



It's A Wonderful Life!

**Senior Adult Fellowship
June, July & August 2014**

For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive me their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Matthew 6: 14-15

This past March when I was confined at home recovering from hip replacement surgery, one of my friends called me to tell me to turn on the Katie Couric program because Katie would be interviewing the wife of the man who was responsible for the deaths of the Amish girls he had taken hostage at their school in Nickel Mines, Pa., in 2006. That terrible tragedy occurred near my hometown and she thought I would want to hear what was said in the interview. I knew nothing about the wife and so I did not know what to expect, but when I tuned in I found a lovely, composed, Christian woman named Marie quietly talking to Katie. What she had to say was so compelling and moving and I was amazed at her boldness in talking repeatedly about Christ on national television. She had just written a book to tell her story about that day in October 2006 when her life changed forever. Two days after I saw the show her book arrived in the mail, sent by the same friend who had encouraged me to listen to the interview.

Since I had time on my hands, I began to read her incredible story of God's faithfulness in the face of unspeakable horror. Her husband had committed suicide after shooting all of the girls inside the school. (He had allowed the teacher and the boys to leave). Six of the girls died, one was critically injured and would not completely recover, and the rest thankfully did recover. She shares about the Amish families that came to her parent's home the day of the shootings to tell her father, who went outside to meet them while Marie watched from the window, that they had forgiven Marie's husband and that they were very concerned about her and her three small children. Here were members of the Amish community, who had experienced such grief that day, coming to her to tell her they cared about her needs.

Several days later, after all the murdered children had been buried, many of the Amish people attended the funeral of her husband. When Marie drove up to the church for the service she was horrified to see the media had set up everywhere. But the Amish folks formed a barrier and shielded her and her children. Some of the Amish who were there had lost a child or had a child injured in the shooting. Over and over again she tells about how God brought forgiveness and mercy to her in such remarkable ways. Her frustration and dislike of the media was tempered when she realized weeks after the tragedy that God was actually using the media to spread the story of forgiveness through the articles written all over the world telling about the hearts of the Amish toward her.

How often do we look at a situation so difficult and wonder how could God allow such a thing to happen? But He tells us in His Word that what man intends for evil, God can use for good. Yes, evil does sometime occur in the life of a believer, but often that is when we can see the faithfulness of God as clearly as we look back and realize that He carried us through that hard time. Our grief or our hurt is real, but our relationship with our loving God will be deepened if we allow ourselves to cling to Him during those difficulties. Forgiveness is usually a component of our healing. That was certainly true for Marie Roberts, now Marie Monville. What a wonderful story of not only forgiveness, but also encouragement, trust and faith in the midst of trial.

(Continued next page)

I would recommend that you get a copy of Marie’s book, “A Light Still Shines,” and read it. It is not a gruesome story – she does not give details of that day other than what is necessary to weave her story together. You will be moved to tears at some parts as you read about the compassion of the Amish and you will be so uplifted as she describes God’s tender mercy to her and her children on that day and in the weeks and months following.

May none of us ever experience such a trial as hers. But this book will serve as a reminder that whatever comes, He will be walking with us and providing for our every need. What an amazing God we serve. And what an example the Amish were of unconditional forgiveness. Isn’t this what God has granted us through His son’s death on the cross? Isn’t this what He expects us to grant when we are wronged? How easy it is to accept Christ’s forgiveness, but how hard it often is to extend it to others. Let us each examine our own lives and see if there is someone God is telling us we need to forgive. May we listen to His voice and obey His command.

In His forgiveness,
Carla Brown

U. S. Presidents Quiz

<i>Term</i>	<i>President</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>President</i>
2009-		1881-1885	
2001-2009		1881	
1993-2001		1877-1881	
1989-1993		1869-1877	
1981-1989		1865-1869	
1977-1981		1861-1865	
1974-1977		1857-1861	
1969-1974		1853-1857	
1963-1969		1850-1853	
1961-1963		1849-1850	
1953-1961		1845-1849	
1945-1953		1841-1845	
1933-1945		1841	
1929-1933		1837-1841	
1923-1929		1829-1837	
1921-1923		1825-1829	
1913-1921		1817-1825	
1909-1913		1809-1817	
1901-1909		1801-1809	
1897-1901		1797-1801	
1893-1897		1789-1797	
1889-1893			
1885-1889			

Oh, eternal and everlasting God, direct my thoughts, words and work. Wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the Lamb and purge my heart by Thy Holy Spirit. Daily, frame me more and more in the likeness of Thy son, Jesus Christ, that living in Thy fear, and dying in Thy favor, I may in thy appointed time obtain the resurrection of the justified unto eternal life. Bless, O Lord, the whole race of mankind and let the world be filled with the knowledge of Thee and Thy son, Jesus Christ.

A Prayer ~ President George Washington

Birthdays ...

June

2 Sherry Dahrling
4 Mary Benton
 Jesse King
5 Floyd Craig
8 Everette Sorensen
12 Jack Kinser
 Bob St. Clair
14 Ted Franklin
 Bill Hartshorn
 Ann Short
16 Virginia Marion
19 Brenda Thompson
20 Don Holwerda
21 Mary Ruth Venable
23 Chris Ehlers
25 Bill Dietzen
 Ruth Wolf
27 Marie Turner
30 Bob McDowell

July

2 Bruce Gibson
4 Dot Rucker
5 Harriett Berman
7 Janice Bond
10 Linda Austin
 Barbara Brewer
11 Betty Ball
12 Larry Hamby
13 Jim Brewer
 Julie Lutz
14 Larry Jones
 Mary Roser
17 Mary Ellen Locklear
18 Mary Coleman
 Larry Ryan
22 Doris Swafford
26 Carolyn Davis
28 Alan Bonderud
29 Lauch McKinnon
 Betsy Anderson

August

2 Dot Carter
3 Mary Gaither
 John Rose
4 Loren Hartley
 Melissa Sherrill
5 Linda McKinney
6 Peggy Love
9 Carman Wolf
11 Edith Davis
13 Linda Neff
15 Sandy Hartley
17 Virginia Turner
18 Wilma Lockery
24 Mary Wright
25 Margaret Harding
26 Gerry Allen
27 Jane Fitzpatrick
29 Diane McKinnon
30 Don Elkins

Prayer & Praise ...

**Lee Anderson
Betty Ball
Lil Barnett
Tom Blackshear
Charlotte Blocker
Bill Dietzen
Bashie Evans
Bruce Gibson
Shirley Hardy
Joan Heywood
Nancy Jones**

**Ted & Mary Alice Mills
Gil Knier
Velma Mason
Paul & Joyce Ritch and family
Fred Seepe
Therese Van Wickler
Virginia Turner
Suzy Weaver
Mary Wright
Aileen Davis, Mary Ellen Locklear's mom
Edwina Varnell, sister of Betty Jones**

In Loving Memory ...

**We extend our deepest sympathy to the family
and friends of those who have passed away.**

**Ken Simonds, husband of Elizabeth
Norma Knier, wife of Gil
Estella Kinser, step-mother of Jack Kinser
Family of Joe Lanham, Sr**

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## ***Pastor's Prayer Corner***

***“Turning worry to worship,” that is a simple phrase, but, oh, so powerful.***

As we have found in our study of Habakkuk, the key verse is 2.4 “The Just shall live by faith.” This verse is quoted throughout the New Testament: Romans 1.17, Galatians 3.11, Hebrews 10.38, as these authors are leading us to place our faith in Christ rather than in our own good works for salvation. We know that good works in a Christian’s life simply reveal the reality of God’s salvation in his heart. I have said that the theme of Habakkuk is “Trusting God during troubling times” and we know that Habakkuk lived in troubling times. Judah was evil and God promised to judge them by bringing the Babylonians down on them as a judgment for their sin. Habakkuk was waiting for God’s just judgment to take place. Instead of remaining in a posture of worry, Habakkuk worshiped YHWH, our faithful promise-keeping God. Actually, it is quite an insult to our great God to worry. When we worry we are telling God (among other things) that He is untrustworthy, that He is uncaring and that He is impotent to help. God please forgive us of this heinous sin against your character. God taught Habakkuk to focus and to trust in Him. In chapter 3.3-16 of Habakkuk, we saw that Habakkuk recounted the work of God from the past. He remembered how God powerfully provided for His people by defeating their enemies. Focusing on the character of God in our prayer life lifts us to a place of rest and worship, as we trust Him. We worry when our resources are incapable of meeting the demand: we can’t heal our sick loved one, we can’t pay our bills, we can’t control the timing and sequence of events, we can’t find a job, or we can’t control other people. But when we acknowledge God’s sovereign power and resources (which are always greater than our need) we fall to our knees into a place of rest and worship. Turning worry into worship is something each Christian must do as we transfer our trust from our own resources to God’s infinite resources. By reading God’s word on a daily basis the Holy Spirit reveals to us the character of God, and these truths about God fuel our faith and prayers. You may still be thinking, “Wait a minute, how do I turn worry into worship?” If you know how to worry then you know how to meditate on God’s character.

“What do we do when we worry?” When we worry we fixate all of our attention on things we want to control or change. Basically, we want our preferred results. We play out the scenarios in our minds over and over and over. Instead of worrying, we may, with the help of the Holy Spirit, turn worry to worship when we focus and refocus our attention, over and over, on the character of God. Worship and honor God by trusting Him today. As God frees us from the descending cycle of worry into the ascending privilege of worship, He often leads us to serve others in the love of Christ.

In His grip,  
Pastor Tim

***“Believe in Angels ... then return the favor.”***

As she stood in front of her fifth-grade class on the very first day of school, she told the children an untruth. Like most teachers, she looked at her students and said that she loved them all the same. However, that was impossible, because there in the front row, slumped in his seat, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard. Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed that he did not play well with the other children, that his clothes were messy and that he constantly needed a bath. In addition, Teddy could be unpleasant. It got to the point where Mrs. Thompson would actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen, making bold X's and then putting a big "F" at the top of his papers. *(Continued next page)*

### ***“Believe in Angels”***

At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to review each child's past records and she put Teddy's off until last. However, when she reviewed his file, she was in for a surprise. Teddy's first-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is a bright child with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good manners... he is a joy to be around." His second-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student, well liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle." His third-grade teacher wrote, "His mother's death has been hard on him. He tries to do his best, but his father doesn't show much interest and his home life will soon affect him if some steps aren't taken." Teddy's fourth-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends and he sometimes sleeps in class." By now, Mrs. Thompson realized the problem and she was ashamed of herself. She felt even worse when her students brought her Christmas presents, wrapped in beautiful ribbons and bright paper, except for Teddy's. His present was clumsily wrapped in the heavy, brown paper that he got from a grocery bag. Mrs. Thompson took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents. Some of the children started to laugh when she found a rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing, and a bottle that was one-quarter full of perfume. But she stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some of the perfume on her wrist. Teddy Stoddard stayed after school that day just long enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my Mom used to." After the children left, she cried for at least an hour.

On that very day, she quit teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. Instead, she began to teach children. Mrs. Thompson paid particular attention to Teddy. As she worked with him, his mind seemed to come alive. The more she encouraged him, the faster he responded. By the end of the year, Teddy had become one of the smartest children in the class and, despite her lie that she would love all the children the same, Teddy became one of her "teacher's pets." A year later, she found a note under her door, from Teddy, telling her that she was still the best teacher he ever had in his whole life. Six years went by before she got another note from Teddy. He then wrote that he had finished high school, third in his class, and she was still the best teacher he ever had in life. Four years after that, she got another letter, saying that while things had been tough at times, he'd stayed in school, had stuck with it, and would soon graduate from college with the highest of honors. He assured Mrs. Thompson that she was still the best and favorite teacher he had ever had in his whole life. Then four more years passed and yet another letter came. This time he explained that after he got his bachelor's degree, he decided to go a little further. The letter explained that she was still the best and favorite teacher he ever had. But now his name was a little longer... The letter was signed, Theodore F. Stoddard, MD.

The story does not end there. You see, there was yet another letter that spring. Teddy said he had met this girl and was going to be married. He explained that his father had died a couple of years ago and he was wondering if Mrs. Thompson might agree to sit at the wedding in the place that was usually reserved for the mother of the groom. Of course, Mrs. Thompson did. And guess what? She wore that bracelet, the one with several rhinestones missing. Moreover, she made sure she was wearing the perfume that Teddy remembered his mother wearing on their last Christmas together. They hugged each other, and Dr. Stoddard whispered in Mrs. Thompson's ear, "Thank you Mrs. Thompson, for believing in me. Thank you so much for making me feel important and showing me that I could make a difference." Mrs. Thompson, with tears in her eyes, whispered back. She said, "Teddy, you have it all wrong. You were the one who taught me that I could make a difference. I didn't know how to teach until I met you." (For you who don't know, Teddy Stoddard is the Dr. at Iowa Methodist Hospital in Des Moines that has the Stoddard Cancer Wing.)

Warm someone's heart today ... pass this along. Try to make a difference in someone's life today? tomorrow? Just "do it!" Showing the love of Christ in random acts of kindness, I think that is what they call it?

**It's A Wonderful Life!  
Senior Adult Fellowship  
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*This newsletter is prayerfully prepared for:*

First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga Adult Choir presents:

**“True Religion, True Home”**

“So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him.”  
2 Corinthians 5:6–9

**June 29, 2014  
6:00 pm  
FPCC Sanctuary**

Presented by Adult Choir, Instrumental Ensemble and Benedict Trio



Free hamburger fellowship dinner at 5:00pm in the Fellowship Hall  
Invite family, friends and neighbors !!  
For more information (423) 267-1206

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*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.
2 Chronicles 7:14*

God Bless America!

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