

MAHSEH NEWSLETTER

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the Mahseh staff.

VOL. 1, ISSUE 4

NOVEMBER 2017

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!!



Ladies Tea at Mahseh

GREETINGS TO YOU FROM THE STAFF AT MAHSEH

We have continued to be very busy with various sized groups and many individuals coming to Mahseh. November 11 was our annual board meeting at Mahseh.

AUTUMN AT MAHSEH

This fall Mahseh was the venue for three women's retreats, some prayer retreats including a group of college students from Indiana Wesleyan University, and many church groups.

SPOTLIGHT on one of our groups:

...but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 18:24b

Eight women.

Eight different occupations.

Eight ages, spanning five decades.

Eleven years of friendship, forged through commitment to love one another unconditionally.

Ten years of annual retreats at Mahseh....

with God as their foundation,

the source of their hope,

the destination of their individual lives.

The "Chirp" Sisters, as they affectionately refer to themselves, were thrown together at a weekend retreat called **Christ Renews His Parish,** (hence, the **Chirp!**) sponsored by St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in Kokomo. At the close of that weekend 11 years ago, they had the opportunity to continue their lives together by committing to meet with one another on a monthly basis. These were women who attended the same church, but who had not known one another before that weekend..

A group of eight emerged from the retreat. They meet monthly, usually for dinner at a restaurant. With every rendezvous, the ladies take turns updating the rest on their lives. In between the monthly gatherings, they are in touch with one another by phone or group emails; they know the triumphs and trials of one another's lives. They pray with and for one another. When they convene, even in the restaurant, they pray for one another. Their monthly Chirp nights along with the annual retreat at Mahseh are the events on which all else rests.

The group meets annually at the Mahseh Center to spend a few days apart from the world, spouses and family.

This has been a highlight each year for the past ten years for these women to continue their lives of sharing with one another on a soul healing level that ministers God's love. These women have forged a sacred circle of friendship. They have learned that with Jesus Christ as their foundation, they can share anything. They have learned to be vulnerable within the safety of this God ordained group.

It's easy to see how fond the women are of one another. They share the ups and downs of their lives. Some refer to this as their group therapy or spiritual therapy. "We learn so much from each other!" All find their group to be a source of hope. The days spent each summer at Mahseh have been special times of renewal. July 19th marked their 10th visit to Mahseh. They come in the front door and breathe, "We're Home!" Their quiet days are all spent at the Mahseh House. They each prepare a meal or two. They spend time in Bible study together. They enjoy conversation with one another, as well as enjoy the quiet of the lake.

2016 Mahseh Retreat

Anna Rudolph (Retired from Delphi Electronics),
Lori McDaniel (Accounting),
Bridget Whitmore (College Professor – Nursing),
Carol Savage (Bank Operations),
Pat Lang (Retired School Teacher),
Cathy Dietrich (retired from Chrysler)
Amy Pitzfer (Engineer),
Mary Lou Ripberger (Deceased)



Retreat feels different this year. Life is ever changing. One of their number, Anna, is presently dealing with very challenging health issues, and although unable to attend this year's retreat, was recently visited by some of the sisters. Another change – Mary Lou, the oldest in years and reportedly one of the youngest at heart, went to her true home with the Lord this past January. Amidst the laughter and the smiles and the stories at this year's retreat, one can see grief still reflected in the eyes of the sisters. But even greeting death, this precious community of believers testifies of the love and power of Jesus, for the sisters were able to honor Mary Lou's wish that her Chirp sisters walk directly behind her casket as honorary pall bearers at Mary Lou's funeral.

We are so blessed and so grateful for Mahseh and the 11 years we have come here! We have grown closer as Sisters in Christ over those years. Our faith is the center and root of our friendships, and this amazing place has helped to strengthen those. Thank you so much and may God continue to bless and strengthen you in this ministry.

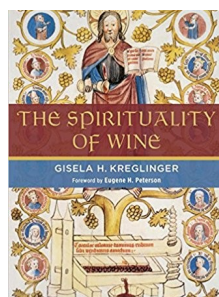
Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some,
but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
Hebrews 10: 23-25

We at Mahseh are honored to be a part of peoples' lives by providing Mahseh as a place to draw near to God and find refreshment for the soul.

BOOK REVIEW: GISELA H. KREGLINGER ~THE SPIRITUALITY OF WINE

Third in a series of book reviews added to the Mahseh Center library during the current calendar quarter.

From the editor notes: In this book Gisela Kreglinger offers a fresh, holistic vision of the Christian life that sees God at work in all created things, including vineyards, the work of vintners, and the beauty of well-crafted wine shared with others around a table. Kreglinger begins by examining wine in the Bible, in the history of the church, and in the Lord's Supper, and these reflections culminate in a theology of joy and feasting that celebrates the human senses as gifts for tasting the goodness of God.



In the second part of the book Kreglinger brings Christian spirituality and the world of wine together in new ways, exploring such matters as technology and wine-crafting, the health benefits of wine, alcohol abuse, consumerism, and soul care. Her discussion is enriched by interviews with thirty vintners from around the world as well as her own experience growing up on a family winery in Bavaria.

I was so intrigued by the title of this book that as a casual wine drinker myself I felt compelled to read this 2016 Eerdmans Publishing release. To my pleasant surprise it was well worth the effort. Besides gaining insights into the Biblical images of wine and vineyards it also provided unique insights into his ancient of beverages.

Perhaps the most significant insight was that wine, more so than any other drink in history, connects us to the place of its production. Even an occasional wine drinker knows that one Cabernet Sauvignon does not taste like another. In descriptive prose, Kreglinger discusses how the change in soil mixtures, amount of rain, type of yeast and a hundred other unique environmental factors all go to shaping the body, taste and aroma of any particular vintage. It is little wonder that the thirty vintners she interviews all leave you with the impression of men that are uniquely tied the land they farm. They also all viewed themselves as caretakers of the land for the next generation as they care for vine plants that may be well over one hundred years old.

Quoting from page 203 of the book:

It is striking that many of the vintner craftspeople I interviewed understand their relationship with the vines in parental terms. They see themselves as motherly and fatherly guardians of the vines, and they view the vines as children in need of care, nourishment and pruning. Perhaps their lifelong experience of tending to the vines and the vineyard will shed more light on those potent metaphors for the life of the church and what it means to root our identity in Christ the vine and God the vintner/father.

Needless to say, Kreglinger has only marginally positive things to say for two trends in current winemaking—the use of technology and the emergence of corporate vineyards. Technology has created more consistency in the production of wine but with that comes a sameness that has narrowed the taste of many wine drinkers and robbed the product of much of the “art” in wine making. Likewise, large corporate vineyards are more interested in making money than practicing their craft and as a result, care for the soil and uniqueness of product are being lost as they are looking to manufacture thousands of cases of wine all with the same predictable taste. That might be a fine goal for Coca Cola but totally out of character with the nearly 5000 year history of wine production. This push towards standardization in modern culture is an alarming trend.

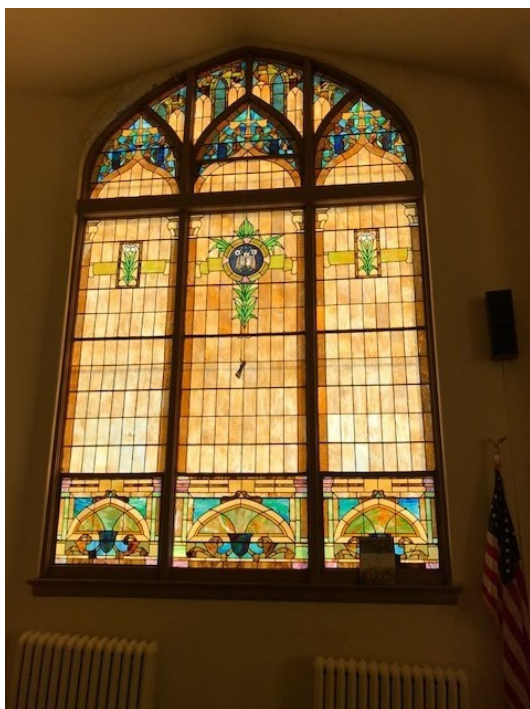
Quoting from page 207:

When we think about the life of the church, we can see similar dynamic. The church can easily become a place where individuals gather to find comfort and security in homogeneous groups...People look for churches whose members might share similar educational backgrounds, professional occupations, or ethnic origins. When the unity of the church is reduced to homogeneity of opinions and habits, stages in life, economic status, or educational backgrounds, then the vital flourishing of life in the Christian sense is more difficult.

The book would be a worthwhile read if just read in the context of a recovery of the land a-la Wendell Berry. However, Kreglinger also offers unique insights into the nature of addiction as sin, the unique place of wine as one of God’s great gifts, the medicinal value of wine and the history of wine making. Even those of you that come from a denominational tradition that views non-consumption of alcohol as a tenant of faith will still garnish a lot of practical wisdom from reading this book that is now a part of the Mahseh library.

Rob

See next page...



MAHSEH Acquires Insides of Church

Through God's Providence Mahseh had the opportunity to acquire the contents of a circa 1915 church that due to structural issues is being demolished. Included were many beautiful stained glass windows, oak pews, theatre seats and oak woodwork. More information coming in a future newsletter.



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