

MAHSEH NEWSLETTER

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the Mahseh staff.

VOL. 23 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2019

Christmas Table



Sunrise over the open field



GREETINGS TO YOU FROM THE STAFF AT MAHSEH

January has had one group cancel and reschedule due to inclement weather. We hope their new date at the end of this month has a break from this snowy weather. Our policy is if Fulton or Pulaski County is under a winter weather advisory a group can cancel and reschedule without losing their deposit. The lake is just now frozen after a warm December and early January. Looking forward to spring, we will have a Ladies Tea June 1 @ 10 am.



Winamac Nazarene Church

The Winamac Nazarene Church had their first ladies retreat at Mahseh on a snowy January weekend. They want to come back in the fall or spring when the weather is such that they can enjoy the Mahseh porches and the beautiful gardens. Debbie Wingerter presented three messages to the ladies on the book of Ruth. Titled Ruth: Romance, Redemption and the Providence of God, God's perfect plan of redemption for all mankind was examined in His Word. The communities of Winamac and Rochester had recently experienced horrible school bus accidents resulting in the deaths of four children. Why would God who is good all the time allow these tragedies to occur? Why did God allow Naomi's husband and both of her sons to die? We don't have all the answers but we do know that God has a plan and His ways are not our ways. Ruth was a foreigner but she professed faith in Yahweh, and God's Providence put her in the genealogy of the Line of David and ultimately in our redeemer, Jesus.



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.

The staff of East Tipp Baptist Church were able to enjoy the Mahseh porch during their retreat in August 2018. Rob presented teaching for them on the subject of Spiritual Gifts.

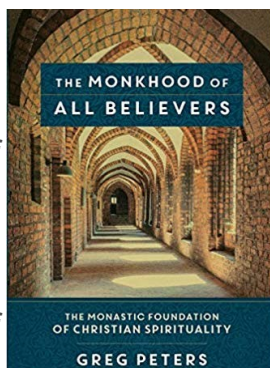


BOOK REVIEW:

The Monkhood of All Believers

Greg Peters

From the editors notes—“Without rejecting institutionalized monasticism, Greg Peters succeeds in demonstrating that we are all monks in the sense that our baptismal vows obligate us to cultivate single-minded interior devotion to God and to seek an asceticism of balance and moderation in everyday life. One could call it a revisionist history of monasticism that commends it to Protestants—especially to those heirs of Luther who have rejected monasticism. But along the way what makes Greg’s book a feast is all the wisdom he has unearthed from the entire history and wide breadth of the Christian church.”



To the modern Protestant, especially those of the evangelical strain, likely nothing seems so antiquated and out of step with Christian modernity as the practice of monasticism. In its most severe forms, monasticism conjures up visions of extreme asceticism and escapism from the reality of daily life. Greg Peters makes a compelling case that, properly understood, nothing could be further from the truth. While not advocating that every Christian should don their habits and enter communal living, Peters does identify several aspects of monasticism that have applicability to every Christians life.

In seven well documented chapters, Peters gives us a definition of a monk, the history of monasticism, the role of asceticism in

monasticism and how the attributes of being a monk can play out in the lives of every believer.

Key to understanding the role of monasticism in a believer's life is defining the term "monk". Not satisfied to look to the Greek source word of "living alone", Peters does an historical review of the writings of Eusebius, Augustine, John Cassian and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. We discover that a better understanding of the Greek word *monachos* is "singleness of purpose". That purpose being to focus their lives on God. As such, their focus is not any different than the early church described in the book of Acts and should be the purpose of all Christians.

Having defined what a monk is, Peters next turns his attention to the idea of "interiorized monasticism". Here he begins to build the bridge between those that practice institutionalized monasticism and the role of monasticism in every believer's life. Simply stated, being a monk should be a matter of habits of the heart and not restricted to one particular outward lifestyle.

Of particular interest in this section of the book is the linkage between interiorized monasticism and Martin Luther's concept of "the priesthood of all believers". Peters makes an effective defense that these concepts have overlapping parts and Luther's criticism of monasticism (remembering that Luther was an Augustinian monk himself) was of certain excesses that had crept into monasticism and not the idea of monasticism itself. The parallels between Luther's criticism of the excesses of the Roman Catholic church and monasticism are skillfully analyzed and the reader can become convinced that monasticism can be the foundation of Christian spirituality for Protestant and Catholics alike.

Peters next tackles the area of ascetic practices in monastic traditions. Again, using historical writers as proof texts, he makes a compelling case that excesses in this area were non-sanctioned anomalies and not part of daily practice. Sighting the Rule of Benedict as one example, monks are encouraged to practice moderation in comforts, but not to the point of bodily harm. In our modern society of excess, there is certainly something to be learned about the practice of saying no to the non-essentials of life.

Peters concludes his book by exploring the way that all Christians are monks when they live out their life according to Biblical principles. Likewise, he does not want to leave the reader with the impression that those that elect to practice monasticism in an institutional setting are wrong by concluding that all monks are Christians and we would all do well to learn the lessons of monasticism and apply them to our daily lives.

Rob

Volunteers keep the Mahseh Gardens Vibrant



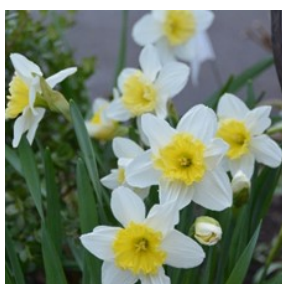
A year ago, some of our favorite retreaters asked if they could offer their help in the Mahseh gardens in the spring. Chris, Sue and Melissa from the west side of Indy, rounded up most of their children and one husband. They descended on Mahseh for Mulch Day at the end of April. In addition to mulching the Mahseh Gardens, they planted, transplanted, weeded and encouraged! What a huge boost that was for the spring gardens as well as for me personally as I would be out of commission for at least 6 weeks for surgery and recovery from Deep Brain Stimulation for Parkinson's. Chris and Sue returned for a catch-up day in midsummer.



Another source of help emerged from the Ladies of the Lake as I like to call my lady friends and neighbors here at Lake Bruce. Sister-in-law Debbie picked up the slack for most of the gardens outside of Mahseh and did some dead heading at Mahseh itself. Kathy was a steady weekly help, as was Wendy who just kept coming around to dead head the flowers practically until frost!



My long time friend from the Indy area, Kim, came especially to help me close up the gardens in October. I could not slow her down once she started – here she is even cleaning the pontoon!



If you helped and I failed to mention you, chalk it up to my brain surgery!

More than one visitor to Mahseh said the gardens were the prettiest they had ever been.

Couldn't have done it without you all!

Many, many thanks to all who helped.

Alison

If there is any way for you to come to Mahseh for a walk through the gardens to see the spring bulbs in bloom, you won't regret taking the time to do so. Relatively few folks get to see this spring display of daffodils, tulips, and Lenten roses which bloom generally through April and into May. Feel free to drop by or give us a call if you want an update on the blooms before you come. 812-878-3756.



Mahseh House Updates *by Ron*

As houses age they need attention. The Mahseh house is no exception. Late this past fall we had to replace the lower sash on a number of windows that face the Lake. Over the years these windows have deteriorated to the point where they needed to be replaced. Some of the windows had even gotten to the point where it was no longer safe to even open them, and I had to install a bracket to secure them shut. Now all windows are operational.

This past summer a new water heater was installed in the garage. This unit did not replace an existing unit but was added to help alleviate the problem of getting hot water in a timely manner to the Schaeffer bathroom and the main kitchen. Some minor plumbing changes had to be made to the house in order to separate the hot water in these areas from the rest of the house.

Rob and Debbie

Ron & Alison

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