



Choosing to Praise by Carol Landis

"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the other prisoners were listening to them." -Acts 16:25

As a child this verse stood out to me. A picture of them in my Bible story book with their feet in shackles, and hands uplifted in praise, left an impression. One night, as an eight-year-old, I remembered it. I was lying in bed, hearing muffled cries in the next room because my 4-year-old sister was hospitalized with a ruptured appendix. Peritonitis had also developed, but surgery wasn't scheduled until morning. Later I learned my parents feared she would not live through the night. But at that time, I was more concerned about the lack of routine, than my sister's health; which I did not understand. I simply wanted them to tuck me in as normal and then stay awhile with me. However, as I lay there, unable to fall sleep, the picture of Paul and Silas praising God in prison came to me. And I silently began singing the simple songs I learned in Sunday School. The next thing I knew it was morning.

This experience remains imprinted within me. I haven't always practiced praise, but I remembered what happened when I did. Praise. It's a trait I need to practice; a decision I need to make when dealing with an unwanted situation; it's not natural. When I discipline myself to do so, and allow God to become larger than a present difficulty, it becomes obvious why Paul and Silas did what they did. Praise brings a different perspective. Singing of the greatness and faithfulness of God breathes hope into me. It makes room for hope.

Recently while reading this passage, I sensed another lesson from these faithful disciples. Whether a natural response, or choosing to praise because they knew it would bring comfort and peace, their response caused the other prisoners to listen. The prisoners could have been angry that the midnight singing kept them awake, but the presence of God caused them to listen.

Paul and Silas had no idea their hopeful praise, after being beaten, flogged, and imprisoned for healing a slave girl, would set the stage for a miracle. Likewise, I have no idea what God is doing with my responses. What "stage" may He be creating in someone's heart? The not knowing isn't important. What matters is recognizing people notice a decision to honor God when life isn't going as hoped. Negatively or positively; they notice. Often, they listen.

What miracles does God desire to work through your praise-filled responses in difficult places?

September 2023



WOMEN'S MINISTRY MISSION STATEMENT: Encouraging women to connect in deeper, genuine relationships both with each other and with Jesus Christ.



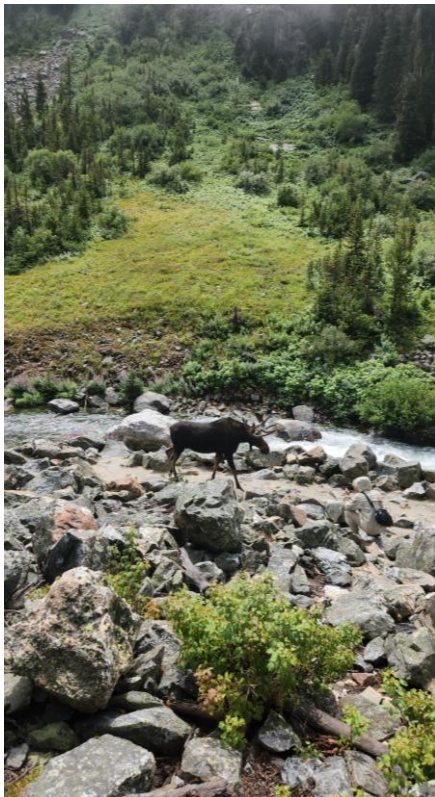
Making Connections

Meet **Bethany Landis**: A follower of Christ, wife to Eric, mother to Myra & Jude, and Certified Financial Planner at Wescott Financial Advisory Group in Harleysville for the past 24 years.

I have been married to Eric for 20 years and we have two children. Myra is in 11th grade and Jude is in 9th grade. They both will be attending Souderton Area High School this year. Having two children in high school is a busy time in life as we are kept busy driving them around but lately we are being driven around by Myra as she now has her driving permit.

I love to read and often have multiple books that I am reading at the same time. I enjoy participating in various online Bible studies as well as a Bible Study with my co-workers. Currently we are studying the book: *Ten Words to Live By*, written by Jen Wilkin and it is based on the ten commandments. While some of the ten commandments, seem very easy to obey, I have learned there is so much more to them, and God is really challenging me in new ways to keep my heart and thoughts pure.

We enjoy hosting friends at our house and sharing our collection of animals (dog, cat, chickens, and bearded dragon). Another hobby is baking muffins and cookies which my family enjoys eating.



Our family has enjoyed traveling in our RV the last few years. We have been able to see a lot of God's creation while also spending time together. This past summer our trip took us through 13 national parks. A favorite memory is while eating lunch in the Grand Teton National Park, a moose ambled by on the trail.

We also enjoy taking family trips to our mountain cabin. It is great for all of us to disconnect and get away from our busy lives at home.

A few verses have been encouraging to me over the years:

- Jeremiah 29:11 – as a planner, it is encouraging that God knows my future.
- Philippians 4:13 – I daily need to rely on God for His strength.
- Joshua 24:15 - a reminder that it is a daily choice to serve the Lord, for myself and my household.

I have been attending Franconia since I was born and am grateful for the many relationships I and my family have developed through youth group and BFG's. It is helpful for me to know that there are others who are helping to grow my faith and to help guide my family. It truly does take a village and I am grateful for mine!



Get Involved!

Ladies' Game Night with Homemade Ice Cream!



Wed, Sept. 13th
7:00 – 8:30 pm



Come join us for a fun night of fellowship!

We will be playing Tenzi, which is an easy game to learn (no skill required) and lots of fun for everyone, and we will enjoy some homemade ice cream together!

Please **SIGN UP** at the Women's Ministry Table or by emailing franconiawomen@gmail.com

Come join us for a Ladies'

Walk in the Park

Tuesday, Sept. 5th
7:00 pm



At Franconia Park
(Allentown Rd. entrance)

All ages are welcome! This is an informal gathering for fellowship, exercise, and enjoying God's creation. Pick a walking partner, choose your pace, and walk and talk as long as you like!

This is a great way to get to know ladies from our congregation better, or just spend time with old friends!

Ladies' Fall Bible Study Opportunities

"Wisdom for Today's Woman" *Insights from Esther*

By Poppy Smith

This is an 8-week study on the book of Esther, with a very doable amount of homework. Led by Julie Kratz.

Thursday mornings,
Sept. 28th - Nov. 16th

9:30-10:30 am

*Childcare will be provided

Study guide - \$5

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"Desperate for Hope"

Questions we ask God in Suffering, Loss, & Longing

By Vaneetha Risner

Have you ever asked, *Why am I going through this? What if this never gets better? Does God really care about me?* When life falls apart, it's easy to feel alone and slip into despair—disillusioned with God, hopeless about the future, and doubting your faith.

In this 7-session study, Vaneetha Risner tackles hard questions and offers a scriptural framework to help you find hope in your pain.

If you have interest in participating in this study, or just have questions about it, please email franconiawomen@gmail.com or talk to Lori Menzies or Julie Kratz. (We are currently gauging interest and will then decide on a meeting time for this study.)

September 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5 Walk in the Park 7pm	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Sewing Circle 8am-4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm	13 Game Night & Homemade Ice Cream 7:00-8:30pm	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Esther Study 9:30-10:30am	29	30

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