



Compassion

Sharing hope...

Celebrating 115 years

2017 - First Quarter

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Truly, How Great!



Special Gifts & Memorials



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NEWS

When Muslims Show Up

The Bible studies I facilitate in prison bring in a surprisingly wide spectrum of people. I always let everyone who shows up know they all have something valuable to bring to the table from their own experiences and insights, and I mean it. Whenever people get together in an effort to be honest with themselves, with each other, and with God, great things happen, no matter where those people are coming from. My addiction recovery groups are known to be Bible-based, but still guys who don't identify as Christian will show up, including Muslims.

Generally, what happens next is a lot of respect: The Muslim guys being very respectful of the Christians, and the Christians being very respectful of the Muslims. There's no way I want to blow up all that goodwill by doing something confrontational, like preaching to them about the falsehoods of Islam. So instead I look to God: I figure, it's his group, he

brought this particular bunch of people together, so he needs to set the agenda. And then I watch to see what he does.

One week the topic was "What's Special About Grace-Based Recovery?" I wondered how the Muslim guys would handle that, since Islam seems so devoid of grace. Surprise! God guided us onto an area of common ground right away. One of the guys said, "We just finished Ramadan, and I've been spending a lot of time meditating on the Pillars of Islam. Everything you're saying about 'grace' makes me think of 'zakat'. That's about giving to people in need: it involves giving without any thought of being paid back, or of being charitable just to check it off your to-do list. It's about being generous as a lifestyle, as part of your identity." I thought, Hmm, that sounds like something we can work with. So we launched from that into talking about living in God's endless grace.

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*“Every good
and perfect gift
is from above,
coming down
from the
Father of the
heavenly lights,
who does not
change like
shifting shadows
(James 1:17)”*

My Two Fathers

With sadness in his heart, an elderly patient named Alfred said to me, “I don’t remember my parents. I want to remember them, but I can’t.” Alfred’s parents died when he was only four years old. His parents froze to death a hundred yards from their house when they tried walking home after their car got stuck during a snow storm. In this tragic story Alfred’s pain was apparent.



The good news however, is that Alfred did come to know his heavenly Father. Alfred learned about God’s Fatherly love for him from passages like Galatians 4:4-7: “But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’” In other words, because of Jesus’ saving love and work, we can call God, “Daddy,” and Alfred did, every time he prayed “Our Father, who art in heaven....”

In the pain of his parent’s death, Alfred also found comfort in Jesus’ promises: “In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). With joy in his heart, Alfred knows that someday, he and his parents will meet each other again – in their “Father’s house” in heaven.

From passages like “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows (James 1:17), Alfred also learned about his heavenly Father’s care for him in this life. His earthly father may be gone, but Alfred knows that his heavenly Father is caring for him daily – even now in his old age.

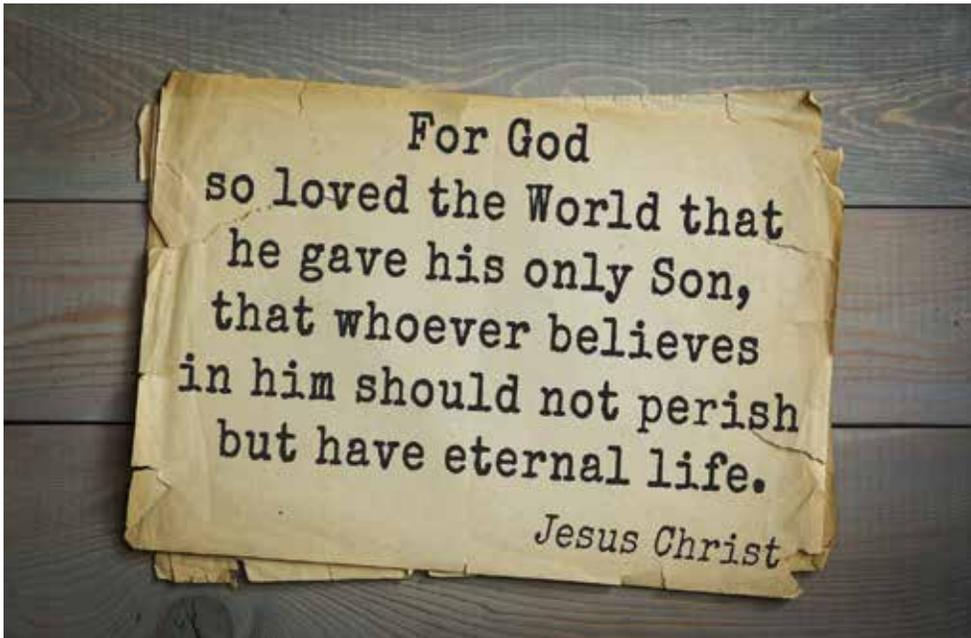
Finally, in the comfort and strength of his faith, Alfred continues to praise his heavenly Father in the spirit of “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1). Alfred may not be able to remember his earthly parents, but he remembers his heavenly Father. In love, God the Father, adopted Alfred into his eternal family, and since that day, he has been providing Alfred with peace, comfort, and daily strength.



As a chaplain, it was my privilege to review these amazing truths with Alfred – to share hope, when Alfred needed it most.



by Chaplain Ken Wenzel



Truly, How Great!

I'm not always aware of all the pain and suffering that the ladies have gone through in their life before they end up at the institution where I serve, but I knew a little of Janet's story. Her life had been filled with trauma, addiction and pain, and I had observed a great deal of growth in her since she started coming to my Bible study group. Our time together was quickly coming to an end, and the week before our last gathering, she asked if we could sing and study the hymn *How Great Thou Art*, which had been sung at her father's funeral. The anniversary of his death was drawing near and she was hoping to honor his life in this special way.

The following week, we did exactly that. I brought copies of the hymn so that everyone could sing and reflect on the words together. We talked about the wonderful blessing of God's gift of "nature" – His creativity, and the beauty of all that He created for us to enjoy. Janet shared how the song reminded her of how her father loved to spend time in nature too. Then, as we sang the third verse, we talked about God not sparing His Son, how he sent Him to die in order to provide us with a home in heaven. Janet was especially touched, thinking of her father in heaven and the comfort of seeing him again, as well as the joy of seeing her Heavenly Father face to face.

New friends are continually coming and going as we do institutional ministry. As chaplains, we are simply blessed to have known and to learn from, each individual we meet. I pray that God continually bless each soul as they continue their journey through life, and that He use us to bring whatever message that they need to hear. Confident that our Great God – Maker of heaven and earth, the Savior of our souls – will lead, guide and speak through us to accomplish this, we continue to serve these precious souls.



by Chaplain Sarah Guenther

When Muslims Show Up

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But this inmate said something else, too: "You practice 'zakat' knowing that God always sees you." That phrase came up several times in what he said, and I've heard it fairly frequently from other Muslims: "God always sees." And looking back on that I gently kicked myself for missing an opportunity to talk about the grace of God with some people who desperately needed to hear it. "God always sees" – that's a statement that a follower of Jesus and a Muslim could agree on, but we're going to be seeing it in two drastically different ways. The Muslim sees it as a threat and warning: God always sees, so don't give him any reason to judge you as unacceptable. The disciple of Jesus sees it as encouraging: God always sees, because God is always right here with me; God always sees me with eyes of love; God always sees when I mess up, and he's right there to forgive and to help me get back on course.

I'm grateful that God gives me and the rest of the Institutional Ministries staff and volunteers all these wonderful opportunities to get to know people outside our normal religious circles, and I pray that God will give us wise minds and loving hearts as we listen to and speak with people who need to know how loved they truly are.



by Chaplain Phil Merten



Sharing hope...
with those who need it most!

Celebrating
115 years

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OUR MISSION

*“To share God’s law
and the saving
Gospel of Jesus
Christ with all
individuals who
are or have been
institutionalized,
and their families.”*

Special Gifts & Memorials 12/6/2016 - 1/23/2017

IN CELEBRATION OF
Chris Roozen's birthday
2-25-2016
Ms. Audrey Roozen
Christ's Birthday
Mrs. Jane Krueger
Christmas
Mr. Kenneth Taube
500th Anniversary of the
Lutheran Reformation 2017
Mrs. Judy Ruppert

IN HONOR OF
Faithful Quilters
Faith Lutheran - Faithful Quilters
Those who have less than we but
continue to have faith.
Mr. & Mrs. James Warras
Kristen Walters Christianson
Mr. & Mrs. David Feutz
Linda Paul
Mr. Jordan Paul
Lorraine Raabe
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Raabe
Nancy Peterson
Ms. Nancy Pech
My Retirement
Mr. Paul Soucy
Spreading the Gospel to all
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kaiser
Dave Beyer
Ms. Betty Bader
Rev. Timothy Blauert
Mr. & Mrs. John Oswald

IN MEMORY OF
Adolph Fehlauer
Mrs. Carol Ryan
Alan Abel
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Ehlke
Allen Krause
Mr. & Mrs. Willard Mess
Allyn Curler
Mrs. Patsy Curler
Arlene Hoganson
Dr. & Mrs. Marvin Koch

Arlene Neu
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Rzepka
Arlie Strobusch
Mary Johanknecht
Rev. Arnold H. Schroeder
(grandpa)
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Clarence and Ella Marquardt
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Madsen
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Mr. Daniel Davidson
Carol Elger
Mr. Lee Elger
Just Brothers
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Mrs. Gloria Zuelsdorf
Donald Zuelsdorf
Ms. Muriel McKinley
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Dorothy Seifert
Mr. Loyley Seifert
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Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Huth
Emily Streich
Mrs. Doris Nehls
Floyd Helling
Mrs. Flora Helling
Gerald Schuelke
Mrs. Lois Schuelke
Gloria Cirraa
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Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Kamps
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Mrs. Shirley Hilden
Jean Schwantes
Mrs. Sharon Zinke
Stan Schwantes
Mrs. Sharon Zinke

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Mr. Ronald Limberg
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Mrs. Faye Witt
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Mr. David Bock
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Ms. Ellen Pamperin
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Mr. Fred Strey
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Mrs. Donna Vieth
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Mr. & Mrs. Jesse Jones
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Rev. & Mrs. Joseph Radsek
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Mrs. Dorothy Rusch
Lillian Dessloch
Ms. Paula Rauth
Lorraine Lampe
Ms. Ruth Lampe
Louis & Loretta Buhrow
Ms. Louise Knoke
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Rev. Ronald Winter
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Ms. Carol Stolpa
Wilma Brehmer
Mrs. Patricia Piippo

IN THANKSGIVING FOR
Blessings without number
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Uher
Avery P. Saller
(4th great-grandchild)
Dr. Anthony Fiorini &
Mrs. Sheila M. Fiorini
Our Savior Jesus Christ
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Gresens
God's Grace
Mr. David Beyer Sr.
God's Blessings
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Oppitz
God's never ending grace,
mercy, and love
Mr. & Mrs. Michael M. Twohig
Larry & Evie Lepien
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lepien
Chaplain Mark Wenzel
Ms. Ruth Rehbaum
God's Blessing of 115 years
of Institutional Ministries
dedicated service
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Deyo
Rebecca Krueger
Mrs. Lenore Krueger
Countless blessings
Mr. & Mrs. William Arndt