

Acts 9:36-43

Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

The Lord is our strength and our song
THE LORD HAS BECOME OUR SALVATION

One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar.
Helen Keller

*I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.*
Tagore

Let us dance in the sun, wearing wild flowers in our hair...
Susan Polis Schutz

You may have heard this week or read about the boy who said “wow!” at the end of a classical music concert. I heard about it on NPR which featured audio of the moment. The music fades, and just as the music ends you hear the voice of a young boy in hushed amazement-----“wow!” But the acoustics of the concert hall allow his wow to be heard by everyone and someone was recording so now millions have heard it. It’s quite adorable. There was at first a mystery to be solved-----who was that boy? I guess it took a few days to track him down. Turns out he is on the autism spectrum-----and if I recall the radio story correctly, his grandfather told an interviewer that this was a rare vocalization of an emotion for this little boy. When I heard that, I said to myself “wow!”

Do you suppose any of the saints and widows in our story, when Peter brought Dorcas out of the upstairs room, said “wow?”

There was also a story on NPR this week (thanks for the sermon material NPR!) about placebos. A researcher has discovered that sometimes people in medical studies get better even when they KNOW THEY ARE TAKING A PLACEBO. The story featured a middle aged woman who had suffered for many years with abdominal or intestinal pain. She said it was sometimes worse than giving birth. Medical professionals could never correctly diagnose the pain or treat it. She found her way into this medical study. She was in the placebo group and she was disappointed to be told this but she went ahead with it. The thing is, her pain went away in a few days and if I recall the story correctly it has not returned. She credits the Dr. who worked with her in this process.....a Dr. whose compassion and kindness really impacted her. I remember she said this when being interviewed on NPR, “talking with this Dr. was like getting a full body massage.” His voice and manner were apparently very soothing and reassuring. When I heard that I said to myself “wow!”

And again I thought to myself, surely there must have been a few of the saints and widows who said “wow!” when Peter brought Dorcas out of the upstairs room.

If you haven’t seen the current movie “Breakthrough” you might want to make a note to see it. It’s based on a true story from a few years ago of a teenage boy in the Saint Louis area who falls through the ice and is submerged for way too long and who is finally retrieved by rescue workers and hospitalized but with severe brain and organ damage-----his mother and their congregation remain committed to prayer as the medical team is telling them there is not much hope of recovery. Sure enough, the boy wakes up and is, astonishingly, fully functional, back to normal. Spoiler alert-----but you know this when you buy your ticket. Even so---as the credits started to roll---I said to myself “wow!”

So let’s look at all this a bit more closely and bring the story of Peter and Dorcas into the mix.

There is no explaining any of this really. The boy at the concert, the woman cured of her chronic pain, the boy in Saint Louis, or Peter and Dorcas. No explaining it other than to say that the life-giving, life-restoring energy of a Divine Benevolence is woven into the fabric of creation and mysteriously manifests itself in any number of ways that bring us up short, in terms of explanations, but which invites us, if we are willing to make the journey, beyond explanations and into a much more spacious realm of faith and trust.

There is no explaining or controlling how or when or where this Divine Benevolence will manifest itself. The Easter faith of the church is clear though. As we make our way, or as we are led by the Spirit into that spacious realm of faith and trust, with growing confidence we see, with growing frequency, this Benevolence at work in our world and we become more serene with a living hope that the created order is undergoing a transformation toward wholeness, toward, healing, toward renewal.

Countless times every day in every corner of the world, countless people say “wow” because a Divine Benevolence has shown up in ways that astonish and inspire and humble them and entice them into deeper faith and trust and compel them to allow this Divine Benevolence to shape their lives, to inform their way of being in the world.

Every wow is a prayer of sorts right? Every wow opens us up to that realm of faith and trust, expanding that interior spaciousness in us where God Christ and Spirit can move around in us and through us.

Peter had certainly experienced enough wows in his life to trust that his purpose in our story today was to hold himself open in that upstairs room... and when Dorcas opened her eyes... wow.

Every musician in that concert hall we mentioned earlier had no doubt been drawn to music by countless little wow moments of wonder and delight leading them to invest their lives in work that brought that little boy and all of us to a collective wow that now has gone viral.

That compassionate physician had certainly been shaped by all kinds of wow moments of being loved and affirmed in ways that inspired him to be a participant in the healing of the world.

And the mom in the movie, touched by many subtle wow moments in her story, interestingly, comes to a place of surrender, the simplest of prayers for her son, all she can do is hold herself open to God and trust. She is as surprised as anyone when her son opens his eyes. Her wow became a book and a movie, leading to more wows.

That’s really the story of our lives in Christ isn’t it? The story of the wows of my life and your lives, the wows of our life together in community, in ministry. God wowing us in and through one another until in the fullness of time, as the story goes, the wolf will lie down with the lamb, and all humanity will together say “wow!”

HE IS RISEN!

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

May 12, 2019

In Jesus' Name, Greetings!

Music for Gathering

Resurrection Bells

In this place, where heaven and earth meet

UNDER THE RAINBOW OF GOD'S PROMISE

In this sharing of bread and wine

FUTURE HOPE BECOMES REALITY NOW

Lighting of the Candles

"...the most important activity of the Church consists in looking at the face of Jesus." Andre Louf

Morning Has Broken

We Welcome One Another as Christ

Here I Am Lord vs 1 and 3

The Morning Prayer and Musical Response

Silence

"...you do not know when the moment will come." Mark 13

Children's Circle

All children thru 5th grade are welcome to come forward. A small outreach offering will be collected for our money jar. Following this time of sharing and prayer, children may attend their very own

"Worship and Wonder" time together in our classroom annex. Child care is offered for infants and toddlers but they are also welcome in the sanctuary.

Prayer for Illumination

Gracious Beloved, help us to welcome the light and walk in it always

SHOW US THE WAY WE MUST GO TO ETERNAL DAY, AMEN

THE LESSON ACTS 9: 36-43

The Meditation "Wow!" Rev. Rob Carr

Breathe on us, O Breath of Inspiration. Fill us with your Wisdom and Tranquility, that we might radiate your compassion and grace. To all who open the doors of their hearts, You come as Guide into the path of wholeness and understanding. Direct our steps, Risen Lord, fill our hearts with truth and light, give us courage for the trials and tests ahead of us as we offer our lives in witness to You in word and deed. Amen.

Silent and spoken personal prayers of thanksgiving confession, intercession

"A Mother's Blessing" Lori Hall

The Offering

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.
As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

You Are Mine

The sorrows of this world, all our pain and regret, are passing
GOD'S TENDER COMFORTING PRESENCE IS ETERNAL
The illusion of our separateness is strong, causing us grief
BUT IN GOD'S LOVE WE REALIZE OUR ONENESS
Our deep presence in one another is eternal
EVERYTHING ELSE IS PASSING AWAY

Welcome to the Table
The Words of Institution

We live in hope of that day
WHEN GOD WIPES EVERY TEAR FROM OUR EYES
Hope that is not mere wishful thinking
BUT CONFIDENCE THAT THE DAY IS ALREADY DAWNING IN US
May you be made strong with all the strength of his glorious power
CHRIST IN US, THE HOPE OF GLORY

The Communion Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, amen.

Following the Lord's Prayer, please come forward by rows to receive the loaf and the cup.
The cup is non-alcoholic by choice of the congregation
Gluten free crackers are available on the table for those who prefer this option
Children also celebrate communion weekly as part of "Worship and Wonder"

Family Prayer Song

Wondrous God, we thank you with all our hearts
FOR YOU HAVE DELIVERED US FROM THE GRAVE

TO OUR GUESTS----WELCOME!

**SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD AND GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE
WE WALK HUMBLY, LOVE DEEPLY, LIVE SIMPLY, AND SERVE JOYFULLY**

We are delighted to include you today. Your presence and participation is a gift to us all. We hope you experience among us the warm spirit of our family of faith and the gracious touch of Christ upon your life. Refreshments and welcoming conversation are available after worship in the Community Room just down the hall. More information about NOCC and the Disciples of Christ is available via

Facebook and these websites

www.nocckc.org www.kcdisciples.org www.disciples.org

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

THIS WEEK

Today 1145AM Bells Practice
Monday 6PM Troop 900
Tuesday 945AM Men's Bible Group
Tuesday 1230PM Women's Bible Group
Tuesday 6PM Pack 900
Wednesday 7PM Music Ministry
Thursday 630PM "You, Me and the Enneagram" Session 2
Saturday 9AM Centering Prayer

UPCOMING

GRADUATION SUNDAY MAY 19
NOCC Youth and Families out to lunch May 19

JEFF NUNN PIANO STUDIO SPRING RECITAL MAY 19 130PM

MAY 22 630PM SHOWING OF THE ACCLAIMED FILM ABOUT HOWARD THURMAN
"BACKS AGAINST THE WALL" AT CHERITH BROOK

JULY 22-23 DISCIPLES GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN DES MOINES

WELCOME

GREATER KANSAS CITY DISCIPLES WOMEN'S MINISTRY TO NOCC

On June 27, Disciples women from our area will be gathering beginning at 6PM (check in) for a dinner and program beginning at 630PM.

The keynote speaker is Dawn R Steiner, MD, Medical Director for UHWC (University of Health Women's Care) in Lee's Summit. Dr. Steiner is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and also certified in daVinci robotic surgery. Sounds like this could be interesting!! All ladies and gents are welcome to attend! Looking for NOCC volunteers to help with hosting the "dining experience" and hope you'll stay for the program too!

Great food, music, and wonderful fellowship with our area Disciples!!
Contact Debbie Herrick for more information!

BAPTISM PREPARATION

Adults and children with questions and interest in Baptism this summer---
Be in touch with Rob

SUMMER CHURCH CAMP DATES ARE POSTED AT TALLOAKS.ORG