



Sow a Habit, Reap a Character

In September of 1977 Lisa wrote a letter to her parents (for the IM generation, check dictionary for definition of "letter") giving updates on our children. A part of one paragraph:

Tonight Lauren said she didn't think too many of the kids in her class "knew about God." So we talked about that and how that was true in life. This is new for her. And I told her that I hoped I could help her to grow up to love God like she does now. A very "deep" talk for a 6-year-old. Also talked about how big people can quit loving God as they did when they were children and how I hope she would never quit . . . a very nice talk.

Children who grow up in Christian homes take a lot of things for granted. When I was perhaps about the same age as Lauren in the story above, I recall finding it curious that many of my school friends—even those who were regular churchgoers on Sundays—didn't go to church on Wednesday nights.

The fact that we live in a country in which almost everybody says they believe in God should not blind us to the reality that many of those same people do not have a personal relationship with the living Christ.

The 19th century missionary to Burma, George Dana Boardman, wrote a three-line proverb that has influenced far more people than he did through his brief but highly successful ministry:

Sow an act, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny.

This is the way habits of the heart are developed. Make choices for God (don't laugh when somebody tells a racial joke, give up the internet if temptation is too strong, choose to come to worship even when the coach threatens dire consequences for missing a game), and when those choices accumulate, habits are developed. Good habits develop character, and character determines destiny. One's direction in life isn't set by wishing. It comes by lots of little choices that are made (often in pain) that set the course of life. Once it's set, it's so natural that we begin thinking everybody should have godly priorities . . . and that's good. **G. Crowe**

Waking Dreams

As I read Scripture this week, I was reminded of the importance of waking dreams. Story after story in the Bible is home to at least one person who lives life in waking dreams: a state of living in which one can stand in the present and to look beyond it into a possible future.

Abraham was the among the first recorded of those who dreamed when awake. He lived as an elderly gentleman, a nomad of sorts, along with his elderly wife . . . and yet he was able to dream about the day when God would give him a child that would bear numerous children, and those children would not have to wander as nomads but would be given a land of their own.

Abraham and others like him were not just "daydreamers," they *lived* in waking dreams. They were able to make daily decisions in the present based upon the promise of the future. It is astounding, really, that they were able to do that, but it certainly paid off in the long run.

We are all called to have waking dreams for God. We are all called to stand on our current plot of ground and to look beyond the horizon to a better future with God.

What will you dream? Will you dream for more people in the pews? Will you dream for Elmwood to be more involved in the community? Will you dream for a new building for Elmwood or a new building for the CSC? Will you dream for stronger marriages here? What will you dream for? And perhaps a better question... Are you willing to make daily decisions today based on God's desire for tomorrow?
~Dan



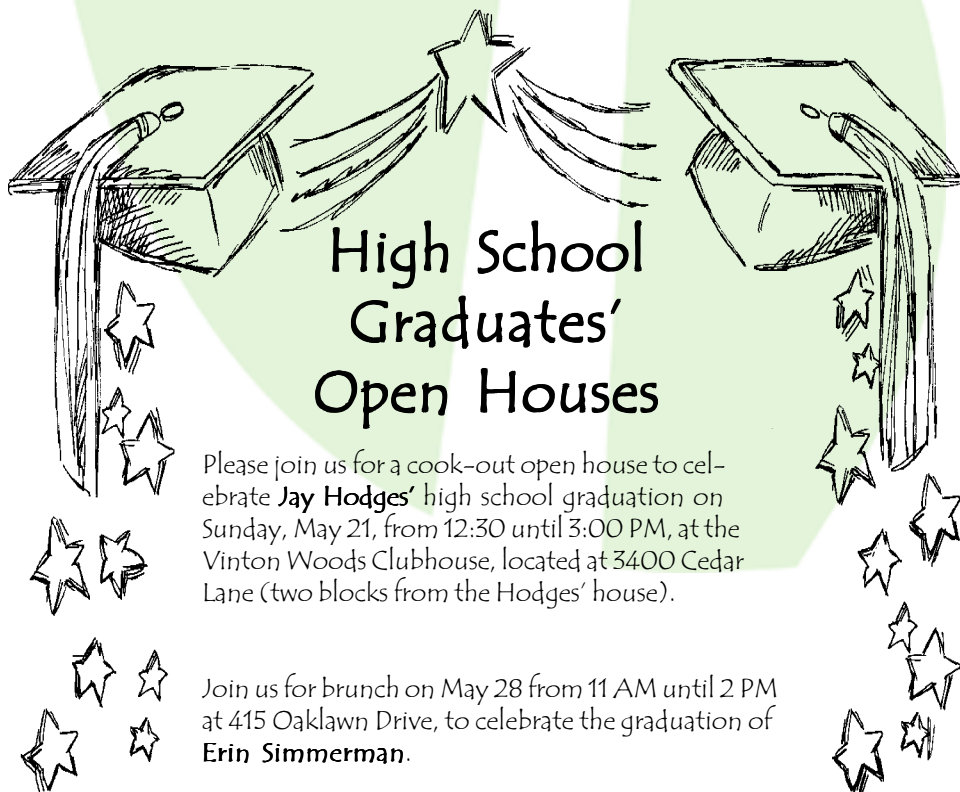
Margie Moffitt, will have shoulder surgery (outpatient) this Wednesday, May 10, at Unity Hospital....**James Thomas**, brother of Carol Bell, had back surgery in Alabama on Tuesday....Valley Stockton's daughter, **Linda Covington** of Georgia, is recovering from a stroke...Continue praying for **Patty Vice, Barbara Newberry, Argie Verett, Sarah Watts, Amber Tolle, Willie Batts, Kaden Koebecke, Noah Powlen, Natasha Risley, Phyllis Gray, Mark Eddy, Marie DeWoody, Anna Dale, Delpha Allen, Carrie High (Regency Place Nursing Home), Irene Fox (George Davis Manor Nursing Home), Paul & Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Gulden (Rosewalk Village).**

Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner, Loren Sniffen, and Brad King.** Serving in South Korea near the DMZ: **Amanda Martin** (Phyllis Simmerman's niece).



Joe Armstrong & Eleri Griffin

Joe Armstrong and his fiancée, **Eleri Griffin**, will be honored at a shower at the home of Mandy and Kenny Anderson, 16 Haymarket Way, Lafayette, this Saturday night, **May 13, at 7:00 PM.** To contribute to a group gift, see Gina Boyd or Mandy Anderson.



High School Graduates' Open Houses

Please join us for a cook-out open house to celebrate **Jay Hodges'** high school graduation on Sunday, May 21, from 12:30 until 3:00 PM, at the Vinton Woods Clubhouse, located at 3400 Cedar Lane (two blocks from the Hodges' house).

Join us for brunch on May 28 from 11 AM until 2 PM at 415 Oaklawn Drive, to celebrate the graduation of **Erin Simmerman.**



It's a Girl!



Josephine Brienne was born Thursday, May 4, to **Kristie & Brian Beeler.** She weighed 7 pounds 7 ounces and was 20 inches long. Congratulations to Kristie, Brian, and big sister Isabella, and also to grandparents, Ronda & Harry Tidrick.

Senior Servants meet on Wednesdays

Senior Servants will have their regular meeting on Wednesday, **May 17, at 11:30 AM**, in room A2 at the church building. Most are over 55, but all are invited. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy the fellowship and service opportunity.

Senior Servants' Lunch

On **Wednesday, May 31**, the Senior Servants will be meeting at 11:30 AM at the Golden Corral Restaurant on Highway 26 E. Everyone is welcome to join us for this meal and fellowship time. We have the group room reserved. Cost: \$6.59.

May 7, 2006
Class: 169 Worship: 293
Contribution: \$10,237
Budget: \$8,100

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On Youth Interns - Bill Bell

For several years, a summer youth intern has been a regular inclusion in the youth ministry budget. We have not always opted to have an intern, but we have always planned to have one as the funds have been budgeted. Why do we do this? While Lee has addressed this from time-to-time in this column, I am stealing the spot light to give my two cents.

First, a summer intern provides direct benefit to the youth program here at Elmwood. As you know, the summer is the busiest and most demanding time for the youth ministry. Our youth group participates in two to four different summer camp sessions each year. In addition, there is an annual mission trip, The Ride (annual trip to Cedar Point), and Youth In Action in Louisville, KY. All of these events are in addition to the weekly gatherings for devotionals or service or fun. This is the time when most of the students are not in school and so it is very important to try to have a variety of spiritual events to help prepare our students for the rest of the year. Phil Travis, our intern for 2006, will be attending a couple of these events, but he will also be staying in town to help support the youth group members who are not able to participate in the outings.

Second, internships are great educational experiences. I was a co-op student in undergraduate school, so I know how on-the-job training enhances the formal education. There are elements of a job that simply cannot be learned in the classroom. Often, for better or worse, the school of hard knocks is the best teacher.

The final reason, and for me the most compelling, is that congregations should contribute to the development of those willing and able to enter full time ministry. While we try to identify and to mentor those among us who may have the SHAPE for this kind of service, in recent years no one from our ranks has been called. (Wasn't Brian Scott the last member from Elmwood to enter full time ministry within Churches of Christ?) So we will use this opportunity to support those from other congregations who are training for full time ministry.

Our practice, which we developed after some hard knocks of our own, is to choose interns who are pursuing full time youth-related ministry and who attend a Christian college that has an internship requirement as part of the degree program. Abilene, Harding, Rochester, and Lipscomb among others, all have such requirements. The intern will have a job description which is available for your perusal, and educational tasks to complete required by the school. He will complete an exit interview and we will send the school a performance assessment that will contribute to the grade he earns from the school. We pay \$2500 for the summer (around \$7/hr) and we rely on the generosity of members to provide housing and some meals. So...PREACH THE GOSPEL - FEED AN INTERN.

Thanks for the space, Lee. Put the two cents on my tab.

—B²

News from the graduate schools

Jon Vaught graduates with a pharmacy degree (Pharm.D.) on Saturday. He is in the process of moving to Dayton, Ohio, where he has a job with Mallinckrodt as a nuclear pharmacist.

Karen Devine Totsuka graduates this Sunday with a M.S. in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences. On June 20 she starts a job in Danville, Kentucky, at a rehabilitation/nursing center. Once she has all the licensure work out of the way, by March she should be able to sign her name as Karen Totsuka, M.S. CCC-SLP.

Joe Armstrong graduates Saturday with a M.S. in weed science. He has already moved to East Lansing to begin a Ph.D. in weed science in Michigan State's Department of Crop and Soil Science. Joe's dad, Mark Armstrong, will be preaching at Elmwood on Sunday.

Susan Swensen graduated on Sunday, May 7, from Indiana State University with a master's degree in education.

Congratulations to all these people on their hard work and dedication to complete their degrees.



Robert Nelson, Earl's brother, 77, died Wednesday, May 3, in Atlanta. He had been in declining health for years with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Robert had been a part of Elmwood 1947-1951, then again in the early 60's while he worked at Purdue on his Ph.D. in educational administration. His funeral was Saturday in Atlanta and his burial was Monday in Petersburg, Indiana. Our sympathies to Earl and his brothers, Ray and Roald.



May 10, 7 PM....Bible classes for all

May 13, 7 PM....Wedding shower for Joe Armstrong & Eleri Griffin at the Anderson home,
16 Haymarket Way, Lafayette

May 13, 1-3 PM....Open House for **Caleb Ethan Witherbee** at the home of Cecil & Sherry, 9510 N. Kissel Rd., Indianapolis (directions on church bulletin board)

May 14, AM services....Mark Armstrong preaching

May 14, 6 PM....LTC awards, preaching, finger foods

June 13....Let's Start Talking Team leaves for Suva, Fiji

Read:

I Samuel 13–31; Philippians
1–4; Proverbs 26:17–29:27

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 21: May 21–27

We are told that God does not give us more than we have the strength to handle, but I truly believe that I am being tested. It is time, once again, for Mark and me to lose another daughter to marriage (twice in 8 ½ months!). I know, we aren't really "losing" her, but it certainly feels that way in my heart.

When the Lord blessed us with Mary 22 years ago, we had no idea of the roller coaster ride that we would have with her; there was never a dull moment! I am very confident that Mary has a special relationship with her Heavenly Father. Just as she is a "Daddy's Girl" on earth, she has that same relationship with God her Father. There have been so many times when He has held her in the palm of His hand and kept her safe. From the time she rolled the pickup truck and walked away without a scratch, to the time she was brought into the hospital in an ambulance (from a youth group meeting, no less) with no feeling in the right side of her body and walked out of the hospital on her own two feet a few hours later, I know He will keep her safe as she leaves our home.

Now, as she and Jared begin their life as husband and wife, I want them to take particular note of this passage from Philippians 4:4-9. *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

God bless *another* new Christian family.

–Sue McClain