

February 2010

Cyberspace News

Michigan News

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The Suffering Church

Elder Charles Moore

The suffering Church is a witness to the suffering of Jesus. In our day we often talk about witnessing for Jesus. For us that usually means talking about Jesus. We forget that our word "martyr" comes from the Greek word for witness. Christians around the world who suffer and die for the sake of Jesus is the highest form of witness to Jesus. The Word of God teaches us how we should respond—both those who are suffering persecution and those of whom suffering has yet to come. I would like to mention briefly three ways in which the Church should respond to the persecution and suffering of the church in the name of Jesus.

First, those who are suffering persecution are called to witness with faithful endurance. As we read in Luke "Then he [Jesus] said to them, 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs

from heaven. But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. This will be your opportunity to bear witness.'" (Luke 21: 10-13) God sends His people into the world so that even in their suffering, they may be His witnesses, but He does not send them alone. The very One who Himself suffered death on the cross has said, ". . . behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20). And not only does Jesus go with His people, He has placed His own Spirit within them, the Comforter sent by the Father in whose comfort the Church does not merely endure the persecution of this world, but in its suffering the Church conquers it by the love of God in Christ "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress,

or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, 'For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us." (Romans 8:35-37) By faithful endurance the persecuted Church witnesses to the redemptive power of God's grace. God has promised to strengthen His Church for that faithful endurance and reward its faithful witness. John wrote to the church in Smyrna: "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. . . . Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2: 10)

Second, Christians are called to respond to persecution with prayer. Paul, writing to the church in Thessalonica, reminded believers: "Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; and that we may be delivered from perverse and evil men; for not all have faith." (2Thessalonians 3:1-2)

In addition to praying for

(Continued on page 2)

those who are suffering persecution for Jesus' sake, we are also commanded to pray for those who are killing, torturing, maiming, and imprisoning the people of God, as Jesus taught, **"But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you."** (Matthew 5 :44) Those who are persecuted and those who by God's grace are spared suffering are both called to pray and call upon God to sustain them in their time of suffering, to deliver them if it be His will and to forgive those who persecute the Church and by our witness hopefully to win the persecutor for Jesus.

Finally—and this is especially for us who have been spared persecution, God's Word teaches that we should come to the aid of those who are suffering in His name. However divided the Church may be in our age, we remain united as members of the one body of Christ. Of this one body of Christ the Scripture teaches: **"And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. (1Corinthians 12:26-27)** It is God's will that the members of His body care for one another in need as they have opportunity. God has spared us the persecution which others endure so that we can be his instruments to serve them and by serving them; honor and witness to the name of Jesus.

In summary what is God's Word to the Church today, as Christians around the world suffer and die for the sake of Jesus? First, be a faithful witness yourself. Second, pray—both for the persecuted and for those who persecute Jesus by persecuting His Church. Finally, help those who are suffering for Jesus' sake, if you know of a way that you can help, do it. **"Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body."** (Hebrews 13:3)

Save this date:

Ladies Dessert and Salad Bar
Saturday April 17, 2 pm

Greetings from Michigan, the Frozen North. We have survived our worst month and are moving into blue skies, I hope. We had a very mild winter until February 9th and I know some of you southerners were not as blessed as well. We can all look forward to spring.

Our winter retreat was the first weekend of the month and we had beautiful weather. I think that was the time the east was dumped on. Jim and Deborah Stoner flew home from Hawaii and got there just before the airport closed for the second time in a week. They had so many snow days they all stopped counting. Her lament was "why did we come home now?" Dorothy Layton told me she felt sorry for her car, since it was buried in snow. She is doing pretty well and glad she can get out and get around again.

David and Ruth Charles flew north from Florida for retreat and we all enjoyed their company. They are veteran flyers and packers these days. They enjoyed getting together with all their family while here.

Lynn Vaughn keeps in touch by email and she reported that Rob had minor surgery on his shoulder in January and then in February son, Dan, had knee surgery. Both seem to be recovering well at this time. We were so happy to see them at retreat along with the Larry Charles family.

Sonya Pease had a good flight here for retreat as did Roy and Bennie Gee, they come from opposite coasts. Sonya flew home Sunday afternoon and arrived safely and was home for the big storms that kept New York busy these past weeks.

Roy and Bennie Gee experienced a Michigan snow storm a couple of days before they flew home. Their flight was not delayed and they were happy to get home to sunny California. We love Roy's studies and are so happy for the close relationships we have all formed these past several years.

Ila Baker had a rough month with a reaction to a drug she had been taking for awhile. Right now things have calmed down and she has been moved to a different facility. Daughters Sandy Fine and Sue Trueman are taking good care of their Mom.

Rachel Sottile continues her chemo treatments and needs each of us to pray for her and her family.

Scott Lane and Mom Berty traveled to Chicago from Phoenix Arizona this past month for a hockey tournament, so Aunt Terrie and Uncle Dave Fedor along with Jamie and kids drove over to spend some time with them and to see Scott play hockey. They had a great time with Scott's team winning and Scott scoring. I just received news that Jon Lane has been promoted to VP of Architecture at Lumension Security. Congratulations Jon, we are proud of you.

You will notice the picture page is filled with our relaxed Saturday evening at retreat. Popcorn with puzzles and games get top-billing for our social hours.

I want to put more of you on that map of the USA next month so send a picture to me!

Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

Last month we learned that the moon was called the Wolf Moon. This month, February's full moon lived up to its name of the Snow Moon. It snowed and snowed, here in Michigan, and there in Maryland and everywhere else. Fortunately the snow did not prevent people from traveling to this year's winter retreat at the Nazarene District Center in Howell. The weather was actually pretty decent and allowed runners to enjoy their campground run, Brian and Kate Begeman, Joe Smeltzer and Carrie DeHaan. In addition, Sonya Pease was able to make it in from New York and Roy and Bennie Gee from California.

We learned from Roy Gee's teaching series from Philippians to shape our worries into prayers of praise and how to be really happy. The Echoes of Happiness then took us on a musical 'cruise planning' session to Destination Heaven. They took us all the way from getting the brochures to see what we are to expect to how to book our trip and to actually *being there*. The trip was inspired by Ken and Karla Coll's well-deserved absence as they traveled the trip of their dreams in Hawaii. We had the honor of celebrating with the Echoes their 40 years of music ministry, and the opportunity to present them with cards and a small trophy. We really have enjoyed and been greatly blessed by them all these years.

The Camp Planning meeting at the retreat was stimulating as well and involved some creative brainstorming about how to use objects in the Bible, even ones as ordinary as rocks and stones, to get across the gospel message. Saturday evening was enjoyable and relaxing as we engaged in picture puzzling, games, visiting and exploring Katy Nevil's wares (sans Katy). Katy is planning a 'thrill of victory and agony of defeat' mission tour, ranging from Paris to Haiti and her

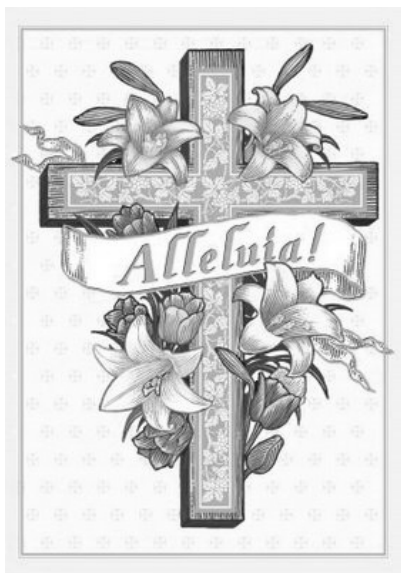
mom and aunt displayed her decorated wares for sale to help finance the trip.

The job situation is looking up for a few of our local folks. Steve Conley got a part time job in Monroe for an auto sales company. Knowing Steve, he will be working full time before you know it. Joel DeHaan also got a job locally as well. Congratulations gentlemen! I got to do a bit of traveling for my work this month, once to Tampa and once to St. Louis Missouri, my own dichotomous travel experience.

Nate Valentine and Charlie Moore got to do some local visitation to Violet Chapman and Ila Baker, both visits which they find enjoyable. Ila was doing some kind of occupational therapy and Charlie was impressed with her abilities, and catching up later with Ila's daughter Sandy Fine by phone. Diane Begeman was looking out for Vicki Velasco, our good friend and occasional visitor from Royal Oak when she spotted a sale at Kroger's in Toledo on Blue Willow pattern dishes and picked up some for Vicki. Vicki came down for church the last Sabbath of the month to pick it up and joined us for worship and a very COLD lunch at a local restaurant with Dale, Geneva, Tim and Diane Begeman and Charlie and Aurine Moore.

Finally, at Variety Time Don Daniels helped us close out the month by sharing some excellent etiquette advice for eating a Japanese dinner, circa 1950's, on fine dining table manners. The three pages of instructions, ably demonstrated by Don, who came equipped with utensils and dinnerware, were impressive. We were left wondering how one carried on conversations while eating. Such a lot to remember!

Well, that's all for now. Until next month, may you be aware of God's abounding presence, wherever you walk this month!



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Junk Science

A student at Eagle Rock Junior High won first prize at the Greater Idaho Falls Science Fair, April 26. He was attempting to show how conditioned we have become to alarmists practicing junk science and spreading fear of everything in our environment. In his project he urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical "dihydrogen monoxide."

And for plenty of good reasons, since:

1. it can cause excessive sweating and vomiting
2. it is a major component in acid rain
3. it can cause severe burns in its gaseous state
4. accidental inhalation can kill you
5. it contributes to erosion
6. it decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes
7. it has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients

He asked 50 people if they supported a ban of the chemical.

Forty-three (43) said yes, six (6) were undecided, and only one (1) knew that the chemical was water.

The title of his prize winning project was, "How Gullible Are We?"

He feels the conclusion is obvious.



They sure don't look like they've been singing for 40 years!
Kathy Smeltzer, Sally Smith, Kay Nevil

WINTER RETREAT 2010

Sonya Pease, Diane Begeman, Terrie Fedor, Charlie Moore



Jean Lane & Roy Gee



Berty Lane, Gabe & Riley Vargas, Jamie Carothers, Scott Lane, Terrie & Dave Fedor



Sarah & Brad Charles & Annie Malburg



Peggy Charles, Sydney Begeman & Lloyd Smith, serious gaming going on.



Bennie Gee Melinda Begeman & Aurine Moore. Puzzling!



Jack Begeman Cheap entertainment!



Ava, Grandpa Rob, Dave Vaughn