



STORIES OF REDEMPTION

BY AVERY VOTH & ROGER VOTH

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Throughout 2024, the feature articles are devoted to hearing stories of God's redemption within our Rosedale Network churches. We pray these stories fuel your love for the Lord and lead you to greater service in His Church.

~Kelsey Jurkovich, Publication & Literature Committee

Life Isn't Busy—You Choose to Be

Avery Voth wrote the following piece for a class assignment at Rosedale Bible College. This poignant snapshot of her life leads us to view our actions from a child's perspective. May we enter into that perspective so that eternity comes into clearer focus.

This redemption story centers on the biblical imperative to "redeem the time for the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16 paraphrase). In the war with the enemy for the souls of our children, may God give us clarity to understand the importance of teaching them "when we come in and when we go out" (Deut. 6:7-8) and in "whatever [we] do whether in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17 NKJV). —Roger

another thing to get done. He's busy taking the trash out, but as for now, he's not too busy.

The passenger door is already open and the bed is already filled with trash, his busy life is on pause. Generally a fast walker, his stride has been slowed down.

his dominant hand, he carries two large bags of trash, but the trash isn't what slows him down today. Instead, it's what is in his other hand that has lowered his speed. He's holding just one thing. Or rather, just one thing holds him. In his hand is a little hand grasping onto all it can easily hold. Just one finger.

Life Isn't Busy—You Choose to Be

In my favorite photo, no faces are visible. Just two figures—one tall and one very small—walking directly away from the camera.

In the background, there is a world. A world in which our tall figure has many responsibilities. Most of which cannot be captured in pixels: bills to file, newsletters to send, guest rooms to clean, and events to organize. Life is busy, but as for now, he's not too busy.

Visible in the picture is a work in progress. Piles of stone lay waiting to be formed into a chimney. The job has already been started; it's been in progress for two months and it is still nowhere near done. It's going to keep him very busy, but as for now, he's not too busy.

Closer to the camera, a truck is parked. The white hue of this work truck is speckled by layers of mud. Only half of it is visible, but you can tell that it's full of trash to be disposed of. He has lots to do and the trash is just



In our small figure's other hand, she holds the littlest and lightest trash bag that could be found. Standing as tall as a grocery bag, the bag spans from her ear to her waist. And although the bag weighs less than a pound, she's carrying all she can handle.

Even without faces visible you can tell they're both happy.

If he cared about how busy he was, the taller figure easily could have transported his two bags and the smaller one in half the time, but he brought her along nonetheless. He brought his little girl to help gather the trash because even though he was busy, he wasn't too busy for her. 📷

—Avery



Avery is a current student at Rosedale Bible College who enjoyed the Akwachink program and the cross-cultural winter term trip to Turkey. Her dad, Roger Voth, enjoys working on projects as administrator of Bethel Mennonite Camp.



A Long Obedience

BY BILL EBERLY



This year, RBC is running a series of articles in the Beacon examining books that might be especially helpful to the life of the Church. We hope you will benefit from these book descriptions and suggestions.

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society by Eugene Peterson

"I want to be baptized..." This past Sunday, a young man arrived at church with this request.

He knew enough to know it was a marker he needed, so he showed up on a Sunday morning seeking the most tender, genuine experience of the Christian walk, as if it were something that could be done in a moment.

What I saw was a young man creating his own invitation to discipleship—an invite to a discussion, that leads to a lifestyle, and ultimately, to a heavenly dwelling after this life.

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction is a reminder, genuine and lovely, that belief in Jesus and following Him as His disciple is a lifelong journey and not a momentary decision. Instant gratification is not a part of the journey, but gratitude and growth certainly are.

...this book reminds us that to be formulaic without the presence of the Holy Spirit is to be running a fruitless race.

In this book, Eugene uses the Psalms of Ascents (120-134) as a way to remember "who we are, and where we're going"—a roadmap for discipleship if you will. It reminds us that discipleship is a process and not a simple formula. As Rosedale Network looks at ways to help churches *mature and multiply*, this book reminds us that to be formulaic without the presence of the Holy Spirit is to be running a fruitless race. I humbly ask for you to read that last sentence one more time.

The primary message we need to hear from this book is that while this journey of pilgrim-disciple is not easy or fast, it is a motivated and joy-filled journey. Many of the chapters cover different markers/experiences on the journey, and how one ought to face them.

As with many things that Peterson writes, to say I have absorbed it completely is to sound arrogant, but to say I was

blessed by it is an understatement. Few can articulate the journey of pastoral life as well as Peterson does. Pick up the book as you pray about and envision what it means to *mature and multiply* at your place of worship and leadership.

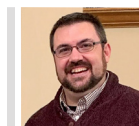
Peterson is a poet and storyteller. I haven't always gone for stories in books, but Peterson has been an exception to that rule for me. Sitting with his book is watching a craftsman work with well-worn tools—storytelling at its finest. And for holy reasons.

Admittedly, if you're looking for a step-by-step guide to help disciple someone, he isn't giving you that. But he is painting the broad strokes of what you'll face on your journey of discipling someone else. And he's interacting with the Psalms of Ascents with the regularity of those who may have made their own version or paraphrase of the biblical text. He isn't afraid to let the scriptures be the roadmap and the gold mine.

Our network and local congregations are working to achieve the goals God has set before us. This book should be on your shortlist, especially if you're the sort of person who needs art to dream. It won't give you step-by-step instructions, but it will get your creative juices flowing.

This book can help you learn how to start a conversation with someone who thinks of baptism as the most important faith step, and to encourage them not to stop there. Baptism is only the first step of a lifelong Jesus journey.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have a phone call to make to one such fella! 📞



Bill is Associate Pastor of Youth & Families at Pigeon River Mennonite Church in Michigan. Bill and his wife, Leslie, have been married for nearly 20 years, and enjoy life with their two daughters, Judy and Rebekah.



Transformational Love

BY MIKE

I met Bo in 2011, when my wife, Karen, and I first visited the village of Catel in Guinea Bissau. He was charismatic and beloved by many people. I noticed that his house was the nicest in the village—everyone else had thatched roofs and used flashlights for light, but Bo had a metal roof and a solar panel. He even had a motorcycle and a satellite! For a villager in a third-world country, Bo had it all. I learned that he had so much money because he was a witch doctor; like Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8, he charged the people for his services.

In 2013, my family moved to Catel and spent the next three years living next door to Bo. As I got to know him, I learned that he was a “level one” witch doctor. Before the village had a medical clinic, everyone came to Bo with their medical issues. He worked mainly with natural remedies, sold blessings and curses, and distributed bracelets and necklaces that he charmed to boost health and fertility.

Once a month—usually a weekend—a female demon possessed him. Bo would speak in a different voice, go by a different name, and was quick to become violent. When it was over, he did not remember a thing. Wicked things happened during these times. You see, Bo had made a pact with this demon; to have all his earthly wealth, he had sold his soul. As payment, this demon took over his body for a weekend. As time passed, this took a toll on Bo’s life and soul. When I talked to him, I saw a void, a deadness in his eyes—there was no light at all.

During the three years that my family lived in Catel, I watched the church transform the village. I was a part of miraculous healings, the casting out of demons, and the amazing transformation of lives. As time passed, the village’s need for Bo grew smaller. I do not fully understand payment in a demonic pact, but I do know that when a demon is not paid, the human host suffers. When the people of Catel stopped buying his services, Bo’s health began to decline. Fungus grew on his head, and his sight clouded.


My family returned to the States in 2016, but the church and ministry in Catel continued to grow. Soon, the church

had tripled in size, and new churches were planted. Two witch doctors from neighboring villages came to Christ and experienced freedom like they’d never known before.

I have been blessed to return to Catel almost every year since my family left. During each visit, I’ve spent time talking with Bo. On some of these trips, he has asked me to pray for him. Would Jesus love and forgive him, he wondered? Could he also find freedom?

In January of this year, I took a short trip to Catel. Sica, one of the church’s pastors, approached me with another man. It was Bo, now called Daniel! I will be honest: I did not even recognize him at first. His face was glowing, and his eyes were filled with light. Daniel told me that as he was literally on his deathbed; Sica and a transformed witch doctor pled with him to surrender his life to Christ. He did—and immediately began to recover and have his life restored. That Sunday in church, God’s transformational power overwhelmed me as I watched Daniel worship with such joy!

Daniel’s story is far from over, and he needs our prayers. When people who are tied to the demonic world come to Christ, they experience a fight for their souls. They face immense persecution, and many times experience bouts of demonic oppression. Yes, they are sealed by Christ—but that does not mean the enemy walks away.

Pray that Daniel can stand firm in this next season of his life. Pray that others in his family would come to know the transformational love of Christ. And I challenge you—look around your life, take notice of who is in bondage to sin and needs this transformational love, and take time to share it with them. 



Mike serves as Rosedale International’s Director of Partner Development. He attends London Christian Fellowship and is active in youth ministry. He, his wife Karen, and their five children previously served in West Africa.



What is Multiply Conference?

Rosedale Network’s annual Multiply Conference provides a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages, scattered across the U.S., to come together to celebrate our life together as a body of churches and to recommit ourselves to the mission God has given us to *mature and multiply churches locally and globally*.

The theme of Multiply 2024 is *Follow Jesus*. Together, we will experience a clear call to keep Jesus and His kingdom front and center as we live in a divided culture that pushes us to align with one worldly system or another. This seems particularly pertinent in an election year when so much attention is put on the earthly kingdom in which we live, and in our social media-saturated culture where it’s all about who you “like” and “follow.”

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us August 2-4 in Greenwood, Delaware! **Registration opens May 1.**

For more information and to register, visit our website at www.rosedalenetwork.org.





SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Doors Open 3:00 pm

Supper 5:00 pm

FRIDAY EVENING 6:30–8:00 pm

Worship – Morgan Coblentz and RBC Team

Moderator’s Address – Preston Yoder

Sermon on the Mount – Piercing Word

Offering for Rosedale Bible College

Reception 8:00 pm – Hosted by RBC, RI, & RNOC

Youth Social 9:00–11:00 pm

Greenwood Mennonite Church

SATURDAY MORNING 9:00 –10:30 am

Call to Worship and Hymn Sing – Doug Root

Introduction of New Congregations – Preston Yoder

Two Kingdoms – Jay Mast

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Breakout Sessions 11:00 am–5:00 pm

- **Jesus and Generosity** – Mark Yoder
- **Jesus and Secret Societies** – Frank Pennell
- **Jesus and Sexuality** – Dion Gingerich
- **Two Kingdoms**
Conversation for Young Adults – Jay Mast
- **Rosedale International Field Workers** – Colleen Maust
- **Jesus and Deliverance** – Tap & Marion Ware
- **Jesus and Politics** – Joshua Good
- **Reaching Gen Z and Alpha for Jesus** – Chris Schaefer
- **Jesus and Justice** – Phil Mast
- **Scripture Memorization** – Piercing Word
- **Jesus and Loving Your Enemies** – Zack Johnson
- **Jesus and Peacemaking** – Preston & Liz Yoder

SATURDAY EVENING 6:30–8:00 pm

Worship – Morgan Coblentz and RBC Team

Introduction of Church Plants

Offering for Rosedale Network of Churches

Jonah – Piercing Word

Joining the Mission of Jesus – Kyle Landis

Reception 8:00 pm – Tent

Hosted by local Rosedale Network congregations

Youth Social 9:00–11:00 pm

Greenwood Mennonite Church

SUNDAY MORNING 9:30–11:30 am

Worship – Morgan Coblentz and RBC Team

Mission Feature – Rosedale International

Offering for Rosedale International

Children’s Choir

Introduction of International Affiliates – Ben Shirik

Jesus to the World, the World to Jesus – Kyle Landis

YOUTH SESSIONS – Gateway Fellowship

Saturday 9:15 am

Topic: TBA

Guest Speaker– Zach Johnson

RI Promo – Discover REACH 02

Lunch 12 pm – RBC Pizza Party and Promo

Breakout Sessions – 1:30 pm Woodbridge High School

YOUTH SOCIALS 9:00–11:00 pm

Friday Night – Greenwood Mennonite Church

- Games and snacks
- Volleyball
- Cornhole
- Manhunt

Saturday Night – Beach Party

- Glow-in-the-dark activities
- Bonfire

Transportation to all off-site activities will be provided.

NURSERY–PRE-K

Available Friday & Saturday evenings 6:30–8:00 pm

CHILDREN’S CLASSES Infant – 8th grade

Theme: *Follow Jesus! Hear His Voice and Join the Flock*

Saturday 9:00 am–noon & 1:00–5:00 pm

Sunday 9:30–11:30 am (Nursery–5th grade only)

Registration & Check-In Location:

Woodbridge High School Lobby

Note: *Classes are determined by grade completed*

Register your children at www.rosedalenetwork.org.



Complimentary **Multiply 2024** t-shirts available for all registered children ages K-8th!