

■ MARCH 2021 ■

Whisperings



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■ ■ ■ A Word from Pastor Scott

Who Do You Say He Is?

Greetings Friends,

I was meditating in my office this morning on a book called *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel. The premise of the book is how Lee Strobel, an investigative reporter and atheist, set out to examine the evidence for Christianity. For two years, he interviewed various scholars and experts in the field of archeology, theology, and philosophy. He studied ancient manuscripts, analyzed history, and asked poignant questions about the existence of Christ as the Son of Man. But more importantly, he made the case that Christ was truly divine, not just a good moral teacher or prophet.

Listen to how C. S. Lewis in his book *Mere Christianity* argued how Jesus was more than a great moral teacher: "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any

■ ■ ■ CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

3474 Rothsville Road, Ephrata, PA 17522 (717) 738-3774

www.hopeumcephrata.org ■ hopeumc@ptd.net

www.facebook.com/hopeumcephrata

Join us Sundays for 10 a.m. worship ■ 11:15 a.m. Sunday school

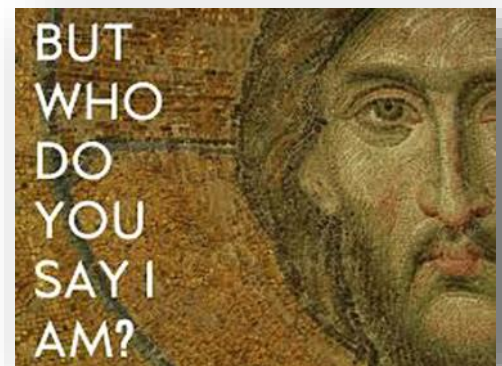
A Word from Pastor Scott ■ ■ ■

patronizing nonsense about him being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

Lewis was so right. I would stake my life on Jesus as my Lord and God. We can look at Him as a fool and a madman, or worship Jesus as our Lord and God, but the argument is settled for me. The countless miracles that Christ performed, the more than 500 witnesses who saw Him after He was resurrected from the dead, and roughly 24,000 manuscripts from the New Testament alone is a truth to which I’m willing to roll the dice.

When Jesus visited Caesarea Philippi, he had a riveting conversation with His disciples about who people say is the Son of Man. The disciples replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” Then Jesus asked Peter the same question, “Who do you say I am?” Peter emphatically answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:13-16). The apostles suffered a martyr’s death because of their belief in who Christ was, and they followed Him to the end.

How about you? If you believe in Christ, are you willing to follow Him to the end? Do you come to the Lord expecting something tangible in return? Do you reason that if you believe, then your lives will be filled with wealth, health, and physical comfort? Do you think that positive statements about your goals will translate into a life of spiritual wellbeing? Do you go to church to find only comfort for yourself? Is your faith simply a formula for living well in the here and now? Are you seeking personal improvement in your current situations?



If the answer to those questions is yes, then you may be believing in a prosperity gospel. The Prosperity Gospel movement goes back decades to the middle of the 20th century. As television use increased during the latter half of the century, so did the number of televangelists, who promoted this theology. Giving was promoted as a means of achieving financial success and health and well-being. Churches that were based on this theology soon began to swell in their membership and attendance. Why wouldn't they? People were searching for stability, calm, peace of mind, even comfort.

However, for those who do not lean in the direction of the Prosperity Gospel, there is a different pathway for following Jesus. That pathway is called the Gospel. In Luke 14:27, 33 we read the following: “Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.” And “So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”

Jesus called upon those who would be his disciples to give themselves completely for his sake. When they argued about who would be the greatest, He reminded them that the first would be last and the last first. When they worried about things, He reminded them that God was with them regardless of circumstances.

There was never a promise of health, wealth, and good fortune in return for discipleship. Indeed, discipleship was not about the disciple or the disciple's wellbeing. To the contrary, discipleship is about Christ. Worshiping the Lord is not about coming to church to get a feel-good message, so WE can be comforted! It is about worshiping so that we will be able to carry the Good News out into the

■ ■ ■ CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ALTAR FLOWERS

We are now offering the opportunity to sponsor altar flowers to commemorate a special occasion or heartfelt remembrance. Cost is \$35. A signup poster is in the lobby outside the Sanctuary or see Sandy Muckle.

Available dates: March 7, 14, 21, and 28.

TO BETTER PLAN OUR CALENDAR

To make the running of the church office more efficient, please fill out the yellow forms on the Administrative Assistant's desk to schedule any upcoming meetings and events. Thank you.

A Word from Pastor Scott ■ ■ ■

community. Do we long for prosperity as a church? I imagine we do. But whose prosperity are we longing for, ours, or the Kingdom of God? We don't believe and follow just a great moral teacher and prophet. We don't follow a lunatic or madman. We follow Christ, the Messiah, our Lord and God to the end.

This Lenten season as we journey through the 40 days leading up to the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as we remind ourselves of our need for repentance from sin and our need to remove ourselves from the temptations of life which separate us from God's will, meditate on this one question, "Who do you say Christ is?" If you can truly answer that question, then you will be more than prosperous in your walk with Him.

Blessings on your Lenten Journey.

In Christ,



Pastor Scott

■ ■ ■ Lenten Sermon Series

"Were You There?"

March 7 - *Were You There When Jesus Was Denied?* (Mark 14:66-72)

March 14 - *Were You There When Jesus Was Accused?* (Mark 15:1-5)

March 21 - *Were You There When Jesus Was Crowned with Thorns?* (Mark 15:6-20)

March 28 - *Were You There When Jesus Was Crucified?* (Mark 15:21-41)

April 4 - *Were You There When Jesus Was Resurrected?* (Mark 16:1-8)

Worship services are broadcast live on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/hopeumcephrata and archived on our YouTube channel: www.tinyurl.com/Hope-YouTube.

HOPE UMC STAFF & OFFICE HOURS

Pastor: Rev. Scott Dorn • **Administrative Assistant:** Barbara Graham

Director of Family Ministries: Morgan Pummer

Director of Music: Lisa Helock • **Organist:** Dave Luck • **Sexton:** Doreen Deamer

Tuesday-Friday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

LITURGISTS NEEDED

We are looking for volunteers to read Scripture on Sunday mornings in April. Interested? Call Cheryl at (717) 859-4535.

WHISPERINGS

During the extended COVID-19 safety restriction period copies of the Whisperings will be located on the Administrative Assistant's desk in the office.

NEW ORGAN TOTAL

As of Feb. 26, Hope Church has received **\$23,134.50** for the new organ. Thank you!

ONE GREAT YEAR OF SHARING 2021

Each Sunday, Hope Church will be collecting for One Great Year of Sharing, with **Water Street Mission** as this year's designee. A large donation jar can be found on the offering plate table in the Sanctuary.

■ ■ ■ **Out and About**

Pastor Scott believes, "Opportunity is everywhere for true mission and evangelism." His faith and spirit is guiding him to get 'out and about' in the community. Each month we will highlight some of his most recent or upcoming ministries.

● **Met via ZOOM** with Angel Perez and Mario Araya in early February to plan future Hispanic worship services at Hope Church. Held during the week or early afternoon on Sundays, services would be multi-congregational, but mainly conducted in Spanish, with an estimated 20-30 people attending. Pastor Perez, who has led missions to Costa Rica and Ecuador, hopes to build: "A church that will grow in the fear of the Lord and to restore people with the teachings of the Bible."

● **Imposed ashes and offered prayer** during our annual "Ashes to Go" event in the carport on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17.

If you would like to suggest a future 'Out and About' segment for the Whisperings, contact Pastor Scott at (267) 467-4027 or email hopeumcpastorscott@gmail.com.

■ ■ ■ **Membership Update**

● **Jeanne Heft** – Ephrata Manor, 99 Bethany Road, PC #108, Ephrata (717) 738-7408.

Please call or email the church office with any contact changes.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

What does it mean to follow? What does faithful following involve? We will hear from Jesus and look at other Biblical persons to see what God calls us to do in following.

Through the Lenten season, Rev. Kevin Readman continues his online weekly "Following" study. Join him Thursdays at 2 p.m.

To sign on the ZOOM meeting:

<https://tinyurl.com/Hope-LentenStudy2021>

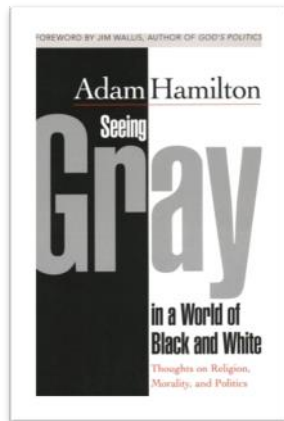
Meeting ID: 825 0260 0882

Passcode: 461377

To listen to the study: Dial 1-646-558-8656



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL ■ 11:15 AM



WIDE AWAKE

Overflow area ■ Ron Lindberg

Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White

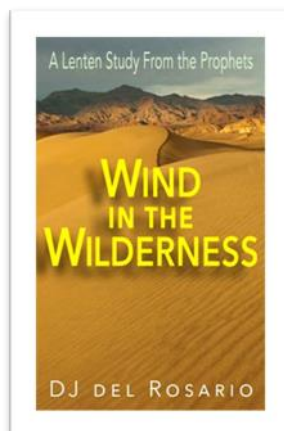
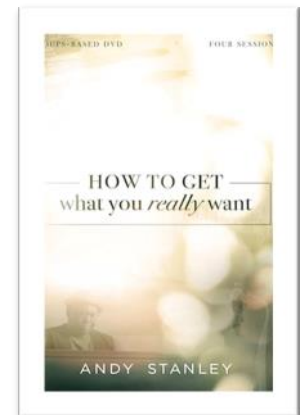
by Adam Hamilton

SEEKERS

Fellowship Hall ■ Bruce Tucker

How to Get What You Really Want

by Andy Stanley



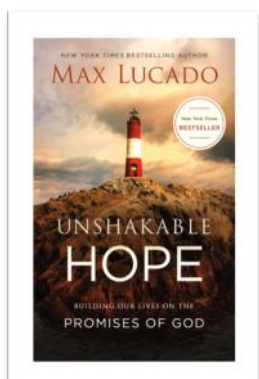
Elective

Sanctuary ■ Rev. Kevin Readman

Wind in the Wilderness

by DJ Del Rosario

The New Beginnings Sunday School class led by Cindy Kamide will not meet for the time being. They will reassess soon.



WOMEN'S BOOK & BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays at 10 a.m.
(Resumes March 25)

■ Room 221

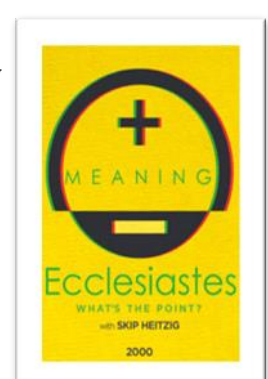
Unshakable Hope
by Max Lucado

MEN OF HOPE BIBLE STUDY

Fridays at 7:30 a.m.

■ Fellowship Hall

Ecclesiastes: What's the Point?
by Skip Heitzig



March

Third Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 7

Daylight Saving Time
Begins
Sunday, March 14

Fourth Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 14

St. Patrick's Day
Wednesday, March 17

First Day of Spring
Saturday, March 20

Fifth Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 21

Family Easter Celebration
Saturday, March 27

Palm Sunday
Sunday, March 28

April

Easter
Sunday, April 4

Tax Day
Thursday, April 15

Church Administration Meetings

(All meetings are at 6:30 p.m. unless specified)

- Monday, March 1 - WPCM
- Thursday, March 4 - Worship Planning
- Tuesday, March 9 - Nominations Prayer Meeting
- Tuesday, March 16 - Leadership Board
- Thursday, March 18 - VBS 7 p.m.

First Sunday Communion resumes April 4



Weekly Events

Women's Book
& Bible Study
Thursdays at 10 a.m.
(Resumes March 25)

Men of Hope
Men's Study Group
Fridays at 7:30 a.m.



Monthly Events

High Hopes
Monday, March 1

First Sunday Giving
for Assistance Fund
March 7

Newsletter Deadline
Monday, March 15



BIBLE READING PLAN

This concludes our online **Bible in a Year** interactive study. Thank you for your participation!

Planned Scripture Study

- | | |
|--|--|
| March 1: Galatians 1; Jeremiah 47; Jeremiah 48; Psalms 142 | March 17: Philippians 1:1-11; Ezekiel 18; Isaiah 47 |
| March 2: Galatians 2; Jeremiah 49; Jeremiah 50; Psalms 143 | March 18: Philippians 1:12-30; Ezekiel 19; Isaiah 48 |
| March 3: Galatians 3:1-18; Jeremiah 51; Jeremiah 52;
Psalms 144 | March 19: Philippians 2:1-11; Ezekiel 20; Isaiah 49 |
| March 4: Galatians 3:19-20; Galatians 4:1-20; Lamentations 1;
Lamentations 2; Psalms 145 | March 20: Philippians 2:12-30; Ezekiel 21; Ezekiel 22; Isaiah 50 |
| March 5: Galatians 4:21-31; Lamentations 3; Lamentations 4;
Psalms 146 | March 21: Philippians 3; Ezekiel 23; Isaiah 51 |
| March 6: Galatians 5:1-15; Lamentations 5; Psalms 147 | March 22: Philippians 4; Ezekiel 24; Isaiah 52 |
| March 7: Galatians 5:16-26; Ezekiel 1; Psalms 148 | March 23: Colossians 1:1-23; Ezekiel 25; Ezekiel 26; Isaiah 53 |
| March 8: Galatians 6; Ezekiel 2; Ezekiel 3; Psalms 149 | March 24: Colossians 1:24-29; Colossians 2:1-19; Ezekiel 27;
Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 54 |
| March 9: Ephesians 1; Ezekiel 4; Ezekiel 5; Psalms 150 | March 25: Colossians 2:20-23; Colossians 3:1-17; Ezekiel 29;
Ezekiel 30; Isaiah 55 |
| March 10: Ephesians 2; Ezekiel 6; Ezekiel 7; Isaiah 40 | March 26: Colossians 3:18-25; Colossians 4:1-18; Ezekiel 31;
Ezekiel 32; Isaiah 56 |
| March 11: Ephesians 3; Ezekiel 8; Ezekiel 9; Isaiah 41 | March 27: Luke 1:1-25; Ezekiel 33; Isaiah 57 |
| March 12: Ephesians 4:1-16; Ezekiel 10; Ezekiel 11; Isaiah 42 | March 28: Luke 1:26-56; Ezekiel 34; Isaiah 58 |
| March 13: Ephesians 4:17-32; Ezekiel 12; Ezekiel 13; Isaiah 43 | March 29: Luke 1:57-80; Ezekiel 35; Ezekiel 36; Isaiah 59 |
| March 14: Ephesians 5:1-20; Ezekiel 14; Ezekiel 15; Isaiah 44 | March 30: Luke 2:1-20; Ezekiel 37; Isaiah 60 |
| March 15: Ephesians 5:21-33; Ezekiel 16; Isaiah 45 | March 31: Luke 2:21-52; Ezekiel 38; Ezekiel 39; Isaiah 61 |
| March 16: Ephesians 6; Ezekiel 17; Isaiah 46 | |

Garden Plots

Have a green thumb but no backyard? Spring is on its way! Our garden plots behind the church will be ready for planting soon. Be on the lookout for a signup sheet in the lobby. Spots go fast, so sign up quick! For more information or if you have any questions, contact Dave Schmid at (717) 733-3073 or dsschmid@ptd.net.





Early February not only brought a lot of wintry weather but High Hopes as well! While the snow fell, High Hopes participants were snug at home meeting on ZOOM. Twenty children and their families joined us to learn about true love through the greatest commandment and how we live out love to everyone. We learned that scripture tells us to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength. We enjoyed an activity of mixing and blowing paint bubbles to create a reminder to cherish God in a way that overflows from our hearts and life (pictured above on right). We also discovered that God just doesn't want us to keep His love inside our hearts, but to share it with our neighbors and our enemies – even when it can be hard. We also learned that we are to love our friends, family, and ourselves! We even played a spin on the classic game Tic-tac-toe. When the first person gets three in a row, they say: "Tic-tac-toe, Jesus Loves Me."

WHAT IS HIGH HOPES?

High Hopes is for families with kids in pre-K through 5th grade. We gather to learn the love of Jesus in an evening filled with storytelling, games, crafts, snacks, and fun!

PRESS ▶ PLAY
GET IN THE MIX

VBS PLANNING MEETING

Thursday, March 18 at 7 p.m.

Join us in-person
in the Overflow Room or on ZOOM.

**Mark your calendar:
Vacation Bible School
June 21-25**

HIGH HOPES

JOIN US VIRTUALLY

March 1st

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

RSVP TO RECEIVE ZOOM ACCESS

717-738-3774 OR

HOPEUMCFAMILY@GMAIL.COM

A poster for an Easter egg hunt. The background is a light teal color with a border of colorful Easter eggs. The eggs have various patterns: purple with white polka dots, pink with white polka dots, pink with white stripes, and blue with white stripes. The text is centered on a white rectangular background.

HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PRESENTS AN

EGGCITING EASTER

Where the egg hunt comes to your door!
Join us after on Zoom at 3pm
March 28th 2021

SIGN UP TO GET YOUR DELIVERY OR
VOLUNTEERING CONTACT
717-738-3774 OR
HOPEUMCFAMILY@GMAIL.COM

■ ■ ■ *Children's Church at Hope*

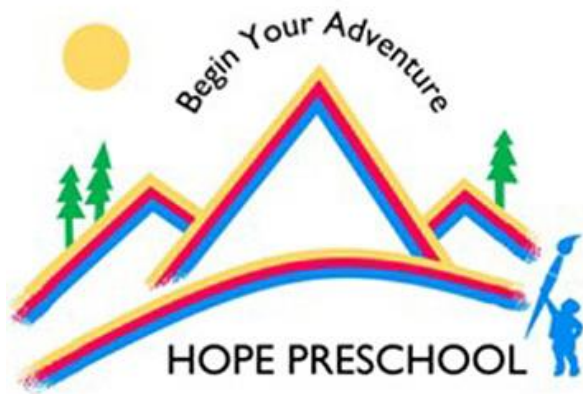
Join us Sunday morning for Children's Church wherever you are! We are meeting on ZOOM. Let us know at hopeumcfamily@gmail.com or call (717) 738-3774 if you would like to join. Children's Church takes place at 11:15 a.m. after worship. Currently, we are walking our way through the Old Testament.

■ ■ ■ *Family Ministries Facebook Page*

Stay connected with us on social media! Log on to www.facebook.com/groups/HopeFamilyMinistries to stay up to date on all things Family Ministries related!



In February, Hope Preschool learned about the letter "h" and constructed a friendship mural for Valentine's Day.



HOPE PRESCHOOL

Greetings from Hope Preschool,

Let it snow! Let it snow! January whipped past us with a flurry of snowflakes and cold temperatures that kept us inside even on the best days. We have made it a point to give our preschool children new and challenging activities in the bike room to keep them moving. In February, the idea was to challenge some of their basic skills, so we prepared an obstacle course for them that included stairs, a balance beam, a mat for tumbling, and a bean bag toss. You might also have seen the “parking spaces” that we added for the bikes, which is challenging the kids to match the number on their bike with the number on the wall. So far, this seems like a successful addition and we plan to keep it going by adding new activities each month!

Things are moving along in the office as we prepare for the next school year. There have been updates to the handbook and program guide, a Hope Preschool Instagram account is in the works, and we have created a whole new website just for the preschool! The upgraded website will allow families to find all the information connected with the preschool, take a virtual tour, meet the staff, register online, and pay tuition right from the site! This is an exciting new feature that we think our families will love. In addition to a new website, Hope Preschool also now has a new logo! Within it you can see the mountain, that is so often referenced in the Bible, along with the sun and trees that God created. This is all being painted by a child to show that we are forming a child’s imagination through their adventures here at Hope. We think this is a great way to honor God and to give a fresh, new look to the preschool!

Registration is currently open for our 2021/2022 classes and we are happy to see that we have a lot of interest in the various programs we are offering. This year we have decided to add a brand-new class to our program and the families have shown a LOT of interest. The new class is an extended Pre-Kindergarten class that will run Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a great option for our families that work, or students that want a little extra academic attention. If you know of a family looking to enroll their kids for next year, please have them call the preschool office at (717) 738-2447.

Thank you to everyone that purchased R&K subs and contributed to our fundraiser! We would not be Hope Preschool without the unending support of Hope United Methodist Church, and we are so happy to have you all as part of our family.

Shannon Brown
Director

Community Help, Volunteering & Employment

Employment and volunteer opportunities, plus information about organizations that provide meals, groceries, clothing, and more can be found in the church lobby.

- **Blessings of Hope Food Boxes** (717) 733-8833
- **Ephrata Area Social Services (EASS)** (717) 733-0345
- **Ephrata Community Meals** (717) 733-9608
- **Lancaster County Office of Aging** (717) 299-7979
- **Meals on Wheels** (717) 733-4846
- **Peter's Porch** (717) 859-2100
- **Water Street Mission** (717) 393-7709

2021 TOOLS FOR MINISTRY

March 13, 2021

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM via Zoom

"To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."
Ephesians 4:12



To find a complete list of workshops,
downloadable schedule, or to register, visit:
www.epaumc.org/conference-calendar/tools-for-ministry/

GOOD SAMARITAN

Ephrata Good Samaritan Services currently needs shelter options, budgeting, job suggestions for clients, and more. To get on board, call their office at (717) 733-3395. Please consider helping!

FOOD DONATIONS SOUGHT FOR EASS

We are currently collecting canned and boxed food along with paper products for Ephrata Area Social Services (EASS). Please place your donations under the coat rack in the lobby. Items can be dropped off after worship on Sundays or when the office is open (Tuesday-Friday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.) Thank you for your continued support of EASS and the work they do for our local community.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Do you or someone you know have a need for some financial assistance during this time? We can help! Please notify the church office or Jerry Gerhart at (717) 733-2331.

Thank you note...

Knowing that my Hope family cares about me has helped to ease the pain of my grief. Thank you for your cards of sympathy and prayers of peace in the passing of my dear sister Kathy. I miss her tremendously – and always will – but being able to share the burden of sadness with my church family has comforted me greatly. Thank you!

■ Sue Fisher

■ ■ ■ *Clyde McMillan-Gamber*

Feathered Gifts from God

I had a pleasant surprise on New Year's Eve morning. After sitting down at our computer by a window I saw a sprightly Carolina chickadee and an attractive tufted titmouse perched in a bare lilac bush, right outside the window, only six feet from me! I admired the beauty of those little "cousins." The chickadee was gray, with a black bib and a black cap set jauntily on its forehead. The titmouse was also gray, but with peach-colored flanks, a gray crest, and big, black eyes that were quite appealing. I continued to watch those handsome birds pecking at the lilac twigs for a minute, possibly for insect eggs, then fly away.

Less than a minute later, a striking male northern cardinal on the same bush caught my eye. Within seconds, he flew to a neighboring, young American holly tree. I was impressed by his bright plumage among the green foliage of the holly. I was reminded of a Christmas tree. After a few seconds of showing off his colorful plumage, that male cardinal flew off, leaving me feeling lucky to see such beauty so close.



A bright red male cardinal is a real standout amongst snow-laden holly branches.

As I continued working, I thought about that attractive line of shrubs along the side of our house, that small, neighborhood birds use as a sheltering roadway to the feeders in our backyard. Two lilacs had green leaf buds at the time. The holly had deep green foliage, and a red twigged dogwood had red stems. These shrubs and the birds that flutter among them enhance the attractiveness of each other. A few minutes after I spotted the cardinal, another motion on the lilac caught my attention – it was a handsome, male white-throated sparrow. His back, tail, and wings were brown with dark streaks. He sported a vivid black and white striped crown and a white throat patch.

While admiring the close-up sparrow, I noticed a Carolina wren touching down briefly in the holly. That lovely wren had warm brown feathering and its tail was cocked upright, reflecting its sassy personality. It hopped about in the holly a few seconds, then dropped to the ground and promptly disappeared because of its camouflaging feathering.

We have had these pretty kinds of birds – and other species – on our suburban lawn for years. I have seen these birds, and others, in that line of shrubbery for years, but not so many at once and so close. I was impressed! As always, beauty is where you find it, sometimes right at home! We do not know when and where nature will enhance our lives with its beauties and intrigues. That day, I was happy to experience those lovely, feathered gifts from God.

● **Check out Clyde's new nature blog: natureswondersbyclyde.blogspot.com.** Each short story is like taking a walk with your very own park naturalist.