

Mid-year 2023



Lakeside Letter

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 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."

Philippians 4:4 - 7



The Lakeside Chapel is a non-denominational fellowship to families who come from different backgrounds to worship God and to care for one another and serve Jesus Christ in the Hanglip area. It is part of the body of Jesus Christ on earth and welcomes all who seek to love God and their fellow man.



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Thank You and More ...

Firstly, to Father God, my Provider, to Jesus Christ, my Saviour and to the Holy Spirit, my Guide, who provide all I need in all circumstances, especially in the production of this Letter.

A big thank you also to all the lovely folks who have contributed to this edition, sharing their lives and their insights with our community. It takes some courage and I appreciate every contribution! Without your commitment and effort, this little publication could not exist. Thank you! Thank you to Pastors Paul and Louis for their support and encouragement.

Then as always, a huge Thank You to my faithful proof-readers, Bienkie, Anne, Jane and Ian, for their willingness to be involved, their wisdom and skills in picking up all the little 'glipsies', and their prompt deliverance of the proofed articles, especially when the 'to the printer' dead-line looms. And a very special thank you to my husband, Ian, who unfailingly keeps me fed, and holds me together when the production wobbles threaten to take over.

Something new?

I have an idea for a new 'item' in the Lakeside Letter and would appreciate your comments. I want to start a 'Smalls' page, where our members can advertise their businesses, skills or items for sale for free. So often all of us have a need for repairs or computer skills or sewing help or baking that special cake, etc, which we could probably find within our Lakeside family. If we can advertise our small industries and skills on a regular basis, we go a long way to supporting each other. Please let me have your thoughts on this plan.

And finally, please do not hesitate to send in comments and / or suggestions, so that we keep the Lakeside Letter real. Email me at: steph.milne1@gmail.com

Wishing you all a happy Spring season and blessings in abundance.

Ed.

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From my stoep ...

Dear Friends

We live in one of the most beautiful countries in the world, but life in South Africa is not always for sissies! Just saying! We have just lived through a tumultuous couple of weeks, especially here in the Western Cape.

At this point I am reminded of my beloved mother-in-law, who always maintained, "There are two topics one does not talk about: religion and politics." Well, here goes, I am about to indulge in a little of each.

While we have mostly been happily living in our "Hangklip bubble", keeping a wary eye on our WhatsApp groups to ensure we don't get caught in any taxi strike action, there are many thousands of our countrymen and women who were directly and severely affected by the disruption of public transport. Imagine two scenarios: 1) you take a risk, get into a vehicle with the hope that you can get to your place of work, get stopped by a crowd of angry protestors, and literally have to run and hide for your life, because the angry mob seem to have lost sight of basic decency. Or 2) you don't even set foot outside your door, keep your children at home and know that the next day there will not be any food on the table for them. Maybe this sounds far-fetched, but I truly believe this is a reality that many of our people have had to consider and face during the strike.

From our perspective, it is very easy to fall into the mode of condemnation: either the taxi industry leaders, or the government, or both, griping about it all and sprouting forth unrealistic, "What they *should* do!" comments. Then, just as the strike is proclaimed as over, we hear that a certain politician has for the second time avoided jail time, which he was "after all, sentenced to serve." More opportunities to gripe and complain.

With issues like these and others dominating our news, I am not surprised how easy it is for people to fall into the way of negative energy instead of positive action, anger instead of compassion, complaining instead of encouraging. But as Jesus Followers, I believe we are equipped to change the narrative in our surroundings. In John 1 verse 5 we read:

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." NIV

I love the passionate way Eugene Peterson puts it in *The Message*:

"The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness; the darkness couldn't put it out." MSG

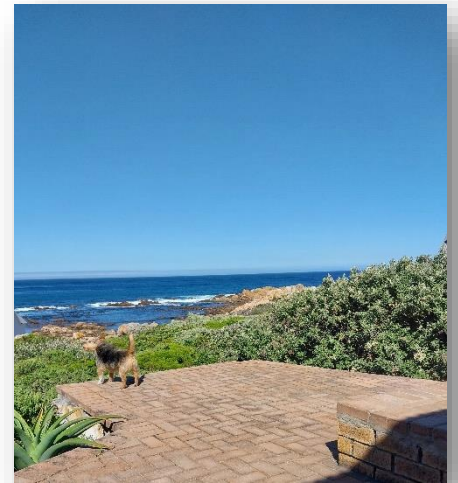
We should take this truth seriously to heart. The Light of Christ will never be extinguished, no matter how dark things seem. Let us not just grumble about or ignore the issues, but with Christ-like compassion realise everyone has challenges, union leaders and city mayors, traffic cops and taxi drivers, commuters and housewives, you and I. When we change our perspective, when we *allow* the Light to illuminate our hearts and minds, then we can gently and lovingly change our own attitudes and extend Christ's light and love to all others.

"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colour in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand – shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven."

Matthew 5: 14-16. MSG

Keep shining the light of Christ, beautiful children of God!

Stephanie





The need for Theology

Louis van Heerden

I've recently come across a few articles discussing the value or not of theological learning for the church. At the same time, I happened to have chats with a couple of people gravitating towards the same topic.

Some of the sentiment is, surely it is about loving God and a relationship with Jesus? Not studying him! Or, our job is to tell people of salvation in Jesus – we don't have to be theological students to do this – it may actually make us too academic and interfere with our ability to just be good witnesses ...

Pastor Paul has just started with a teaching series every second Sunday evening regarding the basic doctrines of our faith. This is invaluable. Leading into this he took some time introducing the topic of theology and why it is important to each one of us.

Let me give you some US-based figures as further motivation as to why this is important.

The following comes from the 2022 "The State of Theology" survey conducted by Ligonier Ministries in the US. The answers are from Evangelical Christian adults. They were asked, "Do you agree with the following?"

- *God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.*
56% of respondents agreed with the statement. This means the majority of Christians in America believe that all roads lead to God. By implication then, they do not believe Jesus who said, "No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6, ESV).
- *Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God.*
43% of respondents agreed. The Bible is clear. Jesus is God. If the Jesus you believe in is not God, He could not pay for your sins, and you are still lost.
- *The Holy Spirit is a force but is not a personal being.*
Almost one-half believe this – that the Holy Spirit is a force and not a personal being. In

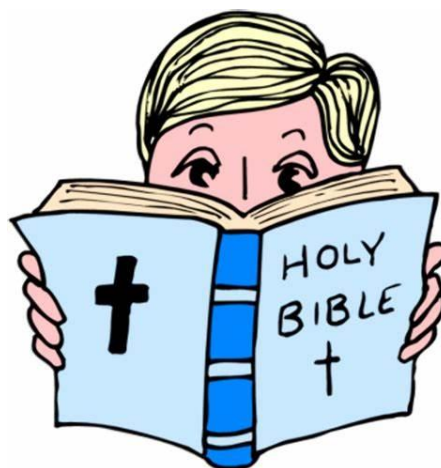
other words, they do not believe in the Trinity.

Remember, this is from people who attend church and consider themselves Christian. Going on these responses, almost half of these people do not know God.

The remedy for this is sound theology.

The suffix 'ology' has come to mean 'the study of'. That would make theology the study of God. But how does the pottery study the Potter? That's just it – we can't and don't. We can only study what God has revealed of Himself to us. This is why the Bible and our view of it is so important. While God speaks in many ways, the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim 3: 16) and the only source containing God's special revelation. Special revelation is that revelation that enables us to truly know God in a way that He has intended for us to do. Our God has given us an incredible revelation of Himself. To Abraham, He revealed Himself as the covenant giving God (Gen 12: 3) and to Solomon the covenant-keeping God (2 Chron 6: 14). In Jesus we are introduced to many more aspects of God, as He is "the exact representation of His being" (Heb 1: 3, *NIV*). God has revealed of Himself what we need to know, to know Him. If we are willing to put in the effort. Because, in knowing Him, our trust and faith and love and desire for Him will grow.

Jesus said: "... this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ ..." (John 17:3, *ESV*). May we make the effort to know the living God by His Word. After all, how can you love someone if you do not know them?





Philippians 4

Marianne Willemse

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 praises God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, calling Him the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

I used to be quite a focused person who wanted to know that I was doing all the right things. This obviously led to often being anxious about my calling, my children, my career. Early in my walk with the Lord, I learned the text from Philippians 4: 4-9 off by heart and I had to learn to apply it repeatedly. Two of the greater trials/troubles that crossed my path in my life have really challenged me in living out this Scripture truth.

The first was when my husband Braam, at the age of 44, was diagnosed with kidney cancer that had already spread to the liver. We were just preparing to go back to Malawi where we had served the Lord in evangelising the Muslim population and discipling young Yao believers. When the oncologist told us – trying to be positive – that someone else with that kind of cancer, diagnosed at the same stage as Braams, had survived for two years, it felt like a death sentence to me.

About six weeks after Braam had a thrombo-embolisation procedure to the kidney (basically this is medically causing a clot in the main artery to the kidney, depriving it of blood and it then dies inside the body) we went to the Kruger National Park. Braam wanted our sons Benjan (six years old) and Simeon (four years old) to see something of the African beauty.

That night when Braam and the boys were sleeping peacefully, I cried out to the Lord, in desperation telling Him that I couldn't live with such a "death sentence" hanging over us. And the Lord, knowing me, answered clearly from his Word. 2 Corinthians 1: 8-9, "We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves, but on God who raises the dead." Somehow the Lord caused me to hand Braam over to His care, His will, His plans and purposes in Braam's life.

Braam, in the meantime, continued to write a book on missionary care, continued to speak at missionary seminars and drew up the plans for our house in Pringle Bay. We laughed, cried, prayed, and shared life – prayed and sought God's guidance on healing, chemo, terminal care, dying. We grieved together that he would never see any of his potential grandchildren. But amidst the heartache I can testify that I experienced God's peace that passes all understanding. I truly know that God raises from the dead. I truly know that my Braam is in that "cloud of witnesses" of Hebrews 12 encouraging me in "the race marked out for me." It does not mean I do not have my lonely times. It does not mean that I do not miss him. It is just my testimony that God's peace is an absolute



Braam and our sons three months before he passed away.

reality. I have experienced it and I continue to experience it!

The second life challenge was about 18 months after Braam passed away. At that stage I was working for an occupational health-care company. I worked mornings only and was happy that I could attend my two younger sons' hockey practices and could be there for them in the afternoons. I had felt that I did not want to make any major changes for at least a year. The two older boys were at university and the younger ones had their friends and school close by. I did not enjoy all the travelling to the clinics in Philippi, Transnet in Woodstock, Epping industry and cold storages in the harbour. Then on my birthday in September, the nursing sister at Transnet told me that she had heard that the company's HR from Johannesburg was going to dismiss me and another part-time doctor so that they could employ a full-time person. I was glad I had been forewarned. (It gave me time to pray and enquire of the Lord.) When I was called in, I testified that the Lord is Lord of my life, and that He knows me, and the desires of my heart even better than I know myself.



When He closes one door, in His time He will open another. This was one of those occasions where what to



say was given me in that hour. (Matt 10: 19)

That December I spent a wonderful, peaceful time in Pringle Bay; God's peace that passed all understanding in the midst of unemployment, two children at university and four boys to feed! The best news is that God did bless me with the most wonderful fifteen years of my career, working at the tuberculous hospital, Brooklyn Chest, in Milnerton. Shortly afterwards, a Christian university friend of mine became a paediatric professor and the visiting consultant at Brooklyn. I felt such peace, as though I could physically see God's umbrella of protection over me. I was totally in my element working with children from a disadvantaged background. We had a small school on the hospital grounds and two paediatric wards where we could look after 56 children. So many of the Coloured and African nursing staff were my sisters in the Lord. Whenever we had a birthday party (with the inevitable Kentucky and Coke) we ended in prayer and blessing and praise to the Lord. The Department of Health paid my salary, but in my heart, I was still God's

missionary (with the added privilege of being close to my school-going children and the two at university!) I had many opportunities to teach the children life skills, the word of God and praying with them. There were also many tears when I had to counsel a parent whose child was left disabled due to TB Meningitis. (TBM would leave some children blind or with a paralysis). But I had also seen some miraculous recoveries post TB Meningitis.



We had regular TB teaching sessions with the children and used the character "Buddy" (in blue) to teach the children in a fun way.

A few toddlers recovered their sight, and a few recovered completely from hemiplegia. But I had also sat in complete grief when a baby died, and I could but hold the mom tightly and grieve with them and ask God to be close to them in their grief. I learnt that I could hug and hold close and be compassionate, but only God can truly give peace.

"From everlasting to everlasting, the Lord's love is with those who fear him."

(Psalm 103).



Be filled with the
Peace of Christ



Knocking On Jesus' Door

Izak Smit

You knock and He opens the door:

'My child, please come in. I know you, although you may not know Me yet; I have often tried to call you, but you were always busy. Tell Me, what made you knock on my door now? Do you perhaps feel that you have come to a point where you can't cope? Or maybe you are also wanting to become a better person, but feel that you always fail to do good, and on top of that, you are afraid that people may also think that you are selfish?'

Well, I am God's Son, and I desire to help you. I wonder what you have heard or been told about Me? About My Father's promises for you and My saving grace? Do you know that what I want to give you is not only meant to favour you but will be completely sufficient for you in life. You see, My power is made perfect in any weaknesses. Moreover, I will give you a Helper to come and stay with you to direct your every step.'

'By submitting to Me, I will take dominion over your mind and thoughts, your temper, tongue, and feelings, and even the way the world has programmed you, to protect and help you in every way to live a life of peace and joy. Allow me to tell you: In My Father's Kingdom, there is a new order where love rules and there is no place for the world to drag you back into darkness, a place of protection. You see, My Father's command is to love Him and others.'

'Since I know you, I will show you mercy and compassion and will remove your distress and discomfort; I promise to sustain you, and also ensure that the brokenness that is part of you is restored. I will cover you with favour and keep you shining like a star.'

My peace will send you on your way, refreshed and encouraged.'

'In the meantime, I would suggest you read all about My Father and Me in the Scriptures, through which you will learn that I am the only Way and the Truth and the Life. You can hold your head up high. You are not a nobody. Rather, forgive yourself and others as I have commanded My children. Come and follow Me and walk in My ways. Don't worry about tomorrow. Always talk to Me. Then you can rejoice and be glad. For if you humble yourself, you will be exalted.'

'With Me, all things are possible. Therefore, you can indeed start anew. Remember this too: do to others what you would want them to do to you and put into practice whatever the Helper tells you, so that you may have peace throughout your earthly life.'

'Now, is there anything else?'

Your response should be:

'Please help and protect me to grow closer to You each and every day for the rest of my life.'

Then He will say:

'That I promise. I want you to know that I will send the Holy Spirit, the Helper, who will come to make His home within you, to dwell in you, making you alive in Me, teaching you to know and understand My Word; even gifting you to serve My Father and to empower you to live the Christian life.'

'Moreover, you will be under My protection, guaranteed of your salvation to eternal life with Me. I will rescue you from sin, fear and every dark force in your life. By confessing that your life is worthless without Me, you will be adopted into My family for ever. In the meantime, the Helper will give you strength to deal with all your struggles in your life.'

'Go in peace now. Remember I am with you always.'





Springtime Healing

Paul Hartwig

A while ago I gave two messages on healing at the Chapel. The first one addressed the biblical importance of calling the elders to pray for serious illnesses. This can be found in James 5: 14-15. I then followed this up with a message entitled *Springtime Healing*. The substance of that message – which was more of a reasoned defence of ongoing healing in the church than a sermon – is reproduced here. May it stir us to seek the Lord for this grace-gift of the Spirit amongst us.

The scripture for this message is taken from 1 Corinthians 12: 9, 30. The apostle Paul is speaking about how the gifts of the Spirit are distributed variously and not all given to a few. He then says in verse 9 “to another is given faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit.” Then in verse 30 he says: “do all have the gifts of healing?” The implied answer is “No”, for the gifts of healing are not given to all but only to some as verse 9 makes clear.

Now, let us imagine that in the discussion about the reality of ongoing healing today, two people come forward to present their case to us. The first protagonist steps up to the podium to give us biblical reasons to expect healing today. Their content consists mainly of the following facts:

(1) The Messianic Age which dawned when Jesus arrived in the world with a host of ‘signs and wonders’, pointed to the presence of the long-awaited Kingdom of God. When John the Baptist was unsure of whether the long-awaited kingdom had arrived, Jesus told John via his messengers that “the blind receive sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached.” (Matthew 11: 1-6). The miracles came with the kingdom of God in Jesus. Surely if we believe in the ongoing presence of the kingdom and the ministry of Jesus, such miracles will accompany that kingdom and ministry wherever it is.

(2) The Gospels make it clear that the ‘prayer of faith’ can move mountains and produce great results. If we have a sure and undivided faith in God for something asked in prayer, and believe it will be given to us, it will be given to us (Mark 11: 20-26).

(3) There was an expectation in the early church that those who believed in Jesus would continue his miraculous ministry. John 14: 12-14 speaks about this, as does Mark 16: 17. Even though the end of the Gospel of Mark may not be part of Mark’s original document, it is

still a clear witness to how the early church expected the miracles of Jesus to continue in his church.

(4) We also see that people in the New Testament who were not apostles were used in powerful healings and ‘signs’. See how the two deacons, Phillip and Stephen, were used in powerful ways by the Holy Spirit (Acts 6 and 8).

(5) Lastly, we should remember that Paul in 1 Corinthians affirms for us about healing ministry in the local church. There is no indication that Paul expected this to die out sometime in the future. The two texts written above from 1 Corinthians 12 show his affirmation of the Spiritual gift of healing.

Then the next person steps forward to take the podium and presents the case for reasons not to expect healing today in the church. Let us listen as they make their case.

(1) Although there are many miracles of healing in the New Testament, death and suffering are still the order of the day. Both the deacon, Stephen, and the elder, James, were killed without God’s prevention or ‘healing’. Paul also preached the Gospel in the Galatian region because he was sick (Gal 4: 13).

(2) Secondly, we note in Acts that some faithful church communities were not able to cure their own suffering and dying members. See how Aeneas and Dorcas in Acts 9 had to rely on a visit from the Apostle Peter for the miracles of healing. The believers in Lydda and Joppa did not have the power to heal and raise the dead.

(3) We note also that the apostle Paul mentions that many of his travelling companions were at times sick. Epaphroditus was so sick that he nearly died (Philippians 2: 27). Timothy (1 Timothy 5: 23) had ‘frequent illnesses’ (not just one!). And Paul had to leave his friend Trophimus sick at Miletus (2 Tim 4: 20).

Lastly, (4) did you know that even Jesus was sick? “I was sick, and you did not care for Me,” said the great King (Matthew 25: 43).

Now we have heard some of the evidence from those who believe divine healing continues until today and those who don’t. What do we make of this? There are valid reasons to follow the protagonists of each side.

Here is what I would counsel on this matter. Both parties are not absolutely correct. Supernatural healing has not fully ceased, nor has it fully arrived. We need to integrate the truth of both sides and find the resolution of this dilemma in a Springtime belief on healing. Springtime is a seasonal overlap between Winter and



Summer. In spring some of winter is still present even though spring has dawned. It is an intermediate season.

So, I would advocate we respond to the whole dilemma of divine healing in a similar way of mutual co-existence. We should avoid polar extremes and have an equatorial theology of healing. The Kingdom of God has come but the Kingdom of God is still to come. Some are healed, but not all. We should seek the Spirit to anoint us with the gift of healing, but he does not give it to all but only to some. Seasons of powerful divine healing can come and go. The history of Christianity demonstrates

this. There is every reason to believe God has not retracted the gift of divine healing from his church. Christianity is not a reality in word only but also in power. That new power is here. But there is also every reason to believe in the sovereign administration of the gifts of power by the Spirit. 'The Spirit blows where he wills' and he cannot be bridled or channelled. "Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord?" asked the Prophet Isaiah. We all know the answer.

So, let me conclude with a short word of encouragement to each of you: In Jesus' Name you can expect your healing to happen! – Maybe now, but certainly later.

An Ear Open; A Will Ready

Submitted by Anne Fairey

"The Lord said to him, 'Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying.'" (Acts 9:11)

In the Bible, there is no mention of Ananias before his appearance in Acts 9, and there is only one brief mention of him after that (Acts 22:12). By all accounts, he was not a tremendous man who had done great things by the world's standards.

Even so, God saw a faithful heart within him and chose to use him in a tremendous way in the conversion of Saul (who subsequently became known as Paul).

Like Ananias, you may not have done tremendous things in your life, gone to amazing places, or gained any sort of great popularity. But God is in the business of setting His hand upon certain individuals and using them to accomplish His will. Our part is simply to be like Ananias, with ears open and wills ready to hear and obey our God. The emphasis in this verse is not on the way in which God spoke to Ananias but on the way in which Ananias responded: "Here I am, Lord." His ear was tuned to hear God. What about yours? Do you hear God speak through His word? Is the posture of your heart such that whatever it is He is calling you to do, that you will say, "Here I am, Lord"? Ananias' response to God is remarkable when we consider what God was calling him to do, and for whom. He had "heard from many about this man [Saul], how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem," and he knew that in Damascus Saul had "authority ... to bind all who call on your name" (Acts 9:13-14). Yet he willingly chose to obey God's call despite any fear or resentment he had of Saul and his reputation. He heard, and he acted. How often do we make excuses for our own inaction in response to God's call? How often do we hide behind our fear or live with excessive caution, forgetting that "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" (2 Timothy 1:7)? Ananias displayed this powerful spirit through his obedience.

Our culture values big names, big accomplishments, and big ratings. God does not have the same preoccupations. Ananias had no great name or huge fanfare; he simply had an ear open to God's voice and a will obedient to His command. This resulted in a life sacrificed for usefulness in God's service. And on this day, it meant that he was the first to tangibly extend God's love and grace to Saul as he reached out and called him "brother" (Acts 9:17). And so, though he may be a small character in the Bible, there is much you and I can learn from him. You may receive little to no recognition for your faithfulness to Christ in this life. You may take risks and make sacrifices in service to Him and feel that not much changes and no one notices. But far better than anything this world can give, you can look forward to hearing God's "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21) as you enter the kingdom of heaven. No good work done in His service is ever wasted. He weaves it all into the great story of salvation.

Alistair Begg. Truth for Life: 365 Daily Devotions (p. 170). The Good Book Company.



Small, Simple Steps of Trust

Or The Simplicity of Christianity

David Horne

While travelling to a small town called Copperton recently, I was listening to some old teachings, and thinking about the Lakeside Letter. On a nine-hour drive, you have some good thinking time.

Starting with Philippians 4: 4 - 7, this edition's theme verse, the first thing that struck me was that these verses are filled with DOING! Actions! This tied in with one of the old teachings I had been listening to and led me to the passage in James 2:14: "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds/works?"

All too often we seem to think that the "works" only refer to becoming a pastor, a missionary, church worker, a volunteer or such like. In other words, it becomes an employment or a life calling or a task. And if we are not doing such "big" works, we feel bad.

However, Strongs Concordance states this: "Work, task, employment: a deed, action; that which is wrought or made, a work." Notable here is a deed, an action. And this brings us back to Philippians. So much of the passage is based on ACTIONS and DEEDS. Rejoice. Be gentle. Pray. Petition. Give thanks. Present requests. These are all things that need to be done, by action.

If we take this further into so much of the New Testament, we find similar commands. We are constantly encouraged to do "small" things: pray, rejoice, give thanks, and so on. Look at just three verses from 1 Thessalonians 5: "rejoice always¹⁶; pray continually¹⁷; give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.¹⁸"

Rejoice always, pray continually, always – as in ALL circumstances – give thanks. So, we are called always to be involved in action. "Small" actions that every single one of us can do. We do not need a skill, or education, or financial backing, a team, equipment and so on. Each of us, no matter who we are, no matter what our background is – this we can all do.

If we do all these small things, starting with the three mentioned above, we will find that our FAITH will become powerful, deep and sustained. Our works will build our faith, as our faith leads us to works/actions/deeds. Our time spent communing with Jesus will have the effect of drawing us ever closer to Him, deepening the friendship, increasing our love for Him, and increasing our faith in Him. So simple. The simplicity of Christianity.

We are told, and shown the way, how simple the steps are that need to be taken. It may not be easy, as our sinful nature fights back and rebels. But it is simple.

Simple steps, small simple steps, which I can take; which I can take with brothers and sisters around me, and I don't need anything special to take these small steps. And then, as we look back, we will see that with many small steps we have accomplished a huge "leap" of faith:

By doing the small things we are called to do.

The next section of our theme verse which struck me during my contemplations, was Phil 4: 7, "The peace of God which passes all understanding." Sometimes it seems that when we read, "transcends all understanding", we don't try to understand. We read it and think: "Oh, it's not understandable; moving on!" But – due to a question posed to me recently and while I was dithering to avoid some work – I realised that there is value in looking into this a bit more. Primarily through an example.

The evening before Jesus was crucified, he was in the Garden of Gethsemane. We are told that His sweat was like drops of blood. "And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22: 44). This phenomenon is called 'Hematohidrosis'. The online National Library of Medicine gives this definition: "Hematohidrosis is a very rare condition in which an individual sweats blood. It may occur in an individual who is suffering from extreme levels of stress.... Fear and intense mental contemplation are the most frequent causes." So, the sweating of blood is real, not a simile. The other gospel accounts describe Jesus' state of mind as: "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death" (Matthew 26: 38; cf. Mark 14: 34). Why was Jesus in agony?

Jesus KNEW what was to come, that night and the next day. He knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, what was going to happen. The betrayal, the loss, the pain, agony, anguish. In fact, we now use a different word to describe pain and suffering based on what happened there. "Excruciating" which literally means "from the cross." Crucifixion, in Roman times, is considered to be the most painful and torturous method of execution. That night, in the Garden of Gethsemane, our Saviour suffered before the suffering began.

Yet, suddenly, after that, something changed. "Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!" (Matthew 26: 45-46). And from then on, Jesus was calm.



Even when a sword was drawn to defend Him. His people could have defended and rescued Him; twelve legions of angels could have been summoned. Yet, He stood by, meek and gentle, and allowed the rest of the night and following day to proceed.

How could this be? I believe it to be "The peace of God, which transcends all understanding" filled Him, calmed and soothed Him, that despite knowing what

was to come, He placed His trust in the hands of His Father, God, and walked forward. THIS is the peace of God. That no matter what is happening to me - illness, terror, anguish, fear, pain, whatever; if I ask for the Peace of God, I can receive it, and be filled with that peace, which guards my heart and mind, calms and reassures me. I believe that if we simply ask, trust, believe and receive, this will happen. Again, the simplicity of Christianity.

Lakeside Chapel Ladies Prayer Group

Fransa van Staden

In our theme for this edition of the Lakeside Letter, Philippians 4: 4-7, we are encouraged to "... not be anxious about anything, but by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

In Acts 16: 13 we read of women who came together for prayer by the river outside the city of Philippi. Lydia was one of those ladies. There are also many more verses in the Bible which encourage us to pray together with other believers.

Lakeside Chapel has started a prayer meeting for ladies on a Friday morning at 9.30am. This was initiated by Jeanette Spencer and usually takes place at the Spencer home in Boundary Street in Pringle Bay.

At present there are between six and ten ladies who attend regularly. We start with a Scripture reading, and then pray for more or less an hour. We intercede on a personal level for our children, grandchildren and other loved ones. We also pray for our Chapel and pastors, as well as for the worldwide church of Christ and the advancement of His Kingdom, and for our government and any other current issues of the day.

Afterwards we have refreshments and continue with fellowship. We get to know one another and share each other's joys and sorrows.

We invite any one of our ladies to join with us in this ministry of prayer. 🙏 🙏 🙏





Performance Orientation

Marge Ramsden

I had “performance orientation” thinking and didn’t know it until God began to show me. This was because I felt I always had to perform well to gain acceptance as a child and was not accepted merely for who I was. This had profoundly affected my thinking. As far as I was concerned, to fail meant sure and definite rejection. So I set very high standards for myself. In fact, I began to develop strong perfectionist tendencies. Unfortunately, the measuring stick that you measure your self with, will be the measuring stick with which you will measure others. Most of my standards were far too high for me or anyone else to live up to. Consequently I became a highly critical and intensely irritated person, because no one around me was living the way I felt they should. I criticised myself and went into extreme bouts of depression and condemnation whenever I failed to live up to my unreasonable standards, or when I didn’t perform well. I suffered from guilt and self-hatred. This of course was the same way I judged others. I suppose you can say I made every one’s life around me very uncomfortable. An extremely critical person finds it difficult to love others.



I suffered from guilt and self-hatred. This of course was the same way I judged others. I suppose you can say I made every one’s life around me very uncomfortable. An extremely critical person finds it difficult to love others.

When the Lord revealed this problem in my thinking, I realised that I was FREE TO FAIL. It changed my whole attitude to life. I saw that God loves me just the way I am, weaknesses and all, and that I don’t need to perform well to gain His approval. In the same way, people still love me, even when I am weak. In fact, the more I opened up and shared my weaknesses with people, the closer they grew to me. It was so good not to have to wear a mask any longer. I could be real, I could be ME. I found I could be compassionate and merciful with others and also accept their weaknesses. When I was set free in this area for the first time, I really learned to LOVE. To love people is to accept them unreservedly.



God wants to set us free from performance orientation. He wants us to know that we are “accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 2:4-8). We don’t have to perform well to gain God’s love and approval; it’s because He loves us that we grow and learn (through our mistakes). Our security should not be in the things we do, but in God and who He is, and what He has done. People with “performance orientation” thinking are very legalistic, whereas the opposite of legalism is grace, and we are not under law but under grace.

Christianity is not a religion of good performance, but growth through Divine revelation from God. Legalism always leads to a judgemental attitude, but seeing our own unworthiness prevents us from judging others. Legalism, or performance orientation, very rarely makes us compassionate towards broken people, but when we are set free from it, we will have humility, love and a desire to reach out to others.





He Ain't (Philosophically) Heavy; He's My Brother

Mike L Anderson

My brother and I saw very little of our father. We were raised from infancy by our single mom. Our father, who was not a believer, happened to be exceptionally well read and loved discussing philosophical, theological and other ideas. As a young Christian and post-grad in the philosophy of science, I thought the opportunity was right up my street. To convince him, I tried to be clever in argument and fact. But it was all to no avail.

Since I was at the opposite end of the country, in the last months of his life our father went to live with my brother, who had a very different approach. When Dad came up to my brother with a formidable book, saying: "You should read this, Gerald," the reply was, "Aw Dad, you know I stopped reading when I left school."

This was not strictly true. Yet while he did some dabbling, he did not look for eternal security in the latest impressive book. With his faith in Someone, he simply pointed Dad to Jesus.

Our father was on an intellectual, self-improvement treadmill. I wonder, how much self-improvement of any sort can you do when you happen to be someone with less than an honest trade and placed on a cross next to Jesus? This does not mean the thief was without opportunity. He saw who was available to him, saying, "We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong" and "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

He who was sinless is not going to lie when He said straight afterwards, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23: 43). Notice the "with me." Too quickly we could take our eyes off Jesus and fixate on paradise. Recall that Jesus also said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11: 25-26).

While there is certainly place for improvement and philosophy and theology and paradise and fitting and turning (my brother's honest trade), none of these can save us. Our father needlessly carried a heavy burden and even tried to pass that torment onto a son, however well-intentioned. But my brother was too much at rest in his Saviour to be tempted. Our father needed to become like the thief, seeing who it was that was available to him, and he did.

Two weeks before he died, he gave his life to Christ.



GEMS OF WISDOM

- **Feelings are good servants, but disastrous masters.**
- **Peace is not the absence of problems, peace is the presence of God.**
 - **Show me how to express my love more than my opinion.**
 - **Express love in the other persons love language.**
 - **Patience – awaiting God's time, and trusting His love.**
- **In happy moments, praise God; in difficult moments seek God; in quiet moments trust God; and in every moment thank God!**



Lakeside Chapel Single Girls Group!

Marianne Willemse

A couple of months ago a few of our church's ladies felt that we needed to start a support group for the many single ladies in our midst. After prayer and some discussions, the Girls' Group was formed. We try to meet monthly, and our primary aim is to cultivate caring relationships and a sense of truly belonging to the body of Christ.

At our first meeting, the Scripture reading was from Hebrews 10: 19-25

"Therefore, since we have confidence to enter the most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us, through the curtain that is His body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **let us** draw near to God, with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. **Let us** hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. And **let us** consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. **Let us** not give up meeting together but **let us** encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

We felt clearly that this Scripture is a guidance to our group, as it is impossible to do the Biblical "**let us commands**" if we do not get to know each other and spend time together to consider how we may spur one another on. And so we have been blessed with indeed **drawing near to God** together in prayer, and drawing near to each other through sharing intimately and honestly in a safe space of love and acceptance. We have shared old photographs of ourselves as toddlers and photographs of ourselves as beautiful young ladies. Some were even models! This opened the opportunity for some of the quieter ones to share, and through the sharing we learned more of God's grace and His unique journey with each of His children. We had a "bring and tell day", where we shared some of our most sentimental items, mostly reminders of loved ones that have gone before us or family that is far away.



We had a lovely and informative walk in the botanical gardens where our very own guide, Jane Forrester, opened our eyes to the wonders of God's creation. We even learned which indigenous leaves we can stuff up our noses for sinusitis! We had a lovely soup morning at Sue's place, as well as an unforgettable morning at Gardiol's farm just outside of Betty's Bay.

These times of relationship building helped when recently Lorna was admitted to a care centre in Hawston. She received much appreciated visits from the ladies, as well as from others of our church family. Daphne knitted these lovely warm bed socks.



Elda was capably looked after for five weeks post-operatively by Gardiol and I was also privileged to spend some wonderful days at her home, fellowshiping and enjoying their company. It felt like a holiday! Here they are outside (one of the few days of sunshine between the terrible storms). I made them a fruit salad for breakfast and served it outside in the garden.



Currently, Margrit is also in hospital, and I know that prayers on her behalf are reaching the throne of our High Priest. Also, a word of thanks to the handy men in our church that sometimes come to the aid of a single lady. These are just some of "the good works that God has prepared for us to walk in." So, **let us** fix our eyes on Jesus and continue to run the race set before us!



The Art of Lamenting; Moving from Correct to Connect

Janice Anderson

It may seem odd that for the theme of rejoicing, I submit an article on lamenting. But this is what I have found: lamenting has been the doorway and bridge for me to cross the muddy ditches and fields of pain and suffering, which I have been in, and have been bogged down by, to being able to run in meadows of joy and freedom. I have titled it an art, as I feel that it is a lost approach to the Lord in the Church today.

Part of the loss of knowing how to lament, are the misconceptions of what lamenting is. It is usually perceived as just grumbling and complaining, being negative or criticising, just being emotional, or stuck in grief and a symptom of 'not being over it' – which is often equated with a lack of faith and trust.

Robert Kelleman defines lament as the "decision to courageously tell the truth about life, to God and myself, so that I come face-to-face with the reality of my suffering." Pain and suffering come in all forms, from a broken favourite bowl to the death of a loved one. Its impact is hugely varied and differs from person to person. Comparing and evaluating loss as worthy or not worthy, permissible or not, is crippling.

Instead, lamenting is the invitation to join with God where we are with whatever our suffering is. In its essence, it is connecting to our loving Father in all honesty.

There seems to be a great 'smile and wave' flavour in Christian circles, where to show the pain of suffering of the now in any form, is often frowned upon or avoided. It's a subtle avoidance, because we are so uncomfortable with tears and struggle, and fill silences with a forced 'end-of-the-journey' cheeriness in a 'middle-of-the-journey' suffering moment. With no thought of timing or sensitive consideration of who is being spoken to, and where they are in their individual journey of grief, and how, or if, they can receive the 'smile and wave' comforting at that moment. A 'fix-it' mindset is reflected in statements such as "At least...", "Just read the Bible," "Are you better yet?" or great truths such as "We do not grieve as those without hope" (1 Thes 4: 13). This can often imply a subtle

reproach, "You are doing it wrong." Instead of weeping *with* those who weep, (Rom 12: 15), we are inclined to persuade the weepers on how to weep. The net effect is adding to the weight of the grief, instead of comforting the griever.

I wonder if part of not knowing how to lament with, or to comfort those who suffer, comes from the general emphasis and approach in the Church. The focus is put on what Jesus has done, and what He will do at the end, but little on what He is presently doing – such as interceding with groans for the sufferers. I am in no way saying that this question is not important – it is – but often the gap between the two lines is glossed over.

It's not either/or, but rather both/and; a balanced weighting. The now and not yet of our present life, where the rubber is hitting the road for me, is largely reduced to a technique – "The five steps of living the godly life" – or limited to an academic look at correct belief on a few issues, often unrelated to the real struggles of the heart of the congregation, such as anxiety, depression, tensions and broken relationships, loss and grief. We focus on how to get to heaven but miss how to get heaven into us: how to walk *with* God in every-day life, at 3am wakefulness, or the crushing of words said in anger, or crippling worry over finances, or the shattering of the death of a loved one. Guided soul care with the wisdom of discernment and discretion, given compassionately, falls by the wayside to correctness.

I am aware that this is a big generalisation, but ask for an honest consideration of the pattern I have noticed. The power and presence of our Lord for this hard section of our journey is not given its rightful place. The gap is an aching void, with leaders themselves neither seeing the gap, nor being equipped with the language of connecting to the Lord in our pain. We are not trained in deep listening and responding in the compassion of Christ, but instead tend to offer in effect, "Take two verses and I'll offer a little prayer." These are well-intentioned words, but often cause more pain. Jesus touched, knelt, invited and deeply listened beyond the words, and was with the suffering world, aching and moved by their pain and confusion.

Maybe it's because we have sanitised the Jesus of the Bible, interpreting the "Jesus wept" (Luke 19: 41) and the enormous anxiety and stress of the garden of Gethsemane, as Him uttering a dignified sigh and then delicately wiping a single tear. This image is not relatable to the falling apart that we can experience. Overemphasis on the deity of Jesus, and underplaying His humanity, is a deep loss for an essential connecting point in our suffering. The true teachers of lamenting are not always those who have degrees in how to study the Bible. Those who have sat on floors weeping in despair, in truth calling out to the Lord, have found the God of all comfort in the depths of the mud. These suffering ones, who stand singing with tears flowing down their cheeks, in wobbly faith proclaiming "Yet will I trust You, my God", are the ones whose feet I want to sit at and learn from. They have learnt





through their own suffering that our mighty God is not afraid to sit on floors with the anguished, listening in compassion to the pain, questions, anger and heartache, and who simply holds the sufferer, weeping with them, tenderly whispering who He is in the midst of it all, and that they are never forsaken in it. These ones then comfort others with the comfort they have received, that is sensitive, perceptive, tender and mostly given without many words. And these ones, who have touched, held and listened to others, and me, in our suffering, are the ones who are great in the Kingdom of God.

My own journey of discovering the treasure of lamenting came a few years ago when I was hit by simultaneous losses in areas of ministry, relationship, health, position, and roles in the community, and witnessing loved one's deep struggles. It created a crisis within me and left me reeling, feeling lost and confused. All the ways of fixing and past structures that I had leant on; that I was told were to be trusted, became pillars of sand. I encountered a few 'Job's friends' who told me that the problem was me and that I wasn't doing this right. The silence and isolation, feeling stuck between a rock and a hard place was overwhelming at times, a no-man's land of parched suffering in varied forms. In this place I found the oasis waters of lamenting, both with the Lord and with a few wise godly counsellors and friends.

What are the elements of lamenting? The Psalms are filled with laments, and we can find a general pattern. The most important element is who the lament is addressed to. Complaint is only addressing the problem, but lamenting connects the complaint and God, expressing the suffering and its impact to Him. Often our prayers are focused more on telling God what to do to fix the problem, but lamenting is more choosing to turn to God and expressing the problem's effect. Lament is talking to God, weeping with God, crying out to God and resting in God. It connects my painful life with the good character of God.

Naming the pain clarifies the milieu of confusion that suffering brings. Here lamenting with a wise, godly counsellor or friend can be invaluable, as, in our pain, we often cannot see the wood for the trees. I experienced this when I poured out my heart about a certain issue to a wise friend, who listened below the words and tears, and then gently said, "That sounds like a lonely place." I knew as soon as she said it, that this was my struggle and I could go and lament to the Lord over this. She didn't give a solution or try and fix me or even quote a verse. She just deeply listened beyond my inarticulate speech, and named it, and it was the pivotal moment in that aspect of my healing.

Once you can name it, express to the Lord the pain and how it affects you. Question, weep, be angry, ache, and mourn loss. Tell the Lord your complaint – His love is never diminished or tainted by our wailing. Finding a psalm, prayer or song that resonates with your own suffering, gives words to the pain.

Sometimes bodily expressing it is so helpful. Throwing stones into the lake or sea, going for a walk, singing, writing a poem or song, creating an image of the struggle in some way, or just crying, is, for me, hugely beneficial. It does not only have to be in perfectly phrased words. Connect to the Lord in bodily form.

And then listen and actively look. This is, in effect, saying to God, "I can't. You can. I think I'll let you" without prescribing to God what it will look like. Broaden the view of looking from the narrow fixing mindset to the wider creating one. God's reply may not be in words alone and may not be what you are expecting. Sometimes it's a sense of His presence, or a Scripture or a song comes to mind. Sometimes it's an image or something you later read or hear, a phrase that stands out, or a person comes and meets a practical need or just gives a hug. Or someone messages "The Lord has put you on my heart; I have been praying" without them knowing your struggle. The Lord is infinitely creative with letting you know He is near and with You. And His presence is all the difference. Then express to the Lord what about Him you have seen or heard. Name the attribute and tell the Lord what perspective this shifts. This is enabling trust to grow. Giving thanks and praise in embodied ways cements the comfort deep into the soul. Read a psalm, journal, write, draw, tell, sing, raise your arms, build a small cairn, create, dance, even sitting in stillness and silence – express in whatever way the Lord has created you to express and you feel comfortable with. Music for me is my main language of expressing pain, trusting hope and praise for His presence, as well as hearing His comfort – both the intonation of the melody and rhythm of words, expressing what I can't with speech.

Lamenting is a means, an approach, not the end. Its purpose is to move one to the One of all comfort, who is near. I am still in the no-man's land sometimes, struggling to find my place, purpose, and ways of being; the fatigue of health issues frustrating; the condemning inner voice of legalism plaguing me; and loved ones suffer yet, but I have the tools now that invite the Lord into this place. I now know the deep riches and abundance of His living presence here, the with-God life. I have profoundly found it to be transformative and cannot help but overflow in teaching this hidden treasure to others. I have been given some opportunities to do so, and at a recent retreat that I was teaching at, after leading a meditative prayer walk where lamenting was part of the walk, a pastor from a church in Kwa-Zulu Natal, shared that he had never done something like that before and how meaningful it had been for him. He would then take this to his congregation. My prayer is that this may become part of the fabric of our connecting to the Lord in individual lives and part of the structure of the suffering church that will transform lives, bringing rejoicing.

Oh Lord let it be so!



Know He's There

Janice Anderson

I have found lamenting to be the gateway of connecting meaningfully to the Lord. Doing this in some creative way gives a dimension of richness and depth that mere speech cannot. This is a song of lament I wrote a long time ago, but I often sing it to myself to remind me of the Lord's presence. May the words draw you nearer to Him, the God of all comfort.

Know He's There

Darkness, all around me
Fear grips my heart, it seems to bind me,
I search for the Lord in His Holy Word,
But though I see no bright light
And His Face is not in sight -
Yet I know He's there,
To carry me.

Heartache has a hold on me
Tears just well up from deep inside me,
Yet the pain will subside when in His love I hide,
His loving arms embrace
And I look into His face,
I know He's there,
To carry me.

Chorus:

When you can't see the light
Know He's there,
When there's darkness all around
Know He's there,
Hold onto His hand, He'll help you to stand,
When you can't see the light,
Know He's there.





The power of forgiveness

Ian Milne

Jesus gave us a “prayer template” in the form of what is called “The Lord’s prayer”, or what one author described as the “Royal Prayer.” We all know it and some use it regularly, but let’s look at the two little lines in the middle, that are so often said without thinking about what they really mean: “*forgive us our trespasses*” or “*forgive us our debts*” or sins, “*as we forgive those who sin against us.*”

I think that often when we get to this part of the prayer, if we really think about it, we figuratively have our fingers crossed behind our backs. Have we really, honestly forgiven all those who have “sinned” against us?

The word “sin” comes from the same root as the word “sunder” as in “to tear asunder”, to rip apart. What sin does is that it causes a rift in relationships. It could be something seemingly inconsequential, for example a little “white lie” I told to maybe get out of a difficult conversation. However, the next time I see the person I lied to, I am going to want to avoid getting into discussion with them in case I get found out. So slowly a barrier is built, and a relationship is torn asunder. This also impacts our relationship with God.

One thing that we as Christians have over any other faith or religion is that we know that we are forgiven. In Old Testament times the sins of the people would be unloaded onto the head of a goat (loaded if you look at it from the goat’s point of view), which was then slaughtered, or sent off into the desert, to get rid of the sins. The “scape goat”.

We know that our “scape goat” is Jesus. Our sins, even those that have not yet been committed, were piled onto Him and he was slaughtered to get rid of our sins. The ultimate act of forgiveness! Because of that sacrifice, we are forgiven our sins. We are the ones that Jesus prayed for on the cross when he said: “*Forgive them Father, they don’t know what they are doing.*”

Forgiveness is something all of us want to receive but often hesitate, or find difficult, to give. Jesus makes it clear

in the lines following the Lord’s Prayer in Mathew 6, that we can’t have it without giving it: “*If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins*” (Matthew 6: 14-15).

These words allow no room for doubt or discussion. Forgiveness flows two ways. We cannot separate receiving forgiveness from extending forgiveness.

Tom Houston, a leader in the Baptist church in the UK in the 70s, put it this way: “*We also know that we cannot have forgiveness in a cup for ourselves. We can only have forgiveness as in a channel or pipe when the other end is open, and forgiveness is flowing through us to others. When that is happening, we will see evangelism which really works.*”

Forgiveness is at the core of emotional well-being. It is fair to say that unforgiving people can become emotionally sick. Their bitterness is a disease of the spirit, and it seems inevitable that the unforgiving person will probably eventually experience physical illness as well. Anger causes surges of adrenaline and secretes other powerful chemicals that attack the body. This is the natural “fight or flight” reaction to a stressful situation. The stress we carry when we refuse to give or receive forgiveness affects our hearts, minds, and bodies. We cannot rid ourselves of emotional pain and its side effects unless we are willing to forgive.

I saw this little quote recently: “*To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.*”

Research has found that any mammal, when subject to stress over a long period will begin to suffer physically, as the immune system is compromised. Unresolved anger keeps us from moving forward because it locks us in a time machine, frozen on the exact moment when a particular offense occurred. Sometimes fear of further injury makes us unwilling to move to new levels of relationship, not only with those who have hurt us but with anyone who represents a similar threat.

Furthermore, if we allow unforgiveness to continue, we are likely to experience depression, bitterness, or both. And finally, more important than any of these concerns is the most serious

consideration of all — **the spiritual consequence of unforgiveness: alienation from God. The most important relationship in our lives!**

Forgiveness cannot begin until we firstly admit our own failures, and then begin by forgiving ourselves. If we cannot do that much, we can neither give nor receive forgiveness. It is often very difficult to say: “Please forgive me”, because it means admitting our failures, but we cannot receive forgiveness without acknowledging our need for it, and we cannot extend forgiveness without admitting that because of our own imperfect condition we have no right to withhold forgiveness from anyone else. Taking a close, honest look at ourselves can be scary and is certainly humbling.

For Christians, forgiveness is non-negotiable; it is the very essence of our faith.

In his book “Bursting the Wineskins,” Michael Cassidy quotes an address given by David Du Plessis, a Pentecostal leader, to the South African Christian Leadership assembly in Durban in 1979. It was something that really hit me between the eyes. This was a time when there were very strong feelings and indeed enmity, between the established, evangelical churches and the Pentecostal churches: “*There came a day when God challenged me to go to my brethren in other churches. ‘But Lord, they are dead!’ He said, ‘Yes, but I never sent any disciples to bury the dead, I sent them to raise the dead.’ – ‘But Lord they’re enemies.’ God said, ‘I have given you an invincible weapon against your enemies. Love your enemies.’ I said: ‘How can I love people who do things of which I cannot approve?’ God said, ‘Forgive them, forgive them.’ I said, ‘Lord, I can’t forgive them. How can I justify their teachings, their actions, their deeds?’ He said, ‘I never gave you any authority to justify anybody. I only gave Christians authority to forgive everybody.’” He goes on to say:*

“*Love is a fruit of the Spirit, and an unforgiving spirit ruins your love, but a forgiving spirit increases the fruit of the Spirit. My friends, my life was completely revolutionised from the day I began to practise forgiveness.*”

Powerful stuff!!



As much as we are aware of the importance of forgiveness, there are some human weaknesses that often stand in the way. One of these is **Fear**.

One of these fears is our **Fear of Loss**. Forgiveness requires us to give up attitudes and actions that are important to us. After all, we have a right to be angry when someone commits an offence against us, we think! It is easy to forgive when the offender comes to you and begs to be forgiven and admits to having hurt or offended you, but often we need to forgive even when the offender does not admit or is not even aware of having committed the offence. We want to say, "Don't you know that I have forgiven you for doing that to me!" We want at least the satisfaction of pointing out to the sinner that we have been sinned against!

Then there is sometimes a **Fear of Losing the Energy that Anger Produces**. Sometimes it is hard to let go of the burning energy that rage can generate. Without this rage some would likely descend into despair and purposelessness because their anger is their purpose. It seems to become a crutch, a motivating force.

Another fear is the **Fear of Losing Leverage in a Relationship**. Those who are still smarting from pain are not eager to risk being hurt again. They assume that if they forgive the guilty party, he or she will feel free to repeat the offense. This brings up an important point: *Forgiveness does not guarantee change in the other person's behaviour*. Forgiveness is an act of obedience to God, not a tool of manipulation. It is a way of cleaning up the grudges and resentments that damage us.

Fear of Losing Power and Control is another fear. Refusing to forgive keeps others in our debt. But although forgiving feels like an act of surrender, those who've done it know it's an act requiring tremendous strength.

Another fear is **Fear of Losing the Image of Superiority**. Holding an offense against another person places us in a "good guy, bad guy" picture, with ourselves wearing the white hat. Imagining that we are better than others makes us feel good, but such a prideful attitude is unacceptable to God. When we hold people captive to our

judgement, we play God in their lives. This places us in an unwinnable wrestling match with our Creator, who, as the apostle James reminded us, "sets himself against the proud" (James 4: 6).

Misconception

Some of the greatest obstacles to forgiveness are the misconceptions about what it is. Realising what **forgiveness is not** may make it easier.

It is NOT Condoning the Behaviour. Once we understand that the act of forgiving does not compromise our moral standard by condoning the offense, we are in a position to forgive even the worst of sins. To forgive is not saying, "What you did is okay." It is saying, "The consequences of your behaviour belong to God, not to me." When we forgive, we transfer the person from our system of justice to God's. To forgive is to recognise that the wrong done against us is a debt of sin, and all sin is against God. Therefore, in forgiving, we transfer the debt from our ledger of accounts to God's, leaving all recompense in his hands.

It is NOT Forgetting What Happened. It would be foolish to think that we can erase from our minds some of the wrongs done to us. What can eventually be forgotten are the raw emotions associated with the event. When we forgive, the terrible memories and feelings gradually diminish. God can do what seems impossible for us; He can forgive and forget.

It is NOT Automatically Restoring Trust in the Person. Trust is earned. It is something we give to those who deserve it. To blindly trust someone who has hurt us is naïve and irresponsible. If a person is a thief, it is foolish to give them a key to your house. We can forgive people for the wrong they've done without extending to them an open invitation to do it again. It is foolish to trust an untrustworthy person.

It is NOT Agreeing to Reconcile. Forgiveness is a necessary step toward reconciliation, but reconciliation is not necessarily the goal of forgiveness. In fact, there are some situations when reconciliation is not a good idea. It is silly, if not dangerous, to press for reconciliation when the other person is unrepentant, unchanging, or unwilling.

It is NOT Doing the Person a Favour. In Judaism, forgiveness is not required unless repentance is demonstrated, and pardon is sought. But Jesus raised the standard of forgiveness to a higher level. According to him, we are to forgive even those who remain unrepentant. Forgiveness benefits the giver at least as much as the receiver, so we extend it whether or not the person asks for it.

And finally, **It is NOT Easy**. Forgiving is difficult enough when it involves a one-time transgression. It verges on the impossible when the offense is ongoing. Such circumstances require **an attitude of forgiveness**, not simply an act of forgiveness. When Peter asked Jesus how often he should forgive, Jesus gave an unsettling answer:

"Peter came to him and asked, 'Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?' 'No!' Jesus replied, 'seventy times seven!'" (Matthew 18: 21 - 22)

Think about the mathematics of that statement. Can you imagine forgiving anyone, even for a minor offense, 490 times? Imagine having a taxi push you off the road every day of the week for seventy weeks. (That's one year, four months, and two weeks!) **Forgiveness is not easy!!**

Jesus is asking us, no commanding us, to do something that is humanly impossible. In and of ourselves we don't have enough forgiveness to go around. But God does! So, when our limited resources run out and we are unable to forgive, we can only ask Him to forgive others through us. In so doing, we take one more step of obedience and allow ourselves to become a conduit, a channel of God's grace.





The Little Ballerina

Lorna Trickey

This is something that happened quite a long time ago, but we haven't forgotten as it profoundly influenced our lives.

We had been fairly faithful "church goers" and enjoyed the ritual of the service, the prayers and hymns. We couldn't really understand why some of our friends and relations started telling us that they had been born again and that they were experiencing all sorts of marvellous things in their lives. We were perfectly satisfied with our lives.

I began questioning what I really believed, then one day had the life changing experience of meeting Jesus, giving my life to Him and being born again. Pete, my husband, remained sceptical as I hadn't yet shared my experience with him.

Some friends, who had been witnessing to us about Jesus, met with a group of believers to pray and praise the Lord every Thursday evening. They decided that they would have a party and invite some of their unsaved friends. The purpose of the party was to show their friends that they were actually quite "normal" people, but just loved Jesus.

The party was to be held at our friends' home on a Friday evening. We duly arrived at their home on the appointed evening but were surprised to see no sign of other guests and no cars outside their house. But we went in and knocked at the door. We were more surprised to see that there were no signs of a party going on. Our hosts were most embarrassed as they realised that they had forgotten to tell us that they had postponed the party to the following week, and they insisted that we come in and have something to eat.

The atmosphere in the home was quite electric and our friends were very eager to tell us why. They had had their usual Thursday meeting the previous evening. One couple always brought their baby girl with them. She was scheduled to have an operation the following day to correct a club foot. The doctors had tried, unsuccessfully, to correct it by applying plaster casts, so now surgery seemed to be the only way. The meeting was about to close when it was decided to bring the baby into the sitting room and pray for the operation to be a success and that God would guide the surgeon's hands. At the last minute Fran, our friend, laid hands on the child's foot and prayed for the foot to be healed. She said that she felt a

little disappointed that nothing appeared to have happened.

Later that night, Ernie, the father of the child, woke up and felt that the Lord had said to him that the baby's foot was healed and that the cast was now restricting the her foot and causing great pain, that she would wake up screaming and that they were to remove the cast by soaking her leg in warm water. The child did indeed wake up screaming, and in faith they did as they felt they were told. As the cast came off, they were overjoyed to see that her foot was straight and completely healed! They took her to the hospital the following morning as scheduled, and the doctors were amazed at what had happened and obviously the surgery was cancelled.

The little group was quite ecstatic and overjoyed at what God had done!

The presence of the Holy Spirit was almost tangible as our friends relayed their story and we were awestruck. When we got into our bed that night, we both lay there shaking from the experience. Pete was convinced that he must be suffering from withdrawal symptoms from all the cough mixture he had had for his whooping cough, but I said that I was shaking just as much, and I hadn't had any cough mixture. We realised that this was a miraculous healing that God had performed, and it made Him so much more real to us. Arriving at our friends' house on the wrong evening was no accident, but God's wonderful plan to reveal Himself!

A while later we all ended up in the same church and it was wonderful to see that little girl performing in a little ballet some years later. It brought tears to my eyes to see how completely God had healed her.

We serve an amazing God!

Psalm 103:1-5

"I will bless the holy name of God with all my heart. Yes, I will bless the Lord and not forget the glorious things He does. He forgives all my sins and heals me. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things."



Letter from the Heart of God:

In quietness you will find strength.



Submitted by Anne Fairey

Dearly Beloved,

Through quietness you will find confidence and strength. I will keep you in peace, if you keep your mind stayed on Me because I know you trust Me. Trust in Me forever, for I am your everlasting strength.

Trust in Me with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Me and I will direct your paths.

Be still and know that I am your God. I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth. Love truth and peace.

Never forget that I am your Shepherd. Therefore you shall want for nothing. I will make you lie down in green pastures and I will lead you beside the still waters. I will restore your soul and lead you in the paths of righteousness for My Name's sake.

My child, remember that Jesus is your peace. Seek peace and pursue it. As a peacemaker, always sow in peace and you will reap a harvest of righteousness. The fruit of righteousness in your life shall be peace and its effect is quietness and assurance forever. Walk in quietness before Me, My child.

With love and peace,

Your Heavenly Father.

"In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

(Isaiah 30:15 ESV)



God of the Ordinary

Submitted by Anne Fairey

“So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.” (Ruth 1: 22)

On any given morning as you read, watch, or listen to the news, do you ever find yourself thinking you are very small? Do you ever wonder, “Does God really know who I am or where I am? What interest would He, the Creator of everything, have in me?” You and I are very ordinary – and we can easily believe that “ordinary” equates to “useless.”

Yet Ruth and Naomi’s story reveals something different. In it, we discover the sovereign, providential hand of God working in and through life’s routines. He knows and He cares, He sustains and He provides.

The book of Ruth’s account of God’s provision and care begins with a mistake. Elimelech made the ill-fated decision to leave famished Bethlehem for prospering Moab with his wife Naomi and their two sons – but he and his sons died there. Whether Elimelech’s motive was one of desperation, discontent, or distrust, Scripture illustrates through his choice that our foolishness cannot set aside God’s providence. Even when we respond to circumstances with the wrong spirit – when figuratively we take ourselves up and out of the land of God’s promise – He can still accomplish His purposes. When we are tempted to fear that God has overlooked our lives because of our mistakes, we can rest in His providence, which is able to work through our biggest – or smallest – missteps.

Have you seen God move in life’s ordinary moments? Have you seen Him at work through your mistakes? Or are you caught in the lie that God only operates in spectacular, extraordinary ways or through our moments of greatest obedience?

When we look only for the extraordinary, we miss God’s glory in the ordinary – in a bowl of apples on the table, a well-prepared meal, a bird singing, a conversation with a friend, the moon shining through a cloudy night sky. When we assume God only works when we are good, we miss God’s grace in working through sinners – through a conversation about Christ with a neighbour, a parent’s repentance to a child after

they have spoken impatiently to them, a prayer prayed for someone because anxiety has kept them from sleep.

For Ruth and Naomi, the very sight of a barley field, ripe for the harvest, was in one sense a very ordinary view – but, in fact, it declared God’s provision to them. Mistakes had been made and griefs had been borne, but the barley harvest showed that God knows, cares, sustains, and provides. God has not changed.

Although He has the whole universe to care for, He turns His gaze on you and me, and He says, I know you. Your name is written on the palm of My hand. And as surely as I cared for Naomi and Ruth, I’m looking after you too (see Isaiah 49: 16). God is sustaining and guiding His children. Let that knowledge comfort your heart and bring you peace today – however ordinary the day may be.

(Alistair Begg. Truth for Life: 365 Daily Devotions. The Good Book Company.)



**An umbrella cannot
stop the rain but it
allows us to stand in
the rain. Faith in God
may not remove
our trials but it gives
us strength to
overcome them.**

You are very
Special 🌟



Daily Scriptural Confessions

Charles de Kock

To Renew our Minds:

- *Lord, you hold my right hand. – Isaiah 41: 3*
- *You are my Shepherd, I shall not wan. ... Even when I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me. – Psalm 23: 14*
- *I can be fearless, no matter what. – Hebrews 13: 6*
- *You have not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind. – 2 Tim 1: 7*
- *You are able to rescue me from every temptation. – Hebrews 2: 18*
- *I rest under Your shadow, Almighty God. – Psalm 91: 1*
- *In the shadow of Your wings, I will rejoice. – Psalm 63: 7*
- *Your Holy Spirit is my comforter. – John 14: 16-18*
- *You are my helper and my keeper. – Psalm 121: 2, 5*
- *You were wounded for my sins, and bruised for my iniquities; chastised that I may have peace, and by Your stripes I am healed. – Isaiah 53: 5*
- *You are in me and greater than he who is in the world. – 1 John 4: 4*
- *I will overcome by the blood of the Lamb. – Revelation 12: 1*
- *Your thoughts of me are of peace and not of evil, to give me a future and a hope. – Jeremiah 29: 11*
- *I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. – Galatians 2: 20*
- *I may come boldly to Your throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace to help me in my time of need. – Hebrews 4: 16*
- *You are able to do exceedingly more than all I could ask for or imagine. Ephesians 3: 20*
- *With You all things are possible. – Matthew 19: 26*
- *I am dead to sin; but alive to You. – Romans 6: 11*
- *No weapon formed against me shall prosper. – Isaiah 54: 17*
- *If You are for me, who can be against me. – Romans 8: 31*

When We are Struggling:

- *Faith is settled and rooted in discomfort. Think of Jonah.*
- *Remember the struggles and joys of Jesus.*
- *Remember life is brief. We might not have another season. If our lives are like a burning match, if the enemy can keep you comfortable, he can waste your match.*
- *Complacency is an attitude of the heart.*
- *Remember this is not our home.*
- *Don't just talk about what you are going to do.*
- *Let God help us to see what is in the balance. It's not all about us, but about God's work and other people.*



Tony's Story

As told to Steph Milne

Tony Holdsworth, who has worshipped at the Lakeside Chapel for many years, qualified as a teacher and taught at Queens High School in Bezuidenhout Valley, Johannesburg, but he found he couldn't manage life on a teacher's salary. He then changed jobs and started working at Corobrick on 1 June 1987. He started off as a senior manager, then was promoted to Personnel Controller, dealing with unions, wage negotiations, and staff issues.

In his spare time, Tony was a passionate paraglider, and was out flying his paraglider as often as he could. On 1 June 1991, a wind gust disrupted the functioning of the paraglider, and he crashed from a height of 30 metres. He hit the ground so hard, he should have been dead. He had a fractured skull, three broken vertebrae, a broken pelvic bone, and was bleeding profusely as he lay unconscious on the ground. When the ambulance arrived, all they could do was to try to stem the bleeding, and rush him off to the nearest hospital, where he was immediately given five units of blood. He was then flown to the Johannesburg General Hospital, where his pregnant wife worked as a trauma nurse in Casualty. One can only imagine how she felt, when she was called by the professor, Prof Boffhart, and told that the paragliding pilot who crashed was her husband. Professor Boffhart felt that by all rights Tony should have been dead. He was paralysed from the waist down and is still blind in his right eye.

Tony spent 23 days in the intensive care unit and spent the month of July learning to walk again. At first he could only use a wheelchair but then subsequently used a walker. All this time the company supported him, and the medical aid paid every bill associated with this incident. On 1 September 1991 he was registered as a disability pensioner, and his daughter was born on 11 September 1991.

Tony wasn't a Christian when he crashed, but his wife attended church and so did his mother, who lived in Hong Kong at the time, and her church were earnestly praying for Tony during this difficult time. The minister from his wife's church also began to visit him and he and his wife were baptised in the swimming pool in early 1992. He remarks that when a professor says you should be dead, what a powerful weapon prayer can be.

Tony and his wife grew apart and eventually divorced in 1994. She remarried and now lives with her new husband and Tony's daughter, who just recently completed a Master's degree, in Canada. Tony visited them about 5 years ago and is happy to say that he is still good friends with them all.

Tony has lived happily in Pringle Bay for the past 20 years, and all he has to do is sign a 'Survival Certificate' once a year to prove he is still alive. He reckons he loves being paid not to work and is grateful for his peaceful life in these beautiful surroundings.

Peaceful Sleep

Submitted by Trish Horne

If something often keeps you awake at night, it could be that you are inclined to be too controlling. Because sleep is actually a form of surrender since you can't DO anything in your sleep. You may have dreams, but you can't solve or plan or worry or DO ANYTHING but sleep. When you surrender to sleep, you surrender to God. Accepting that He is in control of your circumstances.

Only the Lord can keep you safe ... sleeping is a form of trusting God, laying yourself on His mercy.

**IN PEACE I WILL LIE DOWN AND SLEEP, FOR YOU ALONE,
O LORD, WILL KEEP ME SAFE.**

PSALM 4: 8



Chatting to the family:

Gary and Bienkie Lees

LL Thank you for allowing us a glimpse into your lives, Gary and Bienkie. So where are you both from?

Bienkie I grew up in Silverton in Pretoria.

Gary And as you can hear, I am from the UK, grew up in the Manchester area. I came to South Africa in 1982, and first worked in Johannesburg for three years, then took a job in Pretoria and that's where I met Bienkie, somewhere around 1985.

LL And were you both born into Christian families?

Bienkie I was born into a beautiful Christian family, we used to fill the first five rows in the church! My mom was Dutch, we were in the Gereformeerde Kerk which is mostly Dutch people. My dad was such a wonderful father, he was the head of the house, but a loving and soft person, reading the Bible every night with us, and he would sit with us each in turn at our beds and pray before we went to sleep. He would sit with me last, because I would pray for every dog and cat in the neighbourhood. We went to Sunday school and youth, and the choir where I played the triangle – I don't have a good voice! We had a very blessed up-bringing, the world was a rude awakening for us because we had such stable, solid parents and grandparents.

LL And you, Gary?

Gary Oh, the English are a bit different! My mom was church-going, the Church of England, and we were encouraged to go to Sunday School – I was in also the choir. But it wasn't really pushed on us at all, we were encouraged to find out for ourselves. My dad was in the Second World War and because of what he had experienced there, he couldn't really believe. But we weren't discouraged. And that's how we brought Janice up. It turns out she has a very strong faith. Even before she had a job, she was tithing! We didn't force her, we just showed her what was there.

LL And how did you meet?

Gary We met through mutual friends. We were young, it was the 80's and people socialised a lot in those days, and that's how we met.

LL And what work were you doing?

Gary Well, I started out in plastics but then moved into cosmetics and household soap products, such as shampoos, dishwashing liquids etc. I am an industrial

Gary and Bienkie live in Pringle Bay with Moonshine, the black Labrador, their Ginger Cat and Montana, the sheep!



chemist. Then I moved into solid soaps, such as hand soaps. And then the last company I worked for in Johannesburg imported essential oils and such like.

LL And you, Bienkie?

Bienkie I am a teacher by profession. I studied in Pretoria and my first post was at Secunda High School, and then I went to a little Catholic school, St Paulus, in Pretoria. It's the feeding school for St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls and Christian Brothers College in Pretoria. I specialised in Sport, and studied sport psychology, and was employed as the Sport Mistress at St Paulus. Gary and I got married in 1986, and in 1989 we moved to Botswana, where I taught at an international school. After a few years, we moved back to Pretoria, but by 2009 I had found a job at Pringle House Eco-school and moved down here.

Gary I tried to find a job in CT, but that turned out to be difficult. After two and a half years of me applying for jobs, Bienkie got fed up and wanted to move back to Pretoria, but I decided I would just come here instead.

LL Why did you come to the Betty's Bay area?

Bienkie As a family we used to come here when I was young. The larger family started buying holiday homes around here, and I completely fell in love with the area. And then I saw the teaching post at Pringle House advertised and I decided to give it a go. The school used



to be located here in the village. The day I arrived, the lady who was running the school, gave me the keys and said, "You're it!" Well as you can imagine, I was totally gob-smacked; had no clue what was going on, but in the end I was there for ten years!

LL Tell us a bit about your children?

Bienkie We have one beautiful daughter, Janice, and two gorgeous granddaughters, Jemima and Imogen, who is just two and a half months old. My son-in-law is Gerrit. At the moment they live in Pretoria, but are emigrating to New Zealand in the near future. Let's not go there! Janice has a B Cur degree in nursing and is a specialist nursing sister and a qualified mid-wife. Janice was offered a great job in Ireland, but then Covid struck. Gerrit lost his job, and my health took a dip and they put everything on ice. But now he has an offer in New Zealand, and of course she will easily get a job there, so they decided to make that move, although she is planning to stay at home with the baby for now. So sadly, as soon as their visas are approved, they will be off!

LL I'm sorry. That is hard for parents.

Bienkie I resigned from Pringle House after 10 years, because my mother was not well. She was living in Kleinmond and I needed to spend more time helping her. After she passed away, I tutored home-schooled children for income. Then Covid hit and I managed to help here and there with some children, but I am looking at working more full time again.

LL Bienkie, I know you have had health issues. Would you mind sharing a little about this with us?

Bienkie Not at all. I was always a very healthy, sporty person, but in December 2021 I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Of course, this was a big thing, and it took some time to get my head around this fact. They started me off on a chemotherapy tablet, but after a while it was determined that the meds were not effective, and a mastectomy was recommended. So, on the 26th April last year I had the operation. I am now in remission, but I still have to go every three months for my scans and blood tests.

LL How has this affected your spiritual life, Bienkie?

Bienkie It is not always easy, and sometimes you get angry, but I know that it is the Holy Spirit and God's presence that carried me through this time. I am so

grateful for all the support and prayers; they have upheld me, even when I was very low. I have the most amazing circle of friends, who had tirelessly supported me throughout this journey. I am mostly feeling better at this time, but I still have my ups and downs – the medication does have some side effects, but I have so much to be thankful for. I will be on this medication until I am five years in remission. It has affected my hearing and has dried up my joints, leading to rheumatoid arthritis. I actually went to collect my hearing aids today. But this has definitely brought me closer to God and strengthened my faith. I am realising that I just want to be closer to Him to learn more and know more now.

LL Thanks for sharing this, Bienkie. That is very special. My next question is how did you end up going to Lakeside Chapel?

Bienkie I lived with my sister in Betty's Bay at first, and Lakeside was the nearest church, and it made sense to go there. Then, when we moved to Pringle, we first went to a local church, but all the kids from school used to go there and they would not leave me alone, and I really needed time out from them. So we started going back to Lakeside. And even though some of the kids from school followed, we were happy there.

Gary You just get a feeling of where you belong, don't you?

LL Yes, that is true. Now, which biblical character would you like to invite for dinner if you had the chance?

Bienkie I would like to invite Ruth. Such an amazing woman, she never gave up.

Gary I would invite Peter. I think I would be on the same intellectual level as Peter if I were back in those days. He didn't understand right up to the end, and then suddenly he realised that Jesus has given him everything he needs to know.

LL Lastly, do you two have a short message or word for the good folk of Lakeside Chapel?

Bienkie That's easy: Lakeside Chapel is my extended family.

Gary Yes, I agree, that is it.

Bienkie When my family come on holiday, even though they are very Afrikaans, they all love going there. The amazing support and love everyone receives there – it is so tangible at Lakeside. We love it.



Testimony:

God Uses Even a Plain Housewife and Mother

In 1973 when I was pregnant with my daughter, I was filled with fear, and because I had not known the Lord for long, I did not know the Bible very well and was still learning. James 4: 7 says, "If you submit to God, and resist the devil, he must flee from you."

As a result of slipping on an orange peel in the street, I damaged my leg and it went septic. I was six months pregnant and went into labour. It was a very traumatic birth and my baby suffocated and passed away. I was left completely helpless from the shock and was unable to cry for four days. Then it was discovered that I had a blockage in my bowel and needed surgery. It was then that my tears started to flow as if they would never stop.

Soon after these events, I started having about two epileptic fits per week. I went for prayer, but, at first, things got worse – that's how the enemy works. I started having up to 10 'grand mall' epileptic fits a day. After suffering these attacks for four years, on the 23 September 1977, God delivered me. All glory to Him.

I was fellowshipping at a congregation and after my deliverance, I used to go with the pastor's wife once a month to minister the gospel to African ladies. On one occasion, the pastor's wife was unable to go and asked me to take the meeting. I felt led to share with these ladies how God, through His Son Jesus Christ, had delivered me from epilepsy.

At the meeting was a lady named Favourite. When I was finished sharing, she told me that her son

Daphne Wessels recently started having epileptic fits. I said, "What God has done for me, he can do for you!" There were about 10 of us ladies in that meeting, and we stood together and prayed.

Now it happened that a few days later I was waiting for a train to visit my late mother who lived in Benoni. Across the railway line, I saw Favourite standing there, waiting for a train to Johannesburg. She was glad to see me and praised God, saying, "My son is healed. But now my nine-year-old daughter has gone mad." As it was almost time for our trains to come, we prayed together across the railway lines. After we prayed our trains arrived and our ways parted. We had agreed in prayer that the lunatic spirit be bound and cast out of her boy in the Name of Jesus.

A few days later, as I arrived home from the shop, there was Favourite at my gate, and her little daughter was sitting on the pavement, in her right mind. The child was now struck dumb and could not speak. We prayed with her where she sat, binding and casting out the dumb spirit in Jesus' name, then they left.

Not many days later, my little son said, "Mommy, there's an aunty by the fence, she's calling you." It was Favourite. "Ma," she said, "when I went home the other day after we prayed, my husband asked me if I believe that our child will be healed? I replied, 'I am trusting, I am trusting.'" That night they were awakened from their sleep with a noise like a death rattle coming from their daughter's mouth, and this little girl started praising God in a heavenly language.

Favourite had come back to praise God, and we rejoiced together, giving God all the praise, honour and glory. As she testified of what had taken place, the Holy Spirit said to me that it was witchcraft that had been used on the child. I told her what the Holy Spirit had revealed to me, and she then told me that when the child went mad, the demon had screamed, "Your mother-in-law has done this, and your child will never speak again." But God had healed the child according to His will and promises.

If we are willing to allow God to use us, He will. All praise to God, for he is our Healer and strong Deliverer. It is not us, but all glory belongs to Him. Without Him we can do nothing. (Mark 16: 15-18)

**GOD ALLOWS US TO
EXPERIENCE THE LOW
POINTS OF LIFE IN ORDER TO
TEACH US LESSONS THAT WE
COULD LEARN IN NO OTHER
WAY.**

C.S Lewis



Community News

Welcome to our New Members!

We are privileged to have had five new members inaugurated at the Lakeside Chapel in the past three months. On the 30th April, Janie and Neall Visser officially joined our fellowship. So lovely to have more young folks

passionate for the Lord in our midst. And on the same day another well loved young man, Aiden van Heerden – who grew up in the Lakeside Chapel – also made a formal commitment to the Chapel by becoming a member.

Then, hot on their heels, on the 7th of May, Malcolm and Annalize Grimbeek were inaugurated into the Chapel membership. They have recently taken up permanent residence in Betty's Bay, and we are grateful and excited to have them join our fellowship!

We welcome Janie, Neall, Aiden, and Annalize and Malcolm with open arms and joy in our hearts!



*Welcome to the family,
We're glad that you have come to share your life with us,
As we grow in love and may we always be to you
What God would have us be, a family always there
To be strong and to lean on.*

Songwriter: Deborah Melle Retino

Christian Doctrine Course

Pastor Paul has been faithful in presenting his Christian Doctrine Course at Lakeside every second Sunday afternoon. The course sessions start at 16h30 until 17h45, and Paul has the skill of holding his audience enthralled with the fascinating and informative content of each session. The most recent session before going to print was presented on Sunday 6th August – so it will be every 2nd Sunday in this sequence.

An extra bonus is the fact that each session is recorded, and then made available on You-Tube shortly after the live presentation. This is invaluable for those who are unable to attend the live session, or would like to listen to the lecture again. The link to these lectures is published on the





Lakeside Chapel WhatsApp group – if you would like to be on that group, please speak to Pastor Paul, Pastor Louis, or Heather or Liesl. Contact numbers on the back page.

Lakeside Chapel Fellowship Bible Study Groups

As a church, we are progressing well through our in-depth study of the Gospel of Matthew, using the guidelines of a year programme designed by Pastor Paul. There are a number of groups spread from Rooiels in the west, to Sunny Seas on the eastern boundaries of Betty's Bay. Even though the study is well advanced, it is never too late to slot into a Bible Study and if anyone would like to join a group, please contact the convenor of a group in your neighbourhood. A list of groups and contact numbers are published in the Directory on the back page.



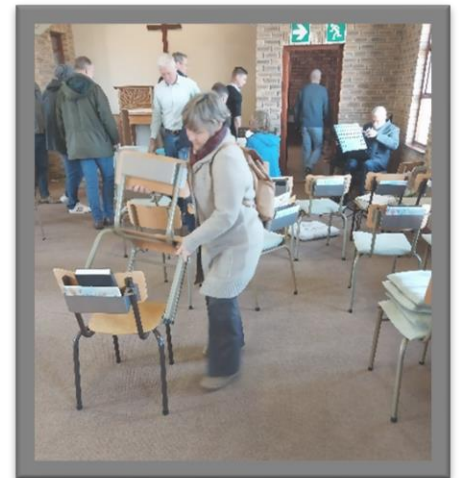
A man of many talents!

Not only are we blessed indeed with our pastor and his in-depth knowledge of the Word, his sensitivity and compassion and his obvious passion for our Lord, but he has recently let onto another talent, namely that he is an accomplished guitarist and singer. Thank you for sharing that talent with us too, Paul.



The Building Project

As you are all aware, big things are happening at the Lakeside Chapel with the long-awaited renovations well underway. The last service in the old Chapel configuration as we knew it was held on the 16th of July, at the end of which there was a flurry of activities as all present picked up a chair or two and carried them into the atrium area, where we are having our services provisionally until the "new" building can be used again.



Rob Bodley, deacon and maintenance manager, reports that the wall between the chapel space and the Turvey Hall has been removed, the Turvey Hall ceiling has been restructured to match the ceiling of the chapel area, the face-brick walls have been bag-washed and are being painted at this time. The laying of new carpet tiles is next in line, and Rob hopes that, God willing, we will be able to start using the "new" chapel in the not too distant future. It's very exciting! In the meantime, we are squashed and squeezed into the atrium area, the brass band must play in the dining room and the preacher has to precariously balance on the rails of the sliding door which separates the dining area from the atrium. But despite these challenges, we still raise the roof with our praise and worship and are blessed to be fed solid and powerful sermons by our pastors.

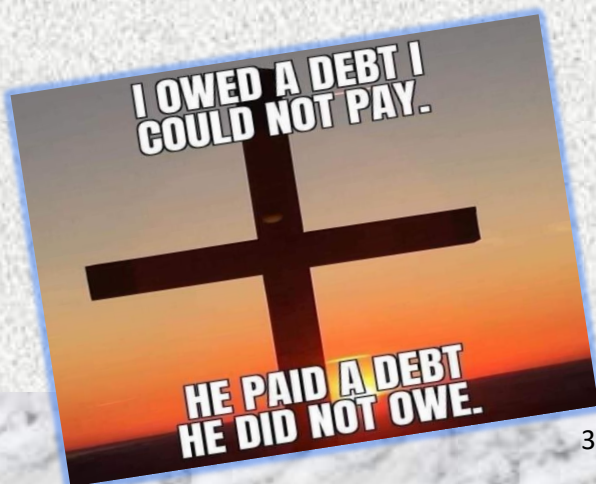
Poetry Corner

Without a Prayer

Submitted by Anne Fairey

A day that starts without a prayer
Is like an empty shell,
And a day that ends without a prayer
Cannot be ended well ...
For when your heart turns heavenward
You find a sweet release,
And you understand the meaning of
'His mercies never cease'.
When life brings you pain and sorrow
Which you feel too weak to bear,
There's strength in God's abiding love
And in the power of prayer ...
So never start a day unless
There's prayer within your heart,
And never take an action
Of which prayer is not a part ...
Don't make a firm decision,
Until you've prayed about it;
For prayer is like a golden gift –
You just can't do without it ...
And though at times you feel as if
Your prayer has not been heard,
Remember, God is listening,
And He hears your every word ...
He may not always give the things
You wished and hoped He would,
But in His love and wisdom
He does all things for your good.

Anon.



I asked the Lord

Submitted by Neall Visser

*I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith and love and ev'ry grace,
Might more of His salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face.*

*'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,
And He, I trust, has answered prayer,
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair.*

*I hoped that in some favoured hour
At once He'd answer my request
And, by His love's constraining pow'r,
Subdue my sins and give me rest.*

*Instead of this, He made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart
And let the angry pow'rs of hell
Assault my soul in ev'ry part.*

*Yea, more with His own hand He seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe,
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Humbled my heart and laid me low.*

*"Lord, why is this," I trembling cried;
"Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death?"
"Tis in this way," the Lord replied,
"I answer prayer for grace and faith."*

*"These inward trials I employ
From self and pride to set thee free
And break thy schemes of earthly joy
That thou may'st find thy all in Me."*

John Newton



What is Our Impact?

David Horne

We have a friend, who has spent most of his life working on behalf of others, living in foreign nations, with their Church denomination, striving to uplift people and communities. He was one of the first outsiders who got into Rwanda after the massacres there in order to understand what the people needed and to help them start rebuilding. So he has a wide range of knowledge and experience. Now retired, he still has an agile mind, and he has a group of friends who meet together and discuss hard issues.

He then ruminates on these issues and sends out a weekly email with some of his thoughts to his friends. His thoughts usually get me thinking and sometimes I end up with some really uncomfortable thinking! But it can also be life changing. Others may not see the changes that occur, as sometimes the changes we go through are on the inside, in how we perceive, understand and think. Let me share some of the recent hard thinking we have done.

Practising one's faith in the world is messy and certainly not easy. More questions arise: What do you do when you see an organization or institution (yes, it could even be the church) doing both good things and some really bad stuff? How does one live and work in that situation? I worked for a Christian NGO, where I faced this. It is hard!

What is our responsibility and what is the cost of calling out the truth? Can you afford to alienate yourself from family, friends, and colleagues? If you stay quiet, you are part of the problem. Jesus Himself faced this, with the current structured religion and religious bodies of the day. As we read in the Gospels, hard questions were asked, with massive repercussions.

Or do we aim to do like the Amish? Retreat from the world, separate ourselves from all those who do not have exactly the same beliefs and opinions as us. Or do we tap dance along the fence, trying frantically to balance between two sides, trying not to land in one camp or the other, which would mean taking a stand.

More than this though ... Can I, can we, can you, handle, process, accept and change when it is me, us, you who is in the wrong, and needs to change? Or do I self-righteously proclaim everyone to be wrong except for me? Do I use my position, power, money, intellect, influence and so on to divert and subvert, to try and keep my standpoint. If I believe I am defending a/the truth of something, do I work in the shadows, manipulating, whispering, murmuring. Or am I open about it, clear, public, transparent. If I am right, and someone else is wrong, surely more are wrong, so I should be loud and clear?

It is hard.

When is it time to persist in a relationship with an organization, hoping to incrementally bring change or when does one leave? There are many reasons to belong to a fellowship of believers (church or a Bible study, or support group) and this is a powerful one. Few of us can live a fruitful life of faith without each other, encouragement, and

community. Going alone is not really an option. But on the other hand, for how long can you endure, never mind thrive, but just endure, within a group that needs to change?

Now the question becomes larger. It is not just each of us independently, but how do we change the Christian church and culture as a faith community? If we look at South Africa, there is much that needs changing, both within and without the Church. Another way to ask the question is this: If the church down the road disappeared over the weekend, would the communities around it miss that church? What real, noticeable and lasting impact do our churches have on the communities around them? Also, what role does my church community play in my life? Some, everything, little, nothing? Does the church want to play a role in my life, but I push it away? Does my church want to control my thinking, my understanding and belief, shaping me only to their truth?

Sometimes change is needed, and we can try and guide and help change. Sometimes change will never happen. The NGO I was with needed to change, it would not. I, in the end, had to leave, followed by two years of unemployment. It is hard. Would it have been better for me to have remained?

St. Francis Prayer... Reversed!

Lord, make me a channel of disturbance. Where there is apathy, let me provoke, where there is compliance, let me bring questioning, where there is silence, may I be a voice.

Where there is too much comfort and too little action, grant disruption. Where there are doors closed and hearts locked, grant the willingness to listen.

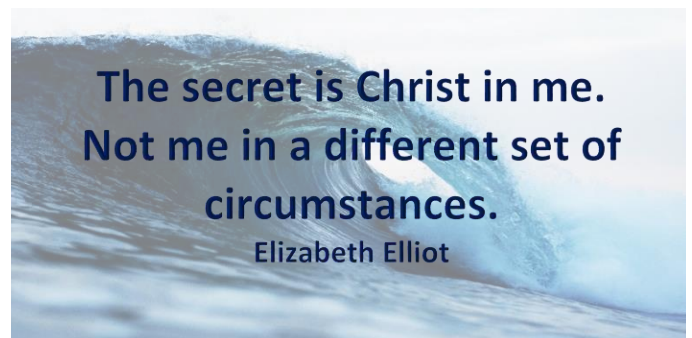
When laws dictate and pain is overlooked, when tradition speaks louder than need; grant that I may seek and do justice rather than to talk about it.

Disturb me, O Lord. To be with, as well as for, the alienated, to love the unlovable as well as the lovely. Lord, make me a channel of disturbance.

Author Unknown

How do I present the truth? How do I help to change? In love? In anger? In self-righteous shouting and demonstrating? In gentleness and meekness?

All I know is that sometimes I need to change before I can even think about leading others to the changes that are needed.





“Teabag Faith”

An Analogy of Our Witness in this World

Jean Joubert



As people of faith, we are called to be a witness in this world. However, there are many in this world today, who claim to be believers in Christ, but their behaviour and doctrines often suggest otherwise. The challenge is for each of us to prove our faith and to bear witness that our testimony is true.

To help us in this, let us compare ourselves to a teabag. We, as believers, claim to have something inside of us that is good, tasty and will produce a pleasantly flavoured drink.

Let us examine this more closely: when you hold, for example, a Rooibos teabag in your hand, the contents are not discernably visible. Holding it up, you can see something that resemble tealeaves and holding it to your nose, you can discern a promising aroma. But how will you KNOW that this teabag is a TRUE Rooibos teabag? We need to dunk it into hot boiling water!

The resulting look, taste and flavour will then give evidence of the truth: Either that this is IS a real Rooibos teabag, or it is an imitation/fake teabag giving off a bad taste and/or smell.

For me, this is very real in our walk of faith. We claim to be believers (teabags), but when we are tested in boiling water (troubles or hardships), the truth comes forth. This testing of our faith is, however, not a pleasant experience because landing in boiling water hurts!

Apart from our possible “hot” tempered reaction and consequently maybe not giving off a nice aroma and/or flavour to the water (our surroundings), and the world judging us for this, we discover impurities within ourselves – things that we might have been unaware of and shortcomings within ourselves. We might discover issues which are not complementary to our faith nor to our witness of Christ in this world. Things that need to be repented of. Things that need to be addressed or corrected or overcome in our walk of faith.

I pray that we may all walk this walk of faith and when we are tested, remember that it is to glorify Christ and for the proving of your faith.

**“See, I have refined you, though not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”**

Isaiah 48: 10 NIV



Keys

Elna Uys

About 3 weeks ago I took my dog Millie to my friend Karen for a haircut and toe-nail trim.

Karen did the job in a short time. But as we wanted to leave, I tried to open the door of my car, and found it – and all the other doors and the boot – locked! There were the keys, dangling from the ignition, and there was no way to get into the car. I was devastated and could not believe that I let this happen.

Karen said she would be happy to take me home to fetch my spare keys, but I was parked behind her car! I pictured myself walking home approximately four kilometres in a howling South-Easter, and then having to walk back again!

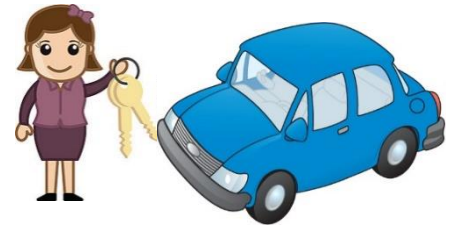
Karen then mentioned that she had a cancellation in the next slot, but after that a new client by the name of Danie was bringing his dogs for grooming. Perhaps he would be so kind as to take me home to fetch

my keys. We didn't have to wait long before Danie turned up.

"Yes, no problem," he assured us, he would take me back home to fetch my keys while Karen did his dogs. I was mightily relieved but all the way home I was racking my brains: "Where are my spare keys? Do I even have spare keys and if so, where are they?" I didn't let on to Danie that I was unsure of the whereabouts, or even the existence of a spare key, but as I got home, I ran straight inside and the first place I looked was the hallstand in the lounge. And there they were! What a relief!

I rushed back to the car, and as I got in, I said aloud, "Thank you, Jesus, that I found the keys!" Very dryly Danie said, "My name is Danie."

I could not help but laugh! The good Lord used a man called Danie to help me that day.



Linky van der Merwe - Artist

The Easter edition of the Lakeside Letter showcased some of the works of the artists in our midst. Herewith sincere apologies for omitting Linky as one of our talented artists. (Ed.)

Submitted by Marianne Willemse

These works of Linky van der Merwe tell us a bit of her history and herself. Her father, Dawid Schalk van der Merwe owned the biggest shop in the then Union of South Africa. It was in Rustenburg and even sent supplies to Cape Town, according to an article in "Die Transvaler". Linky was the younger of two children and from a young age she would just disappear and then her older brother or parents would find her sitting amongst her dad's pigeons or wild doves, feeding them. So, this painting is one of her earliest memories of happiness!



Her mother Jacomina (Mina) started her career as a nursing assistant. She was very dedicated and caring and worked herself up at the Paul Kruger Remembrance Hospital in Rustenburg. Eventually she was asked to take over as matron, but due to not having the required qualifications, she went to study at Wits University at the "ripe old age" of sixty. She then filled the position and became a much respected and loved matron. This beautiful painting speaks of a bygone era when nursing was a calling and service to one's fellowman.

Linky loves animals. She found happiness in getting to know Jesus as her Saviour, and also loves spending time out in nature or painting pictures of her favourite animals: elephants, horses and cats. Today her two cats are her fur-children, and she is happiest with a paint brush in her hand and a cat on her lap!





PRAYER AND INTERCESSION

Submitted by Anne Fairey

To God, nobody is a 'nobody'. Each individual has a value beyond computation. Our prayers of intercession should be in direct proportion to the desperate sin of people who need saving. The worse the wickedness, the more the intercession. Nobody should have to go through life without somebody praying for them.

"I urge then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."

(1 Timothy 2: 1–3)

So the ultimate aim of intercession is evangelism – God wants everybody to be saved. Intercession is not a say-so, but a heart-cry. Not "Lord, bless me and everybody everywhere. Amen." Our Lord Jesus prayed for us until He sweated drops of blood! He even prayed for the soldiers hammering nails into His quivering flesh. Pray for all people, for Christ-lessness is terrible. There is only one Saviour and if He is rejected, what can people do? Their cry is like Reuben's when he found Joseph had gone: "And I, where shall I go?" (Genesis 37: 30 NKJV) There is nowhere to go. So people just drift along, perhaps together, perhaps alone, unknowingly heading for a 'Sargasso Sea' called hell. Christ-less religion is hell on earth! Religious leaders killed Christ. We see it today in unbridled hate, terrorism, murder, and oppression in the Name of God. Intercession is urgent. Intercession brings divine intervention. We have one generation in which to save a generation – not a century! The ultimate aim of intercession is evangelism. On our knees in prayer, we are reaching the world for Christ.

Intercession honours those for whom we pray. Prayer brings distinction to those for whom we pray. It highlights them, makes 'nobodies' into 'somebodies' before God. He turns His attention to them – just think of that!

"I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before Me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none." (Ezekiel 22: 30)

Politicians, speakers, musicians ... but not one intercessor. Intercession may be the only practical thing we can do for some people. To omit prayer from our activities is loveless, grieving to the Spirit of God. Samuel looked at wayward Israel and said,

"You have done all this evil. As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you." (1 Samuel 12: 20, 23)

It is not difficult for us to think of individuals who need our prayers, but we should also never forget the awesome power of interceding for nations. Our prayers make the difference.

(Author unknown)





And The Last Page ...

Do you know the difference?



The Story of the Squirrels and the Church ...

The Presbyterian church called a meeting to decide what to do about their squirrel infestation. After much prayer and consideration, they concluded that the squirrels were predestined to be there, and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will.

At the Baptist church the squirrels had taken an interest in the baptistery. The deacons met and decided to put a water-slide on the baptistery and let the squirrels drown themselves. The squirrels liked the slide and unfortunately, knew instinctively how to swim, so twice as many squirrels showed up the following week.

The Lutheran church decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God's creatures. So, they humanely trapped their squirrels and set them free near the Baptist church. Two weeks later the squirrels were back when the Baptists took down the water-slide.

The Episcopalians tried a much more unique path by setting out pans of whiskey around their church in an effort to kill the squirrels with alcohol poisoning. They sadly learned how much damage a band of drunk squirrels can do.

But the Catholic church came up with a very creative strategy! They baptized all the squirrels and made them members of the church. Now they only see them at Christmas and Easter.

And not much was heard from the Jewish synagogue. They took the first squirrel and circumcised him.



**“Forgive Your Enemies—
It Messes with Their Heads”**





Directory Mid 2023

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Rob Bodley	Maintenance	bodley@polka.co.za	083 448 3497

WEEKLY MEETINGS			
HOME GROUPS	TIME	VENUE	CELL NUMBER
Hazel de Kock	Tues, 09h30	Lakeside Chapel	083 370 7911
McGill Group	Thurs, 18h00	Rotating venue, Betty's Bay	082 550 9108
Deon Maree	Wed, 16h00	Provisionally Home of Elna Uys	081 360 7042
Paul Hartwig	Wed, 17h30	Home of Izak Smit, Rooiels	072 186 0737
Paul Hartwig	Thurs, 10h00	Lakeside Chapel	072 186 0737
Louis van Heerden	Wed, 18h00	Home of Van Heerdens, Betty's Bay	072 793 9133
Louis van Heerden	Thurs, 16h00	Various venues, Pringle Bay	072 793 9133

PRAYER MEETINGS			
Lakeside Chapel	Tues 17h00	Lakeside Chapel	072 186 0737
Ladies Meeting	Fri, 09h30	Home of Jeanette Spencer	082 448 3060
Sunday Morning	Sun, 09h00	Lakeside Chapel	072 186 0737

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