

# The Messenger

April 2024

Darlington United Methodist Church

Dave Bushfield, Interim Pastor

Church phone: 765-794-4824 Website: [www.umcdarlington.org](http://www.umcdarlington.org)

P. O. Box 86, Darlington, IN 47940-0086

Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

Vision: By being a visible sign of restoration and hope in this community

**Open Hearts**

**Open Minds**

**Open Doors**



## Ten Ways to Pray for our Church

Michelle S. Lazurek

If you are someone who prays regularly, you may pray about current events, your unsaved friends and other pressing issues during your prayer time. But how often do you pray for your church? Here are some ways you can keep your church at the top of your prayer list:

### Vision

**Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction. Proverbs 29:18**

Think of a church like a ship sailing in the ocean. Without a strong leader steering the ship with a clear sense of where it is going and weathering potential storms, the ship will easily veer off course. Pastors and leaders must agree on a vision for the church and have the necessary resources to achieve that vision. Pray that the church's vision is Christ centered and will help the church achieve and maintain success in five or ten years from now.

### Direction

**And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Joel 2:28**

Without dreams and vision, churches lack direction. Without a sense of direction, church members also become bored and feel as though they have no purpose within the body. Pray for clear direction.

### Mission

In addition to vision, churches must have a mission, or the steps the church will take to achieve its mission. Pray that the church will clarify and clearly communicate this mission to all its members and that it will remain the church's focus.

### Elders

**The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.**

1 Timothy 5:17

Next to the pastor, a church must have a good board of leaders who stand behind and support the pastor. Pray that they share the pastor's vision, handle conflicts so the pastor doesn't have to and communicate the mission and vision to church members often so members are constantly reminded of a church's values and mission.

### Pastor

A pastor's job never ends. They never stop giving. Between long hours, insufficient pay and additional spiritual warfare, pastors need all the prayers they can get. Pray for protection over he and his family, and that God will use him mightily to preach the good news to all those who hear him.

*An unexamined life Is not worth living.*  
Socrates

## New wine into new wineskins

**Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved. Matthew 9:17**

Dead churches are ones in which long standing church members try to recreate the success of past ministries without considering the church's values and goals for the future. Pray that all servants will not pour old wine into new wineskins, but rather identify the church's biggest needs and do their best to meet them, putting their own needs and desires aside.

## Good soil

**But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop. Luke 8:15.**

Mature to new believers alike fill pews week after week. But only the attendees who are good soil will apply what they have heard and make the world a better place because of it. Pray that churches have enough people who are good soil so that the seeds of truth will take root and grow into people who take the gospel to the ends of the earth world.

## For prodigal sons and daughters to come home

**When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. Luke 15: 17-20**

The fact that younger generations are leaving the church at an alarming rate is nothing new. But because they are leaving now doesn't mean they can't return later. It took the prodigal son to come to his senses before he returned with a repentant heart. Pray that children who were raised in the faith will come to their senses and return to the faith later in their lives.

## For the Holy Spirit to pour Himself out – Unity

**"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Acts 2:2-4**

The disciples, particularly Peter, were never the same after the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost. A dead church can be revitalized if they are working in conjunction with the Holy Spirit.

*Don't wait for someone  
to bring you flowers.  
Plant your own garden  
and decorate your own soul.*  
Luther Burbank



## GREETINGS FROM PASTOR DAVE!!!

I am excited about the opportunity to serve Darlington United Methodist Church during Pastor Dirk's deployment. He and I spoke...and he let me know who the troublemakers are. Just kidding! (From Pastor Dirk to Diana...) I can tell DUMC is a special place. I am excited to be a part of you all.

A little about me personally...I was born and raised in Rossville, graduating in 1991. I attended Purdue University for several years before joining the work force and starting a family. I have been blessed with several children and love them all. I have been married twice and am currently living alone in the church parsonage with my two Boxers, Amos, and Honey. I love basketball. I have officiated hoops for over 32 years in schools around the state and I still officiate on Wednesday nights at the YMCA in Lafayette to stay active in the game I love. I love sports in general, from my Boilermakers to the Pacers, Cubs, and Colts.

I knew I had been called into the ministry when I was a boy. God graciously allowed me to pursue "my plan" but I finally answered the call and entered into my destiny after my youngest daughter graduated high school. I think God said, "ABOUT TIME!"

Being a pastor has been a dream come true. I can honestly say, "WHY DID I NOT DO THIS EARLIER?!" I have no doubt that I am now doing what I was created to do. My father retired from Eli Lilly and became a Licensed Local Pastor (like I am) with Scircleville UMC in the late 1990's. He was pastor there when he died in 2000. My Uncle Jim Bushfield retired from the UMC having been a pastor, District Superintendent, and served as assistant to the Bishop. As you can see, I am glad to continue the tradition of Bushfield men who stepped up and answered God's call. I love God with all of my heart and serving Him is a privilege.

Colfax community churches have 5 churches that share the responsibility of covering the Holy Week events and it just so happened that this year the UMC is hosting the Sunrise Breakfast, like DUMC is. I am sorry for the disappointment of not holding Maundy Thursday or Good Friday services this year. FYI... Good Friday service is hosted at Colfax Manson Church. 3109 S Co Rd 450 W, Frankfort, if anyone wanted to come and worship @ 7pm.

I will be trying to hold office hours similar to when Pastor Dirk did. Feel free to stop by anytime you see my Jeep or Green Chevy (with duct tape windows) parked here. I am here to serve both churches. If you need pastoral care, please reach out. My phone number is 765-426-6271. I am here to help you grow and I look forward to growing with you.



Pastor Dave Bushfield  
P. O. Box 121 (mailing address)  
207 W. Jackson Street  
Colfax, IN 46035-0121  
[dave.bushfield@inumc.org](mailto:dave.bushfield@inumc.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Office Hours

Pastor Dave's Office Hours will be  
Wednesday 8 – 12  
Thursday 12 – 4

\*\*\*\*\*

**In-Person Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.**  
**Fellowship Time – 10:00 a.m.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## April 2024 Scripture Reading

### April 7, 2024, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:32-35  
Psalm 133  
1 John 1:1-2:2  
John 20:19-31

### April 14, 2024, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:12-19  
Psalm 4  
1 John 3:1-7  
Luke 24:36b-48

### April 21, 2024, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:5-12  
Psalm 23  
1 John 3:16-24  
John 10:11-18

### April 28, 2024, 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:26-40  
Psalm 22:25-31  
1 John 4:7-21  
John 15:1-8



\*\*\*\*\*

## Announcements for the Bulletin

Please contact Dustin Gardner at 317-220-7667 or [dustin-gardner@gmail.com](mailto:dustin-gardner@gmail.com) by Wednesday, if you need any announcement included in the bulletin on the following Sunday morning.



\*\*\*\*\*

## Wednesday Morning Ladies Bible Study



It's a great time to consider joining our group! We are starting into the 2nd book of Chronicles and finding that there is much to learn from these ancient texts. Come and join in the fellowship and study for an hour on Wednesday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the church fellowship hall. It can be your mid-week spiritual boost. Feel free to give me a call, email or text with any questions.

In Christ, we stand,  
Diana Binford  
765-918-0356  
[binforddiana@gmail.com](mailto:binforddiana@gmail.com).

\*\*\*\*\*

**What is the first word of the  
Declaration of Independence?**

**We  
Dear**

**When  
Freedom**

**Answer on page 5**

\*\*\*\*\*

*We are all a little off-center.  
Jesus was the only normal person.*

## April Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday and a Happy Anniversary to all our members and friends who have birthdays or anniversaries this month. You are in our thoughts and prayers.



*May God lead you and guide you always. Long life is in your right hand; in your left hand are riches and honor.*

*Proverbs 3:16*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Dates to Remember

Easter Monday	April 1
School Daze Dinner, Comm. Center	April 6
Red Cross Blood Drive, 1 – 5 p	April 8
National Library Workers' Day	April 9
Tax Day	April 1
<b>World General Conference, Charlotte, NC</b>	<b>April 23 – May 3</b>
Administrative Professionals Day	April 24
Take our Daughters & Sons to Work Day	April 25
<b>Annual Conference, St. Luke's, Indianapolis</b>	<b>June 6 – 8</b>



\*\*\*\*\*

## Silly Dates to Remember

April Fool's Day	April 1
Rainbow Day	April 4
Siblings Day	April 10
Submarine Day	April 11
Grilled Cheese Day	April 12
Scrabble Day	April 13
Haiku Poetry	April 17
Look Alike Day	April 20
Jelly Bean Day	April 22
Pretzel Day	April 26
Zipper Day	April 29
National Bugs Bunny Day	April 30



\*\*\*\*\*

## School "Daze" at Dinner at the Community Center

April 6, 2024 5 – 8:30 p.m.

Remember those exciting school days? The friends, the ballgames, the sock hops? And those wonderful days when the school cooks made **PIZZA BURGERS?** Nostalgia is not dead! And neither is the **PIZZA BURGER.** The DFI will sponsor an Old-



Fashioned "Sock Hop" and is reviving the infamous Pizza burger on **April 6<sup>th</sup> from 5 – 8:30 at the Community Center.** Hot dogs will also be available. Bill Douglas will be there to MC the "Sock Hop." Come and enjoy the nostalgic memories of the "Good Ole Days" and have a pizza burger or two. If you would like to contribute a dessert for the occasion, it would be greatly appreciated.

\*\*\*\*\*

*O Lord, O Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.*  
*Psalm 8:9*



## American Red Cross Blood Drive

Date: April 8, 2024  
Time: 3 – 7 p.m.  
Where: American Legion  
Sign up: [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)  
Sponsor Code: Darlington

\*\*\*\*\*



## Walk for National Safe Haven

## April is Safe Haven Awareness Month!

Join the National Safe Haven Alliance for our annual, Virtual Run/Walk Challenge for Safe Haven Awareness and help raise support for a great cause! Register to run or walk a 5K, 10K, OR a Half Marathon (21K), **at your own pace during the month of April,** raise awareness by sharing Safe Haven information and fundraise for NSHA's efforts to prevent infant abandonment in our country!

Hello National Safe Haven leaders!

Our 2024 April RunWalk registration for Safe Haven Awareness month is now LIVE! Be sure to register before 3/15 to be guaranteed a t-shirt and help spread the word about this fun event with family/friends and those in your community! **The final date for registration to walk is April 15.** [Virtual Run/Walk Challenge for Safe Haven Awareness Month \(runsignup.com\).](http://VirtualRun/WalkChallengeforSafeHavenAwarenessMonth(runsignup.com))

Our focus in 2024 is **Educate.Support.Empower.** This theme has allowed us to ask thoughtful questions about how we can educate parents and providers, empower women and parents to make safe choices for their babies, and ultimately find innovative ways to prevent infant abandonment and keep families together. April is Safe Haven Awareness month and NSHA is hosting our annual Virtual Run/Walk for Safe Haven Awareness taking place throughout April! Please visit our run website to learn more: [Virtual Run/Walk Challenge for Safe Haven Awareness Month \(runsignup.com\)](http://VirtualRun/WalkChallengeforSafeHavenAwarenessMonth(runsignup.com)) as well as our home website: [Home | Nsha \(nationalsafehavenalliance.org\)](http://Home|Nsha(nationalsafehavenalliance.org))

We could not do this work without you! Thank you for your support and partnership with us to save babies and help parents in need across the US. Together, we can educate, support, and empower more! Please reach out if you have any questions.

With gratitude,  
Heather Burner, Executive Director, and NSHA Staff  
623-428-1308  
National Safe Haven Crisis Hotline: 1-888-510-BABY (2229)  
[hburner@nationalsafehavenalliance.org](mailto:hburner@nationalsafehavenalliance.org)  
[www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org](http://www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org)

**Leah Kipley**  
Assistant Director, NSHA  
Ph: 804.380.8206  
[kipley@nationalsafehavenalliance.org](mailto:kipley@nationalsafehavenalliance.org)  
[www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org](http://www.nationalsafehavenalliance.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

*No race can prosper until it learns that there is as much dignity in plowing a field as in writing a poem.*  
*Booker T. Washington*





# Church Business

## Ad Council

Our next meeting will be on  
**April 8, 2024,**  
**at 6 p.m.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Financial Report January - February 2024 (YTD)

Thank you for your blessed giving. Jesus is our shepherd and together we will become a strong body. Take time to reflect on what he endured for our salvation.

Dan Hampton, Treasurer

God is good – All the time.  
All the time – God is good.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Lines Written in Early Spring

By William Wordsworth

I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—  
But the least motion which they made  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?

\*\*\*\*\*



# Missions

We have several opportunities for you to get involved. Each opportunity is a great way to reach out to the community around us. **But please, don't feel that you must be involved in every project that is being offered.** Pick what you are passionate about and give whatever support you can. Thanks for your help.

\*\*\*\*\*



## Backpack Program

Come to the church basement any **Thursday at 9:30 a.m.** and help pack for the weekend.

We have sufficient funds for shopping for anyone wishing to help, so please contact Lynn Cox. Drinks and cereal deplete rapidly, since we send out 28 boxes of milk and juice each week. Cereal in individually packed bags are also given out at that rate. This number fluctuates all the time. We don't have as many as usual right now, but that can change overnight.

Thank you to all for whatever help you have done or can do to help with this project.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Hygiene Bags

**Seventy girl and seventy boy hygiene bags were made and sent to School.**

We are collecting items for the hygiene bags for the school. This will be an on-going project because there is a real need at all the schools. You can place the items in drawers in the east Vestibule. All bags need the following:



- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush
- Soap
- Mouth Wash
- Feminine Hygiene

**These items need be small travel sizes please.**

Thank you for your help.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Bottle Caps for Benches

You know all those bottles with the lids you throw away. Benches are made from these lids. Save them, bring them to church, and they will be delivered. The caps cannot be any larger than 6". Don't put them in the recycle because they just throw them in the trash and you know where that goes – into huge trash hills that are becoming mountains right here in Indiana.



\*\*\*\*\*

## National Safe Haven Alliance Ink Cartridge Collection

Donate your used ink cartridges to help National Safe Haven Alliance.

Ink cartridges can be dropped off at **Darlington United Methodist Church.**

Or mail-in your used inks.

To get a free shipping label, use our **PROGRAM I.D. Code 32245**

(Using this I.D. code will help raise funds for our organization.)



\*\*\*\*\*

**How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty.**  
**Zechariah 9:17**

## Guatemalan Project

### HERE IS THE LATEST FROM OUR TEAM IN GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, a new school year is beginning and Mission Guatemala's (Scholarships with a Mission) program is once again supporting students in pursuing their dreams of continuing their education! We are excited to welcome 29 new students to the scholarship program! These students join the 33 middle school and 29 high school students currently in the scholarship program, for a total of 91 students!

Students are selected for the "Becas" scholarship program on the basis of both their economic need and their grades in elementary school. The scholarship helps to cover the student's inscription fees and monthly tuition costs, as well as necessary school supplies and uniforms. As long as each student maintains their grades and meets other basic requirements of the program, Mission Guatemala will continue to support the students each year, beginning in middle school and continuing until they graduate from high school!

This program goes beyond simply helping to cover education expenses. Students in the program also receive free access to Mission Guatemala's medical clinic and are also able to participate in enriching, relationship-building activities and workshops organized throughout the year by our staff!

At the start of each year, we meet with each of the scholarship students and their parents to share the details of the program with them and so that they can sign a document accepting the scholarship and acknowledging the expectations and standards of the program.

Just a little bit goes a long way to help our children in Guatemala. They continue to applaud us for our support!

Blessings, Diana Binford

\*\*\*\*\*

## PB&J Mission

### The need right now is more JELLY!

We have become the "Peanut Butter and Jelly Church". We are providing our collected goods to the FISH Food Pantry and they have indicated they are always in need of peanut butter and jelly.



We will keep track of our collection throughout the year as we did in 2023, and this will go towards our donation/missions numbers for the year. DUMC is an incredibly generous and caring church, and we are going to keep track of not only the PB&J donations, but all of the generous in kind donations that you all show all year, every year.

\*\*\*\*\*

## During WWII, the British used Monopoly games to help POWs escape.

Monopoly has been beloved for generations, but the history of the classic board game isn't all fun and games. During World War II, specially manufactured Monopoly boards were used to help prisoners of war escape from captivity. In 1940, the British government struck a deal with Waddingtons, the company that manufactured London-themed editions of Monopoly, in which MI9, a secret department of the War Office, tasked Waddingtons with creating a version of Monopoly that contained various tools and information to aid POWs in their potential escape efforts.

The sneakily altered Monopoly boards were distributed to Nazi-run POW camps as part of larger aid packages. In addition to the standard thimble and dog game pieces, each board contained metal "playing pieces" that were actually escape tools, such as a file and magnetic compass. Each version also contained silk maps provided by the intelligence agency, which could be unfolded discreetly without drawing attention. What's more, these special editions swapped out fake Monopoly money for real German, Italian, and French currency that could be used to bribe guards. The British government also contracted game company John Jaques & Son to create chess sets and versions of Snakes and Ladders that contained hidden compartments with escape tools.

## God Finds Us Usable

Isn't it amazing to think that the God of the Universe finds us usable. He's given us specific gifts and abilities for reaching out to others. He could have chosen a thousand other ways to reach the unsaved, but the Lord picked us! Thank you for your service to our church.



April 7  
April 14  
April 21  
April 28

May 5  
May 12  
May 19  
May 26

## Liturgist

Cathy Caldwell  
Mary Lou Weliever  
Sarah Boeh  
Dan Maxwell

Dan Hampton  
Lynn Cox  
Cathy Caldwell  
Diana Binford

\*\*\*\*\*

## Scripture Reader

April 7  
April 14  
April 21  
April 28

May 5  
May 12  
May 19  
May 26

Kim Warren  
Kathy Hampton  
Steve Greene  
Pam Crull

Cheryl Greene  
John Wells  
Lynn Robison  
Kim Warren



\*\*\*\*\*

## Fellowship

April 7  
April 14  
April 21  
April 28

May 5  
May 12  
May 19  
May 26

Dan and Kathy Hampton  
Mike and Kim Warren  
David and Jeanette Shelton  
John and Marsha Wells

OPEN  
OPEN  
OPEN  
OPEN

\*\*\*\*\*

Answer to Question:

What is the first word of the Declaration of Independence?  
"When"

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. ..."

\*\*\*\*\*

## Candle Lilies

Mildred Moon Howel  
Tiger lilies spread their flame  
On tall candle stems,  
Casting shadows on the grass,  
Clutching at their hems.  
And the flame burns high or low  
With each soft breeze blowing,  
Meshed of sunlight, caught and held  
In the twilight glowing.  
Tiger-lily candles hold  
All the Midas's treasured gold.



Please remember the following members and friends of our church family in your daily prayers Thank you for your continued prayer.

**Praises**  
Christ the Lord is Risen!!

**Other prayer needs:**

- Children in backpack ministry – needs are met
- Community, State, Nation, World and all the leaders
- Darlington UMC, Christ UMC (Dr. Boyd), and UMC at large, Congregational Church, and East Christian Church
- Families of the deceased
- Our school children, teachers, support staff, and administrators
- Our college students
- Our Guatemalan children
- Our Guatemalan Project
- Those in foster care and all the challenges they face
- Those in search of jobs
- Victims of hate crimes and discrimination
- Victims in Syria, Turkey, and Ukraine, Maui, Haiti, Israel

\*\*\*\*\*

- Those in treatment or suffering with cancer.**
- Those serving in the military:**
- Those with other health**

\*\*\*\*\*

***Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,  
give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.***  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Father,  
We lift up all those who are facing illness or other adversities in their bodies and minds today. We ask that you bring comfort, peace, and healing. Surround them with your love and touch their bodies with your healing hands.  
Amen

\*\*\*\*\*

**When April Comes**

By Virna Sheard

When April comes with softly shining eyes,  
And daffodils bound in her wind-blown hair,  
Oh, she will coax all clouds from out the skies,  
And every day will bring some sweet surprise, --  
The swallows will come swinging through the air  
When April comes!

When April comes with tender smile and tear,  
Dear dandelions will gild the common ways,  
And at the break of morning we will hear  
The piping of the robins crystal clear --  
While bobolinks will whistle through the days,  
When April comes!

When April comes, the world so wise and old,  
Will half forget that it is worn and grey;  
Winter will seem but as a tale long told --  
Its bitter winds with all its frost and cold  
Will be the by-gone things of yesterday,  
When April comes!



**A Prayer to Remember God  
Makes Everything Beautiful**

By Victoria Riollano

***"Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time."***  
Ecclesiastes 3:11

Everything is beautiful in its time.

I can remember a time when a verse like this would cause much frustration. I would read this verse in a time of despair and think, "Lord, how could you make *this* beautiful?" How could a moment of loss, tragedy, or abandonment ever be seen in a positive light? This was especially true a few years ago.

In 2017, it felt like everything was falling apart. My father-in-law had passed away, my church friends had all become foes, and my husband was battling chronic illness. During all this, I was pregnant. Although that was a joyous occasion, birthing something new amidst a sea of pain was not an enjoyable experience. Yet, I could not help but remind myself, "One day, the Lord will make this beautiful." One day, the Lord would show His glory through it all.

I believe this feeling was also shared by the lame man in John 5. Though this man remains nameless, the Bible says he'd been in a paralyzed condition for 38 years. In the passage in John 5:1-5, we see a man who was desperate to be healed to no avail. It is believed that the very place he laid at the Sheep Gate pool would be where angels would come at certain times, stir up the waters, and bring healing. All that was required was to be the first in the water. So, for many years the man was strategically placed to be set free from his condition. Unfortunately, time and time again, he was overlooked, stepped over, and was never able to be the first in the pool. In just reading the words found in John, we can feel the agony and frustration he must have felt. I am certain, he would wrestle with the phrase, "He makes everything beautiful." Sometimes disappointment can make us doubt God's great plan!

I am so happy that the story doesn't end here.

***When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."***

***Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. John 5:6-9***

In an instant, with a single sentence, Jesus changed the trajectory of his life. He went from one who was in desperate need to one who was fully healed! His life has become a testimony for the many who had ignored him and tossed him aside for their own gain. God truly made it all beautiful in His time. He was a living, breathing, walking testimony of God's goodness!

Today, I want to encourage you with the words we find in Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He makes all things beautiful." You may feel disappointed or discouraged now. You may not understand why things have unfolded the way they have in your life.

Yet, here's what we know to be true, we serve a God who loves His child-ren. He sees all and He knows all. He is all-powerful and He has not forgot-ten you.

In 2017, I experienced this as the Lord brought complete healing to my husband, rectified our ministry woes, and allowed us to birth a beautiful baby girl named Heavenly Joy. And for the man we find in John 5, we see that his thirty-eight years of pain have turned into a testimony that over 2,000 years later we can still rejoice about. God truly does turn things around. Let us not grow weary in the wait.

Father,

I thank you for your limitless wisdom. I thank you for writing my story. Although I may not always understand why things are happening, you do. You go before me and keep me even in my darkest hours. I thank you for using my moments of sadness as a starting point for a miracle to take place. Help me to embrace your process for me. Thank you, Lord, that you make all broken things new and beautiful.

In Jesus' Name. Amen.