



PASTOR'S CORNER

Chester Roley passed away this last month. Chester was diagnosed with prostate cancer about three years ago. Most of those three years were a struggle to live. For us to relate to

Chester during those trying years was a learning, spiritual experience.

Dying is a normal human experience. Dying is as normal as birth. The miracle of birth as the beginning of life and death as the ending of life on earth, are sacred experiences for persons of faith. It is however the experience of dying that draws us most to think about the meaning of life and to reflect on how we should live.

To be with Chester and the Roley family during these last weeks was a special experience. For most of his life Chester did not profess to be a religious person, in fact he was rather anti-religious. After he was diagnosed with cancer he began to change. He would tell us, I have been praying and I am not afraid to die. Chester however had never practiced using the words we use to address God. No one knows the words Chester used in prayer. I imagine God must have been pleased to hear someone pray who did not know pious religious language. Being with Chester in the last days of his life brought to me a freshness of the grace of God. Just like a child does not have to earn the love of their parents, Chester was assured that he was loved because he was a husband and a father, a member of the family.

Sometimes we hear the expression, I am glad I am not the judge deciding a persons eternal destiny. What we likely mean, we have made a judgment and do not like our decision. We should never think of ourselves in this divine role. Our focus should not be on the mystery of the future but on the life we are now living. When we witness a person dying, we are naturally drawn to think about the things in life that in the final analysis matter and those that do not. We understand a wasted life, wasted talents, wasted time and energy. Power, fame, and wealth mean nothing in the hour of death. Loving relationships mean everything. Life that has meaning offers memories that we do not regret but treasure in our hearts. We do not have to dread the prospect of dying. The apostle Paul said he was at peace with dying because he had run the race well and in the battle of life's choices, he had fought a good fight.

We extend our condolences to Grace and the Roley family. We wish for all our readers a blessed and glorious Easter season.

Moses Mart

A friend sent these to me this month and I thought I would share. D. O'Neal

What color is God?

I don't know what color God is for sure, but I do know what colors He isn't.

God isn't black because He is the light of the world, in Him there is no darkness.

He isn't green because He's been around a while, He knows what He's doing.

God isn't yellow because He never backs down, He's always right there beside us no matter what.

He can't be white because He's no mere ghost, in Christ, He's truly present and alive.

I would have to say that He's blue sometimes, but only when we're following paths that don't lead to Him.

I don't know for sure what color God is, but I know He isn't red with embarrassment for creating me, for although I may not always be or do what He would like, I am always precious, honored, and loved in His sight.

Arise!

I arise this day through.... God's strength to pilot me.

God's might to uphold me.

God's wisdom to guide me.

God's eye to look after me.

God's ear to hear me.

God's word to speak for me.

God's hand to hold and guard me.

February Revisited

This has been a difficult month for some of our members. Chester Roley passed away on Feb. 24th. Please remember Grace and her family in your prayers. Grace is also recuperating from a broken disc in her back. She is up and around but still experiencing some pain. The O'Neal family spent some time at the hospital on the 21st. Anna was helping pick up the yard and knocked her head bad enough to need a couple stitches- staples actually. At three, anything is bearable if there is the promise of a popsicle at the end. And I went in for kidney stones later the same day. We are both fine now and thank those who called and helped out. Martha Shoemaker also spent the weekend of the 17th in the hospital for tests. We are glad she is home again and doing better.

The afternoon of the 10th, several people from Joy went to Chandler to meet with the group from Hopefield Ranch. Lots of good conversation and discussion on several different topics.

Join us next month, again on the 10th. Call Beverly Bliss at 405-865-2570 for details.

Sat. 23rd, Moses and Sadie met with the annual OK Mennonite Relief Sale contacts in Chouteau, OK. This years sale will be held Nov. 1-2 in Enid, OK. Be thinking about what you would like to contribute for this years sale. We saw so many beautiful things last year, not to mention all the delicious food. I already have "orders" to get more apple butter this year.

Roy Evans brought our message on the 24th. We will hear more from him in the future. Thanks Roy.

March Events

Cheryl Crichley is our worship leader for this month. She will be asking people from the church to assist her in various tasks during this Lenten

season. Our speaker for the 10th will be Roy Dick from Hydro, OK. Roy and his wife, Virginia, were very involved in helping Joy Mennonite get started back in 1987-88. Those of you who knew Roy and Virginia then are invited to renew your friendship with them and Joy on that date. There will be a pot-luck dinner after the service and the more the merrier.

Our worship committee is planning a Good Friday service. Details will be available from Sadie Mast a little later in the month.

Mar. 18th- Lift Every Voice in Hope- A Community Celebration will be held at the Holy Temple Baptist Church 1504 NE 50th beginning at 7pm. All are welcome to share the hope for healing victims of crime, offenders in crisis, families and friends caught in the system, broken relationships, and how we can find peace when the church and the community become involved in ministering to victims and offenders through the criminal justice system to bring restorative justice.

We continue to hold prayer meetings every Friday from 12-1 pm. Every one is welcome and if you find that you can't join us, please take a minute from your lunch hour on Fridays and remember our mission.

Robert Baker will be starting a series of Sunday school lessons on the book of Romans. We look forward to learning

more about the Bible and it's applications in our daily lives.

Final Thoughts Deborah O'Neal

While I was sitting in the waiting room with my daughter, waiting for the doctor, Anna asked for some crackers. The attending nurse gave her several packages and I opened one for Anna. She told me I had to open all the packages. I said why? You can only eat one at a time.

Anna proceeded to tell me that it's easier to share if you can just hand out crackers, not packages. That plastic is hard to open and these are little kids and they are not happy to be there and everybody needs a cracker. Almost makes me wish I was three.

My favorite passage in the Bible starts "and it came to pass...". I've thought a lot about that this past week. It came to pass, it didn't come to stay. If God had not caused things to pass or change, where would we be? Chester made me think a lot this past month. At the end of his time here, he knew who God was and that things would not stay the same. I remember my grandparents and my great-grandparents and how they "came to pass". I was quite young when they went to Heaven and I look forward to seeing them again. I wonder if I will have the same effect on my children that they had on me.

Hey, remember last month I said miracles were everywhere all you had to do was look and listen? Well, Sunday afternoon, the birds in our bird house laid an egg. We should have baby sparrows by Easter. I know, I know, "it's just a sparrow" remember that song... His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me.

JOY MENNONITE CHURCH 504 NE 16TH OKC OK 73104

Sunday Services 10:00 am Sunday School 11:30
All are welcome, please join us as you are able



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