

NEWS FROM THE HEART

ISSUE 115

EDITOR, MARY HANSEN

SEPTEMBER 2018

Jesus, and all great teachers and mystics taught in Parables. I hope the following gives you food for thought.

HOW DO PARABLES WORK?

Those listening to a Parable do not have to understand how the parable functions in order to gain insight. Let's look more closely at the way parables function. There was a man who had lots of problems. He was overweight, and he drank too much. He was estranged from his teenage children and his wife would hardly speak to him. He was in a dead-end job and his only hobby was watching TV. His life was a mess. When he started to tell a friend about his problems, his friend cut him off and told him a story instead.

THE PARABLE OF THE BROKEN COMPUTER

There was a man who had a computer. He used it continuously. Constantly, night and day he ran programs and surfed the Internet and used that computer to its capacity. It was never turned off. Over time the computer started to have glitches that interrupted the man's work. He started losing data and the printer refused to cooperate. For months and months, the man tolerated these problems. One day he got a brilliant idea: He installed an antivirus program that removed three computer bugs. He upgraded the latest versions of all the programs he normally used. He ran diagnostics and corrected several corrupted files. He put a new ink cartridge in the printer. When he rebooted the computer, everything worked great. The man was so happy. The End.



The man shrugged and would have continued to talk about his problems, but his friend shook his head. "Think about the story I just told you," he said, and he walked away. For days the man did think about the story. It kept popping up in his mind and he pondered its meaning. The story just didn't make any sense. Why would his friend tell him this story? What did a computer have to do with his problems? And then it dawned on him. After his billionth fight with his teenage daughter over her loud music, he realized that there was a glitch in his relationship with her. They were stuck in the same place, having the same conversation over, and over again. Then all the other glitches in his life became apparent. He laid on his bed and cried like a baby. When he couldn't cry anymore, he realized that HE was the computer in the story. HE needed diagnostic work and a reboot. Saying a prayer seemed insufficient. Going to therapy was painful. Changing his diet was hard work. Would God hear him? He thought the exercise plan the physician recommended would kill him.



After awhile he started feeling a little peaceful as he remembered each day what he had to be grateful for. He started enjoying his kids again. He took them places and did things with them. His wife was thrilled when he helped with the chores and planned a night out. Through it all he thought about the malfunctioning computer. Eventually he would fix those pesky glitches. The broken computer was a metaphor for his life. His friend could have advised him concerning everything he "should" be doing differently and perhaps he already had. However, the metaphor, story, parable, made him realize that he HIMSELF was the broken computer and that became the catalyst that led to his newfound healthy life. Parables don't always work instantly. Sometimes they need to rattle around in the hearer's mind awhile. Sometimes they don't work at all. But, when they do, the results are often dramatic and life changing. **What's going on with your computer lately? Are there glitches? Do you need a little diagnostic work and a reboot to improve your life? Think about it.**

God says, "I Am here always, you need only listen."



AMAZING GRACE INTERFAITH MINISTRY

We will return to St. Simon's Church for our regular **Recovery Bible Study at 10:30AM** and **Sunday Service at 11:30AM** **9-11 Remembrance on Sunday, September 9th**. We invite all of you to join us. **Amazing Kids Connection 501 c3 for needy children needs volunteers to help on Friday, September 7th** from 12PM to 3PM to set up the clothing and school supplies and for distribution on **Saturday, September 8th at Calvary Presbyterian Church** corner of Castleton and Jewett across from the Court House. Please call me 718-356-6441 ***See attached the Flyer that tells what essentials we distribute each month along with the clothes.** Thank you to the **Siller Foundation, Tunnel to the Towers, Olivet Presbyterian Church, Susan Lamberti** and her wonderful group of **Mission workers., Lois and Richard Nictora, Maria Gardella** and her group of wonderful friends. Thank you... **Earl, Ruth, Joie, Gina, Raphel, Morgan, Magen, Walter, Samantha, Alice, Pat, Karen, Susan B, Susan R. Dottie, Peggy, Lucille, Pat L, Pat R. JC Sanchez, Ken & Car, Pat B, Linda & Gene B.** for your donations. And to my two grandchildren **Ethan 4 years old** and **Anwen 3 years old** who put their clothes in bags and brought them to me saying, **"Grandma, we want to give these to the children who need them."** **They made my heart smile!!!**



We have been **feeding the homeless** the last Wednesday of the month **for Project Hospitality** under the direction of **Rev. Ruth Dugan for 19 years**. Ruthie and her wonderful group of volunteers are truly amazing people working quietly but always getting the job done.



Attached is a flyer with all the dates we will be doing Meditation and Workshops **(the first one Saturday October 27, 2018, "And God said....Let There Be Laughter" 9:30AM to 1:30PM Bagels, fruit and coffee)** at **Woodrow Methodist Church**. **All Donations after expenses goes to The Amazing Kids Connection**. Please mark your calendars Now.

As members of **Building Bridges**, Rev. Bob and I will be doing the annual walk, August 26th starting at Woodrow United Methodist Church 2PM with **Rev. Joseph Upole, Pastor Woodrow United Methodist, Tahir Kukiqi, Iman of Albanian Islamic Cultural Center, Jerome Grushkin, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun**, as we of different faiths walk together to **Sandy Ground** and **Rossville AME Zion Church**. This wonderful organization was founded by **Mona Zaloom**.



Our thoughts and prayers go to **Gladys Bryant** on the death of her brother **Earl**. Gladys has been coming to our Sunday church service once a month for many years bring her beautiful voice and guitar music of **"liquid prayer"**. Prays of comfort and sympathy to **Gerri Smith**, Office Manager of St. Clare's on the death of her husband, **Tom**. Gerri organizes the children's clothing drive for Amazing Kids Connection. Congratulations to **Bobbie Bulger on her 85th Birthday**, celebrated with her beautiful family in Texas.! Our **Prayers and thoughts** go out to **Monsignor Joseph Murphy**, our beloved friend who we miss very much on Staten Island. We know you are in good hands at Cardinal Egan Pavilion in the Bronx. Please know **your kindness, wisdom and comforting words** will always be with all of us **in the rooms** and outside. Healing prayers for our **Francine** who underwent surgery at S.I. Hospital August 21st. She is a power of example to everyone who knows her. Congratulations to **Samantha** on the upcoming birth of her second child, a boy, scheduled for Sept 7th were praying for you. **Congratulations** to our longtime friend and member of Amazing Grace Interfaith Ministry, **Alan Weinman** and his bride to be **Deborah Weiss** who will wed this September at Congregation Emanu-El Of The City Of New York. **May G-d Bless you and give you long life!!**

***And God says. "I Am here always, you need only listen!
Remember.....You hear what you listen for.**





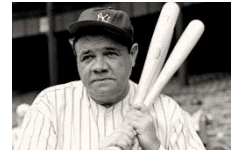
IT WORKS – IF YOU WORK IT

LISTEN FOR YOUR GUIDE

Writer, Alan Cohen shares a wonderful true story about being guided..... A woman goes to a hospital to give birth. After she is gone, her three dogs disappear. Her husband is frantic; he searches for the dogs but cannot find them. That evening the woman looks out her window and there are the three dogs looking up at her hospital room. They had traveled for miles through city streets to find her. The dogs were guided to her. We too have a guide. When we quiet ourselves and listen for that still, small voice. We need to make time to slow down and listen. Some of us meditate, others walk in the woods, some listen to music, some practice yoga or tai chi. The method is not important. What is important is that we SLOW DOWN and MAKE TIME for God to enter our lives. The still small voice is subtle yet persistent. But if I don't slow down, I may miss the messages coming my way.

When we make a decision to turn our lives over to a Higher Power, our lives change forever. We release what doesn't serve us and choose what does. You and I always have a choice. We get to decide if we play victim and stay trapped in the past or if we flex our spiritual muscles and live the life of our dreams. We can break old patterns. There is a spiritual presence within us that guides, comforts and heals. We can learn to go deep within the speak to it. Earnest Holmes wrote, "Within each one of us is an indestructible, an eternal person, a spiritual person, A God intended person. So, we are told we are transformed by the renewal of our minds." By Ron Fox

GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS CALL THE STRONG SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO BE WEAK ENOUGH TO SERVE

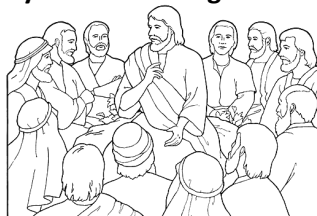


We've all heard the stories. Michael Jordan was cut from the high school basketball team. J.K. Rowling lived on welfare before Harry Potter made her a billionaire. Julia Roberts failed to get a part in the soap opera All My Children. Babe Ruth held the record for the most strikeouts. Walt Disney lost his job at a newspaper for lack of imagination. There failures convince me that our weakness is often the flip side of our strength. Our strengths and weaknesses are usually directly related. For a long time I did not want to confront my weaknesses. It was a long time before I learned that God can use both. ***It took me even longer to learn that sometimes God chooses us for our weaknesses, not for our strengths.***


All through the Bible, God doesn't always choose the strong. He picks the flawed and the weak and transforms them. People like Moses and David. Jesus included among His 12 closest followers a man who lied to Him, a man who doubted Him and a man who betrayed Him. What would happen if God called us to do something higher? It sounds good....for a second until we count the cost. What if it means donating my time, money, talents? A priest once told me he was unsure before his ordination whether he was strong enough to become a priest. Then someone asked him, "Are you weak enough?" Saying yes to God isn't about being strong, but about being weak and saying yes anyway!!!!

Mother Theresa once said that she wasn't called to be successful; she was called to be faithful. If your answer to the question "Are you strong enough to serve?" is no, maybe you're asking the wrong question.

Are you weak enough to serve?




BECOME A MIRACLE




Many people are praying for a miracle. God uses people. He has no hands to heal except through our hands. He has no voice to encourage except through our voice. He has no arms to hug except through our arms. God will bring people across our path so that we can be the answer to their prayers. People say "God, please send me a sign." You are that sign. A simple phone call to say, "I'm thinking about you." And you just became their miracle. Take time to become the miracle. Be aware of who is in your life. They are not there by accident. God put them there on purpose. It's because you are full of miracles. You can lift the fallen. You can restore the broken. You can be kind to a stranger.

If we all had the attitude, "I am a miracle waiting to happen", what kind of world would this be? Sometimes we don't need a miracle, we just need one another. Look around at who's in your life. Listen to what they're saying. Is there any way that you can help?

If you will become a miracle, God will always make sure you have the miracles you need. As long as you're sowing seeds, the right people, the right opportunities and breaks you need will come. God will get you to where you're supposed to be. When you help others, you will be helped. If you need a miracle, become a miracle. When you take the time to invest in others, the seeds you sow will always come back to you.



You can't help everyone, but you can help someone. There are people God has put in your path who are here to help you grow. As you help them rise higher, you rise higher. As you met their needs, God will meet your needs. As you become the miracle, God will give you miracles. If you are too busy to help someone else, too caught up in your own lives to invest in others too worried about our own problems you are going to get stuck. Remember the Computer Parable at the beginning of this newsletter. Reaching your highest potential is dependent on you helping someone else reaching their potential. The closest thing to the heart of God is helping hurting people. When you take time to restore the broken, that is the religion Jesus talked about. Joe is hurting, but it's his own fault. He's got an addiction. He brought the trouble on himself. Anybody can find fault. Anybody can be critical and come up with excuses to pass on by. That's easy.



It's great to go to church, temple, synagogue. That is important, but our real assignment begins when we leave the building. We don't always see how powerful we are. God has put healing in you. Your hugs can cause people to get better. Your kind words can put people back on their feet. Some people just need to know you believe in them. When you tell them, "You're amazing, You're going to do great things. I'm praying for you" it may seem simple to you, but to the other person it can be life-giving. It can help them be all they were created to be. *Joel Olsten*

I believe, this is why the 12 Step Recovery Programs have so many stories of miracles.

As the song goes.....See you all in September!!!

And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand. Love & Blessings. Mary