

## *Chatting on Grandpa's Porch*

Christ the Redeemer Church  
July 18, 2010  
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 10:38-42  
Rev Gary L. Smith  
[www.christredeemerchurch.com](http://www.christredeemerchurch.com)

I told the Youth at Youth Academy that one of the most calming memories I have from living on my grandfather's farm was the hot summer evenings sitting on the porch just drinking sweet iced tea and chatting. No air conditioning. No running water. House too hot to go into after a hot day on the farm. We would just sit on the porch and drink tea and chat and try to get cooled down while waiting for the sun to go down.

When I need to relax in life, I go to that porch and chat in my mind with grandpa and the others and have some sweet tea. I miss times of just sitting and chatting with family and friends.

Martha was busy in the kitchen doing necessary things in life. Mary just plopped down and enjoyed some time to chat with her friend Jesus. Both were right...chores needed to be done and chatting needed to happen.

Let's ignore all chores for a few minutes and just chat.

Last Sunday on the way to the airport Ken Medema and his assistant Bev and I had a fun chat. It was so nice.

Ken said that he heard the new Duke University chaplain speak recently. And that the chaplain said, "No church should be larger than 15 people. Reason? Because a church should be a place where every person is changed by every other person."

Each of us is being changed by every other person in this church.

Janice was at the Texas United Methodist Youth Academy with me and 48 other new friends these past two weeks. Ken was coming to play at our church last Sunday and he likes fruit and coffee with his breakfast.

I called Stephen Jones, the husband of one Janice Jones. Stephen always gets the coffee and doughnuts ready each Sunday here. I asked him to get fruit for Ken and to have it ready at 8:00 am for when Ken arrived for rehearsal time.

Stephen said, "Sure." I brought Ken to church at 8:00 am and took him over to the coffee and doughnuts and fruit. Well, there were the doughnuts and a very small bowl of blueberries and a very, very small bowl of blackberries. That was it. Stephen's definition of fruit was two very, very small bowls of blackberries and blueberries.

I was speechless. Later in the week I told Janice about it. She said, "Well, you should

travel with him. He will ask the kids and me if we want a snack when he stops for gas. We get all excited about the snacks. He comes out of the store with one small package of crackers and divides the crackers up between the four of us. Welcome to my world.”

My 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Mrs. Janice Thompson, wrote me this week. Her life is changed by CTRC and by Lisa and by Lisa’s mother Priscilla. Mrs. Thompson is elderly, lonely as her family is all busy with their own lives and daily chores much like Mary, and she is facing major surgery next month. She wrote me this week, “Your sermon or letter had much food for thought. It was enjoyable, humorous in parts, brought out patriotic feelings, and remembrance to be thankful and grateful that we are part of God’s creation. The beauty is in the Normal Day, as Priscilla and Lisa say. My daughter also loved the (newspaper story you wrote about) Softball Surprises in America. It all took our minds off what was stressing us as we both “cracked up. It is amazing how God’s timing works.”

Church – where every person is changed by every other person.

The youth and faculty at the Youth Academy loved receiving their own hand-made cross, made from mesquite wood by our own Don Fatout. I was honored with being asked to serve communion to the Academy on Wednesday night. I placed 50 wooden crosses on the altar. Told the youth that Jesus dined with his friends on Thursday night and that it was a feast. And that the Disciples had no clue what the meal was about nor did they have a clue what Friday held...the day their Friend Jesus would be killed.

Jesus knew that the memory of the Feast dinner would carry them through the pain of the next day.

After the kids were served communion, I had them go to the altar and select and pick up their own cross. “Pick up your cross and follow me.”

One girl told me, “I do not want to go home. I wish I could stay at camp.” She has many crosses to bear in her life at home.

We each one have our own crosses to bear. The only thing that makes my crosses in life bearable is being loved and being here to enjoy your company each Sunday morning. This feast gets me through a week of Fridays.

Don, here is a note to you inside a card signed by each of the youth at the Academy. ***“Don, Thank you so much for making the pocket crosses for us at Texas Youth Academy. They are all so beautiful and unique and made with love; every time I see it I am not only reminded of Christ’s sacrifice for me but of your kindness and love for those of us that you have never met. I am very blessed to have your cross in my pocket reminding me of my many blessings and goodness in the world. Thank you for your time and your heart for furthering the Kingdom of God. In Him, Maggie Porterfield***

Pinky wants to say a few words to you. Amen.