

November 2017

# The Luttmanns

Serving with Bible Visuals International



John Newton's church in Olney

## Father and Forefathers

*"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." Ecclesiastes 7:2*

We entered that house of mourning on September 25th as we gathered with the rest of Betsy's family to remember her father. Less than a week earlier we received the news that he had passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack. This was hard for the family as you can imagine and it brought back emotions and tears shed thirteen years ago when Betsy's mother died.

I shared in the last update of God's blessings including time spent with Betsy's father as we ministered at a VBS in Illinois. Now we hear Job's question: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" By God's grace we can answer "yes" and testify that God gives grace in these times too. Here are some specific ways He worked:

1. We were able to quickly head to Illinois thanks to coworker's covering a conference and CEF Philly reworking a teacher training session I had scheduled.

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**NOVEMBER 17 2017**

Currently our support level is around 70% for the year. If you are planning an end of year support gift you might consider using ExtraGive as a way to boost your gift. This special day of giving benefits numerous non-profits in Lancaster. The sponsors make a donation to each organization, but the size depends on how much each organization receives from individual donors that day.

To give this way, go to [www.extragive.org](http://www.extragive.org) on Nov. 17th.

2. On short notice, our dear friends, Arden & Sallie Lemponen provided a place for us to stay during the ride out to Illinois.
3. Our Harvest Bible Church family ministered to us through many prayers, words of encouragement and tangible acts of service like mowing our lawn, giving the kids goodie bags for the long drive to Illinois and sending memorial flowers to the funeral.
4. God gave much grace to me personally as I spoke at my father-in-law's funeral. There were several unsaved folks in attendance and I was able to share the Gospel. What a blessing though to see the Gospel message adorned by the strong testimony of Betsy's father's life.
5. God graciously followed up this time of mourning with a time of refreshment for us through a previously scheduled anniversary getaway (Read below).

Over the past seven years I've had opportunity to work on several BVI stories which have connections to England. In October, Betsy and I were able to make a trip to the UK and to visit some of these sites I've written about. It was a reminder that as we share the Gospel with children, we also teach them about the forefathers of our faith.

In Bristol, England, we visited The New Room, the oldest Methodist meeting house in the world. John Wesley established a church in Bristol in 1739 and The New Room was built in 1748. The museum onsite included a headboard supposedly salvaged from the Wesley's house fire shared in our new story "Filling a Little Space".

Nearby, we were also able to visit the house Charles Wesley and his family lived in. Our illustrators had used pictures of his third floor study as a bases for another illustration in our book. The house includes a museum focused on the history of hymn writing.



(1) New Room Chapel, Bristol (2) John Wesley Statue (3) Headboard from Wesley fire (4) Charles Wesley house

Bristol is also the setting for many of the events in "God Provides! The Life of George Mueller". We visited a museum and saw the desk used by Mueller. The museum also had the original architectural drawings for the orphanage houses established on Ashley Downs. One special blessing was to see a pamphlet format of our BVI story available for children who visit the museum. We granted permission for this several years ago.



(1) George Mueller's desk (2) BVI pamphlet at museum (3) Orphanage house at Ashley Downs

Later in the day we drove up to see the Ashley Downs buildings which are now used as private dwellings and as part of a college campus.

The story I had the most involvement in writing was our biography of John Newton called "Depths of Grace." Betsy and I were able to drive out and spend a day in Olney where Newton served as minister. We first toured Orchardside, the home of Newton's friend and fellow hymnwriter, William Cowper. The home is also the site of The Cowper and Newton Museum which sponsored a hymnsing that afternoon at the church of St. Peter and St. Paul where Newton served. It was a thrill to sing "Amazing Grace" in the church where it was first introduced. In the church yard we visited John and Mary "Polly" Newton's grave.



(1) John Newton window in Olney (2) St. Peter and St. Paul chancel (3) Grave of John & Mary "Polly" Newton (4) William Cowper window

Back in the office, I have continued to work on several new licensing and distribution agreements that will see BVI materials distributed in more places internationally. One of those places is in our own backyard. A local release time ministry called Bible2School approached us earlier in the year about using some of our visuals with the Bible lessons they share in their program. I was able to review all of their lessons and suggest visuals from our resources. With the agreement signed, we have now supplied those visuals to all those using the Bible2School program. One additional blessing is that our own church, Harvest, has become a site location this fall for a Bible2School release time club.

Other licensing and distribution agreements are currently in the works in Brazil, the Ukraine and Canada.

Our BVI staff also continues to make great progress on updating our Bible lesson series into full-color. You may recall that much of the initial work was done by ministry partners in India who have been coloring the illustrations for their own needs. So far this year we've seen seven volumes colorized and three more on the way. This is far more than we've been able to do in the past. These updated illustrations not only help those who we supply directly, but, as you just read, they help related ministries like Bible2School, who utilize the illustrations.

Thank you for the prayers and words of encouragement to us. We thank God for the opportunity to serve in a ministry that makes the name of our Lord known throughout the world.

Grace and peace,

Tom & Betsy Luttmann and family



(1) View from Cheddar Gorge—inspiration for “Rock of Ages” (2) Wells Cathedral (3) Pulteney Bridge in Bath

In September and November Betsy had the opportunity to serve as videographer at two weddings in the area.

First Melissa Read and John Kalenkoski were joined in marriage. Then Melissa’s sister Julie was joined in marriage to Justin Scaman.

What a blessing to see two Christian couples begin their married lives with Gospel-focused wedding ceremonies.

One interesting note. Melissa and Julie were both in a 5-day club I taught several years ago when I was serving as a summer missionary with CEF of Eastern Pennsylvania.

What a joy to see these sisters now grown and continuing to follow the Lord!

