

MVCC Voices

The Monthly Newsletter Of
Moraine Valley Community Church

For the Month of March 2016

From The Pastor's Desk

By Pastor Derek
MASON



Every once in a while, I will have someone confront me with an arrogant, argumentative and matter of fact demeanor as they pour out all of the bad things that are going on in their life. And after they create this giant “sour sundae” before me, they nicely place the cherry on top (sometimes with a sense of confident satisfaction in their case) by saying, “So now you tell me, where God is in the midst of all of this!” “Where is God when all I see is darkness,” is the way I interpret this question.

There are many accounts in the Bible where darkness (evil) seems to be prevailing. The Exodus, the Book of Judges, the accounts of David and Saul, the Book of Daniel, and the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Ester are all places where God’s people faced very powerful opposition. God’s word prepares us for these times, however, we are sadly and often more influenced by our culture than God’s word. Our world tells us that everything should revolve around us. Even God’s salvation is often now interpreted as something which is for my happiness and benefit. But this stops short of the truth. The LORD repeatedly shows us that He saves us so that we might know Him and

reflect Him for the benefit of others (not for me). When we believe that God’s salvation is so that I can simply be happy, we get mad at God when difficult times fall on us. As if He owes us or has failed us (has not kept up His side of the bargain)! *No, we are saved to participate with Him in His ministry of reconciliation to humanity.*

It is often in our times of darkness that the LORD is creating a context (a dark backdrop) so to glorify Himself in amazing and powerful ways. If we truly know Him though, then we know that He will never leave us unless we have left Him. How do we think the disciples felt on Good Friday, when Jesus (their LORD, friend and rabbi) was crucified? They left everything to follow Jesus and now He has been brutally murdered! The important fact to recognize is that the story does not end there. Three days later Jesus rose from the dead! The powers of darkness had no right to Him (no hold on Him) because there was no sin in Him. Therefore, He became the first to be risen from the grave and into eternal life. All who follow Him have that same fate. The darkness does not prevail! ***This is essential for all Christians to always remember ... No matter how bad things look, the story is not yet over.*** The darkness does not end up winning over those who take their refuge in Jesus Christ! The resurrection is essential to the foundation of our Christian beliefs – without it we are all to be pitied above all people for our faith is in vain (1 Corinthians 14:14-20). But our faith is not in vain. Our hope in Christ is an absolute and confident victory! May this triumphant message be remembered not

only on Easter but throughout the whole year – “Our God wins!” The question for the world to seriously consider is, “*Where do you put your hope?*” Thank you Jesus for loving us so deeply and for your everlasting goodness and power! Amen.

Many Blessings and Happy Easter,
Pastor Derek Mason

Church Signs

Those little pearls of wisdom found in front of America's Churches

Easter is more than something to *dye* for.

Extreme Savings offered Here, No Coupons required!

Free Trip To Heaven...Details Inside.

Get off Facebook and take out faith book.

Life Study Group

One of our recent Life Study Groups was led by Virginia Beehn, with group members Roy Beehn, DeWayne and Marianne Nichols, Dennis and Pat Pepe, Louise Raeder, Dan and Laura Trezak, and Terry Zappa.

Our first meeting helped us get to know each other better – building and strengthening relationships. During six of our meetings we watched episodes of the video “Fan or Follower” and explored and discussed how it impacted us. After the first video one comment was, “I guess I have a lot of work to do.” Every meeting we prayed for each other, for our church family, and for other friends and loved ones.

For our final meeting we wanted to do something to help others. We chose to work one evening with Feed My Starving Children in Aurora, where we filled food packets to be sent to hungry children and families in third world countries. Here are a couple photos of those who worked that evening: left to right: Dennis Pepe, Pat Pepe, Terry Zappa, DeWayne Nichols, Mary Anne Nichols, Virginia Beehn.



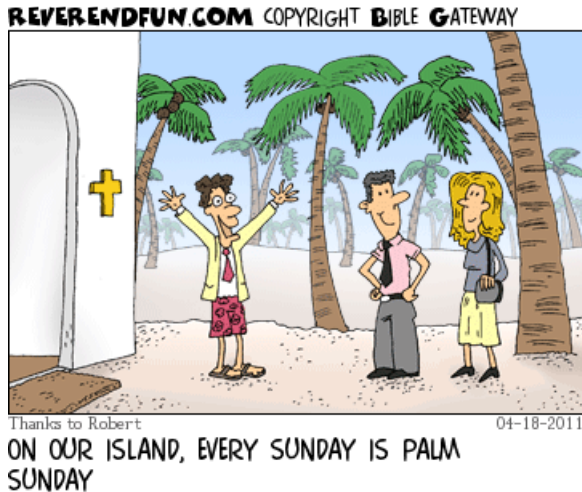
Rachel Circle

Rachel Circle is a social and devotional meeting that is open to any woman who would like to attend. They meet the fourth Monday of the month from September through November, and January through May.

Funds are raised in various ways, and the money donated to worthy causes. Recently Rachel Circle donated \$100.00 to Bibles for China, and \$100.00 to Phone Cards for Veterans.

Birthdays Etc.

Carmen Mohn	Mar. 4
Linda Hudecek	Mar. 8
Lorraine Edwards	Mar. 9
Beth Heinrich	Mar. 9
Luke Healy	Mar. 21



Food For Thought

A little boy's explanation of God:

One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die, so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't make grownups, just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way he doesn't have to take up his valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to mothers and fathers.

God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers and things, pray at times beside bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to the radio or TV because of this. Because he hears everything, there must be a terrible lot of noise in his ears, unless he has thought of a way to turn it off.

God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere which keeps Him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting his time by going over your mom and dad's head asking for something they said you couldn't have.

Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista ... At least there aren't any who come to our church.

Jesus is God's Son. He used to do all the hard work, like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach the people who didn't want to learn about God.. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and they crucified him But he was good and kind, like his father, and he told his father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said O.K.

His dad (God) appreciated everything that he had done and all his hard work on earth so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven. So he did. And now he helps his dad out by listening to prayers and seeing things which are important for God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself without having to bother God. Like a secretary, only more important.

You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to help you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.

You should always go to church on Sunday because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God!

Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. This is wrong. And besides the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway.

If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, you will be very lonely, because your parents can't go everywhere with you, like to camp, but God can. It is good to know He's around you when you're scared, in the dark or when you can't swim and you get thrown into real deep water by big kids.

But.....you shouldn't just always think of what God can do for you. I figure God put me here and he can take me back anytime he pleases.

And...that's why I believe in God.

A little boy's explanation of God --

It was written by an 8-year-old named Danny Dutton, who lives in Chula Vista, CA. He wrote it for his third grade homework assignment, to "explain God." I wonder if any of us could have done as well?

Submitted by Virginia Beehn

From The Elder's Table

The mood around the Elders' Table was somber yet excited as we discussed the subject at hand – the coming Easter season. Pastor Derek reminded us of how important it was to provide our congregation with the proper preparation leading up to the miracle of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. We were reminded of something read somewhere. "Being present at the Easter service without attending the Holy Week services is like walking into a theater only to watch the happy ending without ever seeing all that leads up to it. How can we truly and fully experience the joy? We miss out on a lot." And so we have begun to prepare our plans for our combined Maundy Thursday and Tenebrae Service. It occurred to us that

some of our members and many of those in our community may have never even heard of a Tenebrae Service. "Tenebrae" is Latin for "shadows or darkness." How appropriate a word to describe this service because Christ's death and resurrection brought us from the darkness into the light. Some of the Elders around the table reminisced about services they have attended. "Attended" doesn't seem like the right word we thought as we remembered our past experiences. "Experienced" is a better word because our hearts and souls were deeply touched during those times. We want to bring that experience to our congregation and friends and family of our congregation. And we need you to spread the word.

Come join us in: the breaking of bread (as we start the evening with a soup dinner and reenactment of Jesus washing the disciple's feet and the LORD's Supper), the walk through the garden of Gethsemane and ultimately to the cross - experiencing the sorrow and guilt of being there when our Lord was crucified. We will exit into the darkness in silence as the seven candles are slowly extinguished (symbolizing Jesus' human life coming to an end), and we imagine a world without the light of Jesus Christ in it. All the hope and life that Jesus spoke of and brought to others had seemed to be over and a failure. The darkness seemed to have prevailed over the Light. But when we return on Easter Sunday, we will share the amazing joy of our Savior's Resurrection and Triumph over the darkness and even death itself! In order to truly understand the height of Jesus' victory, we must also know the depth of the loss and appearance of our hopelessness (walk in the shadows). Again, please join us and invite many others! This will be an experience to remember.

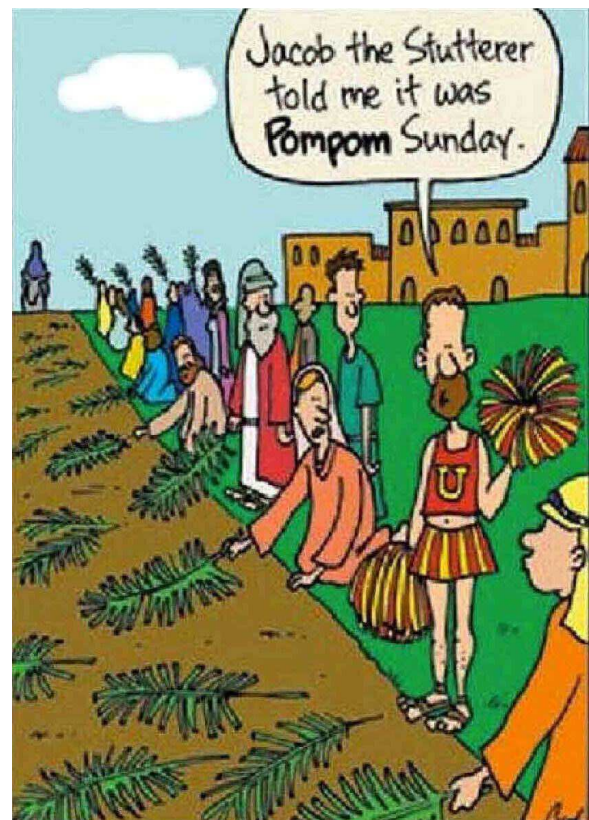
Remember in Prayer...

- Elsie's Food Pantry: provisions/wisdom/protection
- MVCC: wisdom/guidance/protection
 - Hearts to serve – to build our church (formation of ministries)
 - Wisdom and guidance in our new location
 - Discipleship/transformation/leadership
 - Youth and Children's Ministry growth and development
- Emmitt Hayes – heart/health/ condo restoration and living arrangements
- Pete Delgado – dementia (Sarah – strength)
- Vi Wagner – hip/arm/eyes/strength
- Mark DeBauche – cancer healing / strength /endurance / arms and legs recovery
- Roy Beehn – provisions, healing from his open heart surgery
- Tony Juarez – new job closer to his home
- Russ McGurty – job & insurance situation, surgery and pain relief
- Dan Tabert – foot recovery
- Linda Hudecek – lungs & heart healing
- Harriet – strength in her legs, walking
- Becky Lewellen – employment
- Joyce Skowronski – leg pain, for healing
- Herb Mohn – prostate cancer treatment success

- Bill Clemente – family healing and provisions

Answered Prayer:

- Men's Ministry event, Iron Sharpens Iron was a great success for many men
- Our ministries continue to grow and mature
- Russ' situation is getting closer to being resolved
- Linda's heart situation was attended to
- Victor (Megan's cousin) seems to be getting better - PTSD
- Wheel chair provisions were abundantly met



Living Water Youth Group Update by Megan Bustamante

Sometimes when we are caught up in the moment, we are blind to the little ways that God is working and shaping us. Often it takes a time of reflection to start to understand the work that God has been doing. As I look back on the last few months, I am starting to get a glimpse of how God has been preparing myself, the current students and the church, for *Living Water Youth Group* to take off.

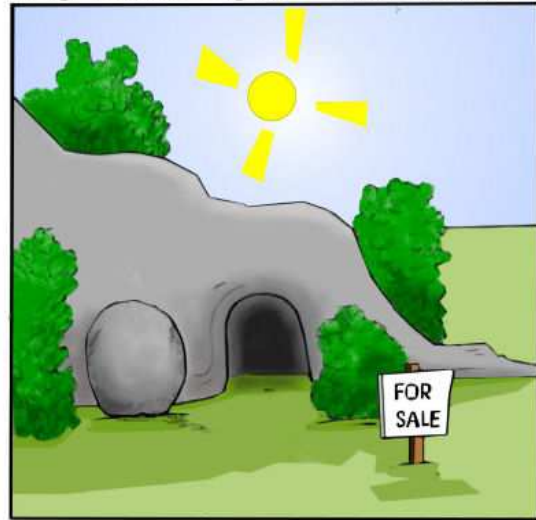
I am learning how important it is to establish strong foundations now, so that as the ministry grows we can hold true to who we are in Christ. The foundations of trust and truth that are being built will hold the us together as new relationships are formed. The foundations of fun and friendships allows us to grow in community and experience joy together in Christ. And most importantly the foundations of Jesus and the gospel will continue to guide us and show us how to live a life pleasing to God.

As God has been working and constructing these foundations, my excitement for what is to come continues to grow. If this gets you excited too, there are a few upcoming events in which you can participate in and be a part of the work that God is doing with the youth group. First, there will be a parents/supporters meeting after church on March 6th. I want to invite anyone that is interested in learning more about the youth group to join us, as I am going to be sharing what some of our hopes, plans and goals are. Also on Saturday, March 19, the youth group will be hosting a pancake breakfast fundraiser. Breakfast will be served here at church from 8-10:30am and will be a great chance for anyone that

has been wanting to support the youth group to get involved.

I hope that you are as excited as I am for the direction that the youth group is heading. Your prayers and support continue to be a blessing.

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



FOR SALE - Single owner tomb. Only used three days, and still has that new tomb smell. Reason for sale.. resident was resurrected.

Advice From an Old Farmer

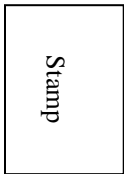
Live a good, honorable life... Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.

Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a Rain dance.

Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.

The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every mornin'.

Moraine Valley Community Church
10040 S. 88th Ave. Palos Hills, IL 60465



Dated Material
Address Change Requested

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10040 S. 88th Ave. Palos Hills, IL 60465 708-598-4434