



The Signpost

Harlem Road Church

April 2019

Volume 14, Number 3

Your Burdens; God's Grace

By Pastor Bud Leskovac

HRC Family,

By the time you receive this, the Lenten Season is in full swing and soon to give way to Holy Week. This season of soul-searching is always a tough one if taken seriously by the Christian. It's a time when we take a deep look within and ponder what is seen there by our Heavenly Father. We know the condition of our hearts. We know the stuff that hides there. Sure we do. And because we do, we realize our need for a Father who will love us and give us space and grace to get things right with Him. I'm reminded of one of my favorite true stories from author Max Lucado; I've likely shared it before, but it's worth the re-read.

"The handwriting was shaky. The stationery was lined loose-leaf paper. The ink was black and the tone desperate. The note was dated February 6, 1974, and was addressed to the U.S. Government. "I'm sending ten dollars for blankets I stole while in World War II. My mind could not rest. Sorry I'm late." It was signed, "an ex-GI." Then there was this postscript: "I want to be ready to meet God."



This recruit was not alone in his guilt. His letter is one of literally tons of letters that have been sent to the U.S. government since it began collecting and storing the letters in 1811. Since that time \$3,500,000 has been deposited in what is called the Conscience Fund. An average of \$45,000 per year is received. The biggest year was 1950 in which \$350,000 was collected. One man sent \$50 to cover a pair of cavalry boots, one case of KC rations and thirty pounds of frozen meat he stole from the army between 1943 and 1946. In some instances the amounts are small; only the remorse is big.

One Colorado woman sent in two eight-cent stamps to make up for having used one stamp twice that for some reason had not been canceled. A former IRS agent mailed in one dollar for four ballpoint pens she had never returned to the office. A Salem, Ohio, man submitted one dollar with the following note: "When a boy, I put a few pennies on the railroad track and the train flattened them. I also used a dime or a quarter in a silver-coating experiment in high school. I understand there is a law against defacing our money. I have not seen the law written, but I desire to be a law-abiding citizen."

Anxiety over a thirty-year-old mistake? Regret over mashed pennies? A guilty conscience because of ballpoint pens? If the struggle to have a clean conscience wasn't so common, the letters would be funny. But the struggle is common.

What do you do with your failures? Our mistakes come to us as pebbles, small stones that serve as souvenirs of our stumbles. We carry them in our hands, and soon our hands are full. We put them in our pockets, and soon our pockets bulge. We place them in a bag and put it over our shoulder; the burlap scratches and chaps. And

soon the bag of yesterday's failures is so heavy, we drag it. Nothing drags more stubbornly than a sack of failures. If you could do it all over again, you'd do it differently. You'd be a different person. You'd be more patient. You'd control your tongue. You'd finish what you started. You'd turn the other cheek instead of slapping his. You'd get married first. You wouldn't marry at all. You'd be honest. You'd resist the temptation. You'd run with a different crowd.

But you can't. And as many times as you tell yourself, "What's done is done," what you did can't be undone. What do you do with the stones from life's stumbles? Max says, "My oldest daughter, Jenna, is four years old. Some time ago she came to me with a confession. 'Daddy, I took a crayon and drew on the wall.' I sat down and lifted her up into my lap and tried to be wise. 'Is that a good thing to do?' I asked her. 'No.' 'What does Daddy do when you write on the wall?' 'You spank me.' 'What do you think Daddy should do this time?' 'Love me.' Don't we all want that? Don't we all long for a father who, even though our mistakes are written all over the wall, will love us in spite of our failures?"

We do have that type of a Father. A Father who is at His best when we are at our worst. A Father whose grace is strongest when our devotion is weakest. If your bag is big and bulky, then you're in for some thrilling news: Your failures are not fatal. In this season of introspection and repentance you've been redeemed! God's grace is sufficient to take the load off of your shoulder and unburden your aching heart. And that's the message of Easter: "Now is the acceptable time." No... Now is the *perfect* time to own God's Grace.

As we've journeyed through Lent 2019, we have had the promise of Easter redemption right in front of us. God's gift of grace in our lives is no more evident than in the Resurrection celebrated on Easter morning. In other parts of this newsletter, you'll see our Easter Services schedule. Consider this your personal invitation to attend the day's celebration with your family and friends. If you and I can understand and apply God's gift of grace in our lives, it will be sufficient to take the load off our shoulders and it will bring peace to our burdened, aching hearts. Don't we all want that? Don't we all long for a Father who, even though our mistakes are written all over the wall, will love us in spite of our failures? Come, learn what God's gift of grace means for you. See you Easter Sunday!

Your Loving Pastor,

Bud



Easter Services – April 21

Please join us!

Sunrise Service – 7:30 am

Breakfast – 8:30 am

Easter Cantata – 10 am

Summer Nights Live!

On June 10, 11, and 12, join us for “Maker Fun-Factory – Created by God for a purpose!” SNL is a three-night event from 6:30-8:30 like Friday Night Live – but dinner is not included. It’s for kids ages 4 through finishing 5th grade. (A toddler class is available for our volunteers.) There will be student sign-up sheets in the lobby beginning April 1. We’ll also be trying a new “online” signup. We’ll let you know when that is uploaded and ready!

If you’d like to volunteer for this great outreach program for kids, please touch base with Kate Steele – cell: 614-312-7691 or email: ksteelie@gmail.com

Youth Group Lunch Helpers Needed

We need volunteers to make lunch for the youth group on March 31, May 5, May 12 & May 19. If you would like to help with this vital piece of ministry to our youth - please let Pam know. God bless you! Respond to: pam@harlemroadchurch.org



MARKET PLACE in September

By Ellen Jacobs

MARKET PLACE returns this fall, on Saturday, September 28. This is a great way to support the orphanage in Haiti, and make a difference for hundreds of children. After just hearing of the many wonderful things being done through Imagine Missions, think about how you might be the hands and feet for Jesus in this outreach. There are many ways you can help make that day a success. Please begin to pray about this and ask God what - if anything - he would have you do.

Ways to support the day:

- Volunteer 2 hours of time at the door, in the kitchen, or for clean-up.
- Save your One Dollar bills, and make a contribution in September toward the purchase of food for the cafe.
- Think about your interest and hobbies, and consider having a table at the event. (\$25 if you bring your own)
- Think about friends you know with a craft and suggest they consider this event.
- Anytime MARKET PLACE pops into your head, pray God’s provision for it.
- Be willing to take home a yard sign in September.
- Save a little bit of spending money for yourself and plan to shop and eat in the cafe that day. (The food gets a great review every year.)
- Take a flyer (or several) when they are ready in September and help spread the word.
- Invite a friend or two to join you there.

September 28 - put it on your calendar now!

Hearing God's Voice

By Linda Huling

"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." - Isaiah 30:21

I long to hear the voice of God, to know His direction in my life. And so I pray for that and for ears tuned to hear Him when He calls. But I am reminded there is a next step, after the "hearing" - the one where we are called to act, or to think, to speak, or to write.

Those times in your life when you know without a shadow of doubt that God is urging you toward or away from something are truly amazing...but they can also be rare.

What about those times when the callings are so soft, so subtle that we can miss them, even when they are right in front of our faces? The times when a friend pops in your mind randomly; or when a Facebook friend's post screams at you to respond; or when taking your grocery cart to the corral seems like too much in the cold winter wind, but you just know you must do it?



I don't think these things are just about doing the right thing; I think they are much more than that. I think it is the way we learn to "hear" God, if we choose to.

I don't think these are random happenings; nor do I think they are small. I think they are openings to listen; opportunities to decide what we do or do not do. Free will is all about choice. And free will brings as many responsibilities as it does blessings. To me it is as much about WHY I choose as it is about WHAT I choose. But that is another topic for another day.

Something I was reading in a Lysa TerKeurst devotional book reminded me of the richness of these softer nudgings from God. Lysa writes (and I'm paraphrasing here) that we can be distracted from these callings by our fast-paced lives...the rush we are always in. It is not that we don't see these opportunities, but that we choose to miss them because we let schedules, to-do lists, or our own stubbornness stop us from responding to them. She tells of a time when she missed an opportunity to greet a woman, who obviously was going through chemotherapy. This preyed on her mind so much that she later sent an email to this woman suggesting they get together. So they met over coffee, with Lysa thinking God wanted her to reach out to this woman and help her in some way. God turns our thinking upside down at times. In that conversation, Lysa found the answer to a prayer she had been praying for a long time. Lysa wasn't meant to come into this woman's life to bless her (although that may have been a side benefit). She was meant to receive a message from God through this woman!

Goodness, think of what we miss, when we choose to ignore those softer "callings" from God?

I believe all around us, "to the right and to the left", there are messages from God, calling us closer to Him, calling us to respond, to act, to speak, to write, to do, to be.

Oh, that we had ears to hear, eyes to see, and hands to do that which is right in front of us.

College Care Packages – Thank You

To my church family –

Your kindness and thoughtfulness is truly special. It warms my heart to know church family are supporting me while I am away at Ohio State.

Many thanks for all the things you send me and for all the love I can feel from you all. The care packages I receive never fail to make my day brighter.

With love,

Lauren (Schnipke)

Hi!

I wanted to thank you and the church for the package of snacks that you sent last week! It came at the perfect time for midterms. :)

Thanks again!

Anna Klingensmith

Thank You

Dear Pastor Bud and Harlem Road UMC Friends,

Thanks so much for your prayers, support, hugs, and cards during Robert's cancer treatment.

It has been greatly appreciated to know we had God and all followers with us.

Sincerely,

Ginger & Robert Rogers

Thank you for the Westerville Strong rug in honor of our fallen brothers. We are truly grateful for your thoughtfulness and support.

Chief J.A. Morbitzer

Health and Wellness News

By Sue Wilcox

The great gift of Easter is Hope, Christian Hope which makes us have the confidence in God, in His goodness and love which nothing can shake.

- Basil C. Hume

Congregational Survey

The results are being tabulated and we will share the results when they are available

April Is Alcohol Abuse Awareness Month

Anyone at any age can have a drinking problem. Uncle George always liked his liquor, so his family may not see that his drinking is getting worse as he gets older. Grandma Betty was a teetotaler all her life until she started having a drink each night to help her sleep, after her husband died. Now, no one realizes that she needs a couple of drinks to get through each day.

These are common stories. The fact is that families, friends, and healthcare workers often overlook their concerns about older people drinking. Sometimes trouble with alcohol in older people is mistaken for other conditions related to aging, for example, a problem with balance. But how the body handles alcohol can change with age. You may have the same drinking habits, but your body has changed.

Alcohol may act differently in older people than in younger people. Some older people can feel "high" without increasing the amount of alcohol they drink. This "high" can make them more likely to have accidents, including falls and fractures and car crashes. Also, older women are more sensitive than men to the effects of alcohol.

Drinking too much alcohol over a long time can:

- Lead to some kinds of cancer, liver damage, immune system disorders, and brain damage
- Worsen some health conditions like osteoporosis, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, ulcers, memory loss and mood disorders
- Make some medical problems hard for doctors to find and treat—for example, alcohol causes changes in the heart and blood vessels. These changes can dull pain that might be a warning sign of a heart attack.
- Cause some older people to be forgetful and confused—these symptoms could be mistaken for signs of Alzheimer's disease.



Reynoldsburg Emmaus Walks

By Judi Ayers

Listed below are the upcoming Reynoldsburg Emmaus Walk dates for 2019 (men & women). If you are interested in attending an Emmaus Walk in 2019, please contact Judi Ayers by e-mail (ayers_judi@yahoo.com) or by cell phone (614) 915-6825.

Emmaus is for you, if you are interested in becoming closer to Jesus Christ and developing a stronger personal relationship with him.

Walks 2019

- Women's Walk #110 – May 2-5, 2019
- Women's Walk #111 – July 25-28, 2019
- Men's Walk #88 – October 10-13, 2019
- Women's Walk #112 – November 7-10, 2019

Children's Ministry News

By Pam Leskovac

Easter Egg Hunt!

On April 19, during Friday Night Live from 6:30-8:30 pm, we'll hold our annual EASTER EGG HUNT! We're opening up FNL to kids age 2 through 5th grade – and we're asking parents of kids ages 2 and 3 to stay with their child for the evening. We do all of our FNL stations first – and then we hold the egg hunt at the end of the evening. We are providing the bags – so no need to bring your Easter baskets!



Contact pam@harlemroadchurch.org for more info!

Friday Night Live breaks for the remainder of the school year after our April event. We resume in September when school is back in session.

Easter Eggs (and Candy!) Needed

We will be collecting plastic eggs and candy for our annual Friday Night Live Easter Egg Hunt on April 19. You can drop donations of candy off in the basket at the back of the main lobby near the playground doors. Thank you in advance for helping to make this a great event for our children!

The Beatitude Challenge!

Our children's Sunday school program is studying the Beatitudes this quarter. We have a challenge out to the kids to memorize the Beatitudes and they receive a prize!

Missions News

By Judy Sharpe-Kosmatka

Harlem Road UMC focuses its Mission Outreach efforts in two key areas: our local Big Walnut community, with an emphasis on Westerville Estates, and our global Haitian community in the Imagine Missions orphanage.

Local Outreach

Our local outreach is done in partnership with other churches and organizations: Galena UMC, Church of the Saviour UMC, New Albany UMC, New Albany Church of the Resurrection Catholic and Harlem Township Helping Hands. We call our combined group "SidebySide."

Homework Help: The Souders principal let us know that our efforts with these kids has improved their reading skills. Besides the academic focus, this ministry gives kids a chance to relate to adults who are focused on them and who offer constant encouragement. Kids who have "aged out" of our program still come around to help because they just love to be with us. We strive to have a one-on-one arrangement between adult and child for each afternoon session. Sessions last from 3:30 – 5 pm, one day/week. If you are interested in giving 90 minutes to a child, please let Judy Sharpe-Kosmatka know! (614-565-3395, judysharpekos@insight.rr.com) If you have books suitable for 3rd and 4th graders, Homework Help would like them for our students. Please bring them in and place them under the "Missions Table" in the back of the main hallway.

Bountiful Backpacks: THANK YOU for being so supportive of this new ministry that supports needy families at Big Walnut Middle School Because of your wonderful support, we have a good supply of many food items; only some of the menu items are needed at any one time. Sally and Bud Morris are heading up this ministry and they post in the Sunday Celebration Folder the items which are needed at that time. If you have an interest in being part of this ministry, please contact Sally and Bud Morris (740-936-5551, budemorris@yahoo.com).



Big Walnut Friends Who Share: THANK YOU for your generosity in March during our "fill the shelves" effort for the Friends Who Share food pantry in Sunbury. Once again, HRUMC has shown our community how to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Free Produce Giveaway: Our monthly produce giveaways for 2019 will start up again on March 16 and will be held every month on the third Saturday, from 10:30 am - 1 pm. If you would like to help, please contact Mishelle Soule at bristol2425@yahoo.com.

Annual Rummage Sale for Missions: - Yes, it's that time again!! Please start finding those treasures that you can donate to our annual garage sale for Missions. The sale will be Friday and Saturday, May 17 and 18 from 8 am - 3 pm at our church building. Setup will be Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings May 14, 15 and 16, from 6 - 8 pm. That is also the time when all donations should be brought to the church.

Please help us with this by ensuring that all items are clean and in good, working order. Furniture, in good condition, is very welcome. Unfortunately, we cannot accept clothing, TVs, computer monitors or mattresses. Along with your treasured donations, we will need much-treasured volunteers! Please let Judy Sharpe-Kosmatka know if you can help with setup and/or the sale OR are willing to come at 3 pm on Saturday to help get the sanctuary ready for Sunday worship. Judy's contact info: judysharpekos@insight.rr.com or cell: 614-565-3395.

Global Outreach – Our Orphans in Haiti

Sponsoring a Child: if you'd like to provide monthly nutrition or education for a child in Haiti, or sponsor a teacher at the school, please visit the www.imaginemissions.org website. Go to the Sponsor/Contribute page and see the list of kids and teachers who need sponsors.

You can stay current on happenings in Haiti by visiting the Imagine Missions page on Facebook where Melissa posts updates almost daily: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ImagineMissions/>

Do You Shop at Amazon? If so, please consider using SMILE.Amazon.com instead. It's the exact same Amazon except that you can select a non-profit to receive a donation from Amazon equal to a percentage of your purchase. Chose a charity of your choice! Perhaps Imagine Missions could be your designee.

Ongoing Missions at HRUMC

Kroger Community Rewards: Here's another great way to help your church! We have several households who are shopping at Kroger and using their Community Rewards card to bless Harlem Road UMC. YOU CAN ALSO HELP IN THIS WAY! Please go to www.kroger.com and follow the instructions for Community/Community Rewards – and thank you!! If you've enrolled in the past, your enrollment expires each 12 months so please re-enroll.

Crochet Necklaces: Each month, necklaces made by an HRUMC-trained Westerville Estates woman are taken to the Ohio Art Market for sale. Please patronize the Ohio Art Market, located in Uptown Westerville on the corner of Main and State streets.

Aluminum Pop Tabs: Please bring in the tabs off your aluminum cans and we will take them to the Columbus Ronald McDonald House which recycles them to raise funds to purchase wheelchairs. Receptacles are on the table at the back of the main hallway.

BoxTops for Education: Please bring in the BoxTops for Education labels from your food packages and we will take them to Souders Elementary School. Receptacles are on the table at the back of the main hallway.

Community Connection Groups

Thinking about joining a small group, but not sure which one might be right for you? Contact the leaders to find out more about the people in the group and what they do!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY Meeting Time/Place: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 7 pm in the pastor's office. All men are welcome!

Leader: Jim Bernhardt (bernharj@gmail.com or 614-895-1807)

WOMEN'S TUESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY Meeting Time/Place: Our small group will begin a study on prayer, beginning April 9. All ladies are welcome. We meet every Tuesday at 7 pm, at the home of Ellen Jacobs, 148 Nicole Dr., Westerville. All women are welcome to join us.

Leader: Ellen Jacobs (jacobsellen53@gmail.com or 614-406-4337)

WOMEN'S WEDNESDAY NIGHT GROUP Meeting Time/Place: We are reading the book *Unshakeable Hope*, by Max Lucado. We will meet at 6:30 pm on April 10 at Jenny Hecker's house, and on April 24 at Diana Robertson's house.

Leader: Diana Robertson (office@harlemroadchurch.org or 614-882-9487)

WOMEN'S LUNCH BUNCH Meeting Time/Place: Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, April 4 at noon, place TBD.

Leader: Bobbi Pollock (bobbi10820@gmail.com or 614 496 7405)

SATURDAY COUPLES GROUP Meeting Time/Place: Please contact Lisa Danne for the latest information.

Leaders: Ron and Lisa Danne (lisad@columbus.rr.com or 740-244-7223)

THE AYERS GROUP Meeting Time/Place: Our next meeting is Tuesday, April 16 at Jeff and Jenny Hecker's house.

Leader: Depends on the month.



Prayer Requests

Expectant Moms: Kerri Grove, Heather Hartz, Emily Patrick, Lisa (Gall) Peters

Requests: Jean Christian, Curt Clapham, Erik Pancoast, Stanley Tam, Bill Fling, Pearl Mae Eireman, Faith Myers, Bill and Carol Bebee, Liz Stimer, Janet Falk, Jane Piper, Bruce Rorher, Debbie Clark, Erni Lyle, Kathy Fracasso, Kevin Wilson, Lexie Aumiller, Alma McCoy, Liz Fravel, Jeanie Hatfield, Donna Evans, Dolores Wandtke, Joseph Abraham, Lorraine Karns, Ben Walls, Sawyer and Mason Danne, Janeene Brown, Jeanette Moreland, Helen Cocchi, Dick McCoy, Mary Reed, Dave Straiko, Emily Jacobs, Mary Rogers, Joel Hecker, Herb & Bonnie Wilson, Kelly Hanlin, Yvonne Lake, Arthur Saunders, Sara Roberts, Sophia Hill, George Pollock, Joel Wilcox, Clyde Fravel, Linda Emerson, Suellen Peterson



Cancer Treatment: Doug Grant, Terry Burnside, Reese Shirey, Ed Reeves, Barbara Shumaker, Jeff Kirn, Eileen Salmans, Robert Rogers, Alma McCoy, Troy Beasy, Iris Centofanti, Linda Houck, Allie Anderson, Nate Roston, Marilyn Akers, Doug Miller, William Hill, Jeff Gyurko, Crystal Rustine, Jack Conley, Michelle Danne, Robin Cumberledge, Bunny Pearson, Robin Smith

Military Service & First Responders: Kyle Disbennett, Jacob Hutchinson, Logan Booty, Ethan Mosely, Jakeb Cokeril, Michael Albaugh, Joe Pasqua, Jeremy Ragan, Christina Hahn, Chad Cunningham, Scott Crowell, Sean Hatch, John Smock, Stuart David, Nathan Brumbaugh, James Martin, Michael David-Gish, Nathan Bertram, Tyler Albaugh, Chaplain David Hogg, Alex Hussey, Kevin Miller, Spencer Morris, Mike Neely, Kevin Peterson, Justin Pickworth, Josh Ripley, Matt Robertson, Eric Roddy, Rob Sagle, Dave Wheeler, Brian Williams, Lucas and Conner.