

Attend Church Regularly

...and read your Bible daily

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

By Kirk Kasson, Almena Congregational Church

Our horse died.

If you're an animal lover, you can probably relate to our sadness, but I want you to understand that this horse was more than a pet. Think hunting dog. Imagine you are an avid hunter, taking every opportunity you have to hunt and learn about hunting. Now imagine that you bought a puppy, not a high dollar puppy, but one with reasonable breeding, one you'd saved up for. Imagine you had spent the last year using all you've learned about hunting and training dogs to train this puppy, and that he had shown promise to be the best hunting dog you have ever had. The smartest. The one with the most natural ability. One that was going to be your best dog for a long time. Now imagine that he died suddenly.

That's pretty much how my wife feels. She had put a lot of herself into this horse, and was proud of him.

When you invest in something emotionally, financially, and with your time, it hurts to lose it.

How much has Jesus invested in you?

How much does it hurt Christ to see his children fail? To see them die eternal death apart from him, knowing full well how

much he has invested so they might succeed.

You cannot invest in something you love without the risk of losing it. God took the biggest risk, not when he created people, but when he allowed them to be free of his will.

To love is to risk being hurt. Our Father loved us so much, he not only allowed his son to die for our sins, he allows us to

reject his son, to deny his son, even to mock his son. (See John 3:16, Isaiah 53, Psalm 22).

Will we buy another horse? Yes. Because we love loving, and we are risk takers. Are we guaranteed happiness? No. The horse could die. He could disappoint. We could even get hurt. But those facts don't change who we are. We are lovers. We are risk takers. In that way we are like God.

One more thing. Are you willing to love people enough that you are willing to risk being hurt by them? Let me suggest that if you are not, you have no business being a parent. Or married. Or a teacher. Or a thousand other things, including a pastor.

I choose to love people. To invest in them. To believe in them. Sometimes they fail. Sometimes they hurt me (sometimes I hurt them). But I take the risk.

"Make My Day!" (GOD'S WAY)

When was the last time someone gleamed at you and said, "You made my day!"? Do you remember what you did that got that response?

Perhaps you looked up and smiled sincerely as a co-worker walked by your desk, telling her, "I'm so glad you're here. I know you'll be a big help with this job!"

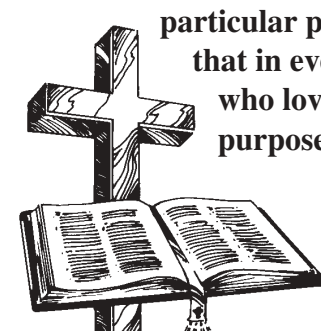
No? Did you take dinner to a neighbor the evening she returned home from the hospital...and stay to wash the dishes?

You may have encountered a troubled acquaintance and offered your phone number and a listening ear... "day or night".

Whatever the situation, it is important to realize that we never know when we could be making a life-altering impact with a small kindness or extra consideration. God may be using us for His

particular purpose. Romans 8:28 explains, "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose."

Would you like to learn more about God working through you? Worship at your chosen House of worship this Sabbath. It will make your day...God's way.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
John 17:1-26	Matthew 16:1-12	Matthew 16:13-28	Matthew 11:1-19	Matthew 11:20-30	Matthew 12:1-14	Matthew 12:15-32

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society
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WHISPERING PINES

By CYNTHIA KINDALL

Dorothy Bernard and her daughter, Ardie Grimes, went to Logan Manor on Dec. 5 to visit Wayne Bernard, Rose Gulick and Bessie Donahey.

Robber bingo was played on Dec. 17. The hot items were a John Deere tractor calendar, a poinsettia towel, toilet paper and paper towels. The reaction of 18 residents always wanting what another resident had made for a fun evening.

The Barney Cox family joined Phileda Nelson for a birthday dinner. Birthday gifts were given and all had a really nice time.

On Dec. 20 several residents went on a Christmas light tour of Norton. They were: Violet Volgamore, Ione Jordan, Beth and Elton Bryant, Melvin Hanchett, Phileda Nelson, Merle Applegate, Don Moody, Dorothy Bernard, Cynthia Collins and Cynthia Kindall. They all agreed that we had seen the lights!

On Dec. 21 the Norton high school Jay Singers were at Whispering Pines for the second annual Christmas coffee. Residents greatly enjoyed this event. And how many could have the Jay Singers sing just to you for your 88th birthday like our own Phileda Nelson did as they sang Happy Birthday.

Birthdays for December were: Phileda Nelson on the 21st; Daryl Olson on the 23rd; Dick Hemphill on the 24th; and Hazel Bates on the 30th.

On Christmas Eve, Margaret McElvoy from Topeka, was here to visit her mother, Carrie Malcolm, for a couple of days and said she enjoyed our warm weather. Good thing she visited when she did.

Christmas Day, and the following, saw most of Doris Stump's family here as they celebrated Christmas with her. Susan and John Wise from Ft. Worth, Texas; Kathy and Ted Mick and oldest son Chris from Newton; and their second son James who is attending college in Ithaca, N.Y.; Brian and Julie Fischer from Solomon; Bonnie and Terry Laughlin with their four boys from Norton, and Dave and Tricia Fischer with daughter Heather from Norton. They enjoyed a variety of soups and holiday goodies, caught up on family news and laughed a lot over Uno card games.

Christmas Day brought more Christmas visitors. From Kansas City came James Sanko and Mona Asforth. They came to visit Carroll and Evelyn Hall. Also visiting were Jon and Spencer Sanko from Superior, Neb., the day after Christmas.

Earl and Phyllis Scharnick visited for Christmas from Milwaukee, Wisc., with Phileda Nelson and her sister, Karen and Barney Cox.

Joining us for our second annual New Year's Eve party were the following: Melvin Hanchett, Beth and Elton Bryant, Dorothy Bernard, Dorothy Lundgren, Ione Jordan, Lucille Stackhouse, Doris Stump, Alice Voyt, Elaine and Allen Tacha, Violet Volgamore, Margaret Richards, Betty Reed; and Phileda Nelson. High winners of the Pitch games were Dorothy Bernard, Allen Kindall and Ione Jordan. They all agreed to do again next year.

We have two new residents: Dorothy Lundgren and Priscilla Johnson. Welcome to our family.

Lucille Stackhouse's daughter, Linda, and family and their grandchildren went out to eat at McDonald's on New Year's Day.

Betty Reed left with her daughter and spent a week in Denver over the Christmas holiday before returning home.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Lloyd Ritter on Dec. 31. He will be missed as he was also one of the card players. Also another resident that will be greatly missed is Alice Foley. Our heart goes out to her family.

Elton and Beth Bryant spent Christmas afternoon and evening at the home of Kenneth and Darlene McClelland at Beaver City, with their family. Dave and Kendra Anderson of St. Paul, Neb.; Tonya Apsegren of Ft. Collins, Colo.; Shane, Keri and Zari Aspergren from Paris, France. Kennis and Nancy McClelland, Beaver City; Kaine McClelland, Ann McClelland, Kearney; and Kaylene and Jeff Bell, Kyle, Karissa and Justin of Holdrege.

Phileda Nelson spent Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Barney Cox. Joining them from Milwaukee, was Phyllis and Earl Scharnick.

Phileda celebrated a belated Christmas on Dec. 29 in the Cox home with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. This celebration included: Keith and Jennifer Hauser, Hadley, and Tessa of Norton; Brad and Ann Cox, Brant, Camden and Kale Cox of Long Island; Nathan and Tracy Cox, Nelson and Mollie from Willmar, Minn.; and Brad and Karlynn of St. Paul, Minn.

The grandchildren and great-grandchildren also visited Mrs. Nelson in her home at Whispering Pines.

January birthdays celebrated and to be celebrated are Elfriede Kelly, 9th; Mabel Malcolm, 11th; and Don Moody, 29th.

NEW ALMELO

By BETTY OTTER

House guests at the home of Marion and Lorraine Long over the Christmas weekend were Irene Schieferecke, McPherson and Roger Schieferecke, Hays. Others joining them on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day were Joe Long, Mike and Barb Long, Christie Long, Joey Tillery, Leawood; Will Long, Naples, Fla., and his fiancée, Raegan Willoughbe, Minneapolis; Wally and Kelly Margheim, Zander and Ella, South Bend, Ind.; Ed and Roxie Schuster, Daniel, Dominic, Mark, Michael and Margaret, Milford, Ohio; Jack and Renee Cella, Joseph, Rachel and Claire, Denver; Roger and JoAnn Long, New Almelo; Frank and Letty Long, Jason and Jonathon, St. Elizabeth, Mo.; Jeffrey Long, U.S. Air Force, stationed at Wichita Falls, Texas. Their daughter, Jennifer Long, is also with the Air Force stationed in Great Falls, Mont., and was unable to be home for the holidays.

On Sunday, the family gathered at the Graham County Community Building in Hill City with Gary and Carolyn Long as hosts. Family present were: Marion and Lorraine Long, Roger Long, Renee Cella, Roxie Schuster and Margaret, Joe and Rose Ann Long, Christie Long and Joe Tillery, Mike and Barb Long, Will Long, Raegan Willoughbe, Bill Barker, Sue Molnar, (Rita was working), Tom and Jan Long, Hays; Irene Schieferecke, Roger Schieferecke, Frank and Letty Long, Jason Long, Jeffrey Long,

Jonathan Long, Gary and Carolyn Long, Hill City; Adam Long and Traci Long, Hays; Leonard and Joan Long, Zach and Alaina, Logan; Mark and Gerry Baalmann, Grinnell, Mandy Baalmann and Chad Baker, Kansas City. New Year's weekend family coming to stay were Floyd and Karen Long and Sammy, Kimball, Neb.; Rhonda and Dale Rice, Canton; with Leonard and Joan Long, Zach and Alaina, Logan; joining them on New Year's Day.

The Roger Long family gathered Christmas Eve at the home of Roger and JoAnn Long. Those present were Renee and Jack Cella, Joseph, Rachel, Claire, Denver; Ed and Roxie Schuster, Daniel, Dominic, Mark, Michael and Margaret, Milford, Ohio; Darin and Joanie Winkel, Bethany and Brooklin, Norton. The Schuster family stayed for a week before returning home.

Raymond and Bonita Slipke and family went to Phillipsburg on Christmas Eve day to the home of Bonita's mother, Vicki Kendall and her husband Glenn. Also present were Mr. and Mrs. Dustin McClurg and family, Logan. On the night of Christmas Day, they joined other Slipke families at the home of Edwin and Miriam Slipke at Hoxie.

Others present were Mike and Kathy Slipke and Sarah, Downs; Linda and Ron Baumberger, Heather, Kendra, Salina; Cheryl and Ryan Goheen, Pratt; William and Michelle Slipke and family, Hoxie; Alan and Phyllis Slipke, Topeka.