



A Medal-Winning Marriage

The skiing world is shaken: Bode bombed. He was favored to win the Olympic downhill in Turin. Instead, he came in 5th.

Bode Miller was the darling of the press. They loved him because he flaunted all the rules and still won the 2005 World Cup title, the "world series of skiing." CBS News in a January 8 broadcast said he could change America's interest in ski racing "the way Lance Armstrong changed cycling." He will ski in other Olympic ski events, but the downhill was supposed to be his.

"I kind of take pride in the fact that I do things my own way," Bode told the press. "My own way" included missing practices, ignoring the advice of his coaches, and being drunk on the slopes (admitted in a *60 Minutes* segment last month). Before the race Sunday he told the press, "I feel good. I feel ready." Too late. It was all about pizzazz, too little about substance.

So what is Bode Miller doing on a front page dated Valentine's Day? Start with the line, "It was all about pizzazz, too little about substance." The average wedding in the United States these days costs in the neighborhood of \$20,000. That's pizzazz. An event to remember. The sad part is, the wedding is often remembered longer than the marriage lasts. The divorce rate, as everybody knows, remains at just under 50 percent for new marriages.

William P. Farley, in an essay comparing his parents' and grandparents' weddings and marriages with those in the 21st century, observed, "It seems that the more we spend on weddings, the shorter the marriages last."

The weddings of our ancestors were short on pizzazz, but long on vows. Farley writes about his wife's parents' wedding as they were making their vows to each other, "He got sick twice during their ceremony and had to leave the altar. He was anxious because he knew there would be no turning back. He knew his oath would bind him to Lois even if she became an invalid, got cranky in middle age, . . . or if he didn't feel like he loved her anymore." Forget pizzazz. That's a game plan for a medal-winning marriage.

G. Crowe

Celebrating Uniqueness

How do you eat a Reese's Peanut Butter Cup? Do you start from the side and nibble the edges and then remove the top layer of chocolate? or do you just eat it one bite at a time like you would anything else? Or do you get it confused with a tootsie roll pop and try to see how many times you have to lick it before the peanut butter breaks through? As the commercial goes . . . there is no wrong way to eat a Reese's.

This marketing campaign made an impact for a couple reasons. 1) Reese's are really good and 2) It brought out the beauty of the uniqueness of individuals in the world. The claim: no two people are alike. The implication: "no two are alike" is a beautiful thing.

My guess is that here at Elmwood we have an almost infinite number of ways that Reese's are being eaten. We have some nibblers, some who eat the whole thing in one bite, and some who refuse to eat them due to their questionable health benefits.....and isn't that a beautiful thing.

As we continue to work through the S.H.A.P.E. material, I want to encourage you to take time out of your week and praise God for the diversity of the church, celebrate the many different faces, styles, and personalities of the church. I think you will find that celebrating differences does not have to be limited to how we eat junk food.

~Dan



Natasha Risley was able to worship with us on Sunday evening! We praise the Lord for her healing and continued recovery!...**Kaden Koebcke**, grandson of Jack & Sue McCoy, remains in neonatal ICU at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis. Though he is up to 2 pounds 15 ounces, he is fighting an infection in his blood. They ask for our prayers as he crosses another "bump in the road."...Shirley Farmer's husband, **Willard**, will have surgery on February 23 for cancer...**Laura Reel**, daughter of Tammy Tatman, expecting her first child March 7, is on bed rest as they monitor her progress. Tammy and Leslie (Laura's twin sister) are on their way to Virginia to be with her...**Sharon McHenry**, Purdue student Megan McHenry's mother, will have surgery this Thursday...**Chris Kimmel**, the father of Purdue student, **Jessica Kimmel**, had successful surgery last week to remove scar tissue from his heart...**A.J. Wilson**, infant son of Leslie & Carl, has been having seizures...Continue praying for **Josh Dieterle**, **Doris Swensen**, **Terry Spenard**, **Marie DeWoody**, **Earl Leech**, **Sarah Watts**, **Neta Guthery**, **Jim Beghtol**, **Mark Eddy**, **Anna Dale**, **Ramona Farris**, **Irene Fox**, **Carrie High**, and **Delpha Allen**. Those in Rosewalk Village: **Paul & Ruth Marks**, **Minnie Scott**, and **Burnell Gulden**. Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner**, **Loren Sniffen**, **Dustin Holley**, and **Brad King**.

Bren White has sent a request. *"I would like to ask you to send encouraging cards and letters to our brother Emmanuel Charles, who is in prison (we believe falsely accused of an immigration violation) on the island of Guadeloupe in the French West Indies. This would be most encouraging to him right now. His address: Monsieur Charles Emmanuel, Centre Penitentiaire B.P. 43, M.A. 2 Sud 58-6175 Fond Sarail, 97122 Baie Mahault, Guadeloupe*

Focus on the Family Programs

Upcoming **Focus on the Family** programs are heard on local radio, WHPL-FM 89.9 at **7:30 PM Monday-Friday**.

- Feb. 15** **Navigating the Rapids of Life**—Carolyn Koons humorously describes a white-water rafting experience to illustrate our need to cling to God when we encounter turbulent times in our lives.
- Feb. 16 & 17** **Inspiring Kids to be Leaders**—Pat Williams discusses his book **Coaching our Kids to Be Leaders**, which gives practical ideas on how parents can encourage the leadership abilities in their children. (Part 1 & 2)
- Feb. 20 & 21** **Teaching Truth to the Next Generation**—Ryan Dobson talks to young people about the importance of living life for God. (Part 1 & 2)
- Feb. 23 & 24** **To Date or Not to Date**—Author Joshua Harris makes the case for why singles shouldn't date until they are ready to pursue marriage. (Part 1 & 2)



OFW Newsletter Available

Copies of Bren and Cheryl White's **Operation French World Newsletter** are available in the foyer (they are blue) for you to pick up. It's loaded with pictures of the White family (before Joe's death). It also highlights Bren & Cheryl's activities in 2005 for OFW. Be sure to pick up a copy.



Longtime member **Eunice Whitesell, 91**, died Monday about noon. She had been living at Regency Place Nursing Home the last two years. Our sympathies to her sons, Bob and Larry, and their families. Funeral arrangements are pending at the Fisher-Loy Funeral Home.



The food pantry is in need of **canned fruit and soup**.

February 12, 2006
Class: 246 Worship: 286
Contribution: \$7,216
Budget: \$8,100



Great Job Guys Boys!

The Elmwood Boys did an excellent job in their concert Sunday evening. Greg Sutherlin tells me we had 179 in attendance...that is the size of our second service on Sunday mornings. We had lots of guests. These four have blessed many lives and I pray they will continue to use their talents to bring glory to our awesome God. It was also really great that Natasha could be here for the performance. The guys dedicated a song to Natasha's recovery from surgery at their last public performance in January.

Winterfest

Twenty-seven of us plan to make the trek south to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, this Friday morning. Lord willing, we will be back on Sunday evening. Due to the size of the group and the potential late arrival, Teen LIFE Groups will not meet this Sunday evening.

Welcome Susan Huff

For the past three years, Mariah Wise has helped coordinate ladies from the college and adult groups to join the teens for classes, activities and other events. She is now leaving us to do her student teaching in a far and distant land and we will miss her. However, before she left, Mariah enlisted the support of Susan to take over in that role. Ladies, college age and up, please say yes to Susan when she asks you to support the youth ministry in this very important role. With the current state of our society, we must do everything we can to provide healthy role models and mentors for our young people...people just like you. Thanks in advance for saying "yes" when Susan asks. Thanks also in advance to Susan for taking on the task of coordinating and we know she will do a wonderful job.

Who Will Teach the Children?

A couple months ago, we asked for volunteers to fill out availability/willingness surveys to help us fill the needs for teachers and helpers in our children's classes. We have been very blessed with capable volunteers the past couple quarters, but the next quarter beginning March 5 looks like a challenge. For next quarter, we have several teachers planning to take a break and we have very few who have volunteered to take their places. If you are willing and able to help us out in the children's classes (Sunday morning and/or Wednesday night) for the spring quarter, please let me know. You can catch me, call the church office, or you may e-mail me at porter@elmwood-church.org. Thanks for letting the children know they are special by your willingness. - Lee



Children of Elmwood:

What a pleasant surprise when Emma came with the beautiful Valentine's bag of goodies and cards. May God bless each of you for your thoughtfulness.

-Mary Ella & Herb King

Thanks to all the children for the Valentine's basket I received. It was greatly appreciated. -Willie Batts



Thank you so much! We are very thankful for all of the cards, phone calls, gifts and prayers. We are very blessed to be a part of this congregation. Your love and support means more to us than words can express.

We love you all,
Natasha Risley and Family

Vacation Bible School June 12-16

Mark your calendars! Vacation Bible School will be held June 12-16, 2006. This is going to be a fantastic time for God to be glorified, so make plans to attend and/or assist.

-Michelle Robson,
VBS Coordinator



Feb. 15, 7 PM...Bible classes for all
Feb. 15, 7 PM...Good Sense Budget Class
February 17-19...Teen Winterfest in Gatlinburg, TN
February 19...Bill Bell preaches Sunday morning;
LIFE Groups at 6 PM

Read:

Leviticus 19–27; Numbers 1–11
Hebrews 6–13; Psalm 21

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 9: February 26–March 4

I, like many people, would classify myself a perfectionist about a few things. If I call or email somebody, I can get a bit too impatient if my attempt to get in touch is not acknowledged within a day. In beginner's band, each one in my class was required to individually practice 300 minutes a week to get a score of 100, so I divided up the total into a practicing schedule to 42.86 minutes each day (I rounded to exactly 43 minutes to be safe—not a minute more or less). Even as I am typing this, I require a radius of 5 feet of space for me to concentrate or I get extremely anxious.

While the perfectionism I described is generally characterized as a personality flaw, there are sometimes that it is an essential trait. From the reading for the week, I am reminded of how our God is, in a way, a perfectionist. Our God wants perfection from us when we have a relationship with Him, and from the beginning, sin has hindered that perfection. In Leviticus 21–22, we read of the strict regulations that the priesthood were required to maintain as they were coming near to God by presenting sacrifices to Him. For so many years, animal sacrifices were offered continually with strict regulation in order for a small part of the world's population to be right with God.

Some claim there is a personality change from the God of the Old Testament to the God of the New Testament. Hebrews 6–10 makes one point clear—God did not change, nor did his expectation for our perfection. We changed. Although sin still acts as a barrier to keep us from perfection, a barrier that no animal sacrifice can destroy, our God changed us by the gift of His son. "[B]y one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy," Heb. 10:14.

Though many sacrifices could not save a relatively small population, in Christ one sacrifice gave all men a chance for perfection. Though sin may be right there with us, Christ's blood removes it as we are continually "being made holy." Our life, then, is not a constant effort to follow regulations and attain perfection, it is a natural, loving, obedient response to the perfection we already have in Him.

–Jimmy Huff