

Sharing

JULY/AUGUST 2020

A Journal of Christian Healing

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OUR MISSION:

OSL empowers God's people throughout the world with Jesus' healing ministry, by:

- Training in the healing ministry of Jesus.
- Learning to pray for others.
- Providing opportunities to experience the healing power of Jesus.
- Empowering you to confidently pray for anyone, anywhere, anytime in the name of Jesus.

OUR VISION:

Individuals, communities and nations made whole, free of sickness, through Jesus Christ.

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THE GIFT OF JESUS' PEACE



REV. PAUL FEIDER
OSL Board President

Several years ago I received a call from a mother who said her 27-year-old daughter was in the hospital on her last days battling cancer. The mom said her daughter was very fearful of death. She asked if I would come and pray with her for healing. Even though it was quite a distance, I felt called

to go. I talked with the daughter about God's love and the peace that comes from a relationship with him. I anointed her and shared communion and then prayed for healing and inner peace.

About a month later, the mother called me and said, "How can I thank you for what you did for my daughter and our family?" I said, "What happened?" She said, "My daughter passed away two weeks after your visit, but I want to thank you for what you did for her." She went on to tell me that after the prayer for healing, her daughter's fear of death went away, and she did not need morphine any more since all her pain was gone. She said, "My daughter called every one of her siblings into her room and comforted each one of them and resolved any unfinished issues. She did the same with us parents. And then she peacefully let go into God's hands. Thank you for the gift that you gave her." I said, "Thank Jesus for the gift."

That incident reminded me that the most precious gift Jesus gave us is his Peace. It is the gift he gave to his apostles after the resurrection. He promised his Peace before he died. He said, "*Peace is my farewell to you, my peace is my gift to you*" (John 14:27). When he appeared to his apostles after the resurrection he said, "*Peace be with you*" (John 20:19). Think of their situation. They were fearful of their own death, grieved at the loss of their master, angered at the

unjust killing of their friend and living in city where violence could break out at any moment. And Jesus said, "*Peace*." His Presence, his Peace calmed their fear, relieved their grief, dissolved their anger and transformed it into compassion. He purchased this gift for us on the cross. Then weeks later he sent his Spirit at Pentecost with all the power and gifts his followers would need to carry his Peace and healing into the world.

The situation in our world is somewhat similar to that of those first disciples. We see and hear of injustice, fear of death, anger and grief. We cannot change all of that, but what we can do is receive and give the Peace of Jesus. We can live in the assurance of his indwelling Presence. We can be people exuding the deep inner Peace that comes only from Jesus. His Peace brings significant healing and transformation. When we commit our life to Jesus and open ourselves to full access of his Spirit, we receive his inner Peace and all the gifts of the Spirit to carry into the world.

Some have described these past months as a time of isolation. For us as Christians, however, it is a time of deepening our awareness of the Presence, the Peace of Jesus. As Christians we are never isolated. We are given time to be enriched in the Presence, absorbing daily his deep Peace. Using this time as enrichment empowers us for the much-needed ministry in our world. Early Christians would intentionally pull away from the distractions of the culture to be replenished with the Peace that only Jesus can give, and then they would enter their world with new wisdom, courage and power to heal.

People need the Peace of Jesus, especially at this time. We each have access to that Peace and the gifts of the Spirit. We can use this time to be enriched in the quiet and empowered for ministry. We can access the virtual conferences, Bible studies and healing community gatherings to equip ourselves for the vital mission of OSL. We can discover new ways to manifest the healing presence of Jesus. We have been richly blessed to know the Peace of Jesus, and we have a great treasure to share.

PLENTY GOOD ROOM

BY THE REV. DR. SANDI KERNER



OUR HUMAN CONDITION

Have you ever confessed to being in a tight spot, pressed for time, squeezed out, pinched financially or bound up? These sayings conjure a visceral feeling of being constricted, clenched or claustrophobic, with no way out nor room to move, resulting in depression, anxiety or anger. Even as I write this article, we are in the second month of “sheltering in place” to curtail the spread of the Coronavirus. At this point many of us can readily identify with feeling cooped up, having cabin fever or being restricted from physical social contact and freedom of movement in wider circles. In the memorable words of a song by Robert Fletcher and Cole Porter, our collective cry is, “Don’t fence me in!”

Many people who seek out healing prayer share comparable stories of distress. In one way or another, they long to be set free from what binds, constricts, controls or presses them down. Sickness, pain or trauma can be located in physical, emotional, spiritual or relational aspects of their lives, often touching all of them. How do we minister to those who are in a tight spot?

THE WORD AND WORK OF GOD

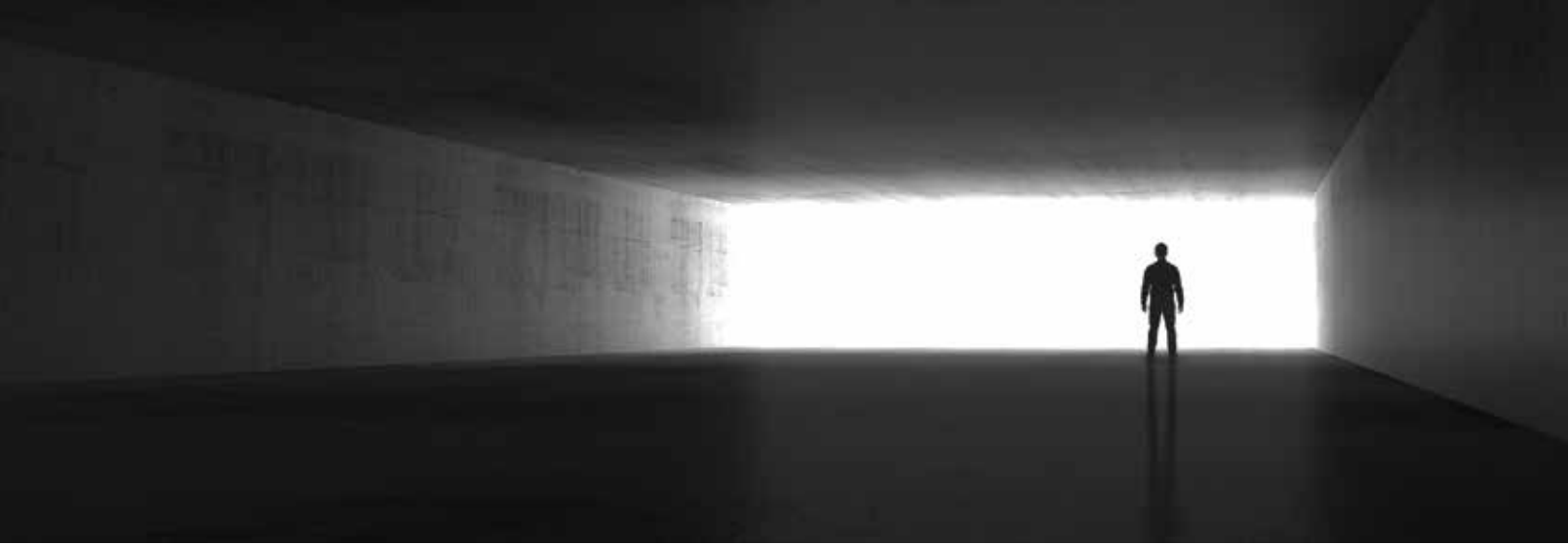
First, we turn together in prayer to our Savior and healer, Jesus. The Hebrew root for the name of Jesus, *Yashah*, means to save, be capacious, make wide or spacious, make sufficient, or be or live in abundance. It is often translated as to deliver (as in give width and breadth to), to be placed in freedom or to be victorious or give victory. He is *Yeshua*, whose very name speaks of saving and healing, bringing spaciousness and new life to all who call upon him. When we call upon the name of Jesus, we receive all the benefits of his passion: forgiveness, cleansing, healing, deliverance, being made whole, reconciliation and spaciousness in abundance. “*He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from our sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds, you have been healed*” (1 Peter 2:24).

Second, Psalm 4:1 provides direction for our prayers and demonstrates how God acts on our behalf: “*Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You gave me room when I was in distress.*” *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary* points out for this verse that the words for salvation and distress include notions of spaciousness and narrowness (NJBC, p. 527). *Merchab*, in Hebrew, translates as room, breadth, a wide or large place, an extraordinarily spacious place, symbolic of freedom from distress and anxiety. In the context of the healing prayer ministry, we are servants who call on the healing power of God to deliver us from the hand of the enemy and set our feet in a wide and spacious place (Psalm 31:8).

A story from the Book of Genesis illustrates this sense of saving spaciousness. As the patriarch Isaac prospered in the Philistine land of Gerar, and his flocks, herds and household became too numerous and a threat to the people of that land. King Abimelech ordered Isaac and his household to depart and settle elsewhere, so they camped in the valley of Gerar. Isaac excavated the wells of water that his father Abraham had dug there and that the Philistines had plugged. Isaac’s servants dug two new wells, but the Philistines contended with them for water rights. Moving a greater distance apart, Isaac dug a third well, uncontested by the locals, which he named *Rehoboth*, saying, “*Now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land*” (Genesis 26:22). *Rehoboth* translates from Hebrew as a broad and wide space, a place of enlargement and plenty of room. Plenty good room is healing and supports fruitfulness and flourishing.

Listening to God and people in the healing prayer ministry provides plenty good room for healing, fruitfulness and human flourishing.

Third, in the power of the Holy Spirit, as healing prayer ministers, we create and curate that sense of saving spaciousness as we deeply listen to people, their stories and requests for prayer. We welcome them with focused, loving attention, with compassion and with intentional listening. Unhurried in our approach, we invite them to take deep breaths, to share both story and emotion and to unburden their soul as we listen with the heart and ears of Christ. Good listening enfolds the other in a safe space, does not judge or advise, accepts the person as is and communicates support at a deeper level than words. We listen to the person even as we listen to God for how to engage in prayer ministry. Listening to God and people in the healing prayer ministry provides plenty good room for healing, fruitfulness and human flourishing.



A WIDE AND SPACIOUS PLACE

My late husband, Fr. Bob Kerner, had claustrophobia for most of his life. He was overwhelmed by increasing anxiety and agitation whenever seated in the middle of a row, hemmed in by others on every side or confined to a small space. One day, while attending a large renewal conference, he was squeezed into the middle of a row by those who had arrived late. Telltale signs of panic ensued: sweaty palms, elevated heart rate and a growing sense that he had to get out of that tight spot. He moved to the back of the church and remained there until the end of the session. When prayer ministry was offered following the session, he asked me to go with him to one of the prayer teams. After he shared his experience of panic with the intercessors, they asked if he remembered a time when he did not feel claustrophobic in a tight space. He could not.

One member of the prayer team then asked about the circumstances of his birth and delivery. We understood later, as we learned about healing prayer, that this question of when such a struggle began could be a key to knowing how to focus the prayer time. His birth and delivery were traumatic, indeed. He was born prematurely by almost two months; his early weeks of life were tenuous at best, confined to a primitive incubator while his lungs developed. Bob was also turned around inside his mother's womb and was almost born in a breech position. The physician successfully turned him around as he descended the birth canal, but he had been wedged inside for a time.

With the disclosure of these new details, the prayer ministers then turned in prayer to our Lord and asked Jesus to be present with him and his mother in that delivery room in their deep distress. Bob reported he could see Jesus in that memory as the delivering physician. Moreover, he became aware of light and air in both the delivery room and within the birth canal. He physically felt that saving spaciousness and freedom to move. He exclaimed, "I see

Doctor Jesus! He is signaling and saying to me, 'Bobby, this is the way out!'" Deep joy accompanied his birth, and he later discerned that in the economy and mercy of God, his mother also experienced healing from the trauma of his birth. At that moment he beheld her shining face, even as she was already resting among the saints in glory.

His healing was tested the following day when he was again squeezed into the middle of a row at the closing service of the renewal conference. This time, there were no signs of claustrophobia, only a sense of light and air, a feeling of spaciousness. The practice of this church was to place hands on the person's shoulders ahead in line while waiting to receive Holy Communion. Bob realized this would have caused him great discomfort before his healing. On this day he only felt great joy and the sense of being hugged and held by the body of Christ.

CONCLUSION

For anyone who is, at this moment, in a tight spot, hear the testimony of the psalmist and have hope: "[God] brought me out to a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me" (Psalm 18:19). For those who respond to God's call to pray with others for healing, point people to Jesus whose very name signifies the saving spaciousness of God. And as you pray with others, offer them a wide and welcoming presence of deep listening and compassion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Then watch God work!



The Rev. Dr. Sandi Kerner, Chaplain at The Prayer Center, a ministry of St. Christopher Camp and Conference Center, Seabrook Island, SC, is an OSL Chaplain, Founder of Fellowship of Christ the Healer, former Director of Healing Prayer at Christian Healing Ministries, Jacksonville, FL, and at Richmond Hill Retreat Center, Richmond, VA. She is a former Rector of two churches in Virginia (both named for St. Luke), and a professed member of the Community of Aidan and Hilda.

The Unforced Rhythms of Grace

BY JACKIE DOSS

I am not a Bible scholar. There are many scripture passages that I can picture in my mind, but when I search, I can't find them. For instance, I was looking for a passage from one of Paul's letters, where he admonishes his church to do what he does. I've searched in BibleGateway.com using various forms of *"Watch me. Do what I do"* in multiple translations, but I've come up empty. I know it's there somewhere! I remember hearing Curry Blake preach about it. He said Paul was training people to walk in the Spirit—to heal the sick and raise people from the dead, just as Jesus taught his disciples. He told them that the best way to do it is to imitate what he did.

This is the best way to learn! It goes beyond listening to lectures and taking notes. It's called practicing, emulating or reverse engineering; some might even call it "fake it 'til you make it." We could listen and admire, but is that truly "taking to heart" in the literal sense? The heart is the muscle that keeps your body "working!" Imitation requires that you to step out of your comfort zone and "do" something.

Not everyone is bold. Some of us sit on the sidelines, hoping we'll muster up some courage or attain enough knowledge to go out into the world and make disciples—after we know, after we know it ALL. We listen to good preachers, take notes, pray for boldness and hope we'll learn by osmosis. But that's not how a baby learns to walk, and it's not how Jesus wants us to learn. He says, "Follow me..." as in "Get up! Walk! Take your first step!"

There's another passage or two in scripture where Paul urges the church to encourage one another, to lift one another up. That's what living in community entails: learning from one another, gaining courage from one

another and walking through life together—always learning, always growing. We are a body, and Christ is our head—a beautiful, complex organism that accomplishes things the hand alone could never accomplish, no matter how many notes it takes!

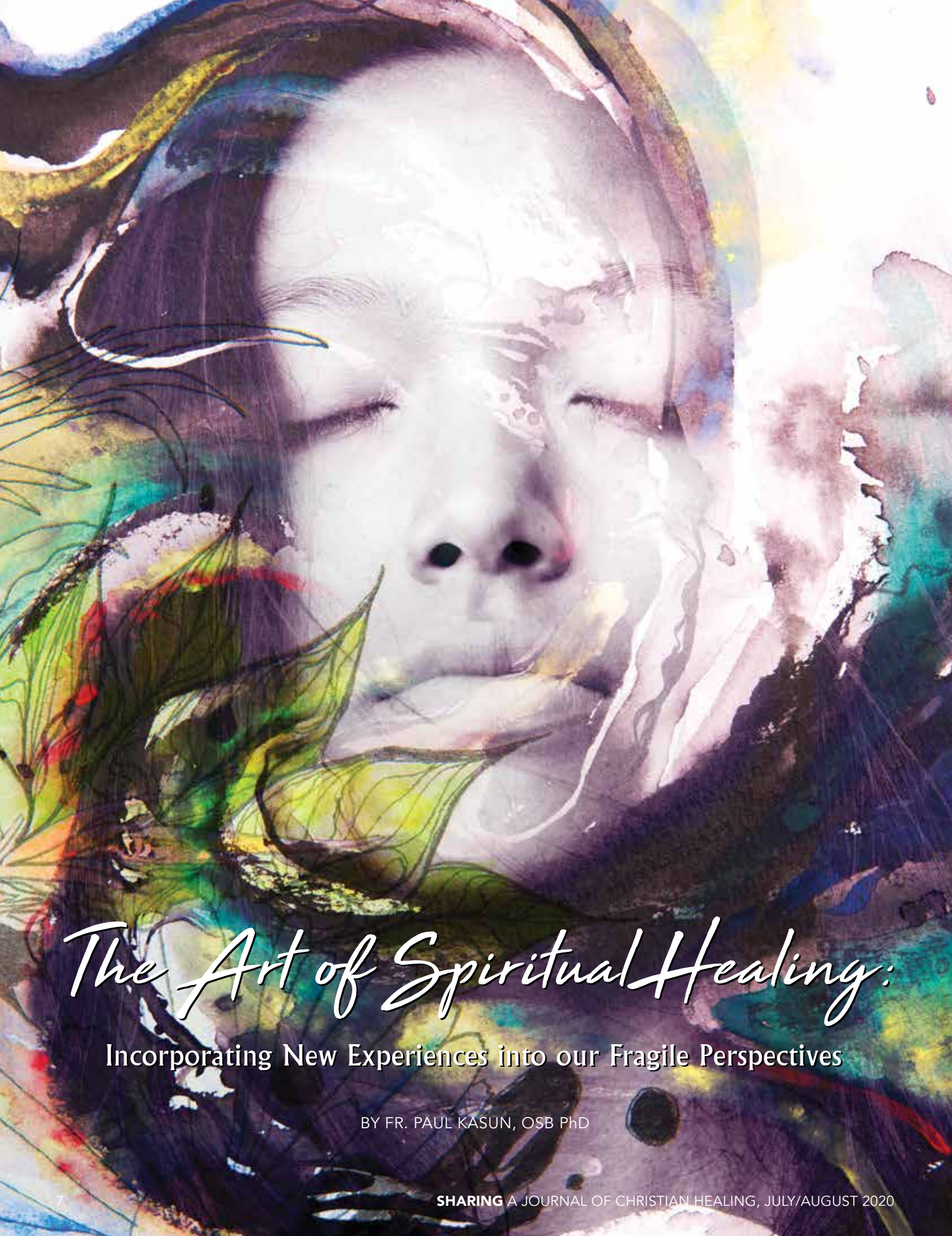
That's why whenever I'm asked to do something I've never done before, I find out what others have done and try to learn from their victories and failures. That's where we are right now in OSL. There are folks out there who have learned how to reach people through virtual conferences and services, and the rest of us are learning from them. Many have been walking in the Spirit so long that they've learned the "unforced rhythms of grace." They are our teachers. If you haven't been getting together with an OSL community in one way or another, you may not have anyone to imitate. Find them! Learn from them.

From seemingly unimportant things like learning to use technology—to big things like praying in faith and seeing people healed—if we learn from our brothers and sisters in Christ, we are following Christ, one baby step at a time.

"Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace." Matthew 11:29
The Message (Look! I found a passage!)



Jackie Doss has been involved in healing ministry as member of OSL since 2007. She is a former teacher and jack-of-all-trades who is also an amateur singer/songwriter/writer and a "Life Message Coach." Jackie writes and performs soaking prayer scripts and leads music at small events. She is married with one grown son, daughter-in-law, and perfect grandbaby. She lives in Irving, Texas with her husband and three dogs.



The Art of Spiritual Healing:

Incorporating New Experiences into our Fragile Perspectives

BY FR. PAUL KASUN, OSB PhD

SHARING A JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN HEALING, JULY/AUGUST 2020

T

he steps we have taken to reduce our likelihood to catch Coronavirus has reshaped how we think and live. For some of us, the changes cause unbearable pain, both physical and mental. How is it that some people are better at bearing

pain and integrating new, sometimes tragic, events into their daily lives and others less so? Because I am both a social scientist and religious leader, I have found unique people who have integrated the best of these two areas into their way of thinking and living. In this article I share with you an excellent example of one of our OSL members. She developed the highest art of spiritual healing, which includes the awareness of her fragility and sensitivity to other people's experiences. Her goal was to be an instrument of God to help others make sense of their personal experiences and wider social conflicts. Indeed, she is a testimony to the power of prayer and the value of God's gift of science to us.

I introduce you to Margaret Gittings, who turned 90 years old this year and has three daughters. Margaret became an occupational therapist, which was an integral part of our health care system, in 1953. While psychiatrists diagnosed the problem, occupational therapists worked with the patients to develop a new perspective enabling them to function in the world. Originally from Colorado, she transferred to Omaha, working at the former St. Joseph's Center for Mental Health. Margaret saw her work as an extension of her faith in Christ as an Episcopalian.

Through faith, she maintained hope in the most difficult of situations to transmit the will of God, seeing the world through the eyes of Christ. Through science, she learned how the social sciences give us insights and knowledge into the weaknesses and strengths of human beings. Margaret witnessed and ministered to humanity's frailest populations, giving individuals the tools to live happy lives by being part of a team to integrate them back into society.

Her journey in the last few decades changed dramatically, in an instant, when she helped an inebriated, blind man get out of a busy street. Seeing the danger that he was in, she stopped her car and got out, attempting to walk the man back to the sidewalk. During this time, he reacted brusquely, causing her to twist, and she fell, breaking vertebrae in her back. Since then, she has been largely confined to her bed. The accident occurred in 2006, when Margaret lived and worked in Los Angeles. For

most people, a drastic change in lifestyle such as hers would mean serious bouts of depression and festering emotional wounds. Many people in such situations die of depression.

Not Margaret! She turned to powerful prayer organizations like her church, and she became a member of OSL. Remarkably, her life as a woman dedicated to both science and religion became the powerhouse of her faith. Many of us may doubt. Was it God's fault that she got out of her car to help an inebriated, blind man? Was God punishing her for something she could not see, and thus that was the reason why she would never walk again? So how did Margaret deal with the turn of events in her life? For her, the words of Jesus carved out her future, *"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple... In the same way, anyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple"* (Luke 14:27, 33).

Through faith she maintained hope in the most difficult of situations in order to transmit the will of God, seeing the world through the eyes of Christ.

Her entire life of service was based on simple Christian principles, which enabled her to see problems and offer solutions. Being able to confront incredibly difficult situations meant that she was aware of her own fragility. I suspect this made her transition from an active life to a passive life easier. This does not mean that this transition was not painful. It was painful. Indeed, there are many things to grieve and this must not be overlooked and this process of going through grief helped her see many opportunities, similar to her past work. For example, Margaret's careful attention that helped many people with mental illness now helped her carefully hear the voice of God. She saw what her own cross looked like and accepted it.



In many conversations with Margaret, she expressed the idea that "If God gave me this cross, then I will make the best of it! If God wants me to renounce certain pleasures of life like driving, going to the movies and restaurants, helping clients, or visiting family members, then I will do it." She reasoned that she could create a new lifestyle with new activities since she had long periods alone. She was inspired by St. Paul. He wrote to the Philippians, "*Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross*" (Philippians 2:6-7).

Margaret's commitment to her faith led her to OSL. OSL asked her to participate in the healing prayer ministry by phone. She would listen to the recorded prayer requests and then distribute them to her prayer partners. Margaret exclaimed, "*I can do that!*" People left their messages on her dedicated phone line for their intentions. She listened

to the messages every day, respecting the privacy of each person, but then reaching out to her vast reserve of prayer partners. Margaret carefully considered each request, meditated upon it and then turned to God for guidance: "Which one of my prayer partners would best fit the current request?" She explained that it takes discernment and, in some cases, requires deeper prayer meditation.

We see this in Jesus' experience. For example, after the Transfiguration of Jesus (Mark 9:6-7), Jesus, James, John and Peter walked down the mountain and encountered a problem. There was a boy who was possessed by a demon, and the other disciples could not expel it or cure the boy. Jesus cured the boy but the disciples were confused, "*When he entered the house, his disciples asked him in private, 'Why could we not drive it out?' He said to them, 'This kind can only come out through prayer'*" (Mark 9:28-29). They did not realize what Jesus knew—the ability to cure a boy with a demon needs lots of prayer.

Margaret followed in the footsteps of Jesus with her healing ministry. In 2016, I made a visit with Margaret in L.A. before I left for a temporary assignment in Bogotá, Colombia. I had been one of her dozens of prayer partners; however, she had less access to me because of the distance. She wrote me a letter and confided, "*My prayer program is going very strong. I miss having your help. I do have other members to help including Mary and Laura. Anna-Marie already has so much with the problems in her job that I don't ask her (these are her daughters). I think I have told you I have been reading about spiritual maturity.*"

Indeed, it was her spiritual maturity that led her to be an integral part of OSL's healing ministry. Margaret talked to some of the people who called the prayer line because they wanted and needed to be heard. Margaret healed the hearts with and through the power of Jesus. In the same letter quoted above, Margaret revealed her power to heal, which was the power of Christ in her heart and mind. In some conversations she listened to people struggling with their fate in life. For Margaret, spiritual maturity meant the ability to listen without judging. "*I think I have told you (that) I have been reading about spiritual maturity. It really helps in the healing ministry, especially as some blame God for their illness.*"

For spiritual healers the ear is critical. Our ability to use our minds to translate what we hear into a feeling of solidarity is quite tricky. In other words, it is not easy to hear a negative, horrible experience and then to make sense out of it. Indeed, spiritual maturity that helps us guide others in time to find meaning in and from our painful experiences. Listening to pain is a tool of the healer that provides an opening for the hurt person to move to the next step.

Margaret teaches us a few things about being a spiritual healer:

First, a spiritual healer looks forward and does not regret the past. Margaret has no regrets about what happened to her. She saw a change in her life circumstances and decided to learn about her possibilities to adapt to her new situation, maximizing her ability to serve others.

Second, a spiritual healer finds joy in the simplest things of life. For example, in a 2017 letter to me, she wrote of her youngest daughter, *"Mary is so wonderful. She can fix my TV and other electrical things I have, like phones, etc. She is also so supportive and tries to find out what I need and get it."* It is this heart of joy that sees blessings in what people can do, even though our weaknesses are all too obvious to see. A heart of joy builds up a person by pointing out what they do well, rather than diminishing them by what they do poorly.

Third, a spiritual healer recognizes her needs. She wrote of her middle daughter, *"Anna-Marie and Lulabell (their pet dog) make my life so happy. Anna-Marie brings me coffee and other things I need as well as keeping me from being so lonely."* Spiritual healers need people and are not afraid to express it. In the last lines of her letter, Margaret encouraged me. *"Best of success in Colombia, and please be safe. I don't know what I would do if you were injured."*

Margaret's training as an occupational therapist and working in hospitals dedicated to mental health across the United States strengthened her faith. Likewise, her dedication to her faith and love for God gave her the energy and power to be an outstanding occupational therapist. For Margaret, the depth of our ability to cure mental illness was matched by the depth of our ability to know God. The two are sides of the same ladder, of which the rungs between them give us the ability to go up and down, to search for the proper solutions. There is space, and there is time to mediate. It is like one of Jesus' parables about heaven, *"Do you understand all these things?" They answered, 'Yes.' And he replied, 'Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old' (Matthew 13:52).*



Paul Kasun is an ordained priest in the Catholic Church, first serving as a diocesan priest in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1994. He joined the Missionary Benedictines in Schuyler, Nebraska, in 2003. As a monk, he furthered his studies at the University of Texas at Austin and received his doctorate in the Department of Sociology in 2015. Currently, he lives and ministers at the Benedictine Monastery of El Rosal, Colombia, and occasionally teaches at the University of Rosario in central Bogotá. He also gives retreats, does spiritual counseling and is currently writing a report based on a study of Vocational Schools associated with Benedictine Monasteries in Tanzania, Uganda and Togo.

When Trouble Comes

BY KATHLEEN FESSLER

When trouble comes and burdens me
With dread to face tomorrow,
Stealing from me peace and joy
Replaced by loads of sorrow,

I look to You, Lord, seeking rescue.
There's no place else to turn.
My only hope is in You.
For comfort now I yearn.

I'm feeling like a drowning man,
His life preserver grasping tight,
Holding on the best he can.
I cling to You with all my might.

Now your words bring comfort.
"Fear not" you say to me.
Your Spirit brings such sweet support.
You'll not abandon me.

You show me that I'm not alone.
All earth is full of mayhem.
There are sorrows others own.
With joy we comfort them.



When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He told His disciples to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

Unfortunately, many believers are reluctant to do that. The late Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, determined only 2 percent of Christians actively share their faith. That means the remaining 98 percent are not regularly introducing others to Jesus Christ. Every Christian has been given “the ministry of reconciliation” and is an ambassador for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18, 20).

The hardest part about sharing the Good News is overcoming fear and getting started. I remember feeling uneasy when initially approaching individuals with the gospel. Now I do that almost daily and have seen thousands give their lives to Jesus. Lately, I’ve stepped out more to minister healing to people. Hopefully, this article will inspire you to do likewise since that’s also part of the Great Commission. Mark 16:17-18 says, “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons... they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Although Jesus healed people in synagogues, there are many accounts of Him doing that outside the house of the Lord. Mark 6:56 says, “Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.” Nowadays, there are nonbelievers (and even some believers) who avoid going to church. God needs us to reach out to them.

The apostles also brought healing beyond the four walls of the church. Acts 5:14-16 says, “And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.”

PERSONAL EXAMPLES

One of the first times I saw God heal through my hands happened before the start of an evangelism outreach. A fellow soul winner named Gary had injured his ankle. He asked me to pray for him. I laid my hands on Gary’s ankle. The power of God knocked him to the floor of the church lobby. When Gary got up, he was healed!

TAKING HEALING TO THE STREETS

BY T. R. POST

Another memorable incident involved a couple walking towards me on the sidewalk. Kita was already saved but had difficulty walking. Raymond wasn't sure of his eternal destiny but prayed with me to get born again. Then I asked Kita if she needed healing, and soon held her hand as I commanded her swollen foot to be healed in Jesus' name. Immediately, Kita noticed a difference with her foot, had a big smile on her face and hollered, "That's crazy!" Then she had tears in her eyes. God really touched her.

One time in Florida, another missionary and I led 22 people to salvation. They included three preachers' kids and a young man in a wheelchair named J. C. After he accepted THE J. C. as his Lord and Savior, Yoanna and I ministered healing to him. J. C. started walking for the first time since a drunk driving accident left him paralyzed over six years ago.

Sports fans aren't afraid to brag on their favorite team in front of strangers who criticize them. Christians need to be more excited talking about a God who saves and heals.

God will even heal those not in a relationship with Him, such as the guard whose ear Peter cut off (Luke 22:51). One afternoon in Minnesota, a friend and I witnessed four young men in a park. One of them was a Muslim named Billy. After Billy's three friends were saved, my friend Brian offered to pray for Billy's hand that was injured in a fight the day before. The power of God flowed from Brian into Billy's hand and the pain went away. Billy still wasn't interested in becoming a Christian but was amazed he was able to move his hand.

Healing can result in people being born again. Often I go to McDonald's to have coffee and go online with my laptop. Once, while waiting for a refill of coffee, the employee, Shombia, apologized for moving too slow. She revealed she had pain in her shoulder. I then said, "I'm a minister of the gospel. The same Jesus that saves today heals today. May I pray for you?" I held her hand over the counter, and the pain went away. She smiled and said, "That's crazy." Then I asked Shombia if she was certain of going to heaven. Her response was, "I know I'm not." Shombia still believed the gospel and prayed to get saved as well.

NO NEED TO FEAR

The Lord wants to use all of us in healing the sick and hurting. That won't happen unless you step out. James 4:2 (KJV) says, "... ye have not, because ye ask not." We shouldn't let the fear of rejection stop us from offering prayer to someone. The worst that might happen is someone calling you a "Jesus freak" or "religious fanatic." Sports fans aren't afraid to brag on their favorite team in front of strangers who criticize them. Christians need to be more excited talking about a God who saves and heals.

One thing we shouldn't fear are thoughts of "What if this person doesn't get healed?" Our job is to lay hands on the sick and leave the results up to God. Some healings don't manifest immediately. While we were in North Dakota, my friend Clint and I ministered to his cousin who couldn't see out of his right eye due to an accident. His vision was restored after we prayed for his eye twice, just like the blind man in Bethsaida (Mark 8:24-25).

We also shouldn't let "unbelieving believers" stop us from healing the sick. Another time in Florida, I met a minister giving away Bibles in a gas station parking lot. As we fellowshipped, I ministered to numerous people walking by. A woman had her knee healed, and a man had problems with his back but felt better after receiving prayer. Another healing involved a man I knew. Unfortunately, the minister giving away Bibles didn't believe me when I told him God healed these people. Some Christians think healing and miracles passed away when the original apostles died. Hebrews 13:8 says, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*"

At the time I'm writing this, there are fears of the Coronavirus spreading throughout the world. Christians don't need to be afraid of sickness and disease. Jesus instructed us in Matthew 10:8, "*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.*" Whenever someone says, "Don't touch me. You might catch something", you could reply, "Touch me. You can be healed of something."

Don't let the fear of man or fear of failure stop you from reaching out to the lost and hurting. Let God use you to bring eternal life and His healing power to others. Your life will never be the same!



T. R. Post is a traveling missionary/evangelist who for over 25 years has preached the gospel and taught others to do the same through seminars, videos and articles on his website signsandwonders.org. This article is based on his recent presentation at the National Capital Area Chapter OSL in Washington, DC.

CONTRA-DICTIONS

BY LINDA MILLER



If there is one thing I have learned in my life, it is that when you receive a great vision or promise from the Lord and start believing it and moving toward it, there will immediately come a "contradiction."

It is all through scripture: David is anointed to be king, then 13 years of contradiction. Moses is to lead his people into the promised land, then 40 years of contradiction. Over and over we see this in scripture. What happens when the "contradiction" determines whether or not we ever move into the manifestation or how long it takes us to move into the manifestation of the promised blessing.

Once I started believing in divine healing, Jere, my husband, got really sick; and several people I prayed for died. It caused me to stagger in unbelief briefly. But then I decided it did not matter what I was experiencing; what God had promised mattered. If I was not experiencing the manifestation, I needed to press in with Him to find out what the hindrance was and keep in faith. Then I started seeing people healed miraculously!

I now realize the contradiction is the test of offense. The enemy wants to see if he can get us off track or distracted. Jesus tells us that "*Offenses will come*" (Matthew 18:7). It is how we handle the offense/contradiction that determines the next step.

Don't worry; God is so gracious. If we miss it, we will get to go around that mountain again. If you are like me, you want to learn from the contradiction and press through the offense in faith. You want to move up the mountain, not continue going around it.

Once I tell the Lord, "I don't care what things look like, I trust You. I am going with You. I believe You and what You told me." That is the first step to moving out of the contradiction. The second step is to completely forgive from your heart anyone who was part of the contradiction. Keep moving daily toward what God shows you to do, even if it does not appear the word will come to pass. Do not get into self-pity. Praise God in the contradiction!

Your breakthrough is coming—hold on in faith! Jesus is with you to help you and to guide you. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Tell the Lord, "I don't care how it looks. I don't care what I feel. I believe Your Word and will not be deterred!"

Buckle up! Great things are on the way!



Linda Miller is a former member of the OSL North American Board of Directors and the Convener of the Ascension Life OSL Chapter. She is the Prayer Pastor for Ascension Life Church in Athens, Tennessee and has been the keynote speaker at numerous OSL and CFO conferences/retreats in the US and Canada. You can reach Linda at linda@arnoldmiller.com.

A Shift in Focus

BY DAVID JACKSON

Despite the Holy Spirit's constant striving, Nature Coast Healing Community in Lecanto, Florida, had become stale. Our monthly meetings were predictable: worship and prayer, business meeting, book study. All the meetings were held in the same chapel. Our meeting time prevented working people from attending. The same convener and co-convener alternated roles year after year. Ninety percent of our prayers were for folks not present at our meeting.

Predictably, our numbers dwindled. Eight became too frail to attend. Our two deacons moved away. No pastors ever attended. Of the twenty-nine left on our roll, only six attended faithfully. Though we did hold successful healing missions in the springs of 2014, 2015 and 2016 that were well attended by OSL members from around the state, our regular monthly attendance remained low. We became discouraged.

Then the Holy Spirit provided us with a new convener. The new convener dedicated himself to attending OSL conferences and implementing what he learned. He encouraged monthly planning meetings with his co-convener during lunch at a local restaurant. Under his leadership, we focused on discernment. Where was the Holy Spirit leading our healing community?

First, we needed to re-dream our role as a healing community. Our OSL healing community is composed of members from seven local churches: four Episcopal, one Methodist, one Presbyterian and one Lutheran. We had thought of ourselves as an ecumenical group of Christians who met to pray for sick folk. We are beginning to see ourselves as a group that promotes healing prayer in our local churches, as a hub of healers. We are beginning to see ourselves as mentors in search of mentees. We have the expertise and the resources to strengthen the healing prayer ministry in our community.

Second, we needed to involve our pastors. We decided that every other month, rather than hold our regular meeting, we would sponsor a healing service in one of our churches, preferably on a holy day. In the past year, we have sponsored four healing services. Attendance at the services has been between twenty and forty people. Several have reported being healed, and all have reported being blessed. The pastors

have been supportive and wish to hold more services. Two prayer-team members from one of the churches have joined OSL, and two others from two different churches have expressed an interest in OSL.

Third, we needed to bring blessing prayers to the community. Our new convener has featured blessing prayers in each of our regular meetings. He has blessed us and has asked God to bless us, and he has taught us different ways to offer blessing prayers. In each of the four healing services, we have included a special time for blessing prayers along with a specific time for healing prayers. The congregations have been grateful, and the pastors have recognized the benefit of including this time of blessing.

Fourth, if we intended to take OSL into the community with power, we needed to grow in confidence in ourselves and our corporate self. We needed to experience *koinonia* (joint participation) in the way the early church did. One start was to encourage each OSL member to schedule a healing service with their particular pastor, giving each member a leadership role in our mission while also fostering cooperation and support among our members. Another small start was to hold our December meeting in a member's home and to invite spouses. We met on a Saturday, so working people could attend. We ate, sang and prayed together. In this more intimate setting, our focus was on strengthening ourselves for the healing ministry.

It is a small beginning, but we feel hopeful about our future. We feel that the Holy Spirit is leading us. We have stopped worrying about our dwindling numbers, and we have started focusing on how we can promote healing and equip our seven churches' healing ministries.



David Jackson is co-convener of Nature Coast Healing Community in Lecanto, Florida. Though he has been involved in healing prayer since 1976, he has been a member of OSL only since 2011. In addition to his work with Nature Coast OSL, he is active in the healing prayer ministry of his home church, Saint Anne's Episcopal, in Crystal River, Florida.

HOW HE SEES YOU

BY REV. JOSH ACTON

I was raised in a family of five girls and six boys. You counted right, that's eleven children. Each of my siblings had their own "thing" they did, a hobby, interest or passion with which they occupied their time. I am a twin and the youngest sibling by twenty minutes. One of my siblings was a beautiful pianist and clarinet player; another was a champion swimmer; another was an excellent cook and yet another a prodigy drummer. My twin brother and I were into sports. Baseball, for example, was the "sport of kings" in my house. My brother and I both did pretty well in this sport in large part because my Dad believed we were "called" to the big leagues!

My dad's life was literally rescued by baseball. As a child of the depression, he lived in abject poverty. He struggled in school, his older brothers were in gangs, and there were times when there was not enough to eat because his dad spent the family food budget on alcohol. He suffered greatly from the family dynamics set ablaze by the anger and alcoholism of his father. He began to believe he had no future in life, as he grew up in poverty on the streets of Washington, D.C. One thing he loved, and was extraordinary at doing, was playing baseball.

Then a man who was the Dean of a college preparatory academy watched him play. My dad must have wowed him because within a week, the man, who was called "Captain Lodge," had a talk with my dad and invited him to play baseball at Briarley Academy. My dad, with my mom's help, ended up with advanced academic degrees and became an educator for the rest of his working life. One can't help notice it was an educator who saw greatness in him.

So baseball was not just a sport to keep my brother and me occupied. It was something more. For quite a while, my brother and I had our struggles. We just weren't that good. As an eight year old, I remember the butterflies in right field were often more interesting to me than what was happening in the game. I was often distracted. I don't know how many fly balls went whizzing past my head while I daydreamed about hitting the game-winning home run. "Get your head in the game!" was a common mantra I heard from my dad, as he always was the coach of the teams I played on.

What does any of this have to do with healing? Well, I'll tell you. A person who has someone who loves and believes in

them and sees the greatness in them, even when striking out in life, or missing the ball, or losing a job, or morally failing, or crashing and burning in any number of things, will very likely also find transformation.

You, my friend, have such a person intimately sharing life with you. His name is Jesus. In Christ you are all the amazing things God says you are: "Royalty," "Ambassador of the Kingdom," "Beloved," "Apple of His Eye," "Christ in You," "More Than a Conqueror," "Chosen," "Child of God," "Holy," "Righteous," "Temple of the Holy Spirit," "Seated in Christ with the Father," "Victorious" and so much more. In Christ all these things are ironclad truth about you!

My dad wisely gave nicknames to my twin brother and me. To his dying day, he called us by these names. My brother's real name is James Acton; to my dad he was always "Brooks," which was the name of one of baseball's greatest infielders, Brooks Robinson. So as the ball was rolling between my brothers legs heading for center field, instead of berating him, he'd give some instruction like, "Get down on it, Brooks!" The name he gave me was "Bambino" after the Sultan of Swat, Babe Ruth. Even when I was the king of strikeouts he called me Bambino.

My brother and I ended up doing well in baseball—not well enough for the Big Leagues, but well enough to have a lot of fun playing the game. We had someone who gave us encouragement with a new identity with a new name! We began seeing ourselves as "Brooks" and "Bambino."

Practice daily in your meditations and prayers to see yourself in Christ. See yourself as your heavenly Abba sees you because how you believe he sees you will perhaps be the most important thing about you. Identity and healing go hand in hand. How you "see" something changes the dynamics and experience of that thing you see, especially if that thing is yourself.



Rev. Josh Acton was the Keynote Speaker for the 2008 North American Conference, served as Director of Region 7, President of the OSL Board of Directors and now serves as OSL North American Director. Josh is the author of *A Powerful Joy: Lessons in Healing, Night Light* and co-author of *Spirit Walk*.

What Kind of Letter Am I?

BY DITSIE SCOBIE

2 Corinthians 3:3
And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.

What kind of letter am I, LORD?

Am I a letter that people delight to open, or one that they dread?
Do I bring joy, light and encouragement, or do I bring gloom, worry, and despair?

Do I bring a smile to peoples' faces and leave their day a little bit brighter, or do I make them feel a little bit worse and their day a bit darker?

Do I look for Christ in each one I meet, or do I find things to judge negatively?

Do I praise Your Name or do I complain?

Do I bring hope or discouragement?

Put a guard on my tongue and on my face and on my heart, LORD.
Let me be an encourager, not a complainer.

Let me share hope, not worry or anxiety.

Let me not choose darkness, but be a light bearer, bringing Your shining light everywhere I go and to everyone I meet.

Let me bring encouragement and joy rather than discouragement and despair.

Fill me anew with Your Holy Spirit. Empower me, equip me, enable me to be used by You as a light bearer, a joy bringer, a hope imparter... a reflection of Jesus.



Flash BACK

BY ALFRED W. PRICE

OCTOBER 1987

Is God the *Author of Evil?*

"He who does not love, does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8).

The question we have set ourselves—"Is God the Author of Evil?"—is immediately and eternally answered if our text is absolutely true. If God is love, then nothing that is cruel or unkind or causes pain could ever be conceived in Him. There is no Hell here or hereafter that could possibly be of His determination. Whittier's *Eternal Goodness* stands forever true:

*And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.*

The mystery of pain is not disposed of by any single statement of Scripture, for even God's love is questioned. Mrs. Besant once declared, "I should not like to be God, and hear the cry of pain from the whole creation, and know that I had called such a rueful world into existence. It would break my heart." But this notable theosophist is scarcely competent to sit in judgment upon God, since it

has been said of her with some truth that all through her life, "she has sighed for wretchedness and shunned the wretched."

It is manifestly beyond our power to justify the ways of God with men. Our little minds can never fathom the infinite mind of God, but we know that men can never wholly love God until they are sure of God's love, that He is not the Author of Evil. The only solution of pain for Christians is the Christ and His Gospel. We have been taught in the name of Christ to accept pain and tragedies and disasters patiently as sent by an all-wise Father. "God sent this disease to you for some purpose that we cannot understand, this angina pectoris that writhes your poor body in excruciating agony, this leprosy that turns your beautiful body into a vile body, God devised it all for you," so it had been said by those who supposed they spoke in the name of our dear Saviour.

But it was never said upon any good scriptural authority, much less upon the authority of Christ. Jesus labored night and day to save men from pain, and He would never have prayed to His Father to remove it if God had caused

the suffering. Jesus wanted us to believe that when we pray for healing, we really release healthful powers. God would answer our prayers for healing. We have closed our prayers for healing with a great big question mark.

Before the churches can meet this challenge for healing in the name of Christ, they must rid themselves of every thought that God inflicts suffering upon any of His creatures. Men suffer for sin, for there is no such thing as sinning without suffering. Even God, and I speak reverently, cannot free us from suffering for sin, but God does not send the suffering. God overrules evil, and out of it brings good; and frequently out of anguish of mind or body, the fairest flowers of character grow.

We must not think of God as one who stands altogether apart from the sorrows of the world. God is Love; there are no qualifications or mental reservations to that affirmation. God is Love; that is His Life; His Spirit; and it is the only characteristic by and through which we can possible ever come to know Him.

Suffering must have a divine mission in life, or God would not permit it. The strongest thing in the world is weakness. It was the cry of the suffering Jesus that turned the soldiers of Caesar into the servants of God. The strongest characters in the world have been made through the discipline of trouble. "I saw a rare flower growing, and I sought to know whence came its entrancing redolence, it's wondrous glow, and I saw that where it grew the ground was wet with tears. I heard a song, and, enraptured I sought to know the source of that melody, so deep, so sweet, and I saw that to reach the ambience it must cross the threshold of a quivering lip."

We must not think of God as one who stands altogether apart from the sorrows of the world. God is Love; there are no qualifications or mental reservations to that affirmation.

God is Love. That is His Life, His Spirit, and it is the only characteristic by and through which we can possible ever come to know Him. "He who does not love does not know God." God is exactly like Jesus, for Christ is the incarnation of God, and Jesus died of a broken heart with His head bowed down by the weight of the world's woe. We have never done justice

to one great saying of a prophet of Israel, "In all their affliction He was afflicted" (Isaiah 63:9). The crown of immortality can never be given to untried lives. The greatest poets alike bear eloquent testimony to the chastening and sanctifying power of suffering. It is one of the basic marks of the Christian that sorrow, pain, sickness, bereavement, adversity, yea, even poverty, that most trying of all tribulations, soften the nature and give an added beauty and pathos to our outlook on life.

Let us close with that beautiful prayer of J. Fort Newton:



"O God merciful and mighty, Giver of life and Fountain of Health, heal the hurts of our hearts and the ills of our bodies by the power of Thy cleansing and renewing grace. If we have been ignorant or careless of Thy laws of health, if we have allowed our spirits to become a prey to worry, fear

or despair, if we have forgotten Thee, our Divine Physician, grant us Thy forgiveness, and help us to find in Thy loving power our health of body and our joy of soul. Restore to Thy church, we beseech Thee, the gift of healing, dwell within it through Thy Spirit of Love and Truth and Power, that it may minister to all the needs of mankind. Inspire and direct all study and research to the discovery of Thy laws of health, the defeat of disease, and the relief of pain. Bless all physicians and nurses who attend the suffering; grant them faith and skill and tenderness in their labors for those who wait in the house of pain. Sanctify Thy people, O God; sustain and comfort them in suffering and sorrow, in weakness and weariness, in life and death; in the name of Him who bore our infirmities and triumphed over all our ills, ever Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord." Amen.



Soaking Prayer IN A TIME OF SOCIAL DISTANCING

Our church family has always valued the monthly offering of Soaking Prayer. We gather in a quiet sanctuary, with soft worship music playing, where we have time and space for reading the Word, journaling, contemplating and receiving the silent prayer ministry of our intercessors. It always seemed that the atmosphere of the holy ground, the ministry of live music, the caring laying on of hands and the occasional whispered communications were essential parts of the whole experience. Then in March of this year came the social distancing requirements of the Covid-19 pandemic, which included shutting down our worship services and all other church meetings and activities. We had been doing live videos of our Sunday services for some time, so we were able to move through Holy Week in April with video services all week. Zoom meetings exploded for all our other activities. We continued worshipping and meeting for business, study and youth activities by Facebook and Zoom.

But what about Soaking Prayer? For that matter, what about individual prayer ministry that we offered at the end of each Sunday service? It seemed that a holy space and social interaction were essential to these ministries. So when our prayer ministry leader called me to say she wanted to explore the possibility of having Soaking Prayer via a Zoom meeting, my immediate thought was, "Well, that's not possible." I was soon to learn that all things are possible with God!

Our prayer team, music person and a parishioner who offered his IT expertise all met several times via Zoom to share ideas, concerns and hopes. Our first Soaking Prayer Zoom meeting was held on May 5, 2020. To our delight it was highly successful. We had nine guests in attendance, three of whom were from outside Gainesville. After receiving feedback and praying, we decided to share the details of what we did with the larger Christian community. That way others might be encouraged to think about doing something similar in their various prayer ministries.

Our Zoom meeting was set up with a greeter in the entry room who welcomed people and invited them to go to a

prayer room with two prayer ministers or to the sanctuary room with music. These were all breakout rooms on Zoom. Participants could move from one room to another by returning to the entry room. Our IT host was the one who admitted participants to the meeting and each of the rooms.

The IT host for this format needs to be experienced in advanced Zoom meetings, with the skill to solve unanticipated problems and the ability to do troubleshooting. They would be responsible for all of the moving of participants from one room to another, setting up and naming breakout rooms, providing music (pre-recorded or live) and having rotating slides of pictures in the sanctuaries. Prior to the meeting or service, as we call it, the technical arrangements for music need to be made and ready to go. The team musician will need to be involved in the set-up tasks as well as being in the music sanctuary during the service.

After our first meeting, we sent out a very brief questionnaire to the participants. Fifty-six percent of them responded, rating the experience between an 8 and a 10. One comment we received:

"Intercessory prayer was wonderful. The prayer team truly seemed to be led by the Spirit to pray with words that were so helpful to me. Their words have stuck with me, and I continue to be supported by them. Thank you!"

The respondents had numerous suggestions, many of which will be incorporated into our next meeting. Some wanted the option of silence or meditative instrumental music, which could be provided in a second sanctuary room. Having rotating slides in the sanctuary was another request that would be easy to accommodate.

We are looking forward to our second Soaking Prayer Zoom Service. Our prayer is that by sharing our experience many ministries will be able to use the Zoom format to meet the needs of those they serve while being constrained to practice social distancing.



Mary Langeland is the coordinator for the Prayer Ministry at Servants of Christ Anglican Church, Gainesville, Florida. She has led the Prayer Chain, Sunday Prayer Teams, Soaking Prayer and other intercessory prayer for the past 8 years at Servants of Christ. She is passionate about prayer and praying for others, a calling she received from God in 2010.



Ann Shower is a founding member of Servants of Christ Anglican Church. She has served in several ministries, including Vestry, Lay Eucharistic Minister, Special Needs Children's ministry, Mark 14:7 Ministry (food collection and dispersal) and the Prayer Ministry for the past 5 years.

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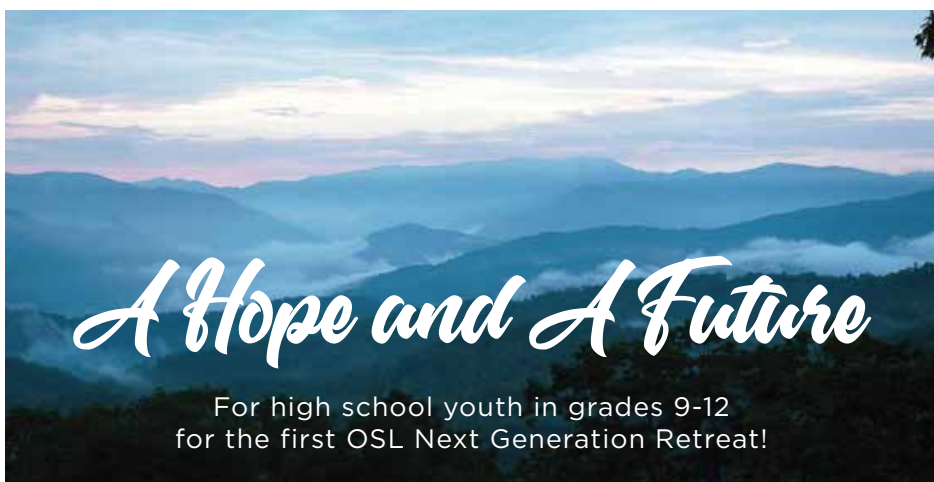
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2915 SE 173rd Court
Vancouver, WA 98683
Contact: Saran Warne (360) 258-0134
warne@comcast.net

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5353 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226

Contact: Becky Morrison (317) 442-0927
bcky2608@gmail.com

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October 31 // Whiting, NJ

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Contact: Stephanie Rotsaert (732) 350-2904

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Region 4 - IN, IL, KY, MI, MO, OH
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Region 5 - AR, LA, KS, TX, OK, CO
Jackie Doss
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Region 6 - ID, MT, OR, WA, WY, AK
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Region 7 - AZ, CA, HI, NV, UT, NM
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Region 8 - Ontario
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Region 9 - Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island
The Rev. John Roddam
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(902) 300-3421; john_roddam@hotmail.com

Region 10 - Manitoba
Position Open

Region 11 - IA, MN, ND, SD, WI, NE
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Region 12 - BC, Yukon, & NW Territory
Shirley Ganton
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Region 13 - Alberta
Mr. Charlie Hand
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Region 14 - Saskatchewan
Position Open

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Fear not, for I am with you;

be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous
right hand.

ISAIAH 41:10 ESV

