

Memories & The Bride's New House

February 17, 2002

Peter Hiett (et al.)

[Aram] I'd like to read to you a Scripture that Paul wrote in I Corinthians 3. "*We are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.*" Do you want to know what God's building is? Take a look around, to the person on your left and your right. We are His temple.

Paul goes on to say this: "*According to the grace of God which was given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*"

Back in 1983 a group of folks desiring to worship Jesus and proclaim His Gospel on this mountain and beyond laid a foundation upon the cornerstone of their faith in Jesus Christ, who is the cornerstone of this church.

Now over the years others have come along. We've built upon and added upon this foundation. Jesus has built His Church here, and lives have been transformed.

For those of you who were part of that early foundational work, take a look around. Look what your faith and commitment have yielded!—an expanding testimony of the grace and power of Jesus Christ, not only on this mountain but also down the hill and in the city, in the Dominican Republic and Mozambique . . . places beyond.

This weekend is the last corporate worship we'll have in this facility. We thought a great way to celebrate what God has done here would be to give you a little snapshot of a couple of lives that were changed—transformed—as a result of being here in this place.

As we were thinking about this, there were two people who immediately came to my mind when I remembered their stories of lives changed: a gal named Martha; a guy named Stewart.

First Stuart will share with us a little bit of his story.

[Stuart] The *real* reason I have been asked to speak today is so that I can answer the question that's been on everyone's mind — are Aram and I related?

Looking back at all of the twists and turns my life has taken, I can now see how God was subtly guiding me so that I would eventually meet Him here, in this church. My vision was not always so clear.

I was raised in a non-religious Jewish family. Through most of my life I was not just indifferent to religion, but downright hostile. I was a pretty screwed-up kid, and by the time I started college in the late 60's it was the era of "sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll," and I jumped right in. For me, the parable of the Prodigal Son is not a metaphor.

But after a while I grew tired of that lifestyle. At the time, I just thought it was some inner voice telling me it was time to grow up. The Holy Spirit was at work — I just didn't know it yet.

I eventually came to live here in Colorado, met Nancy, and married. During that time, I still had no use for religion.

Then came children. Even though neither Nancy nor I had given much thought to religion throughout our adult lives, something was stirring in us. We both started to think that our children would be better off with some kind—*any* kind—of religious background.

We joined an interfaith support group with other couples searching for a religious home. But I felt as uncomfortable as Nancy did in the synagogues we visited; and Nancy felt as uncomfortable as I did in the churches we visited. So we ended up sliding back into a life that had no place for religion.

Several years later our children began taking piano lessons from Katie Pridinoff, a member of this church, who occasionally held her class recitals here in this sanctuary. Then one day when he was about seven years old, totally out of the blue, my son Sam asked if we could go to church.

Although we were surprised, this was a request we could hardly refuse, so we decided to come here to Lookout Mountain, since we had been so impressed with the view from the sanctuary.

At the first service we attended, the sermon was given by Aram. I am convinced that this was an important detail in God's plan — one of Peter's sermons would probably have been way too intense for my first time, and might have even scared me away. Anyway, this was the first place of worship where both Nancy and I felt completely at home, and we came back the next week, then the week after that, and here we still are now.

Did that mean that I suddenly decided I was a Christian? Not really — even then I was still resisting.

As many of you know, I am a research scientist. That means I spend a lot of my time observing and trying to understand how the world and the universe work.

Even before coming here, as I matured as a scientist, I was coming to the point where I could no longer accept the idea that all of the intricacy, complexity, and beauty that is all around us, at all scales, could be the result of random chance. I started to believe in a creator.

Did *that* mean I was becoming a Christian? Well, it was certainly a big step forward on my spiritual path, but the God I was starting to believe in was more of a “watchmaker” God, who created the universe, gave it its natural laws, and then stepped away and let it run. I still could not conceive of a loving God who cared about any particular individual. Looking back, I am struck by the illogic of the idea of a Creator who doesn't care about His creation.

When we started attending this church I greatly benefited from the differing preaching styles of the pastoral staff: Aram, whose sermons are so honest and down to earth; Al Andrews, who

many of you remember, whose face would literally shine with the joy of preaching the gospel; and Peter.

From Peter I started to understand Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and just how much God loves us. But even that understanding was not quite enough.

Then one Sunday during Worship, as we were singing the song "Mercy is Falling," I suddenly felt empty and alone — and my heart broke. I knew I was a sinner and I desperately needed the love and mercy we were singing about. I also knew that grace was freely given, falling like "the sweet spring rain," and all I had to do was accept it. I asked Jesus into my heart and at that moment I felt His presence, and it was more real, and more powerful, than anything I had ever experienced before.

I have to admit that this story is a little embarrassing because I had always thought of "Mercy is Falling" as kind of a silly little song — catchy tune, but not very profound lyrics. I guess the idea of God's mercy and grace always surrounding us is more profound than I had realized.

Anyway, that is how I began my journey as what Gary Reddish refers to as a "baby Christian." I hope that over the years I have matured in my faith. I have to confess that I still have a rebellious heart, and my spiritual journey is still not always easy. But sometimes, when God seems so distant, the one thing that keeps me going is the memory of that morning when I could feel His presence so clearly, so intimately.

[*Aram*] Some of you might remember Martha as "Martha Harris," but she met this guy named Kyle Vaught, and now it is Martha Vaught. Martha is going to share with us now.

[*Martha*] I have a question for you:

How many of you are going to miss this building?
How many of you collect rocks at special places?
How many of you are going to miss the view?

I remember the first time I came to this church, about seven years ago. I didn't even want to *come* to church, because God and I have had this love-hate relationship since I was seven. We were definitely in the *hate* part of the relationship, and the only reason I came to church was because it was what I was "supposed to do." (I was a former missionary.) I sat down and thought to myself, "This is an ugly place."

I thought this was an old office building that was acquired by the church. I didn't know until about two years ago it was *designed* like this, but I'm from the south, and this just didn't look like a church.

You sit in chairs . . . the windows look weird (why these huge, weird windows?) . . . I thought there was a section of the window that was missing . . . and the weirdest thing was this outlet way up on the wall (what *is* that?). A weird church.

It got worse, because the music was *too loud*. Then Peter came up, and the preacher was *too weird*.

But what you need to know coming with that is that I was also suicidal.

I found out the 8:30 a.m. service was quieter, so I started coming to the 8:30 service. I was not in a very good place. I was counting down a certain number of months to my date with death. I was getting ready to check out.

I was always the “single woman” . . . (I will say one good thing about this church: the occasional, amorous, ungulate activity outside the window. When you’re single as long as I was single, it was a blessing!)

I was totally depressed. You wouldn’t know it now maybe, but be aware that you really never know who you’re sitting next to. You never know what they’re dealing with.

I almost got in a fight with an usher because I would try to pray, pray, pray during the offertory, and he would always bump my arm with the offering plate. I was unemployed, and I swore the next time he did it I would reach in and take money *from* the offering plate. “Thank you, Jesus! You’re finally answering a prayer!” I was in a bad, bad place.

In those days I spent most of my life looking *down*. I really couldn’t figure out the windows, but at some point we stood, and I looked *up* and thought, “Oh, my God! *That’s* why they have these windows!”

Over the years I’ve thought that it’s really not so much the *building* as it is the *view*. It’s almost like this building borrows beauty. It grabs it and it brings it in. But the windows are there for us to see it.

So when I think of this church, I also think of the view.

During the past seven years God has been so kind to me and has brought about incredible healing. I do remember thinking how I was kind of like these windows. I had all these windows in my soul, yet all I wanted to do was die. There is something *wrong* with that. I thought, “When is this beauty going to come in?”

During the past seven years God has taken the outward beauty and brought it into me. It makes *me* beautiful; it’s why this *church* is beautiful. After a while I decided I would always sit up front, because you people got in the way! I’m 5’ 3 1/2”, and if I’m sitting too far back you people are always in the way. I always sat up front so I could have “my view.” And I loved it.

But I've noticed something in the last year and a half: I don't care where I sit any more. It's okay if I don't see the view, because you really have become the most beautiful thing for me. He allows us to *borrow* beauty, and when you have it in you, *you* are the beautiful ones.

I went over to the new church; it doesn't have this view. I was staring through the windows and looking through the doors . . . they had all these chairs lined up . . . it was really hot (I think the sun was hitting the doors) . . . I could actually smell the paint on the inside . . . it has that "new church smell" to it.

I was looking at those chairs, and I started crying. I said, "This is *all wrong*. There needs to be *people* in these chairs" — because you really are the most beautiful thing.

I want to share a beautiful verse. It says, "As for the saints who dwell in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all your delight."

I just want to let you know that you are the "saints" and you are the "glorious ones" in whom is all God's delight. He is in *love* with you. And if you ever need to borrow a view, if you're in a dark place, my heart is with you. Come and talk to me. I'm Martha Vaught.

God had one last surprise for me, an old, single woman getting ready to end her life. On December 4, 1999, I became a bride . . . right here. I became a *bride*.

Lots of surprises. Don't forget to look out your windows.

[*Aram*] "Lord, these two folks, Martha and Stuart, represent just a slice of the stories that have been in this room. Lord, we give you thanks for your grace and your power and your goodness that has been on display at this place. We thank you and worship you."

[*Peter*] "Father, I thank you for the people in this room and for their stories. I thank you for the people who are sitting here now thinking, 'Nobody knows my story,' because, Jesus, *you* know their story and you're calling to them, 'Give yourself to me. Surrender yourself to me. My mercy isn't only for Stuart and Martha. It's for *you*. Just give yourself to me and trust me to save you. Invite me into your heart, and I will come.'

"Lord Jesus, I thank you especially right now for the guys who spent a lot of time in difficult meetings, late at night, talking about plumbing and electricity and carpet and budgets. Father, we live in a cold climate, and without those guys there wouldn't be these *other* stories. So I want to thank you for them and for all the work they've put into this church.

"Lord, I thank you for your great body. Lord, everything that's good comes from you, 'from the father of lights in whom there is no shadow or variation due to change.' So Father, *thank you*. In Jesus' name, amen."

[Peter] We spent some time sharing some memories, but God is eternal. That means He doesn't only have memories of the *past*; He has memories of the *future*. This last week at the Living Stone Service, Marcia Hinds shared this wonderful vision she's been having. I asked her if she would share it with us tonight. I've really grown to love and trust Marcia, and sometimes my wife even sees the same things she does.

It's a wonderful vision of God's love for us, so I'm going to have Marcia come up and share what she's been seeing, and Mike's going to come up and help her.

[Marcia] Before I begin with the vision I would like to take a moment, and I know that everyone in this room will want to join in, and I would like to not only thank the pastors and how they have led us, but I would like to thank Susan Hiatt, who very rarely gets recognized for the woman she is. Thank you, Susan.

When I arrived this evening, I didn't hold this lily. Someone here brought it to me, and I'm going to use it now as part of the vision, and you will understand. I want to take a moment and put it at the foot of the cross.

[Marcia, with Mike Klassen playing violin] During the last several months the Lord has been revealing to me several visions and words for Lookout Mountain Community Church. They all seem to have the same theme. As an artist I will attempt to paint this vision for you through words. Mike has agreed to join me, creating the music from the Spirit within his heart.

The vision opens with a close-up view of a single, translucent, silk-like thread. The thread begins to move, weaving itself into what appears to be a beautiful piece of lace. The Weaver is seen knitting together the lives of Lookout Mountain's community, through our hopes and dreams . . . our pains and joys . . . and our loves.

Often when God reveals something close up, he then encourages us to step away, to observe from a different perspective, not so much from a bird's eye view but from a heavenly view. As I step back in the vision, I become aware of the presence of Someone else. It is His Bride, the Bride of Christ. She appears larger than life, dressed in translucent lace, carrying a simple bouquet of one Lily; the Lily represents her Beloved's sacrifice. The veil itself isn't attached to her head; instead, it floats over the Bride, as if sheltering her.

At this point in the vision God gathers us together. We depart through the front door, not as individuals, but as one Bride. In unison we begin the walk from the current facility to our new home. Listen carefully, for as we travel the road the Bride begins to dance to the heavenly sounds of a violin suspended high above. The music leads the way with the echoes of the New Song of the Bride.

Suddenly, there is a change in the tempo; the dancing stops. It seems that in the midst of crossing over the freeway, the Bride pauses. Standing silently she gazes upon the people passing underneath the bridge. She then fixes her eyes upon the bouquet of one Lily, the One Sacrifice. The Bride willingly tosses her bouquet, suspended over the freeway. Slowly the Bride continues her journey, once more dancing to the New Song of the Bride.

We then notice the angels gathering about in order to witness the Bride's arrival. The Bride approaches the new building. She sees her Bridegroom *as* the Door: arms wide open, welcoming His Bride of one accord. As the Bride crosses the threshold, the laced veil moves into its new position, hovering over the building. As she enters the sanctuary, the Bride once again becomes God's uniquely created persons. However, there is hesitation in her heart. The air seems to stand still.

Together, we ask our Beloved, "But . . . where is the Spirit?" Knowing our hearts, He gently responds, "You bring the Spirit with you. Lookout Mountain community, you walk the road destined for my Bride. The Spirit is alive within you."

Once inside the sanctuary there is great delight at the sight of an enormous, wall-to-wall garden, bursting with a variety of lilies. Radiance fills the room. The scent is sweet. Song of Solomon inquires, "*Where has your Beloved gone?*" . . . "*My Beloved has gone down to his Garden . . . to gather lilies. I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine; he browses among the lilies.*"

The Garden of Lilies symbolizes the unique harvest chosen for Lookout Mountain Community Church. The lilies are in full bloom, yet to be gathered. Song of Solomon cries out, "*Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow on my garden that its fragrance may spread abroad.*"

The Lord's charge to Lookout Mountain Community Church is to be known for the oneness of His Heart, to serve in love and kindness, bringing hope and encouragement to the lost. He empowers us, as His Bride, to reach out to those in far-away lands, in the inner-cities, as well as those close by. We are created to be His Testimony, created to gather lilies.

The Lord closes the vision by saying, "What I want Lookout Mountain Community Church to know and to remember is that you have my Spirit power within you. Whatever I did while I walked this Earth, you will also do."

[Peter] Song of Solomon 2:

My beloved speaks and says to me:
"Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away . . .
O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the covert of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice,
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is comely. . . .
My beloved is mine and I am his,
he pastures his flock among the lilies."

On one particular afternoon, some time in May of 1983, I sat in my parents' living room. Across from me in the yellow and white wingback chair sat my fiancé, Susan Coleman. My father was finishing up our premarital counseling. I remember Susan looking at me and saying, "Well, we'll at least have a *house*, won't we?" I said, "I don't know. We might live in a tent." (I didn't think we *would*, but I wasn't joking. I thought I might be a pastor or a missionary, and I knew I just couldn't make promises about such things.)

Susan had tears in her eyes. She said, "I at least want to have a *house*." I wondered, Is she still gonna marry me? Come with me?

It's not that I was all spiritual; I just had different heroes: kind of a combination of Davy Crocket, Billy Graham, and James Bond. Susan's hero was less Crocket and more Crocker—Betty Crocker. All she wanted was a house, some kids, and matching dinner plates.

Well, during our first year of marriage we rented a nice, little condo. We had matching dinner plates, and I worked as a plumber's helper. I never worked nights, and every week I had two days off. (I think they call that a "weekend.") Every night Betty Crocker practiced her skills, and I gained thirty pounds that year. Life was predictable, comfortable, and safe.

Then I got accepted to Fuller Seminary and took a job as Assistant High School Director at Bel Air Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, California.

My sister's friends Verdes and Roger put a new engine in my '67 Mustang, and we loaded all our possessions in a U-Haul trailer. A few miles out of town the new engine (being tight and pulling a trailer) overheated. Every fifteen or twenty miles all the way to California I would stop, let the water blow out of the radiator, and then fill it up. We drove only at night, because it was cooler.

When we got to Needles, California, we couldn't make it up the other side of the valley, so we had to roll back into town. Around 4:00 a.m., looking for a place to sleep, Susan's old Toyota that my sisters were driving caught on fire. I ran back to them on the side of the freeway, and they thought I was a rapist and started screaming in terror.

wife crying . . .
car on fire . . .
stranded in Needles . . .

all my possessions in a trailer . . .
wee hours of the morning . . .
and my sisters started complaining . . .

"We're not going to have time for *Disneyland!*" I screamed, "Well, this is my *life!*"

When we got to L.A. my boss acted like a jerk. He had told me he had gotten us a place to stay, but he had forgotten to ask the owner. It turned out to be a garage full of other people's things.

The bank wouldn't transfer our money;
It was 110 degrees in the valley;
I had to go on a youth group rafting trip in a couple of days;
In desperation we found a dingy apartment . . . roaches were everywhere . . . when you spilled water on the carpet it bubbled;
While I was on the youth trip Susan locked herself in the apartment without a refrigerator and didn't go out for a week;
A band of underwear-clad, foreign exchange students lived above us, and all they owned was a stereo and a drum set;
There were drug dealers and across the street a body-builder who would beat his girlfriend;
We hardly had any money and worked at an exceedingly wealthy church where the youth group kids made fun of Susan's prairie skirts and dingo boots and called her Laura Ingalls Wilder;
I was gone all the time, and when I was home Susan would fall into my arms and cry . . . for hours and hours . . . huge sobs.

Over time things got better. Susan always made whatever space we had a home. She gave herself to me, and she gave birth to three of our four children in California.

In December of 1992 we moved back to Colorado to work at Lookout Mountain Community Church. When we walked into our wonderful, new house (the first we had ever owned), my bride stopped and began weeping for joy.

Now we have a wonderful house, four children, and *more* than one set of matching dinner plates. And it's all that much better because of the journey.

But why am I telling you all this? — Because this is what I thought of when Marcia shared her vision.

When times are hard and I get angry at Susan, or when I'm tempted and I think marriage stinks (we all have times like these), for about fifteen years now I've done this, almost unconsciously: I think back on our journey to California, our cockroach-infested apartment, my bride weeping in my arms in the dark, and I say to myself, "I can't believe she *came* with me. She *followed* me!" I realize there is no one in this world more beautiful to me than she. She believes in me.

There is no one more beautiful in all creation to Jesus than His Bride — *that's you*. And you're following Him. You follow Him all the way to His cross when you trust Him with sufferings and shame.

As a body we're following Him across the interstate. To be honest, the journey has been hard in places. We've been on this journey for about five years, and I think we're about at Barstow. The hardest is over.

But you follow Him and you are beautiful to Him. Your faith in Him is your greatest beauty—His treasure. We get so wrapped up in what we *do* . . . but it's more like who we *are* that is His treasure—His faithful Bride.

Brides bear fruit.

Your lives form the beautiful tapestry that is the Bride's veil.

Your deeds are the Bride's adornment.

Your good work is throwing that flower on the freeway, telling the world with your life, "Jesus loves me."

But the thing that will attract a hurting world is your beauty. Your beauty is your faith in your Groom. That faith is His life in you.

So please don't get intimidated by a new building. Please don't get self-conscious about how you have to act. Don't stop dancing. That is *pride*. You're the same Bride on either side of the road. Don't worry about what you *must* do; first be who you *are*: His Faithful Bride. Let the light you have so shine before men.

I want to say that I've been to a lot of churches, and I know I'm biased, but I think you are *most lovely*. So "show your face" and "let your light shine."

I am constantly surprised and humbled by you and what you do — things we don't program as a staff. Our church is full of authors, evangelists, missionaries, administrators, prophets, pastors, teachers, and musicians.

John and Sharna just started a mission bringing power to remote African villages.

Tom and Dana and others are bringing fresh water to the Third World.

I just learned about Joanna and Peter's ministry to the poor in Africa.

My friends Carol and Jamie just went out and got a house to help poor families in need of shelter.

Terry runs Young Life for West Metro, and I haven't even met her.

Jenny trains evangelists around the world besides playing drums for us.

Ernie, Bonnie, and the Stoners just started Loaves and Fishes.

Mike started HIV CareLink.

Danny ministers to troops around the world.

Susan is pastoring the elderly in downtown Denver.

Becky ministers to inner-city children.

Bruce pastors the homeless.

Jackie is training prophets.

Folks are adopting babies.

People are volunteering with youth, women, men, children, deacons, Session, stewardship, Bible studies, classes, Small Groups . . .

Many are giving sacrificially, turning businesses into ministries of service.

I can't begin to name all the things you do and the people involved! And the greatest things you do aren't programs; they're smiles, hugs, kisses, invitations, and cups of cold water given to children; acts of worship, prayers prayed in secret places, and sins confessed in public places.

And the greatest thing of all is not really what you do, but who you are: the faithful Bride of Christ.

When we move, Bride of Christ, you are the ones who will make our new house a home.

You will be hospitality.

You will throw the flower on the freeway.

You are the aroma of Christ to a perishing world.

You are the light of the world set on a hill.

You are beautiful.

It's not the building; it's *you*, because you are believing Jesus. Be secure in who He has made you so you can lose yourself in Him.

Not conscious of yourself
but conscious of Him—
dancing for Him.

Someone asked Corrie ten Boom how she could possibly handle all the accolades of those so inspired by her beautiful faith . . . how she could handle it without becoming proud. She said she looked at each compliment as a beautiful long-stemmed flower given to her. She smelled it for a moment and then put it into a vase with the others. Each night, just before bed, she gave it to Jesus saying, "Thank you, Lord, for letting me smell the flowers; they all belong to you."

Let the world smell those flowers. That's humility; that's the aroma of faith.

In Marcia's vision we arrive in our new house and He's already there. We are surrounded with lilies. In Matthew and Luke Jesus says, "Why are you anxious? Consider the lilies. They neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." We are arrayed with the righteousness of Christ. Consider the lilies.

I consider that new building and I worry. “Who am I to be in a building like *that*? What will I say? Will anyone come?”

I have this recurring nightmare that I show up to preach and no one is there . . . except my mom. At the end of the sermon I complain, “Mom, no one was *here*.” My mom says, “But, honey, it was a wonderful sermon!” Praise God for moms.

I worry . . . but “consider the lilies,” says Jesus.

Sometimes I think back on our years in California, and I realize there were lilies all over the place: wonderful new friends, exciting new experiences, things He was growing in me, lots of great cockroach stories. There were lilies all over, but I hardly enjoyed any of them, because I was too busy worrying and I had stopped dancing.

“Follow me,” says Jesus, and “consider the lilies.”

I say, “Jesus, lilies get stepped on and they get eaten by deer.”

He says, “But you are of more value than they.”

So *even if* nobody comes and my mom joins another church . . . *even if* we default on our mortgage and they drop the bomb and our bodies are eaten by mutated, carnivorous deer infected with radiation . . . *even if* we hang on a cross, He’s with us, watching over us so we can enjoy the trip. And we’ll be that much more beautiful because of our faith on the journey. But then our journey will truly be over. We will have crossed over. We will be home in our home eternal, at the Great Banquet for ever more.

So what I am saying is, we *really should dance*. Some of you have arthritis, and I understand you may not want to dance on the freeway . . . but I mean dance with your lives, your smiles, your hearts . . . cross the freeway and keep dancing all the way home.

In Jesus’ name, amen.

[Peter] “Lord Jesus, we thank you and worship you for what you have done, for you have made us your people—your temple—your Bride.

“Lord God, we come with darkened minds and tired hearts and weak knees, but, Lord Jesus, we pray that you would help us to lift our drooping hands and strengthen our weak knees and believe your incredible Gospel.

“Lord, we sit and feel sorry for ourselves, that you don’t love us and you don’t care about us and you are not in our story. Yet, Lord Jesus, when we ask you into our hearts you make us your Bride. And I am absolutely convinced of this: No one who arrives on that day at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb will be disappointed. Thank you, Jesus.

“So, Lord God, we worship you here and on the other side of the interstate, and we desire to worship you with every breath we take. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

A Brief History of Lookout Mountain Community Church

The story of LMCC began nearly 19 years ago when a group of 60 families made the decision to split off from Rockland Community Church. We called ourselves Mountain Christian Fellowship. For the first seven years, we met at the beautiful Boettcher Mansion on Lookout Mountain. Every Sunday, we had to convert the conference facility to a church setting, hold our service and Sunday School, and then put everything away for another week. All meetings, choir rehearsals, Bible studies, etc., were held elsewhere.

Mountain Christian Fellowship began as an inter-denominational church. Over the years we have had six pastors (including two short-term interim pastors) of different denominational backgrounds. It was after Peter came that the name was changed and we joined the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

The current church was built in 1990. Although the contractors finished the upstairs, the lower level and outside were finished by members of the congregation. It was truly a labor of love. I recall many hours standing in the hot sun that summer staining both sides of the boards to be used as siding.

Peter came in December of 1992. We had been warned that “if you hire Peter Hiatt, the church will grow dramatically.” And grow it did. Within a year we had added a second service with a third being added a year later. In 1995 the building was remodeled to accommodate 150 more in the sanctuary. The nursery was moved upstairs where offices had been, and the fellowship area downstairs was enlarged. This gave us breathing room for a brief time before we needed to add the Saturday evening service in 1996. From 1993 through 1997 our worship attendance soared from 160 per Sunday to 732 per weekend. With no possibilities to expand on our current site, a committee was formed to find a new location and plan for a new church facility. The rest is history as we eagerly await a move next week.

-History written by Sandy Schumacher

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