



# The Western Light

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**He makes me lie down in green pastures,**



**He leads me beside still  
waters,**

**He restores my soul...**

**Psalm 23:2,3**

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*A friend sent this devotional just the other day. It's taken from a Lenten devotional booklet. I thought it would benefit all of us.* APC

### **Read Psalm 118**

By the Tuesday after Easter, there is little left to show that Easter has just happened. Some candy, maybe. Some leftovers. For most of us, that's it. We just finished celebrating the most world-changing, mind-blowing thing God ever did, and when most of us got back to work yesterday, life looked pretty much the same as it ever does.

But on the Tuesday after the first "Easter," far from petering out, the power of the Resurrection was just beginning to kick in. The disciples would still have been reeling from the shock and excitement, trying to figure it all out. Can you imagine it?

Two thousand years later, it can be tough to maintain that kind of excitement in a world that's gotten a little too used to Easter. So, we do the best we can: we pray to keep ourselves close to God. We sing songs, like Psalm 118, with some of the most memorable lines of Scripture, to remind ourselves of God's goodness. This, too, is a day that the Lord has made. And so we say it over, and over and over, until we begin to live it as well: He is risen! *He is risen, indeed!*

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*The more we know of the Jewish culture and traditions, the better we understand the significance of some of the smallest details in the Bible.*



### **The Folded Napkin**

John 20:7 tells us that the napkin which had been placed over the face of Jesus was not thrown aside with his grave clothes. We learn that the napkin was neatly folded and placed at the head of the stone "coffin."

*"Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen." John 20:6,7*

### **Why is that significant?**

When the Servant set the dinner table for the Master, he made sure it was exactly the way the Master wanted it. The table was furnished perfectly, and then the Servant would wait just out of sight until the Master had finished eating. The servant would not touch the table until the Master was finished.

If the Master was done eating, he would rise from the table, wipe his fingers, his mouth and clean his beard and then he would wad up the napkin and toss it onto the table. The Servant would know to clean the table because in those days, the wadded napkin meant "I'm finished."

If the Master got up from the table and folded his napkin beside his plate, the servant would not dare touch the table because the folded napkin meant "I'm coming back."

Yes, Jesus is coming back! He told us so. Isn't sweet of him to leave us this beautiful clue as to his return?  
*-Arlene Coccia, adapted from a circulating email*

## Pastoral Ponderings

*“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,” -1 Peter 2:2 (NIV)*

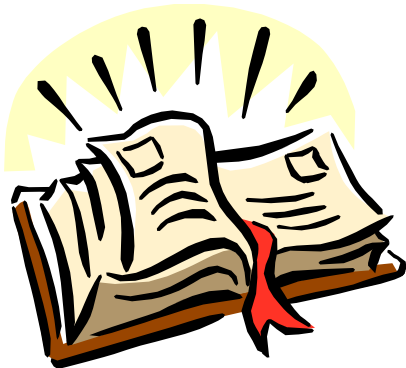
With the birth of our third child Anne and I have been reflecting on those passages of scripture that talk about infants. One such passage has been 1 Peter 2:2. Have you ever witnessed a baby craving milk? He will twist his head every which way and cry until he receives the nourishment he needs. And once on, he eats to his heart’s content. Very rarely will you find a baby wanting to ‘skip’ a meal. By contrast I have noticed that adults tend to be a little different. I have seen friends and family members go a whole day eating only a bagel and coffee. Their craving for food just is not there. When asked why, a common answer is “too much needs to get done.” As adults, much fights for our attention and that which is important to us (nourishment) tends to get pushed to the side. Babies, on the other hand, long for the milk and will not be content until satisfied.

How often in our spiritual life do we tend to be more like the adult who skips meals than the newborn babe? We think that we can get by on very little. We put other things first before our relationship with Jesus Christ. We don’t have time for prayer, meditation, and church. Work, family, and friends all take precedence. Is this what God calls the Christian to do? Did not our Savior say, “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness...” (Matthew 6:33) We ought to have that same craving for God’s Word as a babe does for his mother’s milk. We should be moving our head all round and crying until we are satisfied. Now an interesting thing about newborns is that once they are satisfied, they are only so for a few hours, then they are again craving for that milk. What a lesson for us as believers.

What is keeping you this day from going after spiritual milk? What have you allowed to have priority in your life over spiritual nourishment? Confess it to God, ask for forgiveness, then ask for strength that it would be your desire to crave after these things. Next time you see a newborn baby remember Peter’s words and may it draw you to God’s food.

grace and peace,

*Pastor Brian*



From Leoda Pacheco:

*Do you know the legend of the Cherokee Indian youths' rite of passage?*

His father takes him into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the rays of the morning sun shine through it. He cannot cry out for help to anyone. Once he survives the night, he is a MAN.

He cannot tell the other boys of this experience because each lad must come into manhood on his own. The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human might do him harm. The wind blew the grass and earth, and shook his stump, but he sits stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could become a man!

Finally, after a horrific night, the sun appeared and he removed his blindfold. It was then that he discovered his father sitting on the stump next to him. He had been at watch the entire night, protecting his son from harm.

We, too, are never alone. Even when we don't know it, our Heavenly Father is watching over us, sitting on the stump beside us. When trouble comes, all we have to do is reach out to Him.

Moral of the Story:

Just because you can't see God,

Doesn't mean He is not there.

***"For we walk by faith, not by sight." > ~ 2 Corinthians 5:7 ~***

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Lois Nilson submitted this from the ONE YEAR BOOK OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY (Tyndale Press)

### **The Ugly Poet**

*"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Sam. 16:7b*

Isaac Watts, considered to be the father of English hymnody, was born in England in 1674. He was only 5 feet tall, had a large head, crooked nose and small piercing eyes. The lady he fell in love with spurned his proposal of marriage, so he never married.

At age 18 he remarked to his father, a pastor, that the Psalms, which were the only songs being sung in worship services were "poorly paraphrased" for singing. His father suggested he write something better. One of his early hymns was "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun" (based on Psalm 72, pg 238 in our hymnal). Sadly, he was still frequently ridiculed for his odd looks, suffered poor health and never had his own family. However, he knew Christ was his Savior, his only hope. He managed to write over 600 hymns which helped people to sing the words of Scripture in more meaningful poetic form. "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (pg 258 in our hymnal), "Joy to the World," (pg 171) and "Oh, God our help in Ages Past" (pg. 370) are amongst those hundreds of hymns which are well known and loved by many.

## COMMITTEES AND MINISTRIES



**The CE Board** met with a representative from Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) to discuss a new way to reach out to children in the neighborhood and town during a week long summer event. It's called the Five Day Club. CEF trains and sends out teams of youth and young adults to host churches, clubs or backyards to teach Bible lessons through stories, scripture and music.

While CEF provides the manpower, we, as hosts, would provide refreshments and perhaps a game time and craft time to compliment the lessons.

As we consider this alternative to a Vacation Bible School, we invite questions and comments from our congregation.

**The Missionary Committee** is once again working on adjusting the missions budget.

This past month it was necessary for us to announce a shortfall in our income that would have prevented us from fulfilling our commitment to our missionaries this quarter. Through the generosity of some of our members, we were able to collect enough money to meet our commitment. Thank you for those who gave extra to the missions fund.

When the committee last met our purpose was to decide how we would reduce the budget. God was at work, as always, to help us out. We were able to determine which of the missionaries would be least impacted by a reduction in giving and are confident that God is already providing another source of income for them.

**The Flower Committee** thanks all who donated memorial flowers for the Resurrection service. The lilies and tulips brightened the sanctuary and added a sweet aroma to the air.

Feel free to take the flowers you donated home to add to your own gardens.



And we thank the members of the Flower committee who keep the sanctuary looking so nice with different flower arrangements in various locations *every* Sunday.

Just a reminder: we collect canned goods for the **Mansfield Food Pantry** on the first Sunday of every month. Our assigned items are Beef-a roni, macaroni and cheese and Spaghetti-os. You don't have to wait for the first Sunday, however. They can be left in the basket in the Knowles room at any time.

Also, the **Deacon's Pantry** basket is specifically for members of the church. You can place anything you feel led to give in that basket.

## April

### Birthdays

1 Donna Nilson  
5 Leon Colson  
10 Michelle Haley  
12 Pam French  
16 Peter Pendleton  
18 Ken Fowler  
20 Ben Sanford  
21 Chris Mortensen



### Anniversaries

19 Mark & Joneen Mortensen  
24 Jerry & Jen Wilson  
26 Frank & Lois Nilson  
27 Lex & Cindy Karol

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### ***AROUND FCC....***

*“Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him.” Psalm 127:3*  
*Children’s children are a crown to the aged...” Prov. 17:6a*



**Kyle Richard Pacheco** was born on March 11 at 9:39 pm. He was 6 lbs, 5 1/2 oz and 19 inches long. Proud parents are Tim and Katy, and proud grandmother, Leoda Pacheco. We’ve been able to see what a sweet baby he is as he has been to church twice already.

**John Levi Pendleton** arrived in the afternoon on March 16, weighing in at 8 lbs, 8 oz. He was 21 inches long. Pastor Brian and Anne are the proud parents. Grandma Sue Pendleton was in town for a week to help out. Those of us with email have seen a picture and others have been able to sneak a peek at him. We look forward to having John visit church someday soon!

Baby John’s arrival on a Sunday caused a change in the pulpit on Palm Sunday. We were pleased to have **Frank Nilson** delivering the sermon that day.

IN OUR PRAYERS

*“The Lord your God is with you, He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with His love; He will rejoice over you with singing.” Zeph. 3:17*

Praise!

For two new baby boys in our midst!  
Kyle Pacheco and John Pendleton

The many people who joined us in worship to celebrate our Risen Lord on Easter Sunday

Answered prayer for those in our congregation who have “stepped up to the plate” to fill vacancies of service.

Pray

Job needs: Tim Pacheco

Loss of loved ones: the Briggs and Merrifield families in the loss of Lillian, sister, wife and mother

Healing for: Kenna Shute (recent surgery/cancer)  
Helen Baker (surgery/knee)  
Ethel Claflin (surgery/hand)



Remember our:

Nursing home residents:

Nancy Pierce      Jim Horton      Lottie Scott

Missionary Family:

Dennis and Linda Ryan, Campus Crusade (esp. for Linda’s recovery from surgery)  
Dottie Cook, Wycliff Bible Translators  
Austin and Betty Harding, Life Mission Training Center  
Duane and Betty Kepner, Missionary Gospel Fellowship  
Jackie Fowler, Sudan Interior Mission  
Carol Rosseau, Source of Light Correspondence Bible Studies

Bethany Project, Haiti                      Teen Challenge/ New England

Special prayer request by Beckman’s daughter-in-law, Kris:

Please pray for the physical and spiritual needs of the Haitians.  
*(Kris recently returned from a short-term mission trip helping people with dental needs)*



## DEACON'S BENCH

### In Defense of Paper Bags and Wrapping Paper

Have you noticed lately how the packaging of all kinds of consumer goods is getting more complicated to open?

Whether it is an electronic item or an item from the grocery shelves or a tool or a kitchen implement, they all seem to be packaged, first of all, with a cardboard or plastic backing and then are apt to be enclosed in a clear plastic bubble which is cemented to the backing.

If it is a bottle or a jar, there is a plastic band around the top which has to be removed (at the risk of getting a nasty finger gash is a knife has to be used) before the top can be unscrewed – or worse still it needs to be pried up. Then you find next is a seal under the cap which sometimes has a tab to grasp that more often than not needs a sharp instrument to pry up or cut around.

Sealed plastic bags are another challenge that presents itself each time we are confronted with one. And the glue with which cardboard boxes are sealed seems to be far superior to any glue I can purchase at the hardware store.

And of course, stiffness of joints and muscle deterioration only compound the problem of getting to the goods we have purchased.

I could easily go on with a recital of these negative matters, but I only point them out to contrast them with the ease and simplicity of getting “into” God’s word. How freely we can reach out and just ask the Holy Spirit to guide us to whatever portion of His word that we may need at the particular moment and not only is the particular book, chapter and verse called to our attention, but if our hearts are open to the Spirit’s ministry. The meaning and application will be dropped into our hearts as well.

So the next time you are annoyed or frustrated when trying to penetrate the packaging material around a purchase, stop a minute in your efforts and quietly that the Lord that His Word can be freely opened and its exquisite content can be available with hardly any effort on your part.

*Thank you, God, for the simplicity of the packaging of your Word that makes it so readily available to us with such ease.*

John Hansel



*The following is taken from "The Church Member's Guide" by John Angell James*

**Chapter 7: Duties of Church Members to Each Other**  
**(B) Church members should cultivate peace and harmony one with another**  
**(Ephesians 4:3; 2 Corinthians 13:4; Romans 14:19)**

**1. They should be subject one to another in humility**  
**(1 Peter 5:5)**

There should be some kind of *mutual subjection*. Obviously the young should listen and respect the opinion of the aged, but all should be subject to one another. They should determine, as far as principle permits, not to have their own way but to give up their own views and preferences to the next.

*The democratic principle in our system of church government must not be stretched too far.* "Liberty, fraternity and equality" have often become signals for the lawless invasions of the rights of others. NO man has a right to please only himself. His will ought to be the good of the whole. To insist, "I will have my way", is to rebel against the fellowship (Philippians 2:3; Romans 12:10).

**2. To preserve peace a right dealing with offences is essential**

We should be careful not to *give* offence. Some are rude and dogmatic. They do not think of other people's feelings. They say and do just what they like without the least regard for the consequences of their words and actions.

We should be slow to *receive* offence. To observe these two principles would preserve peace. Some people are like combustible material. The least spark sets them on fire. Their common excuse is the delicacy of their feelings. Delicate feelings! In plain English it means they are petulant and irritable. I would have their foreheads marked, "Beware of Dogs"! Had we patience to wait, or humility to enquire, we would find many things done by mistake rather than intention. Let us discover first whether offence was intended before we allow any anger in our hearts. Even then, if we find the offence was not committed by accident, we should ask ourselves whether we need take any notice of it.

When we have received serious injury which requires explanation if future relationships are not to be spoilt, we should go *directly to the offender, privately*, and tell him how we regard his conduct (Matthew 18:15). Many brood over the matter in silence until imagination has aggravated the offence so that they will have nothing to do with offender. Others set off to tell a friend, or more than one, how they have been treated. The report spreads until the fault has been grossly exaggerated. Eventually it comes back to the offender in a magnified and distorted form so that he finds himself, in his turn, aggrieved and maligned. So a difficult and complicated case develops from what is at first very simple and capable of being adjusted.

We ought to refuse to listen to any complaint unless the offender has been challenged directly. We should be very cautious in approaching an offending brother. All the meekness and gentleness of Christ should be in our own temper and manner. We should not at once accuse our brother of the injury but instead enquire whether the truth is as we have understood it. There should be no threatening but only the appeals of wisdom, the gentle persuasions of love. If there is a little relenting we should cherish it by avoiding any demands for unnecessary concession, any superior aims or insulting ways of dispensing pardon. We should give assurance of being satisfied and determined to forgive and forget the matter.

If the offender refuses to acknowledge his fault our next step should be to take one or two witnesses with us. *We must be very careful to select men of great discretion and calmness, who will act as negotiators, not as partisans.* For offences to be removed the offender must make all suitable concession. In long-continued and complicated disputes the objection usually becomes mutual. Whoever is the original aggressor, a feud seldom continues long before both parties are to blame.

Even the aggrieved individual has something to concede. The way to induce a confession of the greater offence is to confess the lesser. “Confess your faults to one another.”

We should be very careful to be reasonable. A revengeful spirit is hard and humiliating in its terms for reconciliation. When acceptable acknowledgements are made, forgiveness is no longer optional (Ephesians 4:26f). Revenge should be blotted out of a Christian’s vocabulary by the tears he sheds for his own sins. How can an unforgiving Christian pray, “Forgive me my trespasses as I forgive those who trespass against me.” Paul speaks strongly in Ephesians 4:30, 32.

The last step in reclaiming an offender is to *bring him before the assembled church* (Matthew 18:17). Every effort of ingenuity, affection and patience should be used before it be brought to the investigation of the church. If every trivial disagreement were to come to the church all its time would be consumed in adjusting matters of which it ought never to have heard.

An offence is not properly removed until love is restored. A mere cessation of hostilities may do for the world but not for the fellowship of saints. Once an offence is removed it should never be referred to again or, if possible, remembered.

*Every Christian should bear reproof with meekness.* Few know how to give, still fewer, how to bear reproof. “Let the righteous smite me, it shall be kindness.” What wounded pride, what mortification and resentment, are felt by many when told their faults. The Bible is severe to those who turn with neglect or anger from the admonitions of their brethren. “He that hates reproof is brutish” (Proverbs 12:1; 10:7; 29:1).

### **3. To preserve peace church member must repress the spirit of gossip**

Some have every-open ears and lips. Those who love to talk about other people seldom select their excellencies as a topic of conversation but almost always fix on their failings. They are like flies, neglecting the healthy part of the body to luxuriate on the sore.

Let it be a rule with every church member to *avoid speaking of the circumstance, and especially of the faults, of others.* We should beware of saying anything on which a slanderer should base a tale to another’s disadvantage. We ought not to circulate, let alone originate, a report. We must never appear pleased with the tales of gossips, much less with the scandals of the backbiter. Our smile is their reward. If there were no listeners there would be no reporters.

*Lamentation over the faults of our brethren* is a method of indulging in gossip. Such lamentations should be poured out before God and the offender, and to no one else.

There are cases where disclosure of the failings of others is necessary. The pastor should be told in the case of an applicant for church membership. A brother in danger of putting trust in a businessman of unsatisfactory character should be told. Silence in such a case would do him harm. The maxim for every Christian is ‘be slow to speak’.

-Submitted by Pastor Brian