

August 2018

→ **MINISTRY UPDATE** ←

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UPDATE

Everything is moving steadily along. Never fast enough for me, but it's God's timing that matters. We have the mobile homes in the front half of the park skirted and have started on the back half. We'll need another \$20,000 to skirt everything here and on Shields. But hey, money is just a tool God provides.

HUM I (Men's property), is being surveyed for the builder. Pray we can get the chapel done before winter. We've done everything we can do to prepare for it. Looking forward to having a warm dry place to worship in. Tent meetings are good, but ten years of hot summers and cold winters get old. That reminds me. I'm getting old also.

Since the last newsletter, we lost one of our maintenance men to a heart attack at 41 years old. I also lost a friend and former board member, Ted Ketterling, to cancer. Life comes and life goes, and only what is done for Christ makes much difference. We grumble, complain, and work to achieve things. Then we look back and wish we had kept our mouth shut and did more for Him.

As we start our 23rd year at Hand Up, it is hard to imagine it's been that long. Many, many faces have come and gone, and a lot of lives were changed for the better. A few got back on drugs and were put out. But the word of God was planted in them all. **EXAMPLE:** One man named Harold, I put out around 2002. I caught

him drinking, had a heart to heart talk and made him leave. He has called me often ever since to this day. Five years ago (2013), he finally got sober, got married, and attends Faith Assembly in OKC. It took God some time, but He changed him. God doesn't count the days. He pursues us as long as needed. And what we plant for God today may not harvest for a while. We're just required to plant. God is the one who brings the increase.

Pray for us as we labor in love for God's kingdom. And keep planting seeds in love, love yourself and don't grow weary in well doing. — *David Nichols*

TESTIMONY

When I was twenty-three I tried to settle down by getting married and having children, but I was still out of control with drugs and alcohol. I eventually committed the crime for which I went to prison. I came to my senses in prison, and I saw my need for Jesus. I spent the next eight years developing my walk with the Lord. God is still changing my life dramatically, and I have no desire for the things of the past.

I heard about Hand Up Ministries when I was in prison, and I knew Hand Up was where I needed to be. Hand Up greeted me with open arms when the arms of everyone else were closed. Hand Up has provided the stability and structure I need to be a responsible Christian. Hand Up has rules, but they are good rules which have helped me to stand on my own two feet. I am grateful to God for Hand Up, and I look forward to seeing the blessings God has planned for me. — *Chris Edwards*

MUSIC AS WORSHIP

When Christians get together to worship there's always music. There's choruses, songs, musical interludes, free-worship – psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph 5:19). In fact, musical worship is so ubiquitous and feels so "right" that we need to keep reminding ourselves that worship is more than the congregational singing we do in a church service. So, what is it about music that makes it so right for worship? This is a fascinating question.

Music, like language, is one of the few universal human cultural activities. Its use transcends religion, economics, social organization and ethnicity. It is found in the most primitive isolated jungle tribes and the most advanced, wealthiest and congested cities. It's woven into the everyday fabric of life of every human culture throughout history. Music is popular, but also powerful. Our most important personal, communal or national events nearly always employ the power of music – weddings, parties, celebrations and funerals. It is used in entertainment, sport, war ... and in worship. Why?

Music is Emotional: Music aesthetics studies and explores what makes music "work" and what makes for "good" music. It suggests that music is powerful because it is emotional. This doesn't mean that music is about emotions, but that it expresses and engages the emotional life. Psychology and neuroscience would agree, with studies showing both creating and listening to music engage the emotional centers of the brain.

Music is Physical: The rhythm of music resonates with the body in spontaneous foot-tapping, finger drumming, clapping and dancing. This reveals a subtle but im-

portant link. Music is an auditory experience that the mind seeks to echo and express physically. And it's not just the rhythm. How many times have we found ourselves conducting an imaginary orchestra or playing the air guitar as we're captivated by a melody.

Music is Cultural: We probably all have those songs that when we hear them we are automatically "transported" to a particular time and place, complete with the feelings and circumstances of the moment. Music has this incredible ability to evoke and express times of great and vivid personal meaning. Music becomes enmeshed in an event or entwined around a cause, weaving together our thoughts, emotions and senses into a sharp, resonant and memorable moment. Our cultures are full of such music-charged commemorations. The "Taps" played on a bugle on Memorial Day, for me, is one such moment.

Music is Social: As powerful and as meaningful as all these things are to me individually, they are magnified when shared and experienced with others. Shared melodies, lyrics and rhythms have the power to unify a crowd around a deeply felt cultural moment. Think of the national anthem or football songs that fill a stadium.

Music and Worship: All this all gives us a clue to the connection between music and worship. As believers, we love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. And music uniquely has the power to engage the entirety of who I am in that moment of expressing my devotion to God. When I sing in worship I am engaged emotionally, physically and intellectually. It's like "all of me" is caught up in this act of love. It's music that makes this happen. .

But more than that, it's not just me who is having this experience. The person next to me is too. And our experiences are in unison. The same words, the same rhythm, the same melody. The same emotions, the same holistic engagement, the same rich cultural memory. We are here together, in one voice, around one cause, focusing all of who we are in an outpouring of deep devotion to the One who has saved us so thoroughly. Times of corporate worship are one of those moments when "we" can truly become "one."

And it's music that makes that happen.
—Jeff Wendel