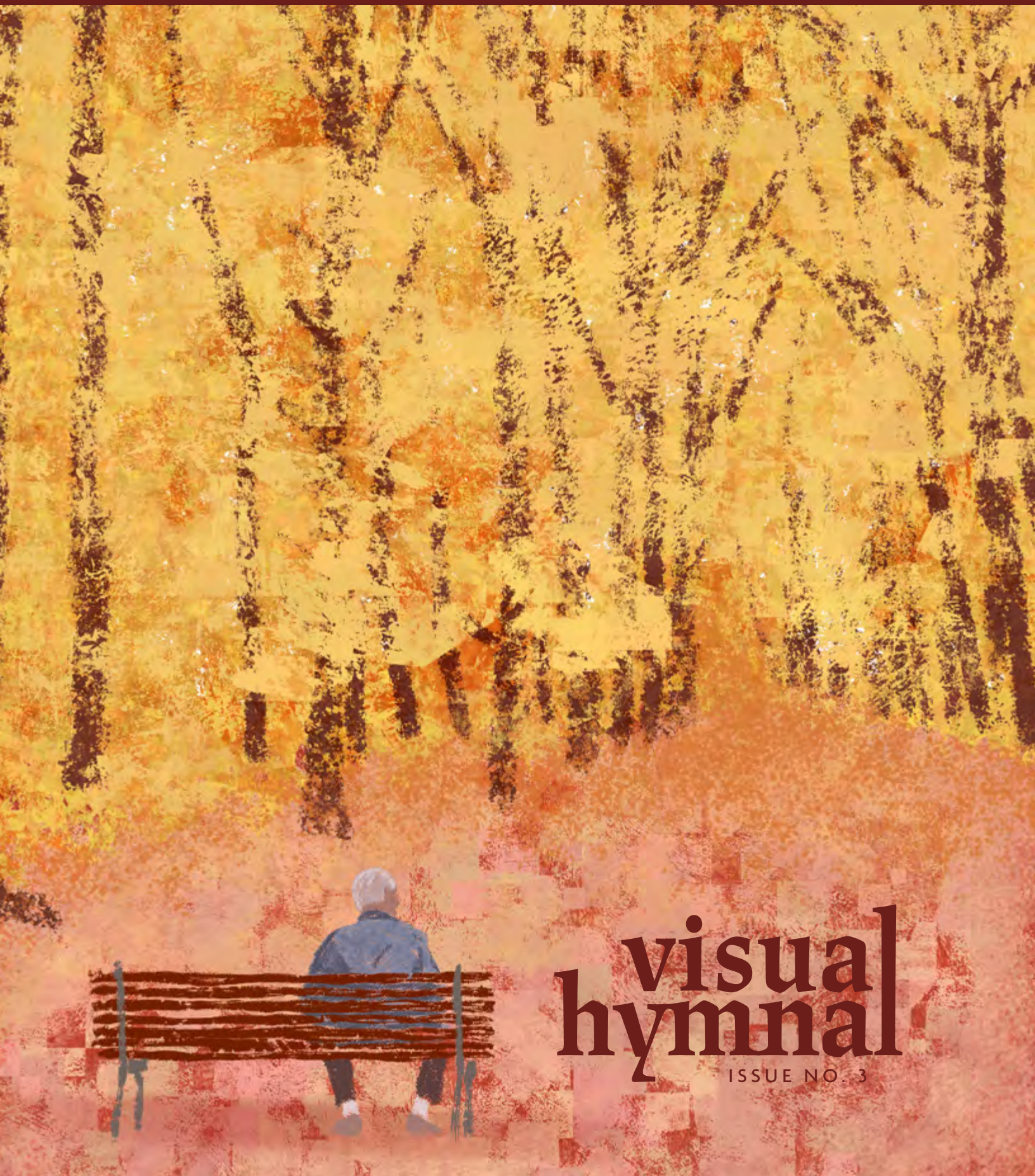


SEEDS OF HOPE ■ COZY CABBAGE ■ BUGS + BIRDS
PRAYING WITH PLANTS ■ SONGS + SONNETS ■ FOLLOW THAT FOX!
HOW TO BE A NEIGHBOR ■ ...AND MUCH, MUCH MORE. *THIS IS VISUAL HYMNAL.*



visual hymnal

ISSUE NO. 3

Notes From the Editors

The Day of Small Things

Here in Florida, the liturgical season of Ordinary Time coincides with hurricane season. The week we spent anticipating Hurricane Helene felt anything but ordinary; schools were transformed into shelters, and Jim Cantore broadcasted from the Old Capitol while friends and neighbors packed their cars to evacuate.

Yet when preparing for a catastrophic storm, we perform the most ordinary tasks, don't we? We go grocery shopping, fill up gas tanks, scrub and launder and take out the trash. We make our numbered to-do lists and check them off, one by one. We consider what we need for protection and provision, and they are such ordinary things: wood, nails, water, light.

As a hurricane approaches, we think a lot about power. How soon will we lose it? How long will we be without it? How will we manage in the meantime?

After the storm, millions in its path were left without power. As I write this, many are still waiting for it to be restored, along with roofs, roads, schools, businesses.

As they always do, stories have emerged of people doing what they could—using what resources, what power, they had—to help each other through. Some are heroic: a woman in Asheville cutting a path with her Sawzall in order to drive a neighbor in need of dialysis to the hospital. Most are smaller, but with outsized impact: Neighbors distributing their swimming pool water for flushing toilets. Grocery store workers wielding flashlights, serving as personal shoppers. “We are okay,” a friend in Western North Carolina texted. “Just all trying to do what we can to help those up the mountain who have lost everything.”

In my mind, there are two ways of thinking about Ordinary Time. First, as a series of numbered (*ordinal*, for our Latin enthusiasts) weeks, the steady march of time. “Teach us to number our days,” we pray with Moses, “that we may get a heart of wisdom.” Our rhythms and routines, our to-do lists and our ten-year plans are worthwhile endeavors. They help us keep order, and they keep us focused on our calling.

But our days are not just finite; Job reminds us that they are also “few and full of trouble.” The steady march of time and trouble wears us down, makes our to-do lists feel insurmountable, our ten-year plans futile. “All things are full of weariness”—just ask wise King Solomon. “All is vanity.”

But Ordinary Time also reminds us that the small, the unassuming, the ordinary—loaves and fishes, mustard seeds, sparrows and lilies, wood and nails, bread and wine and water—are the stuff of the kingdom of God. My mom says this season brings to her mind the prophet Zechariah's admonition: Do not despise the day of small things.

The writers and artists whose work is in these pages have seen their share of trouble. They know what it is to be powerless in the face of the storm, to be weary with what feels like a chasing after wind. And yet they tell stories to children, they grow plants with leaves that pray, they sip tea on their patios at sunrise and sing songs of hope in the wake of searing loss. They have not despised the day of small things. They know that in the kingdom of heaven, these are the most powerful things of all.

Katie Hautamaki

Converging Providences

I may have said this once or twice, but one of the things I loved so, so much about curating VH issues one and two was how they just seemed to come together nicely with little patterns and threads that we didn't plan ahead of time. Number three proved to be no different, even in the midst of a really, really hard season and several delays.

Back in our first planning meetings last year, Leah wanted somehow to incorporate the concept of a Christian *hygge* (see page 10) into one of the issues. And while comfort and hospitality are enjoyable all year round, it seemed most appropriate for an autumn-time issue.

Many pieces this round feature not only fall color motifs, but also themes of fellowship, hearty food, neighborliness, etc. We hadn't told anyone to do that...but what a lovely fit for the *hygge* idea after all. And because of the *slight* delay in publishing, here we are with a decidedly cozy October Ordinary Time issue. It's humbling how the Lord can work out the details, even with our loose ideas or life not going the way we hoped or planned. This is but a stitch in the tapestry—He is the master all the same.

We are delighted to present this, converging providences and all, your third issue of *Visual Hymnal*. Enjoy.

Sara Davis

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Growth and Rest

Curated by Leah Shewmaker

Let's set the mood with some tunes. To play, go to the Spotify search bar, click on the camera next to it, and scan! Grab a cozy mug of tea, coffee, or anything you fancy and enjoy this playlist curated for Ordinary Time.

Seek Your Kingdom – Kings Kaleidoscope

Faith – Citizens

TrusT – half-alive

Prettier Than Solomon – Jon Guerra

Pilgrim – John Mark McMillan

creature – half-alive

Altar – Tekoa, Rory Mckenna

Sweeter Than Wine – John Mark Pantana

I Surrender All – Alabaster Co., Jonathan Ogden, GRACE.

Captured – Mark Barlow, Isla Vista Worship

Canvas – Trulah

I'm Fine – Sarah Sparks

Romans 8 – Poor Bishop Hooper

Orion – Ghost Ship

Running – Land of Color

Illness of the Heart – Jon Guerra

Gone – Kings Kaleidoscope

Square One – Chris Renzema

Satisfied in You (Psalm 42) – The Sing Team

139 – Kings Kaleidoscope

Faith?! – Chris Renzema

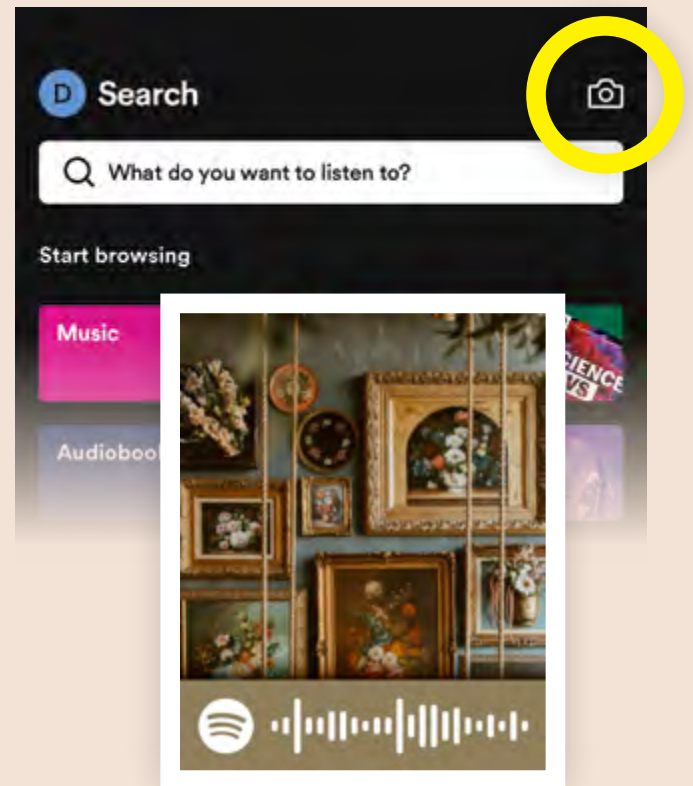
Grow – The Oh Hellos

How Great Thou Art – LOVKN

Psalm 116 (I Love You, Lord) – Acoustic Sessions - Mission House, Jess Ray, Taylor Leonhardt

Sabbath – Zambroa

Strawberry Fields – John Mark Pantana





A Call to Worship

From Titus 3:4-7

By Kristin Webster

Leader: The loving kindness
of God our Savior and His love
for mankind appeared.

All: He saved us.

Leader: Not by works that we had
done, but according to His mercy.

All: He saved us.

Leader: Through the washing of
regeneration and renewal by the
Holy Spirit.

All: He saved us.

Leader: He poured out His Spirit
on us abundantly.

All: He saved us.

Leader: So that, having been justified by
his grace, we may become heirs
with the hope of eternal life.

All: He saved us! Hallelujah!

Contributing Artists

Jay Colle started drawing on folded Order of Service sheets on Sunday mornings at church—an attempt on his mother’s part to tamp down the restless activity of a toddler. The restlessness never waned, so he just kept drawing and painting and creating stuff. There is no sign of it stopping any time soon.

Leah Shewmaker is in her second year of her master’s degree in opera performance at Florida State University. Previously, she worked as an arts and entertainment reporter for *The Villages Daily Sun*. She earned her B.A. in writing, rhetoric, and technical communications and BMus in voice performance from James Madison University in Virginia.

Jennifer Drury is a sinner loved by Jesus, thankful for her amazing husband, sweet kids, and great jobs, both as a homeschooler and a classical teacher. She loves truth, goodness, and beauty in many forms, from sunsets to poems to water molecules.

Daniel Hautamaki grew up in a small South Carolina town steeped in the Southern Appalachian way of life. He writes about the everyday profound intersections of life and faith. Daniel lives in Tallahassee with his wife Katie and their three children.

Mary Jane Sinclair is a daughter, a sister, a mother, a wife, a grandmother and a fellow pilgrim enjoying the beauty and the challenges of the Christian life here on earth. She is proud to be a native Floridian but developed a love of having four distinct seasons in Cincinnati, Ohio. She has enjoyed sewing for most of her life, lately gaining an appreciation for quilting from her mother and grandmother who were both very talented in all kinds of handicrafts.

Autumn Kloth is a senior studying statistics at FSU. She loves to read and write and has been doing both for many years. Autumn writes as a way to glorify God, whether through admiring the beauty of the earth, reflecting on the complexity of human nature, or simply using words to honor Him.

Mike Houghton has been drawing since he was a kid in Miami and telling bedtime stories since he became a dad in Tallahassee. Among his favorite sources of inspiration is exploring Florida’s wild and natural beauty with his family.

Sara Davis grew up in the age of Left Behind vs. Harry Potter and, frankly, is still working through all that. Spoiled rotten by her husband, she enjoys homemaking, hosting dinner parties, and the more-than-occasional midday nap. Mom/Coach/CFO. Sometimes she designs magazines.

Holly Hawkes currently teaches fourth grade, fifth grade, and kindergarten at home. Mom of three and wife of Jeremiah, she has a Master’s of Public Administration from UGA and is part owner of the Green Bay Packers.

Peter Schamp usually expresses his creativity through music or his occupation of learning experience design. He’s grateful to have another outlet here with *VH*.

Becca Hollister is wife to Jason and mom to Brock and Tyson. She loves singing harmony, dancing, and Saturdays at the soccer field with her family.

Catherine Deininger is an avid walker, baker, and pre-bed-time nap-taker. She enjoys baking in the evening when the house is quiet. While she likes good quality food, her favorite culinary treat is a McDonald’s Coke and French fries.

Karen Hawkins is a native Floridian who grew up in Panama City on beautiful St. Andrew Bay. She moved to Tallahassee in 2007 for an editing job at FSU. When she’s not advocating for the Oxford comma, she can be found hanging with her cat Hamilton and quoting Shakespeare to anyone who will listen.

Kristin Webster is a mom, college instructor, wreath-maker, and mystery connoisseur. She enjoys Bible study and walks in the morning with her husband.

Katie Hautamaki is good at spelling but bad at typing. She loves to read to her kids.

Vicki Davis is new at expressing herself creatively. She’s always been an avid observer of art and art forms, but never really a participant. She enjoys learning and growing, adventuring with her family, and growing closer to Jesus.

Cody Sherman doesn’t like mayonnaise or attention. But he has learned to tolerate small amounts of mayonnaise.

Heather Sherman has gone dipnet fishing in Alaska, lived at 13,000 feet in Peru, eaten churros on a beach in Tijuana, and is very content with everyday life in Tallahassee, Florida.



Familiar Strangers

On learning to love thy neighbor

By Peter Schamp

I had a great conversation with my next door neighbor earlier this year. I learned a bit about her family, her origins, and what she typically does for the holidays. We connected enough to feel good about exchanging phone numbers. It was on New Year's Eve. In the baking aisle. At ALDI.

That's right. A passing moment in public—amidst a symphony of clinking carts and barcode scans—outdid any and all of the calm but superficial moments we've shared while coexisting approximately 50 feet from each other's front doors.

You don't need me to tell you that our modern conveniences of garages, air conditioning, fenced yards, AirPods, and the internet make our interactions with neighbors naturally less frequent than those of decades past.

To me, having a relationship with a neighbor is more of a pleasant surprise than an expected standard. A neighbor used to be a person who had your phone number, maybe an extra key to your home, and a willingness to water your plants or move your garbage cans every once in a while. Maybe that's still the standard in some places, but I don't think that's ever been my experience.

It may not surprise you that I don't have a great track record of having neighborly neighbors (or of being one). In my adult years, I've mostly lived in apartments, sharing exterior walls with other people but rarely knowing them. In these environments, people became familiar strangers. Familiar enough that they would walk a misdelivered package over to my door, but stranger enough that they wouldn't stay and chat. Familiar enough that I'd know whose violent domestic dispute I heard at 3 a.m., but stranger enough that I didn't care to chat with the cops about them. I remember the comical time my neighbor (after living next door for three years) introduced himself for the first time whilst I was packing the moving truck to leave Chicago for good. Perhaps you can relate to interactions like that.

It's not that I'd never see my neighbors. We'd cross paths quite often in the parking or entrance areas and become accustomed to the routine head nod, and the quick smile-and-pivot to a phone or hand-in-pocket search for the keys. Making eye contact is far too personal. And when these brief, cordial-by-a-thread moments are the standard interaction, it becomes harder to believe that anyone truly desires any semblance of connection beyond that. And it becomes harder to want it myself.

So the occasional head nod in passing eventually turned into the extra drive around the complex to avoid walking by a neighbor arriving at the same time. Or sometimes, I found it more appealing to stay in the car longer after parking (feigning a phone call or a life-altering soundbite from a podcast), waiting for a nearby neighbor to get into their car before exiting mine.

These are not my proudest moments.

Again, that may just be the nature of apartment living. Out of curiosity, I asked my coworker if she had any impactful neighbor experiences she could share. She mentioned that, while she knows the people who own houses next to hers, she has never attempted to get to know the residents across the street, who rent. "They're just always the ones who leave," she said. So, do apartment-dwelling (or renting) neighbors even count as neighbors?

I suppose it's different when you know your neighbors prior to becoming neighbors. I've heard great stories of folks who choose to move next to each other to live in closer community and partnership. What a way to impact a neighborhood! Still, I imagine, if you're not careful, you could easily let the promise of nearly constant access to someone dissuade you from ever following through on spending time with them. After college, my best friend (who was still in school himself) enthusiastically moved into the unit above mine with some of his city friends. But I recall two, maybe three times that we saw each other that semester, even though his bedroom was literally right above mine—according to the floor plan. It's still painful for me to reflect on that lost opportunity for time together, because two years later, he passed away.

I've always felt that I'd unlock neighborliness if and when I bought a house, as if anyone who landscaped within earshot of me would instantly become a cordial companion. Now that I'm renting a home in an established neighborhood, my optimism about that is waning.

I recently ran into another one of my neighbors in public. This time, we were at the baggage claim at the airport. After staring in his direction for a while and wondering a) if it was him, and b) what his name was, I was surprised when he approached me. I was even more taken aback to learn we were on the same flight, and in the same city (NYC) for the same three days! If we had a better relationship, we may have at least discovered our shared itinerary ahead of time.

"And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High..." Luke 6

Some neighbors might be dangerous, unhinged, or at the least, uncomfortably awkward. But they may need me. They may need you. They definitely need Jesus. How will we know?

If our neighborhood were to experience destructive weather, would we begin to see a dormant neighborliness come to life? Would people come out of their private sanctuaries and help each other? I've witnessed this time and time again in other neighborhoods in the aftermath of storm damage. And in my work environment, it's been helpful to have a challenge to overcome with a coworker to help establish a sense of shared experience, and the beginnings of a friendship. Though effective, I hope that colossal damage from a storm is not what it will take to establish the same with neighbors.

I suppose one could point out that the common denominator of all of these dissatisfying neighbor relationships is me. Maybe Peter—with his bashfulness, introversion, and insecurity—is the problem. Or maybe I'm just the new tenant that people feel less inclined to get to know because we'll move on in a year or two. Regardless, I know I can work on becoming a better neighbor.

Yet neighborliness is a two-way street in most cases. So I wonder if everybody else also desires a little more of it in the world, or if they're content with living a siloed life on the homefront and engaging more in other communities, times, and spaces? If so, I can understand that; home should be a sanctuary. Some neighbors might be dangerous, unhinged, or at the least, uncomfortably awkward. But they may need me. They may need you. They definitely need Jesus. How will we know?

When the Bible speaks of loving our neighbors, we often interpret it as any human we cross paths with or see suffering on the other side of the planet. I wonder if this emphasis on loving others so far outside our immediate vicinity has led us to neglect our literal neighbors next door? Once again, I'm guilty of that.

When I read Luke 6:29-36 last year, it hit me differently. As I considered the command of Jesus not to love only those who love us and can easily reciprocate love, but to love our enemies (or, those who cannot reciprocate love in the same way), it made me think of neighbors.

What does it really mean to love our neighbor? How should we reckon with our failures to do so and move forward to follow that commandment in our daily lives? How do we overcome the hurdles? I don't have those answers, but I'm going to start by working on becoming a better neighbor. By God's grace, it's a work that is already in progress. My history of neighbors is not exclusively speckled with regret and missed opportunities. There have been good times, too:

In Ann Arbor, I assertively introduced myself to Joe on the day he moved in below us, then learned that his girlfriend went to grad school with my wife. We became neighborly and shared meals on a few occasions.

When we moved into our first apartment in Tallahassee, Don-don and Edi lived above us and invited us to their daughter's birthday party.

Now I've been slowly getting to know Isaiah, our fellow air traveler, as he frequently plays outside with his kids across the street.

Maybe this all just confirms a long-held notion that good community takes time. Maybe our neighborliness need not be defined by reciprocal (or transactional?) acts of kindness. We'll give to and serve some and we'll receive from and be blessed by others, and that cycle will continue, no matter where we live, or whether or not we have a mortgage.

Oh, and we just invited Tiffany (from the ALDI baking aisle) to an afternoon social hour and concert in our home.





Home
Digital drawing
By Leah Shewmaker

Hygge: Cultivating Coziness

By Leah Shewmaker

With fall's arrival and winter just around the corner, time often seems to speed up. It's easy to spend our time lost in the busyness of life. *Hygge* is a Danish word, which was added to the Oxford English Dictionary in 2017, and is described as "the quality of being warm and comfortable that gives a feeling of happiness." Imagine, though life often brings anxieties and toil, enjoying the small, quiet moments. Hygge can be enjoyed in any circumstance, whether by taking time for a warm cup of tea, savoring a hearty meal, or lighting a candle in the dark hours of the day. To me, it means enjoying the beauty God has crafted. It is cultivating comfort for ourselves as well as our neighbors and loved ones. So ponder these questions: When do you feel most content? What creates comfort for you and for others? How can we be present and notice the gift of simple joys?

Ordinary Thyme

Performed by Daniel and the Hautamakis

Banjo: Daniel Hautamaki

Harmonica: Nora Hautamaki

Bowl and Spoon: Annie Hautamaki



Apple Picking

By Joshua M. Webster

I wanted some apple stew
But the apples I had were two.
When we got to the farm I ran ahead
Right past the horses being fed.

When my family caught up to me
The apples I had were three.
Oh, the things I would try
When we got home, we made apple pie!



The LORD is One
By Nora Hautamaki





Thanksgiving Sunset
Arthur R. Marshall National Wildlife Refuge
Photo by Sara Davis

Stuffed Cabbage

By Catherine Deininger and Joyce Kercher
Photos by Catherine Deininger

This recipe comes from my Hungarian heritage via my grandmother Elizabeth, or “Elsie,” as she was known. Grandma passed away before I was born, but I’ve been told she was a great host and a loving mother and grandmother. My mom, along with several of her six siblings, have adapted this recipe. It is an ordinary meal for any time. It’s not fancy food, but it’s good and filling and can feed an army.

With any family recipe, it’s best to learn in the kitchen from the expert while they’re making it. Likely it is so ingrained in their being that it has evolved from the original method—additions and adjustments over the years that create a rich taste experience.

The following is a transcribed conversation with my mother, sans family side stories and all the twists and turns of a chat with Mom.

So without further adieu, I present to you Stuffed Cabbage, first printed by the Ladies’ Auxiliary to the Hungarian American Athletic Club, New Brunswick, New Jersey (1955), adapted by my extended family, and told to me by my mother, Joyce.

A concise ingredient list

3 large heads of cabbage
1 pound ground chuck or beef
1 pound ground pork
1 cup rice
2 eggs
Salt
Pepper
Paprika
White onion (chopped and sauteed)
Olive oil
Pork kielbasa (one link)
Sauerkraut
Juniper berries
Garlic cloves (smashed)
Splash of apple cider vinegar
1 28-ounce plus one 14-ounce
jar of tomato puree





Catherine: Okay, so tell me how you make stuffed cabbage.

Mom: I start with three heads of cabbage. Remember that time when I was at the store with you and Lauren [Catherine's sister]? I sent her to get the cabbage and she brought me lettuce—two times! She was eight years old and so proud of herself. Make sure you get cabbage!

Fill a large stock pot with water and let it come to a boil. In the meantime, cut the core out of each cabbage head. Make a big circle to get it all out. When the water is boiling, drop the cored cabbage in. Don't walk away or it will stink up the kitchen.

When the leaves start to lift, use a large knife to pull them off and place them to the side. I have a certain Tupperware that I use for this.

Once all of the cabbage leaves are set aside, drain the stock pot and return it to the stove to make the filling.

For the filling:

1 pound of ground chuck and 1 pound of ground pork. Then add the rice; Uncle Dan cooks it first, but I don't. Then two eggs, plus salt and pepper. Then—I always get the good paprika (Szeged)—but just the regular [works fine]. I don't do the smoked [paprika]... well, maybe a little. But follow your heart. Oh! And a chopped, sauteed white onion.

Catherine: Okay, so now you have to prepare another stock pot for the actual cooking.

Mom: So in the pot goes olive oil and pork kielbasa (one link), cut into bite-sized pieces. Saute over medium heat. Let it get happy, then add the sauerkraut on top and more paprika. It will turn pink. I also put in juniper berries. Juniper berries are dried and found in the spice aisle of your grocery store. Once you're all set, then it's time to roll.

Catherine: May I explain?

Mom: Sure! You're a fine roller!

Catherine: Take your leaf in your left hand. Take your paring knife and cut out the rib of the leaf. Then flip it over so it's like a cup in your hand, and—I was thinking a tablespoon of filling?

Mom: The old Hungarians would be proud because they like it small, but I would do more.

Catherine: So put [the filling] in at the bottom of your leaf, then roll one full rotation, then flip in the right side of the leaf and continue rolling.

Mom: And if there's a lot of leaf then trim it off.

Catherine: And with about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the leaf, then stuff in the left side of the leaf and continue rolling.

Mom: Place the finished roll in a container until you've finished rolling. When you're done, put it in the pot with the sauerkraut and kielbasa. Then add smashed garlic, more juniper berries, more paprika, and maybe a splash of apple cider vinegar. Then add one 28-ounce jar of tomato puree and a half of another. Then fill the empty can with water and add that to the pot. That's it!

Let it come to a boil, then turn to low and let it cook as long as you're able. It's best the day after. Serve with cucumber salad and good bread. My Uncle Tom reminded me that spaetzle (a type of European egg noodle) on the side is also a must!

Jó étvágyat!

Catherine's full recorded interview with her mother, Joyce, can be found at visualhymnal.com.



Survey Markers

By Cody Sherman

Feet in the dirt
Head in my hat
Round in the ground
Knows where I'm at

Benchmarks Grid
Photo collage
Cody Sherman



A sonnet for my true love

By Jennifer Drury

Infatuation masquerades as love
But love lies not in how you make me feel
The measure of my heart lies far above
And fixed upon it an unbroken seal
Love labors in the doldrums of the day
It fights against the weariness of night
To know you, see you, serve you come what may
And rage against the dying of our light
Its brightness be obscured in passing years
Its heat might cool to warmth that's barely felt
But mending all the hurts behind your tears
Can kindle flames in which your fears will melt
Remind the young and heartsick with one voice
Love's no emotion; it's my daily choice.

A stroll on our bicentennial

By Jennifer Drury

Walking 'neath the moss-draped limbs of oak,
Two hundred years of history awaits.
I hear the war chant resonate from Doak
And stroll the learned halls of Florida State.
By railroad tracks creative art is found,
I quaff the latest brew or perfect roast
And cross a bridge where bicyclists abound
Into the park of which the city boasts.
Cascades of water, music, and the Bard,
Delight me as I drink in such a view,
The Capitol and agencies regard
And see a place that blends the old and new.
No matter through which cities I shall roam,
My college town has now become my home.

A Poem For My Magnolia

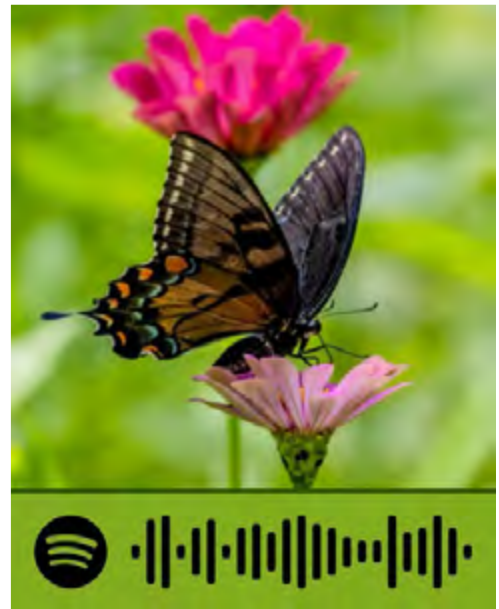
By Holly Hawkes

Beautiful magnolia,
As the winds tear through,
You bend and sway
And stay!

Fragrant creamy flowers,
Southern as my pearls,
Weather surging storms,
Stronger after each.

Creator of magnolias,
Sender of awful storms,
Grant me the strength, the beauty, the give
Against the wind.

"A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice..."
Isaiah 42:3



ordinary//time

playlist compiled by Daniel Hautamaki,
Peter Schamp, Cody Sherman,
Heather Sherman, and Mike Houghton

we live before the face of God//from dust we
came//so do the flowers//to dust we shall return//
thy kingdom come by growth//sowing//rest//
faith//love//friendship//family//community//joy//
suffering//justice//hope

The Very Best Day

Words by Mike Houghton
Illustrations by Jay Colle



Back in the time when imagination had the strength to change the shape of things, there lived a young girl named Una who spent her days in ordinary ways in a tiny cottage at the edge of a thick and peculiar forest.

One day, after helping her mother and father in the garden, Una walked down to the old wooden fence next to the forest and lay down under the shade of a sprawling sycamore tree.

She felt tired and achy and hungry from all the planting and watering and weeding. As Una looked up at the branches swaying in the breeze, she closed her eyes and wondered if the leaves above ever felt like she did. Or were they always lush and carefree and full?

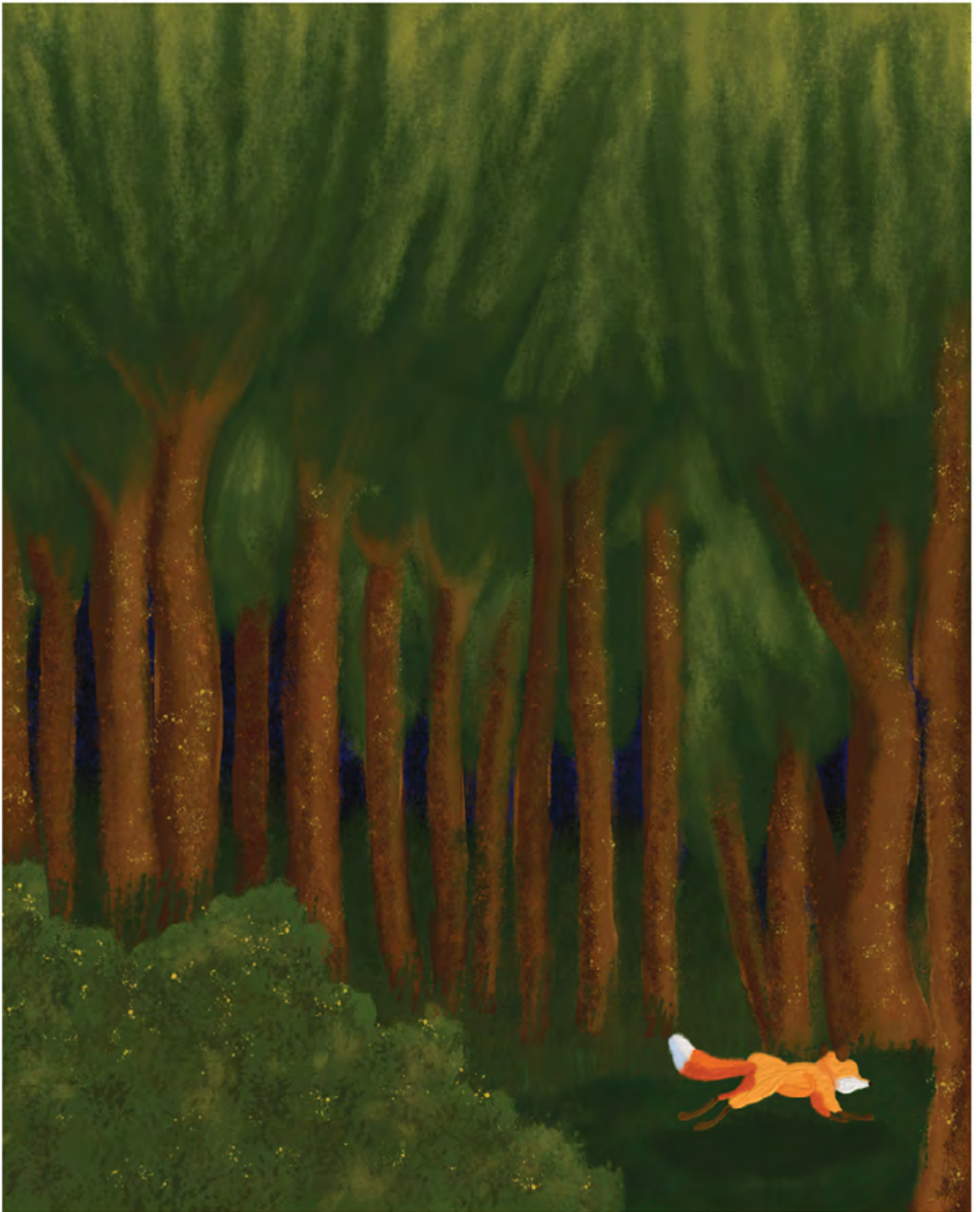
Una was drifting off to sleep when she heard a twig snap nearby in the woods. Something was just beyond the fence, close enough to see her.

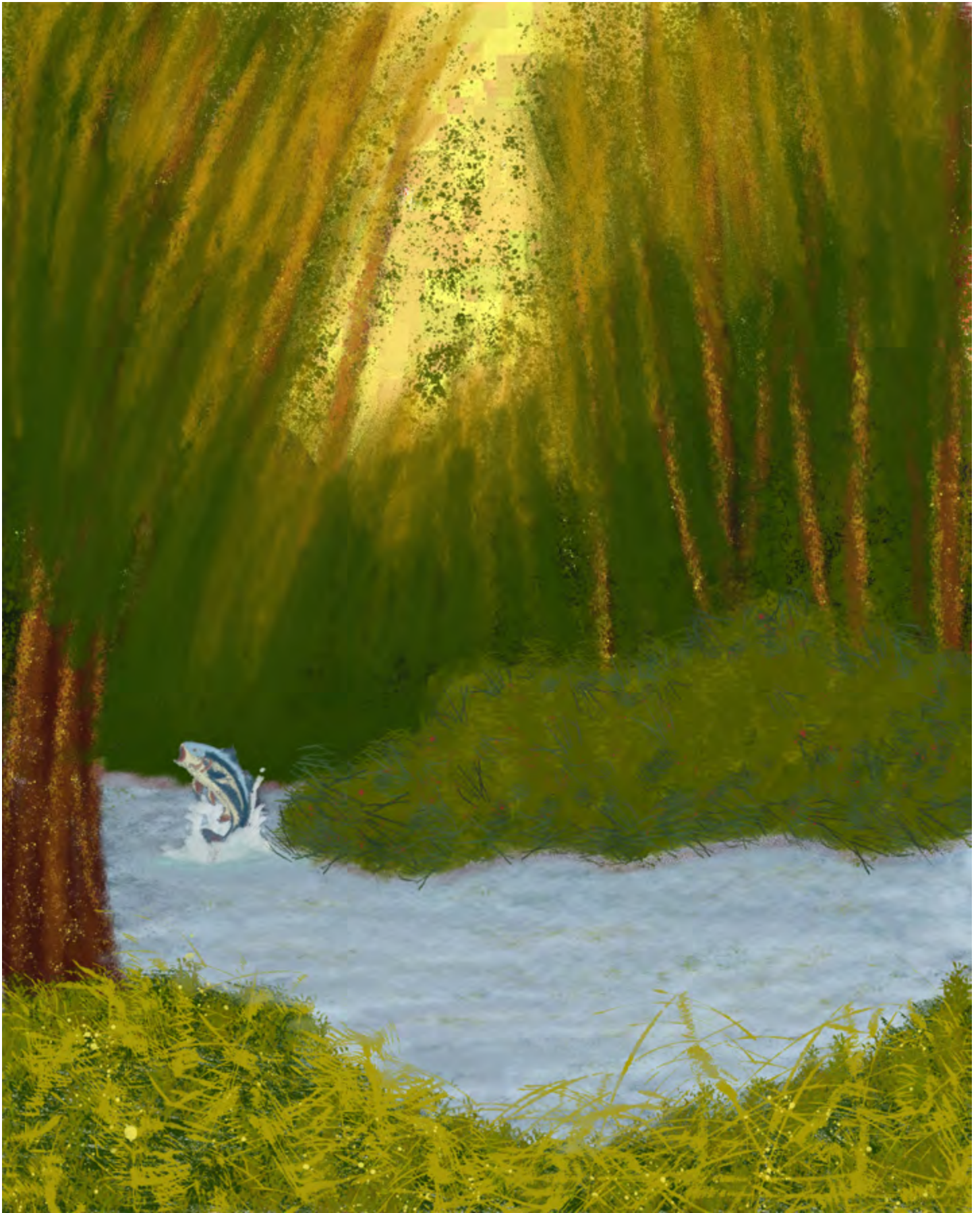
Una sat up. She saw a fox sitting on a log at the edge of the forest. It was furry and fast and elegant. It could see and hear and smell things very far away. It could explore the woods in ways she'd only imagined.

Then the fox spoke. It said, "Leave this garden, climb over the fence, and follow me." And Una did.

On the other side of the fence, Una could see and hear and smell things very far away. She was furry and fast and elegant. And Una ran with the fox through the woods, sniffing and listening and looking. She was having the very best day of her life...

Until she stopped by the edge of a flowing river and saw a fish looking up at her from the surface of the clear water. It was sleek and agile and vibrant. It was the best swimmer Una had ever met, and it could even breathe underwater and explore the river in ways she'd only imagined.





The fish said, "Leave these woods, leap into the river, and follow me." And Una did.

Under the water, Una could dart anywhere she wanted in an instant or hover motionless and nearly invisible. Una was sleek and agile and vibrant. She could dive down into the deepest parts of the water. And Una swam with the fish through the river, darting and hovering and diving. She was having the very best day of her life...

Until she looked up from the river's edge and saw a bird perched on a branch. It was feathery and nimble and dazzling. It could rise up high into the sky and see almost everything. It could soar far above the forest and explore the skies in ways she'd only imagined.

The bird said, "Leave this river, jump into the air, and follow me." And Una did.

Up in the air, Una felt the wind underneath her, and she rose up high into the sky. She was feathery and nimble and dazzling. And Una flew with the bird through the air, rising to a place where she could see almost everything all at once. She was having the very best day of her life...

Until she looked down from her place high up in the clouds and saw a tiny cottage with a garden. In the garden Una saw a man and a woman caring for all kinds of delightful plants. They were loving and forgiving and thankful. They lived in an ordinary way that was beautiful and true and good.

Then the man and the woman said, "Come home." And Una did.

Una yawned and opened her eyes. She saw her mother and father standing on the back porch of the cottage, smiling. Una got up and walked back to the cottage, and she ate a garden feast with her family. She told her mother and father about her journey with the fox and the fish and the bird. Una was home, and she was loved. It was the very best day of her life.

The End

They lived in an ordinary way that was beautiful and true and good.





Ordinary Time
Digital painting
Jay Colle

The concept is, if we stop, sit, and ruminate—in ordinary time, not rushed or distracted or angsty time—the world may appear a bit more magical and bright and full of wonder. The man is purposefully older; he has the time to stop and sit, and he understands how important it is not to miss any wonder in the time he has left.



Spring Rose Cake
Decorated with buttercream icing and molded melting chocolate
Rachael Davis

Sipping & Sunflowers

By Becca Hollister

Every year as summer approaches, I anticipate the season with equal amounts of excitement and dread. As a work-from-home mom of school-aged kids, summer means a break from a lot of things. The obligations of homework, late-night soccer practices, and packing lunches go away, but the work of parenting takes on a different form. My task each summer is to create a schedule for my kids to help them have fun, make memories, learn, stay active, be responsible, and not waste away in front of a screen. And after the busyness of the school year, my own soul deeply longs for summer to be a time of rest.

This year, our first week of summer break was a trip out of town. I hadn't figured out a summer schedule for the kids yet, but the schedule would have to wait. I packed us up for a visit to my aunt and uncle's house a few hours away. My mom flew in from across the country, and we spent the week caring for my sweet grandparents and enjoying lovely mornings and evenings with my aunt and uncle. Although the focus of the trip was hospital visits to Pop-Pop, driving Mimi around, and sharing family meals together, I learned something from my aunt and uncle that week that I hope I will never forget.

My aunt and uncle always make time for morning coffee. Not the kind where you slosh it into a travel mug as you rush out the door, but the kind where you sit on the patio and sip. And in the evenings, they enjoy a drink together, too. Not when they are exhausted and ready for bed, but before dinner. It's leisurely. They have chairs in their sitting room they call "the drinking chairs"—a place for sipping coffee or

*Life is more than to-do
lists and schedules.*

other beverages, depending on the time of day. There are a few comfy spots outside as well to enjoy a drink and time together. Sometimes their dogs join them, and there is always time for a game of fetch.

My aunt and uncle are in a different season of life than I am. They no longer have children at home, but they are busy in the best of ways. They work, they love their adult children, they take care of their parents, they volunteer, they are active in their church, they go sailing, they lead book clubs. And I think God helped me remember an important thing during our visit that I don't believe I have ever truly learned well: Life is more than to-do lists and schedules. There is time for sipping. Especially in the summer.

When the kids and I returned home, I did create a summer schedule for them, but I did something else, too. I planted sunflowers and an herb garden in the backyard with my little boy. And every morning since then, I have stepped out onto my patio with a cup of tea as soon as the sun comes up. There, I spend time with God as I read my Bible, journal, and pray. I listen to the birds and my windchimes. I enjoy my sunflowers, my lavender, my rosemary. I watch the squirrels scurry through our trees. I bring my dog because he likes it, too. And I sip.



A Mimsy, Misty-Eyed Farium

An adventure poem using nonsense words

Poem and Painting by Caitlyn Middlebrook

Extremium! Was the word uttered before the town became **infamous**. (A)

They were once happy and joyous, and here's how it all **happened**. (B)

There was once a misticum man walking through the **town**, (C)

The town of Caleum, home of the **Farium**. (D)

They were once happy and kind, till this day when all that went **away**. (E)

BIM! BANG! BOOM! The curse shook through the **town**. (A)

The once great city began to fall, as the clarium man **laughed**. (B)

Crashing and crumbling **down**, (A)

Everyone became stone as the curse settled **in**, (C)

And left outside was one: a mimsy, misty-eyed farium who was left to **save**. (D)

They lorred throughout the world looking for **answers** (A)

They searched and searched and searched, looking for one to break the **curse**. (B)

Alas they found only friend or foe, neither could **say**, (C)

Until one day they discovered the Mystium, which would give them what was needed to **save** (D)

Now they needed to hurry back, or everyone would be sent to the **grave**. (D)

They returned home with the Mystium in **hand**, (A)

Then used salium and the Mystium to restore their **town**. (B)

The town reversed, returning to its former **glory**; (C)

Now everyone is happy and Wholium **again**. (D)

This is the tale of the mimsy, misty-eyed **Farium**. (E)



Nonsense Words (In Order of Appearance)

mimsy: magical, wistful

Extremium: the curse placed upon
the town of Caleum

misticum: mysterious

Caleum: the town that is home to the Farium

Farium: the citizens of Caleum, fairy people

clarium: crazy, unhinged

lorred: traveled

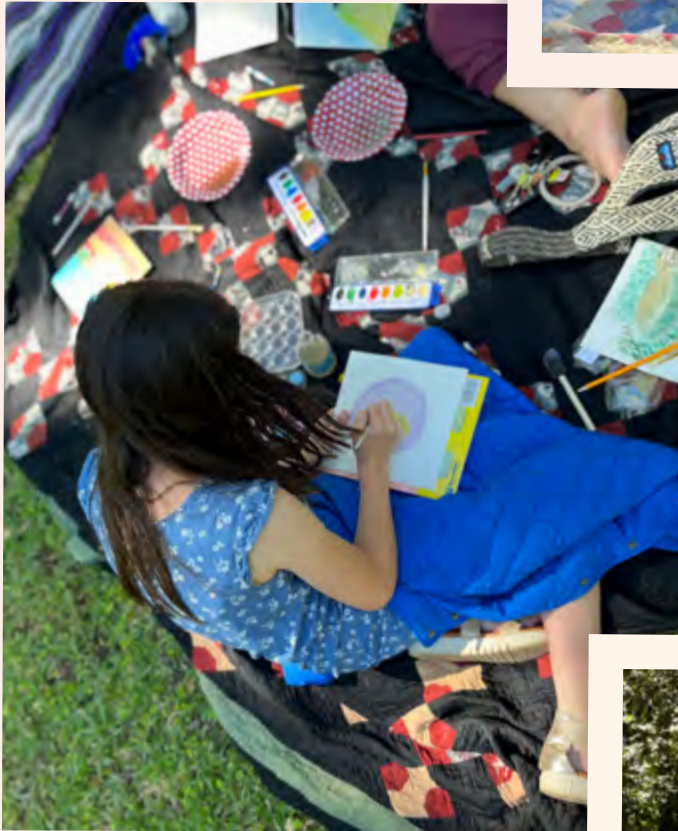
Mystium: the magic book rumored
to be hidden somewhere around Obsidum
(home of the gods)

salium: a set of magical supplies needed
to break Extremium

Wholium: whole again

Catherine and
Bonnie D.

"I want to paint
the way a bird
sings."
- Claude Monet



Esther G.



Cecilia A.



Tara G.

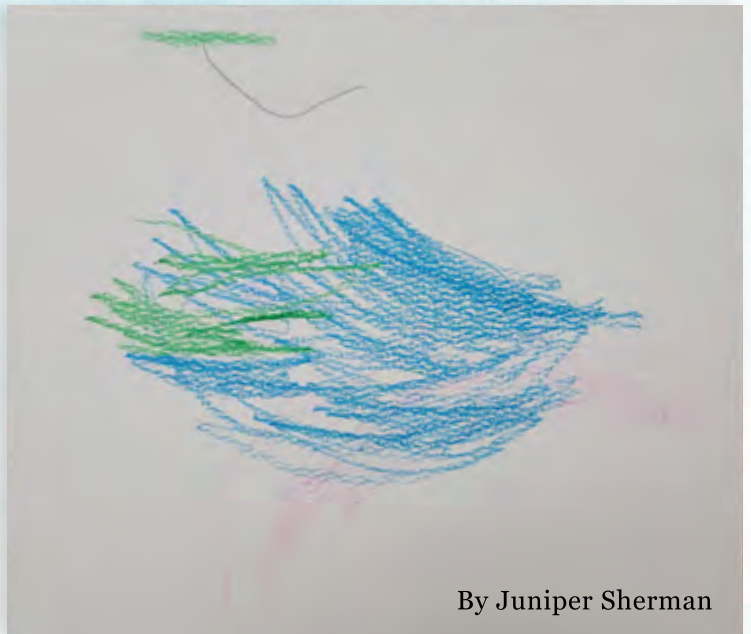
Dorothy B. Owen Park, April 2024

Painting in the Park

On a peaceful spring morning, we gathered on the grassy hill by the pond and felt like we were in a landscape painting ourselves. We're grateful to Alaina Manning for organizing this sweet time spent working with watercolors and being outside together.



By Heather Sherman



By Juniper Sherman



By Nancy Owen

LEFT: I was on a walk during a really difficult day and right in my path I found this gorgeous feather. It was so bright and beautiful I had to bring it home. I love birds and it felt like a little gift from the Lord; a reminder that even in the midst of trials he is still Creator of beautiful things and attentive Keeper of his own. *"His eye is on the [blue jay], and I know he watches me."*
– Sara Davis

CENTER COLUMN: A bluebird I painted at the watercolor day, and Juniper's abstract interpretation of it. I also had my mom paint one when she came to visit.
– Heather Sherman

BELOW:
Fiddler Crab
Watercolor
Mike Houghton

Sailing

By Daniel Hautamaki

You
and
I
were
heeled
over
and
it
was
as
if
we
had
lost
control.

There were forces at work
that I don't pretend to
understand but we
stayed afloat,
didn't
we?



God's Rest

By Autumn Kloth

and while i'm burdened with weary stress
i turn to God to give me rest
to soothe my tired, troubled soul
as worry rages out of control

and while i lay my troubles down
the world's noise ceases all around;
God's peace takes my fears apart
with His gentle spirit and loving heart

so God, teach me Your quiet ways
give me peace on anxious days
let Your hand guide this stressful hour;
let me be still and know Your power

Hallelujah!

By Autumn Kloth

i lift my hands up high
in wonder at this earth
for God once breathed a sigh
and from it came a birth
of a sinless beauty
made perfect in God's way
yet we betrayed our duty
and Heaven went away
but still Him i proclaim
above this sinful earth;
Hallelujah! praise His name
Hallelujah! praise His birth

Hallelujah! look up high
see God's beauty all around



Sunset Over Quiet Waters
Acrylic on canvas
Annie Hautamaki

If We Could

By Vicki Davis, April 2024

If we could,
Fly away
Get away
Run away
Pay our way,
We would.

If we could,
Race away
Move away
Throw away
Search our way, away,
We would.

If we could,
Punch our way
Think our way
Take away, far away,
We would.

We'd take it all away, any way,
If
We
Could,
We would. We'd fight our way.
Out.

If we could,
Shield the way
Hide you away,
Take you away,
Save the day, today,
We would.

We'd take it all away,
If we could,
We most definitely would.
We'd take it all away,
Today.
If we could.

I'd take it all away
He'd force it far away
If we could, we'd erase it
Today.

We'd take it all away,
If we could
We would.

This poem poured out of me early one morning while processing my husband's cancer and what it has meant for our family. We find ourselves in a helpless state—no control over anything anymore, really. In all of our past seasons with our kids, we could, through our own might, protect them, rearrange this or that to shield them from the pain of life, but this cancer has taken away all of the power we had to keep them safe. It's our greatest pain watching them endure their daddy being so sick, and the unknown future. We would both do anything to take this from them.

Now, months after writing this poem, I ponder what God is teaching them, training them for, or creating in them for future use? He must know that this suffering is worth something. He's teaching me to trust that He does.

—Vicki Davis, July 2024



Seeds of Hope

Music and Lyrics by
Vicki Davis
August 4, 2024



Seeds of hope are rising
From the ashes of all the pain
See, I had lost all vision for the future,
Just a stubborn, stoic determination
That I would not give up
Was all that I had left

I had given in
I had let go
And let the waves have my future, let it have my future
Sinking low—letting go—I was letting go
I had let the hopelessness
Rob me of what could be
But why, oh why, why can't he?
Why can't he? Oh why can't he
Why can't he make this bleak reality
Grow wild, grow wild
Grow wildflowers?
Why can't he, oh why can't he
Why can't we be growing something in our
suffering worth building God's legacy on?

Why can't these days be future
Photographs
Of the largest challenge we ever faced
The days when we learned what hope really
looked like
Where dependency on God
really comes from
What if he
is doing something magnificent
through the pain and the loss
What if he's training my kids to be
resilient, ever-ready, ever-ready
warriors for the King
that laugh at the future
because the future belongs to the High King of their hearts
yes, the High King of their hearts?
(What do they have to fear?)

May we learn, may we share
and take on nations
with just this seed
May we praise
when we feel like lamenting
May we say the devil has not won!
He has not won!
Lord, let these seeds of hope
I feel gently moving in my soul—
Let them grow, let them grow

Why can't he move mountains with just this seed
Why can't he, oh why can't he
Why can't we
Dream?
Why can't he, oh why can't he
take this bleak reality and
make it sing?

Take the load, clear the road
Let it grow, let it grow
These baby seeds, grow trees.

*This is a song that the Lord gave me.
In our struggle and season of difficulty,
I was feeling really, really hopeless. One
day God deposited just a tiny bit of hope
in my heart, and I told my husband Lee,
"Oh my gosh, I have hope."*

*Lee passed away the morning of
August 23. We played this song at his
celebration of life service.*

—Vicki Davis, September 2024

Performance of *My Rescuer*
by Abigail Davis



My Rescuer

(written and sung by Abigail Davis)

Like a just scary dream, but it's a match
for me - all I can do is pray. To my
heavenly father, to my heavenly father. Like my
fears screaming at me, now I can't hear a
thing, because of my rescuer. CDRUS: He pulled
me out of the shadow's grasp, he pulled me
out of the pit at last, now I am free, like
someone washed me ~~me~~ clean, now I
feel something rising up in me - for I am
redeemed, oh, oh he pulled me out of the
shadow's grasp, he pulled me out of the pit
at last, now I am free, now I am free.
For there is something unmistakable living
inside of me, something precious, something
worthy, my rescuer. He pulled me out of
the shadow's grasp, he pulled me out of the
pit at last. Now I am free, now I am free.
like a sea of questions, now there all
answered, he answered my questions,
he set me free, he redeemed me, oh, oh
He pulled me out of the shadow's grasp,
he pulled me out of the pit at last.
Now I am free, now I am free. like I'm
on thier ~~me~~ team, now I'm ~~not~~ lonely,
oh, oh God saved me, God made me,
He pulled me out of the shadow's grasp
He pulled me out ~~of~~ the pit at last.
Now I am free, now I am freeeee.





Needlework, completed 1993
Joyce Yancey Post, 1929-2024

Joyce Post was born in Tallahassee and graduated from Leon High and Florida State University. Following college graduation, she moved with her husband Richard to Panama City, where the couple raised six children. Joyce's appreciation for beauty and creativity was exemplified by the intricate embroidery pieces she completed. She was a founding member and former president of the St. Andrew Bay Quilter's Guild and a member of the Embroidery Guild of America. She also enjoyed growing African violets, quilting, cooking, and playing with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

"...faithful to her husband, and well known for her good deeds: bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the Lord's people, helping those in trouble, and devoting herself to all kinds of good work." 1 Timothy 5:9-10

Provided by Mary Jane Sinclair
Photos by Daniel Hautamaki

Maranta

By Heather Sherman

A rhythm of prayer
Up to heaven, down to earth in slow waves
A continuous liturgy

Prayer plant, cultivated and propagated
by Heather Sherman
Photo by Daniel Hautamaki





Visual Hymnal exists to celebrate the creative work of the people of Center Point Church and beyond. We are interested in exploring the intersection of Christian faith and creativity; we also just love seeing what our friends are making. Writing, visual art, music, pottery, sewing, crafting, cooking, gardening—we want to showcase it all.

We welcome submissions on any theme or topic. Our next issue will be released during Advent; please send us your work by **October 25**.

Visual Hymnal is run and funded by a small staff of dedicated volunteers. Want to get involved or support this project? Email visualhymnal@gmail.com or talk to Leah, Sara, or Katie!