

August 2023



Malesus United Methodist Church

The Beacon

...and it's all because of God's

Amazing Grace

Connie, my wife, asked me recently if she could share her morning devotions with me. I said, "of course you can, I would love to hear it." She shared a devotional reading from a friend on Facebook from Daily Bible Verses. The scripture for the devotional came from Luke's Gospel chapter 23 verses 39-43.

Here's what the devotional read:" How does the thief on the cross fit into your theology? No baptism, no communion, no confirmation, no speaking in tongues, no mission trip, no volunteerism, no financial gifts, and no church clothes. He couldn't even bend his knees to pray. He didn't say the sinner's prayer and among other things, he was a thief. Jesus didn't take away his pain, heal his body, or smite his scoffers. Yet, it was a thief who walked into paradise the same hour as Jesus simply by BELIEVING.

He had nothing more to offer other than his belief that Jesus was who He said He was. No spin from brilliant theologians. No ego or arrogance. No shiny lights, skinny jeans, or crafty words. No fog machine, donuts, or coffee in the lobby. Just a naked dying man on a cross unable to even fold his hands to pray."

As I listened to Connie, and when she read the final words in the devotional it made me think. I believe strongly in Wesleyan Theology, and in our Wesleyan Heritage. The story in Luke's Gospel does have special circumstances. This one story alone doesn't negate what Jesus, and the rest of the New Testament communicates to us.

The takeaway from the devotional for me was sometimes we can complicate things. If it doesn't fit within our scope of understanding and experience, we write it off. But God doesn't always work according to our understanding of God and nor does God have to fit in our litmus test.

One truth we can all embrace from this is God is a God of grace and is still changing lives today. God is still changing me; thanks be to God! How does God want to change you?

Pastor, Don

Finance Report

Financial Report year-to-date, as of June 30, 2023:

Pledged giving is at 96% of budget amount year-to-date.

Unpledged giving is approximately 87% of budgeted amount year-to-date.

Total Income is 94% of budgeted year-to-date.

Total expenses are at 96% of budgeted amount year-to-date.

June Income: \$15,410.45

June Expenses: \$16,032.66

Funds needed to date: \$99,540.00

Funds received to date: \$93,795.00



Our Weekly Stewardship

July 2, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	24
Worship	53
Offering	\$4,109.00

July 9, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	35
Worship	63
Offering	\$4,332.00

July 16, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	40
Worship	65
Offering	\$3,015.00

July 23, 2023

Attendance

Sunday School	39
Worship	73
Offering	\$2,266.00

Please note that the offering numbers above are a total of pledged giving, unpledged giving, and loose plate giving. They do not include designated gifts.



Communion Rail Offering

Communion Rail Offerings

Jan:	Southside Assistance	\$204
Feb:	Souper Bowl Sunday	\$287+
	97 cans of soup	
March:	UMCOR Turkey Relief	\$621
April:	Bemis "Room in the Inn"	\$363
May:	VBS	\$178
June:	Project Peanut Butter	\$228
July:	Reelfoot School Supplies	\$676
Aug:	College Care Packages	
Sept:	Undetermined at this time	
Oct:	Undetermined at this time	
Nov:	Reelfoot Toys	
Dec:	Christmas Offering	

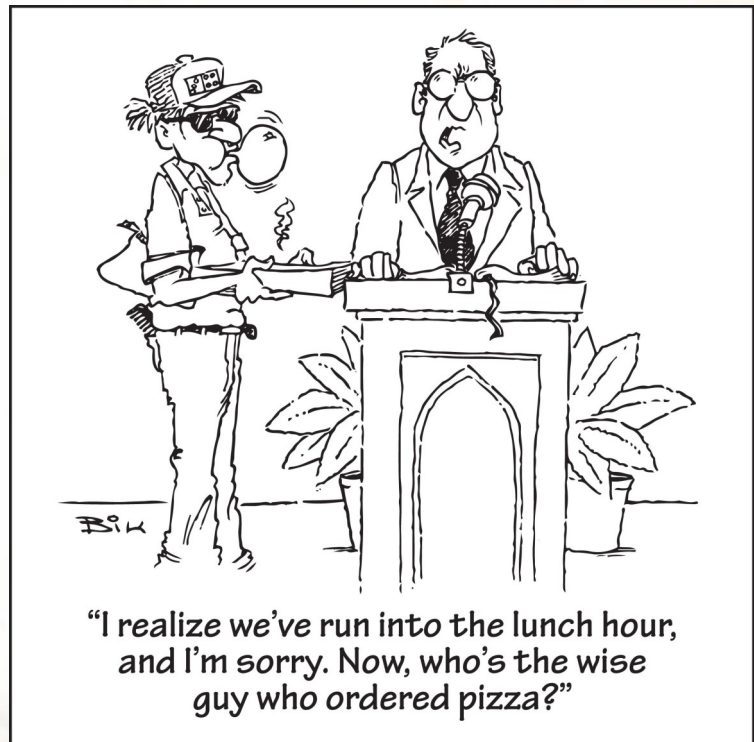


Blessing of the Backpacks

Sunday, August 6th at 9:00



Breath Prayer
Show me the way, Lord.





Hope all of our talented Malesus artists and crafters are busy preparing their treasures for the 3rd Annual Silent Auction in conjunction with our 2023 Christmas Dinner scheduled for Saturday, December 2nd.

To make bidding more fun and competitive a limit has been set of 2 like items.

Here's an example:

2 red Christmas ornaments, or 1 red and 1 green Christmas ornament may be submitted; however, after submitting one of these sets of items, any more Christmas ornaments would



Be watchful for the upcoming training session date (to be determined) for use of our AED.

We have high hopes that we can get many of you trained in using the AED equipment. Please contact

Tanya in the Church Office so we can contact you when we will be doing this class.



Choir Rehearsal will begin again on Wednesday, August 30th!

Come on out and make a joyful



Remember our teachers in prayer as the new school year begins.

Congregational Care

Fellowship is such an important part of our church life. Mark your calendars for Sunday, August 20, 2023. Bemis United Methodist will be joining us again for our morning worship and brunch afterwards. Church services will begin at 10:00 am. There will be no Sunday School that day. There is always a good time to fellowship together!



Talent Show

Malesus UMC Potluck & Talent Show
Wednesday, Sept. 20th
5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall



If you'd like to be a part - contact Loret at 731-693-5282.



When there's too much bad news, catch up on the Good News!



In *Faith Takes a Name*, Dwight E. Stevenson writes that if we consider ourselves to be disciples of Jesus, then we must remain "learners under the instruction of Christ." He notes, "Quite literally, a disciple is a pupil, scholar, student or learner. In [Jesus'] world

a teacher with his band of disciples was to that culture what schools and universities are to our society. To be a disciple of Jesus is to go to school with him."

Did you know that we accept online donations for our Give Back Jack Blessings Box?

These online donations are used by the Missions Team to stock our Blessings Box whenever food donations from our church family members are not enough to fill the needs, usually on a temporary basis. While we prefer food donations placed directly in the Blessings Box or delivered to the church office for future inclusion in the Blessings Box, cash donations can be used to fill a temporary or emergency need for a desperate person or family.



To make an online donation, go to our website at www.malesusumc.org and then click on the GIVE button at the top right of the Home page. By then selecting "Preferred Choice" and then selecting the Blessings Box, a donation of almost any amount can be made using your checking account or credit / debit card.



Blessing Box

Our Blessing Box is providing for the needy in our community and is in constant need of refilling. Some items that have been suggested are things that are basically more of a complete meal. Please keep these in mind when you shop.

- Canned Chili
- Canned Stews
- Canned Meats
- Canned Spaghetti, Spaghetti Os, Ravioli, Chili Mac
- Hormel Completes Meals
- Canned or Packaged Soups
- Peanut or Other Nut Butters
- Jelly
- Bread
- Pancake Mix with Syrup
- Canned Fruits
- Boxed Meal Kits - add the Canned Meat to go with it
- Mac & Cheese
- Non-refrigerated Milk
- Cereals
- Oatmeal
- Canned Veggies

And certainly, personal care items.

Blessed with Work

In the movie *Return to Me*, Grace works for her grandfather, Marty, in his restaurant, and the two live upstairs. After closing time one night, Grace looks through the apartment window and sees Marty cleaning tables. She yells down to ask if he wants help, and he replies, "No, dear, that's okay. I'm blessed with work."

Here's a man well past retirement age laboring extra hours after his staff has clocked out. Marty simply continues to delight in his work, despite the late hour.

Although this snippet had little to do with the movie's plot, I've always remembered Marty's words. But I don't think I've ever claimed to be "blessed with work." By contrast, I often sigh as I'm dealing with messes or long to-do lists. I can get so caught up in tasks that I overlook the incredible people around me. I miss out on the blessing — the joy — of work.

Ecclesiastes 5:19 (NLT) says, "To enjoy your work ... is indeed a gift from God." In what ways are you "blessed with work"?

Mission News – August 2023

Communion Rail offering: This month's communion rail offering will be going to purchase items to send off to our College students and Military. The boxes will be assembled by our Friendship Circle. Be sure and get your College student names in to the Church office.

Reelfoot Rural Missions School Supplies – During the month of July our donation has totaled \$676. Thanks for your support. This has been sent to them to assist these students as the school year starts.



Coming Up This Month:

You have the opportunity to help serve supper to our friends at the RIFA Soup Kitchen on Thursday August 31. Meet us at RIFA at 4:30 and it will be an experience you will never forget. How many of us are really grateful for a good meal?

Fighting Hunger : Right here on the local scene...Our **Blessings Box** has been used regularly. Buy a few extra items, and don't forget the toiletries and/or cleaning supplies that may be needed, too. **"Bring what you can, take what you need, but above all, be blessed."**

Hooks & Needles: We continue to work on various projects — If you know of anyone needing a prayer square, shawl, walker pocket or adult bib, let the office know. A big thanks to our donors, and also to the women who have hemmed baby blankets to donate to Birth Choice of Jackson. If you want to help with any of these projects or with the princess dresses, contact Martha Morris.

Manna Bags: Thanks to the Good News Sunday School class for supplying the Manna bags for all of us to distribute as we are out and about. These provide a protein snack, treats, peanut butter crackers and a water bottle in a ziploc bag that is easy to hand out to those more unfortunate than we are. You never know how much a small gesture might brighten up someone's day.

As we continue to reach out to our community, keep your eyes and ears open. If you see a need, share it with one of your fellow church members---maybe we can take care of each other!!

Next Missions meeting: Sunday August 27 at 1pm.

"Prayer is an acknowledgment that our need of God's help is not partial but total."

—Alistair Begg, Made for His Pleasure

Christ Still Calls Us

The rugged hills of Galilee drop down to meet the sea
Where burly men still mend their nets, still fish there
eagerly.

The sea's the same place where Christ said, "Lay down
your nets and heed
My call to love all people, and serve them in their
need."

"I'll help you fish for humankind," he told them long
ago.

His call's still heard, His help's still real today, as we
well know.

Yes, people still are leaving "nets" wherever they might
be,
And as disciples still go forth to serve Christ willingly.

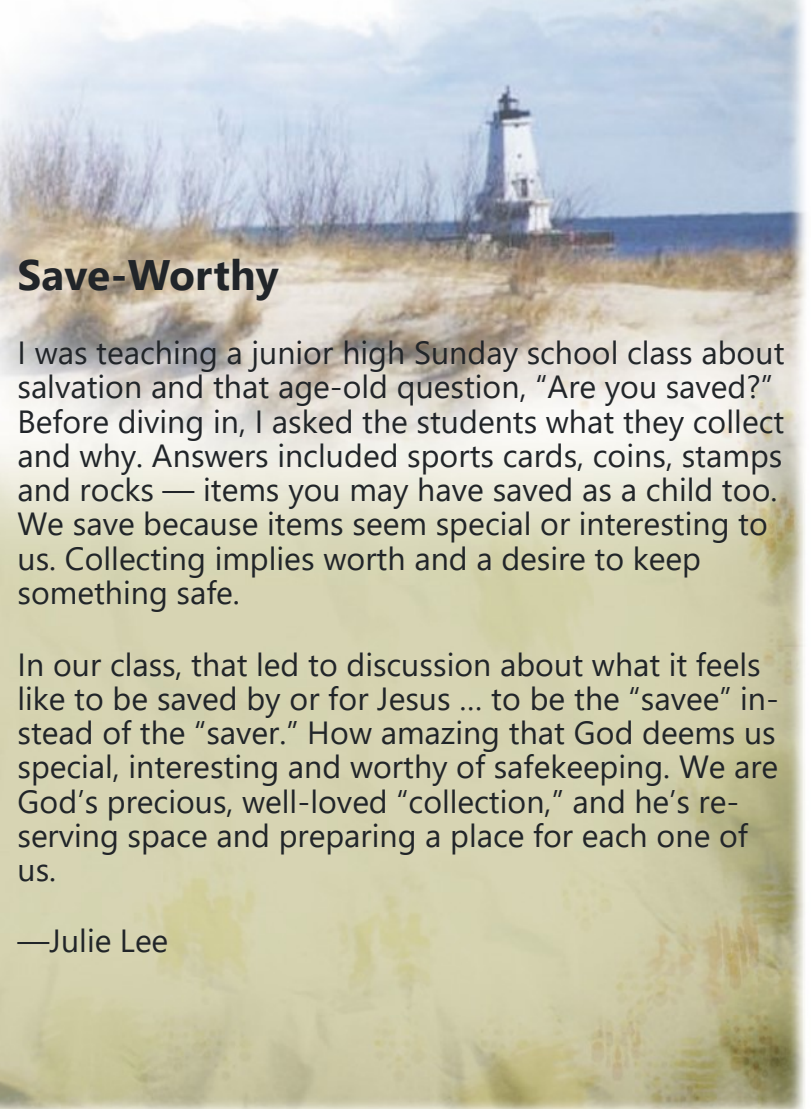
—Peggy Ferrell

Save-Worthy

I was teaching a junior high Sunday school class about salvation and that age-old question, "Are you saved?" Before diving in, I asked the students what they collect and why. Answers included sports cards, coins, stamps and rocks — items you may have saved as a child too. We save because items seem special or interesting to us. Collecting implies worth and a desire to keep something safe.

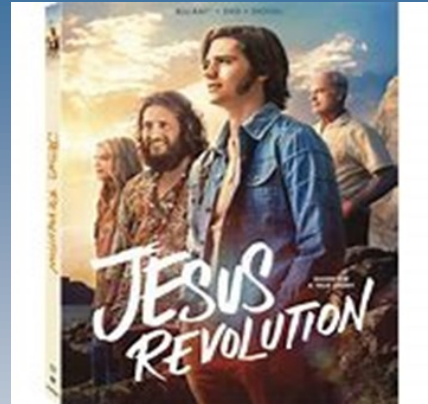
In our class, that led to discussion about what it feels like to be saved by or for Jesus ... to be the "savee" instead of the "saver." How amazing that God deems us special, interesting and worthy of safekeeping. We are God's precious, well-loved "collection," and he's reserving space and preparing a place for each one of us.

—Julie Lee





Our mission is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ by making disciples through our service to our church family, to our community, and to the world.



Our church library has a DVD on hand for Season 1 of the series “**The Chosen**” and it is available for checkout.

We are seeking the **DVDs** for Seasons 2 and 3 of “The Chosen” series. If anybody would like to donate a copy for Season 2 and Season 3 (or copies of any of the first 3 seasons), we would be please to accept them.

We are also seeking for donations the DVD for the critically acclaimed movie “Jesus Revolution” with Jonathan Roumie as a hippie itinerant pastor in the late 1960s and also starring Kelsey Grammer.

If you have any of these DVD and it’ll probably be a long time (or never) before you ever watch them again – and even other DVDs that have Biblical teaching points, please drop those materials off in the church library in the grey fabric box on the left side of the library.

Our library presently has 36 DVDs on our shelves.

When We Least Deserve Love

“Love me when I least deserve it,” says a Swedish proverb, “because that’s when I really need it.” My mom recounts how my 1-year-old sister, scooting around in a walker, somehow got hold of and spilled a loosely capped bottle of cooking oil. As Mom cleaned up, my sis scooted into the bathroom and unwound all the toilet paper.

Mom went to investigate the ruckus, and as she respooled the TP, my sister went back to the kitchen, pulled crackers out of a lower cupboard, tossed them on the floor and drove over them — in the remaining oil. At that point, Mom decided it was naptime! Yet I know Mom laid her little one in her crib with tender love. After a rest, they’d start afresh.

In John 21, the risen Jesus addresses Peter, who had denied him three times the night of Jesus’ arrest. But Jesus didn’t treat Peter harshly. In love, the Savior offered his disciple a fresh start. So too, when we’re at our worst, hurting God’s heart by hurting others and creation, God loves us all the more. He loves us into a fresh start — even, and especially, when we least deserve it.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

Dear Malesus UMC,

I am writing on behalf of the staff and Board of Trustees to express our deep gratitude for your July 6, 2023 donation of \$504.53 to Hannah's Hope, supporting our pregnancy counseling ministry. Your donation will truly impact the lives of women and children in need. This contribution will further the mission of building families through adoptive services, loving all God's children and promoting responsible choices. Please know that your donation has indeed made a difference in the life of a woman in need of support as she plans for the future of her unborn child.



Sincerely,
Sara Vonderheide
Development Specialist
Hannah's Hope



The following items serve as "little guideposts on the footpath to peace," according to author and pastor Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933):

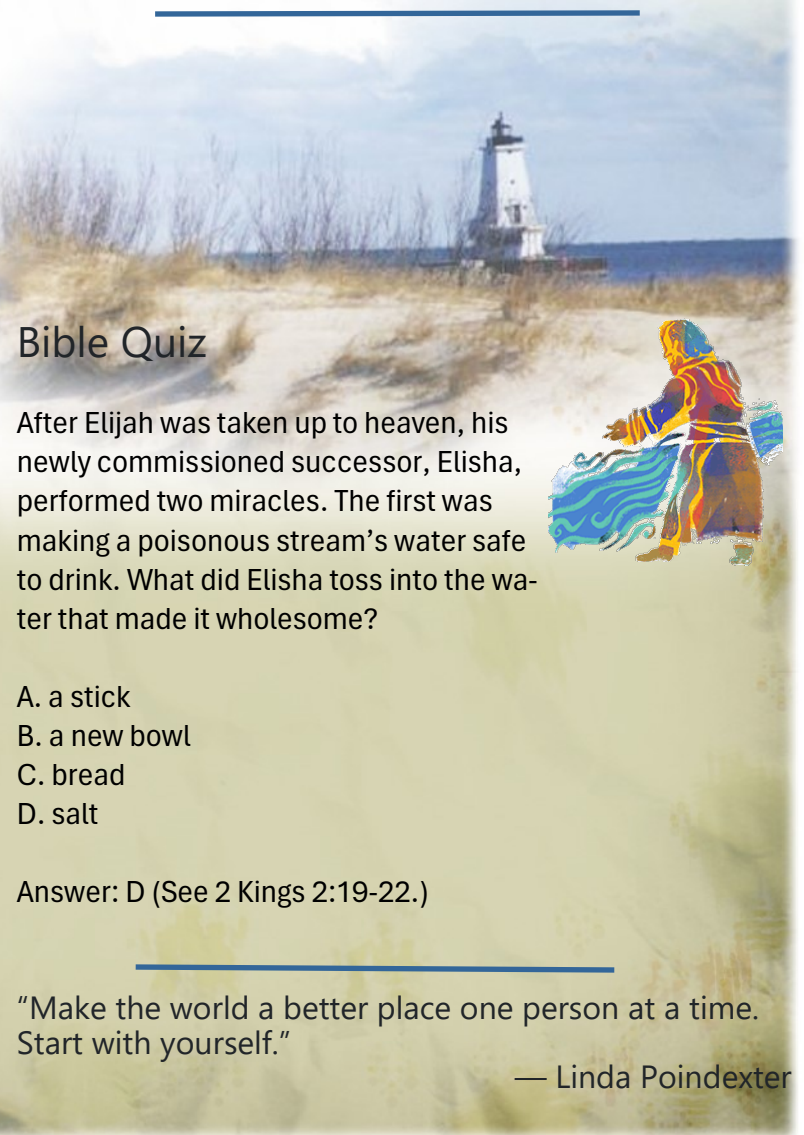
- to be glad of life, because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars;
- to be satisfied with your possessions but not content with yourself until you have made the best of them;
- to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice;
- to covet nothing of your neighbor's except [their] kindness of heart and gentleness of manners;
- to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends and every day of Christ;
- to spend as much time as you can with body and with spirit in God's out-of-doors.

Daily Reasons to Celebrate

Poor August, the only month without holidays! Still, there's lots to celebrate these final weeks of summer. Enjoy some summer flavors: August 1 is National Raspberry Cream Pie Day; August 2, National Ice Cream Sandwich Day; August 3, National Watermelon Day; August 10, National S'mores Day (have a bonfire!); and August 24 is National Peach Day.

If you share life with young kids, have a water balloon fight on — you guessed it — National Water Balloon Day, August 6! Head out for a final (National) Beach Day on August 30. Or head out for an intergenerational hike on National Trail Mix Day, August 31.

And don't forget to celebrate God's precious gifts of friends — National Friendship Day is the first Sunday in August; creation — Global Sleep Under the Stars Night is August 8 (prime time for meteor showers!); laughter — National Tell a Joke Day is August 16; and the opportunity to put God's love into action by serving others — on August 22, National Be an Angel Day, or August 28, National Thoughtful Day, and, for that matter, every day of the year — holiday or not.



Bible Quiz

After Elijah was taken up to heaven, his newly commissioned successor, Elisha, performed two miracles. The first was making a poisonous stream's water safe to drink. What did Elisha toss into the water that made it wholesome?

- A. a stick
- B. a new bowl
- C. bread
- D. salt

Answer: D (See 2 Kings 2:19-22.)


"Make the world a better place one person at a time. Start with yourself."

— Linda Poindexter

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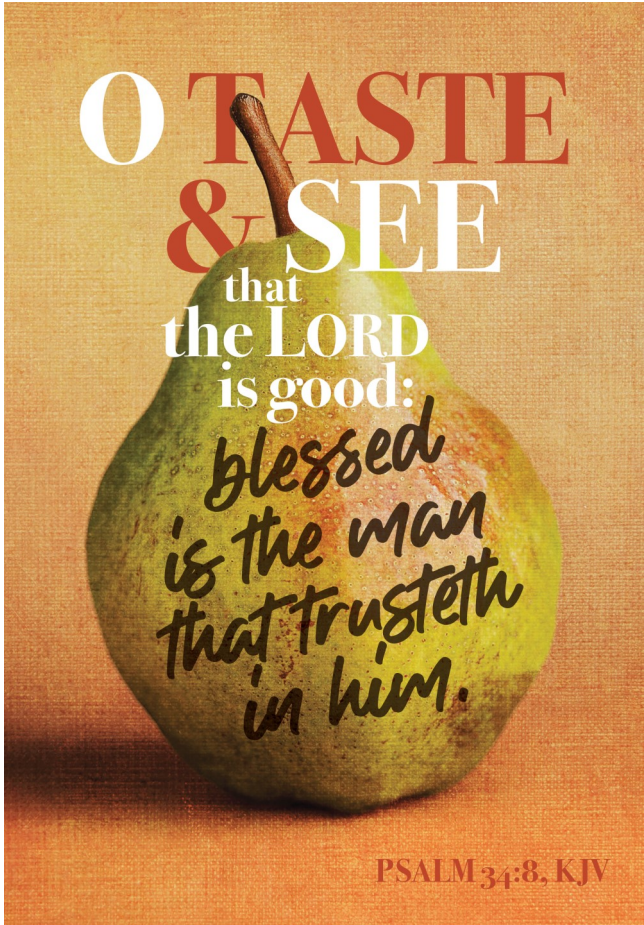
 A Stephen Ministry Congregation

 A Safe Sanctuaries Congregation



OR CURRENT RESIDENT

Our mission is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by making disciples through our service to our church, community, & world.



Christian Symbol



HARP — This multi-stringed musical instrument is associated with David, who played to soothe King Saul and later wrote many Psalms. The harp also represents praise music in general, as well as all the instruments people use to glorify God (see Psalm 71:22). The idea that angels play harps comes from Revelation 14:2 (“And I heard

August

God in his own right hand doth take each day — each sun-filled day — each rare and radiant night, and drop it softly on the earth and say:
“Touch earth with heaven’s own beauty and delight.”
—Jean Blewett (1862-1934)