

Village Voice

April 2025



Overcoming Obstacles

by Cassie Ragenovich



Do you wonder what the days ahead hold for you? What plans God has for you? As we have been told countless times, God has a purpose, a plan for your life, and no one can take your place.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV).

With God blessing your efforts, you are going to accomplish great things in the days, weeks, months and years ahead. We deal with many obstacles in our life and will continue to do so in the future. No matter what is happening in your life, remember God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage. Do your best in all your endeavors, then sleep in peace. God is awake.

Let me tell you about two individuals I met while working at Walla Walla University. Both had tremendous obstacles in their life.

One day a young mother rode her motorcycle about 350 miles to reach our campus. She was escaping a bad marriage and wanted to make a better life for herself and her two-year-old son. She had no money, no place to stay, no friends—only her baby and a desire for a better life and an education from Walla Walla University. I was the first person she saw and was overwhelmed by what seemed to be a hopeless situation.

We made sure she had a place to stay for the night, food to eat, and instructions to come back and see us the next day. We needed to talk to God about this dear child of His. A few days later, she and her little boy were living in a university apartment and she had a full-time job on campus for the summer. A few years later, she graduated from WWU. When I first met her, I

thought she had nothing but insurmountable obstacles. But she had everything she needed—God and determination.

Some years ago, a girl came into my office with a very badly bruised face. At first I just stared at her, then blurted out, “What happened to you?!” She said she was headed over to the office the day before but had stumbled and fallen face down on the curb while crossing College Avenue. So her misery was two-fold—pain and embarrassment.



And that wasn’t all. Before coming to campus, she had told her family she wanted to break out of the Catholic tradition and become a Seventh-day Adventist. This was not at all acceptable with her family, and with it came much heartache. Not knowing what to do, upon hearing about Walla Walla University, she came to campus. All these obstacles . . . how awful it must be to feel so distanced—alienated from your own family, not knowing anyone on campus, no resources, very little clothing, etc. God was giving us a blessing, a chance to make her a part of our college family.

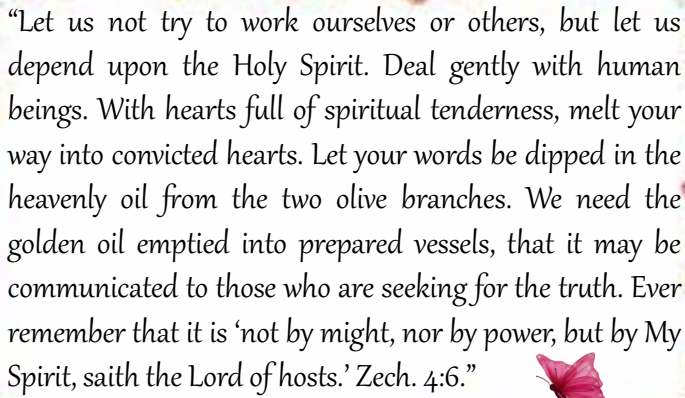


As I looked at her face and sensed her hopelessness, I began to identify with her. I mean, we all fall, fall short. Maybe nobody saw it happen. Maybe the injuries do not show. But aren’t we all bruised from “The Fall”, from the obstacles? And isn’t God just desperately eager to pick us up and hug us to Himself and put us on the path He’s planned, leading toward the hopeful future He has promised? This dear woman graduated, got her master’s degree in education, and was a very positive contributor to Christian education.

My friends, for the road, the jobs, the obstacles ahead of you: Walk in the footsteps of Jesus, follow His guidebook. Use the abilities He gave you. Trust the promises He made you, and know that, more than anything, He wants to save you. Spend the rest of your life in the blessed assurance that Jesus loves you eternally and unconditionally and commit your life to loving others as He does.

Cassie R.





“Let us not try to work ourselves or others, but let us depend upon the Holy Spirit. Deal gently with human beings. With hearts full of spiritual tenderness, melt your way into convicted hearts. Let your words be dipped in the heavenly oil from the two olive branches. We need the golden oil emptied into prepared vessels, that it may be communicated to those who are seeking for the truth. Ever remember that it is ‘not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.’ Zech. 4:6.”

—Ellen G. White, Letter 200, 1899



SonBridge Revisited

There's more to the story about the origin and concept of SonBridge Community Center. The whole project originated with the Village Church as the major financial backer, including its Community Services, along with funds from the Upper Columbia Conference. Through God's leading, Village Church donors generously gave over \$760,000 toward the purchase and renovation of the building, and construction of the warehouse. Upper Columbia Conference funds brought in more than \$142,000 as well to help complete the project. Village Church members also donated countless hours of volunteer labor cleaning, renovating, and building. The continued success of SonBridge is a testament to the loving, God-inspired generosity of the Village Church members. Thank you! -Sherry Keller, church treasurer



“It Only Takes A Spark”* The Power of One Pastor John Bradshaw Presentations

by Terry Koch

The author of the hymn “Let the Lower Lights Be Burning” stated Christ is the lighthouse with its powerful beam shining out to the world, while we are the “lower lights” reflecting His radiance to help guide others around the dangerous obstacles common to human existence, into the safe haven of a relationship with God.



In “The Power of A Personal Testimony” (shepherd of hope.org) Claude Stauffer wrote, “Have you ever had a burden to share the gospel with someone? You have this burden to share, but you just don’t know how? The Lord has prompted you, the Spirit has orchestrated an opportunity, and there you are, what are you going to do?”

That question encapsulates the keystone cores of Pastor John Bradshaw’s inspiring messages presented Friday and Sabbath, March 7-8 at Village Church. Following is a sampling of the deeply significant thoughts he shared with us.



“The disciples just did not see it right! Jesus’ solution was, ‘You shall receive power.’ What kind of power? ‘When the Holy Spirit has come upon you. Then you will be My witnesses in Judea and Samaria, and to the whole world.’ The Holy Spirit will bring us this kind of power—the power that will keep us, down through the ages, until Jesus comes.”

“If you are uncomfortable [about sharing and testifying of your faith] you are going to confront that fear about witnessing for Jesus. When we embrace a renewed witness for Jesus and we are feeling uncomfortable about it, that’s good!”

“We’ve kind of gotten away from [that] part of being a Christian, sharing your faith. God is asking you to share something that will make a difference and save someone’s life.”

“I’m convinced it’s time for us to have a mature faith in Jesus. People believe mentally, but we need to be a people who are serious about the work He wants us to do.”

“These desperate times call for decisive action. We need a church that’s marching on, that’s active. But we only get there when we have the Spirit of Jesus. Because we are yielded to God, Jesus will put the Spirit of God in us. God has saved our lives and we want to tell somebody.”



“When it comes to sharing Jesus with others, you don’t need any special instruction; under the Holy Spirit you just ‘catch the wave.’ There’s power when we remember what happened at the cross. We have to respond; we can’t ignore it. Our purpose in this world is because Jesus died for us. We will say, ‘I have to serve You, I want to serve You because You have not condemned me, but saved me.’”

“Not condemned, but jubilant! There has to be somebody we can reach, stepping in that place [He] wants us to occupy, stepping into the spirit of our calling, sharing Jesus.”

“There is no shortage of people who need the gospel. Pray that God would give you a ministry. Determine to say ‘I’m going to be a witness today. How can I serve You today? How can I reach out for You today?’”

Among Pastor John’s closing remarks were these challenging words: “Share your faith. Be a blessing. Be active for Jesus.”



We offer the Good News one to one with power from heaven, like touching a flaming candle to the wick of one unlit. As the lyrics of the gospel song “Pass It On” remind us:

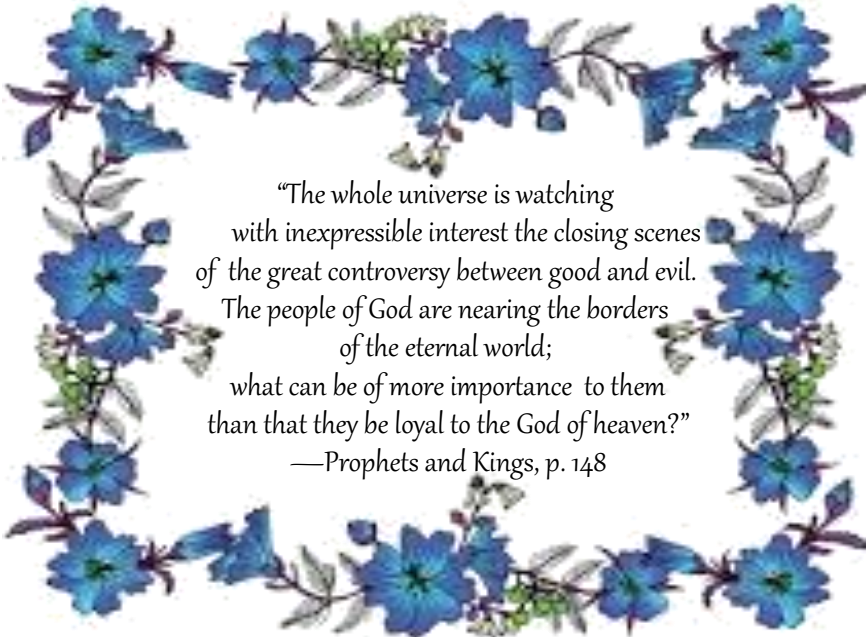


It only takes a spark to get a fire going.
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing.
That’s how it is with God’s love, once you’ve experienced it . . . you have to pass it on!*

Terry Koch



*“Pass It On”, Kurt Kaiser (©1969)
Bud John Songs (Admin. EMI Christian Music Publishing)
<https://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/pass-it-on/>



“The whole universe is watching
with inexpressible interest the closing scenes
of the great controversy between good and evil.
The people of God are nearing the borders
of the eternal world;
what can be of more importance to them
than that they be loyal to the God of heaven?”
—Prophets and Kings, p. 148

Coming to Village Church April 26!

At the 11 a.m. church service, Tom Evans will share about Child Impact's most important initiative, Operation Child Rescue. You'll hear of miracle baby rescues, girls saved from dangerous situations now experiencing total transformation, and how God is the Mighty Warrior working in all our lives to help us join Him in His saving mission. Tom will share how you can partner with Child Impact to become part of the Rescue Party and help to save children from the dangers of human trafficking. At 2 p.m., Tom Evans will provide training on human trafficking both globally and domestically. He will also discuss Child Impact's secret projects. These rescue missions are not featured in any written publication and cannot be recorded on video. Additionally, Tom will share more exciting rescue stories and provide an opportunity for Q & A. —Tony Dennis, CII Events Coordinator

JOIN US FOR AN INSPIRATIONAL PRESENTATION

College Place Village Church is excited to welcome
Child Impact International!



Saturday, April 26
11 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Speaker: Dr. Tom L. Evans

Dr. Tom L. Evans has served as CEO of Child Impact International since 2021. Tom and his wife, Mara, (originally from Brazil) have pursued a lifelong calling to positively impact the lives of children. They have been involved in child sponsorship, hosting exchange students, mission trips, respite care, orphan hosting, and have adopted two boys from Latvia (near the Russian border) and two girls from Bulgaria. Tom and Mara believe they are placed on earth to make a difference and feel compelled to save one more!

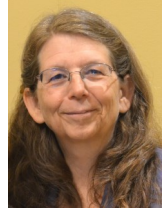


Child Impact International is a Seventh-day Adventist nonprofit empowering vulnerable children through education and fighting to eradicate exploitation.

CHILDIMPACT.ORG | 423-910-0667

Opportunities for Prayer at Village Church

by Barbara Frohne



The Village Church Prayer Ministry Committee has organized the following ways to be involved in prayer ministry. Also, keep an eye out for the new prayer newsletter, “If My People Pray,” which will be available mid-month on the church website. Each issue will contain inspiring stories of church members’ answers to prayer.

Weekly Opportunities

Prayer Meeting—Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. or 7 p.m.

Join us in the chapel, seeking God in united prayer for our church, community, and personal needs.

Sabbath Morning Prayer—9 a.m. in the lobby. Join us in praying for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on our pastors, members, and visitors.

Prayer Circles—Join a team that prays on a specific day of the week for our church’s prayer needs. On your chosen day, pray alone at 9 a.m., at noon, and at 3 p.m. Then at 6 p.m. join a group phone call to pray together. There is room for many more people to join. Contact Trina McCoon at 541-999-4131 to let her know what day of the week you prefer to sign up for. Her email contact is trinamccoon@gmail.com.

Prayer Chain—Receive a text message when there is something that needs prayer. Contact Trina McCoon to join.

Prayer Groups—Join an existing prayer group or gather friends and start a prayer group in your home. To add your group to the list of groups or ask for more information, contact Dave Forsyth at 509-529-1544

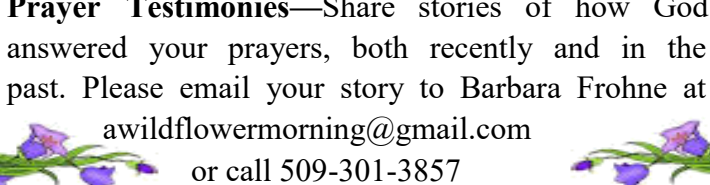


Additional Opportunities

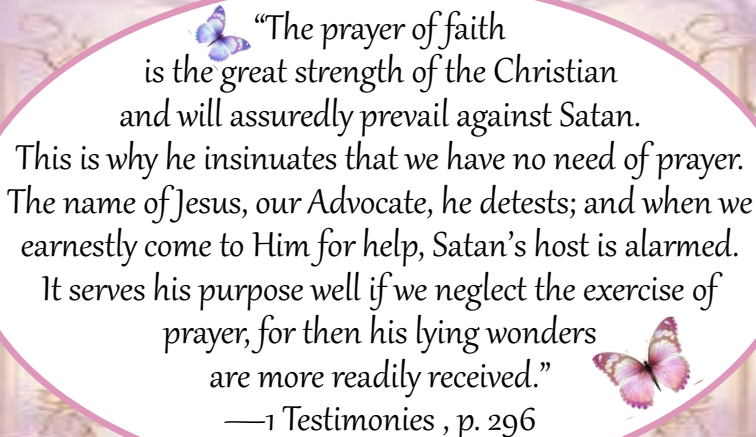
Prayer Walk—Join us to walk our church’s neighborhood to pray for every home and ask God to pour out His Spirit. More information will be coming soon.

Guest Speaker—Sabbath, April 12, 3 to 5:30 p.m. in the chapel. Cheryl Wiley will help us understand how the sanctuary model gives us a framework for united prayer. Then she will teach us to apply those concepts in group prayer time. Cheryl learned to pray while serving as an AFM missionary in Asia. She is a mom of young adult children. Cheryl and her husband currently live in Roseburg, Oregon.

National Day of Prayer—May 1, 7 a.m. in the fellowship hall, join our pastors and community leaders in praying for our community and nation. A light breakfast will be provided.

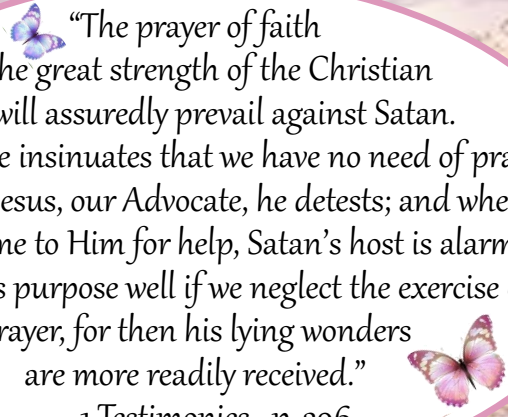


Prayer Testimonies—Share stories of how God answered your prayers, both recently and in the past. Please email your story to Barbara Frohne at awildflowermorning@gmail.com or call 509-301-3857



*“The prayer of faith
is the great strength of the Christian
and will assuredly prevail against Satan.
This is why he insinuates that we have no need of prayer.
The name of Jesus, our Advocate, he detests; and when we
earnestly come to Him for help, Satan’s host is alarmed.
It serves his purpose well if we neglect the exercise of
prayer, for then his lying wonders
are more readily received.”*

—1 Testimonies , p. 296



Easter Outings

by Elizabeth Travis

Spring has always been a time of new beginnings, a joyful time when everything in nature seems to wake up and come back to life. It is also a time for us to remember where our life and our joy come from, a time to remember how Christ gave Himself so that we might live and come to know God.

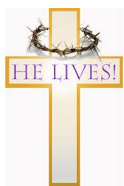


With spring just beginning, the people at Village Church have plenty of events planned to celebrate Easter and commemorate Christ's incredible gift, His sacrifice and resurrection. The two biggest events are the Walk to the Cross and the Violin Praise Easter Cantata.

The Walk to the Cross will be held on Friday, April 18, 4 to 7 p.m., on the Village Church lawn. It will be a family-oriented interactive event where people can come and go and enjoy all sorts of activities, from crafts to stories to live music, all centered around Christ's love, His tremendous sacrifice on the cross, and His resurrection.

We would love for everyone at Village Church to attend. If you are interested in volunteering at one of the booths for Walk to the Cross, be sure to sign up at the welcome desk or contact Pastor Michael.

But our Easter weekend doesn't end with the events on Friday afternoon. Be sure to come back the following evening, Sabbath, April 19, at 5 p.m., for the Violin Praise Easter Cantata, conducted by Liubov Brunton. The concert will feature musicians and singers from Violin Praise Orchestra, the Village Handbells, the Village Choir, and the Children's Choir, as well as several soloists. The program will include





narrative interludes read by John Brunton and Kimberly Golles, telling the story of Jesus and the events leading up to Calvary, His ultimate sacrifice and glorious resurrection.

The music incorporated in the cantata draws much of its inspiration from old spirituals and gospel songs. Some of them might be old favorites, while others the audience may have never heard before. Whatever the case, we are sure that this Easter concert will be a blessing to all who attend.

As Easter comes around, we at Village Church want to remember and celebrate the incredible gift Christ gave us, both



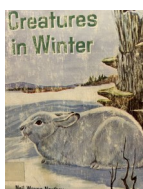
through His life and His death. His resurrection has given new life to us, and we want to share that life with the communities of Walla Walla and College Place. Feel free to join us this Easter weekend in a celebration of God's love and Christ's amazing gift. All are welcome. God bless!

Beth Travis



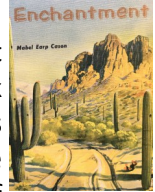
From the Library by Marcel Grondahl

Our first book this month is one that our Pastor Steve used in his sermons. It is "Dare To Stand Alone" by Bradley Booth, published in 2008. You may recall the story about Ivan Gumenjuk who was not afraid to be God's witness in the Soviet Union at a time when the Word of God was being suppressed. Christians were forced to practice their faith secretly, yet Ivan as a teenager in the army, found the courage to stand up and speak boldly about his God, winning the respect of nearly 3,000 enlisted soldiers and even one colonel. Ivan faced trials that tested his faith to the limit, but he remained faithful and accomplished incredible things for God.

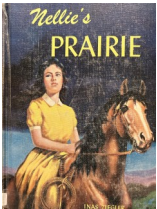


Nature is God's second book, and our second book this month is a wonderful example of how God speaks through His "Wild Creatures in Winter." Written by Neil Northey in

1931 and republished as a classic in 1958, the book is full of interesting stories about nature illustrated with drawings and full-color pictures. The book appeals to junior-age readers, but older folks will enjoy it just as much as they read how God's creatures adapt to the harsh conditions of winter. The creatures include Danny Muskrat, Snowshoe the Hare, Growler the Bear, Snoop the Weasel, Reddy Fox, and many others.



Mabel Earp Cason is the author of our third book: "Desert Enchantment" published in 1963. This nature book highlights the wonders of the desert environment. It is interspersed with accurate drawings to illustrate the wonderful creatures that live in the harsh environment of the desert. A listing of some of the chapters will whet your appetite for the stories told. They include: Don Coyote of the Desert; Elf of the Desert; Chuckwalla, the Ugly One; Blood-spitting Dragon; Killer From the Heights; Long-tailed Invader; The Desert Puma and many more.



Harry Baerg made this book, "Nellie's Prairie," come alive with his hand-drawn illustrations from the life of Nellie Morse Wright. It was authored by Inas Ziegler in 1959. Nellie had a hard life with many disappointments and difficulties on the prairies of Nebraska in the late 1800s but eventually she gave her heart to Jesus to work for Him. This changed her attitude toward life and its challenges. One incident that illustrates her heartaches happened as she was planning her wedding. Nellie and Ed were formally engaged and the day of the wedding was drawing near when Ed became tired and listless. He had come down with typhoid fever and never recovered. The wedding never happened! This was only one of Nellie's many disappointments.

Family Matters

A feature by Bev Donahey especially for parents of young children

Teachers for Your Children

Parents are the first teachers for their children. But other people can teach children, too. A relative or friend that knows a foreign language can talk to the babies and children in that language, enabling them to hear the distinctive sounds of the

language, and grow up bilingual. It broadens the children's minds and is the easiest way to learn another language.



Music lessons, sports and art classes provide children good training in those subjects and in learning to follow directions from people



besides their parents. It's good for the parents to be present to know what is being taught and how it is taught and how their children respond to it. Some teachers are impatient. In that case, change teachers. When your children are taking lessons, and you know what the teacher said, you can practice with the children to encourage them and

help them to learn it right.

If you want your children to learn to swim, go swimming often as a family to prepare them for lessons or to supplement their lessons. Children whose families sing together often, for worship and other times, grow up with an advantage in learning music. You can roll a ball to babies for fun before they are even a year old. Stop doing an activity before they are tired of it. Don't have a "right or wrong" emphasis, instead let them see the results of using different methods.



If you don't have the skill or patience to teach them something, find someone else who can do it. Patient teachers are very important for children's self-esteem, confidence, and even their ability to learn.



Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you be gentle and patient and to find good teachers for your children!



Bev Donahey believes that one of the best things on earth is a happy family. She has a college degree in psychology and a master's degree in Applied Behavioral Science and shares tips she picks up from her experiences, friends, and research.

Retirement Journey

Greetings from Redlands, CA!
Yes, we've settled near all three of our children and their families. We are less than five miles from each family and grateful for this special season of life called retirement. The Nana and Papa thing is awesome. What an honor and privilege!



Jeff and Wafia Kinne

Here's a condensed version of our journey since we left the beautiful Walla Walla valley and our precious Village Church family: The UCC moving van took our belongings (including one car!) to their storage facility on the UCA campus on July 15, and we began our journey by car to California late that afternoon. (We are grateful that the Adventist Church provides one move following retirement.) We planned to stay with our children until we found a place of our own. Since our daughter, Elise, was expecting her second child, we decided that landing at her place, with occasional forays with our boys, would work well. We arrived on Friday, July 19. Khai was born on the 28th. Whew! Just in time! With Elise continuing to work part time, she appreciated the extra help.



The search for our own home in the Redlands area began in earnest soon after our arrival. After several months of searching (not to mention our online shopping before our move), we made an offer on a home in Redlands. We were outbid. Disappointed, but knowing that God had someplace in store for us, we continued searching. Several weeks later we learned that the offer by the higher bidder fell

through. We offered again. Ours! God is good! We love the house . . . but it needed LOTS of work! We removed and replaced carpets, floor coverings, and two fireplaces—mantle, bricks, stones, and all. Ceiling lights were dismal or nonexistent and had to be installed or changed. We painted walls, doors, and trim, and finally moved in two days after our belongings were delivered on January 27.

A few recent highlights will give you an idea of life in Redlands: Mia (3 years) and Khai (8 months) spend two or three or four afternoons a week at Nana and Papa's while our daughter, Elise, works remotely for our eldest son, Evan. Often during the week we enjoy an evening meal together with one or all of our children and their families. On Sabbath morning, the Kinne clan attends Sabbath School and fills an entire pew (or two) for worship at the Redlands SDA Church. Our second son, Nolan, and his wife attend an adults-only wedding reception while Jolie (7 years), Noemie (4 years), and Zurie (2 years) spend Sunday with Nana and Papa. Evan and his wife are away from home for work and conferences. Ava (7 years) and Bodan (5 years) spend the week with Nana and Papa. The entire family spends a few days at Mammoth Lakes, California. Nana enjoys taking care of Khai while the rest of the family hits the slopes. We join Evan and his family on a trip to Italy during spring break.

Previously, we cherished occasional interactions with our children and grandchildren. We are grateful to hug them all more often now. We are grateful for God's blessings and what this season of life has brought us.

We miss the friendships we enjoyed with each of you and would love the opportunity to hear from you. If you are in the Redlands area, we would love to visit in person, we have a room just for you!

May God richly bless each of you.

Sincerely, Jeff and Wafia



The Village Pantry—hosted by Pattie Reesor

This healthy but trendy dish has become a regular in the Reesor household. The colors and textures are fun. It does take a few dishes to make the separate elements of this Sweet Potato Mash, but it's worth every dish!



Steve & Pattie Reesor

Sweet Potato Mash

Sweet Potato

- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 1 pod of garlic



Poke the sweet potatoes with a fork, wrap them in foil, and place on a cookie sheet. Slice the top off the garlic pod and place the pod on a piece of tin foil. Drizzle it with olive oil and wrap up the garlic. Then place it on the cookie sheet with the sweet potatoes and bake at 400 degrees until soft (about one hour). Transfer the orange flesh of the sweet potatoes to a blender, squeeze the garlic out of the individual cloves, add a pinch of salt, and blend until smooth.

Candied Walnuts

- 1 cup of walnuts
- 1-2 Tbsp. of honey
- 1 tsp. chili oil
- Pinch of salt



Place all these in a small frying pan and heat until the honey candies on the nuts. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Any extra nuts make a great topping for salads.

Broccoli

- 1 bunch of broccoli or baby broccoli
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 1 Tbsp. of olive oil
- water



In a hot pan with a lid, combine the broccoli, oil, and garlic and “fry” for about one minute. Add about two tablespoons of water and replace the lid so the broccoli can steam.

White Beans

- 1 can of cannellini or other white beans, drained
- 1 clove of garlic, grated
- Drop of olive oil



Fry long enough to heat the beans thoroughly and cook the garlic. The beans should not be greasy or browned.

Plating

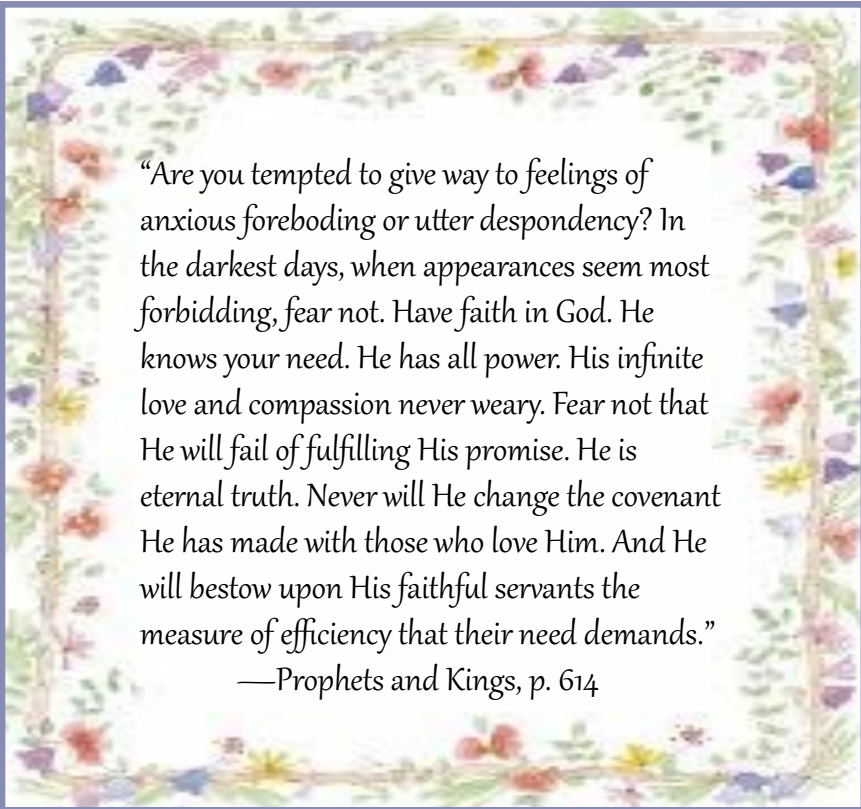
Place one cup of mashed sweet potato on a plate along with several stems of broccoli and ¼ cup of beans. Top with candied walnuts.

According to the USDA dietary guidelines a person should eat 1-3 cups of beans a week. The soluble fiber in beans helps to cut cholesterol and stabilize the blood sugar. Sweet Potato Mash delivers a full serving of beans and also 9+ grams of protein, Vitamins A, C, K, folate and B6.



“For the disheartened there is a sure remedy—faith, prayer, work.”

—Prophets and Kings, p. 164




“Are you tempted to give way to feelings of anxious foreboding or utter despondency? In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that He will fail of fulfilling His promise. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant He has made with those who love Him. And He will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands.”

—Prophets and Kings, p. 614

Class of 2025

Graduation time is coming!



Village Church graduates of Kindergarten, eighth grade, high school, college, and university, your church family would like to acknowledge your achievements and congratulate you!

Names received by noon on May 15 will be listed in the June Village Voice. Later submissions will be listed in the July issue. Contact the church office at 509 525 0882 to share the graduate's name, graduation level, and school.

Thank you!



Dear Village Voice readers,

I enjoy listening to the Conflict of the Ages series when I'm cooking or working around the house. Recently I've been hearing the stories from Prophets and Kings. Oh, what a tumultuous time that was in the history of God's people! But tremendous beauty shines through in the lives of a faithful few.

Several of the quotes in this Village Voice come from the chapters about the prophet Elijah. Whether alone standing for God on Mount Carmel or in terror running for his life, God's constant care for Elijah is so encouraging for us in these troubled times. There's even a model for prayer found on page 152. "Elijah prays . . . as if he knows Jehovah is there, a witness to the scene, a listener to his appeal. The prophets of Baal have prayed wildly, incoherently. Elijah prays simply and fervently, asking God to show His superiority over Baal, that

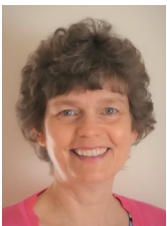
Karen Ekkens

Israel may be led to turn to Him."

May this also be our prayer and our encouragement.

God bless you!

Karen Ekkens, editor



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