

We are a church with one mission: to grow followers of Jesus through grateful worship, genuine community, and generous service to each other and our world. We believe by loving God and loving people we can have an impact that really matters, and would like to tell you more about that. If you are interested in being a part of what God is doing with us, or just have some questions, **fill out the contact card** or ask the person next to you. **Please feel free to call or email too if you have any questions.**

FAMILY NEWS AND NOTES

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GOD'S FAMILY TIMES

BIBLE CLASSES
Building—9:30 am Sunday

WORSHIP
Building—10:30 am Sunday

GROWTH GROUPS
Grose's -- 6 p.m. Sunday
Irwin's -- 6 p.m. Sunday

BIBLE CLASSES
Building—7 pm Wednesday

Congregation Meeting: THIS Thursday April 6th at 7 p.m. at the building

Family Covered Dish Dinner: NEXT Sunday April 9th after services.

Bridal Shower Luncheon to honor Alexis Stutzman: Ladies mark your calendars for Saturday April 22nd at 1 p.m. at the building. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you plan to attend by April 16th so that the ones preparing for lunch will have an accurate count. Don't forget to bring a recipe of your favorite dish to share with the bride-to-be.

Dinner before Class: Wednesday April 26th at 6 p.m.

Two men from "Healing Hands International" will be at the Whitehall church of Christ in Pittsburgh on April 9th at 6 p.m.

An update letter from Nathan and Anna is in your mailbox. Their team's proposal to serve in North Africa has been approved. Their family will be moving from Lyon, France to North Africa in July. God has been faithful in His provision of teammates and a place to settle.

Happy Birthday

4/5 Bruce Niehenke

4/5 Joshua Canose

4/8 Ashley Canose

4/19 Ray Rusnak

4/20 Trina Flamm

4/27 Jason Bracken

4/28 Rodrick Anokye

4/29 Marilyn Magas

Happy Anniversary

4/2 Ezekiel & Mary Fasanya

4/7 John & Gail Gromley

Arrangements for family reunions are being made.

FAMILY MATTERS

Indiana

Church of Christ

724.463.7240

April 2, 2017

The 'Feminine' Trait Every Christian Needs to Learn

The virtue of endurance was a 'female' attribute in New Testament times.

Dr. Lynn H. Cohick (Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College)
Part One

On June 17, 2015, in Charleston, South Carolina, a white supremacist gunned down nine African American Christians as they participated in a Wednesday night Bible study at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Americans were outraged at such heartless and vile racism, but something else gained national attention: The church members forgave the murderer. In fact, such forgiveness is so countercultural that many in the media sought to explain it away by saying that the African American church was fearful of reprisals or was ingratiating themselves to the majority white culture. Fortunately, a few reporters accurately identified the "supernatural" source of such forgiveness—the gospel of the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ.

The media missed another crucial, countercultural aspect of the gospel: resurrection hope expressed by endurance. One week after the shooting, believers were back at Wednesday night Bible study, and they have continued ever since. The gospel message of Christ's loving forgiveness has transformed these believers, and the promise of eternal, resurrection life has given them enduring hope. Forgiveness and endurance shape their values according to God's kingdom ethics. As Joe Riley, mayor of Charleston, pronounced at the funeral of one church member, "Myra [Thompson] will always be here in the memory of this church. She was a martyr in the continuing fight of human dignity."

During the season of Lent, Christians around the world focus especially on Jesus's death on the cross and think about repentance and forgiveness. They recall Paul's words in Romans that they are co-heirs with Christ, "if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (8:17). One of the ways believers share in Christ's sufferings, Paul continues, is to "hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently (hupomonē)" (Rom. 8:25). The term translated "patiently" means "endurance." This Christian virtue is tightly linked to the promise of the resurrection of the body. Paul declares that we eagerly await the redemption of our bodies, and in the meanwhile, we share in Christ's suffering.

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Nathan Irwin and family as they are in Lyon, France for language training and are preparing to move to North Africa to serve there in July.
- For Mary Fasanya's asylum request to be granted and for the girls as they are in the USA without their husband and father. Also for Ezekiel as he is in Nigeria without his wife and daughters.
- For Mayleen Niehenke's visa approval to come to the United States from the Philippines and for a co-sponsor so that the procedure can be quickly expedited.
- Bill Tonkin who is at Indiana Square Personal Care Home, 1703 Warren Road. Lois says cards and visits are always welcome.
- Nick Ruffner, John & Gail Gromley's step grandson, who had another round of chemo in his treatment for leukemia in January.
- Linda Biller Post, Jimmy Biller's mother, whose leukemia is no longer in remission. She will be receiving chemo treatments.
- Cliff Brown was recently hospitalized. He came home March 5th but still deals with heart problems.
- Karen Plowman, Brenda Antonio's cousin, for healing of broken bones in her leg due to a recent fall.
- Dixie Kirk, sister in law of Dan & Debbie Kirk, whose testing of her lung showed no spots. She continues to heal from pneumonia.
- Chuck Sickles, a friend of Don Baker, for God's will to be done for his recovery or peaceful eternal rest.
- Jason Canose for healing as he continues physical therapy and thanksgivings for successful surgery to remove his gall bladder on March 15th.
- Dan Fitzgerald, a friend of Bob Reininger, for healing and recovery from a very serious operation on March 20th.
- The Yurky family as Brenda is struggling right now and is adjusting to new meds.
- Louanne Brown as she recuperates from carpal tunnel surgery done on March 29th.
- Samantha Jo Riley, a friend of Debbie Kirk, for healing from a gunshot wound.
- Hailynn Magas was in the ER on Friday, March 31st due to her sugar count going extremely high and then dropping very low.
- Sam Kirk has been ailing with a UTI and an adverse reaction to the antibiotics. Pray for healing so that his shoulder surgery can proceed as scheduled this month.

Prayer requests can be added to the family prayer book

Since the time of the early church, the gospel message has been challenging cultural norms. While today we stand in awe of the martyrs who embraced endurance in hope of resurrection, the ancient Roman culture they lived in viewed the martyrs' passive submission to suffering and death as unworthy of free men, and ridiculed their hope of bodily resurrection. The idea that a man would quietly endure torture unto death was beyond comprehension. The promotion of the virtue of endurance by early Christians challenged the reigning definitions of masculine and feminine, even as belief in resurrection of the dead confused and confounded the Roman authorities.

Seneca and the Feminine Virtue of Endurance

In the ancient world, virtues were mapped across a gendered hierarchy, which assigned a masculine label to those traits and qualities that involved freedom of choice, and assigned a feminine label to those traits that were deemed passive. Self-control and courage, public voice and action—these defined the Roman understanding of masculinity. By contrast, women were seen as passive by nature. That made endurance, defined as accepting pain from something or someone outside one's control, a decidedly feminine virtue. Roman philosophers pointed to childbirth as a ready example of endurance—passive acceptance of pain as forces over which she has little control consume a woman's body.

Seneca, a philosopher who was a contemporary of the apostle Paul, represents the dominant viewpoint of his day. Seneca talked about endurance exhibited by free men (not slaves) in the context of torture or illness. He was concerned that pain would cause a free man to falter, to let go of his reason and succumb to fear. Consequently, in a letter, Seneca warned his friend Lucilius to avoid torture at all costs, even to the point of committing suicide, so as not to lose his reason—and by extension, his masculinity. Seneca cites the example of a gladiator who, having endured his opponent's superior abilities, chooses honor by killing himself rather than be killed by his opponent. For Seneca, endurance has temporary value, but only if it leads to victory or noble suicide.

Romans 8 and the Virtue of Endurance

How did the gospel prepare Paul and the early Christians to face their culture's disdain for endurance? Paul's answer can be found in his encouraging words to the Romans, "we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance (hupomonē), and endurance (hupomonē) produces character, and character produces hope," (Rom. 5:3–4 ESV). As we share in Christ's suffering, seen most vividly in his crucifixion, so too we proclaim that our present sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed (8:18).

Additionally, Paul uses language concerning childbirth here in the context of suffering (8:22). Paul describes creation's groaning as labor pains, and describes believers' own groaning in the same fashion (8:23). As we endure this life filled with suffering, we eagerly await our adoption as God's children, and the redemption or resurrection of our bodies, and in this hope we are saved (8:23–24).

Notice the connection between endurance as a virtue and the hope of bodily resurrection. Moreover, Paul challenges the wider pagan culture—not only its denial of the resurrection of the body but also its gendered view of endurance. Paul's "countercultural" move makes endurance a worthy virtue for both men and women. This virtue is demonstrated in the testimonies of martyrs.