



CHURCH OF GOD BANNER



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FIRST CHURCH OF GOD: 3RD. AVE. & HWY. 508 ONALASKA, WASHINGTON 98570

THE SANDPIPER

by Robert Peterson

She was six years old when I first met her on the beach near where I live. I drive to this beach, a distance of three or four miles, whenever the world begins to close in on me. She was building a sand castle or something



and looked up, her eyes as blue as the sea. "Hello," she said.

I answered with a nod, not really in the mood to bother with a small child.

"I'm building," she said.

"I see that. What is it?" I asked, not really caring.

"Oh, I don't know, I just like the feel of sand."

That sounds good, I thought, and slipped off my shoes.

A sandpiper glided by.

"That's a joy," the child said.

"It's a what?"

"It's a joy. My mama says sandpipers come to bring us joy."

The bird went gliding down the beach. Good-bye joy, I muttered to myself, hello pain, and turned to walk on. I was depressed, my life seemed completely out of balance.

"What's your name?" She wouldn't give up.

"Robert," I answered. "I'm Robert Peterson."

"Mine's Wendy... I'm six."

"Hi, Wendy."

She giggled. "You're funny," she said.

In spite of my gloom, I laughed too and walked on.

Her musical giggle followed me.

"Come again, Mr. P," she called. "We'll have another happy day."

The next few days consisted of a group of unruly Boy Scouts, PTA

meetings, and an ailing mother. The sun was shining one morning as I took my hands out of the dishwasher. I need a sandpiper, I said to myself, gathering up my coat.

The ever-changing balm of the seashore awaited me. The breeze was chilly but I strode along, trying to recapture the serenity I needed.

"Hello, Mr. P," she said. "Do you want to play?"

"What did you have in mind?" I

asked, with a twinge of annoyance.

"I don't know. You say."

"How about charades?" I asked sarcastically.

The tinkling laughter burst forth again. "I don't know what that is."

"Then let's just walk."

Looking at her, I noticed the delicate fairness of her face.

"Where do you live?" I asked.

"Over there." She pointed toward a row of summer cottages.

Strange, I thought, in winter.

"Where do you go to school?"

"I don't go to school. Mommy says we're on vacation."

She chattered little girl talk as we strolled up the beach, but my mind was on other things. When I left for home, Wendy said it had been a happy day. Feeling surprisingly better, I smiled at her and agreed.

Three weeks later, I rushed to my beach in a state of near panic. I was in no mood to even greet Wendy. I thought I saw her mother on the porch and felt like demanding she keep her child at home.

"Look, if you don't mind," I said crossly when Wendy caught up with me, "I'd rather be alone today." She seemed unusually pale and out of breath.

"Why?" she asked.

I turned to her and shouted, "Because my mother died!" and thought, My God, why was I saying this to a little child?

"Oh," she said quietly, "then this is a bad day."

Continued on page 2

"Yes," I said, "and yesterday and the day before and -- oh, go away!"

"Did it hurt?" she inquired.

"Did it hurt?" I was exasperated with her, with myself.

"When she died?"

"Of course it hurt!" I snapped, misunderstanding, wrapped up in myself. I strode off.

A month or so after that, when I next went to the beach, she wasn't there. Feeling guilty, ashamed, and admitting to myself I missed her, I went up to the cottage after my walk and knocked at the door. A drawn looking young woman with honey-colored hair opened the door.

"Hello," I said, "I'm Robert Peterson. I missed your little girl today and wondered where she was."

"Oh yes, Mr. Peterson, please come in. Wendy spoke of you so much. I'm afraid I allowed her to bother you. If she was a nuisance, please, accept my apologies."

"Not at all -- she's a delightful child." I said, suddenly realizing that I meant what I had just said.

"Wendy died last week, Mr. Peterson. She had leukemia. Maybe she didn't tell you."

Struck dumb, I groped for a chair. I had to catch my breath.

"She loved this beach, so when she asked to come, we couldn't say no. She seemed so much better here and had a lot of what she called happy days. But the last few weeks, she declined rapidly..." Her voice faltered, "She left something for you, if only I can find it. Could you wait a moment while I look?"

I nodded stupidly, my mind racing for something to say to this lovely



young woman. She handed me a smeared envelope with "MR. P"

printed in bold childish letters. Inside was a drawing in bright crayon hues - a yellow beach, a blue sea, and a brown bird. Underneath was carefully printed: **A SAND-PIPER TO BRING**

YOU JOY.

Tears welled up in my eyes, and a heart that had almost forgotten to love opened wide. I took Wendy's mother in my arms. "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry," I uttered over and over, and we wept together. The precious little picture is framed now and hangs in my study. Six words -- one for each year of her life -- that speak to me of harmony, courage, and undemanding love. A gift from a child with sea blue eyes and hair the color of sand -- who taught me the gift of love.

NOTE: *This is a true story sent out by Robert Peterson. It happened over 20 years ago and the incident changed his life forever. It serves as a reminder to all of us that we need to take time to enjoy living and life and each other. The price of hating other human beings is loving oneself less. Life is so complicated, the hustle and bustle of everyday traumas can make us lose focus about what is truly important or what is only a momentary setback or crisis. This week, be sure to give your loved ones an extra hug, and by all means, take a moment... even if it is only ten seconds, to stop and smell the roses.*

There are NO coincidences! Everything that happens to us happens for a reason. Never brush aside anyone as insignificant. Who knows what they can teach us?

THE WATCH

James Hamilton writes: Before refrigerators, people used ice houses to preserve their food. Ice houses had thick walls, no windows, and a tightly fitted door. In winter, when streams and lakes were frozen, large blocks of ice were cut, hauled to the ice houses, and covered with sawdust. Often the ice would last well into the summer. One man lost a valuable watch while working in an ice house. He searched diligently for it, carefully raking through the sawdust, but didn't find it. His fellow workers also looked, but their efforts, too, proved futile.

A small boy who heard about the fruitless search slipped into the ice house during the noon hour



and soon emerged with the watch. Amazed, the men asked him how he found it. "I closed the door," the boy replied, "lay down in the sawdust, and kept very still. Soon I heard the watch ticking."

Often the question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are being still enough, and quiet enough, to hear.

-- Phillip Gunter in *Fresh Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching (Baker)*, from the editors of *Leadership*.

At various times in our lives we will face perplexing situations and fear provoking circumstances but we must remember that the Lord is not far from us and He will never fail to guide us. God will speak to us if we will get alone with Him and tune the rest of the world and its voices out.

ALASKA'S HAPPENINGS

SUNDAYS

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM
MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM

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EVENING SING & PRAISE
SERVICE
6:00 PM

~

WEDNESDAYS

PRAYER
&
VISITATION
6:30 PM

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CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

SATURDAY, JULY 8
10:00 AM

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WCG LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, JULY 8
12:00 NOON

~

MEN'S BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, JULY 15
7:00 AM

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SOMMA FOOD BASKET SUNDAY

SUNDAY MORNING,
JULY 16
11:00 AM

COMMUNITY EVENTS

SENIORS ON THE GO

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19
12 NOON

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AMERICAN LEGION

THURSDAY, JULY 20
7:00 PM
CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL

PNA EVENTS

FAMILY CAMP
@
DOUBLE K CHRISTIAN
RETREAT CENTER
SUNDAY, JULY 16 through
FRIDAY, JULY 21

~
JUNIOR CAMP
Grades 4 — 6

MONDAY, JULY 24 through
FRIDAY, JULY 28

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*There will be no Junior &
Senior High Youth Camp this
year.*

See next column

CAMPING PROGRAM FOR THE YOUTH

Because the Youth Camp for the Junior and Senior High has been canceled we are trying to provide summer activities for the youth of our church 12 years of age and older.

On August 1 & 2, we will be taking our Youth to **WASCO County Fairgrounds**, in central Oregon, for two days. On the first day there will be trusting games, they will spend the night



camping out and the next day they will be

going river rafting. The cost for this event is \$87.00 per person, plus the cost of transportation.

If anyone would like to help with the cost, please contact either, Pastor or Carol Haun.

CAR WASH & BAKE SALE



Youth Group Car Wash

Our Youth will be holding two Car Washes and Bake Sales to help raise money for their trip to central Oregon's Water Rafting trip. They will be held at Brenda's Market on Saturday, July 8th and 15th. We are needing those who are willing to provide baked goods and to help in the car washing. If you are willing to help, please contact, Pastor Mulkins or Ruth Bushnell.



Bake Sale

JESUS WAS PASSIONATE FOR US

In his book Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them, John Ortberg tells of a young man named John Gilbert. At age five, John was diagnosed with Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy, a genetic, progressive, debilitating disease. At age 25, the disease finally claimed John's life.

Every year John lost something. One year, he lost the ability to run, so he couldn't play sports with the other kids. Another year he could no longer walk straight, so all he could do was watch others play. He lost the ability to do all the outward things that we think of that make us human. Eventually, he even lost the ability to speak....

John Gilbert suffered far more than what most of us can imagine during those years. Groups of students humiliated him because of his condition and because he had to bring a trained dog to school to help him. A bully used to torture him in the lunchroom where there were no supervising teachers. No one ever stood up for him; maybe they were afraid for themselves; who knows?

"What a silly species we are," John writes. "We all need to feel accepted ourselves, but we constantly reject others."

But John had other moments in his life, too. Once he was invited to a National Football League fundraising auction. When it began, one item in particular caught



John's eye: a basketball signed by the players of the Sacramento Kings professional team. John so desperately wanted that ball that when it came up for bid, he felt his hand raise up in the air. Not having the funds to participate, John's mother quickly brought it back down. They watched the bidding go up and up and up. It rose to an astounding amount compared to the value of the ball and especially compared to other items at the auction. Finally, a man made a bid that no one else could possibly match, and he won the prize.

The man walked to the front and claimed the basketball. But instead of going back to his seat, the man walked across the room and gently placed it into the thin, small hands of the boy who had desired it so strongly. The man put that ball into hands that would never dribble a ball down a court, never throw it to a teammate, never fire it from the foul line. But those hands would cherish it for as long as they lived.

"It took me a moment to realize what the man had done," John writes. "I remember hearing gasps all around the room, then thunderous applause and weeping eyes. To this day I'm amazed...Have you ever been given a gift that you could have never gotten for yourself? Has anyone ever sacrificed a huge amount for you without getting anything in return...except the joy of giving?"

Citation: John Ortberg, Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them (Zondervan, 2003), p. 197

"WONDERS OF HEAVEN"

LINDA FUSS
AGE 12

There are a lot of questions
around and about us.
We all wonder about the golden
streets.
We all wonder about the won-
drous place we can go.
It's Heaven!
Heaven's a place were the
golden streets are!
Yeah!!
Were do we want to go?
Heaven!
Sing it with me!
Yeah!
God is the Almighty!
Yeah!
God is glorious!
Yeah!
God made the what? Heavens!
Bless the Lord!
Yeah!
Heaven is beautiful!
Our home is Heaven! Heaven!
Say it!
Yeah!

One of our biggest problems in the church today is this vast majority of Sunday morning Christians who claim to have known the Master's cure and fail to thank Him by their presence, prayer, testimony and support of His church.

The fact is, that the whole Christian life is one big "Thank You," and we as Christians should through our living express our gratitude to God for His goodness.

But too often we take Him for granted and what we take for granted we never take seriously.

Psalms 107:22 (KJV) *And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*

Last month, Mildred Dunham won the candy bar because she was the only local person to come up with the correct answer to the quiz. Both my wife Kathleen and Ruth Bushnell also had the correct answer but they are not eligi-



ble for the candy bar. My brother and sister in Arizona were also able to give the correct answer but I can't send them the

candy bar by mail because it would melt and what a mess that would be. I would properly get in trouble with the U S Mail if I did. The answer is found in the 25th chapter of I Samuel. The names were, Nabal, Abigail and David.

Here is this month's quiz.

*I was minding my own business
that fateful day,
When an angel came to send me
on my way.*

*He sent to a desert spot,
To meet a man that I knew not.*

*He was a very important man you
see,
But why would he ever listen to
me.*

*But I'm glad I did what I was told
And I'm glad to say, it saved his
soul.*

*He was reading a book he didn't
know,
And ask me if I could to him the
answer show.*

*So I joined him where he sat,
And explained the Scripture that
he was at.*

*He believed the Scripture that he
read*

*And was baptized just like it said,
I didn't remain there very long,
In fact in a second I was gone.*

*Now his name you will not find
But the name of his boss will do
just fine.*

*Give my name if you think you can,
And a candy bar will be in your
hand.*

NEW PASTOR

Our church was looking for a new minister, and the selection committee finally recommended a young man just out of the seminary. Many older church members protested that a more experienced man would have been preferable. Committee members retaliated with the argument that a younger minister might breathe fresh life into the congregation.

At the end of the meeting, I commented to an older man that this marked the beginning of better things for our church. "Yes," he said with a wry smile. "Moving on to greener pastors."

SAN DIEGO ZOO

A Hittite motorist was about two hours from San Diego when the Hittite was flagged down by a man whose truck had broken down. The man walked up to the car and asked, "Are you going to San Diego?" "Sure," answered the Hittite, "do you need a lift?"



"Not for me. I'll be spending the next three hours fixing my truck. My problem is I've got two chimpanzees in the back which have to be taken to the San Diego Zoo. They're a bit stressed already so I don't want to them on the road all day. Could you possibly take them to the zoo for me? I'll give

you \$100 for your trouble."

"I'd be happy to," said the Hittite. So the two chimpanzees were ushered into the back seat of the Hittite's car and carefully strapped into their seat belts. Off they went.

Five hours later, the truck driver was driving through the heart of San Diego when suddenly he was horrified!! There was the Hittite walking down the street and holding hands with the two chimps, much to the amusement of a big crowd. With a screech of brakes he pulled off the road and ran over to the Hittite. What the heck are you doing here?" he demanded, "I gave you \$100 to take these chimpanzees to the zoo."

"Yes, I know you did," said the Hittite, "but we had money left over-----so now we're going to Sea World "

~

A wife was making a breakfast of fried eggs for her husband. Suddenly, her husband burst into the kitchen. "Careful," he said, "CAREFUL! Put in some more butter! Oh No! You're cooking too many at once. TOO MANY! Turn them! TURN THEM NOW!

We need more butter. Oh dear! WHERE are we going to get MORE BUTTER? They're going to STICK! Careful ... CAREFUL! I said be CAREFUL! You NEVER listen to me when you're cooking! Never! Turn them! Hurry up! Are you CRAZY? Have you LOST your mind? Don't forget to salt them. You know you always forget to salt them. Use the salt. USE THE SALT! THE SALT!"

The wife stared at him. "What in the world is wrong with you? You think I don't know how to fry a couple of eggs?"

The husband calmly replied, "I wanted to show you what it feels like when I'm driving."

◆ Received from Jim Sparks