



Strangers at Home

Peter opens his first letter by addressing his audience as *strangers in the world*. Other translations say, “...to those who reside as aliens.” According to Peter, we are to be strangers and aliens. One author wrote a book based on Peter’s greeting called *Resident Aliens*. That is what we are.

What does it mean to be strangers in the world, or to be resident aliens?

There is a famous letter called *The Letter to Diognetus* that was written a few decades after Peter’s death. In this letter the author is trying to describe the people known as Christians. He writes, “*The difference between Christians and others is not in country, language, or customs. They don’t live apart in Christian cities or speak a special Christian language or have eccentric Christian customs...Nevertheless, the character of their citizenship is in some way strange and surprising. For example, they live in a country but act like resident aliens. Every foreign country is home to them and every homeland is a foreign country.*”

I visited Italy a few years ago. It was a wonderful trip, but I often felt out of place. I didn’t know if people were talking *to* me or *about* me. I didn’t know what I was ordering off of the menu. I didn’t know how to ask for directions. I was definitely a stranger, but I was a stranger in a strange land. I didn’t speak their language or know their customs. That is not what the author of this letter is talking about. He says that even our own homeland is a foreign country to us.

How do we do this? How do we become strangers in the world – foreigners in our own homeland? I think it starts with this: “*As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’*”

Dear God, far too often I lack the holiness needed to make me stand out as a stranger in my homeland. I pray that you instill in me a desire to strive for holiness; not a “holier than thou” type of holiness, but a pure holiness that can only come from you. God, you are holy. Your son, Jesus, was the perfect example of holiness in this world. The Spirit you place inside of me is holy. God, I pray that I will live in the shadow of your holiness. Amen.

-Gilbert

The Pursuit

The Ecclesiastes writer, in his quest to determine what it means to be human, decided to do whatever he wanted in order to make himself happy. After he tells the reader the many ways in which he chased after pleasures, he says:

And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun (2:10-11).

I’m afraid this lesson has not yet sunk in to our collective consciousness! How often do we find ourselves partaking in and promoting a lifestyle where what you have is of utmost importance! Our constitution and “The American Dream” both tell us that we all have a right to pursue happiness, and material gain. The Ecclesiastes writer warns us against those pursuits. He tells us that all of that is vanity. He says that pursuing those things will not help us become that which God calls us to be!

At the end of his search for the meaning of what it means to be human, he says, “*Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man*” (12:13).

Let us also focus on those principles and discover what it means to be what God has called us to be!

-Phil



Sara Postlethwait is in St. Elizabeth Central, ICU, room 2122, in serious condition. No visitors at this time. Along with the doctors, Sam is considering the next step in her care....**Mike Shirley's** heart ablation procedure went very well. He is home recuperating....After a few days back at the hospital, **Carolyn Rigdon** is back at Creasy Springs for rehab.... **Joe Erwin** a friend of George Kenworthy, was recently diagnosed with lung cancer...Continue praying for **Dorothy Walters** (*Westminster for rehab*), **Pete Swank**, **Diann Doty**, **James Thomas**, **Cecil Koons**, **Wanita White**, **Ernie Kirk**, **Elaine Crowder**, **Steve Cable**, **Valley Stockton**, **Delores Hill**, **Willie & Calvin Batts**, **Connie & Ken Nicholson**, **Niel Postlethwait**, **Kaden Koebecke**, **Annie Crowder**, **Jan Lucas**, **Hattie Coffel**, **Eugene Zinn**, **Henrietta Frampton**, **Irene Sims**, **Marie DeWoody**, and **Paul & Argie Verett**.

In the military: **Tim Beghtol** is in Afghanistan....**Matthew Kauffman & Michael Flynn** are serving in Iraq. **Joe Newman** is in Chicago.



*A Note
of Thanks*

Sara and I have been overwhelmed by the amount of love and support you good people have given us during this past month of Sara's illness. You have covered us with hugs, phone calls, cards, visits, prayers, and kindnesses so wonderful that our lives have overflowed with the fulfillment of the promise Jesus gave to Peter (Mk. 10). The cards created by the children in Melanie Collins' class were so very special. They were a real treasure to lift our hearts on days when things were hard to bear. Much love and thanks to you and God above.

-Sam & Sara



Kinley Boyd, 9-year-old daughter of Josh and Gina, made the decision to make Jesus her Lord on her 9th birthday, May 19. Kinley just finished the 3rd grade at Mayflower Elementary. She is excited about her family's upcoming trip to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for Let's Start Talking. This year Kinley will have her own readers! Congratulations, Kinley, Josh and Gina! Kinley's address is 3528 Indianbrook Dr., Lafayette 47909.

The same evening, **Britt Nelson** was baptized as well. Britt has been studying with Danae Casteel and Rachel Ravellette and working through some tough times. We are delighted with her decision. God bless you, Britt. Britt's address: 29 S. 26th St., Lafayette 47905.

John Ream was baptized by Gilbert on Thursday, May 27. John has been attending Elmwood off and on for over a year. We are so happy for him and pray for God's richest blessings as he has named Jesus as his Savior. John lives at 633 Perrin Avenue, Lafayette 47904.

Pray for **Kinley, Britt, and John** as they are trusting God to transform their lives and lead them in their walk with God.

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62nd
ANNIVERSARY



Rick & Doris Swensen will celebrate their 62 wedding anniversary this Sunday, June 6! A very special happy anniversary Rick and Doris!

Kidney Walk-A-Thon



On **June 12**, **Jack & Sue McCoy**, **the Gambles**, **the Powlens (Jenna)**, and **the Koebckes (Cami)** will be walking in the American Kidney Foundation Walkathon in Indianapolis along with Kaden, who continues to be on kidney dialysis as he waits to become eligible for a transplant. Anyone wishing to join them or contribute to the American Kidney Foundation should contact Jack or Sue or Cara Gamble.

This Sunday
Night-June 6,
decorate for VBS

Can You Help?

Cindy Hubbert, Bonnie Ryves' daughter, is making blankets for 30 orphans in India. She needs 4 ply yarn for the project and would appreciate any donations you could make. For more information, you can contact her at 414-7807.

May 30, 2010

Class: 135 Worship: 212

Contribution: \$8,898.55



Youth Events

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 6.12 Common Ground Coffeehouse, 7-10p
 Saturday 6.26 Youth House "Extreme Makeover",
 10a-3p
 Tuesday 6.29 Twilight Night, 5:30p-2a [girls only!]
 7.18 – 7.23 Camp C.U.M.O.

NEED TO KNOW

re: Youth House "Extreme Makeover" – we're going to gather for an intensive but FUN day of cleaning & painting the youth house!!! we're going to vote before the 26th on the colors. we'll work for a couple hours cleaning, eat lunch, & then paint for a couple of hours! stay tuned for what you can bring to help...

re: Twilight Night – we're going to gather at the Casteel Casa for dinner & movie-viewing pleasure. we'll watch the first two Twilight movies, then [if we can score tickets!], we'll head to the movie theater to watch the latest chapter of the saga, "Eclipse"! bring snacks & friends! this is for GIRLS ONLY [not that any of the boys would want to come...!] stay tuned for ticket info...

re: Camp C.U.M.O. – this is an awesome mission trip experience, working with inner-city children. the opportunity is for all rising 9th graders – 12th graders. please see Phyllis Simmerman if you're interested or have questions!

THANKS!

To our dear Elmwood family: thank you soooo much for all the donations & help with the yard sale & lunch sack! We could not have done this without God blessing us through you! We love you so much & appreciate all your support.

Love, the Youth Group

QUARTERLY REPORT

What a whirlwind three months! We are overwhelmed by His blessings, and we'd like to share the highlights with our family.

We attended two youth rallies in March & April, where we bonded during the awesome van rides & made new friends across the state. Our Common Ground coffeehouse has really grown in attendance – our last one in May had a record 14 students come!



Vacation Bible School, June 7-11

Be praying for the week

- The **6:00 Sunday night service** will be dedicated to putting the finishing touches on the rooms and building. Some will come at 2:00. You are welcome to come anytime between 2:00 and 6:00 to help.
- A few **props are still needed**.
- Also, on the bulletin board by the Teachers' Workroom are the **VBS Registration forms**. Take what you need—one for each child.

Be thinking of children you might invite to enjoy this wonderful experience. This is a great way to introduce friends, family and neighbors to Jesus. Remember it is from **6:00 until 8:00 in the evening, June 7-11, for children 3 years old to 5th grade**.



June 2, 6:00-9:00 PM....Decorating classrooms for VBS

June 2, 7 PM....Bible classes

June 6, 2:00 PM....come for any or all of the time to help put the finishing touches on the building for VBS;

NO REGULAR EVENING SERVICE

June 7-11, 6-8 PM.... Vacation Bible School

July 11, 2-4 PM.... Wedding shower for Erin Simmerman & John Fyffe at Carol & Bill Bell's home, 216 Jennings St., WL

We spent two months learning about putting our faith in action, which spurred on the "lunch sack." It started at \$25 & grew to \$1150!!! It took a lot of hard work, like the yard sale, but it was worth it to see God working in & through our lives. Now we're going through a series about how to be Christ-like even in our "bad days" by taking a look at the seven things Jesus said while on the cross. We have been doing a lot of "bible surfing"!

We're geared up for the summer from the Year-End Shebang lock-in. We had **23** students attend, 11 of which aren't originally from Elmwood & 5 of which were first-time visitors!!! We have lots of plans for the summer, including continued coffeehouses, serving at Camp C.U.M.O., & fun in the sun. The only sad part is saying "goodbye" to our graduates, but we're so happy for them! Can't wait to see what God has in store next!

-Danae Casteel

Read:
 Ephesians 1-3; Lev. 1-3;
 I Kings 10-13; Ps. 69-71; Prov.
 4; Ezekiel 1-6; Luke 11-12

2010 Spiritual Adventures

Week 24: June 13-19

Not What They We Expected

The idea that following Jesus is different than people expected seems to be a theme of this section of Luke’s gospel. In the latter part of Luke 11, Jesus identifies the villains among His listeners—not the Romans, or the Gentiles, but the Pharisees and teachers of the law! And Jesus says perhaps the most shocking thing of all in Luke 12:51: *“Do you think I came to bring peace on earth?”* Most of His followers, and probably a lot of American Christians today, whose theology comes largely from Christmas carols, would initially answer this question, “Of course!” But that’s not the answer of the Man Himself— *“No, I tell you, but division.”* Even on the subject of money (a hot topic among “Gospel of Wealth” preachers of the past 120 years), Jesus speaks against popular wisdom. Rather than promising material blessings for the faithful, Jesus instructs His followers, *“Sell your possessions and give to the poor”* (Luke 12:33).

Then and now, Jesus-followers struggle with their ideas about following Jesus. It is easy to expect following Jesus to produce a peaceful, financially stable life. It seems obvious that if we do good, God will do good for us. Yet the actual message of Jesus is often the opposite of what we expect—Christianity is supposed to produce division, not peace; if you want to have *“purses for yourselves that will not wear out”* (Luke 12:33), give everything away. Jesus is Lord, but His lordship is often not exactly what His first century listeners—or we—expected.

—Josh and Gina Boyd

Weekly Schedule	Elders	World Missions
Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Joe Ruhl 463-7012 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653 Staff Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Phil Travis 743-0954 Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536 Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774
		

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