



So be careful how you live; be mindful of your steps... ~ Ephesians 5:15 (Voice)

What Are You Saving For?

When we were young marrieds school tuition took a sizable bite out of our finances. Kathy, in fact, would not buy the new coat she needed to fend off the severe northeast Ohio winter because a coat would cost what three credit hours would cost. To help us stick to a budget, we made a rule that neither of us would spend more than fifty dollars without the other one agreeing to the necessity of it. It worked.

One day while she was searching in my tool shed for a picture hook, she discovered a jar with change and loose bills. Her heart swelled because she knew she had discovered my secret coat fund. She also determined to help me reach my goal on the sly. For weeks she skipped lunch at work and put the money she saved in the jar. If she filled the car or got groceries, the change went toward swelling the secret coat fund. She was delighted even as she denied herself one thing after another and we got cheaper and cheaper cuts of meat for dinner, but the jar was almost full and she knew any day I would reveal it was coat buying time.

One frigid January day she came in from work to discover a record album set of the complete works of Gustav Mahler and two other albums as well. As someone who had trolled record stores with me, she was well aware of the cost of what was sitting there. She reminded me in her best head nurse voice that we had an agreement not to take more than fifty dollars out of our budget without both of us agreeing to it. "What is the meaning of all these albums, John? Can you return them?"

It was then that I let her know I had been saving for them in a jar on my tool bench and that I must have been a better saver than I imagined because there was so much more in the jar than I thought. The silence

was deafening and the look on her face was one I will never forget. Those were followed by the admission that she had been putting the money in the wrong jar instead of a jar of her own, that she had gotten it all wrong and thought she was getting ahead by padding my stash. Kathy had gotten it wrong but I was the one who felt like a cheapskate. She had made an error but my wife still was without the coat she needed.

Early love is learning love and we learned something that day. We learned not to keep secrets. We learned to prioritize. (A coat over a record should have been a no brainer.) We learned you can't assume your money is going where it should be if you don't pray about it. We learned to be more mindful about the way we did things even before "mindfulness" was a topic that hit the New York Times best seller list.

How often I hear stories with sad endings because somebody was not careful how they walked through life, how they walked through other people's lives, selfishness replacing generosity, assuming one thing when it was another. The scriptures urge us toward the ancient paths, to ask where the best roads are then to walk in them that we may have peace. The steps of God's good people are ordered and walking out that order, especially where other people are involved requires sensitivity, discipline and God-direction. It also requires the same things when walking out our life in Christ. The Lord may have very different plans for the contents of the jar He is filling for us than we do. Ancient path. Mind our steps. Mind of Christ.

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Christ held nothing back in His search to reunite us with the Father. All His resources were in service to the Father's plans for our recovery and eternal happiness in His presence. Even now He prepares for the day we are to be united with Him at His great supper. He even plans for each of us to have a special robe. (I am sure it is worth more than three credit hours.) We can trust His intentions and every morning we need to remind ourselves and the world around us that we do. May today be such a day and the day after.

Blessings,

Pastor John LaMantia

P.S. I got to keep my record albums those many years ago and we found a coat sale for Kathy. A beautiful, warm parka that a patient snatched from the nurse's station a week later and made his escape from the nursing home, naked through the snow, except for her coat. At least he was warm. Her old coat would not have protected him so well. Both were safely recovered by two helpful policemen on patrol. Life is a blessing and sometimes a circus.

April Memorials



Memorial for: Gerald Dubie
By: Beverly Dubie

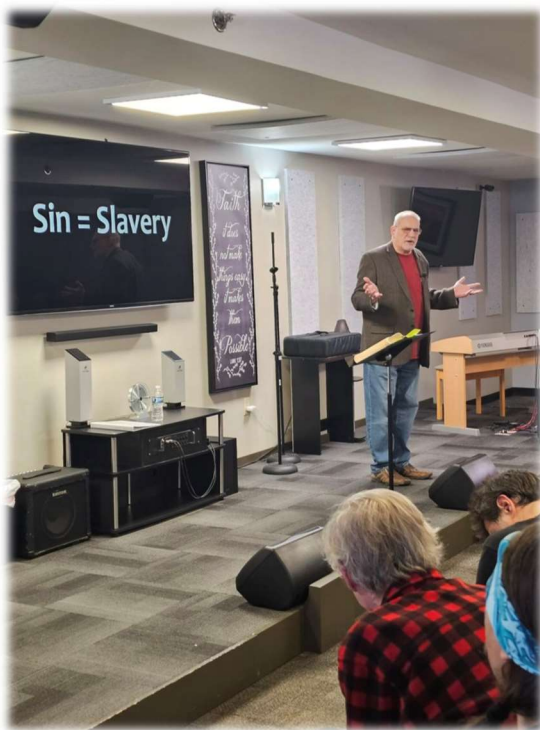
Memorial for: Merlyn Gruhn
By: Janice Gruhn

Memorial for: Ben Bassler
By: Peter & Monique Harren

Memorial for: Russ Wilmot
By: Renate Wilmot

*When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see
Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me*

Preaching the Undiluted Word of God



"....Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise."

~ Philippians 4:8 NLT

Lion's Lunch



Our friends at the Lion's Club came and shared lunch with us. The kitchen was delighted to host them. They are such a good group.

Made With Love



Beautiful, handmade blankets from an anonymous Mission donor are headed for the hands of clients going into housing. What a welcome and blessed gift.

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Making Cards to Share



Beautiful job of cardmaking! In these days of texting and email, don't you appreciate when someone takes the time to send you a REAL card? Our program people made Easter cards for family and friends.

Praying for Don and Charlotte

Former Mission Director, Don Bettis, is in the hospital and he and his family would appreciate your prayers. I was able to visit Don and pray for him. The Lord knows what Don needs and He remembers Don and Charlotte's many years of faithful service.

A smile is the light in your window that tells others that there is a caring, sharing person inside.

~ Denis Waitley



Treasure Hunters

Our art department held a special class, Acrylic Pouring for Beginners. What a good time they had mixing, pouring and encouraging one another. They blew past the ending time for the class and were forced to stop for lights out. The results you can see for yourself. Such a good opportunity for our folks to find yet undiscovered talent and experience success. It helps to divert thoughts from drugs and alcohol especially for people new to the program. Hard work and laughter and lovely art after! Check out our Facebook page for more pictures.



Every year, National Alcohol Screening Day raises awareness about the harmful effects of alcohol abuse and alcohol dependency. Each year, on the Thursday of the first full week in April, these screens offer anonymous and confidential opportunities for those with addiction to seek help.

National Screening

For more information:
<https://alcohol screening.org>

While most people do not abuse alcohol, some do not realize the effects alcohol has on them and their lives. Others do not realize the risks they take even when they only occasionally indulge in alcohol. Taking an alcohol screening may point out areas of concern we may not be aware of. For many, it may be the first step toward recovery.



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Nightly Services 7:30PM - 8:30 PM

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Celebrating Ten Years of God's Faithfulness

I couldn't let today pass without being thankful! Ten years ago, on April 1st, I had the joy and the honor of becoming the Mission Director. I admit to having been a bit reluctant to start directing on April Fool's Day but God was unfazed by any of that.

What blessings I have received. So many people were the wind at my back, the other directors in town who helped me find my way, a wonderful, caring staff that always steps up, amazing donors who always do more than we ask for, and my bride of 50 plus years, Kathy.

May the Lord reward the many kindnesses that have been shown to me and to our ministry. To God be all the glory! There is nothing like being in service to the King!

Pastor John

