



The Plumbline

Newsletter of the Wilmore Free Methodist Church

April / May 2019



From the Pastor's Keyboard *By Daryl Diddle*

The saying goes, "Everyone's Irish on St. Patrick's Day." That may be more true for some of us than for others, as most of us of European descent probably

have at least a little Irish in us. I'm told I do—about as much as I have Native American DNA in me. Do I look even a little Erie (not eerie) to you?

There is something about St. Patrick, though, that is endearing to most people...Irish or not. You probably know something of his story—Patrick (did you know his real name was Maewyn Succat? No offense, but I see why he went with Patrick) was born in what is now Dumbarton, Scotland (then part of the Roman empire) in about 389 A.D.

This was a time of great upheaval for Rome. The legions that once protected civilized Britain from barbaric invaders were called away to defend themselves in other regions, which left Britain vulnerable to attacks. And the attacks came.

Just before Patrick turned 16, while he and his family spent time at their holiday villa by the sea, Irish pirates attacked just before dawn. Some say the villa was attacked during the day while Patrick played on the beach. Although his family escaped, Patrick and many of the family's workers did not. Patrick was kidnapped to Ireland and sold as a slave to Miliuc of Slemich, a Druid tribal chieftain.

Patrick didn't make a decision to follow Christ until he was kidnapped and made a slave.

Patrick was given the task of a herdsman. Though raised in a Christian home

(his grandfather was a priest and his father, Calpornius—a civil magistrate and church deacon), Patrick didn't make a decision to follow Christ until he was kidnapped and made a slave. In his autobiography, *Confessions*, Patrick wrote, "... 'the Lord opened my senses to my unbelief,' so that, though late in the day, I might remember my many sins; and accordingly 'I might turn to the Lord my God with all my heart.'"

He wrote about how his faith in God grew as he prayed to Him while he shepherded the flocks: "But after I had

come to Ireland, it was then that I was made to shepherd the flocks day after day, and, as I did so, I would pray all the time, right through the day. More and more the love of God and fear of Him grew strong within me, and as my faith grew, so the Spirit became more and more active ... In snow, in frost, in rain, I would hardly notice any discomfort, and I was never slack but always full of energy. It is clear to me now, that this was due to ... the Spirit within me."

Patrick's devotion to God did not go unnoticed. He soon earned the nickname "Holy Boy" among his fellow slaves.

One night Patrick had a dream, where a voice told him, "Soon you will be returning to your own country." In another dream he received a response to the first dream, being told, "Come and see where your ship is waiting for you." Prompted by these, at the age of 22, Patrick escaped and traveled 200 miles to the coast of Ireland, then boarded a ship to home.

In response to the evident hand of God in his escape, Patrick studied to become a priest. But Patrick had still another dream of a man who seemed to come from

Patrick's strategy was to try to share the gospel with chieftains, who would then, hopefully, use their influence to share Christ with their tribes and clans.

Ireland, carrying a letter with the words "The Voice of the Irish." As Patrick read the words, he seemed to hear the voice of the same men he worked with, shouting, "Holy broth of a boy, we beg you, come back and walk once more among us."

Church leaders and Patrick's parents fiercely opposed his plans to return to Ireland. His family shuddered at the thought of him returning to barbaric Ireland with the gospel, as the Druids were known to weave criminals and runaway slaves into giant wicker baskets and suspend them over a fire. Yet Patrick wrote, "should I prove worthy, I am ready and willing to give up my own life, without hesitation, for His name."

Eventually, Patrick was permitted to go, but great challenges remained. Patrick's strategy was to try to share the gospel with chieftains, who would then, hopefully, use their influence to share Christ with their tribes and clans. He received mixed results. In sharing Christ with one of his former slave owners, Miliuc the Druid, Miliuc

Continued from page 1 responded by locking himself in his house and setting it on fire while Patrick stood outside. It is said that Miliuc drowned out Patrick's pleas by crying out to his false gods.

While some Druids believed, others tried to kill Patrick yet he continued his journey enduring attempted poisonings and ambushes. He was enslaved several times for short periods, finally having to purchase safe passage through hostile warlords' lands to continue his journey. Patrick wrote, "As every day arrives, I expect either sudden death or deception, or being taken back as a slave or some such other misfortune. But I fear none of these, since I look to the promise of heaven and have flung myself into the hands of the all-powerful God, who rules as Lord everywhere."

Patrick shared Christ in Ireland until his death in or around the year 461 A.D.. He was not the first to go to Ireland in Christian mission—a fellow named Palladius had gone before him, but had not been successful. Patrick replaced Palladius and was far more successful. He did not "introduce" Christianity to Ireland per se, but Patrick did greatly further Christ's Kingdom there with courage, conviction and a selfless giving of himself to the point of offering his very breath and life, if necessary, for the sake of Christ.

We are tempted to look at people like Patrick with a somewhat otherworldly sense of awe. We call them saints (although Patrick was never canonized by the Catholic church...he's a "saint" in name only) because we see them as somehow more capable and even more holy than ourselves.

The truth is, however, that Patrick, or Maewyn, was just an ordinary person...a person who, in fact, endured a

terribly difficult childhood (a circumstance many people hide behind today to keep expectations low); an ordinary person with an extraordinary faith in God and in what God might want to do through him.

The truth is, however, that Patrick, or Maewyn, was just an ordinary person... an ordinary person with an extraordinary faith in God and in what God might want to do through him.

Patrick gave himself wholly to the Lord for His use. He was motivated by the very love of Christ for people...lost people. Therefore, Patrick, gave himself and his own dreams and comforts away for their sake...much like Jesus did only a few hundred years before him.

Patrick was not anyone extraordinarily special. Patrick simply chose to put his trust in someone who was (is) extraordinarily special, and let that extraordinarily special Person direct his life. And what a life Jesus directed in the person of Patrick!

The thing is, Jesus is still looking for modern-day Patricks...people who will trust Him enough to say "yes" to His will and plan for their lives. With those kinds of people—people committed to God's Son, filled with God's Spirit and motivated by God the Father's love – God will transform a clan...a tribe...even a nation.

It's sad that, in our day, St. Patrick's Day is simply a recollection of culture. Really, St. Patrick's Day is about God's ability to transform a culture...through the trust of just one person.

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2008/august/real-st-patrick.html>

<https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/history-of-st-patrick.html>

<https://www.persecution.com/2019-03-courageous-series/>

Some Financial Did You Know...

...that our entire building debt is now under \$770,000.00, which is well ahead of repayment schedule? Thank you for your consistent and generous giving to "Close the Gap," our debt retirement fund.

...that we recently granted \$5,000.00 to three FM churches in the conference - two of them church plant projects (in Charlotte and Waynesville, NC) and to Calvary in Lexington, to help pay for their parking lot repair? (If this sort of investment excites you, you can give to the "Church Plant Fund.")

...that our electronic giving app is complete and will be unveiled in the near future?

...that we have finally closed out our building contract with Burchfield and Thomas and have completed all the HVAC issues we've struggled with?

...that perhaps our greatest giving need presently is to the operating budget? We are running a little behind for the year in operations.

...that since the beginning of the year, we have invested nearly \$15,000.00 in helping several church and community families with emergency, unexpected costs through our Benevolence Fund ministry? Thank you for your faithful giving to Benevolence.

...that, in addition to the cost of mission trips, we will invest nearly \$185,000.00 in world and home missions in 2019?

WFMC Music Ministries: Take "Note"

Important upcoming dates to remember...

- April 29th** 7:00 p.m. Spring Ring XVI: Handbell and Chime Concert, featuring all Chime and Bell choirs of WFMC
- May 5th** 6:00 p.m. Children's Musical, "In the Big Inning" – Step up to the plate with Heaven's Harmony and learn about the "Hall of Faithers" found in Hebrews 11!
- May 12th** 6:00 p.m. Singing Celebration XV—led by the Sanctuary and Youth Choirs



For Your Information...

Sometimes we get so familiar with the "way we do things" that we forget that others, especially visitors, may not be so familiar with the way we sing, etc. As you notice folks around you who may not be familiar or used to using a hymnal or worship guide/insert, please help them out, show them the hymnal, the worship supplement, offer an encouraging word, and a smile. We want everyone to feel free to participate in corporate worship, no matter their background. Thanks for your help!

Please contact Mark Schell or Rose Evans if you have any questions regarding the music ministry at WFMC or if you are interested in being a soloist for music ministry, on a music team for worship services, or in a music ensemble. Let's continue to "sing and make music to our Lord!"

Director Spotlight: Mark Schell

Q: What ensembles do you direct at WFMC and how many years?

A: Morning Worship Music Teams & Youth Choir; too many years to count!

Q: What do you enjoy most about directing those groups?

A: I enjoy facilitating the opportunity for each member to learn more about music, develop their musical gifts, and enjoy making music with others, and then having the experience of watching them give these gifts back to God as an offering.

Q: What instrument do you play, if any?

A: Piano & Organ

Q: What vocal part do you sing?

A: Baritone/Tenor II (some may say I sing "barely-tone," rather than baritone!)

Q: How has experience on these instruments helped you as a director?

A: It is through the lifelong study of these instruments that I have learned not only the "nuts and bolts" of musical literacy, but the sheer joy of making music. Hopefully, I have then been able to pass on what I've learned to others.

Q: What would you like the greater WFMC church family to know about your particular ensemble(s)?

A: Our church has 40+ people participating in the morning worship music teams and 45 young people participating in the youth choir. I believe that one of the most important things a leader can do in this current generation is to provide opportunities for people to get together and form meaningful relationships. Music ensembles are a perfect example of this type of opportunity. My hope and dream for our church is that more and more people will choose to participate in a music ensemble and experience not only true fellowship with others, but God's wonderful gift of making music together. This is truly a holy endeavor and one you don't want to miss!

Director Spotlight

In each *Plumblin*e issue, we have been having a "Q & A" with the different directors of our musical ensembles in order for you to get to know them and the groups they lead a bit better. This edition, we are featuring our final ensemble director, Dr. Mark Schell.



Prayer 101

Margaret Dargan

Are you new to the practice of prayer? Would you like some guidance in how best to begin? It is the greatest privilege we have to be able to draw into close relationship with the God who made us and loves us beyond our understanding. Following are several guidelines that may be helpful for you as you begin.

1. It is like talking to a friend. It can become the most natural thing in the world to talk to God about everything in your life.
2. It's also a little like marriage. In a good marriage, the spouses communicate and discuss everything—large and small.
3. Be abundant and intentional about saying “Thank You,” and acknowledging to Him all that you see of His goodness by worship and praise.
4. Be spontaneous. Willingness to share yourself with God is a matter of the heart and attitude. Be yourself. Be honest. Tell Him your pain that He may give endurance and patience, your troubles that He may give wisdom, your temptations that He may show you the way to avoid them, your wounds that He may heal you, and your heartaches that He may comfort you.
5. Be specific. Matthew 6:7 “And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.” (NIV)
6. Ask freely and boldly.
 - “Ask and it will be given to you; (keep asking)
 - Seek and you will find; (prayer without faith/action is presumption)
 - Knock and the door will be opened to you.” (be persistent)
 - For everyone who asks, receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”
 - Matthew 7:7-8
7. Pray with all your heart.
 - Pray aloud.
 - Write down thoughts that come to mind.
 - Keep a prayer journal.
8. Intercede for others. “I urge, then, first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” I Timothy 2:1-4
9. Pray in all humility — Pray “Thy will be done.” Luke 22:42
10. Pray continually—I Thessalonians 5:17, “Pray continually.” Let your heart turn to Him in prayer throughout the day.



Pray for wisdom to know when to speak and when to be silent.

There may come a time when your words will fall on deaf ears. Pray for wisdom so you know when to speak, and what to speak, and when to be silent so God can speak. Here's a way to pray for that right now:

Lord, Your Word says "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" ([James 1:5](#)). Lord, I need that kind of wisdom to know when to speak to _____ and when to be silent. "Do not let any unwholesome talk (lecturing, judging, or accusing) come out of (my) mouth, but only what is helpful for building _____ up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" ([Eph. 4:29](#)). Let me also be "quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for (my) anger doesn't bring about the righteous life that God desires" ([James 1:19](#)).



National Day of Prayer Thursday, May 2, 2019

The theme for the National Day of Prayer is "Love One Another".

We will begin this day with a Prayer Breakfast in Building C's Great Hall at 6:45 a.m. It will dismiss by 7:45 a.m. so people can get to work on time. We are inviting people from the community to join us that morning as we come together to pray for our nation.

Jesus said, "Love one another, just as I have loved you." John 13:34

We need to pray for people across America to show Christ's love to each other.

We need to pray for the churches in America to show Christ's love. John 13:35 states, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

We need to pray for families, workplaces, communities, and cities in America to demonstrate Christ's love. I John 4:7 states, "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God."

We need to pray for all ethnicities and people in America to love each other. I Corinthians 13:6-8 states, "Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

We need to pray that we will love God and each other so much that we will unite in prayer for the next Great Spiritual Awakening in America. Romans 13:11, 12 states, "¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light."

II Chronicles 7:14 (NIV) ¹⁴ "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Please mark your calendar and plan to join us
for prayer for our nation on Thursday, May 2, 2019.

Nones on Sunday

One day I woke up and became a None;
It gave me lots more time to think and pray.
I'd think about bad things religion's done,
And pray that God would now see things my way.
I wasn't like those numskulls who believed
Almighty God did not per se exist.
I mainly just preferred to be relieved
From Sunday wake-ups on which He'd insist.
Instead I'd get up just in time for brunch,
And nod at all the other Nones I'd see.
And God (per se) I duly thanked a bunch
For giving us mimosa that was free.
Some fellow Nones observed me giving thanks
And threatened to remove me from the ranks.

Joseph Mirra, *First Things Magazine*

Correction

for last month's *Getting to Know You* column

*In some unknown, unintentional way the first paragraph printed in the **Getting to Know You** column last month was changed from the paragraph submitted. A portion of one of the sentences was deleted. Below are the original and the printed copies.*

Original

Joel and Genia Schumacher have been married for 28.5 years. Joel was Genia's brother's best friend, but over time she too developed a friendship with Joel which led to the two of them falling in love.

As printed

Joel and Genia Schumacher have been married for 28 ½ years, and over that time, she developed a friendship with Joel which led to the two of them truly falling in love.

Please accept my apology for the error.

Karen Koehn

Library News

New Books for the Library

Loan Period: 3 weeks

Children's Books

- Ten Boys Who Didn't Give In
- Ten Boys Who Made a Difference
- The Stable Cat's Christmas
- When God Made You
- Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun
- Dear God, Thanks for Jesus
- The Easter Story
- Bible Stories That End With a Hug

Adult Books

- Without a Trace
- Personal Holiness in Times of Temptation
- Spring's Gentle Promise
- Heart of the Wilderness
- More Than a Carpenter
- The Hands-On-Dad
- When Dreams Cross
- Working the Gray Zone: A Call for Productive Ministry by and With Older Adults

Please Renew Items Promptly

If you need to renew any items, please check with the librarian, Bonnie Koteskey, at 858-3436, or leave a note on the library bulletin board. It is important to return the materials when they are due so that others can check them out.

New DVDs for the Library

Loan Period: 1 week

Children's DVDs

- The John Wesley Story
- Adventures of Paul for Children
- The Not So Golden Calf
- The Rest is Yet to Come

Adult DVDs

- A Mighty Fortress is Our God: Great Hymns of the Church
- Wanting to Believe
- Straight Talk to Men
- Love for a Lifetime
- Your Legacy: The Greatest Gift
- The Climb

Can You Help Us Find These Items?

Books:

- Crafty Chloe* by Kelly DiPicchio
- These Are My People* by Mildred Howard
- Fresh Wind of the Spirit* by Kenneth Kinghorn

DVDs

- What's in the Bible in the Beginning*
- Heaven's Harmony 2013*

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE LIBRARY IS CLOSED DURING THE WORSHIP SERVICES.

Overseas Fellowship

The Overseas Fellowship will meet on Friday evening, April 5, in the Hospitality Room of Building C. The covered dish dinner will begin at 6 p.m. and the program at 7 p.m.

Our speakers for the evening will be Barbara Barker and Doug Adkins who have spent many years in Kenya. Barbara will share her experiences with us of growing up in a missionary family there. Doug will share of his time in Kenya as a missionary and his observations of how he sees the trend of missions changing.

Our fellowship is open to everyone.

We extend an invitation to you to join us for an evening of inspiration and fellowship.

Won't you come and join us?
We look forward to seeing you there.



WFMC BIRTHDAYS / ANNIVERSARIES

April Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Cesario Elliott,
BariKay McMillen,
Nichole Shafer, Golf Tonglamun
- 2 Donna Flanigan, Glen Flanigan,
Janis Riffell, Deano Sarantakos
- 3 Darin Land
- 4 Lizet Bowen, Darla Kidwell,
Ruoxin (Rosie) Li,
Jesse & Letha Jones
- 5 Cheryl Schell, Ann Toadvine
- 6 Lora Prochina, Josh Toso,
Joyce Underwood
- 7 Kim Barnard, Paul Evelyn,
Mattie Stinnett
- 8 Bonnie Descoteaux,
Ricardo Gomez
- 9 Kyle Lovell, Kendra Spivey
- 11 Jack Coleman, Renee Riffell
- 12 Cindi Angelo, Dexter Cannon
- 13 Yana Watts,
Ron & Nancy Johns
- 14 Betsy Shockey
- 15 Levi Branan, Isaac Madill
Kyle Miller, John Schumacher
- 16 *Robert & Norma Jean Erny*
- 17 Bettie Cook
- 19 Neil Anderson,
Sarah Blankenship
- 20 Warren Brude, Aiden Dedman
Micah Kidwell,
Peter & Amy Cooper

- 21 Tim Bickert
- 22 Warren Todd,
Melyssa Wittenberg,
Grace Yoder
- 23 Ben Liam O'Neal
- 24 *Duane & Patty Brown*
Shivraj & Anita Mahendra
- 25 Jade Watts
- 26 Stephen Wright
- 27 Keith Madill
- 28 Chase Padgett
- 30 Steve Liversedge

May Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Curt Caldwell, Russell Sweigard,
Clay Winter
- 2 Kay Bickert, Bryan Blankenship
Sharon Madison
- 3 A. J. Kinnell, Carson Roberge
Charlie & Patti Fiskeaux
- 4 Hope Branan
- 5 Heidi Wheelock
- 6 Violet Burke
Chuck & Lynne Fuller
- 7 Don Roxberry, *Jeff & Pam Hiatt*
- 8 Beth Gomez
Carolyn Hale, Grace O'Neal,
Cindy Peterson,
Lyn & Lynne Neyman
- 9 Beverly Bray,
Glen & Ruth Weinberger
- 10 Cathy Bickert, Renae Thompson,

- Lucas Weinberger
- 11 Sylvia Brown
- 12 Pat Gilmore, Roberta Zent
- 14 Elliot Crabtree
- 16 Bette Crouse
- 17 Joyce Bao, Wes Folsom
- 19 Benjamin Randall, Scott Wright,
Bill & Karen Jamison,
Don & Roberta Zent
- 20 Arlene Allen
- 21 *Jerry & Katie Diddle,*
Chris & Annette Wittenberg
- 23 Dillon Bickert, Chuck Brock,
Leonard Fitch, Reid Gouge
Calvin Wright
- 24 Jan Snyder, Ron Welling,
Naomi Williamson
- 25 David Coulliette, Tyler Goforth,
Dick & Mary Ann Crane
- 26 Lois Cobb, Dickie Lee Porter,
Dan Searls, Jody Zweifel
Bernie & Lois Cobb
Benjamin & Emily Randall
- 27 June Eisemann
Dean & Ruth Cook
- 28 Bruce Branan, Josiah Saunders
Tim & Cathy Bickert
- 29 Alethea Hwang
Ken & Christina Proctor
- 30 Anna Belle Bevins
Charlene Demaray
McKayla Kidwell



What Do Tacos and Bells Have in Common?



The April 12th Primetimers' Luncheon, That's What!

The April Primetimers' (60+) Luncheon will be upside down and backwards. It will be held on **April 12th** to accommodate Spring Break visits to or from grandchildren, and we will have the **program FIRST** in the **CHURCH SANCTUARY** at **11:30 a.m.** Pam Hiatt is bringing us a two-fold handbell concert with the Friendship International Suzuran (Japanese word meaning lily-of-the-valley flower which is shaped like a bell) Ringers and The Silver Bells made up of some of our own seniors. After the program, Rosemary Nowitzki will treat us to a taco/salad bar in Building C.



May 3th will be our final luncheon until next fall. This will be a pot-luck picnic under the High Bridge pavilion giving us a beautiful spring-time view of the Kentucky River Palisades as the river runs under the nearly 300 foot tall railroad bridge. The pavilion is handicap accessible. Ladies, we encourage you to wear a fancy Derby Day hat if you have one.





On your mark, Get set, Go! Grab your running shoes and passports and join us on

The Incredible Race

as we travel from continent to continent looking for clues about how we are all part of one family - God's family. We need trainers and assistant trainers to help the children on this global scavenger hunt.

June 3 - 7
 9 a.m. - Noon
 Workers - Sign up TODAY!



Food for Kids Ministry

Jessica Bowers

Each week, our youth pack 67 bags of food that are distributed to children at 3 of our local schools. These bags of non-perishable, easy-to-open foods provide meals for the children while at home over the weekend. Would you like to help with this ministry? Of course, financial donations are always appreciated. The bags cost approximately \$3.50 each and donations can be designated for the Food for Kids Ministry.

But there is also another way you can help. Starting in April, a basket will be located in the lobby by the Welcome Center where food donations can be dropped off. Each month, a designated item will be specifically requested although a listing of all the food that we distribute each week can be found at the basket.



On behalf of the 67 Jessamine County children served, we thank you for your continued support of this ministry!

April Food for Kids request: Instant Oatmeal Packets
May Food for Kids request: Granola Bars



WFMC Quiz Team

Kate Madill and Anna Blankenship

The month of March means our last month of new material before we start reviewing everything for Nationals in July. We will be finishing Luke after 2 years of being in it, and we're excited! We have slowly worked our way through it and have personally come to love the way Luke describes his life with Jesus and the other disciples. We will be studying hard these next few months and would appreciate prayer for us to encourage each other and keep our eyes on Jesus, the ultimate goal.

As we prepare for Nationals, we will be doing a lot of review of old material and teamwork activities. The WFMC quizzing program puts a high priority on being a close knit team and family. We quiz, study, work and play together. The late van rides, fundraisers, McDonald's stops, close huddles in parking lots to stay warm in the cold and singing/yelling all the lyrics to our favorite songs in the vans are some of

the little things that make us so close. We are always there to encourage each other and to laugh with each other.

Going to nationals every summer is definitely a highlight of the year. We get to go visit a new place, hear a great speaker, quiz amazing competitors from around the country (and world) and spend tons of time with our teammates and friends from other churches. Some of my favorite memories are from those weeks. Part of the FMBQ mission statement is to "prepare for service", and each year at nationals we get to put that into practice. One day, instead of quizzing, we split into groups with quizzers and adults from multiple teams, and we head out to different locations in the city to serve. In past years, groups have painted fire hydrants, cleaned gutters and mulched. It really is an amazing experience to get our hands dirty as we work together serving the Lord and others.

Bible quizzing is an amazing way for students and adults to stay immersed in the Scripture and see their lives change because of it. As a quizzer, we get to become friends and compete with other students around the nation, connecting *through Scripture*. Jesus is our connector, and that creates a bond that will last forever. After quizzing for 5 years and most of this one, I can definitely say the winning and losing isn't what I remember. But I can recall old quotes and tell about the different times someone in my quizzing family was there for me or showed me how to love like Jesus.

We may be a bit quirky, but we really are a family and we just love what we do. Next time you see a quizzer, maybe ask them how studying is going or what they've learned about Luke from devotions. I'm so thankful for the support our church provides for this team and I hope our team represents our church well wherever we go.

International Child Care Ministries

ICCM, a ministry arm of the Free Methodist Church, has been changing children's lives through sponsorship since 1965. All over the world, we can point to adults who once benefited from ICCM's sponsorship and scholarship programs and now serve as leaders in their homes, churches, communities, and nations. We celebrate that over 100,000 children have been blessed with sponsorship in these 50+ years. Yet thousands more are waiting! Would you consider this means of helping children around the world? For more information go to: www.childcareministries.org/

There are 62 ICCM sponsors in the Wilmore/Nicholasville area for 93 children from 12 different countries.



Reasoning About Faith...

It Doesn't Fit Anymore

by Dr. Joe Dongell

People leave the church, and the Christian faith, for many reasons. Just in the last week I've pondered three recent departers, all between the ages of 25 and 35. For one, the accumulation of perceived hurts and rejections (at the hands of church people) finally achieved critical mass, crushing her faith beneath a load of pain. For the second, the launching of a successful career has devoured his time, and has laid upon him an on-call routine destroying the regular rhythms of life. His newly emerging lifestyle of no-church, no-prayer, no-scripture is taking hold, and few signs of spiritual vitality remain visible. (Here, of course, I must be careful to remember that only God truly knows human hearts.) A third reported to me that his whole upbringing in a vibrant church and its youth group (in Arkansas) had little spiritual effect after all. "Nothing really took." His university experience that followed launched him into full-blown addictions. No doubt we all could add stories with differing nuances about those who have been raised among us, then drifted away.

But I'm even more interested in a departure story that has been on the rise in recent decades. I'll call it, "World-View Collapse." Imagine a child who has been raised in a relatively healthy Christian home and church. The child progresses through all of the stages of guidance we typically (and sincerely) provide, perhaps even including Christian education extending through the college years. The child, now an emerging adult, has been happy, cooperative, generally moral, and "Christian," even by self-identification. Add in, if you wish, marriage to the same sort of person, a marriage performed in a church by a Christian minister, with pre-marital counselling provided by the same.

But somewhere along the way, often somewhere in their 20's, the wheels come off. It is not that they had been raised in a cocoon, perfectly insulated from the complexities of our world, utterly uninformed about the existence of other religions or of atheists, absolutely ignorant about modern science and the tendency of its practitioners to boast that it alone establishes real truth. I do believe that most were aware of these things, and even conversant about them to a degree.

But our confidence in the Christian world view can be shaken to the core when we have up-close, personal, repetitive, and penetrating encounters with real people and powerful events that call it all into question. We meet and become friends with atheists (or substitute here, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, etc.) who appear to be happy, well-educated, productive, well-liked, thoughtful, socially caring and responsible folk, who also appear to be more attractive to us than many Christians we know. We work with them day by day, enjoying their company. The idea of inviting such folk to "repent of their sins" or to "believe in Jesus alone" suddenly seems unnecessary, if not downright foolish and bigoted. Billions of people apparently live their lives quite well apart from Christianity, even apart from God. Our global travel and communication drive this home to our awareness like never before.



Some of our atheist friends will push further, pointing to the classic "problem of evil." "You're going to tell me that an all-good and all-powerful God exists who is not stopping all suffering and injustice? Pick your poison: either your God is not all-good, or he's not all-powerful!" As we fumble for explanations, we inwardly retreat from our earlier confidence, secretly admiring the strength of the headlock we feel ourselves trapped in.



But even more devastating than abstract argument is any horrific suffering we witness and feel to the bone. Remarkably, certain professionals

(policemen, EMT's, firemen, ER doctors, family court judges, and the list goes on) daily witness unspeakable cruelty and soul-wrecking self-abuse that would make the stoutest hearts wither in short order. Where is God? Can there be a God?

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If then we add to this mix the “gospel of science” preached in many quarters (that all aspects of human life and origins can be accounted for without reference to any god), the stage is set in many hearts for leaving the church and the God it preaches. They find themselves internally crossing a line and declaring that their inherited Christian perspective, “Just doesn’t fit anymore.” World-View Collapse.

As we painfully watch these departures, we may be tempted to plead with our dear ones, “Reverse Course! Stop doubting, stop thinking so hard, and just believe!” But the great Christian apologist Francis Schaeffer, whose Swiss retreat became a haven for doubters seeking truth, would recommend just the opposite: “Full speed ahead! Doubt *more boldly!* Think *more thoroughly!* Seek the *whole truth, tenaciously!*” (I am paraphrasing his approach.)

Those who are outraged at evil, those who insist that love prevail, those who consider every person to be infinitely valuable, and those who passionately seek justice for all (*and have judged the Christian gospel to be inadequate on these counts*) should be encouraged to ask just what world view can best ground these deep (and right) convictions they hold. They should not be content with simplistic answers in this quest. That is, they should *severely doubt all* explanations offered, whether by secular or religious voices. They should put *all* proposals to the test, and give no one a free pass. It is neither fair nor scientific to doubt only the Christian message.

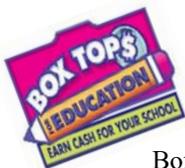
I can report that many who have taken this challenge have made an amazing

discovery. It turns out that such basic and powerful instincts as love, a thirst for real and ultimate justice, the infinite value of all persons, a sense of (my own) personhood, and the “unacceptability” of evil... all of them are quite difficult to account for... apart from exactly the kind of God revealed to us in Scripture and in Jesus. Here we find the *Person* who created us, knows and loves us individually, calls us out of evil and into holiness, and has promised a future in which justice is established and love reigns completely. Yes, many have found that their long journey of departure has wound its way back to *this* God... not as a sentimental and weak relapse into a Sunday School faith, but as the (re)discovery of robust truth, of full reality, of intimate union with *the Person* who is the only source of all life and love. Once we know and love



this God, and are alive through the Spirit and the Word, his wisdom will guide us as we seek to understand whatever light God has revealed about the deep mysteries of our perplexing world... the world this Divine Person once created, currently sustains, and will fully redeem.

Do you have questions or comments? We would welcome your response. Contact us at reasoning@wfmc.net



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Vision Statement

A Community that Reflects
Jesus's Vision and Values

Mission Statement

Wilmore Free Methodist Church
will faithfully offer
members and neighbors
the Word of God,
the love of the Father,
the grace of Jesus,
and the power of the Holy Spirit.
We will be Christ's presence
in our world.



The Plumbl ine

Newsletter of the Wilmore Free Methodist Church

April / May 2019



The Secret Garden

Ladies' Spring Tea
Tuesday, May 21
7:00 p.m.

All Ladies
...and their daughters
...and mothers
...and friends

are invited to attend the Ladies' Spring Tea.

More information will be shared soon!