

Lamplighter

Carlisle Congregational Church



Rarely the Way We Expect

by Pastor Weibley

One of the last commitments I made before accepting the call to become pastor at Carlisle was to direct a performance of Karen Green’s *Romans* Oratorio in Philadelphia. It was Wednesday morning, about half an hour before the first rehearsal with a choir I had never seen, and I was cleaning my glasses before going out the door. Suddenly, I was holding *two pieces* of glasses, the bridge separated in the middle. The realization dawned: I would be conducting difficult music with orchestra and with soloists from New York City Opera the coming weekend and not being able to see either the performers or the music as anything but a blur. A moment of panic, a prayer: my wife (who had been heading out to visit her dad in Lancaster) drove me to the rehearsal, and left to find the nearest Costco Optical (the glasses had come from the wonderful Nashua store) to see if anything could be done. Meanwhile, I began the five hours of scheduled rehearsal. I introduced myself to the choir and spoke on 1 Kings 8:14-21 as I had planned the day before: God keeps his promises, but we rarely can guess ahead of time what the answer will look like. Sometimes, in God’s providence, a performance is a disaster, but we learn a little more about our dependence on the Lord; other times, a dress rehearsal falls apart, but the performance is a remarkable demonstration of God’s power. God is always doing unexpected things in remarkable ways. And there, that morning, I stood before them, with no remedy. The glasses couldn’t successfully be taped; epoxy wouldn’t hold. So, we prayed. As I owlishly conducted, Deb found the Costco person to be an adamant and unpleasant dead end. She drove to Home Depot in the futile hope of some adhesive answer. But, as she came out of the store, across the street she saw a sign she had not seen before: Philadelphia Eyeglass Lab. Deb went in; the man in this little mom and pop eyeglass store not only replaced the bridge, but did it in half an hour and at no cost. Deb walked in mid-rehearsal and handed me the glasses and the choir saw acted out before them the unexpected answer to a prayer we had made less than an hour before.

But what if the answers don’t come as fast as that? What if it something so much bigger than my little concern with glasses? What if years pass? What do we do in the meantime, when we don’t see an answer to prayer, don’t see a way out? Karen Green’s husband, the speaker for the Imago School graduation, spoke of a little girl whose name we don’t even have, who showed what it means to trust our Savior when we don’t see an answer. 2 Kings 5 is a troubling account for we who believe God’s job is first to make us happy here. Naaman was the Syrian commander who had been given victory over God’s people *by the Lord*. And now a girl is carried off by that same Syrian army, taken away from all that was familiar to her, away from her mom and dad, to a land of a different language from the one she knew, under the authority of *this* man. Then she is made to be the slave to the wife of this man to

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whom the Lord gave power to defeat His own people. A man who, for all his valor, suffered from the stigma and disability of leprosy. If you were that little girl, how would you be thinking? What would be in your heart? Anger, bitterness, revenge, depression? Her mouth speaks to her mistress what is on her heart: *“Would that my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.”* This little girl thinks, “My master is sick and I want his good. There is only one place for him to find healing: the God of Israel, who is at work through His prophet living in Samaria. Her trust in her Savior, regardless of her personal circumstances, leads her to hold in her heart compassion for the person who, others might say, ruined her life. Likely it was hard for her to hear “God has a wonderful plan for your life” and this is it. But she had her Savior, and everything else was second for her. From the safety of that Refuge, she could reach out (from what *could* have been a self-absorbed, self-pitying life) and love her enemy and see, in this most unlikely circumstance, her God being faithful to His promises, even if hardly in the way she would expect. Rather than steep in her own dissatisfaction with the painful work God was doing in her heart, and the circumstances necessary for that work into which



He brought her, she asked, “How will I obey my faithful Savior now, even when I don’t see His hand?” The end of this story we know. Naaman later confesses, not only is the LORD God, He is the *only* God. This Gentile oppressor has confessed the faith of the little girl to be his own.

I wonder where the Lord will take me and you this summer. What unexpected opportunity may He give you to serve Him when it’s hard, to be an example of “grace under suffering,” as Karen Lynip recently wrote of her long-struggling niece Megan. I am humbled when I think of this little girl and Megan, but I should be more humbled when I see how much Jesus carried for me and how “light and momentary” is what He calls me to carry for Him. We’re on our way home, given as much manna as we need for one day at a time, having seen in the scriptures and in our lives the history and the track record of our God. We have the bread we need for today as we look to the pillar of cloud, and the angel of the Lord’s presence who speaks from that cloud. The bread we need for tomorrow doesn’t come until then, but He has promised we will always have it, as we make our way toward home fixing our eyes on the One who was present in that cloud, our Lord Jesus, in Whom ALL of God’s promises are yea and amen.



2010 Managua Trip

by John Meneghini

On July 6th I'll be leaving home with a team of 14 adults and teenagers to travel to [Calvary Chapel of Managua, Nicaragua](#). We are a short term missionary team comprised of two churches: [Calvary Chapel Chelmsford](#), and [Carlisle Congregational Church](#). Some of us met only a few months ago, and 10 of us have never been to Nicaragua before. We all come from various walks of life and vocations, and only one of us is fluent in Spanish.

We'll be leaving at 2:30 am in the morning to catch our 5:30 am flight. When we arrive, only the simplest of accommodations will be available. We will live much like the native Nicaraguans do. There will be a dormitory style bedroom, on the third floor of the church, where we all sleep together (non-coed). There's no clean water - we must drink bottle water at all times. There's no air conditioning and no windows. For 10 days we will live in the open air of a city which has no pollution control. The city is powered by diesel generators. On a hot day you can smell the ozone. Every morning the rooms need to be swept clean of all the soot and dust that has settled during the night. It covers everything. There are toilets and showers but the municipal sewer system is so bad that we are not allowed to flush anything but human waste down the toilet. (You dispose of your used toilet paper in the waste paper basket). At this we are living better than most of our neighbors, who have no plumbing. Every morning you see small fires burning in the gutters. This is how most families dispose of their waste from the night before, which serves to enhance the air quality. The municipal systems are bankrupt and unable



to meet the demand for water and electrical systems you never know when you will have water and electricity. Managua is a city of 1.6 million people. This is not a vacation.

The truth be told, I am not looking forward to going on this trip. Commitments at work and at home are pressing, there are many preparation to make, and I am running out of time. Moreover, I don't feel spiritually prepared at all. I have no great sense of spiritual peace or calling about this... I'm just waiting for the time to come so I can leave and come back.

So then, you may ask: why do you go? The answer is simple. I go because I can. I go because I have the opportunity to go. I go because, having been on many missions trips like this before, I know I won't regret it. It's like going to the gym to workout. Nobody wants to exercise, they do it because they know they'll be better off when they do. No trial seems pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Heb 12:11).

I don't go to Nicaragua because I have any great purpose or calling. I have nothing to offer my brothers and sisters in Nicaragua. The truth is, I am just as impoverished as they are. I go to Nicaragua to be taught. I go there to see and to learn of the body of Christ. This is what it means to be a missionary. I go to Nicaragua knowing I will receive more than I can give. This is what it means to be a Christian. For all of us have received far more than we can give.



You may ask: is God calling me to go too? How will I know? The answer is found in prayer, but I may not be speaking of the kind of prayer you're imagining. The



to meet the demand for water and power. Public water and electricity are turned off everyday, for hours at a time; without notice or alarm. Without your own private,

Westminster Larger Catechism defines prayer as follows:

Q: What is prayer?

A: Prayer is an *offering up of our desires* unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies.

Prayer involves *offering up our desires*. Going on a short term missionary trip usually involves giving up the desire for comfort. It involves giving up the desire to keep

your money, or to spend your vacation time enjoying yourself. Going on a trip like this always involves leaving one's comfort zone... but then that's exactly why we go. We go because the very act of leaving our comfort zone *is a prayer* unto God.

[Editor's note: follow John's blog at:

<http://2010mngtrp.blogspot.com/>]

Learning from Grown Grandchildren—A Unique Experience

by Kay Woodward

What a different world we live in! In 1930 I remember the occasional visits we made from home in Indiana to my maternal grandparents home in Wisconsin. We enjoyed eating Grandma's German coffeecake and climbing all over the farm machinery that Grandpa sold from his spacious front yard. Less frequent trips were made to Canada (3 days by car) where my paternal grandparents lived on a farm. My two brothers helped with the farm work, while my sister and I helped wash clothes on a washboard and bucket of water on the back porch (no electricity) and played croquet by the hour in the front yard. We never took weekend trips. Cornfields in Indiana do not offer much interesting scenery.

Now with 10 grandchildren of my own (ages 18 to 36). I keep a world map on the wall where I can quickly locate the foreign country a grandchild is going to work in. I feel fortunate to have frequent communication with them by email or occasionally a handwritten note or greeting card. Rather than being drafted for the Viet Nam war, our two sons joined the Peace Corps in the late '60s, one sent to Turkey, one to Fiji. Our daughter had an American Field Service (AFS) year of study in France, so all profited by overseas experience.

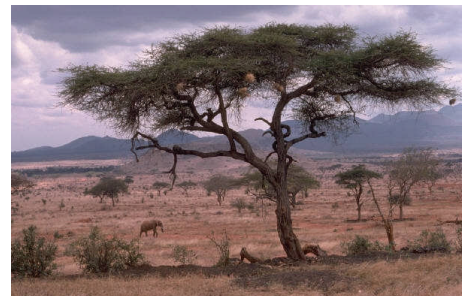
That interest and opportunity to live and learn the culture of a foreign country has been handed down to their children. Some have also served in the Peace Corps in Togo or Guinea in West Africa, AFS in Ecuador and Czechoslovakia; or doing research in grad school in Peru. This past year four were working in Washington, D.C. , two of whom spent several months of work in Sri Lanka and Mali in West Africa.

In September, my Canadian granddaughter married the American she met while both were working for Mercy

Corps in Mongolia. Now Mercy Corps has sent them on a two year job program in Thailand. With recent reports of the uprising and violence in the streets of Bangkok, we have been concerned for their safety. Fortunately, since they were living in the American Embassy, they have been moved to an area farther from the mid-town turmoil.

Several years ago, our New Hampshire granddaughter, working for the International Refugee Commission, was sent to Darfur, but was moved shortly after because of the Darfur-Sudan violence. She works with refugees and domestic violence victims, and is frequently involved with refugees wanting to return to their native countries. She felt the need two years ago to get a degree in International Law.

One summer as I e-mailed two of my granddaughters (first cousins), I realized both had been sent to Nairobi, Kenya, for the same month. So I inquired of each if they knew their cousin was there. They made contact and together attended a party which one had an invitation to as a State Department employee.



Several years ago my French-speaking grandson chose to attend graduate Business School in Lausanne, Switzerland. He and his wife had been working in Paris, but he had dreams of starting his own business. After hav-

ing two little boys, his wife wanted to go back to work. Our Carlisle granddaughter had graduated from college but had been unable to get a job. So, the older cousin asked his Carlisle cousin if she would come over to be their nanny. She got ready in a week and while living with the family, her artistic talent was recognized. She was then hired as the graphic artist for the start-up company. She enjoys photography and often paints what she sees and so is happy to be in a beautiful and picturesque country.

This summer a grandson and his wife who have been with the NYC school system for several years, have decided they want a year or two of work overseas and now are scheduled to go to Sudan and work in a refugee camp.

Some of our church groups have become acquainted with Taina this year. She is the mother of Walter, the clarinetist, and was brought up in a fundamentalist church in Fiji. Recently, she attended a week's conference of the Pan-Pacific Southeast Asia Women's Association in Indonesia. She is secretary for the organization which meets once every three years. The theme this year was "Unity in Diversity" and she was a speaker discussing education, health and economic issues. Her college age daughter went with her a month ago and helped lead a discussion of the "Youth Ambassador" group.



Having made friends in their work far and near, my grown grandchildren are now invited to weddings which require air travel. One granddaughter lamented that they were invited to ten weddings one summer, all requiring air travel, and they would have to decline some. When I was married in 1943, the wedding was in my family's Presbyterian church and the receptions were held in our back yard with a friend of my mother's providing light refreshments and a wedding cake. Only local friends and out-of-town relatives were invited. There were no sit-down dinners which seem to be the prevailing custom now.

As a widow now, it gives me great pleasure when grown grandchildren come to visit me, one or two at a time. The one-to-one relationship is more meaningful than large family gatherings. I am impressed that my spouses are just at home in the kitchen as their wives and seem glad to help prepare meals or load the dishwasher. I did not train my sons to cook, but their wives have taught them. With both parents having careers, there is certainly a need for teamwork at home. I was a "stay-at-home" mom, but practiced my Home Economics training by making my own clothes and my children's, making curtains and slipcovers when needed and doing wallpapering, painting indoor and outdoor work in summer.

Talkin' Godspell with Casey, Brady and Mitchell McKee

by Gretchen McKee

I was really pleased when Terry Tracy asked me to write an article on Littleton High School's Spring production of Godspell – in part because our grandsons were in it, and also because it was an obvious 'work' of the Lord. His hand was evident in every aspect ... from the announcement that Godspell was the chosen endeavor, through the discussions of Blair, Diana, Casey and Brady with the directors, to the asking of Pastor Weibley to sit in on some of the rehearsals, right straight through to the closing curtain the final night. That a public school would present this play, under these 'conditions' was one thing, but the fact that the director and her musical director husband wanted to present it 'correctly' was another. Some amazing things took

place and it was very exciting.

Recently ... at The Goldenrod at York Beach on Brady's 16th birthday ... we did a video interview with the McKee grandsons regarding their Godspell experience ... and the following is what they said --

Casey, what can you tell us about your reaction to playing the part of Jesus Christ?

Casey: Having the opportunity to portray Jesus during the crucifixion was a stirring experience. I had to try to give the audience insight into the agony Jesus went through, both physically and spiritually .. some-



thing I would be grateful to accomplish in a small part. This attempt gave me, I believe, greater insight into what it must have been like for our Savior to allow Himself to pay the price for our sins, and has helped me to further appreciate that gift. I will never forget the simultaneously amazing, disturbing, and finally triumphant feeling of reenacting our Lord's death, and resurrection.

Brady, what did it feel like to play Judas?

Brady:

"Well ... sort of made me look at myself – compare and contrast myself to the character; and it reinforced just how amazing it is that someone as sinful as me could be forgiven. When I came back on stage at the end, (after his Judas leap from the fence and the crucifixion of Christ), it wasn't like I was trying to show Judas was forgiven ... but just me as myself – just the fact that I was also completely disgusting in God's eyes, and sinful, but because of Jesus, I'm forgiven. It felt good to take off the red Judas jacket ... to feel like myself and know I've been forgiven in Jesus.

Casey:

"That's when I said he could relate to his character a lot better than I could relate to mine ... and (laughing) he got offended! No, not really." Playing the role of Christ made me feel very humble .. inadequate ... it was a great experience – it really was.

Brady, tell us what it was like singing as John the Baptist coming down the aisle at the opening?

Brady:

"Well ... it scared me half to death. It was an amazing thing to sing, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

What about discussions with the kids during your many rehearsals?

Casey:

"Sometime we would make corrections – and the

Director loved it ... she knew we knew more about this than she did. She wanted the resurrection ... wanted it to be correct. She'd been in Godspell herself, twice before, and both times it ended with Jesus being carried off dead ... they picked Him up and carried Him out, with everyone crying because that was the end. Terribly sad. The Director said, 'It was the saddest thing I'd ever done.' "

Brady:

"The Director knew the other endings weren't right .. and she wanted it to be accurate to what the Bible says..

We had personal discussions with some of the kids .. answered a couple of their questions and comments. We just hope and pray the Lord was working in their hearts. We don't know."

Casey:

"The Director would make alterations, changes – she wanted a 'resurrection song' and that's why we did 'You Raise Me Up' at the close.

That wasn't a part of 'Godspell'?

Casey:

Noooo ... the director stuck it in there ... wanted a resurrection song – that fits! Done! She talked with Pastor Weibley first. We took issue with the line 'you raise me up to be more than I can be' ... that wasn't right for me as Jesus to sing ... so the way we worked it out with the director was I would sing the first verse and the rest of the cast would sing that part to me as Christ."

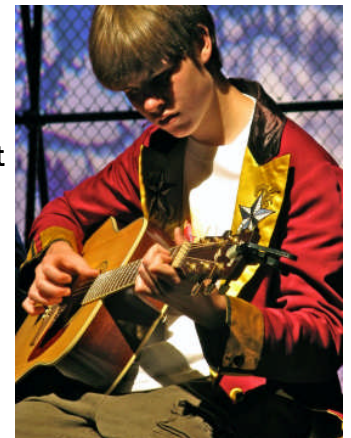
Brady:

Thinking back, it's hard to imagine, like, that was me. I just feel like I put so much into the character and it was such a big deal. But after I left it, it was almost like that was someone else ... putting everything into a character like that

That 'Aha moment' of the crucifixion, when the lights went out and all was pitch dark, and the audience was in awe ... what did you expect from that?

Casey:

"If we did it right – and that was the effect we were going for ... the audience supposed to sit



there and wait and wait .. and wonder. We wanted an 'awkward silence' that's what the director called it ... an awkward silence ... and if we did it right, that's what we'd get ... and we did! My first realization was, wow, this is so extraordinarily dark! I stepped on someone getting off stage ... didn't hurt them though." I think we achieved the desired effect – don't you think so?"

What was it like when it was over ... when that final curtain fell?

Casey:

"It was hard. It was a mixture of 'oh man, it's over' ... and relief! We'd been doing it for such a long time .. three performances (plus dress rehearsal) and I was so emotionally drained – so tired physically. It was three shows in a row (4)! In the days that followed though, I was sad it was over.

Would you guys recommend that someone be in Godspell?

Casey:

Oh yes!

Brady:

Check with your director first if you can, and try to find out how they're going to do it. If we'd had a bad director .. not even like a bad director, but a director with a certain way of doing it in their mind ...

Casey:

... even if the Director just sticks to the script. Our Director altered things ... took things out ... made script changes for correctness.

That was an important issue for you as a family, wasn't it?

Casey:

If it wasn't going to be done truthfully and honoring to Christ, we wouldn't have been in it.

If you could hope for one thing for the people seeing Godspell, what would it be? What would you want them to take from the performance?

Brady:

Not necessarily just one thing – I want them to wonder ... to want to find out more about the story and

learn more .. to raise their curiosity.

Casey:

Right after the singing of 'come sing about love', then it went to the Last Supper and the crucifixion scene. I was wanting them (the audience) to see love for the lost ... Christ's love for all this little rag tag bunch of goof balls that didn't deserve it. That's what I wanted to get across to the audience.

Have you heard any 'local' comments about Godspell?

Casey:

A Mom of someone who works at Donelans, and is Jewish, went twice because she loved it – and the second time, she took a friend!

Brady:

... and a woman at the doctor's office raved about it!

OK Mitchell ... what were your thoughts about Godspell? Did you enjoy it?

Mitchell:

It was a great production ... and how they did it in a public school! It was so blatantly Biblical! Really amazing to have it be out there.

Were you glad the boys had a part in it?

Mitchell:

Oh yea! I got to go to some of the rehearsals .. and got to know the Director. It was good.

What was your favorite part?

Mitchell:

Casey's and Brady's duet ... "All For The Best" ... and it is. My brothers .. and that was really cool. And the crucifixion with the pause right after ... the long silence. It was really moving – emotional.

Thank you, Mitchell ... and Casey and Brady. Godspell was a great experience for us all and because of your faith, Casey and Brady ... because you know the Truth, you were able to give performances that went beyond just learning lines and playing roles. The Lord had His purpose in this presentation of Godspell at Littleton High School. We may never know just what that was until we're with Him, but in the meantime, we'll be praying for all those adults and young people who were a part of Godspell.



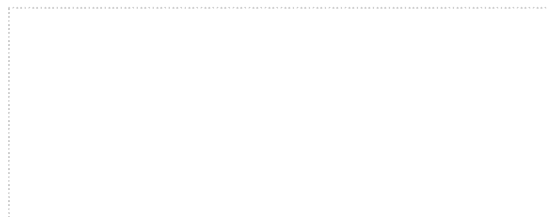
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Knowing, Loving and Living the Word in God's World for His glory..

The Lamplighter

Dates to Remember

(Check church web site for the latest event information.)

July 11	Sermon: Psalm 22
July 18	Sermon: Psalm 23
July 18	Concert on the Green—Pneuma Brass
July 25	Sermon: Psalm 24
Aug 1	Sermon: Psalm 25
Aug 8	Sermon: Psalm 26
Aug 15	Sermon: Psalm 27
Aug 22	Sermon: Psalm 28
Aug 29	Sermon: Psalm 29
Sept 5	Sermon: Sacrament of Rest
Sept 12	End of Summer Schedule-Return to regular schedule