



What Are You Guarding?

It's an old story—you've probably heard it a dozen times. But then, maybe not. Have a cup of coffee while we tell it again.

One of the Czars of Russia was strolling the palace grounds when he saw a guard standing over in the corner of the courtyard. He thought that was an unlikely place for a guard to be posted, so he went to the guard and asked what he was guarding. The guard did not know. He only knew it was his duty to stand there. The Czar was intrigued, so he went to the guard's senior officer to investigate. No help. A search was begun. Records and logs stretched back for more than a hundred years. The guard was always posted there, but why?

Finally the answer was found. When Catherine the Great was in charge of the palace grounds, she was particularly fond of one young rosebush. She was afraid the bush might be trampled, so she ordered that it should be guarded night and day. Before long it was grown and no longer so delicate, but even so, the officers continued to obey their orders, and their orders called for them to guard the bush.

Eventually both Catherine the Great and the rosebush faded into history, but orders are orders, so that same spot of the courtyard continued to have a special guard. For over 100 years a useless guard was posted to protect something that no longer existed. It took the curiosity of a Czar to question the assignment and reverse the order that had lasted for so long.

True story? As reported by San Diego State University, it may be legend or it may be fact. Whichever it is, the story survives because there are well-guarded rosebushes in all our lives.

What rosebushes am I guarding? Many Christians have guarded the truth that in order for their church to be valid, all other churches must be invalid. Could that be just a "well-guarded garden"? Is it not closer to the truth that all of us, *all of God's people*, will be saved from our sins and disobedience by the lavish grace of God. Not our perfect church. Not our perfect lives. It's not about perfect us. It's about God and His grace. *G. Crowe*

Opposite Day

When I was a little boy, my friends and I used to tease each other. We would say cruel things to each other and even call each other "stupid." Comments like that warranted one of two responses: 1) "I'm rubber, you are glue...whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to you" or 2) "Today is opposite day!" (which meant that he really called me smart). It is this second response that I ask you to consider this week.

Let today be "opposite day" for you. Every day we encounter things that dictate certain reactions from us (e.g. someone lies to us; we experience a conflict of some sort; we are tempted by the same old struggles), and because we are fallible human beings we sometimes react poorly. Let today be "opposite day!" Do not react without considering the opposite reaction!

If your initial reaction is to hurt someone who has hurt you, consider the opposite reaction: love and pray for that person! If your initial reaction is to lavish yourself with gifts to make yourself feel better, consider the opposite reaction: lavishing someone less fortunate or someone in need with gifts of love and give yourself nothing. If your initial reaction is to do the right thing, consider the hazards of doing the opposite: it will allow you to minister to those struggling with right choices.

Celebrate "opposite day" with me! I guarantee you will at least have to stop and think about actions that are sometimes so commonplace that we forget the reason behind them.

~Dan

Attention parents of children ages cradle through high school

It's an exciting new school year and we are blessed with wonderful Bible class teachers who are eager to involve your children in the most important classroom subject of all! This **Sunday, September 3**, will be the first Sunday of the fall quarter and it will also be the day when some of the children will be moving up to the next grade level in their Bible classes. On that day, teachers will be available in and around the classrooms if you need help finding your child's class. The names of the students will also be posted next to their assigned classroom doors. In addition, **Preschool Worship** will continue to be held during first and second worship hours, and **Children's Church** (for grades 1-5) will be held during the second worship hour. Mark your calendar!

-Joe Ruhl

Thank You!

I want to express my appreciation to my church family for your prayers, cards, phone calls, and the many meals you provided for David and I following my recent surgery and subsequent convalescence. You were so generous and beautifully manifested the care of our Christian community to "love one another." God is so good and I have surely been blessed by Him, again and again, through my wonderful family at Elmwood! Thank you all!

Love, Rose Hunt

Passion of the Christ

The movie, **The Passion of the Christ**, will be shown this Sunday, September 3, during the Bible class hour, in the conference room, room 17. -Rick Swensen

Promise Keeper's (PK) 2006

If you're a male and you've been to a PK Meeting before, you know how exciting and uplifting it is to worship God with several thousand men. The fellowship and singing are the greatest!!! This year, several Elmwood men will attend the PK Meeting in Louisville, KY on September 22nd and 23rd. The theme of this year's PK is "**UN-LEASHED.**" If your desire is to better understanding God's vision for manhood in our day and age and to be free to live and enjoy new freedom in the power of God, make plans to join us. If you are able to join us, please add your name to the PK list located in the Farris Foyer by September 13th.

August 27, 2006

Class: 219 Worship: 292 Contribution: \$5,995 Budget: \$8,100

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Happy Anniversary



Al & Anna Dale will celebrate their 59th wedding anniversary on September 6! Congratulations, Al and Anna.

It's a Girl!



Eric & Michelle Clowdus are proud parents of **Cianna Lynnae**, born August 21, weighing 8 pounds 2 ounces, and measuring 20.25 inches long. Congratulations to the Clowdus family! Their address: 4925 London Rd., Farmington, MO 63640.

Can You Help?

Hanna Community Center's **Annual HannaFest** is scheduled for Labor Day, September 4. Their most popular event is their **Cake-Walk**. They are seeking individuals and/or groups who would be willing to donate homemade baked goods. They can be delivered on Thursday, August 31, between the hours of 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Call the Hanna Center at 742-0191 if you can help.



LIFE Groups

Well, school is back in full swing and we have a flurry of activities coming up for the youth ministry. In case anyone is confused, all youth activities are for all **6th through 12th graders** unless otherwise specified. LIFE Groups will be starting in just a couple of weeks. This year we will be tracking along with the adult studies (with some modifications), but our schedule will be a little different.

Each month we will have one group meeting with all teens together, one with a Middle School group and a separate High School group, and then one Sunday each month, the teens will be joining their parents for their LIFE Group meeting. We will, of course, still meet with the church family when there are meetings at the building....do you think teens would miss finger foods? When the teens do meet with their parents' groups, most of the time there will be a service project or special outing earlier in the day.

Some might wonder why we are doing things this way. It is very simple. First, our group needs to be together sometimes. Next, there are times when the Middle School group and High School group (especially siblings) need a little space from each other. Finally, because worship and faith are experienced in community (family). It is important for our teens to hear their parents pray, talk about their faith, and even voice their concerns and fears. The parents, of course, need to see and hear the teens doing the same. All of this may not happen in the LIFE Group meeting once a month, but maybe it will be a catalyst. If you are willing to host our groups, you have a couple of options: if you have a house big enough you may choose to host the combined group meeting. If you don't want the whole crowd, you can host just the High School or just the Middle School (the house is available for LIFE Group meetings if you would like to host there). If your house is big enough to host the whole group with places to split into the two groups, you are welcome to host the separate meeting weeks, too.

The schedule for meetings this year follows:
September 17—together at the Simmermans' house; 24—separate at the Staffords' house
October 1—meet with parents; 8—Finger Foods; 15—together at the Staffords' house; 22—separate at the Simmermans' house; 29—special activity
November 5—Finger Foods; 12—together at the Staffords' house; 19—separate at the Simmermans' house; 26—meet with parents
December 3—together at the Staffords' house
Please note that on the dates where a host is listed for the Separate groups, another host family is welcome... especially for the Middle School group.

Don't forget the cookout at Columbian Park Saturday at 5:00. A sign-up sheet for what to bring is posted on the refrigerator at the house.

-Lee



Pray that God would show each of us open doors to communicate our faith.

Emily Eberhart, 2-year-old daughter of Susan & Marc, granddaughter of Pam Frampton and great-granddaughter of Henrietta Frampton, had open heart surgery at Riley Hospital on Tuesday, August 29....**Steven Rutledge**, brother-in-law of Fay Wolf, has learned he has cancer. He is undergoing tests to see if his kidney (donated by his mother 20 years ago) can withstand chemotherapy treatments...**Connie Nicholson's** growth on her thyroid is non-malignant!...**Brooke Baumis**, 17-year-old-friend of Philip Devine, had good results on her tests on her heart. She is back playing sports....**Elizabeth Tinkle** is now at home....Continue praying for **Ronda Tidrick, Ella McBride, Nathan Weir** (Riley Children's Hospital), **Mary Burns, Lynn Robinson** (treatment for colon cancer), **Linda** (Newberry) **Smith, Helen Clements** (Heritage Healthcare), **Kaden Koebcke, Mark Eddy, Marie DeWoody, Delpha Allen, Anna Dale, Elizabeth Tinkle & Carrie High** (Regency Place), **Irene Fox** (George Davis Manor Nursing Home), and in Rosewalk Village: **Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, & Burnell Gulden.**

Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner, Loren Sniffen, and Brad King.** Serving in South Korea: **Amanda Martin.**

Baby Gifts

Money and gifts will be collected for **Kaden Koebcke** and given to Cami and Travis. Gift suggestions: 6-9 month clothes that **open up in the front** and money for a stroller (large group gift). Please give money or gifts to Becky Pitt and/or Christi Branstetter by **this Sunday, September 3.** If you have any questions, call Christi at 423-5650 or Becky at 471-9155.

Also, Chris Sutherlin is collecting money for a gift card to be sent to new parents, **Eric & Michelle Clowdus** for newborn, **Cianna.** Chris needs money turned in to her by Sunday, September 10.



August 23, 7 PM....Bible classes for all
Sept. 3, 6 PM....Six-Way Happening
Sept. 10, noon....All-church picnic at Columbian Park
Sept. 17, noon....Pot-luck Dinner for new & returning
Purdue students and their adoptive parents
Sept. 17, evening....LIFE Groups resume!
October 13-15....Men's retreat—Patrick Mead the featured speaker

Read:
Job 13-33;
Psalm 119:65-120

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 37: Sept. 10-16

Looking in a New Way

There is a trick often used by attorneys so they can pick up differences in a document they have reviewed and corrected multiple times. They will read the document in reverse beginning with the last sentence, and then the next to the last, and so on in order to trick the mind into seeing each sentence as if they had not read it before. Some may read the first sentence of every paragraph first.

I thought I would try this with Psalms 119. This time while looking at the sections of the prayer I noticed the beginning verse of each section. "You have done good things for your servant, as you have promised, Lord." (v. 65), "You made me and formed me with your hands." (v. 73), "...but I hope in your word." (v. 81), "Lord, your word is everlasting; it continues forever in heaven." (v.89), "How I love your teachings! I think about them all day long." (v.97), and "Your word is like a lamp unto my feet and a light for my path." (v.105).

Once I had read the first verse I began to notice the different items referred to as God's. I then looked at just those items and wrote them down in order to try and create my own prayer using the psalmist's words. First I started with your servant, your hands, your word, your teachings, and your word. Unlike the method used by attorneys, I wanted in this instance to develop a new document or prayer. If we use the words from the verses to help connect the sentence we could come up with something like:

Lord, I am your servant whom you made with your hands and I hope in your word. Your word is everlasting and I find love in your teachings. Your word provides light so that I may see.

Sometimes if we try to look at things a different way it is amazing what we might see!

-John Adams

This Week's Highlight: "Resources"

Each of Elmwood's five deacons leads one ministry area. This is the fourth ministry area to be highlighted in the newsletter.

What is the "Resources" Group About?

Chad Pitt, deacon who supports the "Resources" group, was asked specific questions about his area of ministry.

1. How would you describe what your ministry is about?

The Resources Ministry involves all material blessings of the church: buildings, facilities and equipment as well as people power for "support jobs."

2. Why is this ministry important? Why do you think God wants this ministry to be a part of this church's life?

This ministry is about being good stewards with all the Lord has blessed us with. It allows us to have additional "tools" for furthering His Kingdom, as well as facilities to worship. God has blessed the members of Elmwood so that they will further His work. This ministry is a tangible way we can give back, not so we can have a bigger building or more members, but so we can grow in Spirit individually and as a group of believers.

3. What in your background has led you to be prepared to lead this ministry?

I have had many jobs that have led to my qualifications for this position. My management, sales and construction experience have been skills that have been easily transferable to this position. I have also owned my own land development and construction business for three years and I deal on a daily basis with many of the same issues Elmwood faces in the Resource Ministry. Elmwood's accounting, budgets, purchasing, manpower, repairs, and distribution of resources are just a small list of items in this ministry within my experience.

4. What are some of your most immediate objectives for your particular ministry?

Have our budget plan for future purchases so that we can stop purchasing out of emergencies. Get all ministries in the church to plan for the future and coordinate with the accounting ministry on current purchases. Give purchasing power to the ministries so they don't need to "get permission."

5. What are some of your long-range goals for this ministry?

Get more people involved in the resources ministry. Have up to date facilities with equipment to match while reducing repair costs. Install a new computer system with better software and back-up procedures. Reduce snail mail by 50%. Make sure purchases are right for the job they need to do. Get Gayle off AOL.

6. What specifically could the Elmwood members be praying about regarding you and/or your ministry?

Please pray that I will have wisdom in dealing with situations and personalities and that I will be a good steward with my time.