



On Mules and Churches

Allow me to be clear from the start: In these lines I am not comparing a church to a mule. The fact that you will, if you proceed, read about a mule and a church does not mean . . . well, let's get on with it.

A retired English professor in Nebraska, Dr. Bob Lawrence, reminisced via email to his family and favored friends last week about his childhood days with Julie, the family's old mule:

I don't recall when or where we got her, but she was already a mule who brought a lot of experience with her, experience that can come only with many passing moons. . . . Unless my memory is playing tricks upon me and causing me to romanticize about a subject so down to earth as a mule, I recall that this simple creature possessed some extraordinary insights about snaking (dragging) logs. If I were using her to snake several logs from the same general location, I found out early on that with the first log I would simply hitch her to it and set her going with a positive cluck. She could always find her way down the hill much better than if I led her! I've also seen Julie when the log she was dragging would jam on a root or stump. She would not just stand there and wait for me to come to her rescue; she would twist around right or left with no command from me and get the log unjammed, going on her merry way down the hill. . . .

What Dr. Lawrence speaks of, when applied to the health of a church (as explained in Christian Schwarz's *Natural Church Development*), is called the "biotic principle." That is to say, healthy churches thrive when they follow the leading of the Spirit who lives in them—not when they arbitrarily latch on to a recipe for success that has worked in some other church. This is the principle on which Elmwood's "health team" is operating. Discovering the long-standing strengths and inclinations of the body at Elmwood, we can work from those to create new structures that will carry us into the foreseeable future.

To try to impose direction (whether to a mule or to a church) from an external source just doesn't work very well. G. Crowe

Fanning the Flame

While visiting my mom recently I received a phone call. But this was not a normal call: a friend from college wanting to catch up on life, my mom checking in on me (as all good moms do!), or a college student waking me up at 2 am to tell me that they love and miss me (umm, please don't do that ever again).

This phone call was far, far different. This was a phone call from the college students. The reason for the phone call? . . . to tell me that they want to share with me some new outreach ideas they have.

Did you catch that? The students at the CSC care about outreach. Praise God for their hearts and desire to spread the news! This summer is not a time for the fire to die, but rather it is a time to fan the flame. I pray that you will join me in encouraging our students this summer.

~Dan



Elaine Crowder had hip replacement surgery at St. Elizabeth Hospital on Tuesday....**Darrell Martin**, father of Phyllis Simmerman, is recovering from a stroke. He is in Home Hospital....**Lisa Crowe** suffered a broken foot last Tuesday, and had surgery on Friday....**Lorraine Weckerly** has been having ongoing medical tests.... Continue to pray for **Joe White, Betty Hunt, Naomi Hunt, Anna Dale, Chuck Hanson, Burnell Gulden, Dovie Hurst, Geneva Hamilton, Terry Pepper, Minnie Scott, Eunice Whitesell, Mark Eddy, Bernice Todd, Ramona Farris, Irene Fox, and Delpha Allen.**

Expecting babies in the near future: the **Wilson, Hombs, and Studebaker** families.

Serving in the military: **Josh Hunt** is in Iraq; **Loren Sniffen** is in Afghanistan.

Thank You!

I wish to somehow convey to Elmwood my appreciation for your love, friendship, and compassion shown to me over the years—for prayers for my stepfather (who is now doing well) and recently in the sudden death of my brother. I love my ladies' Bible class, LIFE group, and especially the senior servants. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of you.

Love, Lori Perkins

Focus on the Family Programs

Upcoming **Focus on the Family** programs are heard on local radio, WHPL-FM 89.9 at **6:30 PM Monday-Friday.**

- May 18* **Keeping a Watchful Eye on Schools**—Deborah Johannes and Karen Mathison discuss an offensive play being performed in their local school district and encourage other concerned parents to be watchful of what's happening in their local schools.
- May 19 & 20* **The Proper Care of Husbands**—Dr. Laura explains how women can enjoy more satisfying marriages by caring for their husbands' emotional needs. (Parts 1 & 2)
- May 23* **Finding Comfort in God's Presence**—Patsy Clairmont discusses how loss, failure and grief aid in the development of faith and how God is the best source of comfort during times of suffering.
- May 24-25* **Rebellious Children**—Focus on the Family panel discusses teen rebellion and how parents can respond constructively to it. (Parts 1 & 2)
- May 26-27* **Screaming Mothers**—Pat Holt and Dr. Grace Ketterman examine the various reasons some mothers scream at their children and offer help for overcoming that behavior. (Parts 1 & 2)



Awards & Recognition

Perry Achor received the Department of Construction Management's Outstanding Tenured Faculty Teaching Award for 2005, and was recently recognized at the College of Technology Annual Banquet, at Purdue University. Congratulations, Perry!

At the Purdue Varsity Glee Club's annual Mother's Brunch on April 17, **Kyle Hodges** received the Purdue Sir Award. He will be touring with the group until the end of May in England, Ireland, and Scotland. Congratulations, Kyle!

Pantry Item of the Week



This week we begin something new with our newsletter. Each week we will now give you a food item needed for our pantry. You may bring it anytime throughout the week. This week we need **16 oz. canned fruit and/or 10 oz. chicken noodle soup.**

May 15, 2005
Class: 202 Worship: 287
Contribution: \$7,401
Budget: \$8,100

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Mission Trip – July 9-15, 2005 Camp C.U.M.O. – Cincinnati, OH

C.U.M.O. stands for Cincinnati Urban Mission Outreach. Camp C.U.M.O. is under the direction of the Withamsville Church of Christ and is focused on serving the Cincinnati inner city youth. The camp has been in existence for 3 years.

Camp C.U.M.O. is targeted to serve families and children who cannot afford such opportunities. Camp funding is primarily obtained through the generosity of individuals and churches of Christ.

The camp serves 50 children 9 to 11 years of age. The campers are from families who earn below average income or receive government financial assistance and are fully funded through scholarships.

Biblical Focus: each year, a theme is chosen to give structure to the classes and devotional times. This year, the theme is "Fool Factor." This theme will be developed on Tuesday through Friday with the general idea of not being foolish with what we say, see, do, and in where we go.

Special events occur each evening. Past events have included Karate demonstrations, Juggler for Jesus, Illusionists, a trip to the County Fair, Appalachian stories by Nora Stanger, Theatron (Harding University drama group), firefighters and policemen, and Summer Zoo.

The camp is primarily run by high school students from churches of Christ, with adult supervision. The students serve as counselors in the tents (yes, this is tent camping), devotional leaders, mentors, game and activity coordinators, and crafts instructors.

Camp Vision:

- 1) To provide a fun, safe, Christian environment for inner city kids that focuses on encouraging faith in God.
- 2) To encourage the staff to work as one body for the good of the children and the Lord.

This is the first year that the Withamsville group will not be doing the camp totally by themselves. The eCy group is greatly honored to have been invited to participate in this special effort. If you are interested in going on this mission, you need to: 1) have completed 8th grade, 2) turn in \$75, 3) fill out an application and have it mailed by May 25 (see me if that is a problem), 4) have three reference forms filled out and sent in, 5) plan to be God's servant for the week. If any adults would like to go, or if you would like to sponsor a camper or teen worker, see me.

-Lee



After some time of decision-making and prayerful thought, **Kenny Anderson** has taken the step of giving his life to Jesus and was baptized last Sunday morning at the 10:45 worship hour. Kenny and Mandy first heard about Elmwood from the Boyds, and have been attending the Pitts' Life Group for the past several years. Their children are Caleb, Bailey, and Ty. Kenny is with Alcoa in the Environment Health & Safety Dept. The Andersons' address is 16 Haymarket Way, Lafayette 47905, phone 448-4456. We pray God's blessings on Kenny and his family!

Graduation Party!

Greg & Chris Sutherlin are having a graduation open house for daughter, **Kelsey**, on **Sunday, June 5, from 12 noon until 4:00 PM**, at their home, 2805 Union St., Lafayette. Kelsey graduates from Jefferson High School.

"Will our children have faith?"

Westlake Church of Christ in Indianapolis is hosting a seminar featuring former Elmwood member, **Brian Simmons**, on **May 21-22**. Titled, "**God's Children and Faith**," it answers questions such as, "How do we engage our children on spiritual issues without putting them to sleep or turning them off?" And "How do we incorporate spiritual training into our family's busy schedule?" Brian speaks Saturday, May 21, from 9:30 AM-3:00 PM, and Sunday, May 22, at 9:00 AM.



- May 17, 6:30 PM**....Good Sense Class
- May 18, 4 PM**....Tree planting at Elmwood in memory of Scottie Morrison; at 5 PM, dinner at Arni's (everyone is welcome to join those here for the reunion)
- May 18, 7 PM**....All adult classes will meet in the auditorium for a special devotional led by those of the John T. Smithson reunion group
- May 20-21**....Promise Keepers in Ft. Wayne
- May 22**....Rally Day at Spring Mill Bible Camp; activities begin at 3:00; worship at 4:00 with dinner to follow
- June 5, 12-4 PM**....Graduation Open House for **Kelsey Sutherlin**, 2805 Union St., Lafayette

Read:

II Samuel 4–16; John 14–19;

Psalms 119;

Proverbs 15:31–16:11

2005 Spiritual Adventure

Week 22: May 30–June 5

Recently I ran across one of the most fundamental concepts of life in Christ in John 17. It is an incredibly obvious and simple concept, which is why we overlook it so often. It is so easy to overlook because the secret to life in Christ is a two-letter word — “in.”

John makes certain that his readers are aware of Jesus’ prayer for them. The prayer centers on the concept of “in” . . . the Father *in* Christ, Christ *in* the Father, Christ *in* us, and we *in* both the Father and the Son. The prayer itself seems somewhat mystical, other worldly, strange. But, when all is said and done, the concept is entirely practical.

How do you engage the world? How do you engage sin in your life? How do you confront the temptations, doubts, concerns, and worries of day-in and day-out living? Do you use will power to resist? Do you force yourself to quit thinking about the worries of this world? Do you neglect asking tough faith questions because you don’t want to deal with it? Do you do the things above or do you utilize the “in” concept?

Using the traditional methods of dealing with life is destined to fail. But living in Christ is simply that – being *in* Him. Being *in* the Father and *in* the Son changes everything. For starters, it means no more relying on human wisdom to answer the tough questions in life. But it also means not relying on personal strength to overcome the temptations and hard times in life. He is our source of power, of hope, of joy, of strength. Jesus said this a different way in John 15:5: “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains *in* me and I *in* him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (italics mine). We must stay *in* Christ. If we do not, we can do nothing; but if we do . . . oh man, buckle your seatbelt because you are in for the ride of your life!

–**Dan Cooke**