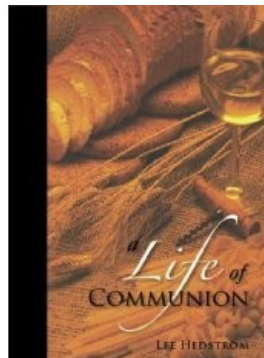
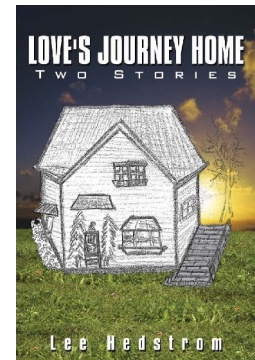
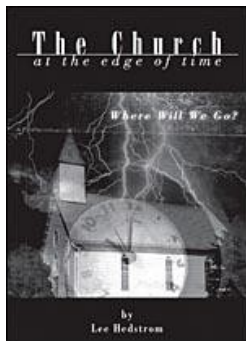


An Interview with Lee Hedstrom

By:

TANNIA E. ORTIZ-LOPES
(<http://timewithtannia.tripod.com>)



1) **Tell us about yourself**

I grew up in a small town in Kansas . My parents were merchants, owning a hardware store. My father also operated the family farm. We were surrounded, by aunts, uncles, cousins and other family, with love and food. Even after leaving for college in 1968, I knew that love would never fade away. I graduated in 1973 from Dana College in Blair Nebraska; married, with one daughter and a son on the way. We moved to St. Paul , Minnesota , where I started seminary. I found that the ministry was not my calling and began working in the secular world. In the last 45 years I have seen the changes that society has gone through, and have been able to write down what I have seen.

Many other changes have taken place in my life during that time, some bad, some really bad, and much good. God is faithful even when we fail, and when He forgives, He forgets, and so have I. Life can't get any better than it is now.

2) In 1973 you graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in religion. Then you went for one year only to Luther/Northwestern Seminar. How the change of family environment in Kansas to the flairs and temptations of the university in Blair, Nebraska affected your life? Did you engage on any type of „unapproved parental“ behavior just because you have „free will“ to choose between right and wrong? Why did you attended only one year the seminarian school? Share your college experiences with our readers and your decision to stop the seminarian school.

When I began my life as a student, I was quiet and reserved. When I graduated, I was married, and broken down. I had begun a descent down to the pit of depression. I lost all hope of becoming a minister or even seeing any hope of carrying on with my life. I had rebelled against God and my wife. Even after moving to Minnesota, I couldn't seem to manage my life. Therein lies the crux of my problem, I was trying to manage my life, and not allowing my Father in Heaven to take control. Because of my pride, I ended up losing everything, my family, my job, my home, and my mind.

3) You lived and worked at the Union Gospel Mission when as a prodigal son you lost everything dear to you. How long were you there and why? What did you learn from this experience?

I began living at the Union Gospel Mission in August of 1986. I had sunk to the bottom of the pit, and because I finally did as much damage as my wife could take, she asked me to leave. Moving to the Mission was both the bottom of the pit, and a trampoline which sprung me back onto solid ground. I was forced to look at myself and see all the filth that I was covered with. I then saw Jesus in the ministers who came to the chapel service. I gave my heart back to Jesus, and found release for my mind and spirit. I learned again, God loved me and wanted me to be with Him. Just like the prodigal son in Luke chapter 15: 16-32, I was welcomed by the Father.

4) Your wife, Maggie, played an important role during your years of searching for "Lee" How her support and love brought balance to you? Was she the missing link?

Maggie is the best gift God could give me. She played a pivotal role, orchestrated by God, to draw me into His Kingdom. She invited me to attend a counseling session with her, which I accepted, wherein I found healing. I was able to grow and develop as a Christian, and become the whole person each of us can be. She has supported me as I developed as a writer, and encourages me to continue to get better as I write. I have found that in my life, Jesus had been the missing link in the chain of events that made up my life, but Maggie was the instrument God chose to bring me closer to Him.

5) You published two books with Tate Publishing, *The Church at the Edge of Time* and *A Life of Communion*. Where these books inspired by your desire of share God's redeeming love with others? Tell us a little about them and where can they be purchased.

The books I have published with Tate Publishing were an outgrowth of my realization of God's mercy and grace toward me. Each book tells the story of His redeeming grace, as He works in us and through us. *The Church At The Edge Of Time* is a work that introduces us to God's plan. Telling about the lives of biblical characters, we see what happens when God's plan is followed and also what happens when it is not followed.

In my book, *A Life Of Communion*, I show the possibility of having an intimate relationship with the Father, because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Because Jesus died and rose again, we have the possibility of reconciliation with the Father, and that scene from the parable of the prodigal son where the Father runs out to the road and hugs and kisses his son, gives him a royal ring and robe, and sandals for his feet, then throws a party in his honor comes true. *Love's Journey Home* is a different style. In poetry form, I tell the story of a person in a tough circumstance, who first tries living life on his terms then, through the love of a wife and family, comes to know what love is, and how much God loves each one of them.

6) You published your third book, *Love's Journey Home*, with Author's House. Why did you change publisher? Would you recommend you new publisher to new authors? If yes, what are the advantages of this publisher versus your previous one?

Tate Publishing is an honorable institution, and I am happy that I brought my first two books to them. They were not able to publish my third book, however, because it was poetry. I, therefore searched the internet, and the newsletters I receive from writers groups. I chose AuthorHouse because they seemed to have the requirements I needed for publishing my book. They are a print on demand publisher, which means there is no inventory, only a template. They charge a lower first investment price, which means they charge for each option the author chooses. Therefore, eventually, each publisher ends up costing the same amount. Whichever we choose as our publisher is determined by two things; the first is affordability. If you as an author don't have a lot of money, a print on demand publisher might be the answer. The second thing is this; Who ever your audience is will determine which publisher you send your manuscript to. That is something the publisher can help with. They will tell you if they can publish your book. Just don't choose the first one who comes along, study the recommendations of other authors, ask questions, and pray for wisdom.

7) *Love's Journey Home* is an old and not so use literature style which is becoming for common among poets; poetry storytelling. Were you inspired by the epic poems the Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer? Share with us with decision process and how did you choose the poems for the book.

The use of poetry to tell a story is as old as there are words. Although I was inspired by the Iliad and the Odyssey, I didn't follow the style of Homer. Homer's poem were epic poems covering whole books. In his two books, he had many books, which we would consider as chapters. I wrote individual poems, which when brought together form a story. The poems could stand as individual poems and still have a powerful message, but when they are brought together become even stronger. Each poem brings into view either the background from which the character comes forth, or the characters thoughts and actions. Each poem shares in the story as a partner, telling of the characters final destination. We can follow his thoughts, fears, and emotional upheavals as he progresses toward his destiny.

8) How can our readers contact you?

I can be contacted by e-mail oleenmaglena@comcast.net or www.myspace.com/leehedstrom

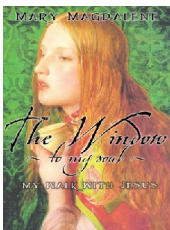
9) Are you working on new projects?

I have three new projects. I am doing research for a book I have tentatively entitled: Molech in American Culture. I am also writing several short stories about Detective John Kittle, and I am writing a study guide for my latest book, [Love's Journey Home](#).

Of course, I am also writing poetry.

10) A word of advice for new writers.

The only advise I know is this: Don't worry about who will publish your book until it is finished and edited. Then you will know who your audience is. Publishers have audiences, too. Certain audiences gravitate toward certain publishers, and certain publishers gravitate toward certain audiences. That is why it is important to know who your audience is. That is also the reason much study is recommended before picking the publisher who will publish your book.



Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés, author of *The Window To My Soul; My Walk With Jesus*

ISBN 0975393359; 2004 Tate Publishing; www.tatepublishing.com).

Author's websites: <http://www.myspace.com/tanniaortizlopes> and <http://timewithtannia.tripod.com>. The author also has a blog at www.amazon.com

Copyrighted May 2008, Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopes – All Rights Reserved

Readers Comments:

Date Received: May 31, 2008

Name: Christine

Email: maggieodae@yahoo.com

Comment: Excellent interview. I can feel the love God has for you and tell that He is very proud to call you son.