



## It's Not All Over!

Great news. From **The Onion** (billed as "America's Finest News Source") comes news that we've been longing for:

*A worldwide consortium of scientists, mathematicians, and philosophers is nearing the completion of the ambitious, decade-long project of cataloging everything that can go wrong. . . . Soon every hazardous possibility will be known to man. . . .*

A segment of page 55,623 contains these, among many others, *run in stocking, nuclear annihilation of planet, phone system down, balloon floats away, glass eye falls out during speech, hairdresser quits, lose \$60 at bus stop, floor collapses, tsunami, cola explodes all over you, UPS package isn't for you, oversleep on first day of work, . . . .*

If you know **The Onion**, you'll understand all of that and smile. If you don't, we can't explain it here.

The point is, bad stuff happens. When it does, what do you do? To what or whom do you turn? Eugene Peterson (translator of **The Message**) wrote these words in his book, **Five Smooth Stones**:

*The Gospel message says: "You don't live in a mechanistic world ruled by necessity; you don't live in a random world ruled by chance; you live in a world ruled by the God of Exodus and Easter. He will do things in you that neither you nor your friends would have supposed possible. . . ."*

When the boy Joseph was being driven away from his homeland by the Midianites, who would have thought he would one day be the second in command over all Egypt? When Moses was fleeing from authorities as a murderer, who would have thought he would one day emerge as the great lawgiver, pastor, and leader of the entire Hebrew nation? When Elijah was sitting in a cave feeling nothing but isolation and rejection and defeat, who would have thought his next stops would be to anoint the future kings of both Syria and Israel?

When bad stuff happens, never, never say it's all over. Our God defined himself gloriously as the God who raises the dead. He's still doing it. Today, tomorrow, forever, he's doing it. G. Crowe

## Garden Tending

Anyone who has ever had flowers in a garden knows that the garden comes with weeds. Weeds, weeds, weeds. As many of you know, weeds have been a recent source of anguish in my life. I have pulled them, dug them up, sprayed them . . . I have even talked trash to them trying to scare them away. But, alas, they remain.

Craig helped me eliminate weeds, dig up unwanted grass, section it off, and mulch the entire area. I would like to say that the weeds are gone. But, truthfully, I know they will return. It means I will have to actually "tend" my garden.

Weeds are not an uncommon analogy for the troubles and temptations of our spiritual lives. Jesus used this analogy. He also knew that weeds are a recurring problem in the lives of his people.

Trials, temptations, worries, and even doubts are inevitable. We should not grow angry and wearisome, but simply ask God to empower us to tend to our spiritual lives. We cannot simply move from Sunday to Sunday looking for the ministers or pastors to tend to our gardens. We must tend to them ourselves with the Spirit's help. We must be content being the vineyard and let the Father be our vine dresser.

I want to encourage you this week to tend to a neglected area of your spiritual garden. Do not let weeds overrun it. The result will be a beautiful garden that, yes, still has weeds, but fewer, less crippling weeds than before. ~Dan

## Prayer Concerns...

**Aevin Gaylor**, 3-month-old granddaughter of Mike & Scheryl, had another pacemaker put in on Monday night in Phoenix....**Paul & Ruth Marks** are now at Rosewalk Village Health Care....Continue to pray for **Joe White, Bill Andrews, Geneva Hamilton, Beth Holt, Anna Dale, Burnell Gulden, Darrel Martin, Gene Walker, Terry Pepper, Minnie Scott, Eunice Whitesell, Mark Eddy, Bernice Todd, Irene Fox, Ramona Farris, and Delpha Allen.**

Expecting babies in the near future: the **Hombs** family.

Serving in the military: **Josh Hunt** is in Iraq; **Loren Sniffen** has come home!!

## New Study for Young Mom's Bible Class

The Wednesday night Young Mom's Bible Class begins a new study of **The Five Love Languages** by Gary Chapman, this Wednesday, June 29, at 7:00 PM. Questions? Call Becky Pitt at 471-9155.

## Congratulations!

**Kellie White** successfully defended her Ph.D. June 14! She is still waiting to hear about funding for the job she interviewed for as post-doctoral researcher in Atlanta. She and her husband, Ryan, though, will be moving to the Atlanta area in the next month-and-a-half where Ryan has accepted a transfer to the Caterpillar plant in Griffin, Georgia. They headed there last week to look for a house! Congratulations, Kellie!

On Wednesday, June 15, **Kenji Totsuka** successfully defended his thesis and will receive the Master of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Purdue in August. Congratulations, Kenji! Kenji and Karen have moved to their new home in Lexington, Kentucky, where he has begun his new job with Lexmark. Their address is 804 Seminole Creek Ct., Lexington, KY 40511. Their telephone number is (859) 559-0619.

*Thank You!*

Dear Church Family,

*Thank you all so much for your prayers last week through my surgery and recovery. I am so thankful to have a church family that embraced me and my family during the unexpected complications following my procedure. Thank you to all who visited me in the hospital and at home, and for the encouraging phone calls and cards. I love you all so much.*

Love, Sarah McClain

## Food Pantry Needs

The pantry items for this week are **cereal & boxed dinners.**



Congratulations to **Tammy & Jesse Studebaker** on the arrival of their little girl **Eryn Shannon** on Thursday, June 23. Coming 3 weeks early, she weighed just 4 pounds 2 ounces! Congratulations also to grandparents, **Cheri & Carey Vaughn.**

## Senior Servants Meet Wednesday

**Elmwood Senior Servants** meet **next Wednesday, July 6,** at **11:30 AM,** in the fellowship room. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy the fellowship.

## LUM Meal Providers

Serving dinner at Lafayette Urban Ministry on Monday night were: **Marilyn Walters, Harold & Judy Riddle, Sherry & Afton Scoggin, & Michelle Robson.**

**June 26, 2005**

Class: 171 Worship: 250

Contribution: \$6,746

Budget: \$8,100

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## A Milestone

I don't know where the time has gone, but July 1 marks a real milestone in my life and in my ministry. Until Elmwood, the Lord has only seen fit to leave the Porters in one place for a maximum of six and one half years. This is my fifth and longest ministry to date. On July 1, we will begin our eighth year of ministry together. Much has happened in these past seven years: I suffered my first major broken bone – I'm still the proud (?) owner of a steel plate and seven screws. Jessica graduated from West Lafayette High School and now Rochester College. Joshua moved back home and then followed his sister to Michigan. God sent Nichole into our lives, I had the honor of baptizing her, she graduated from West Lafayette High School and we adopted her last year. Sharon and I celebrated the big 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary (29 now) with the help of many of you. In the youth ministry, we have seen many graduate high school and several go on to graduate from college, get married, some are doing graduate work, and one is serving our country in Iraq. I have had the privilege of baptizing several (even one while I was on crutches!) and I have had the honor of coaching many families in their studies with their children and helped dads as they baptized their daughters and sons. I have performed a couple of weddings. I have even done a couple of funerals for members who were not teens, but who were huge supporters of the youth ministry. Members of the eCy youth group and the Porters have gone on many youth rallies like Winterfest and Youth in Action, have attended many camp sessions, participated in Leadership Training for Christ, have done a service project or two, have had some wonderful and even a few not as wonderful class sessions, have had some incredible LIFE Group sessions, and there have been many times where we just had fun together.

What lies ahead for the partnership between the Elmwood Church of Christ and the Porter family in our ministry together? Only God knows for sure, but in the meantime, I/we would like to say thank you for seven years of love, support, forgiveness and brotherhood. May the glory always be to Him and may there be even more of it in the years ahead. Thank you again, but now we have reminisced enough...the Lord has work for us to do – let's join Him, there.

## Help Still Needed!

I have mentioned this a couple times already, but we still need co-teachers for our three year olds class on Sunday morning and on Wednesday nights. I really hate the guilt trip thing, but you don't really want me to have to tell these precious children (or their parents), "I'm sorry, no one is willing to teach your class," do you? I didn't think so. Thanks for filling these needs.

- Lee

## Tsunami Update from Thailand

Greetings from rainy Phuket. It's monsoon season and we're thankful for some much needed rain. Loren and our Thai preachers have been making many trips up country taking care of the tsunami business. They are doing their best to verify all their stories, then purchase boats, fishing equipment, housing materials, inventories for shops and many other things that are needed to help people get their lives back together. As I mentioned before, mobile phones have really changed everyone's lives. Everyday now Loren, Gaet, Sak and Lek all have at least 4 or 5 phone calls asking for help. People are getting desperate. It's been almost 6 months and their lives are still in turmoil. One young woman we met lost her four-year-old daughter. She was holding her hand and the wave just took the child away from her. They found the daughter's body 5 days later. Nine of her eleven family members lost their lives. We made arrangements for her to have a motorcycle with a side cart so that she could sell fish or food to help her husband pay expenses. We continue to buy new and used boats for fishermen who lost their boats. Since I last wrote, five students from Texas A & M and two from Abilene Christian have arrived to teach English. God bless you all and our deepest thanks once again for your sacrifices, encouragement and prayers. You have reached so many. Hopefully God is glorified in our feeble efforts on your behalf. Love to all. *Penny & Loren Hollingsworth*

## "Hymns from Our Hearts"

All copies of the CD of hymns recorded by the Elmwood College Class Singers (~1962) have been distributed. If you signed up for one or more but did not get them, please add your name to the **NEW** sign up sheet posted in the Farris Foyer. If anyone else would like a CD, just add your name to the same sign up sheet. We'll keep the sign up sheets available through the end of June and try to have the CDs for you by July 17<sup>th</sup>.



**June 29, 7 PM....**Bible classes for all

**June 29, 7 PM....**Men's Class, room 204

**July 3....**Dan Cooke will preach in the morning;

**Jim Moore** has the 6 PM message: **Where Do I Begin?**

Finger Foods will follow in the fellowship room

# ***This Week's Highlight:*** **Prayer**

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An age-old question: *"Recently my dad died at age 62. A month later, my best friend died at age 37, leaving a widow and a three-year-old daughter. Many Christians in many places were praying for both men to survive and to be healed. It seems like God has an appointed day for our deaths. If so, what good does it do to pray?"*

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**T**he question is one of the oldest in recorded human history and also one of the most inexplicable. In a world where evil exists (and death is the ultimate earthly evil because it is both total and final so far as our present bodily existence is concerned), thoughtful people always ask "Why?" For people of faith, the moral question is more serious: "If God is both powerful and good, why does he allow evil?" Your religious questions then follow concerning prayer: "If God answers prayer, why is my prayer unanswered? If my prayer goes unanswered why bother to pray?"

The biblical book of Job (the narrative of which probably fits chronologically somewhere among the Genesis stories) wrestles with these questions but does not provide any clear answers. Job is a godly man who prays every day for his children. Yet God specifically allows the Adversary to destroy Job's children, his personal property and his physical and emotional health. Job's theological friends insist that the solution is simple: God is just, Job has sinned and he is getting what he deserves. Job, who knows that he is pious if not perfect, defends his own innocence before his friends and before God himself and demands an explanation from God.

Eventually God responds to Job with an "Enough already!" and silences the devout questioner with a volley of divine questions that say in effect: "I am God and you are not!" Through it all Job hopes in

God, asserting a personal faith that God will vindicate him even beyond death, which will never have the final word. This expression of faith brings the larger story full circle and proves the Adversary wrong who, in the prologue to the book, had alleged that Job would renounce all faith in God under the circumstances which then followed. Although the book of Job does not answer the questions that trouble us now, it provides a larger perspective in which we can trust God despite the present darkness.

The story of Jesus provides even more context for faith under fire. After publicly proclaiming Jesus to be his "beloved Son," God proceeds to permit Jesus to suffer and die in horrible pain, apparent abandonment and public disgrace. Before the weekend is over, however, God changes forever the way his people view death itself by bringing Jesus back to life in a glorified body belonging to a new and eternal dimension. The faithful Father has vindicated his faithful Son and, by so doing, has demonstrated himself worthy of unwavering trust as the all-powerful and all-loving master over time and eternity. Why pray? Because God invites us to do so and, in ways and for reasons we cannot now comprehend, our prayers sometimes make a difference in what would otherwise happen. Like Job, we trust God in the dark. Because of Jesus, however, a blinding shaft of light has pierced through the darkness, illuminating a path of faith that finally leads to the visible presence of God.

*—Edward Fudge*

Read:

I Chronicles 1-12; Acts 23-28

Psalms 1-4;

Proverbs 18:14-19:3

# 2005 Spiritual Adventure

Week 28: July 11-17

## Listen!

Hold it a minute. I have something to tell you.

Did you know the Bible talks about listening? Of course you did. Of course I did. It is mentioned, though sometimes indirectly, in several passages. Here is a direct reference that struck me recently: *He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.* (Proverbs 18:13 NASB)

I do not do this very well. And now that I ponder it a bit, not listening very well is a sign of an egomaniac. It is like nothing anybody else says is important; I am the one who should be heard. Imagine treating God that way. Imagine nothing! We do treat Him that way. Not listening to God is one thing. Insisting that He listen to us is another. Now the notion from the Proverbs verse that not listening is folly starts to take hold.

Not that any of you have noticed, but I have been trying to work on this especially with my wife and the NCD team, and I have found that being a good listener is almost the same as being patient. I am geared to give an answer, to find solution. But, if I listen patiently I find the answer or comment I would have injected would have been meaningless because I impatiently inferred what was going to be said. And I inferred incorrectly. That is what foot-in-mouth disease is.

So, I will keep trying to be a better listener. This Proverb will be a good motivator. If I get good enough at listening maybe you'll notice.

Well, that is all. Now, what were you saying?

**-Bill Bell**