warning right now that this article will require more of your brain cells than some of my other ones.

Are you familiar with the yin and yang? Even if you didn't know what it was called, you'd recognize it if you saw it. Go ahead and Google it. I'll wait.

Many folks assume that it's just an interesting trinket: something you'd get out of a gumball machine or a necklace you purchase because it seems vaguely Oriental. I'll gladly admit that it's a fascinating design. The symmetry allures even as the dissonance intrigues. I'm sure that the actual history of the yin and yang grabs my interest more than it does yours, so I won't recommend you read up on it online (though it might be worthwhile). That being said, the seed of the symbol itself is nearly a thousand years old. Though its specific origins are Taoistic, for our purposes it will suffice to say that the yin and yang is a good example of something called dualism.

I don't have enough philosophical knowhow (or desire) to take you on a journey into what all dualism entails, but I'm standing by my position that I think it would be helpful to know at least something about it. At its core (when it comes to theological understanding), dualism teaches that good and evil are separate and largely equal forces in the world. Often, dualism puts forth that good and evil have always existed side by side and that they will always both endure. More Western forms of dualism would see good and evil locked in a never-ending struggle for dominance (consider the Greek and Roman pantheons, for instance), while more Eastern forms of dualism very zen-ly assert that the evil needs the good and the good needs the evil to keep on existing (hence the white dot in the black teardrop and the black dot in the white teardrop). They are not enemies but "friends." Since you're likely already imagining one of these yin and yangs in black and white, think of dualism as a chess board. One is the white and one is the black. They have the same pieces and neither has any immediate advantage over the other.

Why do you care? What in the world does Chinese philosophy and a silly little shape have to do with my everyday walk as a Christian? Permit me to offer a handful of thoughts with some of what I hope to be application for you as you seek to grow in Christlikeness.

1) I've only run into this bizarre mutation of Christian truth once, but it did make me wonder how many people had been led astray by something similar. I don't remember the specifics (since it really caught me off guard), but I had one guy suggest to me that the yin yang reminds him of the evil that will always be in him and that he just has to live with it. The impression I got was that we have a light side and a dark side and we just do our best with what we have. Here's my main problem with that: the dark side is known as sin and Jesus died to remove that. If my approach to the Christian life is to maintain "balance" between white and black, I have missed the point of the Gospel. The goal isn't balance - it's holiness. It's God's Spirit inside us eradicating the wickedness and mending the brokenness. Any excuse for tolerating wrongdoing in one's life is to be rejected out of hand.

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2) I think that this is a little more common: people conceive of God and Satan being more or less equal. We know, of course, that Satan will ultimately lose and that God will ultimately win, but in the meantime it's a fierce battle. We perhaps subconsciously look at history as a catalog of "wins." The expansion of the church throughout the Roman Empire was a "win" for God. The brutal slaying of Christians in the Coliseum was a "win" for Satan. The Great Awakenings were "wins" for God and the World Wars with all their destruction were "wins" for Satan. Perhaps we think of God and Satan being in opposite corners of a boxing ring. "In this corner, fighting for the good and true and beautiful is God Himself! Shining in white and gold and with a voice like thunder, Jesus is our reigning champion!" "And in this corner, quick as lightning (as it falls from heaven) and crowned king of the rebels is Satan. The father of lies has been practicing and he's ready to steal, kill, and destroy anything that crosses his path."

Do you see the dualism here? This silly little picture (which, I think, too often strikes a chord with many Christians) portrays God and Satan as on the same playing field. There is white and there is black and it's just a matter of who's stronger that will eventually determine who "wins."

There is truth in this assessment, don't get me wrong. Satan is the prince of the power of the air and he is indeed the father of lies. Where wickedness exists in the world, Satan's handiwork is plain. Wherever there is destruction or death, the thief rejoices in his depraved produce. God is indeed stronger than Satan will ever be. Satan will never be stronger than God, and therein lies my problem with the whole "boxing ring" type of theological understanding. Satan isn't in the same ring with God. That's not a level playing field. To equate him with God, even to an unconscious extent is (I believe) one of his victories. To simply compare relative strength between the two is to assume that they are equal in type. If you'll permit me, it's to begin to conceive of Satan as an independent being. It's a temptation for us to forget that **only** God is self-existent. The theological word for this is God's "aseity." Please look it up. It'll be good for you (and yes, I know it doesn't appear in many dictionaries).

This whole line of thought was sparked from a book I'm reading on Revelation. As I dig more deeply into this book of Scripture, I'm seeing just how often Satan is used (note that word) by God to accomplish God's purposes. Satan has no existence outside of God's sovereignty. He doesn't exist alongside God. He doesn't exist to complement God. He doesn't exist to balance God out. He exists as a rebel who is still necessarily restricted by the fact that he is a created being, same as we are (though of a different type).

Rest in the fact that God doesn't have an evil twin. Rejoice in His aseity and worship Him as the one who has the whole world (including all the bad stuff) in His loving hands. Remember that, whenever Satan does something to steal, kill, or destroy, God is still sovereign and will work for His glory.

Ever only by God's grace,

Pastor Caleb



SUNNYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Dear Family and Friends,

Greetings from the Shields' Family!! In case you were wondering, we are not MIA nor have we fallen off the planet. We just haven't sent out a family newsletter in a LONG time. It is unbelievable how the months, even years, have flown by since the last one. Thankfully, we have been in touch with many of you via phone calls, personal letters, e-mail, and facebook during our time of snail mail silence!! Now for an update...

August 1st marked our third anniversary at **Sunnyside Community Church**. Sunnyside is a long time Village Missions church, and although it once was in the country, it is now a suburb of Portland. We are 15 miles (45 minutes) from downtown, but we don't have to go there very often. As with any change in leadership, there have been ups and downs as Pastor and congregation get to 'know' each other. There are some who have transitioned to other fellowships and some who have come to SCC in this "sifting" process. Now, after 3 years, we are finding the foundation of who and what is Sunnyside Community Church.

Emblazoned in large letters on one wall in the worship center is the new mission statement for the church: "**Conformity to Christ, for the everlasting good of all peoples, to the glory of God.**" Out of this comes the priority of the transforming Word of God in the life of the church corporately and individually as it is the **Word of God** that changes lives through the work of the Holy Spirit, conforming His people into the image of Christ. As Pastor, Guy's primary focus is shepherding the flock through the ministry of the Word: during the Sunday services as the Word is read and the Word is preached; through One-To-One Bible reading with men in the congregation; by encouraging others through the Word when visiting in their homes or at the hospital.

Another area of emphasis addressed in this statement is the priority of Missions, "**for the everlasting good of all peoples**". Sunnyside supports a number of local ministries as well as overseas missionaries, and it has been our desire to increase their visibility and support at SCC. There has been an annual Missions' Conference and church sponsored Missions' Trip for the past three years. In the fall of 2015, we went to the Philippines when Guy was a speaker at a Pastoral Care Conference for national pastors. In August of 2016, we took a team of 13 to the **Philippines** and spent 2 weeks helping with several ministries. Most recently, we took a team of 13 to **Wistaria, BC** to lead a VBS/Daycamp for Wistaria Community Church, a sister Village Missions' church.

The last part of the mission statement is what we pray Sunnyside will always be about : "**to the glory of God**"!!

Now for some **family news**...

Benjamin graduated from high school June of last year and went to Oregon State in September. He was very involved in the **Navigators**, and we are thankful for the spiritual challenges and encouragement he encountered through this Christian campus ministry during his year at OSU. This summer he is again working for Neptune Pools, and in the fall he will attend a local community college.



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Jonathan is now a Junior!! This school year begins with a 9 day class trip to Yellowstone where they will explore and learn about God's Creation from a Biblical worldview under the guidance of a Christian geologist and Christian scientist. Jonathan is looking forward to another basketball season and will be a starter on the Varsity team. He got his **license** last November and is very happy to have that taste of independence...when a vehicle is available.

Geni is the family manager and keeps it all running smoothly (not really, but it sounded good!!). She does try to keep track of who needs to be where when and with what!! Sometimes it's right, sometimes it's not, something all moms can relate to!! She plays for church most weeks and is involved with Children's Ministry and Ladies' Ministry. Geni continues to work for **Providence ElderPlace** and describes it as the least stressful nursing job she has ever had!! ElderPlace is part of the national PACE program, a managed healthcare for Seniors. [Check it out online!! It's a great program that provides so much more than Home Health can).

Being "**Pastor Guy**" occupies much of Guy's day, but he loves finding time for his favorite "hobby"... reading!! He always has several books on the go and moves between them depending on his mood. His **reading** usually includes theological, philosophical, and current cultural issues. Occasionally there is a game of golf with men from the church or with our boys. In July, his brother Doug and wife Joanne came for a quick visit. Guy and Doug celebrated **birthday number 5** on July 10. It has been a number of years since they were together for their birthday!!

In the past year our family has enjoyed the blessing of going on two **missions trips** together. The first was last August when we went to the **Philippines** with 8 others from Sunnyside. We were involved in a few different ministry outreaches: a feeding program for children living in garbage dumps; VBS and basketball camp in a slum area; a camp for street children; putting together "Bundles of Hope" for moms and babies at Shalom Birthing home. The most heart wrenching experience for all of us was the day we spent serving meals to the children; their living conditions were grievous and many were moved to tears as we witnessed firsthand their harsh reality. **Thank you** to those who supported this trip through prayer and financial gifts!!

This July we spent a week in the small remote town of **Wistaria, British Columbia**. Wistaria Community Church has been a VM church for many years but just welcomed a new pastor in February after 10 years of being without; Our team of 13 ran a week long daycamp for the kids in the area. We had **44 kids** throughout the week and most of them came every day. Some of the parents drove 90 minutes each way so their kids could be part of the camp. We had the kids for 5 hours each day, and we packed a lot into that time; the most important thing was the **Word of God** taught through music, Biblical teaching, and small group review. We trust that a foundation has been laid for ongoing outreach into the community.

You may have noticed a **Florida** postmark...no we did not move again, but we are visiting Geni's family in Cape Coral. Things are different now as Geni's mom is living with her sister Paula. We will help Geni's sisters finish moving things to Paula's and clean the house. We also have plans to go the beach and perhaps down to the Keys to do some snorkeling.

Thanks to all who partner with us through prayer and financial support as we serve with Village Missions. We are so thankful for you and **praise God** for you!! Hopefully the next newsletter will come out sooner rather than later!! Thanks for keeping in touch in whatever form it takes.

Love & prayers
Guy & Geni
Benjamin & Jonathan

Guy and Geni Shields are Village Missionaries our PCC Church Family Supports



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Mandy Fowler **By Ben Wichaël**

My last newsletter I introduced you to the series I am doing—***“Sojourners.”*** This is where I give you a snapshot of what missions is like from these individuals’ perspectives.

I want to take you into the life of someone who has had a positive impact on my life by the name of ***Mandy Fowler.***

She started her missionary life in 2000; and, has spent eight years staffing at the YWAM Honolulu base. She has been all around Asia and the South Pacific serving God and training people to follow Him; and, spread the gospel.

Of all the countries she has been to her favorite is Thailand—as anyone who has spent any time with her will know. In fact later this year she is moving to Thailand as a full time missionary. That is a cause of rejoicing, when someone devotes their lives to the service of God!

He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Luke 10:2

As awesome as this is, that Mandy has responded to the call of God, her decision did not come without trials, discouragement and sadness. That being said, Mandy is an example of what it means to take all your worries and cast them on God.

An average person might weigh the situation and choose the easier path; but, it takes a person of courage to set that aside and respond to the call God has on their life.

We all have a call on our lives from God and many never respond to him. My challenge for you is to step out in boldness and courage like Mandy to do what God is calling you too.

If the situation seems to be overwhelming know that God is near, turn to him and trust him to make things clear.

With all love in Christ,
Ben Wichaël

Ben Wichaël is a Youth with a Mission missionary our PCC family supports



FRANCIS AND ROSEMARY KLONTZ

August 2017

Pahrump Community Church

Dear friends – A note to keep you posted.

We are getting settled here in Northern California with our daughter Mary and family and sharing in a good church with a great outreach ministry. We have done visitation with our church people and RoseMary will be leading a choir for at least special times. Several people are interested and for sometime, the pastor has wanted to include a choir as part of the ministry. Both of us sing in the worship team.

We have encouraged the local hospital to include volunteer chaplains and now they tell us that they are working on the program. We had a great ministry with chaplains in Carlsbad, New Mexico and they didn't want us to leave.

Thank you for your faithful prayer and for the regular financial help through Village Missions. We want to continue serving the Lord even as we age. Thank you for your help.

Love in Christ,

Francis and RoseMary Klontz

2061 Wilcox Ranch Rd
Plumas Lake, CA 95961

Pastor Francis and RoseMary Klontz are retired Village Missionaries that our Church Family Supports. The Klontz' have been married 66 years and are both 85 years old. Although the Klontz' are retired, they remain active in doing missionary work. They are currently on a missions trip in Mexico.



PIERSALLS PROGRESS SEPT, 2017

GHNI GOAT REPORT

A Widow's Growing Hope

Kito Village, Ethiopia

Fetiya from Kito Village is 28-years-old and has one child. Sadly, she was widowed two years ago when her husband passed away. Fetiya was entirely dependent on her husband's income, and after he died, life was very difficult for her. She received some support from the government's "safety-net" program. It was not enough for Fetiya's family's survival, so her neighbors frequently supported her.



After GHNI's Transformational Community Development (TCD) program started in her village, Fetiya was selected by the village elders and the TCD committee to become a member of the Agriculture and Income Generation groups.

Two month ago, Fetiya earned 6,500 Birr (about \$280) from the agriculture activity. Additionally, she received two goats from GHNI-Ethiopia, and now the two goats' number multiplied by two so now she has four goats. Fetiya says her life has changed, her hope is growing, and she plans to send her child to school next September.

We are doing the same work with another village and our TCD workers plan to hold TCD training. They also plan to expand the irrigation land and establish more groups.

Fetiya's life has turned around for a bright and bountiful future. Thank you for your support! Please continue to make it possible for us to offer help and hope to more widows and single mothers in Kito Village. New donors are always welcome and needed.

Lemi - GHNI TCD Worker in Ethiopia

Guy & Jan's Oregon Trip Report: We traveled to Oregon in July to meet with mission pastors at churches we knew from past years. We were able to meet only one pastor (Trail Christian Fellowship) and shared GHNI info with him to consider. Of the other eight, two were not interested in new projects at this time, the other six were on vacation, so we left information with them for a September follow up.



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Trail Christian Fellowship in S. Oregon



Kelly and Kelly Nokes (he is the mission pastor at TCF)

We also were able to meet with a GHNI Board Member and three donors. Two other donors were on vacation and not available. One of the donors we met with was so enthusiastic about the effect GHNI is having on people's lives and was grateful he was able to help support a project.

We also were able to meet with a few friends and family and share GHNI's work with them.

Jan and I are very grateful for the opportunity to serve with GHNI to help improve lives of men, women, and children who have been given so little to work with in this life. Even the poorest among us here in the USA have so much more than the people in the rural villages where GHNI works. We are so grateful for those who share what they can to support families who need help finding clean, safe water, food to eat, work to provide income for their family, basic health training, and education for both girls and boys.

Jan and I are also very grateful for those who pray for us for safe travel, good health, and good contacts for GHNI. And for PCC and individual donors who help with our expenses.

We ask you all to continue praying for us as we continue travel the next few weeks. We will be returning to Phoenix and Los Angeles for follow up meetings with existing and prospective donors. Please pray for us as we travel in November to visit GHNI work in Israel and Jordan.

Praise and Prayer Requests:

Praise for safe travel to Oregon and contacts made

Prayer for open minds and hearts of the Oregon contacts to prayerfully consider GHNI projects

Prayer for LV Rotary Clubs (and other service clubs we contact) to include us in their speakers program

Prayer for our first GHNI overseas trip to see projects in Jordan and Israel in November.

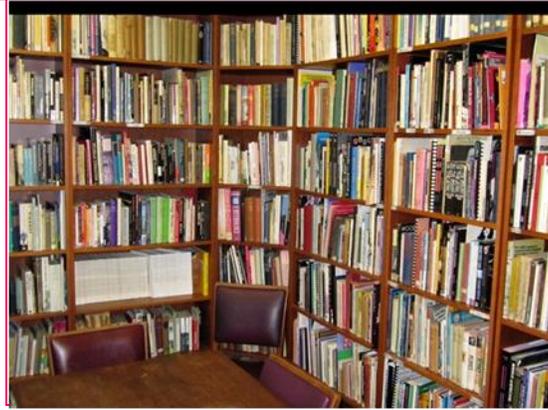
Guy & Jan Piersall
August 2017

Guy and Jan Piersall are Global Hope Network Inc. missionaries out church family supports.



WHAT TO READ???

By Sharon Ankrum



I love to read!! Sometimes I am in the mood for a good mystery, or a Christian romance. I have read everything from historical novels to sappy poetry, however have a hard time with Shakespeare, and really not crazy about science fiction.

To take a journey on a rainy day, with a cup of tea and a good book is truly a delight (if I don't fall asleep somewhere in the adventure). I love a book that makes you sit on the edge of the chair and your heart beats fast and you can't wait to turn the next page, or one where you cry with the character or laugh out loud with delight. Sometimes I feel like reading an autobiography or biography to get the true picture of a person. There is always sorrow and happiness, trials and triumphs much like my own life.

Even if you don't read, to have someone tell of a good book they have read and relate the story , you can almost visualize the characters.

I usually have a couple or three books going at the same time, I bounce back and forth between them. Don't read a couple of mysteries at the same time, or you will really mix characters□.

Of all the books I've read, not one can compare to the Bible! I just finished a book called "THE TRUE JESUS" by David Limbaugh. As we walked together through the Gospels, I laughed, cried and was spellbound at the wonderful life and character of those that had the opportunity to be with the Savior.

Even though I have read through the Bible several times, each time another characteristic of our Lord is revealed. I can truly say with the men on the road to Emmaus, "my heart burned within me."

The Gospels reveal characteristics of the Son of God and Man, and those who followed Him. Let's look at some of these people.

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First is the HERO of the whole Bible: JESUS

Born to an unwed mother in a stable
Worshiped as King
Holy yet walked among the vilest of all
An innocent man, judged as a criminal
Compassionate, loving, patient, serving His brothers
Died a horrible death for all mankind
Rose from the grave to defeat that separation (death) from God
Sitting as our advocate on the right hand of the Father
Promising to come back as the reigning King. WOW

Now let's see which of these few characters do we see ourselves in as we cannot compare to The Hero!!

Let's be an Andrew, little written about him, but the one who brings others to meet Jesus the Messiah. (John 1:41 and John 6:9)

How about Peter, (me) impetuous, proud, brazen, mouthy, but willing to jump off the boat to follow his Lord. I think of Peter as a large, burly rough fisherman, tough, but weeps when the rooster crows

Or Phillip, questioning, but goes where he sent, trusting God to give him the words to witness to others (John 14:8-9 1:45-46).

Are we a Doubting Thomas, who has to have miracles to believe, then proclaims our love? (John 20:27-28)

Let's consider Levi (Matthew) greedy, a cheater, dishonest, playing both sides of the fence, yet when asked jumped up and followed his Master and took Him to other sinners. (Matthew 9:9-10).

Then there is Judas, in the midst, swallowing up the benefits, looking for an easy out and betraying his benefactor. Do we sell out ?

Where do we fit in this plan? Each time we read about the love Jesus has for us, both joy and remorse fills our beings. The Gospels truly give us a clear understanding of God who came to earth, that He created, to restore the brokenness of a world doomed.

The book of Matthew shows us his Deity,
Mark, shows us his being the faithful servant,
Luke tells us his humanness, and John portrays His love. I want to be the disciple Jesus loved don't you? 1st John 4:10 is one of my favorite verses. *This is love, not that we loved God, but He first loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

So if you haven't picked up a good book for a while, why not find history, romance, intrigue, betrayal, murder, poetry, self help, character building, adventure, the very best Autobiography ever written?

THE ENDING IS THE GREATEST!!!
JUST SAYING



Salt Creek and Salt Creek Hills, California By Bob Jacobs

Do not confuse this area with Salt Creek in Death Valley National Park. This area is located very close to Dumont Dunes which is heavily used by the public, so the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) felt it necessary to designate this area as an ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern) to help protect this historical and fragile riparian area.

NOTE: Please treat this area and all nature areas with respect. Leave only footprints and take only pictures. Help save areas like this for future generations to use and enjoy.

The BLM has put a lot of effort into this area and the trail is well marked and easy to follow with many interesting interpretive signs, making this hike particularly enjoyable. They have placed picnic tables underneath a grove of big trees (an oasis) that is just a short distance from the parking area.

This is an easy, relatively flat hike. There is a lot to see if you include wandering around the old mine sites; and, if you include a stop under the big shade trees for lunch, you could easily spend several hours. Time is easily forgotten when you're distracted by the beauty of nature. From the parking area, follow the well marked and well maintained trail northeast towards a large group of trees. Be sure to stop and read the interpretive signs that are all along the trail. They are very informative. The trail runs along the left (west) side of Salt Creek and after 0.2 miles, the trail crosses Salt Creek itself via a wooden bridge. Look to your right, under the trees for the picnic tables.

The trail continues on its northeastern route towards Amargosa Spring which is located between the two hills visible ahead. The trail then tops a small summit and turns to the left, now heading due north. At this turn, you'll get your first glimpse of the old mining camp ruins. All around Amargosa Spring are various mining tunnels and prospect holes. Although most of the vertical shafts in the area are now protected with large metal grates, you should still watch where you step! These metal grates serve two purposes; one is to help prevent people from falling in; and, the other is to offer the local bats a place to roost. The extra effort that was made to add these grates, instead of simply filling in the holes, is a great way to return a little back to nature after taking the minerals. Bats fill an important ecological spot; and, help to keep the insect population in check. Continuing on the trail, you'll pass the small mining camp that grew up around Amargosa Spring and more mines. The trail ends at another entrance to Salt Creek Hills. This one is used by people who are enjoying the Dumont Dunes Recreational Area located just to the north.

To get there from Pahrump take highway 372/178 to Shoshone, California. Then head South on CA State Route 127 for approximately 27 miles and turn left (east) at the Park Service sign and go about 100 yards to the parking area and trail head.

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The Oasis along Salt Creek



Remains of an old stamp mill

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Blessed Assurance

All year I have been struggling with the fact that I have “weak” faith.

Just what is “faith?” The thesaurus defines “faith” as the “belief and trust in and loyalty to God.” I believe in Jesus Christ who is the Son of God. I believe Jesus was born as mortal man; and, lived and died a horrendous death so that my sins may be forgiven and forgotten. I believe I may have eternal life by His grace and mercy.

The thesaurus says “trust” is the assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something or one in which confidence is placed. WOW!!! Well, I do rely on the character, ability, strength and truth of Jesus and I do place my confidence in Him. Or, do I?

Confidence is free from self-doubt or uncertainty. Confidence is an assurance – a being certain in mind – being free from self-doubt or uncertainty. Am I free from self-doubt or uncertainty? This question haunts and taunts me. How do I get that “blessed assurance?” How can I obtain that certainty of mind? How do I even know when I have it? I want a “peace” of mind; not a “piece” of mine!

Am I praying for confidence to have faith in what I believe? Or, am I praying to have faith in my confidence? Questions! Questions! Questions! I love you, Lord! I believe you are the Son of God. I believe no one comes to the Father except through the Son. I believe that! But, how can I get that assurance in what I believe? I continue to question myself not You, Lord.

I am crying out to you from my own lack of assurance not yours. How do I get that assurance and know when I have it? I know what I have and need to do. I have to acknowledge my weaknesses and submit to Your strength. I have to admit I cannot be anything but a mortal and a sinner. I have to be at peace with my humanness; and, acknowledge your divinity. I can never be the perfect mortal. I can never be more than human. I can never be more than I am. But, what I can be is your child living, loving, failing, and adoring you as I acknowledge your presence in my life. Of that I can be *assured*. Never reaching that pinnacle of perfection that I aspire to reach; but, failing, falling and fainting from the weight of my sins. Then, getting up over and over again from my weaknesses only to fall again from the weight of my failures; but, being *assured* that Your word never fails.

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| <p>EDITORIAL STAFF Jacquie Hinton – <i>Editor</i> Pastor Caleb Walker and Karen Crispell– <i>Copy Editors</i> Reporters and Contributors: <i>Our Missionaries and PCC family</i></p> | |



BLESSED ASSURANCE

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine
O what a foretaste of glory divine
Heir of salvation, purchase of God
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood
Perfect submission, all is at rest
I in my Savior am happy and blessed
Watching and waiting, looking above
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love
This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long
This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long
Oh what a Savior, wonderful Jesus
Death could not hold You, You are victorious
Praise to the risen King
Death could not hold You, You are victorious
Praise to the risen King
Oh what a Savior, wonderful Jesus
Oh what a Savior
Wonderful Savior



**Prison Ministry
September 2017**

September is very special in Pahrump. It is a time when we celebrate a Harvest Festival with a weekend of gathering together in the park displaying some of the many things we work on all year; and, we begin the get-together with a parade. It's a great way to meet with friends and share, person to person. Our computers are great for connecting; but, it is fun to leave them home and share, person to person. I guess what I am trying to say to you is "Happy Fall".

During our time in Prison Ministry we tell the prisoners that we will not talk to them when we see them outside. This is because they are entitled to confidentiality; and, may not want to tell their associates where they met us. However, if they speak first we tell them that we will give them a hug right where they stand. We give a lot of hugs on the outside and, last week, we were given some veggies one of them had grown in their garden. What a great surprise – and a delicious one, too!

At Inspirations Adult Living facility we are enjoying the return of some "snow birds". Folks who traveled away from our extremely hot weather during the summer. Our Sing Along on Tuesday mornings is increasing in numbers; and, last week we enjoyed the return of two more of our team members, Bernard (tambourine player) and Sharon (singer). We meet there every Tuesday morning and have a great time singing the old songs and hymns. There is always an open place for any of you

who would like to join us at 10:15 am in their up-stairs meeting room.

At one of our Jail services we had the joy of being joined by four men from the locked down area, one of them chained, and accompanied by one of the guards. It was a special request from them; and, one of the officers was kind enough (and also had the time enough) to favor their request and bring them to church service. It is unusual for one of the officers to attend our services. We have always felt very safe and happy to spend the time with the prisoners. We are all "just folks" and the Lord loves us all. No need to be afraid.

We are now experiencing some changes in our Boot Camp services. Mid-month the guard requested that we come in an hour early, at 6:00 pm on Mondays. We have been doing this for the past two weeks and last Monday we ran into a problem. I don't know exactly why, but we were kept outside waiting about 45 minutes; and, then we were asked to cancel our service for the day. There is now a new officer in charge and he didn't have time to explain why the change. But, we may find out when we attend next week. Our ministry is **not** cancelled; but, I am sure we will be experiencing some changes in order to fit into their time frame. Please keep us in your prayers.

God bless you,
Irene Hunt, Chaplin

**STATISTICS FOR SEPTEMBER
MATERIALS GIVEN**

Total Services—19
Total Attendance— 305
Total Team Hours — 109
Total Ministry Miles— 524

Bibles—27 **Our Daily Bread—6**
Books—15 **Writing Materials—85**