

New Normal: Church Renewal in Pandemic

Happy Mother's Day: Caring for the Vulnerable

2020-05-10 by Ben Deaver at Tallgrass Church on Psalm 139:13-14

10:00—Welcome & Holy Water (spotlight Emily Strom)

10:05—Welcome, kids/Sprouts!

- Miss Elisha's here but we wanted to give her a Mother's Day gift and let her just hang with her kids this morning.
- I'm excited to talk to the kids today. Miss Lizy Johnson told me that Theo loves hearing me talk, which is awesome! That little Theo is a solid kid. He's really on to something.
- **4th-6th Graders**—I wanted to share a couple cool things from a Saturday morning Tallgrass Sprouts class that's been happening for 4th-6th graders. They may be growing beyond being Sprouts pretty quick here.
 - Alexis' video based on John 2:1-11
 - Kate's painting based on John 6:16-21
- **Baby Celebration of Doris Elena** (3 min)—We are so excited about celebrating new life in our church, whether that's spiritual or physical life. This morning we get to celebration Doris Elena Millard, who was born on March 2 this year, the same exact day that Maddox turned seven.
 - Josh and Pyungwha have been friends of ours for years now. They live in Dallas, TX now but have always been a part of the Tallgrass family. We've had a sort of family reunion with them during this COVID-19 era since they've been with us every Sunday morning.
 - Let's have Nate and Jermaine Dillon pray over Doris and her family!
- **Mothers of the Bible** video (3.5 min)
- **Sprouts Mother's Day** video (3.5 min)
- I made a video with Kate and Maddox for you all that your parents can get setup right now during Mingle Time!
- Sprouts Mother's Day video—<https://youtu.be/1ajHB4YONik>

10:20—Mingle Question: What's your favorite kind of fruit?

10:25—New Normal: Personal Renewal in Pandemic

- God has invited us into something new and profound through this unique season: personal renewal! This current season of disruption has been that divine invitation.
- We've tried to slow way down together, focusing specifically on rediscovering and reclaiming personal habits and practices that have proven from generation to generation to lead us each into personal renewal, growth, and vital connection with God Himself.

Maris' wellness check!

Now we're curious about what's next? What will OUR new normal as a church be?

Keep Zoomin', at least until June 7!

- As a church, we still have at least three more Sundays where we'll be gathering like this on Zoom.
- I had several meetings and good conversations this week about how other organizations and churches from across the country and here locally are beginning to phase into in person meetings.
 - Pastors Prayer, MMA, PastorServe Pastor's Cohort
 - KLC coach, Samuel Preylo, Justin Kastner, Edie Doane, Andy Thompson,
- Dave Geldart and I talked earlier this week and committed to make the most of Zoom at least until June 7th.
- We're meeting with the SLT, Servant Leadership Team, on Tuesday to really discuss opportunities for us moving forward together into the summer. You may wonder, "What's the Servant Leadership Team?" That's our Elders and spouses, LIFE Group leaders (which includes our Elders and spouse), and all Staff Team.
- Always feel free to give feedback to me, Dave, and our Elder Team. We plan to come up with a more formal way to get feedback through this time.
- In the meantime, keep battling to engage with one another as best you can, stay relationally close while maintaining physical distance.
- If things are going very well for you, consider giving a portion of your stimulus money to Tallgrass Church or some other great organization.
- If you are struggling, we have funds available in our Neighboring Fund and other resources to point you to.

Jeremiah 17:7-8 ⁷"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. ⁸He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

Have Maris PRAY!!!

Who's the most vulnerable right now?

- Any guesses as to who among us is the most vulnerable during this COVID-19 era?
- The older population? Those with underlying conditions?
- No, it's the unborn.
- The unborn have always been a vulnerable group. Infant mortality rates have typically been high until modern medicine.
- Now, however, the unborn are vulnerable for a different reason, the possibility of being an unwanted pregnancy.
- 87% of statistics are wrong! That's one of the frustrations with the COVID-19, is you can't get clear statistics, and even if you had them, we can get unity on how to interpret them. That's kind of how it is with any controversial topic in our society.
- From Wikipedia—Abortion statistics in the United States vary by source because reporting is not mandatory. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Guttmacher Institute regularly report these statistics using different methodologies.
 - 623,471 U.S. abortions in 2016
 - In the 80s and 90s it was much higher, so maybe steps can be taken to help mitigate the death rate of the unborn in our country, just like steps are being taken to mitigate deaths from other tragedies, like COVID-19 or the flu or drunk driving or texting while drive, etc.
- Worldwide—<https://www.worldometers.info/abortions/>
 - 40-50 million abortion deaths annually.
 - 125,000 per day
- Just envision stacking up the reports of COVID-19 deaths per state, per country, worldwide and comparing it to abortion deaths per state, per country, worldwide. That would be a sobering visual to look at...even without being able to gather precise statistics.

- Quote from a friend who works at a pregnancy resource center on April 1, 2020—“We are still going to do emergency appointments for those considering abortion. Sadly, the past 3 weeks or so, we have seen an increase in those who have chosen that option. We want to be as available as possible.”
- The unborn have always been a vulnerable group. Infant mortality rates have typically been high until modern medicine. Now the unborn are vulnerable for a different reason, the possibility of being an unwanted pregnancy.
- How does it feel to be unwanted?
- God has been building a fire in my belly on this issue of the unwantedness of so many in our society, and not just in our society. God wants EVERY HUMAN BEING who ever was even a blip on the radar in His eternal family. And God wants EVERY HUMAN BEING to feel wanted by Him and by other humans who also feel the wantedness of the Father.
- You are wanted! You are desired. You are seen. You are valued. You are cherished. You are treasured. You are carefully crafted. You are loved!
- My own journey: infertility and Micah’s miscarriage
- Washington Times article—WATCH the pro-life Super Bowl ad that FOX won't air #FacesofChoice
 - <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jan/30/watch-pro-life-super-bowl-ad-fox-wont-air/>
- *Unplanned* movie
- Back to Jeremiah.

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- More fruit! **BEAR FRUIT!!!**
- The goal of the tree isn’t just to be a beautiful and healthy tree but to...bear fruit!
- **Genesis 1:11-13** ¹¹And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.
- **Genesis 1:26a, 27-28a** ²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”
- ²⁷So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.
- ²⁸And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth...”
- Bible study ideas—Tree, Fruit, Seed, Genesis 1-3 themes, Isaiah, etc.
- Humans as trees
 - Branchogram—Lungs are like trees but in the reverse, lungs take in oxygen and put out carbon dioxide while trees take in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen.
 - Reforesting Faith
 - Infertile (in Hebrew) = uprooted/unrooted
 - The potential for life in a single seed
 - A tree has eternal life, in a sense, because it carries generations within it—MULTIPLICATION!!!
- Therefore, an attack on the 1) God’s design for fruit-bearing and 2) the actual fruit...is a work of Satan!
- **Genesis 9:1, 7** And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth... And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”
 - Fruit of the womb
 - The church has gotten slippery on these points and therefore need renewal.

- **Psalm 139:13-14** ¹³For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.
- You are wanted! You are desired. You are seen. You are valued. You are cherished. You are treasured. You are carefully crafted. You are loved!
- The power of the ultrasound—When you begin to see with your own eyes, that which King David once wrote about over 3000 years ago, your skepticism and cynicism and fear come into great question!

10:45—Barb Sanderson, Life Choice Ministries

- Every month we're choosing a different organization to give \$500 out of our Neighboring Fund. For May we're supporting Life Choice Ministries.
- *The Chopping Block #7: At Life Choice Ministries* with Barb—<https://youtu.be/hWcrLGS8Uno>
- FundEasy.com—Search for *Deaver*
- Virtual Walk for Life on May 30th.
- Life Choice Ministries Goal = \$30,000—51% there
- My goal = \$1000—50% there
- The power of fathers in our family systems
- We labor for the vulnerable.
- Church renewal for us involves a dogged commitment to life, to human flourishing, to battling for the vulnerable.
- The Quartet of the Vulnerable—The widow, the orphan, the immigrant, and the poor!

PRAY!!!

10:57—All the Poor & Powerless (play video from computer)

11:00—Benediction (spotlight Dave Geldart)

Reflection Questions:

1. How does our rootedness by the stream impact the most vulnerable in our community?
2. What vulnerable population is God putting on your heart?
3. Where is a fire building in your belly for the things on God's heart?
4. How can you stoke that fire?

The Chopping Block:

Top Songs About Abortion: Pro-Life Edition

1. Happy Birthday by Flipsyde—A song in which a man apologizes to the child he might have had if not for an abortion.
2. Retrospect for Life by Common (featuring Lauryn Hill)—A song about how Common and his girlfriend found themselves facing an unplanned pregnancy and opted against abortion.
3. In America by Creed
4. See No Evil by Holy Soldier—A song which features the dialog of an aborted fetus.
5. The Beat of Black Wings by Joni Mitchell—A song about a shell-shocked Vietnam War veteran who finds out his girlfriend had an abortion without telling him.
6. Execution by Grammatrain—A Christian rock song about the band's opposition to abortion.
7. Abortion Is a Crime by Alpha Blondy—A reggae song about how all humans have a right to life.
8. In the Line of Fire by Dogwood—A song from the Christian punk band that provides a narrative from the fetus's point of view.
9. Unborn Child by Seals and Crofts—A song that asks women considering abortion to rethink their decision.
10. The Unseen by Geto Boys—WARNING: An explicit rap song about how the group believes abortion needs to be stopped.
11. A Baby's Prayer by Kathy Troccoli—A song in which a child in heaven asks God to forgive his or her mother for having an abortion.
12. Burden In Your Hands by UnderOath—Underoath elaborates on their pro-life position on abortion.
13. Hellbound by The Breeders—A song about a fetus who survives an abortion.
14. Little Ones by Phil Keaggy—A song in which the singer pleads for people to stand up for the rights of the unborn.
15. Abortion by Doug E. Fresh & the Get Fresh Crew—A pro-life old school rap song that describes abortion as a "distortion" and states the "world's morals are out of proportion."
16. Silent Scream by The Crucified—A pro-life song that asks "Does only God and my heart hear the baby's silent scream?"
17. Abortion Is Murder by P.O.D.—A song that appears as a hidden track on the album Snuff the Punk.
18. To Zion by Lauryn Hill—A song about how Hill chose to give birth to her son Zion despite being advised to have an abortion on account of her music career.
19. Mazohyst of Decadence by Dir En Grey—A song written to be an account of abortion told from the perspective of the fetus.
20. Children Can Live Without It by DC Talk
21. Silent Scream by Slayer—This song is about abortion. The first chorus says, "Silent scream, burying an unwanted child, beaten and torn, sacrifice the unborn."

fruit of the womb

Genesis 30:2

Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in **the** place **of** God, who has withheld from you **the fruit of the womb**?"

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

Deuteronomy 7:13

He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will also bless **the fruit of your womb** and **the fruit of your** ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, **the** increase **of** your herds and **the** young **of** your flock, in **the** land that he swore to your fathers to give you.

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Deuteronomy 28:4

Blessed shall be **the fruit of your womb** and **the fruit of your** ground and **the fruit of your** cattle, **the** increase **of** your herds and **the** young **of** your flock.

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Deuteronomy 28:11

And **the** LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in **the fruit of your womb** and in **the fruit of your** livestock and in **the fruit of your** ground, within **the** land that **the** LORD swore to your fathers to give you.

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Deuteronomy 28:18

Cursed shall be **the fruit of your womb** and **the fruit of your** ground, **the** increase **of** your herds and **the** young **of** your flock.

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Deuteronomy 28:53

And you shall eat **the fruit of your womb**, **the** flesh **of** your sons and daughters, whom **the** LORD your God has given you, in **the** siege and in **the** distress with which your enemies shall distress you.

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Deuteronomy 30:9

The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all **the** work **of** your hand, in **the fruit of your womb** and in **the fruit of your** cattle and in **the fruit of your** ground. For **the** LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers,

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Psalms 127:3

Behold, children are a heritage from **the** LORD, **the fruit of the womb** a reward.

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Isaiah 13:18

Their bows will slaughter **the** young men; **they** will have no mercy on **the fruit of the womb**; **their** eyes will not pity children.

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Lamentations 2:20

Look, O LORD, and see! With whom have you dealt thus? Should women eat **the fruit of their womb**, **the** children **of their** tender care? Should priest and prophet be killed in **the** sanctuary **of the** Lord?

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Luke 1:42

and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is **the fruit of your womb**!"

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