

The Harbinger

January 2009

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HARBINGER

DEADLINE

February

15th

There will be

no February

issue since the

editor will be

recuperating

from surgery.

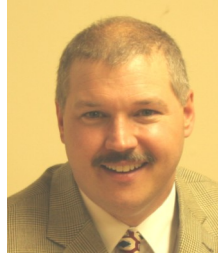
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MEMORY VERSE OF THE MONTH!

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

Ephesians 6:10-13



In one of my favorite poems, Rudyard Kipling writes:

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgetting minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man my son!

So how do we talk and walk in this life without losing our virtue. In other words, as the psalmist posits; How do we live in this sinful world and keep our purity (119:10)? In this life, at every turn there is temptation, at every corner an enticement, at every bend an allure. That is the reality of this life. So we return to the initial question; How can we make our way through this life and retain even a modicum of wholesomeness in God's eyes? The answer is found in the very next verse: I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. In other words, know what God has said about the situations you face in your life.

That is why at SWHCC we have begun a yearly program to hide God's Word in our heart. This year our Memory verse is Ephesians 6:10-13:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

As we memorize this, I would like to leave you with several nuggets that this verse teaches us.

First, we should not rely on our strength, but on the Lord's. This is a difficult truth to get through our rather thick heads. We tend to give ourselves a little too much credit when it comes to our abilities. We need to learn to lean on God in times of difficulty and realize that there are many, many situations in life that God has the power to deal with and we do not.

Another major reality that Ephesians 6 teaches us is that the spiritual realm is real. We go about our lives and think predominately about the physical. When something happens we almost always deal with it on the physical level. As we memorize this verse, we should meditate on the reality of the spiritual realm. It is just as real as the one that we interact with even though we cannot sense it.

Our verse also encourages us to be proactive in our Christian preparation. If we are indeed in a spiritual battle that we cannot necessarily see, we need to be equipped for what we come up against. Paul describes it in military terms using the armor metaphor, but what he is telling us is that we need to be pre-

pared. This armor cannot simply be strapped on at a convenient time, but it takes consistent Christian discipline over time.

The last nugget to be thinking about over the next year is that sometimes life gets so tough that you cannot make any progress, but do not turn back! Stand your ground! This is the time to trust in the Lord and in **His** mighty power (not your own).

So, these are just some of the nuggets to be reflecting on as you hid this word in your heart over the next year. So, take the verse below and stick it on your refrigerator and be intentional in your preparation!

Pastor Blake Brown



Helps for Worship #13: The Prayer of Invocation

William Shishko

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find.” (Matt. 7:7)

There are so many prayers in a worship service: opening prayers, closing prayers, prayers of confession, the "pastoral prayer" (which can often become quite long!), prayer after the offering, prayer before the sermon, and then prayer after the sermon. Why so many prayers?

The fact that we take so much time for prayer during worship indicates the blunt truth that without the blessing of Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5). It also indicates that we know that everything we have comes from God, so we are to be thankful in everything (Phil. 4:6).

We use the term *prayer of invocation* as a formal term to describe the first prayer in a Lord's Day worship service. (In our church, we usually call it the "prayer for God's blessing on our worship.") It may well be the most important prayer of any worship service.

In a prayer of invocation, we "invoke" (i.e., call upon, summon, beg) God to bless our time of worship. While God greets us as we gather (in the salutation), we do not presume upon his promised mercy to us. We praise God for who he is. (Notice that the elements of a prayer of invocation usually include things about which we have just sung or confessed.) We earnestly ask God to use the means of grace as means of *grace* to those who are present.

Among other things, we pray that:

- ◆ Those who are dead in sin would be made alive by the power of the Holy Spirit, who uses the Word of God to bring new birth (1 Pet. 1:23).
- ◆ Those who are already saved by grace would be built up in the true Christian faith (Jude 20).
- ◆ The Holy Spirit would transform all who hear, so that we are not just hearers of the Word, but doers as well (James 1:22).
- ◆ We would all be transformed by the renewing of our minds and by the "washing" done by the Word of God (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 5:26).

For Reflection

- ◆ Do you carefully follow the prayer of invocation?
- ◆ Do you earnestly desire what is asked for in that prayer?
- ◆ What would the results of worship be if the Lord did *not* answer those requests? (Think seriously about this one!)



The Outreach Ministry

Here's the latest Outreach Partner news:

*Be aware that all of our Outreach Partners are facing hardships in this challenging economic time. Also be aware that the Missions Ministry has stepped out in faith and voted to give each Outreach Partner \$10 more per month than the \$100 we have been sending. Though this will exceed the Missions Faith Promises by about \$1,000, we believe we **have** to do this and that God will provide the extra funds. Indeed, these Outreach Partners cannot stop doing God's work. So, during the year, if you can occasionally slip in a bit above your Missions pledge, you will be blessed!*

1. **Sam Leonardi**—Hancock County Prison Ministry

To everyone in the High Road Church, May the Joy of Christmas be expressed in all that you say and do as we await Christ's return! This season has brought forth a great amount of sadness as well as joy. I have left my job at the Hinckley Company after 20 years and am now working for Morris Yacht as the service electrician for the Northeast Harbor branch. I am feeling at home with the people that I work with and I am within walking distance from my house. Praise God!

The ministry is doing well. We have added another to those involved. Rev. Chuck Bradshaw has joined the team. He is graciously giving one Saturday per month to attend the evening services. He is a joy and an inspiration to us all. This will be the 9th year that God has blessed us with the ability to minister to the inmates at Hancock County Jail. Working so closely with Russell Spofard for three years and now having Rev. Bradshaw with us as well I feel a personal blessing has been given. This can actually be the beginning of some good humor. What do you get when you put a born again Catholic, a Pentecostal and an Episcopal in the same room? Or, three men died a Catholic, a Pentecostal and an Episcopalian. Well, working for the glory of God through His Son Jesus Christ is no joke, but we can have some fun with this.

So our plans remain the same for the upcoming year. We work hard during the week and we work hard on the weekend. God is so good to allow us the strength to work. Please keep the family of Tom Morris in prayer. Tom had battled cancer for some time and has died. From all of us who worked for him, we say he will be missed. For all of us who work for the Morris Yacht Company that call Jesus Lord, may we always walk with grace and peace so others can see Christ in us. May the

blessings of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit be upon you.

2. **Doug Palmeter**—Campus Crusade for Christ, Orono

Dear Friends,

Thanksgiving is a time of harvest. However, it seems we did a lot of digging (sowing) this fall. One of the most enjoyable opportunities I've had was to attend a leadership workshop with Sig Ep, the largest fraternity in the country. Seven brothers from Maine went to NH and joined another hundred and fifty students. I had been asked to lead three workshops; Values, Leadership, and Substance Abuse.

There were 25 men in my group. In the first two discussions the men were fairly open. The third discussion, on Substance Abuse, caught me off guard. I used to drink in college, 'everyone' drank, so went my rationalization. The term 'drink', as used today means to get drunk. As we discussed drinking in their personal, and fraternity life my ears perked up. One student, Eric, said "I drink so I can be myself, so I can have less inhibitions." Others got drunk to be "sociable." Girls were made "easy", and a host of other excuses.

It was astounding how much a fraternity could drink in a week. Apparently it is nothing for 20 men to spend 300 dollars or more a week on alcohol and more if there are parties. My heart broke as I listened to the stories of the men's lives. The brokenness, misplaced hope, and useless attempts to fill their lives revealed their true state and need.

Some fraternities with Sig Ep are dry. Looking around the room it wasn't difficult to identify those. Some men had uncomfortable looks. **Rob** was one such young man from Maine. We spoke before and after about life, hope, and God. **Eric** was from Rhode Island. He was the one who drank to 'be himself'. He was a big guy and said he would drink upwards of 15 beers at a party. It seems unbelievable! We talked about his hopes in life and God. We have traded e mails about the Lord. On the way home Walter and I traded stories. His heart is full of hurt. He says he has no place to call home except the fraternity. Since then I have been asked to mentor mentors. Each new brother has an older brother mentor. As a mentor I am able to bring my whole self into the relationship. It provides plentiful opportunities to talk about Christ.

Owen is the president of Sig Ep and will most likely become Student President. (I think I have asked you to pray for Owen.) About a third of the student senate are members of Sig Ep. As Owen and I had lunch he expressed doubts about God's existence. Then a couple of weeks ago he told me he had been praying. What a change! Please continue to pray.

We love you and appreciate your investment into God's work at U. Maine. God uses you to build into men like **Derrick, Jeremy**, and others. God also uses you to bring others to Christ, like **KO**.

Zac (our son) and I sat at a table in the Hill Top Dining Commons. The football team is required to eat dinners together. As the men filtered by we gave them a survey on values. Twenty-three out of sixty men asked to chat with us in the future. While students are open they, as a whole, are less interested in the Lord. So it was a joy to see the men desire forgiveness and learn how to give up control. And it was a joy to have Zac with me.

Fran and the boys are well. We have enjoyed a mild fall and are still waiting for Old Man winter to come calling. The highlights of the fall have been Josh quarterbacking his team to a decent record, and Zac, leading his soccer team in scores, energy, and motivation. They scored 35 goals to 2 throughout the season. Danny played soccer too. I have never seen so much energy burned up on the field as those pin ball kids ran up and down chasing the ball endlessly. Fran continues to home school the older boys. She has been reading and studying the Christian walk and the part the Holy Spirit plays in our life.

From the Missions Ministry's Compassion Child, Patricia in Uganda.

Dear SW Harbor Congregational Church,

I greet you in Jesus name. Praise the Living God! I want to thank the Lord so much for he has kept us alive.

Dear, I was very happy for the family gift you sent for me which was a total of 163700 shillings. I pray that may God bless you and more from where you got that gift and bless the work of your hands dear because I was really so happy to receive it. We suggested to buy a cow from that money and I will send a photograph of that cow later.

I am preparing myself to go back to school and I still need your support and your prayers because it is a promotional term which needs a lot of concentration and more seriousness. But I know by God's grace, I am going to succeed.

I have a memory verse for you from Isaiah 41:10. Greet all your friends there at SW Harbor Congregational church.

I wish you the best and May God bless you so much.

See the pictures of Patricia and her goats on the Missions bulletin board downstairs.

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

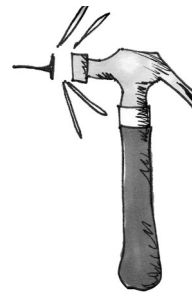
Trustees

The trustees are so happy to report that some major items have been moved off our extensive to-do list:

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1. The steeple is completely renovated, including beautiful little "cricket" roofs made of natural cedar shingles to match the "ice cream cone". It looks amazing, and we're so thankful that Damon Leer and the crew from NewYankee Builders did such a fabulous job, finishing before the really bad weather set in.
 2. We have a brand new roof! We no longer have to worry about leaks in the sanctuary.
 3. We've done, hopefully, the last basement leak fix! With trenching, re-grading and installation of water-proof foundation liner, we are looking forward to dry Sunday school rooms.
 4. Don Jenkins has built new railings and the GOMers have installed a new center railing and replaced the front steps.
 5. Dave Ward has gotten the carillon to work, and we're enjoying Christmas carols three times a day.
 6. An anonymous donor has contributed two beautiful new flags to the sanctuary.
 7. We are now incorporated.

There are still plenty of projects to work on, including:

1. Get rid of red ants.
2. Seed and mulch the water run-off area.
3. Finishing touches on the kitchen.
4. Work on parsonage and garage roofs.
5. Paint parsonage trim.
6. Paint church.
7. Install low-energy lights.
8. Install closer on door at bottom of sanctuary stairs.
9. Replace kitchen floor.



Most of these projects will be done by the GOMers, so if any grumpy and/or old men would like to join the fun, they meet **Monday mornings**.

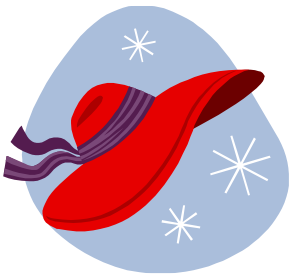
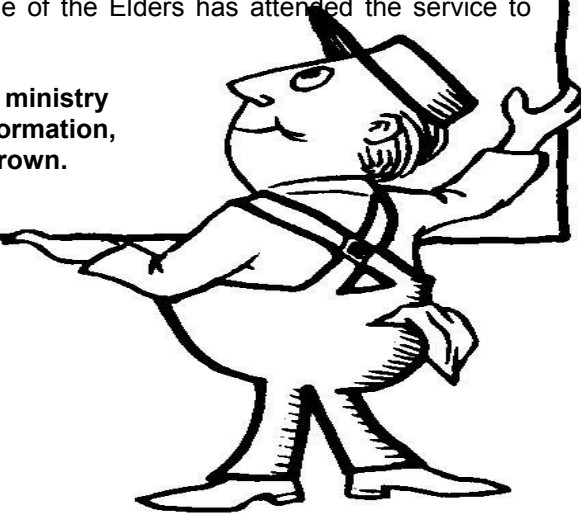
Marty Ward for the Trustees

NOTICE !

Opportunity for Ministry

SWHCC works with the Sonogee Rehabilitation and Living Center in Bar Harbor to provide a Sunday Morning Service to their residents. The Local Outreach Ministry is looking to put together a team of 4-8 volunteers to provide this ministry in 2009. The commitment would be for one service every quarter. **We are currently on the schedule for January 18th and April 19th.** Volunteers would be responsible for attending the 10:30am service at Sonogee, helping the residents turn the pages of their hymnals, leading prayers, and possibly helping to bring the residents to and from the service. In the past, one of the Elders has attended the service to share a message.

If you are interested in this ministry or would like additional information, please speak with Carrie Brown.



Women's Fellowship

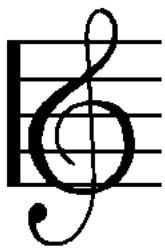
Women of the Southwest Harbor Congregational Church and beyond – put on your Pink Hats and **ASPIRE** to increased and dedicated outreach and fellowship!

We begin our new year with our new program of meetings on January 14th at 10AM at Kay Woody's house. (Snow date January 21 at 10AM) The first topic is **"New Years Revolution and Devotional Book Swap"**. Bring a devotional book, maybe the one you finished in 2008, and we will trade with one another.

We will begin with some music followed by a discussion on being resolved to press on toward the goal. Kari Reed will lead the discussion using an article about the resolutions of Jonathan Edwards from the January 2009, **Table Talk** magazine. Be thinking about your resolutions for improving your walk with God. Be prepared to look into the life of a man resolved to do God's will.

After a time of prayer, we will continue fellowship for those who are able to stay longer with lunch together. Be resolved to bring a healthy lunch. Coffee, tea, and dessert (may not be so healthy!) will be provided.

If you need directions to Kay's house, call 244-9469. The address is 70 Burnt Hill Road in Tremont.



FROM THE HYMN CORNER

JANUARY, 2009

SANDY JOHNSON

“HE LEADETH ME”



JOSEPH HENRY GILMORE

BORN IN BOSTON, MA IN 1834-DIED IN ROCHESTER, NY, IN 1918

A GREAT HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR TO REMIND US HOW MUCH WE NEED GOD TO LEAD US EVERY DAY IN 2009!

After studying about this man, I have discovered how godly and talented Joseph Gilmore was in his day. A graduate of Brown University, he later taught at a university and seminary, along with writing several textbooks in Hebrew and English literature (Six books in all). He was a Baptist pastor at the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia where he ‘scribbled down the lines of “He Leadeth Me” after a Wed. night evening service, preaching the truths of Psalm 23.’

“It was the dark-est hour of the Ci-vil War. I did not refer to that fact—that is, I don’t think I did—but it may subconsciously have led me to realize that God’s leadership is the one significant fact in human experience, that it makes no difference how we are led, or whither we are led, so long as we are sure God is leading us. At the close of the service, we adjourned to Deacon Watson’s pleasant home, where we were being entertained. During our conversation, the blessedness of God’s leading so grew upon me that I took out my pencil, wrote the text just as it stands today, handed it to my wife, and thought no more of it.” Without telling her husband, Mrs. Gilmore sent the verses to the *Watchman and Reflector Magazine*, where it first appeared the following year. It was three years later when Joseph was going to the Second Baptist Church in Rochester, NY in 1865 as a candidate for the pastorate, when he recalled: “Upon entering the chapel, I took up a hymnal, thinking—I wonder what they sing here. To my amazement the book opened up at “He Leadeth Me” and that was the first time I knew that my hurriedly written lines had found a place among the songs of the church.”

William Bradbury added two additional lines to the chorus:

“His faithful foll’wer I would be, for by His hand, He leadeth me.”

He leadeth me, O blessed thought!
O words with heav’nly comfort fraught!
Whate’er I do, where’er I be
Still ’tis God’s hand that leadeth me.

Refrain:

*He leadeth me, He leadeth me,
By His own hand He leadeth me;
His faithful follower I would be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.*

Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden’s bowers bloom,
By waters still, over troubled sea,
Still ’tis His hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would place my hand in Thine,
Nor ever murmur nor repine;
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since ’tis my God that leadeth me.

And when my task on earth is done,
When by Thy grace the vict’ry’s won,
E’en death’s cold wave I will not flee,
Since God through Jordan leadeth me.