

# THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

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Newsletter of the Washington Christian Church

JUNE 2006

2006 - YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION

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## **A Tribute to Dad**

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*LaVerne P. Larson*

Dad, you are mighty special  
Each day of every year.  
You truly bless our lives,  
And we always hold you dear.  
Your words have truth and wisdom.  
You're firm, yet gentle too.  
Hope and faith and knowledge  
Are typical of you.  
You strive for higher goals with  
A quiet, steady aim.  
You're modest when you win;  
If you lose, you don't complain.  
With respect and admiration  
And pride and love, we say,  
Dad, our humble thanks to you.  
You're a great man every day!

## **My Dad's Hands**

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*by David Kettler*

Bedtime came, we were settling down,  
I was holding one of my lads.  
As I grasped him so tight, I saw a strange sight:  
My hands. . . they looked like my dad's!  
I remember them well, those old gnarled hooks,  
there was always a cracked nail or two.  
And thanks to a hammer that strayed from its mark,  
his thumb was a beautiful blue!  
They were rough, I remember, incredibly tough,  
as strong as a carpenter's vice.  
But holding a scared little boy at night,  
they seemed to me awfully nice!  
The sight of those hands - how impressive it was  
in the eyes of his little boy.  
Other dads' hands were cleaner, it seemed  
(the effects of their office employ).  
I gave little thought in my formative years  
of the reason for Dad's raspy mitts:  
The love in the toil, the dirt and the oil,  
rusty plumbing that gave those hands fits!  
Thinking back, misty-eyed, and thinking ahead,  
when one day my time is done.  
The torch of love in my own wrinkled hands  
will pass on to the hands of my son.  
I don't mind the bruises, the scars here and there  
or the hammer that just seemed to slip.  
I want most of all when my son takes my hand,  
to feel that love lies in the grip.

## **FOCUS ON OUR FAMILY**

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*by Kim Taylor*

### ***An Interview With Jamie & Kara McClintock***

Jamie McClintock was born in Carthage, Illinois, on Sept. 9, 1977, to Larry and Diana McClintock. He has two older sisters, Angela and Michelle, who are both married and have kids. Jamie attended Carthage High School and the University of Illinois-Champaign, where he majored in Mechanical Engineering.

For three years at college, Jamie was very involved at the Campus House, where he led small groups and enjoyed teaching and coaching people.

During college, Jamie would intern for a particular company each summer. His third internship was in Scotland. While there, Jamie made some very good friends that later traveled here to attend his wedding. Last summer, Jamie and Kara traveled to Scotland to attend one of their weddings.

Jamie is currently working on his Masters in Business Administration at the University of Illinois-Springfield, Peoria campus. He will graduate next May.

Kara was born on March 10, 1980, to Joe and Callie Connor, in Carthage, Illinois. Kara has one brother, Matt, who lives in Champaign.

Kara also attended Carthage High School and the University of Illinois, where she studied Speech and Hearing Science. Kara received her Masters at Illinois State University as a Speech Language Pathologist.

While attending college, Kara lived at a Cooperative Sorority, or "4-H" house. There she did her own cooking and cleaning and served as chaplain a couple of years. Kara led a weekly Bible study and Vesper service. Kara said they began every meeting with the chaplain reading a Bible verse. Kara also served as President for one year.

Jamie and Kara met when Jamie was a sophomore and Kara was in eighth grade. They first

met when Jamie offered to keep Kara company when the guy who brought her to a Super Bowl party left with another girl. Jamie and Kara dated all through high school and college and only broke up once! They attended all their homecomings, proms, etc., together.

Jamie proposed on December 23, 1998. They decided to marry on May 26, 2001, while Kara was in her junior year and shortly after Jamie graduated. They were married in the small town of Burnside, Illinois, just north of Carthage. Ironically, this is where Jamie's parents now attend church.

The McClintock's enjoy traveling, and since Kara's Dad is a well-known veterinarian who was asked to speak abroad, they traveled with him to Italy, England, and Germany. Kara was also able to spend three weeks in Australia with her father. Jamie and Kara both enjoy experiencing new things and trying new foods.

Jamie grew up in a non-denominational church, like Washington Christian Church only smaller, with 60-70 members. His Dad was an Elder and a farmer, and his Mom was a housewife. Jamie's parents were very active in the church, read the Bible a lot, and prayed together. He was very involved as a kid, attending VBS, church camp, etc. Jamie made the decision to be baptized at around ten years old; he said, "I understood as much as I could at that point. Not in full adult understanding, but I knew it was the right thing to do."

Kara's family was Catholic, and she was baptized as an infant. Her mom was originally a Methodist, but when her parents were married they decided they would need to embrace one denomination, so she became Catholic. Kara remembers searching when she was still very little-wanting to know and have that relationship with Christ.

Jamie grew up in a Christian home, and he says, "My family actively lived out their faith." He continued, "It was something I wanted to be a part of." Later in high school, Jamie tested his faith to make sure it was really his own. He was glad that happened before he went on to college.

When Kara began dating Jamie, she would attend her church Saturday night and Jamie's church on Sunday morning. Then Jamie and Kara had a discussion and decided it was important for them to attend the same church. Kara did not want to switch just because it was easier, but she did begin to see things in the Catholic faith with which she did not

agree. In college, Kara was immersed, and they both began attending the same church.

Kara explained that her mother was supportive of her decision and would much rather Kara was committed to her decision and not forced into anything. Kara feels that her experience has helped her relate to other people, especially in small groups. The experience helped Jamie realize that there are Christians beyond our four walls, in other denominations, and not think Christian Church people are the only Christians.

While they lived in Bloomington/Normal, Kara earned her Master's, and they attended Eastview Church. After she finished, they decided to move to Washington. It was small enough to remind them of home, but without needing to drive forty miles to Wal-Mart. Washington had also been recommended by co-workers.

Once they moved, Jamie said they began looking for Christian churches in the phone book. They tried a few churches, even a Methodist church their neighbors attended. At Washington Christian Church, they were impressed with Jeff and his sermons, they found friendly people, and they agreed with what the church believed in. Also, the church sanctuary was exactly the same as the church where they were married.

They began attending WCC in the spring, and by that summer, they became involved in the Young Adult Bible Study with Jonathan and Amanda Moore. There they met and became good friends with Steve and Dawn Peterson, Chris and Shanna Gerth, and Caleb Henley. When the group began rotating leadership, Jamie and Kara said it began to change their lives.

Jamie and Kara have helped with the Junior High and High School for VBS, and the same group for Wednesday night FISH. They have also chaperoned events for the High School, like the Agape Festival Concert. Jamie has helped with sets for VBS, has served communion, and has been a Deacon for a year and a half.

Currently, they are leading a LIFEGROUP. Kara helps with the organization, and says it is fun to do something together. Jamie says he feels most at home in small groups, where there is sharing and discipleship. He feels he has been blessed with the ability to get along with just about anybody, which is great because he enjoys spending time with people. Kara, on the other hand, likes to be quiet. She shared, "I'm a young Christian, but I find that in looking back, I am learning! I do know more and I

am growing." She continued, "I've learned as a leader, that you don't need to be a Bible scholar. And if I can do it, anybody can do it!"

Jamie says, "I enjoy working with people to teach them and coach them to be their best. Small groups kept us at Washington Christian. When we were new to the area," he explained, "[small groups] helped us build friendships that made the town smaller. They are our family here. If they were in the hospital, we were there!"

The McClintock's are expecting their first baby on May 31. The gender is a secret; Kara does not want to know, and Jamie does not care. The name is also a secret; no one, not even the grandmothers, know. Perhaps by the time you are reading this, the secret will be out.

The new baby will be joining the McClintock's four-year-old Black Lab-mix, "Miles", and their five-year-old cat, "Buttons."

Jamie's favorite book of the Bible is James, and his favorite gospel is Luke because "You can tell he has that love for people."

Kara says her favorite book changes with the season of her life, but her favorite scripture is 1 Corinthians 12:12, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ."

Jamie's favorite scripture is James 1:22 "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

## **REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTERS**

I recently saw a news report about an Army veteran named John Crabtree who had been receiving benefits from the government. Evidently he had been wounded in Vietnam and was now on permanent disability. One day, out of the blue, he received an official notification from the government of his own death. Needless to say, this was quite a shock!

Mr. Crabtree wrote the government a letter stating that he was indeed very much alive and would like to continue receiving his benefits. The letter did no good. He then tried calling the government. (Have you ever tried to call the government? This required the patience of Job and the persistence of Noah!) The phone calls didn't change the situation either. Finally, as a last resort, the veteran contacted a local television station, which ran a human-interest story about his situation.

During the interview, the reporter asked him, "How do you feel about this whole ordeal?"

The veteran chuckled and said, "Well, I feel a little frustrated by it. After all, have you ever tried to prove that you're alive?"

That's a pretty good question for all of us. Could you prove that you are alive? Really, genuinely, deep down alive? When was the last time you had an alive moment? Not the last time you took a breath or had your heart beat inside your chest, but the last time you really felt yourself alive to the living God? When was it that you last allowed Jesus to direct your steps and then see His handiwork in the results?

God had given us a great adventure we call life. Shouldn't we live it to the fullest . . . glorifying the living God?

"Be very careful, then how you live - not as unwise but as Wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:15,16 NIV)

Blessings to you, Jeff

## **LIFEGROUP - Meeting Places and Times**

### **Sunday @**

6:00 p.m. ~ LIFEGROUP @ Gillespie's, 1506 Kern Rd. (Jon-678-0645; Laurel-678-0749)

6:00 p.m. ~ Men's Bible Study @ Groff's 1338 Hickory Hills Dr. Metamora, every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. (383-4327)

6:00 p.m. ~ Adult Bible Study @ Heller's, 109 North Pine, (444-7700)

### **Monday @**

6:30 p.m. ~ LIFEGROUP @ Taylor's, 208 W. Holland

6:30 p.m. ~ LIFEGROUP @ location varies each week, check bulletin for weekly meeting place. Contact person: Bochart's. (444-8531)

7:00 p.m. ~ LIFEGROUP @ location varies each week, check bulletin for weekly meeting place. Contact person: Peterson's. (444-5174)

### **Wednesday @**

6:00 a.m. ~ Men's Early Morning LIFEGROUP @ Cummin's Family Restaurant Contact person: Frank Douglas. (444-5548)

6:30 p.m. ~ LIFEGROUP @ location varies each week, check bulletin for weekly meeting place. Contact person: McClintock's. (444-1751).

Questions about LIFEGROUPS?

Contact Ed Taylor: 444-2550 or 712-6495.

## **EMERGENCY ON-CALL STAFF PAGER**

The Ministerial Staff has an After Hours Emergency On Call Pager which will rotate between whoever is on call for the week. If you have an after hours emergency come up and need to get a hold of one of the Ministers please call this pager number: 689-9341. The On Call Minister will be on call from Monday through the following Sunday.

## **WASHINGTON CHRISTIAN VILLAGE ~ VOLUNTEERS**

On Wednesday, May 17, WCC members Celia Adams, Pat Connaughton, Betty Hoyt, Marilyn McDonald, and Anamarie Morris helped at the County Fair Days at WCV.

For this annual event, the residents had a program and then a variety of fresh fruits, breads, cheeses, and relishes. From WCC Pat Connaughton, Pat Huskins, Lois Johnson, Leanette Libotte, and Joyce Nordhielm provided sliced strawberries. Celia Adams and Anamarie Morris provided sliced kiwi.

This week is also National Nursing Home Week. During the week the residents attended a Mother's Day Tea on Sunday. There was a balloon Fest on Monday-each resident got a helium balloon, the Senior Citizen Band entertained the residents on Tuesday. County Faire Day was Wednesday. Thursday was Track and Field events, and Friday was a Fishing Derby. All week long the Apartment residents sponsored a raffle of afghans and other items. The drawing was held on Friday.

When you stop to visit residents at the Village take a special note of the hanging baskets of flowers on the porch and the two urns. Nancy Groff and April Sepich, one of her neighbors, chose the flowers and planted them for the enjoyment of the residents.

Washington Christian Village needs individuals who have special interests and skills and who would be willing to undertake a special short term project.

Jim Gorby pointed out at the Volunteer Banquet in April that the volunteers' work represented 3,875 hours for the Nursing Home. Studies from RSVP, a clearing house for Volunteers, figured that by hiring the work to be done and paying minimum wage, and including benefits they would be spending approximately \$18 per hour which comes close to \$70,000.

One example was that a retired painter volunteered to paint the cafeteria which allowed the

maintenance crew to spend their time on other needed projects.

Presently, the Village has many such projects awaiting someone to undertake them. For instance, there is a need for someone willing to help with the flowerbeds, keeping them weed free, etc. If any LIFEGROUP is looking for a worthwhile project, it might check out to see if it could be of service at the Village.

Right now we have a few faithful Volunteers who help out on the fourth Tuesday of each month. This month that day is June 27th. We meet out there around 9 a.m. and help the residents to and from the dining area, fill water pitchers, read mail to them, and many other tasks that helps them out so the Nurses and CNA's are available to do other jobs. If you are interested in helping out but have questions see Anamarie Morris.

## **YOUTH PAGE**

### ***Fabulous Flamingo Fund Raiser!!***

Don't miss this opportunity to add some "home improvements" to our local yards! For a donation toward our Youth Summer Mission Trip to Mexico you can add a little 'tropical flavor' to a friend's yard.

Give your donation to Jon or Jessica Pittman. Make checks out to WCC; memo line reading "Flamingo Fund Raiser" and an address of which favorite friend you would like to "donate" our pink flamingo to for a short time period. Our little 'flamingo elves' will secretly decorate said yard with pink fun!

If the flamingo flies to your yard, how about a small donation for the elves to return for a "pick-up"? Don't miss the fun! We do all the work! The Flamingo-Mobile is just a phone call away! Jon-444-2550 or Ginny - 444-7732.

### **Those Who Have Graduated**

Those who have graduated from Washington Christian Nursery School: Ryan Douglas and Hannah Waguespack,

Those who have graduated from 8th Grade: Earl Born, Jacob Burd, Casey Doremus, Kayla Groff, Kelsey Hagan, Cory Hill, Amanda Howard, Andrew Jarrett, Nathan Libotte, Noah Libotte, Tyler Mansfield, Jessica Navas, Amanda Pyle, Trevor Underwood, Andrew Walker, Nate Wilson,

Those who have graduated from High School: Justin Brown, Mollie Brown, Tiffany Filson, Krista Groff, Morgan Kinsella, Amanda Libotte, Matt

McCormick, Bree McQuillen, Sam Norris, Ben Orr, Danetta Smith, and Janelle Travis.

Those who have graduated from College: Andy Farraher-St Francis College of Nursing;

### **High School Graduation Recognition Sunday**

We would like to recognize our young adults who have graduated from High School this year at a special potluck to be held Sun, June 4th, 12:30 here in the Fellowship Hall. See Jon for details.

**June's Youth Team Meeting: Wed, June 7th at 7 p.m..** Please see Cory Hynek if unable to attend.

A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God."

The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like."

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl: replied, "They will in a minute."

**Mission Mexico Meetings:** Wed, June 14th, 21st, & 28th @ 7 p.m. @ Church.

### **VBS 2006 - Let's get fired up about Jesus!**

Mark your calendars for Sunday, July 30th ~ Friday, August 4th from 6-8:45 PM!

Each Crew member will learn Jesus is our friend, our life, our leader, our Savior and our helper!

There will be daily challenges in Chadder's Desert Drive-in Theater, Cactus Crafts, Grande Games, Hot Bible Adventures, Maraca Munchies, & lots of awesome music in Sing & Play Ole! Our mission for the week will be Mission Mexico 2006.

We are still in need of volunteers in several areas. Sign-up sheets are on the VBS bulletin board in the fellowship hall. If you don't volunteer, we may come find you! Seriously, please consider joining us and ask God to show you where he wants you to help. This is a week that not only touches the kids, but also touches the adults who help!

We will also need many donations for supplies and such. Keep an eye on the bulletin and on the bulletin board for items needed.

This year the ages for kids to attend will be 4 year olds through 5th grade. We will take 3 year olds but only if you are a helper for VBS. Also, a Nursery will be available for worker's children.

Again this year we will offer a simple, fairly inexpensive meal before VBS starts each night, (except for Sunday evening) for those who are helping and their children that are attending. The menu and a sign-up sheet will be posted shortly before VBS starts. This allows those helpers who need to be here early or are coming directly from work to be able to eat and not have to worry about fixing supper.

Thank you in advance for your prayers and support! If you have any questions or want to help out, please contact either Jess Bochart (444-8531) or Jess Pittman (444-5868).

Attention walkers - Youth and Adults - We need you! V.B.S. is coming soon and we are in need of walkers to hand out notes/flyers (prepared) door-to-door. If you are available some time during July 1-10 please contact Pat Huskins by phone or email. 444.7115 or phuskins@insightbb.com. Let me know what neighborhood you'll be handing out the good news to. A sign up sheet is also available on the V.B.S. bulletin board.

First come, first serve, and please don't argue over how many neighborhoods you get to walk. Also, if you live out of town don't feel down and out because we'll find a neighborhood for you too. Grab a walking partner and get signed up.

### ***Mexico Mission 2006 Fundraiser***

#### **All Church Garage Sale**

The Sale will be held Thursday through Saturday, June 8th-10th. You may bring any good, usable, items to the S. Parsonage garage. Please have all your garage sale donations here by Sunday, June 4th.

Kids: we will start marking items that afternoon. Again, this year we stress, bring only good, clean, usable items. No broken items or things that need to go in the trash. All proceeds from this sale will go toward the Mexico Mission trip this Summer.

### **6 Flags Trip Planned for High Schoolers**

Tuesday, June 20th ~ Approximately \$30/person. Keep an eye on the bulletin. More info TBA.

### **Bands in the Barn**

Saturday, June 3, 5-10 p.m.  
1225 Nofsinger Rd. Washington, IL  
FREE!!! Featuring 5 Local Bands!

### **5th-8th Graders to Kartville**

Tuesday, June 13, 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Join us for a fun day of unlimited rides and mini golf, all for \$10/person. Bring extra \$\$ for snacks and stuff you may want to buy. See Jon for details.

## **PRIME TIMERS PERSPECTIVE**

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### **The Cookie Thief**

*by Valerie Cox*

A woman was waiting at an airport one night  
With several long hours before her flight  
She hunted for a book in the airport shop  
Bought a bag of cookies and found a place to drop  
She was engrossed in her book but happened to see  
That the man beside her as bold as could be  
Grabbed a cookie or two from the bag between  
Which she tried to ignore to avoid a scene  
She munched cookies and watched the clock  
As this gusty cookie thief diminished her stock  
She was getting more irritated as the minutes ticked by  
Thinking "If I wasn't so nice I'd blacken his eye"  
With each cookie she took he took one too  
And when only one was left she wondered what he'd do  
With a smile on his face and nervous laugh  
He took the last cookie and broke it in half  
He offered her half as he ate the other  
She snatched it from him and thought "Oh brother  
This guy has some nerve and he's also rude  
Why he didn't even show any gratitude"  
She had never known when she had been so galled  
And sighed with relief when her flight was called  
She gathered her belongings and headed for the gate  
Refusing to look back at the thieving ingrate  
She boarded the plane and sank in her seat  
Then sought her book which was almost complete  
As she reached in her baggage she gasped with surprise  
There was her bag of cookies in front of her eyes  
"If mine are here" she moaned with despair  
"Then the others were his and he tried to share  
Too late to apologize she realized with grief  
That she was the rude one, the ingrate, the thief.

*submitted by Edna Neal*

### **It's All About Attitude**

There once was a woman who woke up one morning,  
looked in the mirror, and noticed she had only three hairs on her head.

"Well," she said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So she did and she had a wonderful day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that she had only two hairs on her head.

"H-M-M," she said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today." So she did and she had a grand day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that she had only one hair on her head.

"Well," she said, "Today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So she did and she had a fun, fun day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on her head.

"YEAH!" she exclaimed, "I don't have to fix my hair today!"

Attitude is everything!

### ***Prime Timers Calendar of Events for June:***

There will be NO Prime Timer Prayer Breakfast in June as we will be leaving for our Senior Saints in the Smokies Trip that weekend. We will be gone from Saturday the 3rd to Friday, June 9th.

Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Supported Living Center ~ Thursday, June 15, @ 11 a.m.

WCV Volunteer Day ~ Tuesday, June 27 @ 9 a.m.

### **Something to Plan For:**

On Sunday, July 2nd the Prime Timers will be a part of the worship service as Praise Team. We are working with and sharing the service with the Youth C.O.R. Group. Keep an eye on the weekly bulletins for practice times and further details.

### **F. Y. I. - For Your Information**

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#### **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES:**

Turn into church office by the 15th of the month.

Suggested length of the articles:

Typewritten-1/2 pages / Handwritten-1 1/2 pages

Pictures should be black and white if possible.

Articles must be signed - name will be withheld from publication upon request.

Editor reserves the right to condense, edit, or reject articles.

#### **Congratulations!**

Congratulations go out to Cory & Elizabeth Hynek on the birth of their first born, a boy, Quinton Wallace, on Monday, May 8th at 10:30 p.m. Quinton weighed 7 lbs. 1 oz and is 19 1/2 inches long. The Hyneks live at 1609 W. Jefferson, Apt C., Wash.

### **Circle of Friends**

On April, 27, 2006, Circle of Friends held it's Mother-Daughter Salad Buffet for approximately 50 women. Jennifer Navas provided a fun ice breaker so participants would have an opportunity to meet others.

After eating some very delicious salads provided by those attending and cheesecakes provided by Tami Shawgo, the group listened to Debbie Walker, current president as she presented, the slate of new officers: Anamarie Morris-President; Sherri Frazier- Vice- President; Ginny Browning-Secretary; and Mary Fisher-Treasurer.

Debbie also explained that Circle of Friends would not meet from June-August. The fourth Thursday, Sept. 28, will be the beginning of the

2006-2007 year. Please consider joining us this Fall!

The entire group adjourned to the auditorium where Elizabeth Morris, Anamarie's niece, shared her trip to Africa. After the travelogue, Joyce Nordhielm presented a wonderful devotion.

Everyone seemed to really enjoy the evening.

Each year, the Sunday School tries to recognize and honor each mother who attends the Mother's Day services. on May 14, Betty Hoyt, Pat Huskins, Leanette Libotte, and Anamarie Morris pinned beautiful carnations on all the mothers.

The Sunday School knows that one flower is only a token of thanks for the enormous amount of time that mothers expend each year to raise godly children. God's love probably shines the brightest when one sees the love each mother has for her children. God must really rejoice when He sees this love. I John 4:7 says, "and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God".

What a blessing each mother is to the world.

### **Sunday School Promotion**

Join us Sunday, June 11th @ 9:45 a.m., during the Sunday School Hour for our annual Sunday School Promotion. The Sunday School Department will be promoting the kids involved in Pre-K thru High School into their new classes. We will follow the promotion ceremony with a donut, juice, and coffee fellowship in the Fellowship Hall. All classes (adults included) will meet in the auditorium after quickly taking attendance in their classrooms.

### **A Scrapbook for Dad**

*Laurie Dawson Wilcox*

I open a page in my faded scrapbook,  
And there tucked away in a special nook  
Is a problem you worked with patience and care;  
I remember the night I placed it there.  
I see in my scrapbook a ribbon of blue,  
A faded corsage with a message from you.  
You sent it with love for my graduation;  
I wore it with pride and much admiration.  
And here in the back is a menu so fine;  
You remembered my birthday and took me to dine.  
You gave me so much to make my heart glad!  
Each page that I turn, I remember you, Dad.

### **Grandpa Hands ~ A Tribute to Fathers**

Grandpa, some ninety plus years, sat feebly on the patio bench. he didn't move, just sat with his head down staring at his hands. When I sat down beside him he didn't acknowledge my presence and the longer I sat I wondered if he was OK.

Finally, not really wanting to disturb him but wanting to check on him at the same time, I asked him if he was OK. He raised his head and looked at me and smiled Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking , he said in a clear voice.

I didn't mean to disturb you, grandpa, but you were just sitting here staring at your hands and I wanted to make sure you were OK I explained to him.

Have you ever looked at your hands he asked. I mean really looked at your hands?

I slowly opened my hands and stared down at them. I turned them over, palms up and then palms down. No, I guess I had never really looked at my hands as I tried to figure out the point he was making.

Grandpa smiled and relates this story:

Stop and think for a moment about the hands you have, how they have served you well throughout your years. These hands, though wrinkled, shriveled and weak have been the tools I have used all my life to reach out and grab and embrace life.

They braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed upon the floor. They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back. As a child my mother taught me to fold them in prayer. They tied my shoes and pulled on my boots.

They dried the tears of my children and caressed the love of my life. They held my rifle and wiped my tears when I went off to war. They have been dirty, scraped and raw, swollen and bent.

They were uneasy and clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn child. Decorated with my wedding band they showed the world that I was married and loved someone special. They wrote the letters home, and trembled and shook when I buried my parents, my spouse, and walked my daughter down the aisle.

Yet, they were strong and sure when I dug my buddy out of a foxhole and lifted a plow off of my best friends foot. They have held children, consoled neighbors and shook in fists of anger when I didn't understand. They have covered my face, combed my hair, and washed and cleansed the rest of my body. They have been sticky and wet, bent and broken, dried and rough.

And to this day when not much of anything else of me works real well these hands hold me up, lay me down, and again continue to fold in prayer. These hands are the mark of where I've been and the ruggedness of my life.

But more importantly it will be these hands that God will reach out and take when he leads me home. And with my hands He will lift me to His side and there I will use these hands to touch the face of Christ. We sat quietly then.

I will never look at my hands the same again. But I remember when God reached out and took my grandpa's hands and led him home. When my hands are hurt or sore or when I stroke the face of my children and wife I think of grandpa. I know he is being stroked and caressed and held by the hands of God. I, too, want to touch the face of God and feel his Hands upon my face someday.