



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER



www.onalaskachurchofgod.com

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

THE MAN AND THE BIRDS

Author unknown

Now the man to whom I'm going to introduce you was not a scrooge, he was a kind, decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family, upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn't believe all that incarnation stuff which the churches proclaim at Christmas Time. It just didn't make sense and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn't swallow the Jesus Story, about God coming to Earth as a man. "I'm truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, "but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve." He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he'd much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. And so he stayed and they went to the midnight service.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another, and then another. Sort of a thump or a



thud. At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. But when he went to the front door to investigate he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They'd been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter, if he could direct the birds to it. Quickly he put on a coat, galoshes, tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in. So he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail to the yellow-lighted wide open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms. Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn.

And then, he realized, that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me. That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Because any move he made tend-

ed to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him. "If only I could be a bird," he thought to himself, "and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to safety ... to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see, and hear and understand."

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow understanding for the first time, the true meaning of the Christmas story.

TURN ABOUT IS FAIR PLAY

One morning I was called to pick up my son at the school nurse's office. When I walked through the main entrance, I noticed a woman, curlers in her hair, wearing pajamas. "Why are you dressed like that?" I asked her.

"I told my son," she explained, "that if he ever did anything to embarrass me, I would embarrass him back. He was caught cutting school. So now I've come to spend the day with him!"



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ONE PERSON

Source Unknown

Dr. Frank Mayfield was touring Tewksbury Institute when, on his way out, he accidentally collided with an elderly floor maid. To cover the awkward moment Dr. Mayfield started asking questions, "How long have you worked here?"

"I've worked here almost since the place opened," the maid replied.

"What can you tell me about the history of this place?" he asked.

"I don't think I can tell you anything, but I could show you something." With that, she took his hand and led him down to the basement under the oldest section of the building. She pointed to one of what looked like small prison cells; their iron bars rusted with



age, and said, "That's the cage where they used to keep Annie."

"Who's Annie?" the doctor asked.

"Annie was a young girl who was brought in here because she was incorrigible which means nobody could do anything with her. She'd bite and scream and throw her food at people. The doctors and nurses couldn't even examine her or anything. I'd see them trying with her spitting and scratching at them. I was only a few years younger than her myself and I used to think, 'I sure would hate to be locked up in a cage like that.' I wanted to help her, but I didn't have any idea what I could do. I mean, if the doctors and nurses couldn't help her, what could someone like me do?"

"I didn't know what else to do, so I just baked her some brownies one night after work. The next day

I brought them in. I walked carefully to her cage and said, 'Annie, I baked these brownies just for you. I'll put them right here on the floor and you can come and get them if you want.' Then I got out of there just as fast as I could because I was afraid she might throw them at me. But she didn't. She actually took the brownies and ate them.

"After that, she was just a little bit nicer to me when I was around. And sometimes I'd talk to her. Once, I even got her laughing. One of the nurses noticed this and she told the doctor. They asked me if I'd help them with Annie. I said I would if I could. So that's how it came about that every time they wanted to see Annie or examine her, I went into the cage first and explained and calmed her down and held her hand. Which is how they discovered that Annie was almost blind."

After they'd been working with her for about a year - and it was tough sledding with Annie - the Perkins Institute for the Blind opened its doors. They were able to help her and she went on to study and became a teacher herself.

Annie came back to the Tewksbury Institute to visit, and to see what she could do to help out. At first, the Director didn't say anything and then he thought about a letter he'd just received. A man had written to him about his daughter. She was absolutely unruly - almost like an animal. He'd been told she was blind and deaf as well as 'deranged'. He was at his wit's end, but he didn't want to put her in an asylum. So he wrote here to ask if we knew of anyone - any teacher - who would come to his house and work with his daughter.

And that is how Annie Sullivan became the lifelong companion

of Helen Keller.

When Helen Keller received the Nobel Prize, she was asked who had the greatest impact on her life and she said, "Annie Sullivan." But Annie said, "No Helen. The woman who had the greatest influence on both our lives was a floor maid at the Tewksbury Institute."

History is changed when one person asks, what can someone like me do?

Received from Dan Bourassa

"To the world you might be one person, but to one person you might be the world."

SHAKE OFF YOUR PROBLEMS

A man's favorite donkey falls into a deep precipice;
He can't pull it out no matter how hard he tries;
He therefore decides to bury it alive.

Soil is poured onto the donkey from above.
The donkey feels the load, shakes it off, and steps on it;
More soil is poured.

It shakes it off and steps up;
The more the load was poured, the higher it rose;
By noon, the donkey was grazing in green pastures.

After much shaking off (of problems)
And stepping up (learning from them),
One will graze in GREEN PASTURES.



ONALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

**MORNING WORSHIP 8:15 AM
& 11:00 AM**

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM

WEDNESDAYS

SOUP & SANDWICHES
5:45 PM

BIBLE STUDY
6:15 PM

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY
DECEMBER 5th & 6th**

WE WILL BE RINGING CHRISTMAS
BELLS FOR THE SALVATION ARMY
AT BRENDA'S: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13th

MEN'S BREAKFAST: 8:00 AM
LISA'S DINNER

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:
9:30 AM

LADIES LUNCHEON: 1100 AM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21st

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: 11:00 AM
CHRISTMAS DINNER POTLUCK
FOLLOWING THE 11:00 AM SERVICE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24th

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLE LIGHT &
COMMUNION SERVICE
6:00 PM

COMMUNITY EVENTS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8th

TEA & PRAISE: 10:00 AM
ONALASKA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17th

SENIORS ON THE GO: 12:00 NOON
CHRISTMAS CAROLING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18th

AMERICAN LEGION: 6:00 PM

STARTING TIME

Former Miami Dolphins football coach Don Shula took his wife on vacation to a small seaside town in Maine. He'd heard it was a quiet place where they could relax without anyone paying attention to them.



It was raining when they arrived, and they decided to take in a movie. When they entered the small theater, the lights were on, and the show hadn't started. To their surprise, a scattered handful of people gave them a round of applause as they seated themselves.

Secretly pleased, Shula whispered to his wife, "I guess there isn't anywhere I'm not known." "You're known and loved the world over," she replied -- with just a touch of sarcasm.

A man with a friendly smile came over and shook hands with Shula. "I'm really surprised you know me here," Shula remarked.

"Should I know you?" the man replied. "We're just happy to see you folks. The manager said he wouldn't start the film until at least two more people showed up."

⇒ Received from Jim Sparks

They have both been married to

IT'S ALL IN HOW

their husbands for a long time; Sharon is upset because she thinks her husband doesn't find her attractive anymore.

"As I get older he doesn't bother to look at me!" Sharon cries.

"I'm so sorry for you, as I get older my husband says I get more beautiful every day." replies Leah.

"Yes, but your husband's an antique dealer."

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT & CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Sunday morning at the 11:00 am Worship Service the Sunday School children will present our Christmas Pageant "Grandpa's Christmas Story".



Children's
Christmas
Program



Following the Christmas Pageant we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for our Annual Christmas dinner.

BAILEY'S JESUS

*From "The Story of Encouragement"
by PBN (Praise Broadcasting Network)*

God recently allowed me to see Jesus through the eyes of someone seeing Him for the first time. Having the advantage of knowing how the story ends, we can easily forget the cost of our redemption and the love of our Savior.

Every year we attend a local church pageant at Christmas time, which tells the story of Jesus from His birth through His resurrection. It is a spectacular event, with live animals and hundreds of cast members in realistic costumes. The magi enter the huge auditorium on llamas from the rear, descending the steps in pomp and majesty. Roman soldiers look huge and menacing in their costumes and makeup.

Of all the years we have attended, one stands out indelibly in my heart. It was the year we took our then three-year-old granddaughter, Bailey, who loves Jesus. She was mesmerized throughout the entire play, not just watching, but involved as if she were a player. She watches as Joseph and Mary travel to the Inn and is thrilled when she sees the baby Jesus in His mother's arms.

When Jesus, on a young donkey, descends the steps from the back of the auditorium, depicting His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Bailey was ecstatic. As he neared our aisle, Bailey began jumping up and down, screaming, "Jesus, Jesus! There's Jesus!" Not just saying the words but exclaiming them with every fiber of her being. She alternated between screaming his

name and hugging us. "It's Jesus. Look!" I thought she might actually pass out. Tears filled my eyes as I looked at Jesus through the eyes of a child in love with Him, seeing Him for the first time. How like the blind beggar screaming out in reckless abandon, "Jesus, Jesus!", afraid he might miss Him, not caring what others thought. (Mark 10:46-52)

This was so much fun.

Then came the arrest scene. On stage, the soldiers shoved and slapped Jesus as they moved Him from the Garden of Gethsemane to Pilate. Bailey responded as if she were in the crowd of women, with terror and anger. "Stop it!" she screamed. "Bad soldiers, stop it!" As I watched her reaction, I wished we had talked to her before the play. "Bailey it's OK. They are just pretending."

"They are hurting Jesus! Stop it!"

She stood in her seat reacting to each and every move. People around us at first smiled at her reaction, thinking "How cute!". Then they quit smiling and began watching her watch Him. In a most powerful scene, the soldiers lead Jesus carrying the cross down the steps of the auditorium from the back. They were yelling, whipping, and cursing at Jesus, who was bloodied and beaten.

Bailey was now hysterical. "Stop it! Soldiers! Stop it," she screamed. She must have been wondering why all these people did nothing. She then began to cry instead of scream. "Jesus, Oh, Jesus!" People all around us began to weep as we all watch this devoted little disciple see her Jesus beaten and killed as those first century disciples had.

Going back and forth between her mother's lap and mine for comfort, she was distraught. I kept saying, "Bailey, it's OK. Jesus is going to be OK.

These are just people pretending to be soldiers. She looked at me like I was crazy. In my lap, we talked through the cross and burial. "Watch, Bailey, watch for Jesus!"

The tomb began to tremble and lightening flashed as the stone rolled away. A Super Bowl touchdown cheer couldn't come close to matching this little one's reaction to the resurrection. "Jesus! He's OK. Mommy, it's Jesus!" I prayed that she wasn't going to be traumatized by this event, but that she would remember it. I shall never forget it. I shall never forget seeing Jesus suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection through the eyes of an innocent child.

Following the pageant the actors all assembled in the foyer to be greeted by the audience. As we passed by some of the soldiers Bailey screamed out, "Bad soldier, don't you hurt Jesus." The actor who portrayed Jesus was some distance away surrounded by well-wishers and friends. Bailey broke away from us and ran toward him, wrapping herself around his legs, holding on for dear life. He hugged her and said, "Jesus loves you." He patted her to go away.

She wouldn't let go. She kept clinging to Him, laughing and calling His name. She wasn't about to let go of her Jesus.

I think God in heaven stopped what ever was going on that day and made all the angels watch Bailey. "Now, look there! You see what I meant when I said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven?'"

Bailey's reaction should be our reaction every day. When we think of Him, who He is, what He did for us, and what He offers us, we have to say, how can we do anything less than worship Him?

Pastor's note: This story reminds me of when our youngest daughter, Marlana, was listening to an Easter Cantata and part of the music said "Crucify Him, Crucify Him" she became very upset and cried out "Don't Crucify Him."



LAST MONTH'S QUIZ

No one has been able to come up with all thirty Hidden Books of the Bible. The best was 29 books found by Leanne James of Delta, Colorado.

There is no quiz this month.

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

This poem was written by a Marine.

Lance Corporal James M. Schmidt

*TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS,
HE LIVED ALL ALONE,
IN A ONE BEDROOM HOUSE,
MADE OF PLASTER AND STONE.
I HAD COME DOWN THE CHIMNEY
WITH PRESENTS TO GIVE,
TO SEE JUST WHO
IN THIS HOME DID LIVE.
I LOOKED ALL ABOUT,
A STRANGE SIGHT I DID SEE,
NO TINSEL, NO PRESENTS,
NOT EVEN A TREE.
NO STOCKING BY MANTLE,
JUST BOOTS FILLED WITH SAND,
ON THE WALL HUNG PICTURES
OF FAR DISTANT LANDS.
WITH MEDALS AND BADGES,
AWARDS OF ALL KINDS,
A SOBER THOUGHT
CAME THROUGH MY MIND.
FOR THIS HOUSE WAS DIFFERENT,
IT WAS DARK AND DREARY,
I FOUND THE HOME OF A SOLDIER,
ONCE I COULD SEE CLEARLY.
THE SOLDIER LAY SLEEPING,
SILENT, ALONE,
CURLING UP ON THE FLOOR
IN THIS ONE BEDROOM HOME.
THE FACE WAS SO GENTLE,
THE ROOM IN SUCH DISORDER,
NOT HOW I PICTURED
A UNITED STATES SOLDIER.*

*WAS THIS THE HERO
OF WHOM I'D JUST READ?
CURLING UP ON A PONCHO,
THE FLOOR FOR A BED?*

*I REALIZED THE FAMILIES
THAT I SAW THIS NIGHT,
OWED THEIR LIVES TO THESE
SOLDIERS
WHO WERE WILLING TO FIGHT.*

*SOON ROUND THE WORLD,
THE CHILDREN WOULD PLAY,
AND GROWNUPS WOULD
CELEBRATE
A BRIGHT CHRISTMAS DAY.*

*THEY ALL ENJOYED FREEDOM
EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR,
BECAUSE OF THE SOLDIERS,
LIKE THE ONE LYING HERE.*

*I COULDN'T HELP WONDER
HOW MANY LAY ALONE,
ON A COLD CHRISTMAS EVE
IN A LAND FAR FROM HOME.*

*THE VERY THOUGHT
BROUGHT A TEAR TO MY EYE,
I DROPPED TO MY KNEES
AND STARTED TO CRY.*

*THE SOLDIER AWAKENED
AND I HEARD A ROUGH VOICE,
'SANTA DON'T CRY,
THIS LIFE IS MY CHOICE;*

*I FIGHT FOR FREEDOM,
I DON'T ASK FOR MORE,
MY LIFE IS MY GOD,
MY COUNTRY, MY CORPS.'*

*THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER
AND DRIFTED TO SLEEP,
I COULDN'T CONTROL IT,
I CONTINUED TO WEEP.*

*I KEPT WATCH FOR HOURS,
SO SILENT AND STILL
AND WE BOTH SHIVERED
FROM THE COLD NIGHT'S CHILL.*

*I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE
ON THAT COLD, DARK, NIGHT,
THIS GUARDIAN OF HONOR
SO WILLING TO FIGHT.*

*THEN THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER,
WITH A VOICE SOFT AND PURE,
HE WHISPERED, 'CARRY ON SANTA,
IT'S CHRISTMAS DAY, ALL IS SECURE.'*

*ONE LOOK AT MY WATCH,
AND I KNEW HE WAS RIGHT.
'MERRY CHRISTMAS MY FRIEND,
AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT.'*

⇒ Received from Norma Gift

MISSING WIFE

A husband went to the sheriff's department to report that his wife was missing.

Husband: I've lost my wife. She went shopping yesterday and has not come home.

Sergeant: What is her height?

Husband: Gee, I really never noticed. Maybe about 5 feet tall.

Sergeant: Build?

Husband: Not slim, not really fat.

Sergeant: Color of eyes?

Husband: Never noticed.

Sergeant: Color of hair?

Husband: Changes a couple times a year--maybe red.

Sergeant: What was she wearing?

Husband: Could have been a skirt or shorts. I don't remember exactly.

Sergeant: Did she go in a car?

Husband: No, she went in my truck.

Sergeant: What kind of truck was it?

Husband: Brand new Ford F-150 King Ranch 4 X 4 with Eco-boost 5.0 L V8 engine, special ordered with manual transmission. It has a custom matching white cover for the bed. Custom leather seats, DVD with Navigation, 21 channel CB radio, 6 cup holders, 4 power outlets, custom "Bubba" floor mats, trailering package with gold balls hanging from the hitch. Put on special alloy wheels and off road Michelins. Wife put a small scratch on the driver's door.

At this point the husband started tearing up and almost cried.

Sergeant: Don't worry, Bubba. We'll find your truck.