



The Battle is the Lord's By Alana Carson

A few weeks after my first year of teaching in China began, the teacher who had the adjacent classroom from me, and who also quickly became my closest teaching friend, was diagnosed with stage 3 throat cancer. As she was forced to reconcile what life with cancer would look like, she was also doing this as a single woman, many countries away from her family, in only her second year of teaching. I saw the deep pains and fears that cancer can bring, and the difficulties of battling between all that you want to accomplish versus what your weakened body confines you to accomplish.

It was an unimaginably difficult time for her, and then, just as this friend was conquering cancer with the Lord's help, another friend of ours at our school was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was not only overwhelming for her and her family, but also difficult for us, as her support system and now her care team, to swallow.

It was shortly after this second diagnosis when the Lord brought me to 1 Samuel and nearly brought me to my knees in both conviction and relief: repentant recognition that I was not living my life grounded in this understanding, yet now deeply confident with God's provision over the well-being of our friends.

In chapter 17, the well-known story of David versus Goliath unfolds, but despite the many times I have heard this narrative, my eyes were opened. In verse 37, David said this to Saul as he prepared to battle Goliath: "The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." David explicitly speaks from personal experience and declares that the Lord is faithful in all things. Just like David, God has taken care of you in the past, and He will continue to take care of your needs, and the needs of those you love, no matter how daunting or difficult.

Then, in verse 47, David says to Goliath, "All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." David speaks to the Philistines with confidence about what he knows to be true. It is not going to be through any effort of his own that he will get through the challenges, but it is through the Lord's provision in the battle. You will overcome anything through God's strength, and you are forever safe through God's salvation.

God is not just behind you; he is not just "in your corner." He is in fact before you, guiding you, and it is His concern. I believe we would live our lives very differently if we woke up each morning with the understanding that the battle, because we all have our battles, is not our own, but the Lord's. And He does not save by sword or spear; He does not save by violence or lashing out. We just know that the Lord saves, so let us let Him do that—for us, our friends, and any difficulty we will experience.

Lord, may we rest in the fact that the battle is Yours.

*"All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's."
(1 Samuel 17: 47a)*

July 2023 |



Making Connections

Meet **Ruth Detwiler**: I was born in Beatrice, NE, the first and only daughter with 4 brothers after me. I grew up on a rented dairy farm and always felt that we were really poor. My parents took us to Sunday School and church, but we were always late.

I went to a two-room country school through 6th grade, then to what seemed like a huge junior high in town. Probably from 6-8 in my class to over 200 in 7th grade.

I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when I was 7 years old. Care and management for diabetes has changed immensely since then. It was in October, and one of my first days back to school was the Halloween Party. I was quite upset that I got only one bowl of diet canned peaches and the other kids got two donuts. I'm grateful to my parents for teaching me responsibility and caring for myself, and I am blessed to have had no complications except some laser treatments for bleeding in my eyes.



From little on, I always wanted to be a nurse. My original reason was to see what the inside of people looked like. That didn't really happen. I chose to go to Goshen College to get my bachelors degree right away. I always enjoyed being a bedside nurse and never desired a management position. I usually told my patients who might have been scheduled for a treatment or surgery, "God bless you," rather than good luck. I started out working in a newborn nursery and ended up doing geriatric behavioral health my last several years. Behavioral health was my favorite job.

I did a year of Discipleship and Service VS in Phoenix, AZ. We learned journal writing, read books that we discussed, met with a spiritual advisor monthly, and had a monthly supper with two other units from the suburbs who were in the same program. At Christmas a local pilot was flying three persons from one unit home, and the plane was lost for months. All four young people died. That was a trying time for all of us.

I drove from Nebraska to Philadelphia in 1980 with some friends from Indiana, with no place of my own to stay and without a job. I was soon employed at Einstein Medical Center and stayed for almost 40 years with different areas of nursing. During that time I was blessed to go to the Mennonite World Conference in France, and traveled for 3 months, much of it alone. One of my favorite things at the conference was Communion and learning and singing the song, "Praise, I will Praise you Lord" in French, with people from all over the world.



Leon and I were married in 1986. It was supposed to be an outdoor meadow wedding, but it rained very hard and we moved it at the last minute. We were blessed with a son Noah, and now his wife Breann and their two daughters, Grace and Annie, as well as a daughter Sara, and her husband Mitchel. Ever since we were married we've lived on the Detwiler farm in a double house, first with Leon's parents on one side and we on the other, now with Noah and his family. And I'm thankful that Sara and Mitchel are only a 5-7 minute walk up the road.

I transferred from Ambler Mennonite Church to FMC in 1997. FMC is where Leon grew up, and his parents, as well as many of the classmates of our children attended, so it felt like a good fit for the future of our family. I have been happy here and a part of many activities and some committees.

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A meaningful spiritual experience was when I was in VS. We had a weekend silent retreat and were to go off by ourselves to meditate in silence. I found a tree that the branches nestled around me and I had a feeling of being wrapped in Jesus' arms. I wanted to experience it again the next day and went back, but it wasn't the same. The second experience is when a pastor asked the congregation to close our eyes and raise a hand if we wanted to commit or recommit our lives to Jesus. I was extremely surprised when I raised mine and he said, "I see that hand." My confession was out, but I met with him and feel that after that is when I had a real peace. I've attended many Bible Studies on prayer and still feel that is my most needed obedience.

Leon passed away peacefully and very unexpectedly last fall, and life has certainly been different. I've realized that I expected him to be what only Jesus can be to me, and I have a different understanding now that I'm here to serve God and not be everything to all people at all times.

I enjoy being outdoors weeding my flower beds, but never seem to finish. I especially like sitting on the bench and enjoying the redbud tree given by my BFG to support me in remembrance of Leon. I also enjoy watching the birds and reading. I'm told I can bake a good pie and have learned some PA Dutch recipes as well.

Since retiring I feel I'm not as involved with people who don't know Christ, and I have started a Question place (Q place) training course. I'm praying for 2 co-initiators to start a neighborhood Bible Study.

My favorite scripture is Ephesians 3:14-20: "...I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith..."



Get Involved!

Come join us for a Ladies'

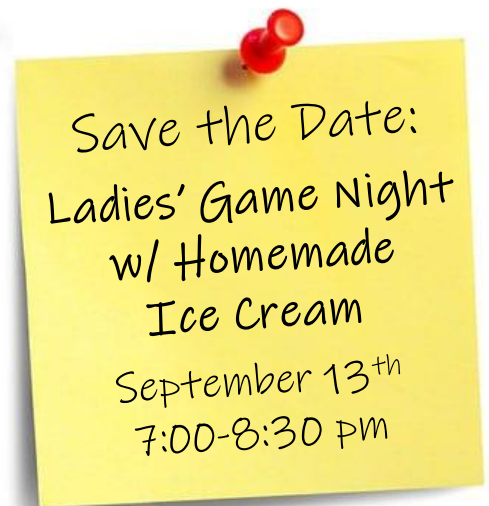
Walk in the Park

Tuesday, July 11th
7:00 pm

At Franconia Park
(Allentown Rd. entrance)

All are welcome! This is an informal gathering for fellowship, exercise, and enjoying God's creation. Walk and talk as long as you like!

Next walk: August 1st



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SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	Sewing Circle 8am-4pm 11 Walk in the Park 7pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

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