

September 2024

A Monthly Newsletter from Hope Wesleyan Church



**Changing Lives by
Leading People
Into a Growing
Relationship with Jesus**

505 4th Ave NE Independence, Iowa 50644 (319) 334-7148
www.hopewesleyan.org

Why Did God Let This Happen?

Booster shots! That's what we used to call them. My sister Cindy sported a round scar on her upper arm where, years ago, she received her smallpox vaccine. I was young enough to not require the vaccine myself; but I do have my fair share of scars, most of them coming from an overconfidence in my abilities to jump over a creek on a 2-wheeler, climb that oak tree in the woods, or some other childhood accident.

Scars often tell a hurtful story



filled with tears, confusion, and accusations that include the question, "God, why did you let this happen?"

Imagine what might have been going through Cindy's mind as she was taken, against her will, into a sterile doctor's office. A strange woman comes into the room wielding a sharp, bifurcated needle that looks like a gun. The "gun" is fired point-blank into her arm, sending a virus into her body and leaving her with a wound that gets red and ugly. After a few days, puss drains down her arm before it eventually begins to heal. Little Cindy could understandably get mad at her father. She could see no good coming from this senseless act of suffering. Cindy may even begin to doubt her father's love for her.

We do the same.

When hardships, sufferings, senseless trials, and pain come into our lives, it's natural for us to shake our fists at God in anger. It's normal to declare that we see no purpose to this pain. And it's often in those

moments of deepest hurt that we can be tempted to doubt God's love for us.

As a 7-year-old, I thought I was pretty smart. But, by the time I turned 14, I realized that a 7-year-old did not have a clue how the world really works. And my 21-year-old self would look back at the 14-year-old version of me with eyes rolling at the ignorance I used to make sense of life. The same can be said of me at 35, 50, and now 56 years of life-experience on the earth. The fact is, we are extremely limited in our understanding of all that God allows to happen in our lives.

So, how can a loving all-powerful God allow pain and suffering? The same way a loving father can allow his infant child to suffer the doctor's needle. From the child's point of view, the shot is unwanted, uncalled for, full of pointless pain. But from the father's point of view, the pain of that injection is bringing benefits the child may never fully comprehend. The father also knows he is acting in love even as his child's tears are dripping down her cheeks and she angrily demands answers her mind may never grasp. Finally, the father realizes that the momentary pain of the injection will prepare her for what lies ahead in the future his daughter cannot see.

We are all sporting scars; some on the outside and some on the inside. We will never fully know the reasons why God allowed these into our lives. In those moments of deepest anger and confusion, cling to the promise of Jesus, who said, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

*Help
September*

Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m.

Online @

hope@hopewesleyan.org

Children's Church

10:00 a.m.

Fellowship Hall

(Pre-school - 5th grade)

Small Groups

9:00 a.m.

*Adult Class

Library

*Women's Class

Breakfast Club Room

Women's Connection

Monday, Sept. 9th

6:30 p.m.

Immanuel Lutheran Church

JR & SR High Youth Groups

Begin Wed., Sept. 11th

7:00 p.m.

Sisters In Widowhood

Friday, September 20th

1:00 p.m.

TBD



say, "I really didn't write it. I was merely the instrument God used."

*"On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame.
And I love that old cross
Where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners
was slain.*

*"So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down.
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some
day for a crown."*

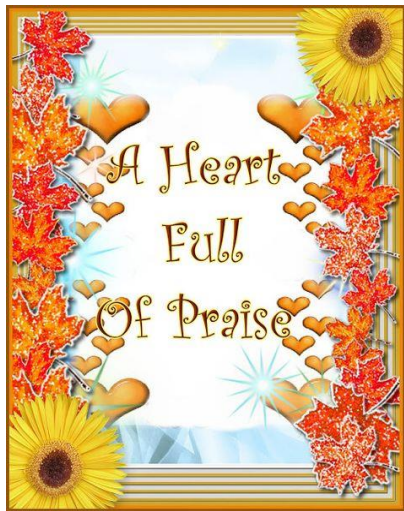
**The Story
Small Groups**
Sign up on foyer table

**Kernels Game
Sunday, Sept. 8th
1:05 p.m.
Sign up on Foyer Table**

**Men's Breakfast
Saturday, Sept. 14th
8:00 a.m.
Fellowship Hall**

**Operation
Christmas Child**

**SEPTEMBER
Personal items:**
**Hair bands, hair bows,
hairbrushes, combs, lip
balm, socks, necklaces,
sunglasses, sm coin purses,
t-shirts, hats, reusable sm
plates, bowls, cups.**
**If cash donation, please
make checks payable to
Hope Wesleyan Church
memo OCC.**
Thank you!
**Contact: Margie Smith
@ 515-341-0304**



If someone approached you, asking you to name America's most popular hymn, no doubt many of you would respond with "The Old Rugged Cross." It has been the most favored of the approximately 300 songs written by George Bennard.

Bennard was born into a very modest family in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1873. His father passed away during George's teen years, leaving the youth with tremendous family responsibilities. To that end, he became a coal miner, as was his father before him. Later, and for a number of years, he and his wife worked with the Salvation Army.

George served for several years as an itinerant Method preacher and had a favorite scripture verse, John 3:16. When quoting the verse, he seemed to always have a vision of a cross — a crude Roman instrument of death.

It was stained with the blood of Christ, who gave His life in order that we might become Christians.

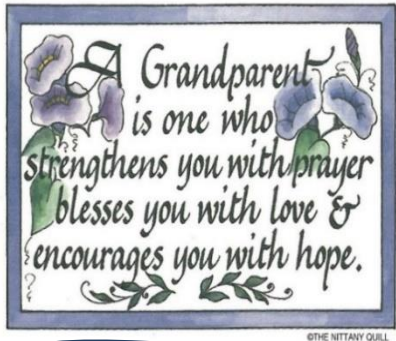
On one occasion, as he was thinking of Christ's crucifixion, an original melody ran through his mind. Although it was a complete melody, very few words came with it. He struggled to write some appropriate lyrics, but all that came was the passage, "I'll cherish the old rugged cross." The song seemed to take shape in bits and pieces.

He returned from several preaching engagements to his home with a renewed meaning of the cross etched in his mind and heart. He took the song manuscript and placed it on the kitchen table. In a very short span of time, he was able to rewrite the stanzas with each word falling perfectly into place. He asked his wife to join him in the kitchen. She did so and he joyfully sang his prized, new song. She was very pleased, expressing that the song was great.

He then sent the manuscript to Charles H. Gabriel, in Chicago, asking if he would write the proper chords with the melody line. Gabriel did so and returned the document with the message, "You will hear from this song."

Bennard said what I have since heard countless other songwriters

🎉 Birthdays	
Vonda Wiltsey	2
Julene DeHart	10
Heather Turner	11
Darlene Bumsted	14
Gary Johnson	14
Reagan Steffens	15
Judy Miller	19
Sharon Beyer	25
Steve Neuzil	25
Merlin Dodge	26
💕 Anniversaries	
Ben & Nicole Reiff	4
Lyle & Dixie Eschweiler	19



**Happy Grandparents Day!
Sunday, September 8th**

NEXT STEPS

Baptism: Declare your faith in Christ through baptism.
Membership: Learn more about who we are, our beliefs and our mission at Hope Wesleyan Church.
Child Dedication: A ceremony in which believing parents make a commitment before the Lord and the congregation to raise that child according to God's Word and God's ways.
Contact: hope@hopewesleyan.org