



RESONANCE

The word “resonance” is not typically associated with Advent. Normally reserved as a descriptor for some quality of sound or vibration, resonance may also speak to the experiential evocation of rich, meaningful engagement.

Golfers experience this when the club and ball connect in perfect synchronization. Musicians resonate in the harmony of perfect pitch. Relationally, we may give voice to this in the colloquialism of Anne of Green Gables, “kindred spirits.”

The Apostle Paul in writing to the church in Rome states, “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Romans 8:16, NIV). The Message translates this as, “God’s Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are.”

“Testifies,” . . . “touches,” . . . this resonance of spirit is both confirming and affirming of the wonderful truth that we are adopted sons and daughters of the most High.

Attempting to capture something of this verb, commentators use experiential language such as verdict of heart, direct impression upon the mind, still small voice, inward conviction, handwriting on the heart, the responsive testimony of our own hearts echoing the silent utterances of the Holy Ghost, and giving us confidence toward God.

When the angel Gabriel informed Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus, resonance within her heart found outward expression in the praise-filled worship we refer to as the Magnificat, “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name . . .” (*Luke 1:46ff*).

Following the angelic proclamation of the birth of Jesus, resonance for the Shepherds and the Wise men alike led to curious and determined pilgrimage, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about” (*Luke 2:15*).

For Simeon, his resonant encounter with the child Jesus, brought peace-filled resolution to years of patient waiting, “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel” (*Luke 2: 29 – 32*).

This Advent season may there be fresh resonance. May this intentional time of encounter and celebration reverberate with praise-filled worship, curious and determined spiritual pilgrimage, and peace-filled resolution whereby the Spirit himself testifies with your spirit that you are a child of God.

PAST MEETS PRESENT IN ANTICIPATION OF THE FUTURE



We were treated to a wonderful evening including a tour of the beautiful complex where they reside; a little slice of heaven where God has seen fit to bless them. Actively involved in visitation, Charles and Colleen seem to be known by everyone! The following day we spent four hours sitting as it were at the master's feet.



From Shell Point our trip took us to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Tennessee where we were warmly embraced by Ed and Sherry Gore, Executive Directors of Fairhaven Ministries, TN. Here the history of God's faithfulness in the Fairhaven story came alive for Gwen and I.

The beauty and peacefulness of the setting, the design of the campus and facilities, abundant stories of God's provision of resources and staff over the years, and the Father's tangible presence at work in the lives of guests left us with a profoundly humble sense of our part in the larger Fairhaven narrative.

Like the Shepsons, Ed and Sherry were most gracious hosts. Together we reminisced about our respective journeys, shared similar joys and challenges encountered in leadership, and sparked a friendship that we trust will continue to grow.

Earlier this fall Gwen and I had the privilege of visiting with Dr. Charles Shepson and his wife Colleen. In their early 90's, the Shepsons are enjoying this season of life at Shell Point Retirement Community outside Fort Myers, FL.. He and Colleen picked us up at the airport (yes, he is still driving, and quite well I might add!). Though we had only talked on the phone or e-mailed occasionally they graciously welcomed us as friends. And so the tone of our visit was set. Back at Shell Point the mode of transportation changed.



So much could be shared. Gwen and I listened and we queried as we were delightfully walked along history lane. By the end, the exchange of stories and insights left us all with a deep sense of gratitude to the Father for His ongoing presence, provision and work in the continuing story that is Fairhaven.





Following this we attended the CareGivers Forum an annual gathering of people who are involved in the ministry of caring for professional Christian workers and their families. The conference was held in Ridgecrest, NC., next door to the Billy Graham Training Center at the Cove, which we visited on the final day. Here our hearts resonated with story after story of passion for this work and the myriad of tangible ways it is being expressed. From long established care ministries operating out of people's homes to new facilities being erected this very year, God is at work in caring for those He calls into kingdom service.

Gwen and I returned to the mountain with full hearts. As we look to the future of the work here in Canada we do so from an anchored appreciation for the faithfulness of God spanning nearly 40 years of combined US and Canadian Fairhaven history. We look forward with confident anticipation to what is yet to come.

UPDATES FROM THE YEAR

There is much to share. The Spring Dinner Tour was a wonderful time of reminiscing together and sharing how God's Spirit is moving in our midst. Financially we are praying for and seeking the Father's provision of an annual increase of \$100,000.00 toward our operating expenses. In His wisdom, through our regular donors and through those who chose to include Fairhaven in their final wishes, the 2019 need is being met.

Further, a list of practical needs (new washer and dryer/ multi-tool cordless combo kit/new office computer/large flat screen TV for presentations) were all met through gracious individuals responding to tangible needs.

In excess of 40 individuals gave of themselves, their time and talents toward the operational needs of the ministry this past year alone. Witnessing God working in and through their lives is a joy and a privilege as we serve together. Mel and Char Reimer have settled in and quickly become part of the Fairhaven team.

Finalizing the third staff residence project with the addition of decking and a garage is nearing completion.

As a Board and leadership we continue to discern God's timing and design on our next capital expansion. Exciting days are on the horizon!

All of this is ultimately a means to fulfilling the Fairhaven mission. God is at work in the lives of those who come seeking rest and renewal. 32% of our summer guests experienced Fairhaven for the very first time! 100% of these new guests indicated they would return. For many Fairhaven is a place of silence and solitude. For some, a place of rest and respite. For others, a place of restoration. For all, a safe place to spend time with Jesus and experience the renewing presence of the Holy Spirit. We love hearing accounts of how God has met with people here on the mountain.



RECIPROCATED GENEROSITY

To the good people of Fairhaven, Many times thank you for this gift of time you gave me to read, study, reflect, pray and to experience deep relaxation. Two weeks of no worries was so healing. May God's grace and peace rest deeply upon you this day and all your days. C&M.

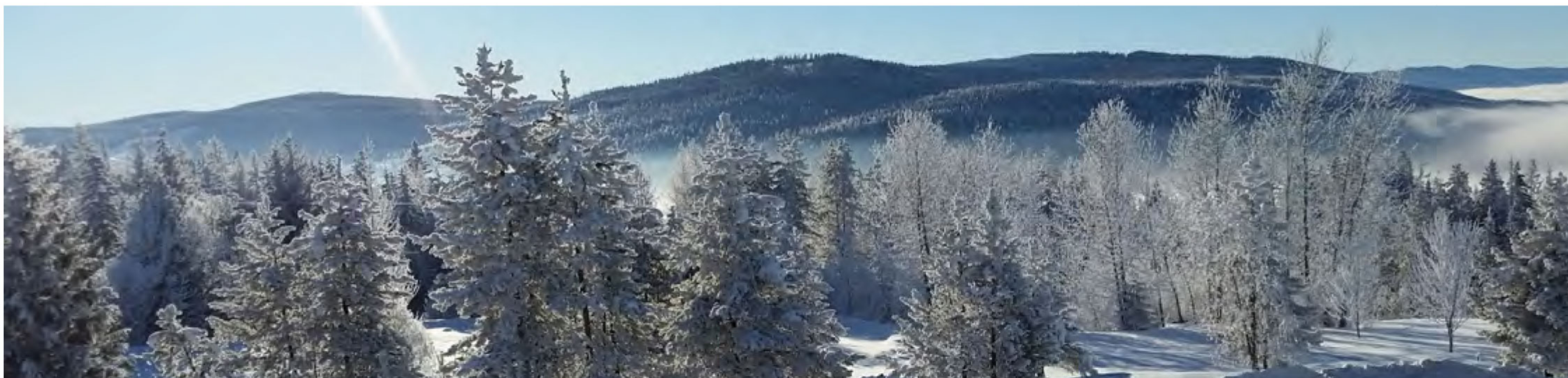
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Fairhaven Staff, Thank you so much for your prayers and for this amazing place. Each time I come here I encounter a deeper presence with God. It's such a gift. R.

I heard God's voice today. Thank you for providing a fair haven for that. Bless you! M.

Dear Fairhaven Staff, Thank you so much for the opportunity to stay here! Our time was filled with much relaxation and rest. You have blessed us with your attention to detail, and well-cared for facility. We enjoyed walking the trails, and spent much time reading. Thank you for the welcome note and fresh baked cookies. You all make a great team! Much thanks. B. & C.



IN CONCLUSION

Be encouraged! Your partnership with this ministry is making a profound difference in the hearts and lives of those called to kingdom purposes.

As we enter the Advent season may I encourage you to prayerfully consider a year-end gift that will be used to extend the blessing this place has and continues to become for so many. Fairhaven really is a story of God's faithfulness expressed through people responding to the gentle nudging of His Spirit to pray for and financially partner with us . . . Your generosity . . . an expression of worship to Jesus . . . meeting the needs of Kingdom servants!

Stay tuned for the launch of our redesigned website and promotional video on January 1st

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Reimers, Bittles, and our team of volunteers, Gwen and I wish you and yours a wonderful Christ-centered season.

Blessings,

Tony Schnare,
Executive Director.

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