



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER



www.onalaskachurchofgod.com

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FIRST CHURCH OF GOD: 3RD. AVE. & HWY. 508 ONALASKA, WASHINGTON 98570

THE ROOM

Brian Moore

17-year-old Brian Moore had only a short time to write something for a class. The subject was what Heaven was like. "I wowed 'em," he later told his father, Bruce. "It's a killer. It's the best thing I ever wrote." It also was the last.

Brian's parents had forgotten about the essay when a cousin found it while cleaning out the teenager's locker at Teary Valley High School. Brian had been dead only hours, but his parents desperately wanted every piece of his life near them—notes from classmates and teachers, his homework.

Only two months before, he had handwritten the essay about encountering Jesus in a file room full of cards detailing every moment of the teen's life. But it was only after Brian's death that Beth and Bruce Moore realized that their son had described his view of heaven. "It makes such an impact that people want to share it. You feel like you are there." Mr. Moore said.

Brian Moore died May 27, 1997, the day after Memorial Day. He was driving home from a friend's house when his car went off the road and struck a utility pole. He emerged from the wreck unharmed but stepped on a downed power line and was electrocuted.

The Moores framed a copy of Brian's essay and hung it among the family portraits in the living room. "I think God used him to make a point. I think we were meant to find it and make something out of it," Mrs. Moore said of the essay. She and her husband want to share their son's vision of life after death. "I'm happy for Brian. I know he's in heaven. I know I'll see him."

Brian's Essay: The Room...

In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in the room. There were no distinguishing features except for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endless in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read "Girls I have liked." I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I recognized the names written on each one. And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was.

This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match. A sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and explor-

ing their content. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching.

A file named "Friends" was next to one marked "Friends I have betrayed." The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird "Books I Have Read," "Lies I Have Told," "Comfort I have Given," "Jokes I Have Laughed at." Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "Things I've yelled at my brothers." Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I Have Done in My Anger", "Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents." I never ceased to be surprised by the contents.

Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes fewer than I hoped. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my years to fill each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature.

When I pulled out the file marked "TV Shows I have watched", I realized the files grew to contain



their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of shows but more by the vast wasted time I knew that file represented.

When I came to a file marked "Lustful Thoughts," I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded. An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!" In insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it. Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh.

And then I saw it. The title was "People I Have Shared the Gospel With." The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand.

And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that they hurt. They started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know

of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key. But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him.

No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own.

He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one? Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me.

Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card. "No!" I shouted rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no," as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood. He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards. I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side.

He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, "It is finished." I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written.

◆ *Received from Dave Chilson*

YOUTH OF THE MONTH



Linda Fuss is our special Youth of the Month for December. Linda loves horses and all kinds of animals. She lives with her mother, Kathy, her brother Na-

than and her grandmother. Linda enjoys living in the country where she can have all sorts of animals to care for. She enjoys coming to church and loves music. One of Linda's favorite foods are her mother's homemade Bon-Bons.

Linda just turned 12 on August 8. She is home schooled and enjoys PE. Her favorite color is pink and her favorite food outside of her mother's Bon-Bons, is spaghetti.

What she likes best about coming to church is being around her friends and learning about God.

KID OF THE MONTH



Just look at this face, can't you just see innocence. This is the face of Charles Poole, the youngest of three brothers who attend our Church. Charles is a really wonderful little boy. He is definitely all boy. You cannot be around Charles very long without loving him. He enjoys everyone he meets. He loves to come to Kid's Club and enjoys Sunday School. Charles' birthday is March 2, he is five years old and is in Kindergarten. The one food Charles does not like is peas, everything else is open season.

ALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

SUNDAYS

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM
MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM

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EVENING SING & PRAISE
SERVICE
6:00 PM

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WEDNESDAYS

MEN'S BREAKFAST

@

THE BURGER BAR 6:00 AM

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SOUP & BREAD
6:00 PM

BIBLE STUDY
7:00 PM

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THURSDAYS

BIBLE STUDY AT ELVA'S
1:00 PM

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FRIDAYS

KID'S CLUB
3:30 PM — 4:30 PM

There will be no Kid's Club on
December 23 and 30

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WCG LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10
12:00 NOON

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HOLIDAY POTLUCK

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11
FOLLOWING MORNING
SERVICE



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17
10:00 AM

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CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLE LIGHT

&

COMMUNION SERVICE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24
6:00 PM

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YOUTH MOVIE NIGHT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30

6:00 PM



COMMUNITY EVENTS

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS SING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4
6:30 PM

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH



TEA & PRAISE

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

10:00 AM

SENIORS ON THE GO POTLUCK

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21

12:00 NOON

DEDICATED TO THE LORD



On Sunday, October 2, Christopher Matthew Mitchell was dedicated to the Lord by his Grandmother, Kellie Garner-Mitchell. Christopher was born on May 18, 2003 prematurely, weighing 2 lbs 4 oz. As we have witnessed his growth and development we have seen a real miracle from God.

May God's blessing rest upon Christopher and may he accept Jesus as his Savior very early in life. May God give Kellie the wisdom and grace to raise Christopher in the fear of the Lord.

MISSIONARY NEWS

By Kathleen Mulkins

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS JESUS DOING?

Lewis and Barbara Winkler go to Singapore with Campus Crusade for Christ

Lewis and Barbara are headed for Singapore where Lewis will teach in the International School of Theology helping to take national spiritual leaders to their next level of training. The training they just finished included training for their three children. These three kids are on fire for Jesus and I'm sure will be sharing the gospel as much as the parents. I met Lewis at the seminary where I attended. Barbara happened to be in one of my classes and we became good friends. A gracious couple through whom Christ's love and grace pours. Please keep them in prayer as they transition to a new life in Singapore.

THE BIBLE AND THE COAL BASKET!

Author unknown

The story is told of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains of eastern Kentucky with his young grandson. Each morning, Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading from his old worn-out Bible.

His grandson who wanted to be just like him tried to imitate him in any way he could. One day the grandson asked, "Papa, I try to read the Bible just like you but I

don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. What good does reading the Bible do?"

The Grandfather quietly turned from putting coal in the stove and said, "Take this coal basket down to the river and bring back a basket of water." The boy did as he was told, even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house.

The grandfather laughed and said, "You will have to move a little faster next time," and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again.

This time the boy ran faster, but again the basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was "impossible to carry water in a basket," and he went to get a bucket instead. The old man said, "I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough," and he went out the door to watch the boy try again.

At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty.



Out of breath, he said, "See Papa, it's useless!"

"So you think it is use-



less?" The old man said, "Look at the basket." The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old coal basket, it was clean. "Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out. That is the work of God in our lives. To change us from the inside out and to slowly transform us into the image of His son. Take time to read a portion of God's word each day.

◆ Received from David Chilson

WHAT KEEPS US GOING

Happiness keeps you sweet,
Trials keep you strong,
Sorrows keep you human,
Failures keep you humble,
Success keeps you glowing,
But only God keeps you going!

◆ Received from Eva Dean Stone



With hurricanes, earthquakes, out of control fires, mud slides, tornadoes, flooding and severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, with the threat of bird flu and terrorists attacks, Jay Leno asks, "Are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?"



FROM A STRICTLY MATHEMATICAL VIEWPOINT

What Equals 100%? What does it mean to give MORE than 100%? Ever wonder about those people who say they are giving more than 100%? We have all been in situations where someone wants you to give over 100%. How about achieving 101%? What equals 100% in life?

Here's a little mathematical formula that might help you answer these questions:

If: **A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z** is represented as: **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26.**

Then: H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K would be $8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98\%$, K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E would be $11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96\%$ and A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E would add up to $1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$ but, look how far the **Love of God** will take you L-O-V-E-O-F-G-O-D would be $12+15+22+5+15+6+7+15+4 = 101\%$.

Therefore, one can conclude with mathematical certainty that: While Hard work and Knowledge will get you close, and Attitude will help you reach 100%, it's the only the **Love of God that will put you over the top!**



Once again my sister, Katie, from Scottsdale, Arizona was the only one to come up with the correct answer to last month's quiz.

The answer was Zerubbabel and his story is found in the first six chapters of Ezra.

Here is this month's quiz.

I am not alive,
Yet I can make man do what he
ought.
Although I cannot breathe
I lead them to the right spot.

I do not have a voice
Yet I'm heard both near and far
I made each one go to where they
should
But I am not a star.

People really hated me
And many of them still do
And though it was so long ago
I still come and visit you.

I love to ask so many questions
Even though I can not speak
But if you fail to answer me
In trouble you are deep.

Kings have used me
Governors and Presidents as well,
They only want me for
The stories I can tell.

I do not like to boast or brag
But this I must relate
Because of me and what I did
You have reason to celebrate.

Now tell me who or what I am
I know you would like to know
Even though I am still around
I started out long ago.

A candy bar is waiting
For the one who knows just who or
what I am.
And if you're the first to tell
That candy bar will be in your hand.

NEVER ARGUE WITH A CHILD

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah". The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him".

~

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to "honor" thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, "Thou shall not kill."

~

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch.

At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching."

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, "Take all you want...God is watching the apples. "