

## ON THAT FIRST EASTER MORNING... BY PASTOR CHUCK

“But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, [the women] came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.’” Luke 24: 1-5

An email came through to Lynn and me from our dear friend, Nancy Gray, informing us that we were invited to a family get-together on Saturday, February 27th. It was to be a time to once again remember and honor the memory of her husband Bill.

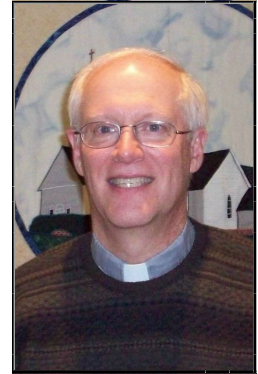
The invitation threw me back to the events of that Monday morning, February 26, 2007. Lynn and I were preparing to go visit my friend and mentor, Bill Gray. He had been battling cancer for almost a year and we had been hopeful that he would “win” this battle against the dreaded “C” word! Unfortunately, two weeks before, we learned that the cancer had spread to his liver and his bones. We were too late to see him alive, if you can call living in constant pain and nausea living; his wife, Nancy, called informing us that Bill had died only moments before our leaving the house.

As much as I regretted not being able to see Bill in person to experience just one more smile, give him a hug and tell him, “I love you!,” I was relieved that he had not had to suffer long and that he had been able to cross through the doorway of death in this life to eternal life with his Creator Father, God.

A week later, Saturday, March 3, we said our goodbyes to Bill in worship, giving thanks for his life in our lives and God present to us through him! As a friend of the family, I had the honor, albeit, an emotionally painful one, of sharing at Bill’s funeral service. Among the words shared were these from a plaque that Lynn and I had received:

“Some people come into our lives and quickly go,  
some stay for awhile and leave footprints on our hearts,  
and we are never the same.”

Bill left his faith footprints on our lives and we have never been the same because of that relationship! As we gather in worship and fellowship during the days of Holy Week leading up to the empty tomb and Jesus’ resurrection victory over sin, the devil and death, I hope each of us will pause to give thanks to God for those individuals in our lives who have left footprints of faith on our hearts over the years, some still living and some alive in the Lord! Most of all, I pray that our time in worship will remind us of the awesome footprints of God’s love on lives formed by the relationship we share in Christ, our Lord and Savior! We are never the same because of that relationship of love, life and new life! Thanks be to God! See you in Church!!!



Scrollings  
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