

into the new (continued from p. 2)

But the Lord had different plans and intentions for us. He was clearly indicating, “No, I didn’t bring you through this life experience in order to take you back to where you were. Because of what I’ve taught you, I’m now going to do new things in and through your lives.”

Why should we be surprised? The Lord is always inviting us into something new. I was reminded that everything God does is new, because His presence is in it. You could say that God doesn’t do “old.” We are always becoming new, and what He does in our lives is new. Old things are passed away, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

As we know, whatever role or position we are now serving in is temporary. Sometimes what we used to do, or the role we had, is no longer there. But it is seldom all that God has for us. Vollie and I are experiencing some of His “new” right now.

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

What might the Lord have next for you? ◀

trust fall



by Lyndi Lee Markus
Editor-in-Chief, *Upfront*
Staff Development and Care

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, and the mountains quake with their surging. (Psalms 46:1-2)

Living in Colorado Springs, I always have Pikes Peak on my horizon. The idea of waking up one morning to find it suddenly missing, tossed in a sea somewhere, is horrifying! What a changed landscape that would be! Everything familiar stripped away, leaving behind only desolate, unrecognizable devastation.

That’s how I often see changes in my own landscape. The time when I moved back broken from the mission field in the Dominican Republic. The time I broke up with my boyfriend. The time I changed jobs. The time I chose to live apart from friends I love. For each of these, I looked at the remnants of my life and wondered what on earth could replace what I’d lost.

But what if the breaking into pieces is actually for good? Like the enormous old tree that falls in a storm, making way for the long-range vista to shine through. Or like forest fires that burn away the undergrowth, clearing and preparing the ground for thriving new foliage.

When God changes our scenery, pruning us, His biggest purpose is not necessarily to rid us of something “useless.” Rather, He is pulling back the excess, revealing the foundations He has established in our souls for future construction. If I’m not careful, though, I underestimate God’s potential for restoration and redemption.

We must abide in Him for the change. Dwell outside of our natural perspective, in His timeless space, where He sees the long-range good of our earth-shattering devastation. Enter the trust fall.

The Lord is the singular constant in it all. “See, I am doing a new thing,” He says (Isaiah 43:19)—yet He Himself remains constant. A holy dichotomy. The only way we can weather the change is to abide in the One who does not change—our refuge and our strength. ◀



hate change (continued from p. 3)

Malachi 3:6 says, “I the Lord do not change. Therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed” (ESV). We can depend on his unchanging nature when everything else is in flux.

At the same time, the verses shortly before and after that require us to change. Malachi 3:2-3 talks about the sanctifying work of Jesus. Malachi 3:7 deals with repentance. The images in these verses involve turning up the heat, washing, scrubbing, spinning, turning around—all marks of change.

What my Campus Director taught me was that personal growth and development, missional effectiveness, and simply following Christ all demand change. Yes, change is good! During those years at West Point, I actually got to the place where I would come home from my engineering job, walk into the end of a long Nav staff meeting, and ask, “Okay, what’s the latest thing? What’s behind it, and what can I do to help implement it?” I may never get completely used to change, but it’s become part of my “normal.”

So let’s hold onto the Rock of our Salvation and his enduring nature as we “navigate a sea of change” for the good of our Calling and our growth in Christ. ◀

We’d love to hear from you!
What feedback do you have for us? What hot topics are on your mind that you’d like to see us cover? Shoot us an email at SDC@Navigators.org. ◀



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upfront

Real-Life Stories and Practical Tools
to Advance The Navigator Calling

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anchors in change

by Kristie Monteiro
City Director, Detroit

Yes or no? At some point, everyone has to make that choice in a big, life-changing way. For my husband, Paul, and me, the road to my accepting the role of City Director of Detroit was full of hard decisions, prayer, and communal discernment with our Navigators

Neighbors national and local team.

Saying yes would mean leaving behind a fruitful community of like-hearted believers, fertile soil full of seeds we had sown over the course of seven years. Leaving would be hard. Our six children, spanning 4-15 years of age, were embedded in relationships and activities that spun around them, holding them secure. They were in the process of growing, maturing, and rooting.

Nonetheless, the Lord spoke very clearly to Paul and me, and also to those around us. We had a deep, deep sense that this would be an act of obedience.

These early conversations, feelings, and moments—times when we tasted, saw, and heard the Lord speak—became our anchor in the months that followed. As the realities of transition rolled in, so did the waves of uncertainty and doubt. Being able to remember and mark those times in meaningful ways proved vital. We wrote out verses that struck a chord and memorized them, jotting notes to ourselves, dwelling on moments of clarity, and bringing ourselves back to them.

These small links in the chain pulled us back down to the anchor, and they still do. In verses like Hebrews 10:35-37, remembering why we are enduring this season of change calls us back to our obedience.

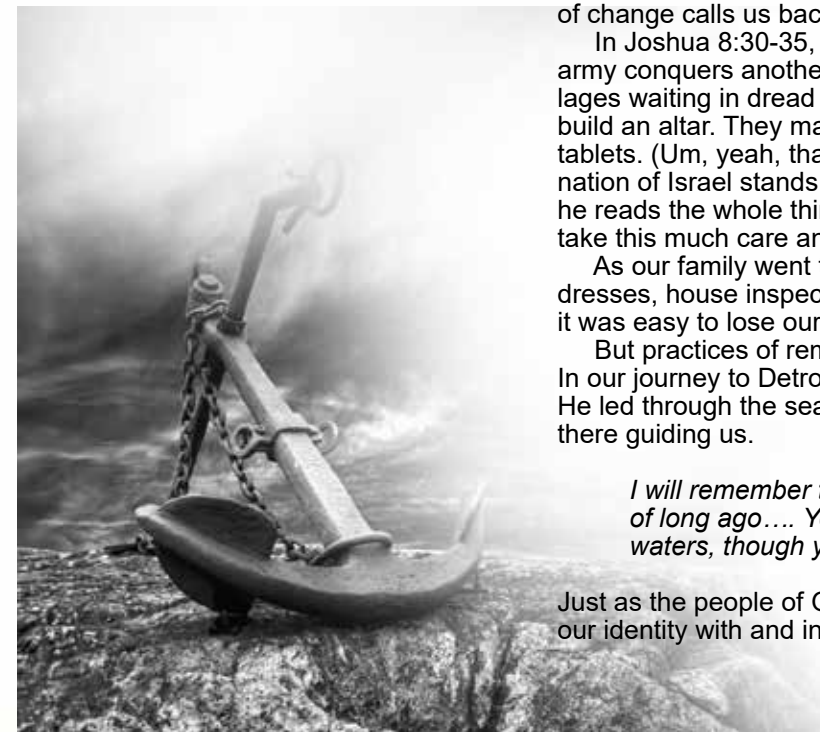
In Joshua 8:30-35, we see an unusual wartime strategy acted out. The Israelite army conquers another piece of the Promised Land. Then, with other towns and villages waiting in dread for Israel to come conquer them, Joshua gathers Israel. They build an altar. They make sacrifices. Then Joshua copies the whole Law onto stone tablets. (Um, yeah, that’s right. He chisels another copy of the Law while the whole nation of Israel stands around waiting. Super productive, right?) When he’s finished, he reads the whole thing to them! What patience and perseverance for a leader to take this much care and concern to practice remembering.

As our family went through the process of goodbyes—packing, changing addresses, house inspections, repairs, last trips to our doctor, dentist, and hair salon—it was easy to lose our sense of why. The same proved true on the other end.

But practices of remembering can provide a way through the transitional battles. In our journey to Detroit, God didn’t always lead through the path of least resistance. He led through the seas and waves ... but when they swamped us, He was still there guiding us.

I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.... Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen (Psalms 77:11, 19).

Just as the people of God have done for centuries, we remember our way back to our identity with and in Him. ◀



leaning into transition

by Laurie Besonen

Executive Director,
Staff Development and Care



"Moving gives a person the opportunity to redefine themselves." That's the sage advice my supervisor offered as I considered taking on a new role in a different region. She was right. The move stretched me and gave me room to grow.

What she didn't mention was how disorienting, disorienting, and *vulnerable* the process can be. In my first week after moving, I distressed the teenaged bagger at the grocery store by bursting into tears and confessing, "I don't know how to get home!" (Those were the days before GPS and smartphones.)

Similarly challenging and redefining are the internal shifts in priorities and perspectives that come through exposure to new ways of being. I, alongside my coworkers, have been working through the three Cultural Development waves on our journey to increase Navigator ethnic minority contributions. Examining my own story and the systemic injustice in the story of "we" pushed me toward discomfort and repentance.

My first reaction was to push back—to reject the concept of white privilege and deny its existence. But a nagging voice in my spirit said, *Watch for it*. Another self-redefinition is underway, and its weight sometimes overwhelms me. Changing harmful laws and practices feels so out of my reach! This has led to the realization that what I *can* change is my own approach to life and leadership.

Leaning into transition, of whatever kind, means leaning into vulnerability, surrendering the power we have over our circumstances, and trusting God to do the work in us and in our world.

This edition of *Upfront* presents a spectrum of articles from staff who have gone or are going through various transitions. I hope their words strengthen and encourage you as you lean into the vulnerability and redefinition of whatever changes you face right now. ◀



leading us into the new

by Darrell Sanders

Senior Adviser to
The Associate U.S. Director



His compassions...are new every morning.
Lamentations 3:23

I spent part of April and May of 2018 in the hospital and a rehabilitation facility, recovering from a still undiagnosed illness. During the time, I lost my ability to read, write, walk, and think—all the primary elements of being a person.

Over time, the Lord began to slowly return some of what was lost. I remember clearly the first time I could read a whole sentence. What a blessing. And once again, I began to enjoy the presence of the Lord and what He was revealing to VOLLIE and me through the process.

We returned home as the recovery continued. So many friends came to help, and a wonderful set of neighbors made it a priority to care for and support us. My hope and desire at that time was to get back to where I'd been before the illness. I wanted the Lord to restore my health and place me back into the ministry role and contribution I'd enjoyed before.

into the new (continued on back)

Connecting with God
...in Times of Change

When the whole world's quaking on its axis, it's vital to stay plugged in to the Source. In *God Is Closer Than You Think* (Zondervan, 2005), John Ortberg outlines seven pathways to connect with our unchanging God. Read through the descriptions and consider: Which pathways are natural connection points for you and God? How can you utilize these during times of change?

- Intellectual pathway**
Learning about God brings you closer to Him. Your heart follows what you read and study into deeper relationship.
- Relational pathway**
You sense God's presence profoundly when you're also connecting with other people.
- Serving pathway**
Helping others gives you great joy and a sense of connection.
- Worship pathway**
Expression in worship, musically, artistically, or otherwise, brings you to life.
- Activist pathway**
You're a mobilizer, passionate about action toward a cause, which brings an awareness of God.
- Contemplative pathway**
God is most present to you in your thoughtful inner world, without the distractions of the modern day to day.
- Creation pathway**
Experience of God's world brings you connection to His presence.

In the midst of change, we can often find ourselves off-center and drifting in focus. Both of the tools in this issue might help you assess and home in on your true anchor.



You can use this **spiritual barometer**, a guided journey through Psalms 143, to assess your focus.

Where are you centered when the pressure's high? This resource is available in its entirety at www.sdcresourcehub.org/care under Printable Resources, or by scanning the QR code with your smart phone.



tools for change



by Josh Borunda

Campus Director, Texas State University
LaVida Leadership Team

I recently became the Campus Director at Texas State University, and I'm realizing that this is a unique environment requiring a unique approach: fifty-five percent of the student population are minority ethnic, making them the majority.

Our staff team is recruiting a Latina student for a short-term mission this summer in the Dominican Republic. She's highly motivated for Christ, but when one of our staff asked her to join us for the trip, she hesitated. She was excited, but she wouldn't just say yes on her own. She wanted one of our team members to come to her home and meet her family first.

Being Latino myself, I get it. Our students highly value family, so we can't just connect with the student and win their trust; we also need to try to connect with their families. The gospel moves forth through relational connections and networks—networks as simple as families.

The beauty is that not only does this potentially bless both this student and her family, but it enriches our lives and blesses us as a staff team and our ministry. This approach may take time and energy away from what we traditionally think of as college ministry, but if we embrace it, we just might win the hearts of Latino students—and their families, maybe for generations—for the gospel. It's a change I'm excited about.

But it's one change on top of many. Caitlin and I have been married for less than a year, and we're both new to this city, this campus, and this role. Sound like a lot? It is.

I've learned to navigate this challenging season in a couple specific ways.

First, mentorship. In the Leader Development Initiative, I was paired with someone who had been a Campus Director before taking on his regional role. He could relate to my high-stress life stage, so after LDI ended, he agreed to keep meeting with me remotely. This deep, Christ-centered relationship helps me feel less isolated and less of a failure in my new roles as husband and Campus Director.

Second, sabbath. Weekends can be full in campus ministry, so Caitlin and I have embraced a Thursday sabbath. This has guided our relationship to a place of rest, attempting to delight in the Lord, intentionally laying down our responsibilities before Christ, and centering our marriage on what's really important.

Honestly, it's been really hard, but over the last six months, we have seen the fruitfulness of making space for God to speak to us. For instance, for us "sabbath" includes not checking work emails or being consumed by social media.

I've also had to negotiate with some of my other responsibilities, including the LaVida leadership team, that I won't attend team meetings if they're on a Thursday. This presents some complications, but it's worth it for myself, my marriage, and the ministry the Lord has entrusted me with.

As you navigate change, how do you find time to rest? Who helps you focus on Christ and gives you valuable advice and a listening ear? ◀

i (used to) hate change

by Mike Whitney

Deputy Director
Director of Cultural Development
Staff Development and Care



"I hate change!" I said. "It seems we just get things working well when we have to change them."

My Campus Director had just introduced yet another change to our ministry plan for the year. At the time, I was serving at USMA West Point as a Navigator Associate while

also working for Consolidated Edison as a nuclear engineer.

My leader's response caught me by surprise. "Change is a good thing, Mike. The fact that we did something one way last year is as good a reason as any to change it this year."

WHAT!? I'd never heard of such a thing before. My cultural background, steeped in Maine tradition, taught me to value and preserve the "old ways." Our motto is "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Anyone who knows me knows I like consistency and keeping things the same. Same habits, favorite foods, traditions, cars, roads, stores, relationships, life rhythms, etc. If someone gives me a clothing gift for Christmas, I usually put it in my closet to age for a few weeks or months before rediscovering and wearing it. A little strange, maybe, but it works.

In my defense, I think it's in the nature of humanity to long for something that doesn't change. Thankfully, God is such a rock.

hate change (continued on back)

development opportunities

May 1-2, 2019 (Los Angeles)
SUPERvision Training
(for supervisors)

June 18-22, 2019 (Colorado Springs)
Summer Together 2019
(Navigator development and training, open to all)

For more information, call
719-594-2555 or email
SDC@Navigators.org