

Community Christian Center



The Word
Fellowship
Prayer

The Good Tidings Newsletter

A Report on the Revival at CCC

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ERIC GIORGIO, PASTOR

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Pastor's Corner

This month featuring *Associate Pastor Dustin Paraspolo*

The Golden Gift

Taken from the internet

The Gold Wrapping Paper - Author Unknown

Once upon a time, there was a man who worked very hard just to keep food on the table for his family. This particular year a few days before Christmas, he punished his little five-year-old daughter after learning that she had used up the family's only roll of expensive gold wrapping paper.



Pastor Dustin with his family, Sara and little Sofia

As money was tight, he became even more upset when on Christmas Eve he saw that the child had used all of the expensive gold paper to decorate one shoebox she had put under the Christmas tree. He also was concerned about where she had gotten money to buy what was in the shoebox.

Nevertheless, the next morning the little girl, filled with excitement, brought the gift box to her father and said, "This is for you, Daddy!"

As he opened the box, the father was embarrassed by his earlier overreaction, now regretting how he had punished her.

But when he opened the shoebox, he found it was empty and again his anger flared. "Don't you know, young lady," he said harshly, "when you give someone a present, there's supposed to be something inside the package!"

The little girl looked up at him with sad tears rolling from her eyes and whispered: "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was all full."

The father was crushed. He fell on his knees and put his arms around his precious little girl. He begged her to forgive him for his unnecessary anger.

An accident took the life of the child only a short time later. It is told that the father kept this little gold box by his bed for all the years of his life. Whenever he was discouraged or faced difficult problems, he would open the box, take out an imaginary kiss, and remember the love of this beautiful child who had put it there.

This story reminds us of what's really important during the Christmas season. For many this time of year isn't the most wonderful time but the most stressful weather your busy at work, having trouble keeping food on the table or giving your family more than you can afford. Some just feel like they have nothing to give or no one to share with.

In this story we see a father who feels the weight of not having the means to give more to his family but what's worse is letting that distract him from what was of real value which is the family who loves him. And then there's the precious daughter who isn't inter-

ested in what she doesn't have or what her dad can't give but loves her father for who he is.

The daughter's gift of unconditional love obviously reminds us our savior. He's the gift that keeps on giving or as our late brother Sylvester Blue sang, 'The Gift Goes On.'

We all have something to give; time, kind words, encouragement, a ride, an act of kindness and most importantly giving time to prayer for the lost, sick and hurting. We all want to give and get material gifts but keep in mind the golden gift.... The gift of love.

May God our Father who gives the best gifts bless you with His love, joy and peace during this Christmas season.



Last month Pastor Eric gave a prophetic word of encouragement to a beloved CCC family.

Forever Young

by Sharon Johnson

After the Trunk or Treat night put on by our Youth, I was thinking about how good looking our youth are, and then I felt I heard God say in my spirit, "That's how I see you." I thought, "Wow, God sees me how I looked when I was very young." I remembered the Bible verse that says, God looks on the heart of people and not the outward appearance. I and every other older person I know say that they feel the same inside as they did when they were very young – but outwardly we deteriorate – wrinkle, droop, sag, develop aches and pains, and a million other outrageous things happen to us as we age. Someone once said, "Getting old isn't for wimps," and they were right.

But God said he saw me as young. I thought in Heaven we will be young, and then it will be forever. We will be given new ageless bodies – the kind that Jesus has right now. It reminded me of the song "Forever Young."

Then I thought about those who don't make it to heaven because they never accept Jesus as their Savior. They will not receive new bodies and they will remain spirits throughout eternity, and in terrible pain. We must continue to pray for them as we don't want to see anyone go through that.

I have been collecting songs that I would like to have played at my funeral should Jesus tarry. I had chosen "Peace in the Valley" because that was my mother's favorite hymn. She suffered a lot on this earth but I know she is at peace in Heaven with Jesus now. I would also choose, "I Love You, There I've said it again" because that was the song my mother dedicated to me in my teens when I felt no one could love me. The third song is "In the Summertime" for my brother-in-law Ray who hates hot weather. So now I will include, "Forever Young" because of the amazing gift of eternal youth that our God will give us in Heaven.

Kitchen Korner

from the kitchen of *Dee Paraspolo*

The old man sat in his gas station on Christmas Eve. He hadn't been anywhere in years since his wife had passes away. It was just another day to him. He didn't hate Christmas . . . he just couldn't find a reason to celebrate. He was sitting there looking at the snow that had been falling when the door opened and a homeless man stepped through. Instead of throwing the man out, Old George, as he was known, told the man to come in and sit by the heater and warm up.

"Thank you, but I don't mean to intrude," the stranger said. "I'll just go."

"Not without something hot in your belly," George replied. He turned, opened a wide mouth thermos and handed it to the stranger. "It ain't much, but it's hot and tasty . . . stew . . . made it myself. When you're done, there's coffee and it's fresh too."

At that moment he heard the "ding" of the driveway bell. "Excuse me, be right back," George said. There in the driveway was an old '53 Chevy with steam rolling out of the front. The driver was panicked. "Mister, can you help me?" the driver pled in broken English. "My wife is with child . . . We need the hospital." George opened the hood. It was bad. The block looked cracked from the cold, the car was dead. "You ain't going in this thing," George said as he turned away.

"But, Mister, please help . . ." The door of the office closed behind George as he went inside. He returned with the keys to his old truck and drove it around to where the couple was waiting. "Here, take my truck," he said. "She ain't the best thing you ever looked at, but she runs real good."

George helped put the woman in the truck and watched as it sped off into the night. He turned and walked back inside the office. "Glad I gave 'em the truck, their tires were shot too." George thought he was talking to the stranger, but the man had gone. The thermos was on the desk, empty, with a used coffee cup beside it. "Well, at least he got something in his belly," George thought.

George went back outside to see if the old Chevy would start. It cranked slowly, but it started. He pulled it into the garage where the truck had been. He thought he would tinker with it for something to do. Christmas Eve meant no customers. He discovered the block hadn't cracked; it was just the bottom hose on the radiator. "Well, shoot, I can fix this," he said to himself as he put a new hose on the old Chevy.

"Those tires ain't gonna get 'em through the winter either." He took the snow tread off his wife's old Lincoln. They were like new and he wasn't going to drive the car anyway. As he worked, he heard shots fired. He ran outside and beside a patrol car an officer lay on the cold ground. "Please, help me," the officer moaned.

George helped the officer inside. Remembering his Army training, he thought, "Pressure to stop the bleeding." He grabbed clean shop towels and used them and duct tape to bind the wound. "Hey, they say duct tape can fix anything." George said, trying to make the officer feel at ease.

"Something for pain," George thought. All he had was aspirin. He put some water in a cup and gave the policeman the pills. "You hang in there. I'm going to call an ambulance." The phone was dead. "Probably lines down," thought George. He went back to find the policeman sitting up.

The front door of the office flew open. In burst a young man with a gun. "Give me all your cash! Do it NOW!" the young man yelled. His hand was shaking and George thought, "Bet he has never done anything like this before."

"That's the guy that shot me!" exclaimed the officer.

"Son, why are you doing this?" asked George, "You need to put that cannon away before someone else gets hurt."

The young man was confused. "Shut up old man or I'll shoot you too. Now give me the cash."

"Son, it's Christmas Eve. If you need money, well then, here. It ain't much but it's all I got. Now put that pea shooter away."

George pulled \$150 out of his pocket and handed it to the young man, reaching for the barrel of the gun at the same time. The young man released his grip on the gun, fell to his knees and began to cry. "I'm not very good at this, am I? All I wanted was a buy something for my wife and son. I've lost my job, rent is due, my car got repossessed last week . . ."

George handed the gun to the cop. "Son, we all get in a bit of a squeeze now and then. The road gets hard, but we make it through the best we can."

He got the young man to his feet, and sat him down on a chair across from the cop. "Sometimes we do stupid things." George handed the young man a cup of coffee. "Bein' stupid is one of the things that make us human. Comin' in here with a gun ain't the answer. Now sit there and get warm and we'll sort this thing out."

The young man had stopped crying. He looked over to the cop. "Sorry. It just went off. I'm sorry officer." Shut up and drink your coffee," the cop said. George could hear the sounds of sirens outside. A police car and an ambulance skidded to a halt. Two officers came through the door, guns drawn. "Chuck! You OK?" one of the cops asked the wounded officer.

"Not bad for a guy who took a bullet. How did you find me?"

"The GPS locator in your car. Who did this?" the other officer asked as he approached.

Chuck answered, "I don't know. The guy ran off into the dark. Just dropped his gun and ran." George and the young man both looked puzzled.

"That guy work here?" asked the wounded officer. "Yep," George answered, "Just hired him."

The paramedics came in and loaded Chuck onto the stretcher. The young man leaned over the wounded cop and whispered, "Why?"

Chuck just said, "Merry Christmas boy, and you too, George . . . and thanks for everything."

"Well, looks like you got one doozy of a break there. That ought to solve some of your problems." said George.

George went into the back room and came out with a box. He pulled out a ring box. "Here you go; something for the little woman. I don't think Martha would mind. She said it would come in handy someday." The young man looked inside to see a beautiful diamond ring. "I can't take this," said the young man. "It means something to you."

"And now it means something to you," replied George. "I got my memories. That's all I need." George reached into the box again; an airplane, a car and a truck appeared next. They were toys the oil company had left for him to sell. "And here's something for that little man of yours."

The young man began to cry again as he handed back the \$150 the old man had handed him earlier. "And what are you to buy Christmas dinner with? You keep that too," George said. "Now get home to your family."

The young man turned with tears streaming down his face. "I'll be here in the morning for work, if that job offer is still good."

"Nope. I'm closed Christmas Day," George said. "See ya the day after."

George turned around to find the stranger had returned. "Where'd you come from? I thought you had left."

"I've been here. I've always been here," said the stranger. "You say you don't celebrate Christmas. Why?"

"Well, after my wife died, I just couldn't see what all the bother was – a tree, cookies – without Martha it just wasn't the same.

The stranger put his hand on George's shoulder. "But you do celebrate. You gave me food and drink and warmed me when I was cold and hungry. The woman with child will bear a son and he will become a great doctor. The policeman you helped will go on to save 9 lives during his career. The young man who tried to rob you will be a most dedicated employee to you. That is the spirit of the season." George was taken back by all the stranger had said. "And how do you know all this?" asked the old man.

The stranger moved toward the door. "If you will excuse me, George, I have to go home. There's a big celebration planned." George watched as the old leather jacket and the torn pants the stranger was wearing turned into a white robe. A golden light began to fill the room. "You see, George . . . it's My birthday. Merry Christmas" George fell to his knees and replied, "Happy Birthday, Lord Jesus." (An internet story, author unknown)

Thanksgiving Meal Outreach

The Thanksgiving turkey meal giveaway was a great success. We provided over 100 meals to people in need this year. Albertson's Eastland allowed us to collect money and with it they provided cooked meals; and Vons on Grand and Badillo allowed us to collect food from their patrons. God moved on the heart of one gentleman and he gave CCC a check for a thousand dollars to help. We thank God for him and all the volunteers and workers. CCC loves to reach out to our community in Jesus name. I know we all feel grateful to God to be able to participate. Below pictures courtesy of *Billy Paver*.



November in Pictures



Praying for Lula - She's seeing better now. Praise God.

Our pastors pray for CCC's prayer requests



CCC'ers testifying as to God's goodness, provision, healing power, mercy, restoration, and much more...

Mike Paraspolo has written a film that he is hoping can be produced. He assembled actors whose lives have been changed dramatically after they accepted Jesus as their Savior. The picture below shows happy Christians. The picture underneath it is a humorous reminder of how things were many years ago before Jesus came into their lives.



The Youth Camping Trip

Pictures courtesy of Sara Paraspolo



NEWS FLASHES!

by CCC's Roving Reporter, *Debbie Shaw*

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Well here we are in the month that celebrates the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ. To all a very Merry Christmas! I will be spending this holiday with my family in Tennessee including three of my great grandchildren - Kaleb, age 5, Paxton, age 3, and Tegann, age 9 months.

Did You Know?

- ✂ If you want to feel rich, just count all the things you have that money cannot buy.
- ✂ Commercial pilots who fly on international flights along with the flight controllers with whom the pilots talk are required to be able to speak English. However, pilots making domestic flights within their own countries speak with the controllers in their own language. - The Flying Book

Quotes

- ✂ The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly and lie about your age. - Lucille Ball
- ✂ God said, *I will never leave you nor forsake you.* Hebrews 13:5
- ✂ It behooves us to never make idols of great men of God, but only to thank God for them. -Pastor Al.
- ✂ The Lord in His infinite wisdom gave us three things to make life bearable: Hope, Jokes, and Dogs. -Robyn Davidson
- ✂ God puts something in our hearts when we come to the House of the Lord. We are here to receive from the Lord. -Pastor Ken
- ✂ Our bodies are not made to work over 40 hours per week. Our body need to rest and rejuvenate. -Pastor Eric

Bit of Humor

- ✂ Dear God, Please send me a pony. I never asked before. You can look it up! -Bruce, Age 7
- ✂ The Golfer's Hymn: "There's a Green Hill Far Away."
- ✂ An L.A. Christmas: One seagull in a palm tree.

Two mouse ears
 Three yachting surgeons
 Four hiding agents
 Five golden rings (piercings)
 Six pools-a-sparkling
 Seven surfers surfing
 Eight earthquakes shaking
 Nine Commuters cursing
 Ten tourists swimming
 Eleven cell phones ringing
 Twelve Actors Serving
 (Taken from a Christmas Card.)

Person of the Month - Deacon Albert Gomez

- ✂ Albert has served 20 years as one of the deacons at CCC. He also is in charge of Tuesday morning prayer. His vision for the church is that we continue to grow and serve the community. Albert said that when he was 14 years old he put a motor in his bicycle making it into a motorbike. He rode it for six months until it blew up!!



Albert's favorite Bible verse is 1 Peter 5:7 *Cast all your cares upon Him because He cares for you.*

Albert and his beloved wife, Esther have seven children and numerous grand children and great grand children...and even great-great grand children!

A Word of Encouragement

✂ Waiting is a part of life in this world. One of the hardest times to wait is during the night when you are having trouble sleeping. However, no matter how long the night seems to be, the dawn eventually comes.

People who are struggling with long term problems may feel that their suffering will never end. But for those who love and serve the Lord, relief will come and He can change situations and take away suffering in an instant.

The night may seem long, yet it always ends in a new dawn, so your journey through this world may also seem long and hard, but it will definitely end in Glory!

-So long for now. Your Roving Reporter, AKA, Jr. Scoop. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* Romans 16:20

The Rest of the Story
by L.W. Beckley

Submitted by *Susie Algorri*

WE are wont to sing of shepherds
And the heavenly glory bright,
Of angels and their message
On that peaceful, holy night.

BUT so oft we end the story
When 'tis only just begun,
For we fail to give the message
That this Child is God the Son.

HERE to give Himself a ransom,
Crucified on Calvary's tree,
Through His blood providing pardon,
Perfect cleansing, full and free.

AND the tomb, thank God, is empty;
Jesus sits at God's right hand
Now a loving, mighty Savior;
Spread the news to every land!

THE One born in Bethlehem was none other than God in human flesh. Having lived a perfect life, He died an awful death to pay the price for the sins of mankind. Now He's in heaven, and any day He could return. How wonderful to know the complete story!

MERRY CHRISTMAS CCC



Our CCC family praying together one Sunday evening

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