

GREETINGS FROM GREENVINE



Four funerals in a week. Brings many thoughts to my mind as I help in the final preparations for helping families say good bye to their loved ones.

Four different kinds of funerals as different as the people and families themselves.

The first was Saturday morning, a memorial service for Gary Lee from our congregation. Though he suffered with Alzheimer's Disease he seemed to be such a kind and happy man. I remember the many times that he told me how he "blew up stuff in the army." He said it was fun. The memorial service was a time of remembrance and laughter. So many humorous stories about a fun-loving man. A side of him that none of us here at Greenville knew. There was much consolation and happiness in spite of tears during the service as well as during the meal. I sat between a couple of engineers that Gary worked with and they told me of pranks and fun that Gary was involved with. Even though it was goodbye, it was joyful. I like memorial services like that one.

The second was a baby not born. Two weeks prior to the predicted birth, the doctors could not find a heart beat. So they had to take the baby. His name was to be Nicholas. His parents, Bryan and Sara could hardly contain themselves. The rest of the family was devastated as well. A small grave side service. Reminding them of God's sovereignty, grace and love in spite of the circumstances. Friends and family were so taken aback that no one could say a word without falling apart. Such sorrow. Grief beyond all compare. They will probably not go through any other event in their lives that will be as sad, hard and difficult as that day was. Karen and I sat with them at the grave after everyone else had gone. We sat and tried as best we could to find comfort and consolation in the midst of this devastating event. Those kinds of funerals are not one that I look forward to.

Wednesday I will attend and participate in a funeral of a dear friend that I have known for many years. He was a fellow pastor. I rode with him with the Patriot Guard Riders. I ministered with him in a couple of discipleship weekends. He loved the Lord. However, he contracted cancer. A couple of times in the past 10 years. This last time he was diagnosed with yet another form, he said, "No more." I can't go on fighting like this. I am too tired and worn out from all the radiation, chemo and surgeries. Les was a good man. A Christ lover. A family man. He recorded his own goodbye for the funeral itself. I think he will have the last say-so there. Like Gary's service, there will be tears as

well as laughter. Although more difficult than Gary's, I don't mind this kind of service either. The family loves the Lord and is drawing comfort from the Holy Spirit.

Saturday will be the funeral of T. K. Condren. I didn't know him much. He attended our Men's breakfast as often as he could. I think he was 94 when he died. T. K. Also loved the Lord. Was an active member at his church until he couldn't. He was a man who knew how to tell stories. You would lean in to hear and understand what he was saying. I would go visit him on occasion and go away happy and joyful. Usually had some kind of funny ending. He truly knew about life and godliness. I'm sure that his funeral will glorify God and be a great tribute to a great man.

These services make me look at my own life. I take an inventory of who I am and what I am doing. I thank my God Whom I serve with my entire being for the life He has graced me with. I look at my family, friends, and you all here at Greenvine and am so thankful that He has led us here. I was asked not too long ago, "How long are you going to be here?" I don't know. The Apostle Paul says that "life is but a vapor, here today and gone tomorrow." Time seems to speed on by.

The writer of the book of Hebrews says, "It is appointed for mankind once to die, and after that the judgment." We will all die unless we are still here when the Lord returns for His own. Either way, it is followed by judgment. Not for our sins, that was taken care of at the cross at Calvary. Paul goes on to say that "we will all give an account of our deeds here on earth, whether good or bad." Not judgment in the sense of punishment, but rather for reward.

It all started in the Garden of Eden. You remember, God said, "If you eat from this tree you will surely die." And that started this cycle of life and death. Adam and Eve died spiritually that day. It would take a few years, but they both eventually died physically. All that they had in paradise was forfeited because they wouldn't obey God. Rather they gave into the temptation from the devil himself.

As I recall, only two men in history didn't die. "Enoch walked with God and he was taken." I heard a preacher say that he and God walked together often. One time they had walked a long distance and had so much conversation. Then God said to him, "Enoch we are closer to my place than yours. Why don't you just come home with me." We don't know what really happened. We do know that God showed favor to Enoch and simply took him home body, soul and spirit. What a way to go. I think I'd like that.

Then there was Elijah. Taken to glory in a chariot of fire. Whush! Wouldn't that have been a sight.

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Two righteous men who were so favored by our God that He invited them home without dying. “In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, we who remain and are alive will be taken up to glory.” I’d like to see that in my life time.

My friend Woody says that he wants to be cremated and half of his ashes spilled in the Pacific Ocean that the other half in the Atlantic Ocean. When his body is resurrected, what a whush. Who knows. Maybe we won’t even know what is happening. Simply meeting the Lord in the air and spending eternity with Him. “What a day, glorious day that will be.”

Thoughts of death don’t scare or bother me. I know that the Lord has “numbered our days” according to Psalm 139. There is nothing we can do to add to those days, nor take away. I’m so thankful that God is in control of everything. I bless God that He loves, keeps and satisfies. I truly look forward to heaven. I don’t know when I’ll get to see it and witness the face-to-face with Jesus. I would like a few more lives with you all. Karen and I really enjoy our time in Greenvine.

Be sure to pray for Camp Hope coming up. Those kiddos need to hear stories of Jesus.

Blessings upon all of you. Jack & Karen

Announcements

- Please remember to complete your information card for the directory.
- Wednesday Night Bible Study -Wednesday nights @ 6pm
- Women’s Ministry - 2nd Tuesday of each month @6pm - Next meeting June 8@6pm
- Woman’s Bible Study -Saturday June 5 @10am
- Men’s Prayer Breakfast - Wednesday June 29, @ 7am
- Volunteers needed for Camp Hope June 7-11 (at Greenvine) and June 14 - 18 (at Camp For All)
 - Adults needed to help with children’s programs.
 - Cook a taco meal for 50 - 75 people
 - Please see Charlotte to sign up.
- _ Remember to fill your baby bottles and return on Father’s day.
- Special offering for Bible Sticks ministry on Sunday May 30
- Southern Association annual meeting - Saturday June 26
 - Congregation will supply sides and desserts for lunch - see Charlotte to sign up to cook
- 4th of July Barbecue- Sunday July 4th - 5pm - dark - Stay tuned for more details

Prayer Requests

Becky's granddaughter Taylor who has Cystic Fibrosis and is having health issues

Colin Smith - 18 yr old with a Traumatic Brain Injury. (Patient of Karens)

Patty's Brother Scott - Recovering from surgery

Gerri Smart's daughter Terri has been diagnosed with cancer. She will be starting chemo prior to surgery then more chemo and possibly radiation. Please pray for strength as she walks through this and prayers for Gerri as well as she she helps Terri through this process.

Gerri Smart has seen another eye doctor and he wants to hold off on another eye surgery for now. Please pray for healing in Gerri's eye.

Cliff Reed's dad is recovering from a UTI (He was hospitalized earlier this week)

Juliette - recovering from gun shot wound - she has been able to go home.

Joe Durrett - Stomach cancer and heart attack - home on hospice care

Ray and Bev Morris - Bev and been diagnosed with Alzheimers

Cliff's dad has dementia and is not doing well.

Bobbie Schulte - Doing better

Mandy Forester - Upcoming Brain surgery

Sandra Carson's daughter Candace is having some mental health issues

Charlotte's grandson Brayden - He is struggling with this next phase of his life and what he is going to do.

Bob & Sadie Easley - Health issues

Ed Ehring's sister Julie Robison is suffering from Alzheimer's.

Vicky Hoffman - legally blind but her eyes are getting worse

Chain of Love - Pray for the children, the house parents, the teachers and pastors that work with them

Sandra - housemother passed away last week

Valdir - COL Maintenance - ICU with Covid

Prayers for those working in health related jobs, for protection. Especially those from our own families:

Karen at St Joseph - Susan - State School - Zella Johnson