



# FOLLOWING JESUS WHERE?

THE TALL SPIRE  
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2018

## Healing the Divide

Our nation, communities, and our families are divided. Yes, I know, that's sounds like Captain Obvious talking, but what isn't so clear is how to heal the divisions within and throughout our selves and nation. I recently reread Walter Brueggemann's classic work, *The Prophetic Imagination*, and it has become a lens through which I see so much around us. Begin with Moses and the Exodus. Something new is happening in the history of the world! The cries of the Hebrew slaves have been heard and through God's movement in Moses, the intention is both to dismantle the oppressive empire of Pharaoh and form an energizing new community focused on "God's freedom and the politics of justice and compassion" (law and love). The act of the prophetic is twofold: 1 – to criticize the way things are while embracing the sadness felt at experiencing such a painful reality (dismantling) and 2 – to energize the people with a new vision of God which inspires "amazement" (energizing: reestablishing God's intention for humanity or Kingdom and Community). The works of the prophets all follow at least part of this two-step dance.

Take Jeremiah, written at the beginning of the Babylonian exile (587 BCE). In Jeremiah (as well as Lamentations, attributed to Jeremiah), it is heart wrenching to read of the grief for the death of Israel. He is announcing the funeral, the end of the Israelite people. He must do this because the powers at work in the Israelite and

Babylonian monarchies just as the powerful today want us to simply be numb, unable to feel and thus maintain their control over us for "forever". This is, of course, absurd, but it is the denial of "kings", desperate to maintain the status quo and thus their control or power. Therefore, prophetic ministry must first "bring people to engage their experiences of suffering to death." Acknowledging that we will all die is both obvious and taboo. We, as a society, don't like to talk about death. We have created a whole industry around funeral direction so that we don't have to contemplate or interact with this reality. Societal powers (or what he calls the "royal consciousness") want us to remain numb, apathetic, or indifferent which creates behaviors that can be managed. For example, days after the national trauma of 9/11, we all saw politicians and celebrities get on television and tell us to "get back to normal" by spending money at shops or restaurants. We couldn't let the terrorists win, right??? Maybe, instead of trying to get back to normal in the midst of tragedy, we need to linger with the sadness and the work of the prophetic is embracing the mourners. Helping them to see that the numbness they feel is not normal nor God's intention for their life. When the numbness is gone, we notice God's enduring presence and intention to be present in every moment of our lives.

This leads to the second step of the prophetic work, that of energizing and the creation of

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**Sunday Worship @ 10:30am**

**Misión Bautista Worship @ 12:30pm**

**Adult Forum @ 9:30am**

**Church Office Hours  
Monday – Thursday 9am to 2:30pm  
Friday 9am to 1pm**

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**Rev. Tim Dalton, Senior Pastor**

**Matthew Perez, Minister of Music**

**Lucia Gold, Office Manager**

**George McCullough  
Maintenance Supervisor**

•  
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**LOOK FOR THE TALL SPIRE  
at Bryant Avenue and North Street  
adjacent to White Plains High School**

amazement. Take Second Isaiah (Isaiah chapters 40-66), written later during the Babylonian exile. This is a powerful work of hope that builds upon Jeremiah's embrace of their fear and misery, in which the Hebrew people are ready to test "hope". Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Second Isaiah is where new ideas of what it means to be in covenant with God can mean: 1 – to be a light to the nations and 2 – a suffering servant that brings us an understanding of struggles being a part of the work of God's people in order to prophetically dispel the notions of numbness and despair being sold to us. John the Baptist's prophetic mission was singular: to prepare the way of the Lord! This new hope grows out of the end of old ways and grief into new beginnings and possibilities – a new possibility out of exile, of Jesus.

Jesus both criticizes the dominate culture and thus dismantles it with his death: "In the crucifixion of Jesus the ultimate act of prophetic criticism in which Jesus announces the end of a world of death (the same announcement as that of Jeremiah) and takes the death into his own person. Therefore we say that the ultimate criticism is that God embraces the death of God's people must die." Not standing in condemnation against us, but a God who in stands with us in the midst of death, the ultimate in love and compassion. Jesus also energizes in his resurrection, bring about the Kingdom of Heaven, a new reality that is dawning upon the world, and the amazement is felt in the energy of the new church that is formed through the Holy Spirit.

## Margaret's Garden

We had a bumper crop of green beans and a nice harvest of super-sweet sweet corn from Margaret's Garden this year. In addition we continue to get lots of super-sized zucchini, nice slicing cucumbers, and, for the first time in several years, enough blueberries and strawberries to sell. The only disappointment so far has been the delayed planting and slow development of tomatoes this year. I believe we will eventually have a good crop but it will be late in coming. This year we have been partnering with Misión Bautista to sell the garden produce and the combined proceeds will be used to support the Center of Hope-Haiti. Over the summer the young apple, plum, and paw-paw trees that were planted in the new orchard have taken



root and grown. Cover crops of mixed grasses and legumes were seeded in the new orchard plot and have grown up to supplant the brush and weeds that previously occupied that space. The new garden continues to be developed with plots being allocated to various people including the children of Misión Bautista, the Peace Project of Westchester, and several family groups. It has been fun to watch and offer advice to neophyte gardeners assiduously tending their new garden plots. We hope to allocate more plots next year to such groups that either distribute the produce to people in need or use it to supplement their own family's food supply. It is our hope that the gardens and orchard at FBCWP will continue to grow as resources that help support the Center of Hope Haiti and the White Plains community at large for years to come.

*Carl Hamby, Gardener-in-Chief*

So, the question remains: How do we heal our divided world? We see in this prophetic two-step dance both the greatest asset and weakness of both religious progressives and conservatives. Where progressives have a capacity to bring criticism to the current exploitation of our institutions and social order, they have had a history of a little articulation of hope that is not ultimately energizing, thus allowing fatigue to set in. And where conservatives have energy around personal salvation and hope of God's reign in the world to come, they have little stomach for being critical of unjust social practices today. If we are to be a prophetic church, we need both critical engagement and hopeful aspiration! That is how we heal our divisions; we become a truly prophetic people aware that "only anguish leads to life, only grieving leads to joy, and only embraced endings permit new beginnings."

Friends, we are at the challenging and exciting beginning of this dance as an authentic prophetic community! Over the past year, we have aided 8 hungry families with our Food Cooperative, partnered to host a community garden, we ministered to over 80 children in our community with an amazing week of Vacation Bible Camp, we are continuing to support children at the Center of Hope, Haiti (Inc.) and New York City Rescue Mission. More is to be done and we do it by engaging with and bringing hope to those who hurt. Won't you join in this prophetic work/dance?

*Faithfully Dismantling and Energizing, Pastor Tim*

## Bible Study Following Jesus Where?

What is God doing in the world? What is God doing in your world? What is God doing in you? Through you? With you? What is God desiring to do in us? Through us? With us? Please join us for the Fall bible study on what the Gospels say about discipleship, the journey with Jesus. Hope you can make it! Please let Pastor Tim know if you are interested in being a part of the group.

*Wednesday's at 8:00 PM in the Parsonage  
starting on September 19th through November 14th*



# The Blessed Bees

We will soon be winterizing our bee hives with the hope that they survive the harsh winter. Many beehives are lost over the winter, often due to starvation, chilling, pests, or disease. Our plan is to put up a barrier on the north east side of the hives to protect them from the direction that most storms travel. We also plan to put bales of hay around each hive to help keep them warm. Carl will later use the hay in the garden.

In the fall we will feed the bees with bee juice or syrup that is in a 2:1 mix (two parts granulated sugar dissolved in one part water by volume). We need to watch out for robbing, which can be particularly problematic in the fall from neighboring hives as well as marauding wasps or mice trying to get warm. We will keep the entrance reducer at the smallest opening to help with hive defense.

The reason we did not take honey this year is so the bees have enough honey to feed off of during the winter. Honey bees eat a lot during the winter, particularly in colder regions. For example, a typical hive eats about 60 to 90 pounds of honey over the winter. For reference, a full shallow super typically holds almost 30 pounds of honey. A medium super holds about 50 pounds. We will be leaving all of the honey in our hives for winter. We will not worry about the bees heating the space, because if the hives are wrapped with insulation there shouldn't be a problem.

Although many beekeepers don't bother with wrapping their hives, even in colder states, there are several advantages to wrapping. First, the bees will consume less honey if they don't have to expend a lot of energy staying warm. Second, wrapped hives have warm walls and ceilings, so condensation doesn't form on them, which keeps the bees drier. Third, warmer clusters are more mobile and have an easier time moving up to access the honey stores. Chronically cold clusters can actually starve to death, even when honey is available, due to their limited movement.

We will wait until mid-October when I know there will be no more hot days for the year. Be aware that brief periods of cold weather will not harm the bees, so even if the weather drops down well below freezing before the hives are wrapped the bees will be fine. It is prolonged periods of exposure to cold that wear colonies down and kill them.

Although many beekeepers report good results using tarpaper, I think it has the potential to collect too much heat on the odd warm sunny day in late winter. I prefer to use 1-inch rigid foam sheeting. Sheets of blueboard or pinkboard are available at hardware stores, and these materials offer snug warmth without absorbing too much heat from the sun. I will cut panels to fit around the hive, and then screw them together or attach them with bungee cords.

Insulation under the roof is also important to keep condensed water from dripping onto the cluster. You can use many types of insulation such as rigid foam sheeting, quilt batting, scrap wool, packing peanuts, or even newspaper. It seems to work well to remove the foam core during the last two weeks of March.



One of the dangers of inadequate winter ventilation is Nosema, or bee dysentery. It is a fungal disease that thrives in wet and chilly winter hives. Well-ventilated and well-wrapped hives are both snug and sufficiently dry throughout the winter, discouraging Nosema. We will need one ventilation gap at the bottom of the hive, and one at the top in order to create good cross-ventilation. In the top of the uppermost brood chamber drill a cluster of two or three 3/8-inch holes.

As soon as late summer hits and nectar sources have largely disappeared, we will flip the entrance reducer to the smallest opening and leave it there for the winter. It will cut down on problems with nectar robbers, and keep cold fall weather out. Additionally, mice love to invade hives in the late fall, when clustering bees are less able to defend their territory. We will be placing a mouse guard in the entrance and adding a cover to the back of the hive.

Every spring beekeepers discover that some of the hives that seemed the most vigorous in the fall have died during the winter because of a runaway problem with Varroa mites. Varroa can flare up quickly in the fall, killing many worker bees. Varroa are at peak numbers in August and September. This is also the time when queens virtually stop producing drone brood, the preferred food source for Varroa during their reproductive phase. With no drone brood around, reproductive female Varroa mites will shift their focus to worker brood cells. We try to do everything as natural as possible. I plan to sprinkle the bees with sugar and they will then eat the mites off of each other and not necessitate using harsh chemicals.

Please continue to pray for our bees this winter as we try our best to keep them alive and well!

*Lucia Gold, Keeper of the Blessed Bees*



## Vacation Bible Camp 2018 Recap

Our Vacation Bible Camp was an amazing success! We, along with Misión Bautista, the Salvation Army, and Trinity Lutheran served 80 children from our community with an all day, week-long camp bringing the love and energy of Jesus Christ into their lives. From adult and youth volunteers who served as teachers, counselors, and kitchen teams; everyone pulled together to make it a great week and grew closer together in the process. We are looking forward to doing this again next summer!

## Nourish Your Neighbor Food Drive

We will be having another healthy food drive for our **“Putting Families First: Food Cooperative”** with our supportive partners at **Nourish Your Neighbor** through the local Cornell University Westchester extension. For three consecutive Sundays in the month of September (*September 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>*) we will be collecting healthy food options for families. Please bring your donation with you to church, or drop it off during the week at the Wilson House church office.

## Upcoming Events

Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup> – Blessing of the Backpacks

Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> – Welcome Back Cookout

Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup> – Blessing of the Animals @10AM

## Adult Forum

We will be starting *Adult Forum* (Sunday School for Adults) on Sundays at 9:30AM on September 9th. Pastor Tim will be exploring the scriptures for that Sunday’s worship service in more depth for discussion and prayer.

## Trunk or Treat

Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 1PM to 4PM

Dress up your kids in their favorite Halloween costumes for our fourth annual Trunk or Treat! Featured activities include decorated cars with candy for trick-or-treaters, a moon bounce to play in, and face painting. Call the church office or visit our Facebook for details!

