

The Messenger

June 29, 2016



Moment's Reflection

*"God, give me grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things which should be changed, and the Wisdom to distinguish the one from the other."
-Reinhold Niebuhr, "Serenity Prayer"*



I've been praying the first stanza of the Serenity Prayer the past two weeks— "God give me grace to accept . . . the things that cannot be changed." I'm not very good at it.

I've learned through the course of my life that as much as I excel at problem solving, I typically fail at accepting problems that can't be changed. I don't often know the difference because I'm generally too occupied spinning solutions in my head. I often fight against the intractable because of the illusion that if I fight hard enough, work long enough, strategize deep enough, I'll find the answer to the problem that isn't readily apparent. I like to reason that this tireless mindset is what makes the difference between success and failure. Somewhere in my upbringing I was taught well that failure is often the product of laziness and that reasonable people should be able to derive reasonable solutions. I typically push myself until I find those solutions.

I remember an anguished night years ago before I took Zach to NYC for his final cancer treatments. Dallas doctors kept telling me that I should accept his terminal condition. I refused to accept counsel like that, and late one night in April I woke from a troubled sleep determined that I finally figured the answer to the mystery of the puzzle of cancer. Of course, he died two months later. In days before, I remember crumpling in tears in the hospital chapel saying to God, "I've tried everything I know to do. I can't do anymore. I can't help him." The confession nearly killed me as much as it killed him.

Now a week in California with my mother. I listened in silence as her oncologist detailed the severity of her illness. Yet last week, as years before, I kicked into hyper-mode and spent long days trying to work a solution. I generated mounds of paper. Had countless conversations. Researched until my mind wouldn't cooperate anymore. Slept little and strategized much.

And at week's end, as I was leaving my mother's room and preparing to head home early the next morning, that same helpless feeling from year's past started creeping over me. I had tried everything I knew to do. I couldn't do anymore. I couldn't help my mother anymore. My best wasn't good enough to save her or the situation in which she's in. It practically broke me.

I don't recall any of this for sympathy's sake, only to suggest that restlessness like this is grist for a particular kind of spiritual growth. Sometimes what's required in life is not the determination to do more, but the grace to understand that there is nothing more to do. Sometimes acceptance is the greater virtue. Sometimes the peace that God promises comes not in having finally exhausted one's self at the altar of Herculean effort, but in allowing oneself to rest in the love of God's grace.

I suspect we don't need to wait for some large moment to practice wisdom like this. In church, in life, maybe wisdom really is cultivating grace to *"accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed."* -Dan

IMPORTANT NOTICE!



DUE TO HEIGHTENED SECURITY CONCERNS, beginning Sunday, July 10th, the Avenue A door will remain locked during the worship service and Sunday school. You may access the Avenue A door using the keypad (call the church office if you need the code for the keypad), or you may use the main Sanctuary doors on Glenbrook. Thank you.

FCCG July Board Meeting *Rescheduled* . . .

The FCCG July Board meeting will be held on Sunday, July 10, 2016, at 11:30am in the Sanctuary (instead of the regular second Monday meeting). The Cabinet will meet as usual in July—Monday, July 11, 2016, 6:45pm in the Parlor.



BOARD MEETING

Take the Survey



Don't forget to take the FCCG **By-Laws Reformation Survey** by July 3rd. Contact Rev. Casey if you have any questions.

Worship at Fowler Homes

July 17th

Meet at the church at 2pm to carpool.

JOIN US as we lead worship for Juliette Fowler Homes!



Night at the Drive-In

August 19th

Meet at the church at 6:45pm to carpool; bring food to share.

\$7 / adult

\$3 / kid



PRAYER REQUESTS

Circle of Fellowship

Marilyn Fowler

Cup of Life

Jack Barger
Pat Spradley

Fishers of Families

Mike Whalin

God's Messengers

Charles Terry

Shepherds

Lee MacDonald

The Grapevine

Joyce Witt Boyd

SNEAKER SUNDAY at FCCG on July 31st



Adult Sunday School Classes may compete by collecting sneakers of all sizes.

Children and Youth Sunday School Classes may compete by collecting socks and underwear (all sizes).

These donations will be given to children in need through the *Salvation Army* and *New Beginnings*.

The winning Sunday School Class will be treated to a special breakfast.



THANKS to all who participated and worked on the VBS set. Your dedication to the success of this ministry is greatly appreciated. The children thoroughly enjoyed the program and we had a great turn-out. We could not accomplish this without your support.

-Stephanie Gordon and Sharon Campbell
VBS Directors



The Church Office will be closed on Monday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day.

**First Christian Church
115 South Glenbrook Drive
Garland, Texas, 75040**



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