



So a few days ago folks gathered on Ground Hog's Day to see if Punxsutawney Phil would see his shadow or not. Well, Punxsutawney Phil did see his shadow meaning we have 6 more weeks of winter. This tradition is fun and ridiculous at the same time. It has led to hit movies, episodes in our favorite tv shows, and even songs about the day and the ground hog!

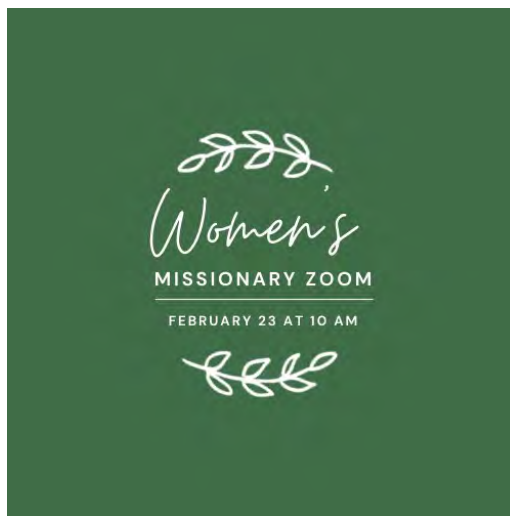
I have always felt a special affinity to Ground Hog's Day because my grandfather was born and raised in Punxsutawney, PA. I have been to the town, seen Gobbler's Knob and viewed the ground hogs. I have also driven to the graves of distant relatives, viewed the area where my grandfather grew up, and heard all the stories of my grandfather and his brothers growing up in small town Punxsy. So, what I really love about Ground Hog's Day is not whether or not our winter will be extended by a groundhog's prediction; what I love is that this holiday brings attention to a town that birthed and impacted someone I love very much. I have an affinity for Punxsutawney because I have a personal connection.

At the end of February we will have access to hear from and make connections with Briarwood missionaries serving around the globe. They will share the stories of their cities and towns, and the hope and dreams of their neighbors, and the struggles and victories of the communities they are invested in. Our prayer is that as we grow in our affection and love of these missionaries we will also start to care about the location they are serving. We will grow in our commitment and affection for countries and people groups because we "know" someone there.

Ladies, I would like to invite you to hear from and get to know two of our women serving internationally. The Women's Ministry is hosting:

Tuesday, February 23rd, 10 am—11 am. Join us by clicking on the following zoom link. The link will be available beginning 9:45 am.

<https://zoom.us/join/branding/p/0bef4d83-5890-4502-9910-30deb104313c.jpg>



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Daily YouTube	
Devotionals.....	2
February Bible Study	
updates and pictures.....	3
Charleigh Steelman	
Encouragement for the	
New Year Article.....	4-5
February Bible Reading	
Plan: Romans.....	5
Valentine's Day Berry	
Crisp Recipe.....	6
Pop-Up Spring Events.....	7

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Global Missions Conference—Feb. 21-28
- Women's Missionary Zoom—Tuesday, February 23



We hope you all have had a chance to go listen to our daily YouTube devotionals that started up mid-January. These are posted Monday-Friday each week. So far, we've had the privilege of hearing from:

Jan. 18 Sonya Stallings

Jan. 19 Carol Gould

Jan. 20 Mary Gwin Morris

Jan. 21 Rebekah Vermeer

Jan. 22 Marie Gathings

Jan. 25 Susan Bellows

Jan. 26 Marion Petty

Jan. 27 Abby Leib

Jan. 28 April Jeff

Jan. 29 Annette Blake

Feb. 1 Caroline Brown

Feb. 2 Sandy Murphy

Feb. 3 Chesley Peed

And below is a list of the women who will be sharing over the next couple of weeks:

Feb. 4 Ginger Marlow

Feb. 5 Katie Russell

Feb 8 Wendy Long

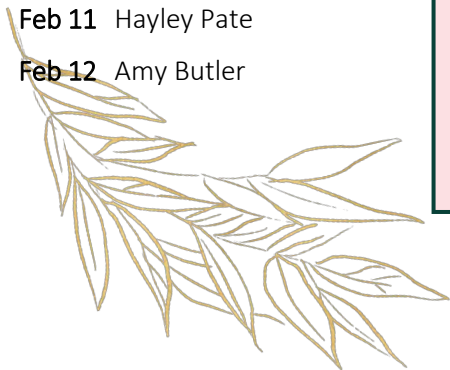
Feb 9 Christian Terrell

Feb 10 Sonja Steelman

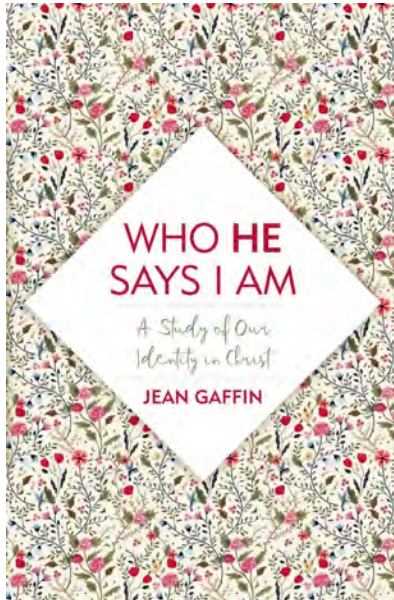
Feb 11 Hayley Pate

Feb 12 Amy Butler

We hope you enjoy listening to these daily devotions and that they encourage you in your own walk with the Lord! Stay tuned for more devotions to come as February unfolds!



February Bible Study Update:



Who HE Says I Am | Cindy Reeder

Tuesdays starting February 16

Chapel at 9:30am

With her characteristic warmth, wisdom, and wit, Jean Gaffin's 'Who He Says I Am' explores the riches of the believer's identity in union with Christ by faith. Each chapter touches on a different aspect of Christ in us, the hope of glory, and in that context encourages women primarily, and all believers generally, to live out of this reality, just as Jean did throughout her life.

**Books can be ordered through the bookstore!*



Pictures from Bible studies this semester!
They're off to a great start!



Charleigh Steelman | New Year's Encouragement

Even as an adult, I'm a pretty picky eater.

My parents still whisper in the kitchen during holiday meal preparations so I won't overhear that they're putting onions in the succotash.

When our dinner has olives in it, my husband always sweetly serves me with an extra plate on the side so I have somewhere to put them after I've picked them out. (And probably so he can have his own extra plate full of olives now that I think about it.)

And when I go to any drive-through, I painstakingly ask for specific verbal confirmation every time that there won't be any pickles on my sandwich.

"You've got that it's plain, right?"

But sometimes, no matter how carefully you've ordered, you don't know until you bite into your burger that it does--in fact--have pickles on it. And if you're a picky eater like me, your mid-grimace, immediate thought in that scenario is probably: "This does not taste good."

Honestly, the year 2020 felt a lot like a burger with pickles on it. At first glance, it looked just like I had hoped it would, but after a few bites, things didn't taste so good after all. Our plans and goals got canceled. I heard sad stories of loss. Life became lonely. My husband lost his dream job. I grieved as holidays and milestones passed with isolation instead of celebration. There were far more tears than laughs.

And after grieving all that I had hoped for last year, January brought new hope for a fresh start. But as we turn the corner to February, and many situations stay the same, I'm already beginning to grieve the hopes and plans I had for this year too. Life is still lonely, hugs are still off-limits, screens are still replacing deep companionship, and the things I had looked forward to in this season of life honestly may never happen.

It still feels more sour than sweet. It still doesn't taste very good.

But there is good news--no matter how sharp our hurt or how deeply our expectations aren't met. No matter how bad the taste of the world may be, we are invited to taste and see that the Lord is good.

"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!" (Psalm 34:7-8)

Unlike the tastes we experience in the world--whether it's the taste of pickles or the taste of heartbreak--tasting and experiencing the Lord shows us that He is good, even when it feels like what's happening all around us isn't.

No matter what our circumstances are, He is always good, even when it feels like our situations taste a lot like pickles (or olives or onions or whatever it may be for you). The truth is that even the smallest sample of God is better than any figurative entree we might find in the world--even the good things we look forward to and cherish in it. I had hoped for blessings of friendships and new experiences and celebrations. But I am seeing that blessing comes, not because of what we have or what we've experienced or what our lives might look like on any given day. It comes with refuge taken in the Lord.

So no matter what your life tastes like these days, friend, be encouraged, not because of any hope in the world, but a hope of sound refuge. Take refuge in the Lord, experience him and know that even when things may not feel like they're very good, He is. If your life feels sour, join me in hiding in the One who is immeasurably sweet.

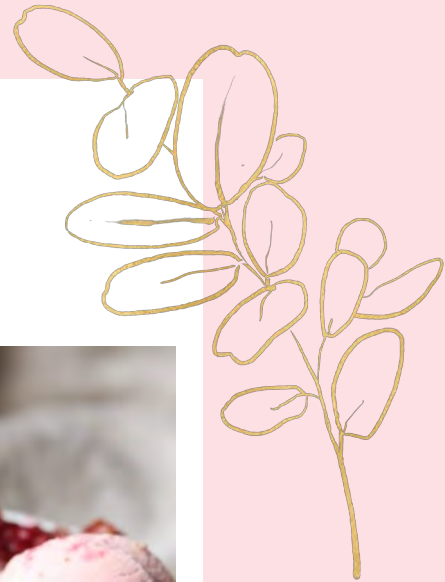
The taste of life may be hard, sad, lonely, stressful and hurtful. But, taste and see that the Lord is good! And that taste is much better than anything else that we could hope to taste in this life. As it turns out, the Lord is much better than a pickle!

5 Year Reading Plan: February

For the month of February, we will be reading the book of Romans!



Valentine's Day Berry Crisp



Ingredients:

Topping—

- 1 1/4 cup quick oats
- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup cold butter, diced

Berry Filling—

- 2 cups strawberries, cut in half, or quarters if large
- 2 cups blueberries
- 1 cup raspberries
- 1 cup blackberries
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/4 cup flour



Recipe from: Cookies & Cups

<https://cookiesandcups.com/berry-crisp/>

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9×13 baking dish with nonstick spray, set aside.
2. In a large bowl mix together the oats, flour, sugar, and salt. Mix in the butter with your hands or a pastry cutter until mixture form crumbs when squeezed together.
3. Place berries in another large bowl. Stir in the sugar, juice, and vanilla into the berries. Sprinkle the flour on top of the berries and toss to coat.
4. Place the berry mixture into the prepared pan, and sprinkle with the oat mixture evenly.

Bake for 45 minutes, until the top is golden and the berries are bubbly.

pop up

Beginning in March the Women's Ministry will host some small Pop-Up social events. The events will meet all current social distance requirements and safety protocols. This means that most of these events will be small in terms of numbers that can participate. So, when they become available make sure you sign up right away. A few of our events will be off campus through Party Art and through Apron Cooking School. We will also have an on-campus flower arranging class. Each of these events will require that you sign up and pay ahead of time.

The details are still being worked out with each vendor and leader/teacher. So, please be patient with us but also be prepared to move quickly as these events "Pop-Up." Go ahead and starting talking with your friends about what activities you will want to do together in March, April and May!

