



CENTER PLACE RESTORATION

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School



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THE GIFT OF FAMILY

This holiday season, as with many previous occasions, has been a time of reflecting on our thankfulness for the many gifts the Lord has given us, and the most special gift of all, our savior Jesus Christ. Since two of my siblings are raising families of their own, my brother and I have started sharing Thanksgiving and Christmas with our parents on our own every other year. The house is considerably quieter without little voices chattering away and little footfalls racing from one room to another. Somewhere in the stillness of my parents' house, though, I sometimes hear echoes of laughter from my own childhood. From as far back as thirty years ago, I can still see images of us kids gathered around the Christmas tree or my parents setting the table for the Thanksgiving dinner.

My reflections this year have settled on the gifts that are perpetually given from one genera-

tion to the next through family. We all look for ourselves in our parents (or we look for our parents in ourselves), and surely they did the same with their parents. Probably, if we knew our grandparents and our great-grandparents as well as we know our own mothers and fathers, we would see traces of them passed along to our own personalities and character traits four and five generations back. I have had the chance to express my appreciation to my dad for teaching me how to think critically or my mom for her gift of language, and I can even see my grandfather's work ethic reflected in each of my siblings.

Sometimes, when our hearts yield to the inspiration of the Lord, these gifts transcend several generations. A few years ago, as I was preparing to speak for the class of 2010's baccalaureate ceremony, I started reading a

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book of family history and genealogy that my Great Aunt Mae wrote many years ago. A few days later, as I was watching the History Channel, my attention latched on to a familiar name—Edward Winslow. I reached for Aunt Mae's book and flipped through the pages until I found the name in one of the early chapters. There was recorded a brief anecdote, only a few pages in length, about his travels to the New World aboard the Mayflower and the religious per-

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE

The greatest gift God gives man is the opportunity to serve Him." - Arthur Oakman

There was a period of time that I kept praying for the chance to do something big for the Lord. I expected a big opportunity, like a mission trip to Africa or Asia. I prayed for this repeatedly. I remember praying for it as the last thing before I fell asleep. I truly desired to serve Him. The next morning, my devotional started, "Do you want to do something big for the Lord?" I immediately thought, "Yes! Yes, I do!" and opened the devotional looking for my answer. The author proceeded to make the point that we should not measure our efforts by the honor or recognition of man. We need to do whatever God calls us to do. Sometimes that call is a mission trip in a foreign land, and sometimes it's ministering to those in your own congregation. In the eyes of God, the missionary and the stay-at-home parent are equal because they are both doing His work and teaching His word.

I had the realization that I didn't need to go too far away to do God's work. He has important work for me here at home. Instead of traveling to a distant land, eating strange food (I am sure there is a school cafeteria joke in there somewhere), and roughing it, I'm called to be a supportive wife, lov-

ing mother, and middle school teacher. Others are filled with a passion to spread God's word, and I'm filled with a passion to teach God's word to the children in our church. This is not easy work; there are accomplishments and setbacks. I am not a perfect teacher and I don't teach perfect students. When my alarm goes off in the morning, it feels like work, not an adventure ordained by God.

I have learned that each of us has the opportunity to do kingdom building things every day. The opportunities that come our way may not feel like they are big or important at the time, but we are all called to our own tasks, and they are all equally important in building the Kingdom of God.

There is a story that compares raising children to building Cathedrals. Most often the people that worked on the Cathedrals never saw the completion of their efforts. The same can be said about teaching at CPRS. I may never see the full impact of my day-to-day efforts here just as those who went before may not have seen the efforts of their day-to-day efforts. Often when I walk around the building I thank God that he worked with them to purchase this building that has blessed so many.

I have been blessed working at CPRS. It is my honor and privilege to serve my Heavenly Fa-

ther and my students.

"...When ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God." Mosiah 1:49

*Susan Freeze
Middle School Faculty Member*

FACULTY OPENING

Center Place Restoration School is currently accepting faculty applications for a high school choir teacher beginning with the 2016-2017 school year.

This position involves working with students in 9th through 12th grades. Responsibilities include selecting music for the choir, working on vocal training and performance preparation during daily class times, and rehearsing for concerts within the school setting and occasional community/branch outreach.

Candidates should have experience in choral music and be comfortable working with students. A music degree or extensive music background is preferred.

Applications may be picked up from CPRS. Our office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, and Fridays from 8:00 AM-3:30 PM.

"...Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father..."

Isaiah 9:6

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secution he faced in England. The History Channel, however, told a fuller story.

Winslow was a religious writer whose views did not align with the popular teachings of the Anglican Church. Since publishing his materials in England was considered an act of treason, he moved to Holland where he could publish freely and have his writing smuggled into his native country. After some years, he sought permanent reprieve in America from religious censorship and became the father of thousands of future American families. What caught my attention most was an excerpt from his personal diary, which recorded his beliefs on his relocation on the shores of the future United States. In the excerpt he states that his reason for coming to the New World was to seek to establish the Kingdom of God. When I heard those words on the TV, I nearly gasped and thought to myself, "That's the same reason I'm here!"

Thankfulness multiplied within me that, over the course of eight generations and almost 400 years, this kingdom mission has been passed down from parent to child like some perpetual inheritance. Certainly over the years the family's appreciation for Winslow's vision of the kingdom has grown and waned, and certainly the Lord can intercede and restore that vision where it has failed, but to know that Edward Winslow's faith in God had been preserved eight generations later in my family and in

my own life humbled me. How little we must realize we have been given from those who have gone before us, even hundreds of years in the past.

In the days that followed, I came to see my family history more like a story authored by my Savior, and my family members as active participants in the kingdom building work. Both the blessings and the trials of years gone by appeared to weave together as part of the gospel story. I became thankful for how the Lord has used struggles in my family history to teach faith and perseverance, and how His grace has transformed terrible situations into unforeseeable blessings.

As Baccalaureate 2010 approached, and as I considered how the story of Edward Winslow might have meaning to the candidates for graduation, my appreciation for the past translated into responsibility for the future. What spiritual inheritance would I pass on to the next generation? What gift of character would be transmitted through my conduct and decisions? Would I perpetuate the kingdom mission and continue to live the vision that arrived on this soil in the life of Edward Winslow? Would I only receive the gift of family, or would I choose to be the gift of family?

I believe and hope that we all will one day see more clearly the gifts that have been passed down to us in the form of family, whether they are recent or reach us from the distant past.

John D. Larson

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, January 21—COURTWARMING
Basketball games - 4:30, 6:00, 7:30

Saturday, January 30—ROBOT TEAM
Competition at UMKC

Saturday, February 20—DINNER
Senior class sponsored fundraiser - 6 PM at CPRS

Friday & Saturday, April 1 & 2—PLAY
Spring Play at 7 PM—tickets at the door

Saturday, May 9—GOLDEN EAGLE 5K
Visit our Facebook page for more info or to sign up to participate at the link below.

<https://www.facebook.com/goldeneagle5k/?fref=ts>

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Visit us at
www.cprsgoldeneagles.com

