

MOVING SPIRIT

devotional newsletter of

Village Community Church

Pastor's Parcel

Recently I've been doing some artwork. This color painting in *gouche*, [opaque watercolor] is monochrome in print, but that doesn't diminish the illustration I've seen within it.

In our 1st service's *sharing time* each Sunday, people can tell of their blessings during the week, especially the ways God spoke to them. I often point out that Jesus gave parables from nature and still does. He spoke to me from the photo I used as a reference for this painting. The stark contrast of a light feather on heavy rocks parallels the contrast between spiritual *life* and spiritual *lifelessness*.

All things God created are special in quality and function, but differences between the inorganic and the organic are extreme. Geological material is inert and uniform in composition. The biological organization in a single cell outstrips the structural complexity of New York City.

Rocks have none of the characteristics of life: *movement, growth, reproduction, stimulus response, and functional cell structure*. These elements are behind the



distinctive development of feathers, which enable birds to soar the skies, while rocks can't move on their own.

The mysterious variety among living things matches the marvelous uniqueness produced in us by spiritual life in Christ. Rocks have their place, but feathered wings have taught humans how to fly.

The Holy Spirit, the Heavenly Dove, brings not only new birth in Christ but fills our hearts with God's love, enabling us to soar with the wings of prayer and praise on an individual spiritual journey. We find our own flight pattern by taking a leap of faith. — *Pastor David Hatton*

Parish Proclamations

Some may be wondering why Pastor Terry is not preaching as often as in the past. He has reduced his pulpit time to once a month and will be extending those intervals progressively.

Retirement from the VCC Team has been on his mind for some time, even before regular participation in a church orchestra was added to his chaplaincy role in local Civil War re-enactments. So, sometime next year, he plans to retire from the pastoral team, yet hopes to remain on our list of preachers for occasional pulpit supply.

In the interim, we are continuing to pray for a younger person or couple to join the VCC Team and hopefully be mentored in assuming leadership when the present team must step down. Please, join us in that prayer, so this important ministry will continue at Eskaton.

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Personal Pulpit

(from the autobiography *Journey: The Travels, Tragedies and Triumphs* by Eskaton resident Charles V. McAvoy)

“In closing, here are some things I have learned and hope you will remember:

God won't ask the square footage of your house, but He'll ask how many people you welcomed into it.

God won't ask about your social status, but He will ask what kind of class you displayed.

God won't ask how many material possessions you had, but He'll ask if they dictated your life.

God won't ask what your highest salary was, but He'll ask if you compromised your character to get it.

God won't ask how many promotions you received, but He'll ask how you promoted others.

God won't ask what your job title was, but He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.

God won't ask what you did to help yourself, but He'll ask what you did to help others.

God won't ask how many friends you had, but He'll ask how many you were a friend to.

God won't ask about the color of your skin, but He'll ask about the content of your character.

God won't ask how many times your deeds matched your words, but He'll ask how many times they didn't.”

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Pithy Pieces

The MIRROR Concept

The mirror concept is very simple. When you have a strong reaction to people, both friends and strangers, it is quite often a mirror, or a reflection on what you like or dislike about yourself. You may encounter someone whose behavior disturbs you; this may reflect something that is a problem for you—something you wish you were better able to deal with....

You may encounter someone you really like who is reflecting your assets or characteristics you value in yourself. Try this out in your daily life. You may see yourself in the mirror and not become so disturbed at your own reflection. Your compassion and tolerance may grow for yourself and others. Think about it.... (selected)

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Praise's Portion

When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise!

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Our week is not complete
till we make it our goal

To honor the Lord's Day
and nourish our soul;
The help that we need
for the tasks that we face
Is ours if we worship
and draw from His grace.

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Precious Promises

For the Christian, death is the last
shadow before Heaven's dawn.

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God has given you His promise
That He hears and answers prayer;
He will heed your supplication,
If you cast on Him your care.

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Scripture has very much to say about
the spiritual status of those "**in Christ**"
"*alive to God in Christ*" – Rom 6:11
"*eternal life in Christ*" – Rom 6:23
"*no condemnation in Christ*" – Rom 8:1
"*sanctified in Christ*" – 1 Cor 1:2
"*we have hope in Christ*" – 1 Cor 15:19
"*triumph in Christ*" – 2 Cor 2:14
"*in Christ...a new creation*" – 2 Cor 5:17
"*liberty... in Christ Jesus*" – Gal 2:4
"*justified by faith in Christ*" – Gal 2:16
"*sons of God through faith in Christ*"
– Gal 3:26
"*blessed with every spiritual blessing...*
in Christ" – Eph 1:3

“*seated... in the heavenly realms in
Christ Jesus*” – Eph 2:6

“*sharers together in the promise in
Christ Jesus*” – Eph 3:6

“*saints in Christ Jesus*” – Phil 1:1

“*perfect in Christ*” – Col 1:28

“*the promise of life... in Christ Jesus*”
– 2 Tim 1:1

“*grace in Christ*” – 2 Tim 2:1

“*salvation through faith in Christ
Jesus*” – 2 Tim 3:15
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Prayer's Priority

There is no time of night or day
When God can't hear us as we pray;
There is no guarded room or place
Where we may not implore His grace.
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BURY THY SORROW

by *Mary A. Bachelor* (1868)

Go bury thy sorrow,
the world hath its share;
Go bury it deeply,
go hide it with care.
Go think of it calmly,
when curtained by night;
Go tell it to Jesus,
and all will be right.

Go tell it to Jesus,

He knoweth thy grief;
Go tell it to Jesus,
He'll send thee relief;
Go gather the sunshine
He sheds on the way:
He'll lighten thy burden—
Go, weary one, pray.

Hearts growing weary
with heavier woe
Now droop 'mid the darkness—
Go, comfort them, go!
Go bury thy sorrow,
let others be blessed;
Go give them the sunshine,
tell Jesus the rest.
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Perpetual Precepts

The call for justice must be strong
To show what's right and wrong,
But let's reject the smallest part
Of vengeance in the heart.
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We can't avoid growing old,
but we can avoid growing cold.
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God gives strength
in proportion to the strain.
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He who walks with God
will be out of step with the world.

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There comes a time in life, when you walk away from all the drama and people who create it. You surround yourself with people who make you laugh, forget the bad, and focus on the good. So, love the people who treat you right, and have compassion for those who don't!

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Poetry's Place

HAPPINESS

by *Helen Steiner Rice*

Happiness is something we create in our mind,
It's not something you search and so seldom find—
It's just waking up and beginning the day
By counting our blessings and kneeling to pray—
It's giving up thoughts that breed discontent
And accepting what comes as a "gift heaven-sent"—
It's giving up wishing for things we have not
And making the best of whatever we've got—
It's knowing that life

is determined for us,
And pursuing our tasks without fret, fume or fuss—
For it's by completing what God gives us to do
That we find real contentment and happiness, too.

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Pearls of Prudence

"Let us give up our plans, our work, ourselves, our lives, our loved ones, our influence, our all, right into God's hands; and then, when we have given all over to Him, there will be nothing left for us to be troubled about."

— *Hudson Taylor*

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The devil doesn't care how much good we do, as long as we don't do it today!

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No garment is more becoming to a child of God than the cloak of humility.

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Don't grumble because you don't have what you want; be thankful you don't get what you deserve.

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(found and contributed by Elaine Vargo)
God does not give us the charge card of grace to waste on thoughtless

purchases. He gives us the name of His Son, so that at His expense, we can buy a whole new way of living and loving.

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Pleasurable Pastime

Every Christian should own a red Bible... I mean, a *well*-read Bible!

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Day 1, God created the dog and said: “Sit all day by your front door and bark at all who come in or walk past, and I’ll give you a 20-year life span.” When the dog said, “That’s too long to be barking. How about only 10 years and I’ll give You back the other 10?” So God agreed.

Day 2, God made the monkey and said: “Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh, and I’ll give you a 20-year life span. The monkey said: “Monkey tricks for 20 years? That’s a pretty long performance. How about I give you back 10 like the dog did?” And God agreed.

Day 3, God created the cow and said: “Go slave under the hot sun in the farmer’s field all day long, have calves and give milk to support the farmer’s family, and I’ll let you live 60 years.” The cow said: “What a tough life for 60 years! Can I have just 20 and give You back the 40?” And God agreed again.

Day 4, God created man and said: “Eat,

sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life, and for this, I’ll give you 20 years.” But the man said: “Only 20 years? Couldn’t You give me my 20, the 40 the cow gave back, the two 10’s from the monkey and dog; that’d make 80... Okay?” “Okay,” said God, “You asked for it.”

This is why, for our first 20 years, we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. The next 40 years, we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next 10, we do monkey tricks to entertain grandkids. Then, the last 10 years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

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Proverb Prescriptions

Forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred and the waste of energy.

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If we have God’s Word in our mind, He can put the right words in our mouth.

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Man needs more than a new start—he needs a new heart.

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Better than counting your years is to make all your years count.

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If honesty isn’t kind, it’s the wrong kind.

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Too many people make a *grave* mistake by burying their talents.

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Priceless Prose

(found and submitted by Sally Murphy)

I hired a plumber to help me restore an old farmhouse, and he had a rough first day on the job. A flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric drill quit and his ancient one-ton truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he set in stony silence.

On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family. As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands. Then opening the door, he had an amazing transformation. With a smiling face, he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss.

Afterward, when he walked me to the car, we passed the tree and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I'd seen him do earlier.

"Oh, that's my *trouble tree*," he replied. "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure. Those troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and the children. So I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home and ask God to

take care of them. Then, in the morning I pick them up again.

"Funny thing is," he smiled, "when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there aren't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before."

Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here we might as well dance.... We all need a trouble tree!

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Past Pathways

(by **Ed Sullivan**, from a 1957 Guidepost book)

"All of my life I've been blessed, first with a wonderful father and mother, sisters and brothers. Later with an exceptional wife, special daughter and splendid son-in-law. My TV show dropped into my lap by complete accident. It is my deepest belief that all of these things have resulted from prayer—not so much my own—but prayers of priests and nuns I have known and with whom I've been privileged to work. So I know about the power of prayer. I know it keeps you steady, unshaken and able to take pain. I know it will guide you to your place—the place that will best help you grow.



Serving Residents at Eskaton

VCC meets each Sunday morning for a time of interdenominational Christian worship. We maintain *evangelical* faith in the Bible and express congregational unity at each monthly Holy Communion by unitedly confessing the Apostles or Nicene Creed. We hope that residents without church homes, or those who find travel to their own churches too difficult, will visit and enjoy our services.

Pastor David Hatton, a retired RN, is ordained in The Wesleyan Church and leads the VCC Ministry Team under the

sponsorship of Faith Legacy Church. On the team are Pastor Dawn Valerio, Rev. Terry A. Brown, and Rosemary Hatton, our pianist. For visit requests or more information, **our contact numbers** are:
Pastor David's cell phone: 605-9615
Pastor Dawn's cell phone: 764-2328
Rosemary & David's home: 550-8200
Pastor Terry's cell phone: 425-4731
Faith Legacy Church office, 487-5123

Regular Meetings:

Worship, 10:00 a.m. [TV Room, for now]
Worship, 11:15 a.m. [Assisted Living]
Communion – 1st Sunday each month

Village Community Church

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c/o Faith Legacy Church
3532 Whitney Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95821

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