

Elevators, Chandeliers, and Sweet Corn

Christ the Redeemer Church
August 9, 2009
10th Sunday after Pentecost/Green Time

John 6:35, 41-51
Rev Gary L. Smith
www.christredeemerchurch.com

Did you know that there is a woman new to this church and new in the community who recently turned down a job offer to move to another city for a new job making more money? She turned it down saying, “I have never found a church like this and I do not want to leave it now”?

Did you know that Reverend Mike Young in Fort Worth, who just had a heart transplant this year, is now preaching the Good News – again -- in the Church? He will come here and preach sometime soon...when his schedule allows.

Did you know that last Sunday while we were on our way to the cabin in New Mexico that Melanie Jones called me – she never calls me – her husband Steve “Pinky” calls me nearly daily from work at 5:30 am each morning, sort of a daily prayer for the day call to the pastor—Melanie called me and left a message on my voice mail.

Her phone message said, “Gary, I just called to tell you I Love You and I love my church.” I don’t normally receive messages from women that say “I love you.”

Knowing something had happened I called her back. She told me she had just attended a funeral and she had worn her new dress and her new hairdo. A friend said to her at the funeral, “I would not be allowed to wear that new hairdo in my church.”

Steve Pinky, ever the diplomat, said to the family friend, “Oh, she read the Scripture reading this morning in *our* church.”

Melanie called to say how much she loves being in a church that does not judge her, her hair, and others.

Did you know that Carla called the cabin late Thursday night and asked me if I would call her Friday morning at 5:30 am before her mastectomy cancer surgery – so that we could have prayer over the phone? She said she wanted to hear my voice prior to surgery.

Did you know that when Pam jumped out of bed at the cabin at 5:15 am in the dark and put on a winter hooded jacket to sit on the porch in the dark under a full moon to talk to Carla and have prayer with her prior to the surgery? I told Carla that NO ONE gets to hear Pam’s voice at 5:15 am in the morning...not even Pam hears her voice that early!

Did you know that when we called that Shirley Weston, medically retired nurse and pancreatic cancer survivor, was already in the room with Carla? She was waiting for Carla when Carla arrived. Carla’s church was waiting in the room for her at 6 a.m.

Did you know that after the surgery that Brenda Smith, a local judge, spent the night in the hospital room with Carla so that Randy could stay home with the two scared daughters who were wondering why their mother was not coming home that night.

Did you know my son asked me if I had ever served in a church where a judge would sit in a room all night with a friend recovering from cancer surgery?

Did you know that Steve and Janice Jones helped start this church over four years ago and that this was their second church to help start in their young lives? Steve's real estate expertise has greatly benefited this church. They love communion each Sunday here.

Did you know that Lisa Dennis, Certified Public Accountant and newly employed at the university College of Business, voluntarily runs our books for our church and for our church's Event Rental Business Ministry...which helps pay our rent on this building?

Did you know that 93-year-old Wren Giesen called me Friday and said, "Gary, I just want you to know someone can sit in my seat this Sunday. I had an operation on my eyelid this past week and did not tell anyone. I am fine. My face is black and blue. I will not be in church this Sunday. But I wanted you to know I am not playing hooky. I will see you Sunday after next."

Did you know that Dr. Bert Cobb and his wife Gaye, both struggling with health issues of their own, visited Carla in the hospital on Friday? Bert just completed writing devotions for the year 2011 edition of the Methodist Publishing House devotional *The Disciple*.

Did you know that Brenda's mother Mrs. Smith in Fort Worth weekly receives the sermons and bulletins from our church at her home per her request? She has never been inside this church.

Did you know that Tricia Salinas (aka *Truck Girl*) high school classmate of Daniel's and Nora's, is a second year engineering student at Iowa State University and is doing a summer internship in Albuquerque, New Mexico...and that she drove up to the cabin to fish with us this week for a few days? She spoke at our church last year and gave a speech to us about what it was like to wrestle a pig and how she won the Hays County Pig Wrestling Contest. She loves our church and this story.

Did you know that Steve Pinky's mother up in Eastland just asked to become my Friend on Facebook? A photo of the Baptist Church she raised Steve in is now on my computer. She has never been inside this church.

Did you know that as we headed home from New Mexico on Friday that we bumped into Steve Jones Pinky and his two dogs and three kids at a Roadside Park in Brownwood? He was heading north and we were heading south.

Melanie Jones was not with them...she is at a medical profession conference in Kansas this weekend. Her son Mason said, "Mom says the hotel is so nice that that the elevators have chandeliers!"

Elevators with chandeliers...that will preach. A banquet place. A nice place. Fit for a queen.

Jesus told the church leaders of his day to quit asking confrontation, complaining-type questions like "Hey, aren't you that carpenter's son? Why should we listen to you?" and to stop complaining and just follow some good teachings of love, compassion, generosity, hospitality, forgiveness, to feast and dine with sinners, to not elevate ourselves above anyone else, and to taste of God's Love and never thirst again.

Did you know that the woman who read the Scripture this morning is a working college student who bought a new dress and got a new hair-do...just for this morning? Do you have any idea how many lives are being changed due to *your* presence and love?

Did you know that Brenda and Berry ordered and paid for fresh-from-the-Midwest-fields-of-Ohio sweet corn to be shipped here overnight on Fed-Ex two days ago...enough for each of you take home one ear each and feast on tonight. Paid for by your fellow church family members for you to enjoy. They paid my brother Rodney to ship enough fresh sweet corn for this entire church. **Just pull back the husks, clean off the silk, pull the husks back over the tender corn and hit "Fresh Vegetable" on the microwave. Or keep the husk on each ear of corn and grille over a hot fire for 10 minutes, turning each ear regularly. Not your ear...each ear of corn. Feast and enjoy.**

I feel like when we treat each other properly and love as God loves us then it is like living in a 5-star hotel where even the elevators have chandeliers. All the while eating real Good Bread at this Banquet Table. Daniel will bag and hand you your ear of fresh sweet corn at the altar after you take the Bread of Life and eat it. Homemade Bread. Tasty bread made by Don. Amen.