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Christian Church of God Newsletter

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The PASTOR'S PEN



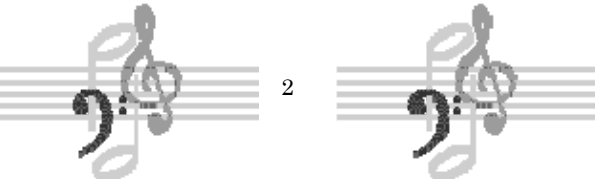
Hello My Brothers & Sisters,

I want to thank each and every one of you who sent flowers, cards, emails & prayers after my mother's sudden and unexpected death on March 22nd. Your compassion and love provided our family great comfort and support at a sad and difficult time. Mom was in the hospital for a hernia operation which had gone well and she was recovering in the hospital when she contracted Clostridium difficile, often called C. difficile or "C. diff". It is a bacterium that can cause symptoms ranging from diarrhea to life-threatening inflammation of the colon. Illness from C. difficile most commonly affects older adults in hospitals or in long term care facilities and typically occurs after use of antibiotic medications. It is serious and in Mom's case, deadly.

I was traveling when my brothers called me, just as I deplaned in Phoenix, to inform me of her turn for the worse and gave me the news that her doctor didn't expect her to make it through the day. Before I could catch the next plane to Pittsburgh, it was too late. In a matter of hours after the C.diff symptoms were observed, the infection shut her organs down and Mom was gone. I traveled on to Pittsburgh to be with my family and assist with the funeral arrangements and Linda made the trip from Amarillo a couple of days later to join us. Mom loved us enough to have her funeral arrangements pre-arranged so my three brothers and I didn't have to deal with that difficult task. As promised to my mother, I conducted her memorial service... though difficult, it was my honor to celebrate her life and sing her praises...after all, it was the least I could do for all the sacrifices she had made for her "4 boys". Our family is very close and the love and support given to each other was touching and comforting. We spent countless hours together sharing memory treasures recalling the life of our "Virtuous Woman" (Prov. 31). I do miss being with family but am ever so grateful for you, my church family, and all the love and support you showered upon Linda and me in our time of loss.

It is truly comforting, as this Passover season reminds us, to know that this is not the end and that I will one day see my mother again in a land and time free of death and pain, without suffering and loss... a land and a time called the Kingdom of God. My family and I take comfort and solace in the surety of the resurrection, knowing that our Lord & Savior put His life on the line so that we may live forever. Just as surely as Lazarus rose and walked... just as surely as Jesus stepped forth from His stony tomb... my mother will step forth from death to life eternal. Her crown is sure, her salvation sealed and that assurance is ours too if we are not moved from grace, for there is laid up for each of us a "crown of glory" in the Kingdom that is God's. It is ours for the taking.

Thankful for Jesus' sacrifice at Calvary, *Jeff Booth*



All together now—applause for God! Sing songs to the tune of his glory, set glory to the rhythms of his praise.

-Psalms 66:1-2 (MSG)

I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done. I will be filled with

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CHECK THIS MEDIA

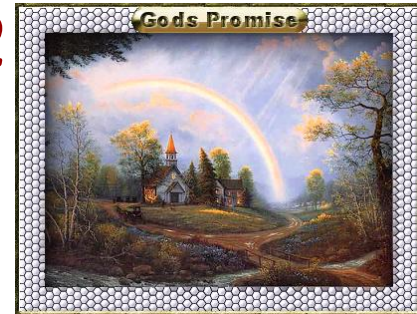
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- Rescue your dreams
- Never hesitate to do what you know is right
- Think quickly
- Work diligently
- Fight fairly
- Never swap your integrity for money, power, or fame
- Watch your back
- Watch your weight
- Watch your language
- Don't be so concerned with your rights that you forget your manners
- Whether it's life or a horse that throws you, get right back on
- Savor every day

God's 'Yes' to Life

Whatever God has promised gets stamped with the Yes of Jesus. In him, this is what we preach and pray, the great Amen, God's Yes and our Yes together, gloriously evident. ²¹ God affirms us, making us a sure thing in Christ, putting his Yes within us. ²² By his Spirit he has stamped us with his eternal pledge—a sure beginning of what he is destined to complete.
~2 Cor 1:20-22 (MSG)



"Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more" Nah. 1:12

There is a limit to affliction. God sends it and God removes it. Do you sigh, and say "When will the end be?" Remember that our griefs will surely and finally end when this poor earthly life is over. Let us quietly wait, and patiently endure the will of the Lord till He cometh.

Meanwhile, our Father in Heaven takes away the rod when His design in using it is fully served. When He has whipped away our folly, there will be no more strokes. Or, if the affliction is sent for testing us, that our graces may glorify God, it will end when the Lord has made us bear witness to His praise. We would not wish the affliction to depart till God has gotten out of us all the honor which we can possibly yield Him.

There may today be "a great calm." Who knows how soon those raging billows will give place to a sea of glass, and the sea birds sit on the gentle waves? After long tribulation the flail is hung up, and the wheat rests in the garner. We may, before many hours are past, be just as happy as now we are sorrowful. It is not hard for the Lord to turn night into day. He that sends the clouds can as easily clear the skies. Let us be of good cheer. It is better on before. Let us sing Hallelujah by anticipation.

GraceRhythms

GraceRhythms

In Galatians 2:20 Paul claimed he had been “crucified,” but he was still alive. Paul had died with Christ, but it was his “old self” that had died: I myself no longer live. The self-centered, Jewish Pharisee, Christian-persecuting, law-abiding, violent, and evil Paul “no longer” lived. That person’s sinful life had been crucified with Christ on the cross. This is the “I” of the flesh (see 5:13-24), of sinful human desires, of works and pride. Paul was released, not only from the tyranny of the Mosaic law, but also from the tyranny of self.

Instead, Paul was a “new person” (2 Corinthians 5:17) because, he explained, Christ lives in me. In other words, Paul had turned over his life to Christ. . . . It is as if Paul was saying, “My old life, my old goals and plans, even old relationships were nailed to the cross with Christ. Now I have a new life because Christ came in and filled the empty spaces all those old pursuits could not fill. Now he lives in me and is the focus of my life.”

—Life Application Concise New Testament Commentary



For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.
~James 1:23-25 (NKJV)

LORD AND MASTER, I WILL TAKE TIME THIS SEASON TO LOOK AT MY HEART MIRROR AND EXAMINE MYSELF IN RESPECT TO . . .
PARTAKING OF YOUR BODY AND BLOOD

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-34

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the **unforced rhythms of grace**. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." ~ Jesus.
Matt 11:28-30 (MSG)

“. . . a man should thoroughly examine himself, and only then should he eat the bread or drink of the cup. He that eats and drinks carelessly is eating and drinking a judgment on himself, for he is blind to the presence of the Lord's body.” —1 Cor 11:28-29 (Phillips NT)

The solemn occasion of the Lord's Supper was to be celebrated carefully and entered into with spiritual readiness. When Paul said that no one should take the Lord's Supper unworthily, he was speaking to church members who were rushing into it without thinking of its meaning. Those who did so would be guilty of sinning against the body and the blood of the Lord. To treat the symbols of Christ's ultimate sacrifice irreverently is to be guilty of irreverence toward his body and blood shed on sinners' behalf. Instead of honoring Christ's sacrifice, those who ate unworthily were sharing in the guilt of those who crucified him.

The very nature of the rite calls for introspection. Therefore, Paul told the believers to examine themselves. No one should partake of the Lord's Supper who had not accepted Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for salvation. Neither should they come to the table drunk, angry with others, or with known but unrepented sin in their lives. Coming to the Lord's table “in an unworthy manner” means to come without a solemn understanding of what is being remembered, and without a repentant and humble spirit before the Lord.
—Life Application Concise New Testament Commentary



Prayer Requests

“. . . The prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; . . . Pray for one another that you may be healed.”
— James 5:15-16.

Sheri Bartlett: Continues to have serious health problems.

Amber & Dylan Clark: Grandchildren of Betty Clark, cerebral palsy.

Vickie Crevoji: Sister of Linda Booth, Chronic Progressive MS.

Bob Fink: Larry Lyles' daughter's father-in-law, prostate cancer which has metastasized to the bone, undergoing chemo.

Bobbie Gatson: Mother of Velvet Green, nerve and back problems making it difficult for her to walk.

Je Keishalyn Henley: Daughter of Velvet and Gary Green, is incarcerated and having health problems. Pray for an early release.

Benny Ray Hicks: Betty Clark's daughter's brother-in-law, leukemia.

Anna Law: In need of a kidney transplant; she has dialysis three times a week.

Dollie Meil: She is suffering with cerebral palsy.

Ted Rankin: Tests show he has increased brain lesions, indicating MS.

Kathryn Scott: Friend of the Baileys; severe MS.

Wilson Stewart: Diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Ron Vorheis: He is still having serious health issues, but has more good days than bad.

IF YOU HAVE UPDATES OR NEW REQUESTS PLEASE INFORM THE EDITOR.

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Celebrations⁴

BIRTHDAYS		ANNIVERSERIES	
Curly Shaklee	4/8	Glennis & Weldon McAlister	4/24
J. R. Hamilton	4/18		
James Vines	4/26		

Condolences

TO THE FAMILY OF
AUDREY L. BOOTH STRAHL
 Born in St. Clairsville, Ohio on April 8, 1925; Departed on March 22, 2009
 At the age of 83
 Daughter of the late Paul and Edith Greer
 A homemaker; attended the Christian Church of God
 Preceded in death by her first husband Riley "Bud" Booth, her second husband Wilmer "Spooks" Strahl, and a brother Robert Houston
 Survived by 4 children: Jeffrey Booth and his wife Linda of Amarillo, Texas; Jerry Booth of Bellaire, Ohio; Brian Booth and his wife Wendy of Martins Ferry; Eric Booth and his wife Patty of Bellaire; a sister Dorothy Nance of San Anselmo, California;
 8 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren
 Services were conducted by Jeff Booth

Christian Passover/ Lord's Supper & Holy Days⁹



TUESDAY, APRIL 7TH
 FOOTWASHING CEREMONY ~ 7:30 P.M.
 SACRAMENT SERVICE ~ 8:00 P.M.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9TH
 FIRST DAY OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
 C.E.P. BIBLE CLASS ~ 11:00 A.M.
 WORSHIP SERVICE~11:45A.M.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15TH
 LAST DAY OF UNLEAVENED BREAD
 C.E.P. BIBLE CLASS ~ 11:00 A.M.
 WORSHIP SERVICE~11:45A.M.



Heartbeats

Editorial
Jerry McClenagan

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Prov 4:23 (NIV)

"I AM AMAZED THAT GOD COULD EVER LOVE ME," begins one of my favorite songs . . .

"so full of sin, so covered o'er with shame."

Its message is especially poignant as we enter Passover Week. Another hymn goes: "Jesus paid it all; all to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain; He washed it white as snow."

Oh the wonder of His grace! The wonder of bowing at the foot of the Cross to accept His mercy! The wonder of hearing His voice through the pain He suffered, "Father forgive them!"

"I gave Him my old tattered garment; He gave me a robe of pure white . . . And I got the best of the deal." Song after song comes to mind: "Redeemed how I love to proclaim it; redeemed by the blood of the Lamb . . .

Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee; be of sin the double cure, save from wrath and make me pure . . . Just as I am without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me . . . At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light, and the burden of my heart rolled away . . ." All I can say is Amen and Hallelujah!



Then Came the Morning

When the Sabbath was over, just as the first day of the week was dawning Mary from Magdala and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. At that moment there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from Heaven, went forward and rolled back the stone and took his seat upon it. His appearance was dazzling like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. The guards shook with terror at the sight of him and collapsed like dead men. But the angel spoke to the women, "Do not be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here - he is risen, just as he said he would. Come and look at the place where he was lying. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead. And, listen, he goes before you into Galilee! You will see him there! Now I have told you my message." ~Matt 28:1 (Phillips NT)

Hymns for Him Hymns for Him

Sing songs from your heart to Christ. Sing praises over everything, any excuse for a song to God the Father in the name of our Master, Jesus Christ . . . ~ Ephesians 5:19-20, Msg.

HE LIVES!



"Why should I worship a dead Jew?"

This challenging question was posed by a sincere young Jewish student who had been attending evangelistic meetings conducted by the author and composer of this hymn, Alfred H. Ackley.

Mr. Ackley's answer to this searching question, ultimately prompted the writing of this popular gospel hymn, *He Lives*.

The composer answered his inquirer: He lives! I tell you, He is not dead, but lives here and now! Jesus Christ is more alive today than ever before. I can prove it by my own experience, as well as the testimony of countless thousands.

Mr. Ackley's forthright, emphatic answer, together with his subsequent successful effort to win the man for Christ, flowered forth into song and crystallized into a convincing sermon in hymn on *He Lives!*

So he sat down at the piano and voiced that conclusion in song. He says, The thought of His ever-living presence brought the music promptly and easily.

	(1) <i>I serve a risen Savior,</i>	(2) <i>In all the world around me</i>
	<i>He's in the world today;</i>	<i>I see His loving care,</i>
	<i>I know that he is living,</i>	<i>And though my heart grows weary</i>
	<i>whatever men may say;</i>	<i>I never will despair;</i>
	<i>I see His hand of mercy,</i>	<i>I know that He is leading</i>
	<i>I hear His voice of cheer,</i>	<i>through all the stormy blast</i>
	<i>And just the time I need Him</i>	<i>The day of His appearing</i>
	<i>He's always near.</i>	<i>will come at last.</i>
	<i>Chr: He lives, He lives,</i>	(3) <i>Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian,</i>
	<i>Christ Jesus lives today!</i>	<i>lift up your voice and sing</i>
	<i>he walks with me and talks with me</i>	<i>Eternal hallelujahs</i>
	<i>along life's narrow way.</i>	<i>to Jesus Christ the King!</i>
	<i>He lives, He lives,</i>	<i>The Hope of all who seek Him,</i>
	<i>salvation to impart!</i>	<i>the Help of all who find,</i>
	<i>You ask me how I know He lives?</i>	<i>None other is so loving,</i>
	<i>He lives within my heart.</i>	<i>so good and kind. ■</i>



Door Openers

In the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples had met together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood right in the middle of them and said, "Peace be with you!" ~John 20:19 (Phillips NT)

"The doors locked for fear . . ." The first post-Passover with the real Lamb of God having been sacrificed, and the fear was as real and terrifying as that first Passover trek from Egypt after the blood was sprinkled on the Israelite's doors.

"For fear." A fear so powerful in the Lord's apostles that it blocked out the joy and peace of their redemption and freedom. For once again, blood was sprinkled, redemption was given, freedom was available . . . and history repeated itself in the New Israel: the doors were locked "for fear."

Are we living the Christian life in crippling fear? In constant trepidation? In daily dread?

There is One who steps through closed, locked doors and stands in our midst. He has conquered death, and fulfilled the words of Hebrews 2:14, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might

destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage."

No longer do we need to lock our doors "for fear." No longer dread the future, be afraid of our failures, or be anxious about our circumstances.

Because He lives!

Because He said, "Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (Matt. 28:10).

Because the shadow of the Cross are dispelled by the glorious light of the Empty Tomb!

"Because I live, you shall also live" (John 14:19).

That's all the reason we need to leave the doors of fear unlocked and open. Let the Son-shine in. Let the Lamb of God become the Living Shepherd of your life. Face each day knowing "He lives, He lives within my heart." ~ JDM

CHUCKLES

7 A cheerful disposition is good for your health; gloom and doom leave you bone-



A priest and a pastor from the local parishes were standing by the side of the road holding up a sign that read, "The End is Near! Turn around before it is too late!"

A car slowed down and the driver rolled down a window, then yelled, "Leave us alone you religious nuts!"

From around the curve they heard screeching tires and a big splash.

"Do you think," said one clergy to the other, "we should just put up a sign that says 'Bridge Out' instead?"

At Sabbath school they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings. Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs.

Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, Johnny, what's the matter? He replied, "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

