



Decision After Decision

On Saturday afternoon, dressed in flowing wedding dress and tuxedo, Angela Darko and Ernest Nyannor will hear these words:

A marriage the way God intends is the result of work: one decision on another decision on another decision. The small hourly decisions on which your life will revolve from now on. Real love, real marriage, is a decision that you must re-make and re-affirm every day you live. Each day you must decide to love the other, even if you should feel unloving. Every day you must decide to trust the other, even if you should feel distrustful. Each day you must decide to be open and honest with each other, even if you should feel withdrawn. Emotions may rise and fall; feelings may rise and fall; not so with genuine love. In marriage you are not saying merely, "I promise always to feel love for you" – because you can't promise your feelings. Rather, you are saying what is much more demanding: "I promise that **regardless** of how I may feel on a given day or in a given hour, I will always **act** in a loving way toward you." That's what love, real love, is about. Love is a decision. Love is serving. Love is giving.

Some may hear those words and decide, "Whew! That's heavy! Marriage isn't for me!" But before the line grows too long at the singles' (juice) bar, stop and think. Exactly what is that paragraph saying? It's saying that husbands and wives are supposed to act toward each other with what the Greeks called *agape*—a put-myself-out-of-the-way-so-I-can-serve-your-needs kind of spirit.

But what is interesting about all this is that *agape* isn't just for married people. This is the way Christians are supposed to treat everybody, regardless of the relationship. To decide every day to be trusting, to be open and honest, to act for the other's best interests. Toward everybody, the ideal is, "I promise that regardless of how I may feel on a given day or in a given hour, I will always act in a loving way toward you." That's what *agape* calls for, whether directed to a spouse or to the postal clerk at the counter.

Living as a Christian is not for cowards. Neither is marriage. For both, the spirit of Jesus is a great way to start. G. Crowe

Construction Workers Needed

Have you ever seen a house torn down and leveled to the ground? It is so much fun to watch. Involved are a host of destructive tools including wrecking balls, explosives, sledge hammers, etc. It looks like so much fun to take those tools and tear down a house (we will actually be doing some of this work in Slidell, LA, over Spring Break)! Demolition is a fun thing to be part of.

Have you noticed that we are raising a generation of demolition workers in the church? A generation of critical thinkers who do not accept truth simply because their parents tell them it is so. In classes our students are taught to deconstruct existing models of operation in numerous disciplines. Students are very good at deconstruction. The university setting makes them apt pupils of demolition (so do certain church traditions that focus on finding what is wrong with another group's theology).

The problem with all of this is that God has not called us to be demolition workers only but also to be construction workers. He has called us to help build something in place of that which is torn down. The language of the New Testament is construction-oriented in reference to the church. We are his "temple" being "built up." I urge you this week to help construct something for our college students and for ourselves. Are there things that we could tear down about others? about other groups? Absolutely! But it seems like a waste of time and energy when we have so much that we could be building! ~Dan



Phyllis Gray is in rehab at University Place after a fall at her house last week. She had surgery on her broken right upper arm on Thursday....**Sarah Bird**, suffering with health problems for some time, will have gall bladder surgery on Monday, March 13....**Ryan Woolard**, a young friend of Seth Mullen who has muscular dystrophy, is heavily sedated with serious breathing problems at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis**Sarah Vaught**, dehydrated from the flu, had a short overnight hospital stay on Monday....**Carrie High** has been moved to Regency Place Nursing Home. The address there is 300 Windy Hill Dr., Room 130, Lafayette 47905....**Kaden Koebcke**, grandson of Jack & Sue McCoy, remains in NICU at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis. He continues to have respiratory problems. He now weighs 4 pounds 6 ounces! Their other grandson, **Noah Powlen**, is doing very well—now eating from a bottle instead of a feeding tube!....**Shirley Farmers's** husband, **Willard**, consults with a cardiologist this week in hopes of rescheduling surgery....**Wanita White** has been sick for two weeks with walking pneumonia, but is feeling some better....**Elizabeth Tinkle** is doing better though continues to have her legs and feet wrapped daily**Brandon Hombs' grandfather, Jack**, is in the hospital with pneumonia and complications of lung cancer....Continue praying for **Natasha Risley, Amber Tolle, A.J. Wilson, Josh Dieterle, Mark Eddy, Marie DeWoody, Anna Dale, Ramona Farris, Irene Fox, 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**.



Ernest Nyannor, Purdue graduate student from Ghana who is studying animal nutrition, and Angela Darko of Baltimore, who is an MD now in residency in Newark, New Jersey, will be married March 11, in Wilmington, Delaware. Gayle and Lisa Crowe will be joining the festivities, and Gayle will be performing the wedding. Hopefully, Angela will be able to visit Elmwood in the not-too-distant future. See Lisa or Susan Huff if you are interested in participating in a cash gift to be presented to them.



Thank you to the children, teachers, and parents of Elmwood for the lovely Valentine cards and bag of goodies. May God bless each of you. –Richard & Janice Waterstraat

What a treat it was to see such cute children bearing gifts for Valentine's Day. Thank you to Cody and Jenny Sipe. –University Place Residents



Congratulations!



Harry & Ronda Tidrick will celebrate their **25th** wedding anniversary March 21st. Congratulations!

Also, **Sam & Sara Postlethwait**, will celebrate **65 years** of marriage on March 22. What an inspiration!

It's a Boy!



Conner Dean was born February 28 to Jason & Laura (Tatman) Reel in Rutherglen, Virginia. He weighed 7 pounds 8 ounces and measured 18.75 inches long. Grandmother, Tammy Tatman, was there to greet him! Congratulations to Tammy and also to great-grandparents, Connie and Ken Nicholson.



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

March 5, 2006

Class: 240 Worship: 267

Contribution: \$8,232

Budget: \$8,100



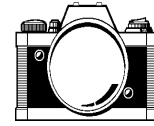
Midwest Leadership Training for Christ April 14-16, 2006

It is really hard to believe, but Easter is just over a month away. LTC practices are in full swing and pre-convention events are in the mail. If you are a student, you have been or will be registered for the convention by our own Rose Hunt. If you are not a participating student, you may or may not be registered as an observer. Rose tries to register those she knows are coming, but we can't remember everyone. Everyone who is not a participant **MUST** be registered to go into the meeting rooms (yes, you get to wear those bracelets you love – we do have some new colors this year!). If you want to make sure you are registered, you can go to: <http://www.mwltc.org/lcereg/index.php?LTC> and your sign in user name is observer and your password is takethelead. Jim Jones is also planning to add a link for observers to our church's website: www.elmwood-church.org, you would use the same user name and password. Please remember that we also need adults to help us with judging the various events and with serving as door monitors. If you have a desire to serve and can make the trek over to the Marriott East in Indy, please let Barb Tilley, Phyllis Simmerman, Rose Hunt, Sue McClain or me know. Also remember that we have a few hotel rooms reserved at the Marriott (\$69 up to quad occupancy), but next week I will have to release any rooms we do not have names for. When you see our students preparing for the convention, let them know you are proud of them. LTC Preview here at Elmwood will be Sunday night, April 9.

Summer is Coming!

I know, spring isn't officially here for some of you, but it is time to start making plans for the summer. One of the things the teens and I have been looking forward to for over a year is a summer intern. We didn't have an intern last year, so we are excited that plans are coming together for this year. Sunday evening, Bill Bell, Joe Ruhl and I interviewed a couple of our top candidates (we got more applications than ever before this year!) and we will be inviting one of these young men to join us for the summer. As soon as the decision is made, we will introduce you to our intern. In the meantime, we need you to start gearing up for his coming. As before we will probably need members of the church family to allow the intern to live with them during the time he is here (mid-May to mid-August) and we need you to help provide meals for the intern. Some of you have misunderstood this practice.... we offer a competitive salary, but when members provide meals (in or out), it allows the intern to get to know our church family more fully. Thanks for understanding and for helping with both of these areas of need! – Lee

New Directory Pictures to be taken in April



Elmwood is shooting a new pictorial directory, and we need everyone to participate. A photo studio will be set up at the church building on **April 14, 15, 25 and 26** (Friday, Saturday, Tuesday and Wednesday). Every participating family gets a **free directory and 8 x 10 picture**. **There is no cost to the church and you are not obligated by high pressure sales to buy any pictures.** (Online registry is no longer available.) There will be sign-up sheets available in the Farris foyer and the A-2 fellowship room this Sunday from 9:00 until 9:30 AM and 10:15 to 10:45 AM. Sign up early to make sure you get a convenient time! This directory is an important tool in our staying in touch with each other and in helping new members learn who everyone else is.

Free Offer from Lafayette Urban Ministry

LUM is offering free tax preparation assistance for low and moderate income Tippecanoe County workers. They especially encourage people to think about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). This is a federal tax credit for low and moderate income workers. Workers who earned up to \$37,000 may be eligible for some EITC. Volunteer tax preparers are available at LUM on Monday & Wednesday evenings from 5-8 PM and on Thursday afternoons from 1-4:30 PM (appointment only–call 423-2691).



- March 8, 7 PM....**Bible classes for all
- March 8, 6:30 PM....**Small Group Singing practice;
Puppet practice for LTC
- March 12, 4:15 PM....**LTC Large Group Singing
practice at Elmwood building
- March 12, 6 PM....**LIFE Groups meet

Read:
Deut. 8-30; Psalms 36-41

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 12: March 19-25

Hearing God's Voice

It's not that we don't have ears; it's that we don't use them.

Scripture has always placed a premium on hearing God's voice. Indeed, the great command from God through Moses began with the words, "Listen, people of Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4). Nehemiah and his men were commended because they "listened carefully" to the book of the Law (Nehemiah 8:3). "Happy are those who listen to me" is the promise of Proverbs 8:34. Jesus urges us to learn to listen like sheep. "The sheep listen to the voice of the Shepherd. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out... They follow him because they know his voice" (John 10:3-5). Each of the seven churches in Revelation is addressed in the same manner: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Our ears, unlike our eyes, do not have lids. They are to remain open, but how easily they close. (From ***Just Like Jesus*** by Max Lucado)

Question: What is God telling you in his Scriptures?

Sharing the above well illustrates the Scripture readings we have for this week. How often do we let things go in one ear and out the other. We need to remember when we read the scriptures that we need to apply them to our lives and do what they say. "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun" (Psalm 37:5-6).

Please ponder these thoughts with me. God will ask:

- What have you done with my son, Jesus Christ?
- What have you done with the gifts I have given you?

Are we following and applying what God's word is telling us? How well do we listen and follow when it comes to God's Word?

-Kevin Walters