

STORIES OF HOPE

PASTOR'S MEMO



Little Johnny's grandma asked him to fetch a jar of tomatoes from the pantry. It was a BIG pantry and the bulb was blown. Johnny just stood there, staring into the ominous darkness. His grandmother urged him on, but Johnny said, "It's way too dark in there!" "Oh sweetie, don't worry, Jesus is in there. Please, get them for Grandma." Johnny didn't budge. He wanted to be BRAVE but he couldn't summon the courage. Then he got an idea. Peering into the pantry he whispered, "Jesus, if you're in there... could you please hand me a can of tomatoes!" We laugh. But isn't this US as we follow Jesus? Life is chalk-full of dark pantries, into which, we are asked to walk. We're promised that Jesus is "in there", but the uncertainties of the unknown often overwhelm us and stall us out. If we try to account for all the variables ahead of time (I like to do that!☺) we find ourselves aging but not GROWING. Hard to find Jesus

faithful if we're only stepping as far as we're comfortable on our own. Are you identifying the next BOLD STEP Jesus wants to take through you? He doesn't want to hand you the tomatoes, but He's happy to lead and strengthen you for every step forward. He's BRAVE! Let's step together!

On the Journey!

Stephen

RESTORING THE BROKEN: CITY GOSPEL MISSION

While visiting City Gospel Mission, two ladies shared their stories of drug addiction. Searching in dumpsters for food, burning relational bridges, crime and more. I asked, "What was the turning point for you, how did you end up at the mission?"



One woman replied, "A n e i g h b o r informed me that they saw me in the Crime Stoppers segment of the evening news." The other woman piped up and said, "While in a dumpster looking for food, I thought to myself, there must be more to life." Both gave the Mission credit for their positive life transformations. One recipient said about the Mission, "I'm humbled and thankful for all the help and love." Restoring the Broken is tough, but extremely rewarding.

GROWING TOGETHER: KARI GLEMAKER

Meet Kari Glemaker, Hope's first Assistant Director of Adult Discipleship. Kari's role, formerly known as the "Director for Ministry to Women," will be expanded in scope to assist Pastor Bill in leading the Adult Discipleship area. Kari and her husband, Dave, have been at Hope for 20 years and she has had many roles here, most recently serving as the Administrative Assistant in Kids' Ministry. She loves Jesus, has a huge heart for women, enjoys mentoring, is creative, fun, organized, and energetic. Her joy is to see women and men discover their identity in Christ and live in the joy of that identity more and more, wherever they are in life. Join us in welcoming her to this role!



GROWING TOGETHER: TADD & KATE WAGNER

In late August, 2014, Kate and I visited Hope Church in what was a time full of exciting, and somewhat scary, changes in our lives. In May, we had both (finally) finished up our college coursework at Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, TN. In June, I left my family, friends, and home church in Carthage, MO to begin working in Mason with Prasco Laboratories. At the



same time, Kate was spending a couple of weeks in Eastern Europe as a final step for students in the Intercultural Studies program at Trevecca. When August finally arrived, Kate and I were married. Kate left her family in Hollywood, FL to move with me to Ohio. Months of prayer led us to Hope, where amongst all these drastic changes in our lives, we connected with the Hope Young Marrieds (HYM) Community, many of these couples in similar situations as ours. The relationships we have formed in the HYM community have been such an answer to our prayers. As difficult as it was to leave all that we knew behind us for Ohio, trusting God in these decisions has proven to bring us many blessings that we would not know otherwise.

MAKING DISCIPLES: GODSPACE

Your siblings in our Hope family are taking steps of faith to intentionally reach out to those future disciples who are outside the faith but inside their reach. “God Space” is being created with a general contractor, an unemployed friend, a car mechanic, family members, a Muslim friend, neighbors, and a dentist among others. Some guys are starting a weekly golf league for this purpose. One person has joined a Euchre club. Another has joined neighborhood women



to play Bunko. Another invited three neighbors to go out for breakfast. These folks have found some natural, doable, and practical ways to increase the quality and quantity of their spiritual conversations through either reading Doug Pollock’s book, God Space, and/or attending his workshop on March 7. They are all taking small steps of faith in the right direction. Are you?

MAKING DISCIPLES: TRIADS

Our triad experience has been a journey of getting to know each other, opening up as we feel more comfortable; nothing forced, there is no judgment, and no grand-standing—just three guys wanting to be authentic with each other, and to know God in new ways. In our triad, we purposefully work to make it safe to reveal what we choose. We take turns sharing our reflections to the degree we are comfortable. All three of us are busy men with demanding and varying schedules, so we utilize Google Hangouts, meeting Thursday nights from wherever we are, maintaining a consistent weekly connection. We try to meet face-to-face over a meal once a month, as we find great value in being together with our wives. It’s not always easy to find the time to meet, but we know the importance of connecting within our triad.



RESTORING THE BROKEN: BEANS & RICE

Restoring the Broken is tough. A local firefighter shared her frustration of responding to calls of numerous people overdosing on heroin. In fact, she shared about one individual who repeatedly overdosed on the drug. The words, “how many time can we save his life?” flew out of her mouth. Heroin has a grip on our city and The Church of Cincinnati wanted to engage the fight against it. During March, the Church of Cincinnati challenged area churches to participate in a Beans and Rice fast. The strategy—eat cheaply for one week and donate the funds not used. The funds would be donated to area organizations that are restoring those how have been broken by the grip of heroin. The results—Hope Church collected \$18,976.17. \$12,650.78 will be sent to the Church of Cincinnati and \$6,325.29 will be donated to Hope House in Middletown, Ohio. The combined effort netted \$557,933.69.

