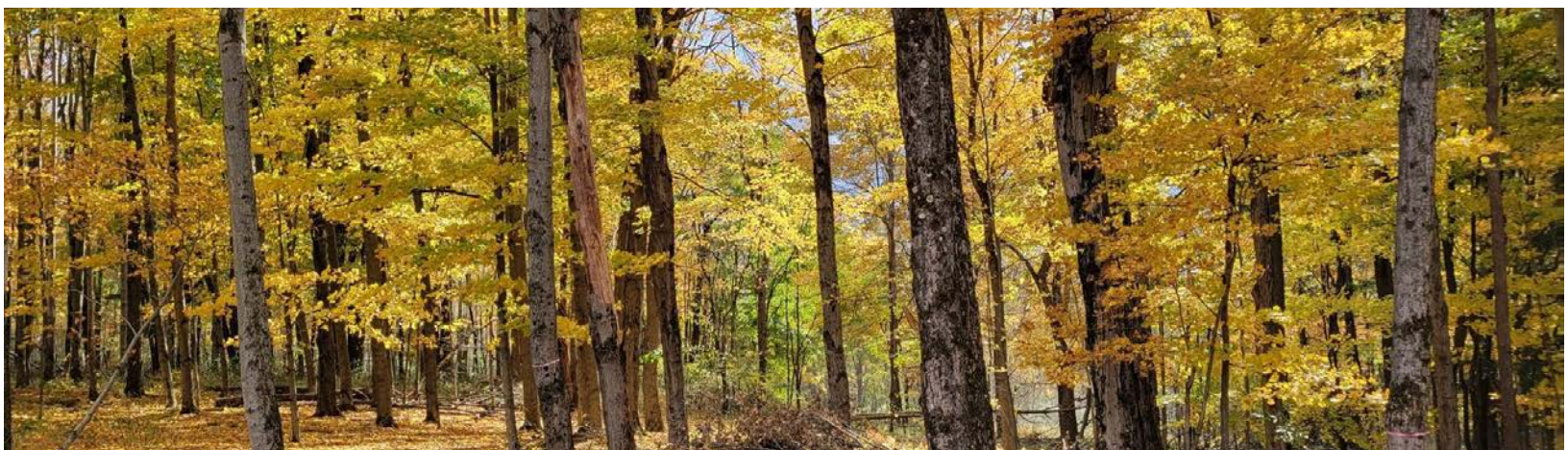


Fall 2022

The Cox Chronicles

The common cry: Why God?



I'm currently reading through the book of Job and wading through man's wrestling with "why God..." would do/allow/permit the things that don't make sense in our lives. Job's friends insist that it is the result of sin, though we know in this instance that it's not. I've asked God this very question many times myself. Being a first responder makes me walk away from many situations with this utterance on my lips. I don't know that I question His love, but certainly have questioned His application of it. I know that He is infinite and sovereign, and sees things through eyes that no human can even fathom. His perspective is an eternal one when mine is often so momentary. I guess that's why it's so hard to explain faith to someone who is questioning God. I'd like to say that I have simply learned to trust God with even the things that don't make sense, but I would be lying if I said that I didn't still ask why.

It's in these moments where I must confront my own motives. I somehow believe I'm entitled to a life free of suffering, instead of being escorted through it by a God who wants to use that suffering for His greater purposes. I think I should be able to choose who should receive trials and judgment, instead of remembering that I have been COMPLETELY absolved of all my sin, and not because I could ever hope to earn that absolution. It is only through the lens of my understanding that I am a sinner undeservedly saved by grace that I can truly embrace the suffering and sorrow in our world. Am I mindful of all that I have been saved from, instead of pouting about the things that I think I've been deprived of? It is in these times that I have to walk myself through the truth that His love is greater than I can fathom, His purposes higher than I can understand, and His grace sufficient for all involved, including me. In the end God doesn't answer Job's question of "why", He instead answers his question with "who" He is, and that is answer enough.



Ministry Highlights:

Weddings! This year has been one full of alumni weddings and thanks to the sale of Piper's puppies we were able to travel to CA as well as TX to be a part of two very special unions. We are so grateful for wonderful friends who gave us housing and even a vehicle to borrow while we were in CA. It was a first for all of us to see the west coast except for

Matt who had been there once right after high school. The whole family was able to make it to CA and all but Lydia went to TX. No matter where we are, together is our favorite place to be!



Summer camp was once again a whirlwind of activity and family going in every direction. It was not uncommon to leave the house before 8a.m. and return after 10 p.m. Over 1200 Ranchers were able to attend camp this summer and we are grateful for each opportunity.

Our nurse's station weekly sees kids coming in for bumps, bruises, belly aches, etc. but one of my favorite stories is of a scholarshiped young man who showed up with inflamed and oozing poison ivy covering large portions of his legs and hands. We were able to coordinate an ER visit for him, get him on the proper meds, make sure he received them daily, treat his discomfort so that he could stay at camp, and by the end of the week his rash was looking great. As the Director of Nursing, I love tending to the kids' and staff's physical needs, but much of my summer is spent making phone calls to parents and loads of paperwork that accompany Rancher medications. I was blessed by a fantastic staff of volunteer nurses and EMTs that shoulder a huge part of this load and make our program more efficient!

Matt's job can often keep him in the office through the summer but he loved jumping in to help with hay as well doing various Message from the Mount presentations at the Ranch and in the community. We could occasionally coordinate schedules and enjoy sneaking our meals from the dining hall to have a picnic/date on the deck of the Brokenstraw.

Jonathan helped out in the Buckboard store this summer as well as with lawn care and chores at home. He is now in the 9th grade and in an online charter school and is also a Jr. Fireman.

Emily served as a camp counselor this summer and is about to start her first job in town. She's excited for this opportunity to branch out from her years of working at the Ranch.

Lydia had to vacate the apartment she was renting due to the owner's family needing it, but we are enjoying having her back home. She is taking online classes in "homesteading" and we are all getting a

chance to partake in this new adventure. (Namely chickens, canning, sourdough bread, and cold frame gardening.)

Megan and Simeon are seeing some movement in the way of his paperwork coming through for citizenship. Megan is still working in the programming department and Simeon has been blessing the Ranch and community with his welding skills while they wait.

Simeon, Megan, Lydia, and Emily all traveled by car to CA and made a grand adventure of it along the way. Due to time constraints the rest of us flew out and back. Jonathan seemed to enjoy his first real experience flying. (He had flown at 6 weeks of age but doesn't remember it.)

We had a brief visit with Hannah and Garrett while attending a wedding in TX but then Garrett's grandpa Dean passed away while we were there. Our caravan then headed north so that we could get back in time for the viewing and funeral. Garrett had to return to TX shortly afterwards but Hannah and the kids were able to stay for an extended visit while Connie (Garrett's mom) helped her mom over the next week. Although we miss our friend dearly, we were blessed by this time as a family.



This fall we graduated 31 students. It was a wonderful year with our 3 girls who were a part of our family; Madi Kittelberger (2nd year), Melissa Beckman, and Lydia Zoschke. Lydia stayed on for a second year, Melissa came on as staff in our housekeeping department, and Madi comes to visit when she is able. Megan was also a co-advisor with us this past year.

This year we opted out of being advisors in the hopes that we might be used when other staff need a fill-in host and also do more hosting of staff and people in our community. We are currently teaching a class with the 2nd year students in our home most mornings and love having the livingroom packed with these wonderful kids. Matt is also teaching multiple classes with the 1st year students at this time. It's been a fun season of getting to know the new students.

One of our fall projects is to hopefully replace the front deck that fell off the house this past spring. Due to schedules we've not been able to complete it yet but hopefully will before winter settles in.

We are so grateful for the donation of tomatoes, onions and peppers allowing us to put up salsa and pasta sauce for the winter.

We were also blessed to take our car in for a seemingly small leak in the tire only to discover that we were basically driving on tires that were in desperate need of replacement. Though not an expense we had anticipated, we rejoice in God's provision of safety in showing us the situation. We are also thankful for His protection as Jenni was pushed off the road by another driver over the summer while returning from an appointment for her mom in Pittsburgh.

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We would like to thank you for the part you have played in our lives and ministry here. I look back over the years in awe of God's provision for our family as well as the Ranch. We look forward with great anticipation to all that He holds ahead for us.

In His service, Matt and Jenni Cox and family



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