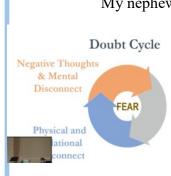
ssionary Evangelism to Corrections



Sharing the gospel & Christ's love with those in corrections since 1982 "I was in prison and you came to me" Matt. 25:36cESV

Dear Becky

If we are willing to let Him, God uses the things we struggle with the most to teach us the most.



My nephew, Dr. Joshua O. Carroll, pastors Ethnos Bible Church in Richardson, Texas. In one of his earlier sermons, he spoke about the doubt cycle. This is where we take a difficult experience and use it to tell ourselves that we are not good enough or are not loved and we let it keep us from loving others well. Currently

they are doing a series on Cultural Intelligence in Spiritual warfare, addressing our interaction with the general culture and specific cultures. One of the strongest values of the church is to build bonds of unity in Christ amongst diversity. I love the work they are doing.

When Becky, the care pastor at Ethnos, gave her testimony, she shared that one of her life struggles was not feeling black enough or white enough [to be accepted in or fit into either the black or white culture].

A friend of mine recently shared her struggle with feeling alone and that no one understands what she has experienced or is going through. It is paradoxical that this is a universal struggle. These two beliefs and the feelings they produce are far more common and unspoken than we realize.

Once the lies and accusations are recognized as such, replacing them with God's truth allows us to take the actions that further our faith and growth in Christ and deepen our love for Him, His and others. Once it is exposed and the truth takes its place, then we are free to do the work necessary to practice the truth. When the lie



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February-March 2023 MEC Newsletter

Spotlight Mercy Unrelenting

MERCY."

"THE PLAY CALLS ON US TO

UNDERSTAND THE NATURE

OF FORGIVENESS AND THE

POWER INHERENT IN

-TALKIN' BROADWAY

We are putting this in our newsletter as some of the volunteers are in this play and because the content reflects crime and the need for God's mercy in our lives.

Open Windows theatre is currently preforming the play Mercy Unrelenting.



Based on a true story, this critically acclaimed original drama by Jeremy Stanbary takes place nearly 50-years after the shocking murder of a young Italian peasant girl, Maria Goretti. In 1950, the eve of Maria's canonization as a saint. attracted half-a-million people to Rome.

Rumors of an

astounding miracle in the life of Maria's killer, motivated an ambitious female journalist to seek answers from the mouth of the reclusive murderer

himself. Difficult questions lead to unexpected answers, forcing both of them to confront the demons of their past.

Summarized from Open Windows web. See next page 2 for notes, place, times and ticket information.



Spotlight: Mercy Unre	elenting	Page 1 & 2

that we are not really a part of the church is exposed, then the work of connecting with others and growing close to them is the expectation we participate in.

A common thought that I recognize as a lie is that I am not really a part of the church, but it is God's truth that counters it.

Nadine, who works at the office for MEC, has had a similar experience in the past, "When I



wanted to attend a new Bible study at my church, that had been going on for several years already, I wasn't sure if I would fit in as I hardly knew any of the people. I remember vividly standing at the bottom of the stairs looking up at the room and hearing people talk and laugh. Something in my mind told me to "just forget it, go home, you don't know any

of them, you won't belong". And I would have done

just that if not for a voice saying, "Go, it'll be alright." How thankful I am for this prompting from the Lord, as I have now been a part of that Bible study for five years and I'm so



grateful for all the connections and friendships have made."



Years ago, I was away from home and my parents moved unexpectedly. For a time, they stayed in a protestant Christian community that used to be a convent. While visiting them, cont. from pg. 1

- March 1—26th (started Feb. 24th)
- Thurs. the 27th & Fridays 7:30pm
- Saturdays : 11th 7:30
- On the 18th & 27th 2:00PM & 7:30PM
- Sundays 2 PM

CONTENT WARNING: While based on a powerfully redemptive true story, this play addresses issues related to sexual assault and depicts brief but intense moments of stage violence.

Recommended for ages 13 and up. Viewer discretion is advised. See the guiding principles for our redemptive, multigenerational plays on the OWT website.

Regular tickets \$20.00 - 30.00

Group discounts available

Go to Open Windows Theatre Website, https://openwindowtheatre.org/

Hours for office 1:00-5:00pm: Tuesday – Friday Tel. 612-615-1515 email: boxoffice@openwindowtheatre.org

Address: 5300 S. Robert Trail Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

For regular or PAYA tickets or Pay-As-You're-Able

On a tight budget? There are two Pay-As-You're-Able dates coming up on Saturday 3/18 at 2:00 PM & Saturday 3/25 at 2:00 PM. PAYA tickets are available in advance as well as at the door pending availability. Call our box office at 612-615-1515 for tickets.

Or go to OWT Website for more info.

Ministry Shout-Out

We know we are not alone in ministry. This months shoutout goes to

THEATIE

Bringing multigenerational professional theater with a redemptive vision to the Twin Cities. We focus on telling relevant stories of faith, hope, and reconciliation in an intimate and immersive environment.

Art, and particularly live theater, has a unique ability to not only bring joy through entertainment but also to educate and inspire by provoking profound self-reflection about the deepest and most important aspects of our humanity.

Of their core principles number 5 says We believe religious faith is something to celebrate—not denigrate through art and we believe in exploring issues of faith & spirituality in a serious and thought-provoking way. See above article on Mercy Unrelenting for contact information

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someone from the church asked me what part of the body I thought I was. My response was, "Maybe a tendon or a ligament, I do not know where I fit, but I think it has something to do with connecting people from different parts of the body of Christ." Since we visited other churches and Bible Studies when it did not work to drive the distance to where our church was. Since then, I have grown to be part of some church communities but have had to battle and work through beliefs that would keep me from this.

It is ironic how many times that statement of being "one who connects" has come back to me over the years. As a nurse advocating for patients or handicapped people in a world that has not experienced similar challenges was one way. I was startled when I recognized myself in the main character of a children's book who seemed to have no

talent, but won a prize for helping others. In the jail ministry, trying to get inmates to see the good and the worth of creating relationships in healthy places and helping those in churches to understand the needs of those with legal challenges or addictions are important.

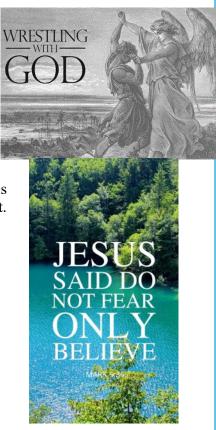
Even within major groupings, there are a lot of subcultures which presents barriers. The healthiest people are those who become bicultural and can function successfully in both cultures. This can be so hard. Doing so or even attempting to do so can create all kinds of pushback. I have been speechless at the reactions of some people in more

than one situation where I had no power and lost positions which were very much a part of my identity because of this. It is God's work. He carries us and He carries the battles. It is in our weakness that His strength becomes known, to us and to others.

In the past, I had my arm tendons damaged and needed two surgeries. My arms need therapy, exercise, stretching and forced rest. Recently, some muscles, tendons and ligaments in my calf have been strained to the point of unbearable pain, making it hard to walk, and at times move. I am incredibly thankful that God is our healer and has and is healing us constantly. Through this, our Father God has shown me how important these connections are to our functioning. This has helped me catch a glimpse of how much He values me and us. It is easy to make this more general and touching to feel it more individually, moving it from head to heart. May we see God's love and work in the things we struggle with the most.

Thank you, Becky, for sharing your story and inspiring these words.





To remove your name from our mailing list, please email us with REMOVE in the subject line, call or write. Please visit our website for articles, studies, prayer aides, resources or to donate. **www.mecjailministry.com**, mec@usfamily.net (651) 408-1300 PO 542, Wyoming MN 55092. *Saul Selby Director, Karen Selby Associate Dir., Nadine Behrens Office Admin.*