



A WALK IN THE PARK

Piedmont Park's Quarterly Newsletter

Our vision: To encourage a closer walk with God and greater involvement in His Ministries in the Lincoln Nebraska area through the medium of *A Walk in the Park*.

Our Mission: With God's leading, we will reach out to our church family, sharing stories of hope, encouraging all, and promoting active involvement in the various ministries of Piedmont Park Seventh-day Adventist Church



VACATION TIME

By Pastor Michael Halfhill



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Summer time has always meant vacation time in my mind. From summer vacation from school work to trips with my family, I always connect the summer months with vacations. This year I believe lots of people are taking trips and vacations. In 2020 we weren't able to travel because of the pandemic, so now people are getting away for some relaxation and some fun.

The concept of rest and taking breaks from work is biblical. We don't have to look farther than the beginning story of the Bible to find someone taking a break

from their labor. In Genesis 2 we find God Himself stopping His work of creating. God built into our world an idea of stopping our work and resting on the seventh day. Then in Israel's worship year, God gave them special days to stop their daily work to celebrate and remember God's mighty actions in the past and to learn how God would save them in the future with days like Passover and the Day of Atonement.

When Jesus came to our world we see in the Gospels how busy our Savior was doing ministry and helping people. But even Jesus took time away either to pray alone with the Father or He even took the disciples away from the busyness of ministry in order to recharge.

I hope this summer or some time this year you will find some time to get away from the hustle and bustle of life to rest and to just be for a while. We all need breaks. We all need to rest. This is one of the reasons God was so loving in giving us the gift of the Sabbath. He knew we needed it. Take time with your family. Take time to explore God's world. Take time to reconnect with God.

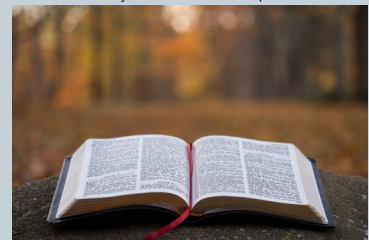
There's plenty of work and ministry to do after the pandemic. I am excited about the future of Piedmont Park as we have Pastor Shawna Henry joining our pastoral staff. This will give us 3 full time pastors for the first time in our church history. But in the busyness and exciting times of ministry, let's not forget to take time to rest and recharge and then come back rejuvenated to continue to serve God, each other and our community

Safe Travels.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS ISSUE!

Pastor Michal Halfhill
Renee Schaecher
Shari Langemann
Carol Leonhardt
Cheyenne Hardy
Chris Hausted
Hugh Davis
Josh Kittleson

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ISAIAH 58:6-8

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.



Photo by [Claire Kelly](#) on [Unsplash](#)

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

Where do I even begin or start I haven't a clue. Do you ever feel that way? What can I possibly say that would be meaningful or helpful. These are my thoughts as I contemplate my contribution to "A Walk in the Park" this evening. I've been putting this off....

Life is messy! People are messy! Relationships are messy! I say this to myself and to my hospice coworkers more and more every day. It seems to help. It helps me to understand that human beings are a complicated mess especially when pressed down under the weight of facing death.

I remember when my mom was diagnosed with brain cancer in 1984. The aggressive kind. Dad and my 2 sisters told each other, "she could out live all of us" knowing full well that wasn't likely. It reminded us that life was fragile because the possibility of death had entered our house. Our house! Not someone else's house,

but ours. And that meant that each of us realized that we will all die someday. It scared me to think about what my life would be without her. And so I found myself stealing away from home more and more...it was just too hard some days to be with her, knowing that her death was not anything I could stop. My grief was heavy as I anticipated losing her. I remember so many family friends and church members asking me how she was doing and when I'd reply that she was doing good, they appeared confused. You see, every day that I still had her was a good day from my point of view! Even though I struggled, pulled away and distanced myself at times I still felt her strength as long as she was alive. After her death, I understood that she had taught me well and I still felt her strength inside me. A Walk in the Park! A Walk at Woodland Acres to be exact! Her favorite place on earth.

By Shari George Lagemann

“Friendship improves happiness and abates misery, by the doubling of our joy and the dividing of our grief.” -Marcus Tullius Cicero

FRESH START

The Fresh Start ladies LOVED the May meal provided by Piedmont Park Women's Ministries volunteers. They ate heartily and expressed appreciation.

One lady named Nancy helped serve & clean up. She asked about activities for her grandkids at our church. Please pray for her & others there. One woman just left prison and spoke of her hope in Jesus.

If you are interested in participating in this ministry, contact Carol Leonhardt, Women's Ministries Chair.



Photo by [Debby Hudson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

GOD'S LOVE

By Renee Schaecher

Summer time fun is here. Facebook is alive with pictures and messages of family fun: vacations, 4th of July celebrations, family reunions. Everyone hopes for and loves a good family gathering, and we love to celebrate the love of family when we see what others are doing.

Jesus Christ, the great Creator, Kinsman Redeemer, Our Restorer and Sustainer also loves family. For Him we are all one big family, His family. We are His sisters and brothers by faith in His redemptive life. Love one another is His command. Yes, command... He does not say it is a suggestion. He promises to give us of His Spirit so that this command is possible through His strength and love.

Let us understand though, that unless we can accept Him as our God who loves and likes us, forgives us, accepts us, helps us we will always find it "out of sorts" to offer agape (unconditional love) to others.

As one wise pastor said to me, God's church is full of faulty and sinful people, yet God says they are perfect. He can say that because when He looks at us, He is looking at us through the sacrificial life of Jesus Christ. Today, let us realize that love is not always soft, it is not only socializing in a surface manner although good manners and warmth of approach are never out of style.

Love in Exodus 20 (the 10 commandments)

Love in 1 Corinthians 13

Love in Isaiah 58

God's love is active and involved. It is alive in God's Holy Spirit. It is lovingly and kindly truthful. It is denying self. It is really listening. It is looking out for another's good. It is taking care of ourselves so we can hear God's still small voice. It is hard work.

God's love is messy. God does not only love, God IS love. God says learning to love God's way is becoming more and more like Him. It is being remade into His image. Even so, come Lord Jesus and do your work in us.



Photo by Rainier Ridao on Unsplash

COMMAND YOUR SOUL

By Cheyenne Hardy

As I sat in the basement of the lodge at Camp Wakonda, my heart was heavier than it had ever been. This was my third summer working there and, while I was excited to be a counselor again, there were struggles in my personal life that were dragging me down. I had just graduated high school and said goodbye to my best friends because I would be moving away from Michigan to attend Union after camp. Loneliness is not just something first-time campers experience. I was in a transition stage and, while I had felt God leading me down this path, I too was lonely.

The first couple weeks at camp were used for preparation as the staff had meetings and cleaned up the cabins before the summer began. Pastor Greg, the camp director, would daily repeat his reminder to “get your sleep and time with Jesus.” So I took his advice. Every spare minute I would steal away to the basement of the girl’s lodge and find a quiet corner. Sometimes I would cry, sometimes I would pray, but most of the time I would read Psalms of encouragement. I poured out my worries, loneliness, and frustration to God and was more honest with Him than I had ever been.

As I processed my emotions, there were times during the day when I would feel overwhelmed and it was all I could do to pray, “Jesus I need you. I need your joy to get me through today.” Normally, I sing to myself in the shower or while getting ready in the morning, but during those first few weeks of camp I did not feel like singing. However, one song kept going through my mind and it goes like this:

“I command my soul to praise the Lord, I command my soul to praise the Lord. Soul, praise the Lord. Soul, praise the Lord!”

I did have to *command* my soul. Many days I did not feel like singing or praising. However, with that song and the daily reminder of my need for God’s joy to get me through every hour of every day, slowly but surely I began to actually feel His joy in my heart. After a couple weeks, I would be walking alone and instead of lonely thoughts, I would feel peaceful, joyful contentment. There was no reason for this feeling and I knew that God was answering my simple prayers. I now look back on that as the best summer I spent at camp, mainly because I felt Jesus closer than I ever had before.

“Our happiness comes not from what is around us, but from what is within us; not from what we have, but from what we are.” EGW (My Life Today, June 30).

Jesus offers to fill our hearts with His presence. We need never feel lonely or discouraged, for He is our strength and will carry us through. Our circumstances will not always be ideal but happiness can be found regardless of our situation. God’s joy can be a steady foundation that remains constant no matter what happens in your life. Recognize your need, ask Him for this joy, and command your soul to praise Him!

CABBAGE SALAD

Salad:
1/2-1 head of cabbage, shredded
5-6 green onions, sliced
1 package ramen noodles, reserve some for topping

Dressing:
4 Tablespoons brown sugar
4 Tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1/2-3/4 c. extra virgin olive oil
seasoning packet from ramen noodles

Topping:
1/2 c. chopped walnuts
noodles from ramen noodle package, roughly crushed
1 c. sunflower seeds

Mix topping ingredients and bake at 275F for 15 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes.

Allow to cool.

Mix dressing ingredients together until well blended.

Just before serving, mix all together to serve.

Shared by Chris Hausted

PSALM 139:7-10

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me...

Lord Hear Our Prayer:

Bring us close to you, God. Help us each one recognize their own sins. You know us inside and out. No one is hidden from you. You already know everything about us; so, help us be willing to trust You enough to bring our needs to You with honest, teachable hearts. Bring us close to You, God. Help us each one recognizes their own sins. You know us inside and out. No one is hidden from you. You already know everything about us; so, help us be willing to trust You enough to bring our needs to You with honest, teachable hearts.

PIEDMONT PARK THUNDERBIRDS

By Josh Kittleson

Piedmont Park's Pathfinder group, The Thunderbirds, will be starting up in just a few short weeks. For all kids starting 5th grade through high school, online registration opens soon. The club meetings are every Wednesday evening from 6:30-8:00pm.

What most Pathfinders especially enjoy is camping! Our club plans from 4-6 campouts per year, including a winter campout in January or February.

Besides camping skills, we learn about the world around us. We earn honors from baking and knot-tying; to LEGO building and fire-building.

The honors we pursue often align with interests expressed by the Pathfinders, but the Pathfinders also engage in leadership training, volunteer, and fundraising activities. In everything we do, we put Christ first and look for ways to grow closer to Him.

Our staff includes Club Director, Joshua Kittleson, Assistant Director, Alexa Hazelton, Alex Stout, Chris Hausted, Christian Beard, Trystin Somers and Cat Singh.

If you enjoy camping, having fun and sharing your faith and life experiences with young people – we would love for you to join us as one of our staff! Previous Pathfinder experience is welcomed, but not necessary.



MARCHING, MARCHING...

By Renee Schaecher

"We're marching, we're marching, marching to beautiful Zion"

Often as Christians, we picture ourselves marching to Zion as an army of God. That's somewhat accurate as we all face opposition and must fight the good fight. However, for today, in this moment, I personally am gaining benefit from marching to a different march. A more gentle tune of worship and praise with balloons and hearts; as weapons of encouragement; along with all kinds of people in different shapes, sizes, ages, and health.

All of us, who choose to, have a lot to look forward to, such as seeing Jesus face to face! Finally we will have peace and contentment that no one steals from us, perfect harmony, wonder upon wonder...so today let your heart lead - loudly tooting your worship horn letting others know of God's promises, and fly your praise balloons high because a Happy Spirit heals the broken hearted and our joy is in the Lord!

FAMILY BIBLE ADVENTURE

By Hugh Davis

We want to thank all of the kids and staff who came to Family Bible Adventure, and those who watched online! You made it a special week! Your presence made all the difference. We pray that the lessons you learned this past week will be a blessing to you this week and beyond! If you'd still like to view the Family Bible Episodes, they are available on our YouTube Channel at youtube.com/piedmontparksda or go directly to the FBA Playlist at this link <https://youtu.be/QvkcJ12HL7k>



“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It DOES.”
William James

BAPTISM

By Hugh Davis

In July we rejoiced and we believe the angels were too when one of our youth, Samuel Devries, dedicated his life to Christ by being baptized. Our worship service included some of Samuel's favorite songs, sung by family and friends, and a special video that he produced highlighting his journey in making his decision to give his life to Christ.

1 Peter 3:21

And this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Titus 3:5

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.



“A bird doesn’t sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.”
Maya Angelou

Piedmont Park Community Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a presence in Lincoln, Nebraska, since 1885. We pray that your encounter with God and His family will renew your experience of joy and peace in your journey.

As of the writing of this newsletter, Lincoln has moved into yellow on the COVID dial. We are not currently requiring masks in the church building, but we do provide masks for those who would like to use them. Please join us for our online worship service if you are not feeling well or have been exposed to Covid-19. For more information and our current statement and plan regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit www.piedmontparksda.org/covid-19

ONLINE SERVICES will continue each Sabbath our YouTube and Facebook pages.

Livestream Adult Sabbath School on YouTube at 9:30am CST

Livestream Church Service YouTube and Facebook at 11:00am CST



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BRICKLAYERS ARE OPTIMISTS

By Renee Schaecher

“Bricklayers are optimists. With their eyes they may see a pack of bricks but with their heart they see a house. So, acting on hope born of experience, they lift the bricks one by one by one until the job is done.” - Lorna Arthur.

As we go through the accumulation of life's years we begin to be aware of heartache, sickness, unfairness, hierarchies, violence, corruption, death and we may begin to think that life is just a useless pile of bricks. At times our hearts may faint within us, we may become ill, or we may just wonder how we can go on. This is the human condition that Christ gives us strength to overcome as we cling to His promises in faith.

The story of Elijah: his unbelievable victory over the Prophets of Baal, his frantic race from fearful Jezebel and at the end of the story, his ascension into heaven in a whirlwind is a fascinating recounting of God's intimate involvement in Elijah's life. This story can be found in 1 Kings 18:16-46, 1 Kings 19:1-9 and 2 Kings 2:11-12. After Elijah's long and stressful flight from Jezebel he was exhausted. He even asked God to let him die. God's response is one of kindness yet with a reality check and a call to minister again. Elijah slept, rested, listened, ate and drank, slept some more and then found his way back to encouragement and faith in God's overarching plan.

The circumstances of human life at this time, on this fallen planet, can be like piles of bricks; hard, un-yielding, and of no productive use on their own without vision and hope and the hand of a bricklayer. God is our Master Brick layer, the Master Optimist.

He takes the heap of hard and trying life circumstances that for us seems like a pile of impossibilities and breathes life into them. He resurrects our hope, He helps us see the larger picture. He builds us up, circumstance by circumstance, into a temple in which His Spirit can live. He makes us part of the larger building of His church. Because He has always existed He has all experience and lives without doubt. He gives us of His hope and shares His work with us and so... we lift life's bricks one by one by one and work with Him until life's job is done.



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