

# HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

*Libraries of Hope Newsletter*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Monthly Topics.....1

Announcements.....3

Marlene’s Musings.....4

WEH in Action.....5

MOI Minute.....7

“FREEDOM IS A RARITY FOR MOST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD’S HISTORY. WHAT ARE WE DOING WITH IT?”

## MONTHLY TOPICS

--At the end of MASB 05, I added a bonus audio story that wasn’t originally included in the text. It was one of those nagging feelings that there was something missing...and when I found the story, I knew that was what I had left out.

We read of daring feats on the battlefield and courageous acts in the face of the enemy. But we cannot forget the quiet faith and prayers of the patriot mother at home caring for her children in our story of our fight for independence and freedom.

The story has been added to the digital text where you can print it out, if you’d like. And will be in future editions of the hard copy.



Art credit: A Prayer by Frederick Daniel Hardy

(Monthly Topics cont.)

--Some of you have asked why I included books like *1984*, *The Giver*, and *Brave New World* in Month 6. That's because I see Month 6, not only as the birth of a new nation, but as a celebration of freedom. Sometimes to appreciate freedom, you have to see what life without freedom looks like. These books, set in the dystopian future, are pretty chilling, even moreso than when I was assigned to read them before 1984. I couldn't have imagined then what we are experiencing now.

Freedom is a rarity for most people in the world's history. What are we doing with it? And more urgently, what are we doing to hold on to it?

--To go along with this month's nature topic of Bugs and Insects, if you haven't met Jean Henri Fabre, he is someone you will want to introduce to your kids. Here is a wonderful little picture biography you can read in Internet Archive or buy on Amazon or check out at your library (<https://archive.org/details/smallwondersjean00smit>).

One of his biographers begins with: "Each thing created, says Emerson, has its painter or its poet. Like the enchanted princess of the fairy tales, it awaits its pre-destined liberator.



Art credit: Der Vlinder by August Allebe

"Every part of nature has its mystery, and its beauty, its logic and its explanation... The tiny insects buried in the soil or creeping over leaf or blade...have revealed a whole world of miracle and poetry," which Jean Henri reveals.

A relative wrote a wonderful life story of him, and was especially motivated to tell the story of a scientist, in an age of atheism, who "finds in science fresh arguments for belief and manifold occasions for affirming his faith in the God who has created and rules the world."

I can't think of the Insect world without thinking of Jean Henri Fabre--another great soul to make friends with. You might also check out his Story Book of Science (<https://archive.org/.../storybookofscien.../page/n7/mode/2up>).



Art credit: Summer and Playing Children by Nikolia Astrup

"Give them habits of thinking and talking and reading and a sense of self-respect. Open their eyes to the world about them, open their minds to the world of learning, open their hearts to the world of their fellow men. Let them come to know the richness of life."

--The objectives of Grundtvig's Danish Folk High Schools

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

--**Congratulations** to those of you who have completed the Catch the Vision challenge! I have so enjoyed reading your letters and have been busy sending pins out. The final book will be sent later...I'm just not satisfied with what I have. There is something more that needs to go in there. But it will come! And to tell you the truth, I didn't expect anyone to finish so soon. :)

To those of you still doing it, I know we tend to want to read a book from front to back, but CTV really is more about explore and discover. I highly recommend drawing from all three volumes as you work your way through, looking at the things that appeal to you in the moment. And then just keep track on your check off list what you have read. Then you can begin to pick up what you have missed over time until you have been through all of it. No need to rush. And for those of you who have no idea what I'm talking about, go to [this page](#), and scroll down to the challenge. You will see a link to the PDF you can print out and keep track of what you've read.

This is an expansion of the Intro Course that you may have gone through. The intro is mostly audios and videos. I have taken the texts of those and included them in the books, but it is only the start. There is a LOT more in the books.



--**I've** been working on a little project that goes along with this month's topic of the Holy Land as well as Story-telling.

Not long ago, I was in a thrift store and I found an old book tucked away on a random shelf all by itself just waiting for me to pick it up. It was an illustrated New Testament story book. I immediately recognized the illustrator--Milo Winter--and I loved the beautiful illustrations inside. The introduction was written by another familiar name--Katherine Lee Bates, who wrote America the Beautiful. And then as I started to read, I knew this had to be a mother who was a master storyteller. She understood the minds of little children and engaged their imaginations and their senses and explained things that might be difficult for them to understand in simple, relatable ways. She chose the stories for little minds to grasp. And most importantly, she presented a loving and kind Friend.

I knew I wanted to share the book with you. I looked on Internet Archive, but you can only borrow the book and that version only contained about half of the 41 stories. So I checked the copyright--the book was written in 1925 which means it has recently entered the public domain. While we hope to get the text in print in the future, for now I did what I could.

We have extracted all the illustrations and put them in a printable PDF file for you to print out and I have recorded the stories for you to listen to.

These are perfect for your littles. The stories are only about five minutes each. And while they are listening, you can help them cut the pictures out and glue them into their own Bible story book--just like you are doing My America Story Book. So I called it My Bible Story Book. You can just use blank sheets of paper and put them in a simple report cover.

Only it will probably just be pictures. And now you have a child's first Bible story book of their very own from which they can begin to retell the story from the pictures. "Who wants to tell daddy the story tonight?" I have a feeling they will be able to do it. Bible stories are the most wonderful stories ever told and a perfect place for children to begin to learn the art of storytelling 'by heart.'

The audio story has been placed in BelMonde under Holy Land - Great Lives (<http://www.mybelmonde.com/holy-land-great-lives.html>). You will find a link to the PDF pictures right there with the story. There are 45 pages. Or you can buy a packet of professionally printed images from us for \$10, which includes shipping.

I never get tired of hearing the stories of Jesus. I hope this can be a blessing in your lives.

--I just came out of a meeting where Jane Clayson Johnson, author of *Silent Souls Weeping*, spoke to us about depression. She described her own battle with it. Some of you may remember that she had a very high profile career in journalism and broadcasting and left it to stay home and be a mother many years ago.

I couldn't help but notice the WEH principles in action in what she was teaching and wanted to pass them along while they are fresh on my mind. She said that surveys show that 40% have suffered with a major clinical depressive episode in the last year. Chances are, that includes many of you here in our group.

While we need to remove the stigma that may keep some from seeking professional help, for depression is an illness, here were some things that anyone can do to help get through the episode or to help someone get through it in addition to whatever treatment you may be seeking.

1. I wrote down her direct quote: "Tell and retell our story. **Storytelling is the most powerful medicine on Earth.**" We need to hear from someone who has been through it and can give hope that you can make it to the other side. "I've been there--I know what you are going through." And you need to be able to share your story with someone you can trust.

2. "Remember" -- Recall and write down times when you felt things you no longer can feel. I noticed and recognized the act of writing to produce clarity of thought and to open new channels of thinking.

3. Immerse yourself in stories of others who have overcome adversity. Write down inspirational quotes from what you are reading. Tape them around the house. (Notebooking, anyone?)

4. She spoke of the necessity of hearing words spoken out loud to you--affirming words. It is the power of the oral; the music of the voice. And I would add the person who is going through the depression will benefit from using her voice. She didn't mention singing, but I know from elsewhere, singing is also very healing.

5. Imagery--she described one mother who took a picture of the Savior and superimposed a picture of her son, who was suffering terribly, in His arms and displayed where it could be seen as a visual reminder that he was loved, even though he couldn't feel it.

6. Her daughter used art therapy. They took a box, cut up magazine pictures and on the outside of the box, glued all the pictures of how she wanted others to perceive her. On the inside were images of how she saw herself when no one was looking--the real her. It was revelatory. The more alike our outside and insides are, the healthier our mental state.

7. "Depression thrives in secrecy; and shrinks in empathy." I think of all the reasons we hope you will gather in Mothers of Influence groups to provide necessary support and empathy with each other. We are going to need each other even more in the days ahead, I strongly believe. The Arts that are the topic of your meetings will literally heal hearts and keep hearts from failing. The arts--sharing our stories, our songs, our creations --help us bond with each other in meaningful ways.

8. The Pattern for Learning is all about increasing Light in our lives--the 'grace' of heaven. There is heaven's grace to deal with depression. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly...will I...glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

I can tell you that within my own family and my own life, I understand the pain and the blackness of depression. When I feel it coming on, I turn to music, to story, to all the things I teach you. Recording the stories for you is one of the most therapeutic things I do. I have had and have children who have suffered and are suffering. There have been times when I was just trying to keep them alive another day. I can tell you the things that I am teaching you about the Arts and Hearts have changed my life and the lives of people very close to me.

You may think WEH is a homeschooling group... I hope you understand it is much, much more.



Art credit: A Hopeless Dawn by Frank Bramley



Art credit: The Day's Catch by Daniel Ridgway Knight

(Marlene's Musings cont.)

--As you form Mothers of Influence groups, we continue to encourage you to include women who don't always think just like you do. I was struck by this statement in a book on the Life of Christ I am reading:

"That Jesus believed men could work together who did not always think alike seems to be shown by the fact that He called both Matthew and Simon the Zealot--the one a tax gatherer and the other a hater of taxes."

There is a difference between one-ness and same-ness.

Our new nation needed the voices of Thomas Jefferson *and* John Adams --who opposed each other in almost every idea! Our nation today needs that same ability to work through our differences and find our commonalities that allow us to progress forward in better ways.

Practicing in small MOI groups is a good start towards that end.

## WEH IN ACTION

For the WEH followers who have been doing this for awhile now...what do you wish you had known at the start? What would you tell a brand-new-to-WEH momma?

--Take it slow.

Feed your heart first.

Your kids will be okay as you figure it out.

Start adding small things to your lifestyle which bring warmth, beauty and goodness to your home. Beautiful background music, heart-warming stories, learn a poem, find a piece of art you connect with on the [Simple Joy](#) website. Print it and post it where your family can enjoy it.

Connect with your kids. Learn what warms their hearts.

Be open to joy.

--Homeschooling isn't school at home. I wish I understood that my kids didn't need "school," they needed "home."

Also, I wish I understood that there is literally no "wrong way" to do WEH.

--Go slow. Don't feel pressure to do all the topics, all the concepts, all the things. Take the pieces that fit.

Our minds want us to think that if we just jump in, we will get it right away and we will have this awesome beautiful life as soon as we understand enough. This is not how it works with our hearts, it is slow and it works, but at first it will almost be unnoticeable. The more you just keep doing the little things, the bigger they will become, and you will suddenly find yourself in this beautiful place that you are almost uncertain how you got there.

--Feed your heart first! Don't worry about how to implement it with your kids. Feed your heart, find your inspiration and then it will flow over to them.

If you feel like you NEED to do something with your kids, do something from the following topics with them: poetry, music, art, stories, nature. It doesn't need to be big or take a lot of time. Read one poem

or story. Find some wholesome music and turn it on in the background. Go for a nature walk. (No plans, no forcing questions, just let them wander and enjoy.) Print one of the pictures from the website and hang it on your fridge.

--The first thing I did was look at what we naturally did already that fit in the WEH paradigm and how I could just tweak it a little with what I was learning...or I looked for times in our schedule that I could easily add something that I wanted more of.

Some changes I made were:

1. I stopped going to the public library as much and cleaned out some books I thought were not inspiring. I slowly have been building my home library with books that I think are more nourishing for my kids.
2. I started playing beautiful music in the morning while we eat and do morning chores. (cont. on p. 6)

(WEH in Action cont.) 3. I already had a night in the week where I made a special treat so we just added tea and poetry. That was easy and my kids love it, of course.

4. I ordered three series from Marlene and read them to the kids in the morning and encouraged the kids to read them other times too, along with the other books I was adding to the library.

5. I did some basic nature paintings with my girls by just looking images up and painting them. I had a 1-year-old and sitting still to paint outside was NOT happening.

6. I read poems to my kids every day to thrill their senses and encouraged memorizing ones that taught lessons.

7. I introduced harder subjects with enthusiasm and tried to help my kids see the whole picture while also teaching them discipline so they could progress.

8. I use principles found in the Big Life Journal to encourage my kids to not give up when they experience a difficulty or setback. Basically it teaches us to keep growing and have an attitude of looking at mistakes as progress and part of growth.

Over the last year I've been adding in more reading, more nature, art and built my library up. I am only now finally doing the rotation and I want to get better at that, too, but it's been a wonderful year of exploring and I'm excited for the future instead of burnt out.

And it didn't feel that hard is the best part...I did this with a baby keeping me up at night.

--Marlene posted a little bit ago about a professor's experience with having to teach poetry to kids who hated it because of how they were forced to learn the mechanics in high school and not the beauty of it. I have to admit I'm one of those. The only appeal of poetry for me was if it was in the form of song lyrics.

That is slowly changing. So much in WEH focuses on how beautiful poetry is so I'm not shunning it as I used to. I found a thrift store copy of some Eugene Field's poems. They are mostly understandable and actually almost made me tear up once. So it's coming. I WANT to see the beauty.

"Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." --7 Men and 7 Women by Eric Metaxas

**"MOTHERHOOD WAS THE BEST THING  
IN ISRAEL. THE JEWS GAVE WOMEN A  
NOBLER PLACE THAN DID ANY OTHER  
PEOPLE. THEY RECOGNIZED THEIR  
MOTHERS AS THE CHIEF BLESSING  
OF BOTH PRESENT AND FUTURE  
NATIONAL LIFE."**

--William Byron Forbush

Art credit: Christ and His Mother Studying by Henry Ossawa Tanner



## MOI MINUTE

We heard from a mother this week. Among her sincere and candid impression of a recent MOI gathering were some thoughtful questions.

*"I went to a MOI group and left feeling inadequate for not decorating for holidays enough and quite uncomfortable as people spoke of energy healing and the like.*

*"I admire and respect all those I have met there, but how do we embrace everyone's story? How do we converse and mingle ideas and life and become edified (and quell racism and hatred) instead of converse and end up in the mire? I guess I wonder if I have missed something because I feel so out of place."*

It reminded me of a comment Marlene made earlier this week: "We are going to need each other even more in the days ahead... The Arts that are the topic of your [MOI] meetings will literally heal hearts and keep hearts from failing... You may think that WEH [and MOI] is a homeschooling group... I hope you understand it is much, much more."

I'm so grateful to this mom for her willingness to let me openly share her thoughts. There's so much to ponder in what she has said. I sense she is longing for what we call *Encircling Reach* - an essential and vital component to Mothers of Influence.

When we talk about arts, we're actually talking about allowing the work of heaven to flow through us. We are the instrument and God is the artist. We learn, practice, and refine...

the *art* of mothering,

the *art* of being a wife, mother, sister, friend, neighbor,

the *art* of creating sanctuary,

the *art* of "home"-making,

the *art* of gentleness, the *art* of unity, the *art* of civility, the *art* of kindness, the *art* of love. Jesus Christ is the creator and exemplar of every one of these arts.

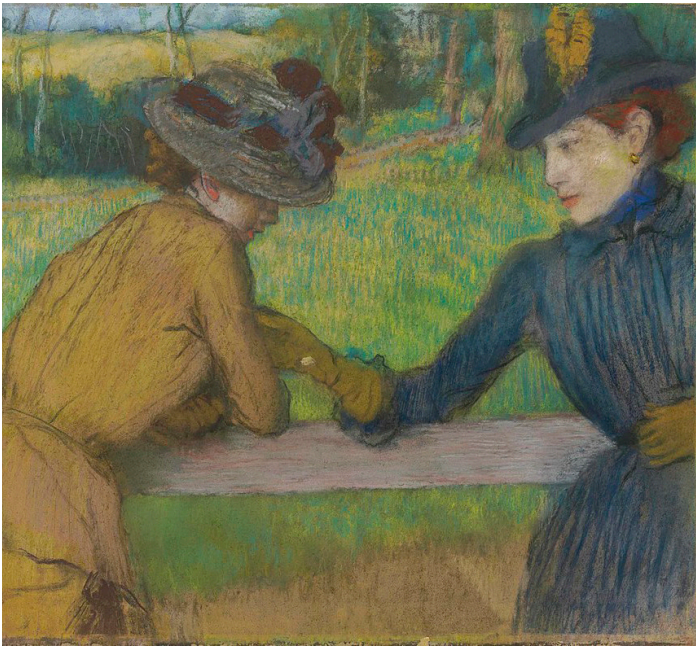
All of these things are acts of creation. They, themselves, are largely "unseen," and (dare I say it?) mothers are given the gift to wield this creative power alongside God. It flows through us. If the enemy to our hearts can keep women from uniting or confuse us unto a false road of "girl power," he can stop the movement that must roll forward.

The real strength of MOI is in the gathering. WEH has the meat--the substance--but the uniting of mothers is a critical piece in all of this - and relationships are everything! MOI is the nursery where we will practice finding and widening our common ground. It's where we'll practice how to navigate and negotiate these differences. Yes, it's messy. Yes, it's hard. But how can we begin to heal hearts if we can't mend the gaps among ourselves? I heard this phrase about unity the other day: "same-ness has never been the goal -- one-ness is the goal." Amen! While it is true that MOI is currently made up of women who are typically similar in backgrounds, beliefs, educational philosophies, and even ethnicity, that's not where we'll stay.

I'll tell anyone who will listen what I'm desperately trying to teach my children; find the common ground -- seek to discover and understand a person's core values -- identify where agreements can be made and build on those things. Soften your own opinions enough so that there can be room for someone else's. That doesn't mean let go of it -- just make room for both to exist together. Take time to examine the other side and "see" with genuine kindness and understanding.

The work of MOI -- when it is working as it should -- is to address the very things this lovely mother is feeling and expressing. I'd like to link arms with her and say don't give up! We need her, and we need you to continue opening the dialog. Return kindness for rudeness and persistence for despair.

MOI won't ever be perfect, but we're still going to aim high. How will it ever happen? Deepen (*cont. on p. 8*)



Art credit: Conversation by Edgar Degas

(MOI Minute cont.) your own roots, increase and nurture your inspired growth, and do everything in your power to cultivate that encircling reach. That's the spirit of MOI, and it's so much bigger than a book club.

Love, Marley

*"The world has enough women who are tough, we need women who are tender. There are enough women who are coarse. We need women who are kind. There are enough women who are rude; we need women who are refined. We have enough women of fame and fortune; we need more women of faith. We have enough greed. We need more goodness. We have enough vanity, we need more virtue. We have enough popularity, we need more purity."*

--Margaret Nadauld

**"IMPART AS MUCH OF YOUR FAITH AS YOU CAN TO THOSE WHO WALK THE ROAD OF LIFE WITH YOU, AND ACCEPT AS SOMETHING PRECIOUS THAT WHICH COMES BACK TO YOU FROM THEM."**

--Albert Schweitzer

Art credit: A La Fontaine  
by William-Adolphe Bougeureau

