

AT THE WELL

A PUBLICATION OF
LIFESPING 55



The background of the entire page is a lush, green tropical scene featuring large palm fronds and banana leaves. The foliage is dense and vibrant, with varying shades of green. A dark grey rectangular area is positioned in the upper half of the page, serving as a backdrop for the title and table of contents. At the bottom, a bright yellow rectangular box contains a quote.

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*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and
learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is
easy and my burden is light.”* —MATTHEW 11: 28-30

YOKED TO YOUR LORD... WHAT?



Matthew 11 records Jesus' remarkable invitation, for you, for us all – perhaps for all creation. A number of years ago I was drawn to the simplicity and the sheer brilliance of this statement; I am truly mesmerized by it.

First, let me contextualize this message from the 'rabbi, speaker, miracle worker', Jesus of Nazareth. He and His disciples were travelling through the 'Sea of Galilee district' when Jesus' cousin and forerunner John – then in prison for offending King Herod, sent his disciples to ask a poignant question, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" WHOA, what a question! I will let you check out Jesus' answer in Matthew 11: 4-6, especially verse 6. Suffice to say: Jesus was having to defend His identity, redirect John's impatience and bring clarity to how God works. (A pervasive mystery for us all).

Jesus spends that day seeking to refocus His hearers – especially disciples, on the fulfillment of God's will in Him. Indeed part of His message is judgment directed towards local towns - even of His ministry centre Capernaum. At the end of his prophecy He prays thanking God that "...you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children." (Matthew 11:25). A profound challenge for us all.

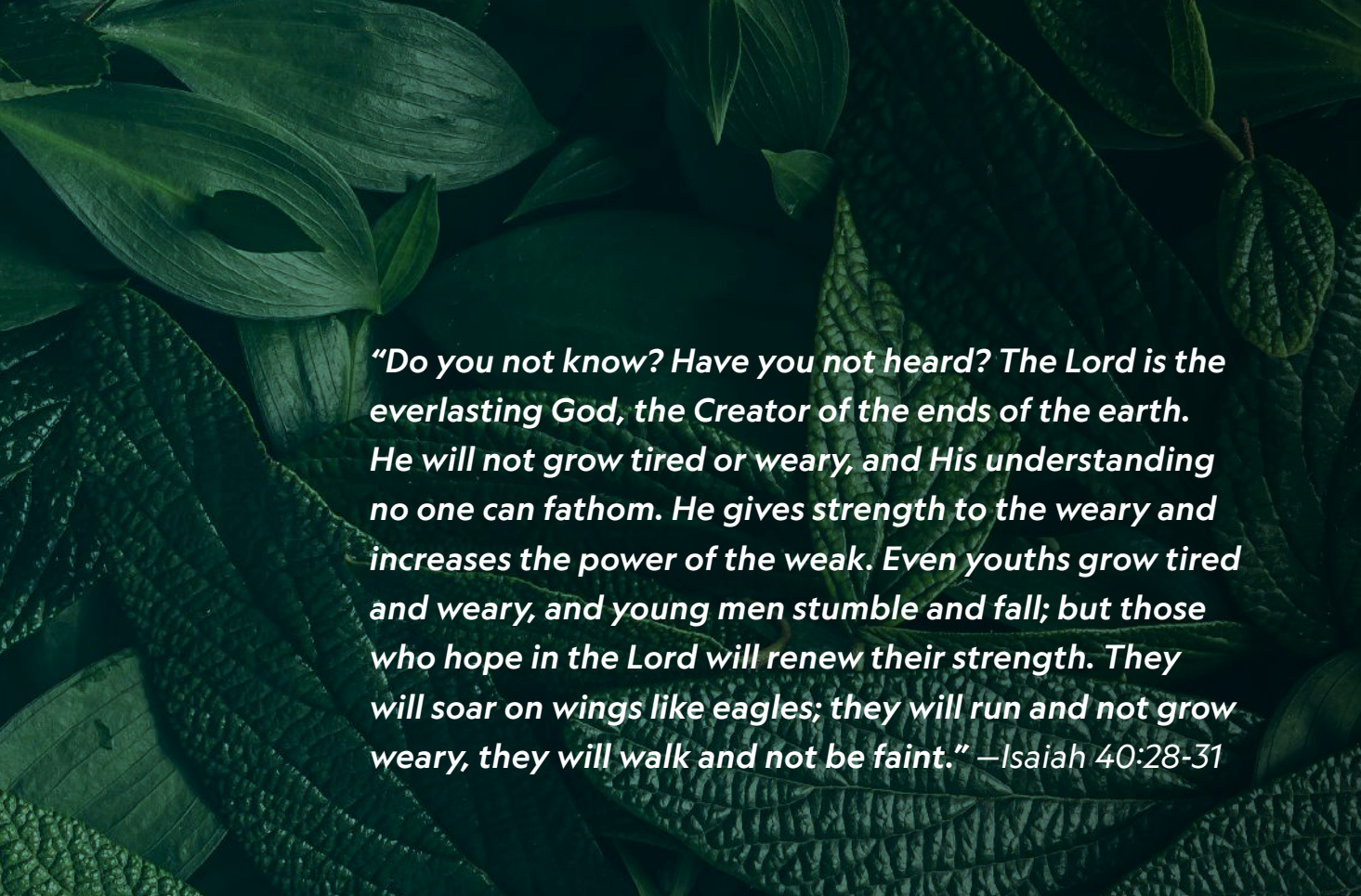
At the end of His wide beareth of teaching, He gives His call to us "Come to me, all you, (your name here) who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you, (your name here) will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11: 28-30)

As a farm boy (dirt in my blood) I am profoundly impressed with Jesus' statement. He is willing to unburden us – take our burdens not destroy them. He does take our sin (we'll consider that in months to come) but He does so to give us rest, then brilliantly He invites us to take on His yoke – to learn from Him and share our burdens. Yoked with Jesus we pull together.


A donkey can carry 20-30% of its weight, however it can pull 200% (10X). Yes, Jesus is saying He can help us understand how to pull our burdens rather than carry them, AND yoked with Him, He actually shares our burdens. WOW, what an offer! I don't know about you but yoked with Jesus I just imagine going in circles with an imbalance of power, but He graciously pulls with us. WOW!

Jesus invites John, his disciples and us all, here, now! So where are you in this passage? Weary, burdened, yoked with Jesus, learning, rested? I hope you can make Jesus' invitation into a prayer you pray regularly, habitually and for others. Rest easy in Him!

Ken Park
Seniors & Visitation Pastor



"Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and His understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." —Isaiah 40:28-31

An aerial photograph of a rugged coastline. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, with white foam from breaking waves visible. A large, brownish-yellow rock formation juts out into the sea on the left side. The overall scene is dynamic and powerful, with the waves crashing against the rocks.

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

—James 1:12

Holy Bible

HAVE A COFFEE WITH HARTLEY RUSSELL



I had the unique opportunity to sit down with Hartley Russell, The Peoples Church Youth and Young Adults Pastor. Get yourself a coffee and join us in our conversation:

Ken Park (KP): We work in different areas of TPC but certainly there is a grace & gospel integration. What delineates those with whom you work?

Hartley Russell (HR): I lead our Senior Youth and Young Adults ministry, ages 13 all the way up to those who identify as young adults up to age 30.

KP: How do you typically describe your job?

HR: We seek to come alongside families to see their young people walk closely with Jesus and care for them holistically, spiritually, relationally, mentally and emotionally. We exist to support families and see their teenagers know and walk with Jesus. Also, to engage in His mission in this world; we really seek to disciple youth and young adults through missions, and for missions. Ultimately, we seek to send them as missionaries of our ministry to universities. We see our high school ministry really as a four year long missionary training program where we are equipping and investing in them to be missionaries sent into wherever God has them.

KP: Where is God working in His ministry with you?

HR: It's really interesting, for many people when we look at the time of COVID we think of it as a really difficult time for the Church, but there are countless students in our ministry who have gotten a lot more serious about their faith. When we ask them what was the moment you wanted to give your whole life to Jesus and follow Him, every single one of them literally says it was during COVID when they were all alone that God met with them and they grew in their faith. It's a really cool thing to know that COVID was actually a wonderful time when God moved powerfully in our youth and our families as much as it was difficult in so many other ways for all of us.

We are also seeing a lot of our young people excited about missions, about sharing Jesus with their peers in school but also as we look to bring our youth overseas on mission. Another really exciting thing is that we, over the last three years, commissioned and sent out about 30 youth – now young adults – into universities as missionaries. It's exciting to hear reports about all that God is doing in and through

them on their campuses, as well as seeing their excitement and joy of walking with God and following Him as a part of His mission. I wish so badly that all of you reading this could have a conversation with them and see the joy on their faces, and in their words. We are seeing God work in equipping and raising up our youth to be on mission. Another cool thing we are seeing: a lot of youth in our community from non-Christian homes enter our doors, some 15-20 every week, hearing the gospel and engaging in conversation. We are excited to see how God is bringing youth to our space, that they see the church as a safe place, ask questions and build friendship. That's been pretty awesome!

KP: What is your greatest joy in your role at TPC?

HR: I would say two things:

1. The privilege and honour to walk with families to support them and their teens in following Jesus.
2. At our church being a global mission church focusing on what God is doing around the world, it is such a great joy to actually bring our youth and young adults into those spaces of what God is doing around our world and to raise up our community here at Peoples to engage in global mission – a huge joy and unique part of being at The Peoples Church.

KP: If you could travel anywhere in the world without concern for money, time or threat, where would it be?

HR: A few places are on my bucket list for personal vacation: an island off Yemen called Socotra where the plant and animal life are only found on that island. It's really amazing. Right now, though where I would like to

go is to my wife's hometown in Ukraine, a suburb of Karkiv – the eastern side of the country next to Russia. Anna and I had the privilege of going there 6 months before the war started and seeing where she grew up - where her great Grandmother built her home. It was one of the greatest honours of my life to be there and be with her family. To be in their backyard, their garden would be such a beautiful thing. One day we are hoping to go back.

KP: What is your favorite book or story in the Bible which you would want to time travel to?

HR: There are a few time periods: book of Daniel, in Babylon - seeing what it was like for him to seek its prosperity is of interest, but the story of Jesus on the boat during the storm: Jesus was asleep, he wakes up and calms the storm, then he goes to the Decapolis and meets a violent, demon possessed man. Jesus casts the demons into the pigs, but then comes one of the most beautiful statements we see in the gospel. I would love to see this moment when the people of the village, who ask Jesus to leave, see the man in his right mind, fully clothed, sitting at the feet of Jesus. Jesus healed him, cared for his physical need and as this man wants to learn, he asks to go with Jesus. Jesus says 'no' but to go and tell his people what God has done for him. The next time Jesus goes to the Decapolis there was over 10,000 people waiting to hear from Him. Just to be there in that moment seeing this man's faith and excitement over God's healing, and then to see him go and share: I would have loved to be there.

KP: What are top 3 words or statements you want us at Lifespring55 to know?

HR: We still need you! One dear senior comes every Friday as part of our youth leadership team and she prays, meets, and encourages our leaders and talks with some kids. Her role and presence is so invaluable; it is making such a difference. God is doing incredible things – breakthrough with a lot of our students. We believe it's because of prayer. We need you, your faith, your experience, your wisdom.

Please talk to our youth! Youth love it when people who are older, stop them and take notice of their life and care for them – even if it's to ask them their name and be praying for them.

Know you are valued! The next generation needs you, and our church needs you.

KP: How can we X, Boomer and post war generations pray for you personally?

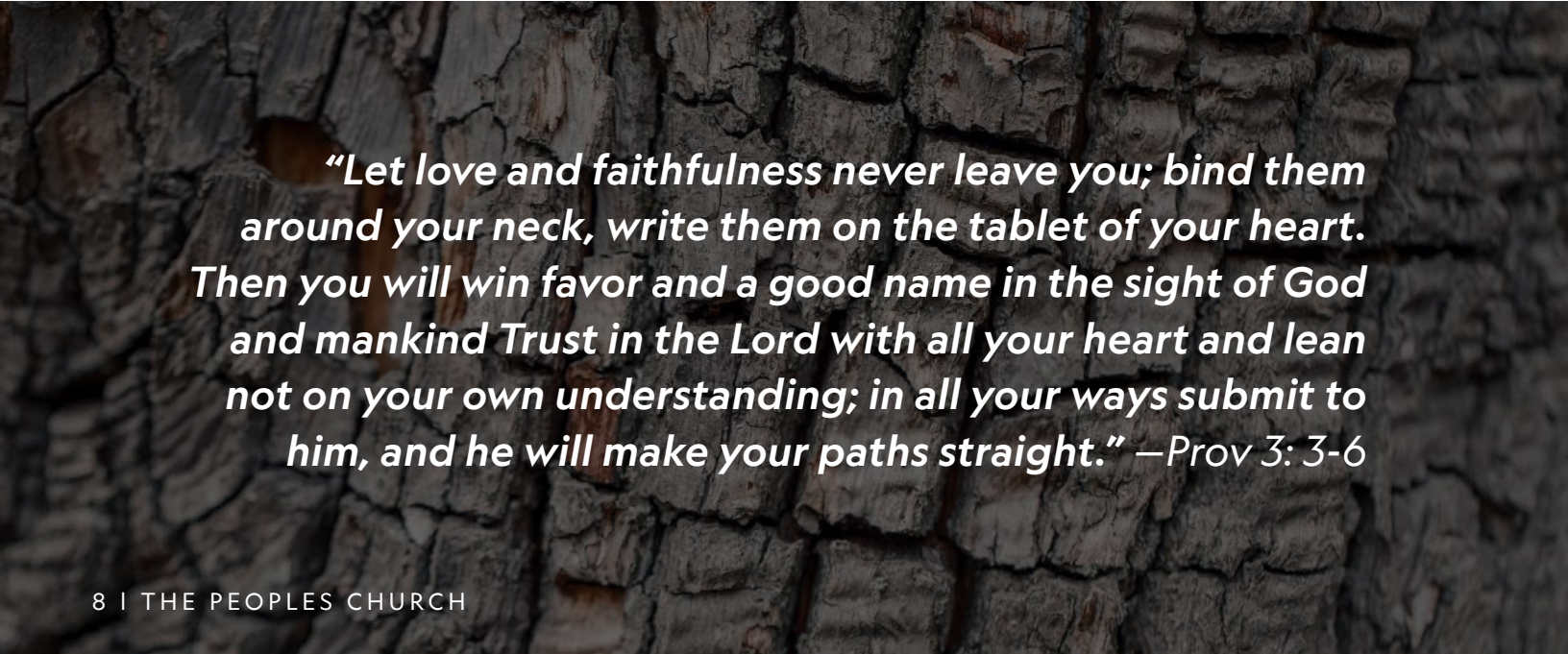
HR: Pray for my wife, Anna and I that we stay at the feet of Jesus and lead from a secret and quiet place of the LORD. Sometimes the rhythm, routine, and busyness of ministry – doing things in our own strength, causes a loss of connection with the LORD. The commitment and discipline to stay close to Jesus is vital.

KP: How can we pray for our youth and young adults?

HR: Pray for these specific things: our youth are really struggling with mental health; every year a number of youth have suicidal ideations, depression and anxiety, and many don't feel they can talk with their parents about it. Please pray against the enemy's attack, robbing their joy. Pray that his attacks will not stand. Pray that God would give freedom and victory in their minds and lives. Also, our society's conversation about sexuality is causing problems as our youth struggle to know how to 'be in the world but not of the world.' In particular, our younger youth are accepting this new sexuality agenda as the way it is. We are trying to help them develop a Biblical world view around sexuality. So please be praying that our young people genuinely believe in the authority, inerrancy & sufficiency of Scripture. This is God's Word to us!

Thank you, Hartley for the flat white coffee, and for sharing.

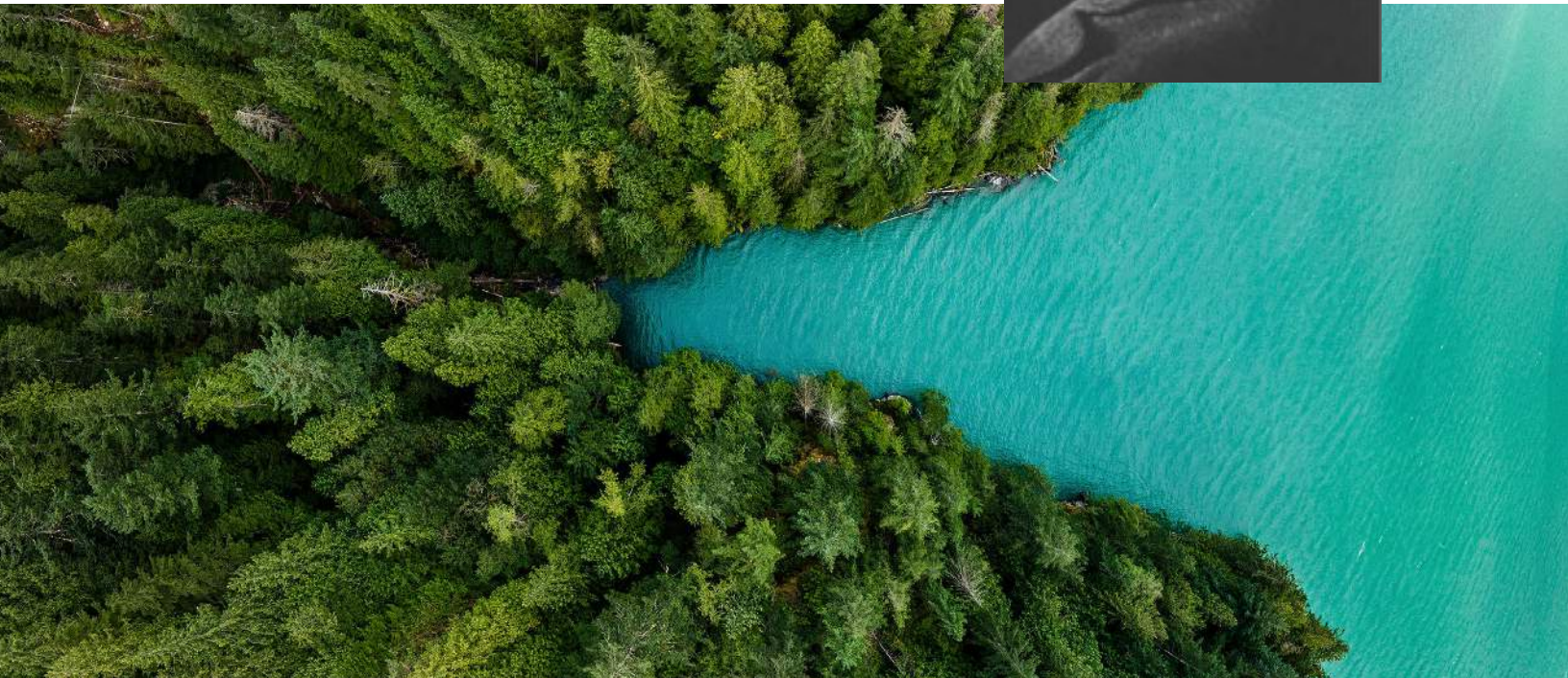
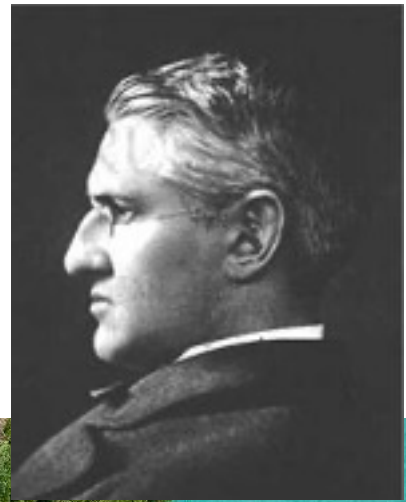
You can contact Hartley to volunteer, ask questions or cheer on his team at hartleyr@thepeopleschurch.ca
416-222-3341x145



“Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and mankind Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” —Prov 3: 3-6

HYMN REVIEW

It is Well (When Peace Like a River)



Horatio Spafford (1828-1888) was quite successful—a senior partner in a Chicago law firm. He was also a committed Christian layman who supported the ministry of Dwight L. Moody. But he was faced with a series of tragedies that would have sunk a lesser man.

He had invested heavily in Chicago real estate, and the Great Fire of Chicago in October 1871 wiped him out financially.

Then, in 1873, he and his family were planning a visit to Europe. He was delayed by business concerns but sent his family ahead on the ocean liner *Ville Du Havre*. Mid-ocean, their ship was struck by an English ship, the *Lochearn*. The

Ville Du Havre quickly sank, resulting in the deaths of 226 people—among them Stafford's four daughters.

Spafford's wife survived the wreck and sent a telegram saying only "Saved alone."

Spafford boarded a ship to join his wife in England, where the rescue vessel had taken his wife. He asked the captain of the ship to point out the location of the wreck that had taken the lives of his daughters. When they came to that place, he stood on deck contemplating the terrible thing that had happened to his family. But then, sustained by his faith that his daughters were not at the bottom of the ocean, but were rather in

the bosom of the Heavenly Father, he retired to his cabin where he wrote:

*When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.
It is well (it is well),
with my soul (with my soul),
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

But the Spaffords were to endure one more tragedy. They had three more children. In 1880, their son, also named Horatio, died of scarlet fever. To compound that tragedy, their church told the Spaffords that their son's death was God's judgment on them for unspecified sins.

The Spaffords responded by moving to Jerusalem with a small group of like-minded people. They founded The American Colony, which engaged in philanthropic work among the people of that region without regard to religious preferences. They gained great favor in the region as a result of their work with hospitals, soup kitchens, and orphanages—work that continued well into the 20th century.

Spafford died of malaria in 1888, just days before his 60th birthday. He was buried in Jerusalem.

It is tempting to think of the Spaffords as people whose lives were marked by tragedy. It would be more appropriate to think of them as people whose lives were characterized by triumph over tragedy.

From sermonwriter.com/hymns/hymn-stories/it-is-well-with-my-soul/ Copyright, 2015, Richard Niell Donovan

Above All, Know Thyself - Socrates

Identity is a vital part of who we are (pun intended). Indeed, we practice many layers of identification every day - family, friends, neighbours, talents, sports, arts, etc. Indeed, the Bible is a transcendent source to affirm your identity in life and with the LORD. Paul notes: "...sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14). "So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir." (Galatians 4:7). "...you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household..." (Ephesians 2:19).

The image shows a page from a hymn book featuring the hymn "It Is Well With My Soul". The title is centered at the top. Below it, the composers are listed: H. G. SPAFFORD. and P. P. BLISS. The music is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. The hymn includes four verses and a chorus. The lyrics are: 1. When peace like a riv - er at - tend - eth my way, When 2. Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, tho' tri - als should come, Let 3. My sin - oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous tho't - My 4. And, Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be eight, The sor - rows like sea - bil - lows roll, What - ev - er my lot, Thou hast this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, That Christ hath re - gard - ed my sin - not in part but the whole, - Is nailed to His cross, and I clouds be roll'd back as a scroll, The trump shall re - sound, and the taught me to say: "It is well, it is well with my soul." help - less es - tate, And hath shed His own blood for my soul. bear it no more; Praise the Lord; praise the Lord, O my soul! Lord shall de - scend, - "E - ven so" - it is well with my soul. CHORUS. It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul! It is well with my soul.

ABOVE ALL, KNOW THYSELF



TRADITIONALISTS

Born 1900-1945

Great Depression

World War II

Disciplined

Workplace Loyalty

Move to the 'Burbs'

Vaccines



BOOMERS

Born 1946-1964

Vietnam, Moon Landing

Civil/Women's Rights

Experimental

Innovators

Hard Working

Personal Computer



GEN X

Born 1965-1976

Fall of Berlin Wall

Gulf War

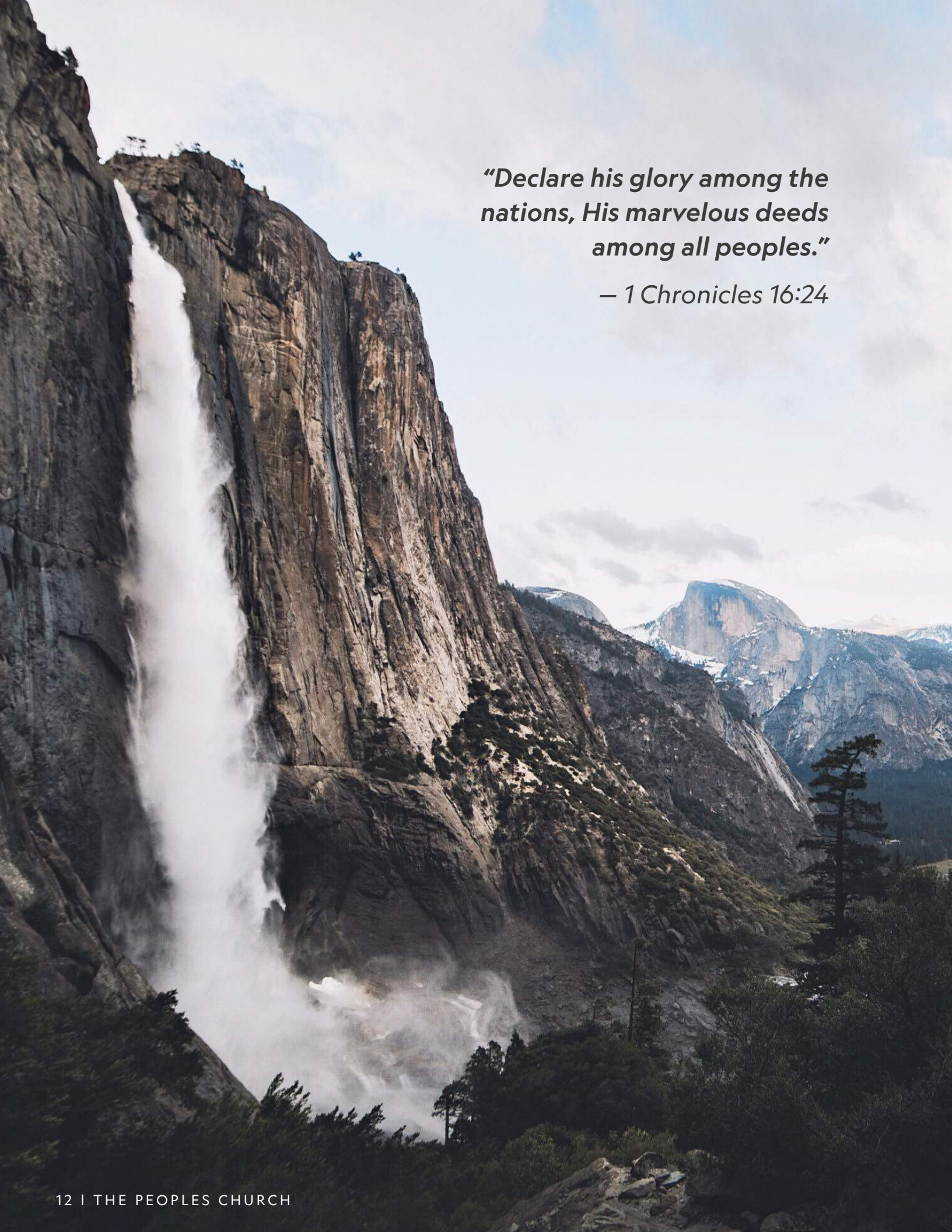
Independent

Free Agents

Internet, MTV, AIDS

Mobile Phone

For fun this issue, let's consider demographic cohorts - a relatively new way to consider identity. Of which cohort would you identify?



*“Declare his glory among the
nations, His marvelous deeds
among all peoples.”*

— 1 Chronicles 16:24

REVISITING THE VITALITY OF VISITATION



In the parable of the sheep & goats (Matthew 25: 31-48), Jesus makes a fascinating future statement, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me...Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Although we all wrestle with our capacity, character, and coordination of connecting with another, it seems to me that Jesus is emphatically saying when we care, we are truly living in the humanity he intended.

So when you entertain, host, enjoy, preside or visit with others consider these good habits to practice & develop:

1. Be loving. Seek to love the one(s) you visit, their family, friends, etc — even if they are difficult to love. Ask God to fill you up to do so; He visits with you.

2. Be time sensitive. Ask how long a person wants to visit. Focus on 15 minute increments, listening for 'invitation to go' cues. Watch body language.
3. Be respectful. Let others go first, let them guide you in topic, ask questions.
4. Be a focused listener. Start with simple questions: job, family, vehicle, pets, hobbies, arts, sports. Active listening is one of the highest forms of love.
5. Be confidential. Take care when asking, and hearing deeply personal issues. If unaware of the public, private divide, ask: can I share this?
6. Be natural, relaxed. If you feel at ease or uncertain, be honest but sensitive. Express healthy barriers and be careful not to overpromise.
7. Be discerning. Ask follow up questions:

"If I understand you correctly... ". Resist desires to fix problems, leave it to the LORD or professionals.

At The Peoples Church, there are a number of faithful volunteers equipped to bring the blessing of friendship and prayer support to those of our church family who are unable to attend as they had. If you know of someone who, for some reason, is unable to attend our services and activities, please let us know. We would love to connect and offer the gift of friendship.

*You may call the church at 416.222.3341
and leave a message at extension
178 or send an email to KenP@
ThePeoplesChurch.ca*

***"You are worthy, our Lord and
God, to receive glory and honor
and power, for you created all
things, and by your will they were
created and have their being."***

—Revelation 4:11

WHO'S DRIVING?

Try guessing the profession of these drivers (see answers on the next page)

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.



10.



An aerial photograph of rolling green hills, likely in the Philippines, showing a mix of lush green vegetation and some brown, eroded soil. The hills are undulating and create a sense of depth and texture. In the upper right corner, there is a bright yellow rectangular box containing a list of professions.

ANSWERS:

1. Writer
2. Realtor
3. Accountant
4. Lawyer
5. Barber
6. Tow Truck Driver
7. Reporter
8. Pirate
9. Filmmaker / Film Star
10. Farmer

“By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.”

—Genesis 2:2-3

SPRING

CHURCHWIDE EVENTS

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES

Friday, Mar 29

9AM, 11:30AM*, 2PM

*Livestreamed

On Friday, kids and junior youth programs will not be available.

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday, Mar 31

9AM, 11:30AM*, 2PM

*Livestreamed

On Sunday, kids and junior youth programs will be available at 9AM & 11:30AM.

WE SERVE MINISTRY FAIR

April 28th & May 5th

WE ARE FAMILY!?

GLOBAL MISSION CONFERENCE 2024

May 24th – June 9th

Worship Night & Conference Kick-Off

Friday, May 24

Prayer Sunday

Sunday, May 26

Mission Partner Expo

Sunday, May 26

Steps of Hope: Walking with Refugees

Saturday, June 1

Guest Speaker: Mark Glanville

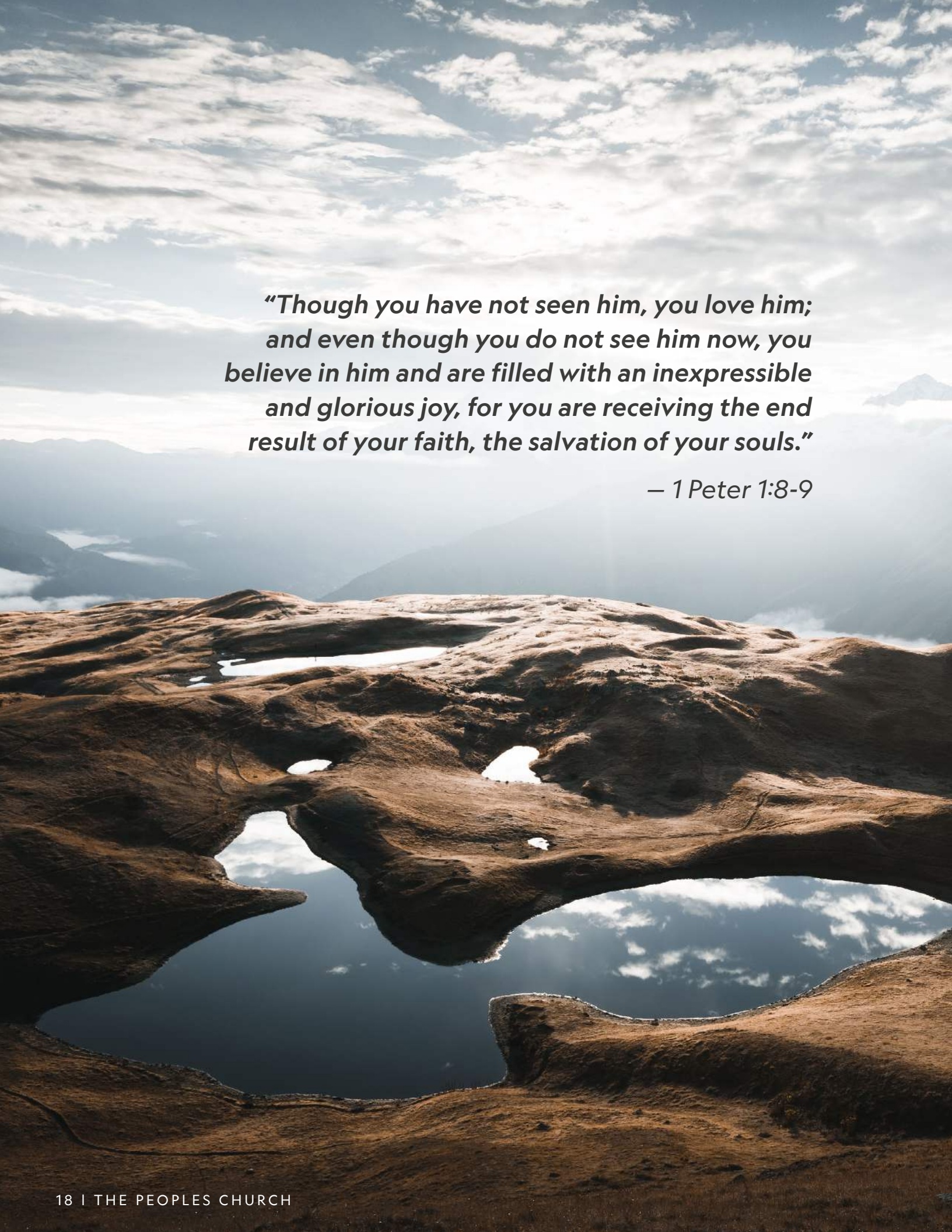
Sunday, June 2

Go Deeper Seminar with Guest Speaker Ray Aldred

Sunday, June 9

*“Whoever does the will of
my Father is my brother
and sister and mother.”*

—Jesus



***“Though you have not seen him, you love him;
and even though you do not see him now, you
believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible
and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end
result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”***

— 1 Peter 1:8-9



LAUGHTER IN CHURCH

GOOD MEDICINE

One child asked her Sunday school teacher:
"If the people of Israel are Israelites, and the people of Canaan are Canaanites, are the people of Paris called Parasites?"

As a little girl became restless in church, she leaned over to her mother and loudly asked,
"Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

A six-year old was overheard reciting the Lord's prayer at a church service: *"And forgive us our trash passes as we forgive those who passed trash against us."*

Upon inspecting a Grade 1 student's picture, the Sunday school teacher pointed to a stick figure in the cockpit of a plane and asked, *"Who is this person?"* The response: *"That's Pontius the Pilot!"*

As a pastor greeted people after church on Remembrance Day, a boy stopped to look at a memorial plaque. Anticipating a question the pastor said: *"My child it's a memorial to all those who died in the service."* After a sober moment of silence the boy asked *"Was it the, the 9:00 or 11:00?"*

LIFESPING 55

MONTHLY MEETINGS

We look forward to celebrating and serving together. Here are the scheduled dates for the first half of the year 2024.

SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, April 20

Saturday, May 18 with a Missionary Guest

Saturday, June 15

Elim Lodge Day trip June 27
(more details to follow)

FALL DATES TO PENCIL IN:

Sep 21

Oct 19

Nov 16

Dec 21

At the Well is a quarterly publication of **Lifespring 55**,
the seniors ministry of The Peoples Church.

Editor: Ken Park
Seniors & Visitation Pastor

Comments and submissions may be
sent to kenp@thepeopleschurch.ca
416.222.3341 ext. 178