
Northwest News for May

From Northwest Baptist Church <linda@nwbcarmore.com>

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To Linda Sherry <linda@nwbcarmore.com>



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A Note from Lex

Dear Church Family,

I can't believe it, but it's been half a year since I started here at NWBC as your pastor! You have all been very welcoming and kind to my family and me, and I am grateful to be here. More than that, I am excited for what the future holds. I know that times have been tough for our church, but we serve a risen Savior. We move forward in faith, united in mission. During the coming months, let's explore new ways of engaging our community, worshipping God, and uniting in the love of Christ! I look forward to many more months here, to be able to look back at this point with the awareness that this was just the beginning!

Lex

Getting to Know You

Northwest Baptist, your new pastor and his family have a request: As Spanky and Our Gang sang in 1968, "I'd like to get to know you! Yes, I would." Unlike Spanky, I can promise you, we will love you. We already do!

To get to know each other better, I'm proposing a fun activity. I'd like every current member of our church to answer the following questions. You can send your replies to me via text(509-499-9880) or email (lex@nwbcardmore.com). I'll also be handing out a hardcopy of these questions, which you can fill out and return to the church office if you prefer. Each month, I'd like to share a different member's profile in our newsletter. Maybe we'll take the fun a little farther and host dinner parties for everyone who shares the same favorite color, or something like that. We'll see. But for sure, we'll learn more about you—and I bet, you'll learn more about each other!

Profile Questions

1. How and When did you become a believer
2. How and when did you come to NWBC?
3. Where are you originally from?
4. Who are the people and/or pets in your (biological or chosen) family?
5. What is your current or former career?
6. What is the first movie you saw in the theater? The most recent one?
7. Who was your favorite singer or band when you were a teenager?
8. What's your favorite restaurant in or near Ardmore?
9. What's your favorite color?
10. What's something you bet no one at NWBC knows about you? (Keep it fun—quirks, special talents, celebrity crushes, first car or job, craziest adventure taken, odd fact, etc. No deep, dark secrets in the newsletter!)

Bonus: How can the church pray for you right now?

New Officers Elected

At the April 22 Business Meeting, the following individuals were elected to serve as officers in 2025:

Moderator- Jim Huggins

Vice Moderator- Glenn Smith

Secretary- Cheryl Smiley

Treasurer- Sallie Walker

Trustees:

Allen Crawford- 1 year term

Geoff Jones- 1 year term

Cookie Smith- 2 year term

Phillip Capshaw- 2 year term

Check Signers:

Bill Owen

Jim Huggins

Cookie Smith

Sallie Walker

Minutes of the meeting are available in the office.

Scripture for May

May 4- Acts 6:1-7

May 11- Acts 8: 26-39

May 18- Acts 15: 1-18

May 25- Galatians 1:13-17, 2:11-21

Always the Same Answer

by Katy Robertson

Where is Jesus?

On the last Sunday in April, as he preached about the two disciples walking to Emmaus, Lex encouraged us to ask that question. “After all, if you want to know,” he said, “the best way to find out is to ask.”

As I pondered that question over the next week, storms (again) rolled into Ardmore. One of the hardest questions I’ve had to answer as a parent is: “But we’ll be okay, right?” Last month in our new home here in Ardmore is the first time I’ve had storm shelter as an adult. When Caelyn was little and the storm radio sounded a tornado warning, she and I would leave our second-story apartment in Plano, TX, and hunker down in the bathroom of the complex’s lobby. Before the days of radars right in our pockets, we’d call my dad, 200 miles away, to tell us when the coast was clear. Once when we couldn’t reach him, we ventured outside to check for ourselves. I hoped my voice wouldn’t betray me when I spotted a wall cloud and the start of a funnel: “Let’s go back in for a while longer.”

“But we’ll be okay, right?” she answered.

Just two months after our first anniversary and two months before Isaac was born, Lex, Caelyn, and I moved into a house in Richardson, TX. We priced adding a shelter, but we simply didn't have the money to swing it. So, much to my dismay, March through June, all the contents of our hall closets lived in the dining room. Each year, Isaac grew more afraid of storms. We bought helmets to wear as we sheltered in the closets with lanterns and hand-crank radios. We said prayers and took deep breaths, but he couldn't hold back his panicked tears. "But we'll be okay, right?"

When Lex texted me about a church in Ardmore, I replied: "I want a storm shelter." We spent our first weekend here in the bathroom and the next in the cinderblock closet of the choir room at the church.

In a crisis (or potential crisis), there's no good answer to, "But we'll be okay, right?" You could offer a reassuring lie, but that's never the answer, and besides, the person asking is smart enough to see through your words when you're clearing out the closet. Statistics, I've found, don't calm a panic either—nor does, "Well, we've prepared and done everything we know to do."

The truth is, I don't know that we'll be okay. And not being able to know it and secure it and promise it to the little ones I love more than my own life, who trust me completely to keep them safe and really believe that I can do it, nearly crushes me. I suppose it always will, even when they're not so little anymore.

My dad is a retired C-141 pilot who flew in Vietnam, Yom Kippur, and the Gulf War. When I was growing up, although he certainly shared lessons he learned in the military, he didn't share many stories from his missions. When I was 28, he came to stay with Caelyn and me as I left an unhealthy marriage and moved into an apartment. He stayed for two weeks. On the day he left, he sat down at the table with me and said he wanted to tell me a story from a mission he flew into Israel to deliver much-needed supplies and troops to the Israeli army. He had recollected before about the men, women, and children who had been on the runway, cheering as the American planes approached, grateful for relief. But this was a different mission, he said.

The C-141 is a cargo plane; it doesn't have any defense weapons. To get into Israel, he had to fly through the territory of Israel's then-enemy. To assure they made it safely, the plan was for Israeli fighter jets—"angels" as the American crew called them—to surround his plane and escort him into Israel. But as he entered the enemy territory, he saw no fighters. He radioed for them . . . no response. He radioed twice more . . . still silence.

Then the speakers in the cockpit crackled to life: "You've got angels at your 6." Two more fighters called in their location on either side of him. He never saw them until he crossed the border into Israel, and they flew away from the C-141 so he could safely land.

He paused, stood up, and looked at me. "In the days ahead, you may fly into enemy territory," he said, "but you've got angels at your 6. Even when you can't see Him or hear Him, God's got you. And He will lead you safely home."

As he walked out the door, I didn't ask, "But we'll be okay, right?" I didn't have to. And I hope I never have to learn how hard it was for him to leave me there that day.

My dad didn't know it, but about a year before then, I had been sitting in the nursery rocking chair, reading a Bible story book to Caelyn at bedtime. We turned to the story about Jesus calming the storm. As I sang and rocked her afterward with the lights out, I could almost feel the raging sea we'd just read about, though the floor beneath the rocker stood firm and the sky outside shone only with the quiet lights of the city. I held Caelyn a little tighter and kept singing what—after many sleepless nights of my reciting Bible verses I'd memorized as a child and singing hymns buried deep in my memory—had oddly become her favorite lullaby, "O Worship the King." Remember the second verse?

O tell of his might and sing of his grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy
space.
His chariots of wrath the deep
thunderclouds form, and dark is his path on
the wings of the storm.

As those words crossed my lips, others filled my ears: "It is enough just for Jesus to be in your boat." I hadn't realized that message before. All the times I'd read or heard that story preached in the past, I'd thought about the disciples asking, "Where is Jesus? Why is He sleeping at a time like this? Lord! Wake up and save us!" And then I'd focused on Jesus' ability to calm the storm, thinking His chastisement of their faith was about their doubt of His power. But if that was the point, it certainly wasn't the only one. They were crying out for salvation from a storm in this world; they believed Jesus *could* calm the storm, just as much as Mary and Martha had believed Jesus *could* heal Lazarus, if only He had rushed to their side.

The disciples on that storm-tossed boat would've sung along with the next verses of "O Worship the King":

Your bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
in you do we trust, nor find you to fail.
Your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,
our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!

O measureless Might, unchangeable Love,
whom angels delight to worship above!
Your ransomed creation, with glory ablaze,
in true adoration shall sing to your praise! *

They would've sung those lines with all their hearts—if only Jesus would wake up and pay attention. If only He would use His power to save them. If only He would intervene in the way that made sense to them, in the way that would relieve the pressure and soothe their fears. If only He would prove He was the Messiah they believed He was.

In His grace, He gave them what they cried out for. But it was enough just for Jesus to be in their boat.

Not so long after that night in Caelyn's nursery, I started over as a single mom from a small Oklahoma town living in a big Texas city with \$500 to my name. Not so long after that, I received a diagnosis of an incurable, degenerative pain condition that required brain surgery and a lifetime of nerve pain that hits and spreads and sizzles like lightning. When others introduced doubt—*This has to be a punishment for leaving your marriage*—I remembered: "Jesus is in my boat, and it's enough." When yet others urged me to look to rituals in exchange for miraculous healing, I remembered: "Jesus is in my boat, and it's enough." When I drove to the hospital for brain surgery after drawing up a will and making plans for Caelyn's care should I not awaken, and my spirit asked, "But we'll be okay, right?" The answer resounded: "Jesus is in your boat, and it's enough."

Five months after we said yes to God's call to Ardmore, we received the storm shelter I'd insisted on and, of course, then was pushed to step out in faith without even the promise of eventually having one. It was a step in a five-year free-fall of faith we'd started when I had obeyed God's leading to quit the job we couldn't afford to lose in 2020. Ardmore was a step that didn't align with our plans, a step to a smaller paycheck when we already had a mountain of debt, a step from a crowded closet as tornado sirens wailed to a bathtub five people could not possibly crouch in at the same time.

Ardmore did not look like a practical solution to any of our practical problems. I'll admit, I did more than once ask Lex, "But we'll be okay, right?"

Months after taking that nonsensical step that that God undeniably wanted us to take, I heard we would be getting a storm shelter. I sat down on the step of our new sunken living room and cried. Ardmore didn't make sense, but with our continued *yes*, God knocked down that mountain of debt. He made that new

paycheck more than enough. His grace thundered in obstacles removed. It flashed like lightning in the generosity of His people. He even gave us a storm shelter.

Where is Jesus?

Maybe God asked the same question when He already knew the answer as Jesus hung on the cross. Maybe, even knowing He couldn't intervene for the One if He wanted to save us all, maybe even knowing the ending, the pain overwhelmed Him.

Where is Jesus?

Maybe the women who went to tend to Jesus' body asked the same question of the glowing angels at the empty tomb. Maybe the disciples said it back to the women when they told them what they had seen and heard. Maybe Mary Magdalene did the same when she met the risen Jesus—the One who had set her free from demons—in the garden and didn't recognize Him. Maybe the two disciples on the way to Emmaus spoke those exact same words to His face.

Where is Jesus?

Where was He while the Sea of Galilee raged? Where was He while Lazarus lay dying? Where was He while a ghost approached Peter's storm-tossed fishing boat?

Where was He while the radios remained silent as my dad flew through enemy territory on his way to Israel? Where was He in my unhealthy marriage, in the neurosurgery suite, in every lightning bolt of nerve pain after?

Where is He when we can't see anything but the danger all around? When our best plans aren't working? When the mountains keep rising? When we're desperate for Him to answer our prayers, to intervene as the Savior we believe He can be, when we're pleading for Him to just wake up and pay attention? Where is He when the storm rolls in and we like children ask, "But we'll be okay, right?" The answer is always the same:

Jesus is in our boat. And that's enough.

* Grant, Robert, "O Worship the King," 1883.

Church Calendar

May 4

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship

May 7

6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting

May 11- Happy Mother's Day

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship

2:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting

May 14

6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting/ Finance

May 18

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship

May 21

6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting

May 25

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship

May 28

6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting



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