

**Beautiful story.... makes you understand that things happen for a reason**

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry, to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn, arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve. They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc, and on December 18 they were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19 a terrible tempest driving rainstorm hit the area and lasted for two days. On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high. The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home.

On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity, so he stopped in. One of the items was a large, beautiful, handmade, ivory colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a Cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church. By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus, 45 minutes later. She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area. Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?" The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials 'EBG' were crocheted into it. There they were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria. The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten "The Tablecloth". The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. He was captured, sent to prison and she never saw her husband or her home again. The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home. That was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return. One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood, continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike? He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison. He never saw his wife or his home again in all the 35 years between. The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier. He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.

True story - submitted by Pastor Rob Reid who says "God does work in mysterious ways". I asked the Lord to bless you as I prayed for you today, to guide you and protect you as you go along your way. His love is always with you. His promises are true, and when we give Him all our cares we know He will see us through. So when the road you're traveling seems difficult at best, just remember I'm here praying and God will do the rest. Hope you have a wonderful Christmas season with your family, each of us are so blessed by God in so many ways.

# Spotlight on Orin Martin

Orin entered the **4H cookie baking contest**. They had to make and bring sugar cookies using the given recipe. He was awarded the blue ribbon in our club. Our group are all homeschooling and is called the Crows Nest. The green ribbon is for participating in the contest.

He is autistic, has separation anxiety and ADHD. This was his first time to ever use an electric mixer (hand held) and it took two attempts as the first time had flour clouds in the kitchen. He required several verbal cues to stay on task. He was not expecting to win but hoping to place. He wanted to give cookies to all the class and this was his reason for wanting to make the cookies. We talked about if you don't win but are last it's still ok because not everyone can win. I was proud of him for wanting to try. He did lots better making these than I expected (we have had a few disaster cooking attempts before). He won and was invited to county



level competition. County competition is December 2. We will be away and unable to participate so since both first and second are asked to go to county he asked if we could let the girl who was third go to county. Our county sponsor agreed and she (the girl) was given the invitation. The girl was so happy and thanked us. So it was a win-win. County has to have two baked goods they give you the recipe for and you decorate a display table. This would have been too much for Orin and being at the fair with all the noise and such could have put him in a melt down. Orin said it was perfect for everyone. He wants to bake more cookies. Maybe this opened a door in his mind because he is more interested in doing things in the kitchen now. This was his first ever win on his own, just participating was a big step emotionally too. Two weeks ago at church Orin was the one with light up ear phones. He is touchy and has varied levels of things he can handle. He is autistic but a kind of Asperger's type and has much more



difficulty in groups and following instructions. Emotionally he is around 5-6, his education levels are different for each subject so it's an adventure to get him learning. He has like zero patience with most anything so his getting cookies baked was a big deal for us.

Elden his brother is high functioning autistic. He can do several things such as karate, archery, and art classes. He can follow instructions to a point and can be very literal. He seems to have trouble socializing in groups but can do good one on one.

Presented by Linda Mims our church member, his teacher, grandmother and now guardian/mother also.

Thank you Linda for sharing. Hope this will help us to understand the behavior and be able to understand his actions at times.



**A LETTER IN THE LOST WALLET!!** As I walked home one freezing day, I stumbled on a wallet someone had lost in the street. I picked it up and looked inside to find some identification so I could call the owner. But the wallet contained only three dollars and a crumpled letter that looked as if it had been in there for years. The envelope was worn and the only thing that was legible on it was the return address. I started to open the letter, hoping to find some clue. Then I saw the dateline--1924. The letter had been written almost sixty years ago. It was written in a beautiful feminine handwriting on powder blue stationery with a little flower in the left-hand corner. It was a "Dear John" letter that told the recipient, whose name appeared to be Michael, that the writer could not see him any more because her mother forbade it. Even so, she wrote that she would always love him. It was signed, Hannah. It was a beautiful letter, but there was no way except for the name Michael, that the owner could be identified. Maybe if I called information, the operator could find a phone listing for the address on the envelope. "Operator," I began, "this is an unusual request. I'm trying to find the owner of a wallet that I found. Is there anyway you can tell me if there is a phone number for an address that was on an envelope in the wallet?" She suggested I speak with her supervisor, who hesitated for a moment then said, "Well, there is a phone listing at that address, but I can't give you the number." She said, as a courtesy, she would call that number, explain my story and would ask them if they wanted her to connect me. I waited a few minutes and then she was back on the line. "I have a party who will speak with you." I asked the woman on the other end of the line if she knew anyone by the name of Hannah. She gasped, "Oh! We bought this house from a family who had a daughter named Hannah. But that was 30 years ago!" "Would you know where that family could be located now?" I asked. "I remember that Hannah had to place her mother in a nursing home some years ago," the woman said. "Maybe if you got in touch with them they might be able to track down the daughter." She gave me the name of the nursing home and I called the number. They told me the old lady had passed away some years ago but they did have a phone number for where they thought the daughter might be living. I thanked them and phoned. The woman who answered explained that Hannah herself was now living in a nursing home. This whole thing was stupid, I thought to myself. Why was I making such a big deal over finding the owner of a wallet that had only three dollars and a letter that was almost 60 years old? Nevertheless, I called the nursing home in which Hannah was supposed to be living and the man who answered the phone told me, "Yes, Hannah is staying with us." Even though it was already 10 p.m., I asked if I could come by to see her. "Well," he said hesitatingly, "if you want to take a chance, she might be in the day room watching television." I thanked him and drove over to the nursing home. The night nurse and a guard greeted me at the door. We went up to the third floor of the large building. In the day room, the nurse introduced me to Hannah. She was a sweet, silver-haired old timer with a warm smile and a twinkle in her eye. I told her about finding the wallet and showed her the letter. The second she saw the powder blue envelope with that little flower on the left, she took a deep breath and said, "Young man, this letter was the last contact I ever had with Michael." She looked away for a moment deep in thought and then said Softly, "I loved him very much. But I was only 16 at the time and my mother felt I was too young. Oh, he was so handsome. He looked like Sean Connery, the actor." "Yes," she continued. "Michael Goldstein was a wonderful person. If you should find him, tell him I think of him often. And," she hesitated for a moment, almost

biting her lip, "tell him I still love him. You know," she said smiling as tears began to well up in her eyes, "I never did marry. I guess no one ever matched up to Michael..." I thanked Hannah and said goodbye. I took the elevator to the first floor and as I stood by the door, the guard there asked, "Was the old lady able to help you?" I told him she had given me a lead. "At least I have a last name. But I think I'll let it go for a while. I spent almost the whole day trying to find the owner of this wallet." I had taken out the wallet, which was a simple brown leather case with red lacing on the side. When the guard saw it, he said, "Hey, wait a minute! That's Mr. Goldstein's wallet. I'd know it anywhere with that bright red lacing. He's always losing that wallet. I must have found it in the halls at least three times." "Who's Mr. Goldstein?" I asked as my hand began to shake. "He's one of the old timers on the 8th floor. That's Mike Goldstein's wallet for sure. He must have lost it on one of his walks." I thanked the guard and quickly ran back to the nurse's office. I told her what the guard had said. We went back to the elevator and got on. I prayed that Mr. Goldstein would be up. On the eighth floor, the floor nurse said, "I think he's still in the day room. He likes to read at night. He's a darling old man." We went to the only room that had any lights on and there was a man reading a book. The nurse went over to him and asked if he had lost his wallet. Mr. Goldstein looked up with surprise, put his hand in his back pocket and said, "Oh, it is missing!" "This kind gentleman found a wallet and we wondered if it could be yours?" I handed Mr. Goldstein the wallet and the second he saw it, he smiled with relief and said, "Yes, that's it! It must have dropped out of my pocket this afternoon. I want to give you a reward." "No, thank you," I said. "But I have to tell you something. I read the letter in the hope of finding out who owned the wallet." The smile on his face suddenly disappeared. "You read that letter?" "Not only did I read it, I think I know where Hannah is." He suddenly grew pale. "Hannah? You know where she is? How is she? Is she still as pretty as she was? Please, please tell me," he begged. "She's fine...just as pretty as when you knew her." I said softly. The old man smiled with anticipation and asked, "Could you tell me where she is? I want to call her tomorrow." He grabbed my hand and said, "You know something, mister, I was so in love with that girl that when that letter came, my life literally ended. I never married. I guess I've always loved her." "Mr. Goldstein," I said, "Come with me." We took the elevator down to the third floor. The hallways were darkened and only one or two little night-lights lit our way to the day room where Hannah was sitting alone watching the television. The nurse walked over to her. "Hannah," she said softly, pointing to Michael, who was waiting with me in the doorway. "Do you know this man?" She adjusted her glasses, looked for a moment, but didn't say a word. Michael said softly, almost in a whisper, "Hannah, it's Michael. Do you remember me?" She gasped, "Michael! I don't believe it! Michael! It's you! My Michael!" He walked slowly towards her and they embraced. The nurse and I left with tears streaming down our faces. "See," I said. "See how the Good Lord works! If it's meant to be, it will be." About three weeks later I got a call at my office from the nursing home. "Can you break away on Sunday to attend a wedding? Michael and Hannah are going to tie the knot!" It was a beautiful wedding with all the people at the nursing home dressed up to join in the celebration. Hannah wore a light beige dress and looked beautiful. Michael wore a dark blue suit and stood tall. They made me their best man. They gave them their own room and if you ever wanted to see a 76-year-old bride and a 79-year-old groom acting like two teenagers, you had to see this couple.



# PASTOR'S CORNER

**Thanksgiving** I've got a love af-

fair going with Thanksgiving. It has been going on for over seventy years, as far back as I can remember. Hands down, it's my favorite holiday of all. Here's why. First of all, it seems to blend together all we Americans hold precious and dear—without the sham and plastic mask of commercialism. Shopping centers jump from Halloween to Christmas. It's spooks to Santa . . . pumpkins to presents . . . orange and black to red and green. It's doubtful that any of us has ever seen (or will ever see) a Pilgrim hype. Just can't be done. Except for grocery stores, merchants are mute when Thanksgiving rolls around. Second, it highlights the home and family. Thanksgiving is synonymous with stuff that can be found only at home—the warmth of a fireplace, early morning fussing around in the kitchen, kids and grandkids, long-distance phone calls, family reunions, singing around the piano, holding hands and praying before that special meal, the Cowboys versus somebody (they always beat) on the tube, a touch football game in the street or backyard, friends dropping by, pumpkin pie, homemade rolls, and six million calories. It is a time of quiet reflection upon the past and an annual reminder that God has, again, been ever so faithful. The solid and simple things of life are brought into clear focus, so much so that everything else fades into insignificance. Thanksgiving is good for our roots . . . it deepens them and strengthens them and thickens them . . . making our trunks and limbs more secure in spite of the threatening gale of our times. The meal, the memories, the music Thanksgiving brings have a way of blocking out the gaunt giant of selfishness and ushering in the sincere spirit of gratitude, love, and genuine joy. Third, it drips with national nostalgia. For me, even more so than the Fourth of July. That holiday reminds us of a battle we won, giving us independence. This one takes us back to a simple slice of life over 375 years ago when our forefathers and foremothers realized their dependence on each other to survive. With Thanksgiving comes a surge of renewed patriotism, a quiet inner peace that whispers, "I am proud to be an American." Thanksgiving puts steel into our patriotic veins. It reminds us of our great heritage. It carries us back with numbing nostalgia to that first dreadful winter at Plymouth where less than half the handful of people survived. It speaks in clear, crisp tones of forgotten terms, like: integrity . . . bravery . . . respect . . . faith . . . vigilance . . . dignity . . . honor . . . freedom . . . discipline . . . sacrifice . . . godliness. Nostalgia washes over me as I take a walk in the woods and reflect on those brave men and women whose bodies lie beneath white crosses—veterans who fought and died that I might live and be free—and as I consider those statesmen who hammered out our laws on the anvil of wisdom, compassion, and human dignity. People who cared about the future of this grand land, not just their own comforts. Visionaries. Tough-minded, clear-thinking, sacrificial souls who did more than talk about integrity. They modeled it. Fourth and finally, it turns our heads upward. Just the word Thanksgiving prompts the spirit of humility. Genuine gratitude to God for His mercy, His abundance, His protection, His smile of favor. At this holiday, as at no other, we count our blessings and we run out of time before we exhaust the list. And best of all, life simplifies itself. At Thanksgiving we come back to the soil and the sun and the rain which combine their efforts to produce the miracle of life, resulting in food for our stomachs and shelter for our bodies . . . direct gifts from our God of grace. From the annals of our rich heritage, there has been preserved this announcement which was made more than 375 years ago. It says it all: To All Ye Pilgrims **Thanksgiving** Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; now, I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November ye 29th of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three, and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor, and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings. —William Bradford Governor of Plymouth Colony, 1623 Excerpted from *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*, Copyright © 1983 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide. Used by arrangement with Zondervan Publishing House.



Pastor Dan

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# Reminiscing Corner

Happy, Birthday. We pray that you are blessed with many more. If I don't have your special day, let me know. Brenda

D E C	2	Florine Linkous
	18	Cassie Higgins
	25	Cherice Cleckler
	27	Rachel Christann Ernest (2015)
	30	Mary Nally
Anniversaries 7th Olan & Kay Suddeth 9th Jim & Ladene Higgins 13th Dexter & Brianna Clark (2016) 17th Bob & Donna Ernest (1964)		



OK, I have a two for one given to me. No hints of any kind.

Don't forget to give me something for next month. Thanks, Brenda



**Speaker Schedule:** Nov. 30 Pastor—Communion; Dec. 7 Tui Pitman; Dec. 14 Pastor; Dec. 21 Ralph Sheperd; Dec. 28 Ted

Winslow **Church Business Meeting: Sunday, Jan 19, Breakfast 8:30, Meeting 9:30 am**

Church service every **Sabbath at 11:00** at the Maplesville Train Depot. Please feel welcome to come & join us. Shawn Smith - Pastor for the Selma/Sylacauga Churches

Burt and the Christmas Play - Burt was a little boy who lived in Riverdale. Burt was a little bit slower than the other kids in learning things. The teachers in his school were planning for the Christmas play. They wondered what part they could give Burt. They knew they could not give him a part with lots of lines to memorize because it would be too hard for him, so they decided to give him the part of the Inn keeper. In the play when Joseph and Mary came to the inn looking for a room, all Burt had to say was one line, "I'm sorry. There is no room in the inn."

The night of the play the whole little town of Riverdale showed up to see the school children act out the Christmas story. Mommies and daddies and aunties and uncles and big brothers and sisters and cousins and many friends all were there. They sat there in the auditorium anxiously waiting for the play to begin.

At last the play began. Joseph and Mary, with their donkey, walked slowly toward the inn. When they reached the inn, Joseph knocked on the door. Burt -who was the innkeeper, opened the door just like he was supposed to do.

Joseph explained to the innkeeper that they needed a room. Burt answered. "I'm sorry. There is no room in the inn." Joseph then pleaded with the innkeeper. "But my wife is very weary. We have traveled a long way."

Burt answered. "I'm sorry. There is no room in the inn." Joseph pleaded again. " But my wife is about to have a baby." Once more Burt said, " I'm sorry. There is no room in the inn."

Poor Joseph and Mary were very disappointed. They turned away from the inn. They started to walk back across the stage. The got about halfway across the stage when to the surprise of all the people in the auditorium, the door to the inn flew open and out ran Burt. He ran up to Joseph and Mary with tears running down his cheeks and said, **"It's OK. You can have my room."** You could hear a big gasp from the audience. You see they knew how the play was supposed to end. And then everything went completely quiet for awhile. At last all the audience, many with tears running down their cheeks, stood up. They clapped and clapped their hands for the little boy Burt who had changed the Christmas story.

From then on – whenever the Christmas play was mentioned in Riverdale, the people always talked about how Burt - the little boy who only had one line to remember - had changed the Christmas Story. Now - Boys and Girls, Mamas and Daddys, If you had been there in Bethlehem that night when Joseph and Mary came looking for a room - Would you have been willing to give them your room so that baby Jesus would not have had to be born in a stable with the cows and sheep?

**“ Hebrews 10:25—Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”**

It is said of Mr. Gladstone of England, that when he was aged and quite deaf, he still attended church twice every Sunday. Although he could not hear, he said that he felt the need of getting in an atmosphere of worship. What a responsibility parents have in this regard! Someone asked J. Edgar Hoover, “Shall I force my child to go to Sunday school and church?” He replied. “YES! and no further discussion about the matter.” “How do you answer Junior when he comes to the breakfast table Monday morning and announces rebelliously, “I’m not going to school today”, you know, Junior goes! “How do you answer when Junior comes in very much besmudged and says, “I’m not going to take a bath,” You know, Junior does! “Why all this timidity, then, in the realm of spiritual guidance and growth? Going to let him wait and decide what church he’ll go to when he’s old enough? “You didn’t wait until he was old enough to decide whether or not he wanted to go to school and get an education or whether or not he wishes to take a bath.

“The parents of America can strike a most effective blow against the forces which contribute to juvenile delinquency, if our mothers and father will take their children to Sabbath school and church regularly. The worship service of the church is not a convention of some kind to which a family should merely send a delegate. It is a place where the whole family should assemble and be instructed and edified. Such training could determine the future usefulness of the family, both to God and to society.

Max Jukes lived in the state of New York. He did not believe in Christian training. He married a girl of like character. From this union they have 1,026 descendants. Three hundred of them died prematurely. One hundred were sent to the penitentiary for an average of thirteen years each. One hundred and ninety were public prostitutes. There were one hundred drunkards and the family cost the state \$1,200,000. They made no contribution to society. But....

Jonathan Edwards lived in the same state. He believed in Christian training. He married a girl of like character. From this union they have 729 descendants. Out of this family have come three hundred preachers, sixty-five college professors, thirteen university presidents, sixty authors of good books, three United States congressmen and one vice-president of the United States, and except for Aaron Burr, a grandson of Edwards who married a questionable character, the family has not cost the state a single dollar.

The difference in the two families: Christian training in youth and heart conversions. Presented by: Don Inman

We have a website!! **UPDATED - Church Website: <https://www.clantonsda.com/>** Tony Plier has posted sermons, music & a lot of info, look under Newsletters to find this publication on line each month. Tony has made it so the previous couple years are there also. If you get an online version and want a hard copy or if you don’t want to get the Newsletter, Let me know. Don’t forget without you sharing with others, we wouldn’t have a newsletter. Also turn in articles, poems and pictures that you want to share with others. Thanks to those that do, Brenda

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***To:***       «AddressBlock»