The professor meant well, I’m sure. And so in trying to demystify a central miracle of the Old Testament, the Great Escape of the Hebrews from Egypt described in Exodus 14, he patiently explained to our class of eager undergraduates that the passage about the parting of the Red Sea had long been misunderstood by many. For it was not the Red Sea at all that those Hebrews faced, but the Reed Sea, or the yam suph, an area just north of the Gulf of Suez characterized by its shallow lakes and marshes. And there, he noted, the water was actually only “a few inches deep.”

From time to time, however, a strong wind would come across those lands from the east and blow the waters back. And that, he explained, was exactly what happened when the Israelites crossed over on dry land on their way out of slavery. In turn, when the Egyptians tried to pursue them, the winds stopped blowing, the waters returned, and their chariots of war were hopelessly bogged down in the mud. It all sounded perfectly reasonable, thus. Until I noticed two little details from the Bible itself. First, as they crossed over on dry land, Exodus 14:22 records that the Hebrews had a “wall of water” on both sides of them, presumably one not simply of baseboard height. Secondly, when the Egyptians followed, those walls collapsed and the LORD swept them all into the sea, with not one of them surviving. And I found myself wondering how indeed “just a few inches of water” could have done all that.

In the end, of course, it may not matter. For even if it was an instance of the wind parting the shallow waters as it blew upon them, what made it so miraculous was that it happened precisely when it needed to, that is, just as that ragtag nation of ex-slaves found themselves at water’s edge with their Egyptian enemies closing in fast behind them. That’s when I realized thus that miracles are sometimes as much about the timing of an event as the supernatural nature of it. And in that respect, the words of C.S. Lewis written long ago seem pertinent. For the celebrated Oxford don noted that the question of whether miracles can occur can never be answered simply by experience, as every event we encounter comes as something presented to our senses, and our senses are never themselves all that infallible. Which means that miracles may indeed sometimes be in the eyes of the beholder, but that doesn’t make them any less miraculous. On the contrary, any philosophy which systematically excludes the supernatural is likely to miss seeing such miracles simply because it refuses to do so. Mirroring the sermon series for Lent, therefore, throughout this quarterly you will read of some of the miracles that many of our own folks have experienced. I invite you to suspend your skepticism, thus, and see if you are not as encouraged by these stories as I have been. For I can’t help but think that the God of the Exodus, and Jesus, the Miracle Maker Himself, is still working in this world in ways that we will never be able to fully comprehend. After all, just look at what He did with only “a few inches” of water.
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"Many people saw the miraculous signs He was doing, and believed in His name."

**JOHN 2:23**
FOR 31 YEARS, CHRIST CHURCH HAS BEEN partnering with Methodist churches in the Reynosa Mexico area. We started in 1990 with a summer VBS program at one church and now we make two trips a year that help 11 groups and over 900 children. The June trip is to provide VBS and school supplies and our December trip is to provide food bags, bibles and Christmas gifts. I have been blessed to participate in this mission program since our family joined Christ Church in 2000.

Everything that we take to the border is donated or used. We create a spreadsheet where we calculate how many bags of toys/crayons/supplies, etc. each church gets depending on the number of children they serve. Once we get to the border, our team unloads the Uhaul truck and sorts everything out by church name according to what the list says.

The Reynosa pastors come to McAllen and help us sort in the parking lot. It’s a joyful time of prayer and fellowship as we work together to load their supplies in their vehicles.

Also, all of the wonderful prayers from our congregation have helped fuel God’s purposes for these missions to be blessed and, time and time again, miracles occur that have shown us that God is much better at counting and shopping than we are! Here are just three examples:

1 | One summer we unloaded the truck and had 30 sets of school supplies left over. Instead of recounting everything, I said, “Let’s put them aside and decide what to do with them later” because the pastors had started arriving. Pastor Carmen brought Chelita, a missionary friend who wanted to meet our team and ask for help for her new church called Dios con Nosotros (God is with Us). We explained that all the supplies were already allocated, but we could add her to the next trip. We asked “How many kids do you need supplies for?” She said, “50.” Renee Teel, the Director of Missions at Christ Church, and I just looked at each other in shock and then started to cry in joy and awe at the “coincidence” of God’s Holy Spirit.

2 | For each VBS, we usually get some kind of hat or scarf for each of the teachers to wear to match that year’s theme. One year our VBS theme was “Deep Sea Discovery”, so we were baffled and couldn’t figure out what we were going get the teachers for this theme. The day of the big school supply sort arrived, and God showed us once again how He responds to our prayerful needs. An entire box of goggles showed up from one of the schools. In all the year’s we’ve been receiving donations from Fort Bend schools, we have never received goggles, but this year God knew what we needed and He provided.

3 | We didn’t have any trips in 2020 and also didn’t plan any for 2021, but the pastors contacted us in August because they were in desperate need of school supplies. We scheduled a September trip and again started our spreadsheet. Right before we left, I received a call from a Pastor Chui who had just taken over Dios con Nosotros Church because it had been closed for 5 years after Chelita retired. He wanted to meet us, so I gave him the location info, but again explained that everything was already assigned to the other churches for this trip. While we were packing the Uhaul to leave for the border, we received a last minute donation box from a local school. They gave us 24 brand new school supply packs! Pastor Chui got everything his church needed! Gloria a Dios! (Glory to God)

Throughout the years, we have built a partnership with our sister churches. We supply them with resources we would normally discard and they use these items to evangelize and show their communities how much Jesus loves them. They appreciate everything we donate and in turn they pray for us. They pray for our children that donate their used toys and school supplies. They pray for all the hands that collect, sort, pack and transport the donations. They pray for our Pastors and for the health of our congregation. They pray for our families when they are sick.

It’s a powerful thing when we hear them pray for all of us in the middle of a parking lot. The Holy Spirit surrounds us and we can feel the love that binds us in Jesus.

We would love for you to join us in supporting our sister church in Reynosa, Mexico. You can join us on a trip to the border to help deliver supplies - or you can help from right here throughout the year! Our School Supply Sort, Eat Half Donate Half, Shop Your Closet, and Gift Wrap Extravaganza, all help support our friends in Mexico. And these are all excellent opportunities for the whole family to work together, with jobs for all ages and abilities. Contact Olinda Jehovics at osjehovics@gmail.com to learn more about getting involved.

“...God knew what we needed, and He provided.”

WRITTEN BY OLINDA JEHOVICS
God has worked in each of our lives in His own way, in his own time. Every person that you greet on Sunday mornings, worship next to, work side-by-side with during missions, or hold hands with to pray, has a story. We asked some members of our congregation to share part of their story, and the miracles they have seen in their own lives.

**FOllowing A Surgery** in September 2020 I developed a hematoma the size of a small apple that became infected. The doctor treated the infection and tried unsuccessfully to get the hematoma to drain in the office. She said that if it did not drain in two days she would schedule a minor surgery to open and drain it. I told her that I was going to get all my praying friends on it, which I did. When I returned to her office in two days it was down to the size of a blueberry so NO surgery needed. She said she was sure that she would be booking an OR. I mentioned that I had gotten my praying friends involved. God used those “praying friends” to bring that healing into my life. — Mary Ann Kovach

**As A Church “Family”, we should be able to share miracles, right?”** Or do I even have any to share? Do you? Is God even working in my life? Is He in yours? What if we realized we each have FULL access and a front row seat to one of the greatest miracles of all times: God’s constant “presence” in our daily lives? God IS in us...and with that miracle comes a miraculous testimony that we EACH are given. But we only see it if we look.

I am sharing my earliest remembrances of God’s miracles in my life in hopes that you will look for the same in yours.

• At age 3, the boy across the street broke his leg. I thought that meant it came off, like my barbie. But he was healed and walked again. I saw him!
• At age 6, my parents divorced. Mom taught me the miracle that God could be the Father I never had...to talk to every day and night and love me unconditionally.
• At age 9, God gave our family the miracle of a second daddy to love my mom and her package deal of 3 kids. A real dad who would build forts and wrestle and laugh.
• At age 12, my mom’s esophagus ruptured and she was given a 2% chance of survival. She died on the table and had an out of body experience. She told God she needed to raise her 4 kids first, with the youngest being only two. Today, she is 82 years young—and apparently still raising us. :D
• At 18, I was in a bad place and mentally struggling with life and direction. God gave me a dream so real that I thought I had died that night. I woke up having been held by Jesus. I was free to move forward and I did. His hug healed me!
• At 50, with a very sick child and what seemed an eternal dry spell from God, He answered us moments before we made a crucial mistake. The Doctor said there was a new drug approved that morning (which our son is still on and healthy today).
• At 61, I am grateful I now see God’s miracles in every day. I am learning to ask Him to “interrupt” my day with His plans. He always seems to have a much better agenda than the one I had set. — Roni Thompson

**At approximately 9:45 AM,** September 4, 1994, I was driving east on Highway 59, travelling about 70 mph, when a white car crossed dramatically close in front of me. I hit the brakes hard to avoid a collision - and my front heavy Camaro started spinning across the four lanes of Highway 59. What seemed like slow-motion was actually seconds, but long enough for me to apply my de-spinning techniques. They didn’t work. I took my hands off of the steering wheel and clasped them in my lap while I prayed: “Dear God please help me.” I was remarkably calm during almost two revolutions, and finally my car came to an abrupt stop with the back right tire up on the jersey barrier. Almost immediately a lady was at my car window asking if I was alright and saying it was unbelievable how many cars managed to maneuver around my spinning car. It was then I realized God had saved me. I remembered seeing slow-motion cars driving past me that were driven by translucent looking “people”. The police shut down Hwy 59, while I drove my car down from the jersey barrier and to the Chevrolet dealership. The Maintenance Manager came out to greet me and I boo-hooed my story all over his white starched shirt. He turned to the policeman who had followed me and said: “You need Ette to teach your guys how to avoid accidents.” The officer responded: “Actually I was thinking about ticketing her for Reckless Driving.” Then the manager looked at me and said: “God has more plans for you.” — Ette Green

“Return home and tell how much God has done for you.” So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him. — Luke 8:39
Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” - Matthew 19:26

PRAYER IS A LARGE PART of what Stephen Ministry is—a one-person-to-one person, confidential, Christian, caring (and praying) ministry. My first experience with it was in 2003 when I asked for a Stephen Minister myself to help me through a family struggle. My Stephen Minister not only handed me tissues while I cried, she listened and, more importantly, prayed with me. Neither one of us knew for sure what exact “answer” to pray for from God, but we kept on, steadfastly “asking, seeking and knocking” for God to provide solutions. God seemed to be with us in our prayer partnership. My relationship with God and God’s relationship with me strengthened as a result.

As time went on, my family relationship matter resolved in wonderful ways I never could have envisioned or imagined at the beginning.

When I later took Stephen Ministry training, I learned to be a prayer partner with my assigned care receiver—among many other skills, like listening, boundaries, Christ-centered caring, etc. I learned to remain focused on the process of the caring relationship and prayer, and to remain open and leave the results to God.

Over the years since, I have had several Stephen Ministry care receivers. In my experiences praying with them, I’ve tried to encourage them to “ask, seek and knock” for their heart’s desires, for what they need from God, in prayer. They may just need a safe space to express strong emotions over losses, emotions such as grief, anger, sadness. Or it may be asking something very specific and detailed (an answer to “why me?,” “why my loved one?,” “why dementia?,” “why this illness?,” “how can I get through this crisis?,” etc.). I have found that no matter what is expressed or asked for by my care receiver in prayer, God listens. God can take it! He never deserts us! As time goes on, I have seen that God does so much more than we can ask or imagine! (Ephesians 3:20)

My encouragement to them—and to myself—is to keep on praying, and to keep our hearts open and flexible to the possibility of miracles that we cannot even imagine right now. I’ve seen things happen I never thought possible. A woman grieving the loss of an adult child was able to find enough peace and faith to leave bitterness and to continue on her healing journey. A Katrina survivor was eventually able to build a new life, step by step. An elderly woman who had a husband with worsening dementia and with his eventual death, was comforted in many ways unseen by us at the beginning of our relationship. So very often, God eventually brings about something more miraculous, way beyond what we could have asked or imagined. So, in the meantime, we stay constant and steadfast in our praying, while staying open to His possibilities, to His miracles, hoping and trusting in Him who loves us beyond anything.

Do you need a caring Christian friend to walk beside you through a hard time? We are blessed to have a group of Stephen Ministers here at Christ Church who are trained in providing confidential, Christ-centered care. Consider requesting a Stephen Minister who will listen and help care for you, walking with you through this time. For more information, contact Sally McKnight at 713.306.1719 or smcknight@prodigy.net.
Lenten Study Series: The Miracle Maker
A series on making the impossible possible in our lives, through the unimaginable power of Jesus.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 13
Come join our Sunday evening lenten study, Light & Love of Christ: A Lenten Study of 1 John, led by Pastoral Intern William Murphree. Lent is a time of committing and renewing our focus on Christ. In the study, we will look at setting our hearts on the truth of Christ and how we are to grow in and share His truth and love with the world.
The study will be held in the church library Sunday evenings at 5 pm, March 13 through April 10. Visit christchurchsl.org/lentstudy to RSVP.

APRIL 3 & 10
Your “trash” can be another person’s treasure. Don’t throw away perfectly good items! Donate them to Tri-City Churches Resale Shop where all sales proceeds go to support FBHNM programs.
The truck will be at the church from 8:30 am - 12 pm on Sunday, April 3 and Sunday, April 10 to accept household items, clothing, furniture, sports equipment and toys. They especially need furniture in good condition. For complete list of accepted items, go to humanityneeds.org.

APRIL 16
While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and walked with them.
- Luke 24:15
The Walk to Emmaus is a spiritual renewal retreat that seeks to inspire, challenge and equip leaders to be the hands and feet of Christ. Our next Merits Walk is April 21-24, and our Women’s Walk is April 28 - May 1.
Contact Bob or Sarah Guffey at 832.296.7770 to learn more about Emmaus, or visit HMRC.org.

APRIL 21 & 28
RECRUING GROUPS & CLASSES

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS
Our bible studies and sermon-based small groups meet weekly in person and online. To learn more about these and how to join them, please visit christchurchsl.org/smallgroups.

SUPPORT GROUPS

UNLESS INDICATED, ALL EVENTS ARE BOTH IN-PERSON AND ONLINE.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

ADULT LIFE

CHRIST KIDS / YOUTH MINISTRIES

We are always adding new events to the calendar! See what’s coming up at Christ Church, please visit christchurchsl.org/events.
As we begin the season of Lent, our sermon series is focusing on the miracles that Jesus performed while he was here on earth. In turn, we are also grateful for the miracles that we have seen in our own lives, and for those around us. If we pay attention, we can see clearly that He is always moving, always working in our lives. Even during times that may seem stagnant, He is working in ways that we may not see. This month, we invite you to build a pinch pot together, and talk about the miracles that God has done in your life that have formed you.

**THE CHALLENGE: Build a pinch pot.**

There are so many references to clay in the bible. Isaiah 64:8 says, “But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.” If you have ever worked with real clay, you probably understand the reference. It is quite the process! Building with clay requires a vision, sturdy unwavering hands, pressure, time, patience, intense heat, and gentle care. And if you use a glaze, the color that the heat produces is vastly different from what you see. The process, and final result, are nothing short of miraculous!

As you design and shape your pinch pot, consider God as your potter. What kind of miracles has God done in your life? How has He answered your prayers? How has His timing been surprisingly perfect? When have you had to wait? How have you felt His steady hands guiding you as you were tempted to waver and bend? Has there been a time where you felt in the midst of the fire, unsure of how it would all turn out?

**HOW TO MAKE A SIMPLE PINCH POT**

**STEP ONE**
Roll clay into an even sphere.

**STEP TWO**
Make a slight indent with your thumbs in the middle of the ball.

**STEP THREE**
Begin turning the clay, using your thumbs to pinch lightly. Little by little, begin deepening the hole. Keep the walls and bottom a consistent thickness.

**STEP FOUR**
Continue thinning walls slowly and gently, no less than 1/4 inch thick. Slightly widen the rim.

**STEP FIVE**
Smooth any lumps and bumps using a spoon or your fingers and water. Add decorations using toothpicks, marker caps, other household items, or paint.

**HEY! YOU DID IT!**

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**CHARTKIDS’ CORNER**

**8:30 - 9:15 AM**
BLENDED SERVICE

**9:30 - 10:15 AM**
SUNDAY SCHOOL (All Ages)

**10:30 - 11:30 AM**
TRADITIONAL SERVICE (Sanctuary)
CONTEMPORARY SERVICE (Covenant Hall)
CHRIST KIDS PRAISE (through 3rd grade)

**5 - 7 PM | STUDENT PROGRAMS IN THE FLC GYM (Dinner $2)**

**JOIN US IN PERSON OR ONLINE ON SUNDAYS**

Our main method of communication is called Realm. Sign up at christchurchsl.org/realm to ensure that you don’t miss anything! You can also download the Realm app on your phone.