

Edify

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Learn to Pray and Dream Again

In his book *A Praying Life*, Paul Miller writes, “If you learn to pray, you learn to dream again. I say ‘again’ because every child naturally dreams and hopes. To learn how to pray is to enter the world of a child, where all things are possible.”

Likewise, in Ephesians 6:18-20, the apostle Paul exhorts and invites his brothers and sisters in Christ to be “praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak.”

I want to thank the communications team for sincerely seeking to spur Waterbrooke to dream about what God can do with a group of believers who take seriously the call to prayer and the command to proclaim the gospel. I recall that in my youth what profoundly shaped my zeal to pursue God was listening to a godly lay person in my home church praying. He wasn’t performing a religious act. He was humbly and sweetly talking to his Father out of love for the family of God and the missionaries that our church supported. It seemed to me that this man was the backbone of the church.

My prayer for this publication is that it will spur us on both in our prayer lives and in the clarity of our purpose to advance the kingdom of God to the

ends of the earth. As we see and hear the stories of everyday believers serving God, may God be pleased to help us to mutually shake off the anesthetizing effects of a noisy, distracting, and deceitful world, and to be filled with the love of Christ for each other and

for our neighbors. I hope we might hear stories of people like you and me who despite weakness and brokenness have begun to dream again of being used powerfully by God where He has placed us and where He is calling us.

I love the testimony of the apostle Paul as he wrote to the Corinthian church about the churches in Macedonia: “We want you to know, brethren, about the grace of God that has been given among

the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.”

May the Lord give us great joy in Jesus so that we might surrender our affliction and poverty and see it result in a super-abundance of gospel generosity. Praying to that end for us all. ♦

- Senior Pastor Kevin Dibbley



LET'S GET TO KNOW: Andy Keppel, Elder

By Karen Kowalke, Treasurer

Andy Keppel serves on the Elder Board at Waterbrooke. He lives in Mayer with his wife Kristin and works at Life Time Fitness in technology services. He and Kristin have three adult children: Libby, Tucker and Ellie.

If you want to find Andy, most Sundays you need look no further than the sound booth. From there, he leads and works with the Tech Team, who control sound levels, run the PowerPoint slides, and record/livestream the service. If you happen to be at church on a Tuesday night, you might also spot him attending a meeting of the Elder Board. You're also sure to see him when he preaches a few times a year in Pastor Kevin Dibbley's absence.

When Andy first started attending Waterbrooke about 20 years ago, he was something of a "seeker" and not yet a believer. So how does a person starting at that point end up as a committed covenant partner who shares his faith from the pulpit to encourage our congregation?

Andy cites several things that helped him to find salvation: God clearly pursuing him; the teaching of Waterbrooke's first pastor, Bill Bonner; the patience and prayers of friends and family; and a particular sermon by Alistair Begg suggested by a friend. As Andy came to see that his intellectual efforts to try to figure everything out were ineffective, and that God's grace comes to those who wait on and seek Him, the



Andy Keppel • photo by Lisa Washington

"mystery of salvation" captured Andy's heart, and he dedicated his life to Christ.

In addition to studying the Bible and joining a small group for encouragement and fellowship, Andy found that faithfully serving was a key way to find joy and to grow in Christ. In his opinion, volunteering gives people the incredible opportunity to see and participate in what God is doing. Equally important in his eyes is the development of relationships between those who serve together. Using the Tech Team as an example, Andy shares that their mission is to support the Worship Team in using their gifts for God's glory and to ensure that the congregation experiences the most conducive environment to worship and hear the Word of God. On a whole other level, though, when the Tech Team meets, they "get to know each other, encourage one another in hope, and help each other get through the week."

What Andy appreciates most about Waterbrooke is that we are a group of imperfect, broken people who share our hearts and burdens with one another. He knows the Lord is present here because God promises to be with the brokenhearted. We don't have it all together and we don't have to, because God will be with us through it all! ♦

Karen Kowalke and her family started attending Waterbrooke in 2000, and for the past 15 years, she's handled finance and human resources for the church. She enjoys hiking at their Black Hills cabin, reading, and improving her rusty French.

Did you know?

- Andy's hobbies include playing mandolin and studying Korean.
- He has a Master of Arts in Theological Studies.
- Andy's doppelganger is Siegfried Farnon (Samuel West) on the PBS series "All Creatures Great and Small."
- He carefully chose his forearm tattoo characters for their spiritual significance and with the idea that if someone asks about them, it gives Andy a chance to share his faith. Go ahead, ask him! ♦

Missionary Care: Let's Love Them Well

By Linnea Barto

How do we best care for missionaries throughout their ministry? Sometimes it's easy to think, "I'm supporting missionaries financially. Isn't that enough?" But while financial support is incredibly important and such a blessing to missionaries, as the church we must not stop there.

God's people are called to take time and energy to care for the missionaries they send to the ends of the earth, and caring starts with loving. We love missionaries because Christians have been commanded by God to do so.

In his third letter, the apostle John writes to a man named Gaius. He commends Gaius for all the ways he faithfully serves traveling workers of God, even though they are strangers to Gaius. John exhorts him, saying, "You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name... Therefore, we

ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth."

In other words, Gaius is to continue doing what he's doing and go above and beyond to support those who travel to different lands for the sake of the gospel. In doing so, he becomes a fellow worker with them.

This letter, while written first to Gaius, is also applicable to us at Waterbrooke in view of long-term missionaries like Karise Pagano in Italy and Diego and Lauren de la Vega in Honduras.

The ESV Study Bible commentary says, "Not everyone is called to go and minister elsewhere. But all Christ's followers are called to play their part in this enterprise."

In short, all Christians are called, like Gaius, to go out of their way to love missionaries well. It's a vital and often-overlooked aspect of the Great Commission and part of the calling of the church.

In the book *Introducing World Missions*, Moreau, Corwin and McGee write about missionary care. They say that caring for missionaries is "the clear instruction of Scripture — senders are to perform this duty with diligence but also with joy" (3 John 5-8).

Christians ought to be both eager and diligent as they serve the missionaries God has given them to care for.

What's more, it's important to realize that missionaries are fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, not super-Christians. As members of the church body, believers are called to care for one another. This instruction doesn't vanish when a person moves to the mission field. In fact, it becomes all the more important because while missionaries are ordinary human beings, the pressures on them are out of the ordinary.

Our missionaries shoulder immense hardships, and as a church we ought not to let them face these hardships alone. ♦

Editor's note: This is the first in two-part series about serving our missionaries. Catch "Missionary Care: 5 Ways to Support" in our next issue.

Linnea Barto is a junior at Boyce College/Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, where she is studying strategic communications. When she's not away at college, you can catch her reading Scripture at Waterbrooke or creating origami butterflies for friends and strangers.

Pray for Karise's Dual Citizenship

Karise Pagano is Waterbrooke's missionary to Italy. After much research, counsel, and prayer, Karise has decided to move forward with the process of seeking dual citizenship. This would allow her to continue serving the Lord in Italy full time without further interruption, having to renew visas, or making special trips to the Italian consulate in Chicago.

Please pray that God would make clear all judicial paths, that He would make this a smooth process, and that He would provide the funds necessary. Also, please consider supporting this dual citizenship pursuit financially by making a donation at www.entrustedword.org/pagano. ♦



Conference Emphasizes Compassion and Logic

By Grace Campbell

In November I had the opportunity to catch a ride back from college for the weekend and attend the two-day Reality Conference at Grace Church with the Waterbrooke youth group. This was the conference's fifth time in Minnesota. What I really like about the Reality Conference and Stand to Reason, the apologetics group behind the conference, is that they focus more on compassion and logic than on vitriol and politics. Even when discussing tough topics, the conference's speakers never stoop to making jokes that would get a laugh or a round of applause from the majority of the audience while alienating others. Instead, they emphasize how we are all sinners and how mocking people's sin struggles is no way to witness.

One of the talks I really liked was about whether God condones ethnic cleansing in the Bible, as seems to be the case in several places where the Israelites are taking their land. But Robby Lashua, the apologist leading the session, warned us against looking for quick answers. These days we are used to getting answers and arguments presented to us in quick, social media-sized sound bites, when really there is so much more complexity to biblical truths. Lashua then led us through the verses that have been misinterpreted as being in support of ethnic cleansing, and we unpacked how context and the ways language was used reveal not hatred or cruelty but God's mercy and grace towards all people in these stories.

Another speaker who I really liked hearing from was Christopher Yuan, an author who as a young adult engaged in a life of drinking, drugs and homosexual activities, ending with a term in prison. The whole time that he was going down this path, his parents prayed nonstop for him and never stopped leading him to God. He finally became a believer at his lowest point. Coming to God turned his life around, and he now travels the country to speak about faith and sexuality. Yuan is an incredible speaker, and it was very interesting to hear his perspective on same-sex attraction. He is compassionate towards people who struggle



While attending the recent Reality Conference in Eden Prairie, students from Waterbrooke listened to Christopher Yuan, author of Holy Sexuality and the Gospel. He spoke on how to have a biblical worldview about same-sex attraction. Photo is courtesy of Reality Apologetics.

with same-sex attraction, but he also urges them to identify with God, not with their sins. For instance, just as no one would say "I'm a Christian and a non-practicing cat burglar," no one should say "I am a gay Christian."

Going to the conference was so instructive and affirming. It was awesome to see the Grace Church auditorium packed with several thousand young Christians worshipping God and eager to learn more about their faith. I hope that I can go next year! ♦

A sophomore at North Dakota State University, Grace Campbell is double-majoring in history and natural resource management. When she's not away at college, you might catch her playing bass on the Waterbrooke Worship Team or reading a good book.