

Why Are We Interested in What You're Reading?

As I was going through the mail today after being gone for a month, I came across the AFLC's Women's Ministries newsletter. The President, Levonne West, is studying a book, Serving as Senders Today by Neal Pirolo. (It's about missions.) She lists the chapters – there are only six. The last chapter is "Your Part in the Big Picture." Then she asks the question, "How do you see yourself in the "big picture...?" Then she mentions another book, JOY, A Study of Philippians by Deb Burma. She says that Ms. Burma lists five guides for prayer, and of course, she lists these as well.

The Chapters of Serving as Senders Today:

The Need for Senders and six ways we can use our spiritual gifts to provide support. Moral, Logistics, Financial, Prayer, Communication, and Re-Entry.

The five ways to guide us:

- *Pray for those who are taking risks as they courageously share Jesus at home and across the world.*
- *Pray for their physical and spiritual protection*
- *Pray that they may stand firm, not caving to a wayward culture or backing down when ridiculed or opposed.*
- *Pray that they may continue to share fearlessly!*
- *Pray for the Spirit's strength, counsel, and comfort over them.*

This brings me back to my first question...why are we interested in what you're reading? Well, if Lavonne West hadn't shared this information, all of us would miss out on what could be very real boosts to our spiritual walk and our prayer life. After all, have any of us, considered what God may want to ask us to do, but we've been just a bit busy and we can't hear Him over the din of our ordinary life? I believe I've said it before, but I'm going to repeat it...this life we live isn't really "our" life. Remember what Paul tell us in 1 Corinthians 6:20 for you were **bought with a price**. So glorify God in your body. And again, he says 1 Corinthians 7:23 You were **bought with a price**; do not become bondservants of men.

Our life is not our own. We belong to God. He purchased us with the blood of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. We are on this earth for a purpose. We are responsible for finding out what that purpose is and pursuing it with all our might.

As retired/semi-retired folks, what do you see God asking of you in this portion of your life? I have a friend who used to be super busy, and very involved in pro-life work. Then they retired and moved. She told me she feels like a stick ---something just lying around with nothing to do. I sent her a picture of a fence with sticks in it...

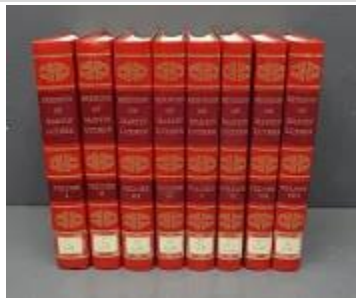


Prayer is a great source of strength...it keeps things in as well as keeping things out.

Please, feel free to share what you're reading. We would all love to hear and grow along with you.

What Are You Reading???

Michael Bloese

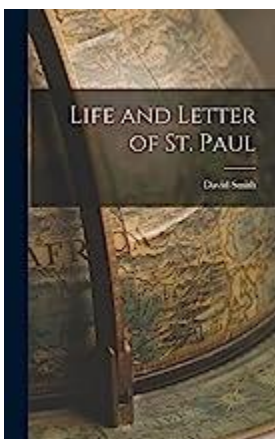


“The Sermons of Martin Luther”

Volumes I through VI

Edited by Pastor Gregory L. Jackson, PhD.
Illustrated by Norma A. Boeckler

John Horn



“The Life and Letters of St. Paul”

By David Smith
M.A. D. D.

So Sad to Say Good-bye

The second half of May was sad as we said our farewells to two member...Bob Wright and Shirley Bell. While we hadn't seen either one in quite some time, our hearts are heavy and they will be missed.

Robert Wright 1938 – 2023

Shirley Bell 1931 – 2023

Both Dennis and Jeffery de Freese were laid to rest June 16th here in OKC. David passed In January of this year, and Jeffery passed in April of 2020. Both Dennis and Jeffrey lived in Springfield, OR.

Shirley Joyce Ladine Bell, 92, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, May 31, 2023 in Midwest City, Oklahoma.

Shirley was born on March 13, 1931 on the family farm in Cheyenne County, Nebraska to John "Joseph" and Vivian Ladine. She attended Harmony School, a rural one room schoolhouse for grades 1-8, and then graduated from Sidney High School in 1948. Shirley spent her college years at Nebraska Wesleyan University where she was a member of Phi Mu Sorority. She played intramural basketball while majoring in Education. In 1952, she began her career teaching kindergarten in Hyannis, Nebraska and later in Crawford, Nebraska. She married William James Bell on December 29, 1956. They had three children and being a caring wife and mother became her focus. Shirley relocated to Midwest City, Oklahoma in 1973. She began substituting in the Midwest City- Del City School District and in 1976 began teaching at Barnes Elementary where she taught second, third, and fourth grades. During the summers, Shirley attended Central State University and earned a M.Ed in Reading. She was a dedicated, well-respected. teacher who was recognized as Site Teacher of the Year and received the P.R.I.D.E. of Mid-Del award before retiring in 1994.

Shirley was an active member of the First Lutheran Church in Oklahoma City where she was often found volunteering, attending Bible studies, and teaching Sunday and Vacation Bible School. She was an avid reader and enjoyed attending various book clubs and discussing different genres of literature with her friends. She was also involved in an Investment Club with a group of teachers who researched and invested in the stock market. She had a close bond with her colleagues and was a member of Kappa Kappa Iota, a sorority of teachers whose goal was the betterment of public education.

Shirley was a wonderful, caring mother and her love reached new heights with her grandchildren. She was closely involved in each of her grandchildren's lives and fondly remembered for her numerous trips to the East Coast to visit her grandchildren and her terrible luck with flying as she most often arrived without her luggage and especially the one time her luggage arrived without her. She created sweet Christmas memories, and loved to bake and pass on her favorite recipes with her granddaughters. She was an active grandmother shooting hoops and playing catch with her then young grandsons and would laugh good heartedly as they instructed her to "Dive for it, Grandma!".

Shirley was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters Betty Ladine Mears and Marva Ladine Welsh, and her daughter Jacqueline Bell Dagenais. She is survived by her sister, Carol Ladine, son Jeffrey Bell, son in law Scott Dagenais, daughter Judith Bell Schuman and husband Paul, her grandchildren; Niki Urive, Brittany Bollom and husband Garrett, Kyle Dagenais and wife Portia, Kristen Dagenais, Tyler Schuman and wife Lindsey, and Bryson Schuman and fiancé Bailey. She is also survived by her great grandchildren; Regan, Gunner, Remi, Hayes, a great granddaughter arriving in July and a host of nieces, nephews, friends, and neighbors.

The family would like to thank Robbin of Right at Home, the staff of Arbor House Memory Care, and Tender Care Hospice for their compassionate, attentive care of their mother. A Memorial Service will be held on

Thursday, June 8, 2023 at Barnes and Friedrich at 1820 S. Douglas, Midwest City, Oklahoma. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Dementia Society of America or to a charity of your choice.

Robert “Bob” Lee Wright was born January 7, 1938, in Enid, Oklahoma and adopted shortly after birth by Robert and Dorothea Wright of Stillwater, Oklahoma. Bob grew up and went to school in Stillwater. After graduation Bob attended a military academy and from there served in the US Navy from 1955 to 1963, where, while on active duty, he served on a crash recovery crew before becoming a crew member of the U.S.S. Forrestal as an airplane mechanic. He served 4 years of active duty and 4 years reserved. He is a Viet Nam era Veteran.

After his service in the Navy, Bob went on to graduate from Oklahoma State University in the early 1970s with a degree in Hotel & Restaurant Management. From there he was a manager for a spaghetti restaurant in Kansas City, then moved back to Oklahoma and worked at Hollies Drive-In and Long John Silvers, before partnering with good friend Marcus Hulings to open, Park Place Restaurant in the Downtown OKC Concourse.

Bob met his wife, Claudia, at Park Place, and they married in June of 1980. Together they opened Great Plains Restaurant in the Stockyards and operated it until they tired of the restaurant business and took a leap of faith, opening OKCs first bed and breakfast, The Grandison Inn, in 1988. They continued to own and operate the Inn at three different locations in the OKC area, where the kids grew and learned the hospitality spirit.

In recent years, Bob has battled many health issues, from heart attacks, kidney failure, COPD, and the most recent, late onset Alzheimer’s. After a short time in hospice care, Bob passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his loved ones. Not only was he a beloved husband, dad and papa, he was also a great friend to all and will be terribly missed. We are so proud of his service in the Navy and the service of hospitality to Oklahoma City.

Bob is survived by his wife of 42 years, Claudia, son Jevon Wright, daughters Emilee Parson and husband Joey, Amy Wright, Christy Williams and husband John, granddaughters Natilee Burke, Mya Wright, Nora and Emma Parson. Also, cousins Jim and Melinda Shidler of Stillwater.

A celebration of life service will be held July 30th at the Grandison Inn. In lieu of flowers, a memorial fund has been established by First Lutheran Church to help cover medical bills and final expenses. Donations can be sent to First Lutheran Church of Oklahoma City, 1300 N. Robinson, Oklahoma City, OK 73103. Please designate “Bob Wright Memorial” in the memo section.



Operation Christmas Child

During the Fellowship Hour for the next couple of months (July – August) there will be a “Craft Hour”. Joan Heierding will be overseeing the creation of the various gifts that will be made – fishing kits, jump ropes, jewelry and other items.

If you would like to join her, the time will be 9:45 – 10:45 each Sunday. All are welcome. Thank you for your participation and help. Many hands make light work. 😊 If you have any questions, please feel free to call Joan – the Church Office has her number.

Don't forget that school supplies will be going on sale VERY SOON. As you shop, please remember OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD. It will be time to pack boxes before you know it. The Operation Christmas Child collection week will be approximately November 12-20 this year.



Lutherans for Life

July 2 – Pentecost V (Proper 8A) – Far from freedom and the opposite of autonomy, death-dealing measures like abortion and assisted suicide hold hearts captive to sinful passions (Romans 7:5-6) such as pride and lust. The sanctity of life Gospel brings the sword that truly liberates (Matthew 10:34) “so that you may belong to another” (Romans 7:4). The Heavenly Father holds every human life as His own precious treasure.

July 9 – Pentecost VI (Proper 9A) – Neighbors struggling with surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis long for hope and rest. The Lord God Almighty promises His gifts of life come with relief (Matthew 11:28) and rejoicing (Zechariah 9:9). How can we remain silent and deny them the very blessings we’ve received? Let us take up the privilege of commending life’s goodness and God’s greatness one generation to another (Psalm 145:4).

July 16 – Pentecost VII (Proper 10A) – Celebrating every human being as gift and privilege sometimes meets with resistance. This doesn’t mean the message failed. Good ground may lie beneath an unsightly surface. Our patient Savior often slowly softens soil, and seeds take time to germinate and flower. The sanctity of life carries God’s message, not ours, and He guarantees His strong Word never goes to waste (Isaiah 55:10-11).

July 23 – Pentecost VIII (Proper 11A) – The people of God dare not confuse weeds with wheat. His Word clearly distinguishes His gifts from counterfeits. For our neighbor’s sake and our own, we must recognize the enemy’s doings (Matthew 13:27-28). Abortion, embryocide, and euthanasia are the devil’s deceptions. Jesus Christ alone decides life and death for us (Isaiah 44:6), and His timing never withholds any bounties or glories (Romans 8:18).

July 30 – Pentecost IX (Proper 12A) – Our Lord loves to take the tiniest as His treasured possession (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). Their insufficiencies only accentuate how great is His compassion (Psalm 125:2). “Little ones to Him belong, they are weak but He is strong.” Does this include gestating embryos and unborn babies? Does it include bodies limited by age or ailment? Yes, Jesus loves them just as much as He loves me.

August

August 6 – Pentecost X (Proper 13A) – Why should anxiety over expenses darken a terminal diagnosis? Why should panic about poverty affect a surprise pregnancy? He who sends mouths also sends meat, even conjuring necessities out of thin air (Matthew 14:19). Our gracious Savior bestows in abundance, and the Body of Christ knows how to share. If God spends His riches on relationships, how can we do any better?

August 13 – Pentecost XI (Proper 14A) – Contrary to the logic of abortion and assisted suicide, human worth doesn’t come from age, appearance, or ability. God’s grace in creating, redeeming, and calling makes every life precious. No one else’s labor or lack thereof can improve or impair it. We declare and demonstrate a righteousness based on this faith and not based instead on works of the law (Romans 10:5-6).

August 20 – Pentecost XII (Proper 15A) – He who made and still sustains nature and all creatures has no anxieties about overpopulation. The Lord our God delights in adding another human life (Isaiah 56:8) and wrapping the next neighbor in magnificent mercy (Romans 15:32). Let the peoples praise You, O God, in ever increasing number (Psalm 67:5-6) – the unborn one, the impaired one, and even our Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

August 27 – Pentecost XIII (Proper 16A) – Confessing the Christ means advocating the sanctity of every human life. If Jesus is indeed the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:16), then He also serves as Lord of life-and-death situations and decisions. May He whose Word has plundered us out of hell’s gates grant our testimony to extend this same courage and compassion to everyone considering abortion or physician-assisted suicide.

SERVING the Month of JULY

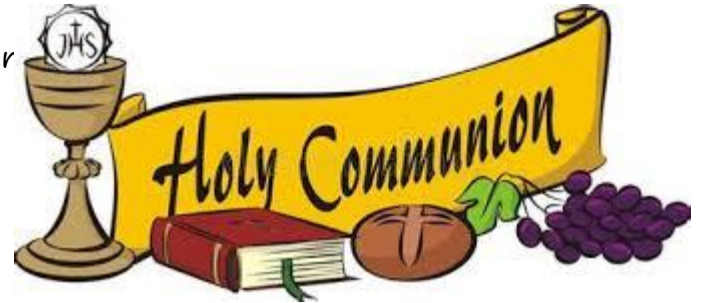
Date	Lay Reader	Date	Usher
2	Gary Jo Lee	2	Penny Lee
9	Michelle Brennan	9	Jim Wackerly
16	Bill Heierding	16	Joan Heierding
23	Chuck Gray	23	Carol Gray
30	Sue Wackerly	30	Jim Wacker

Communion Deacon:

Chuck Gray

Alternate:

Bill Heierding



Altar Guild:

Laura Waller
Sue Wackerly
Joan Heierding

SERVING the Month of AUGUST

Communion Deacon:

Bill Heierding

Alternate:

Chuck Gray

Date	Lay Reader	Date	Usher
6	Michelle Brennan	6	Chuck Gray
13	Sue Wackerly	13	Jim Wackerly
20	Bill Heierding	20	Joan Heierding
27	Chuck Gray	27	Carol Gray

Happy Birthday

July

4	Joan Heierding	10	Keith Monroe
11	Bonnie Forsberg	14	Jim Wackerly
15	Dot Linn	15	Joan Monroe
17	Carol Gray	57	Joe Glass
27	Kiley Wackerly	28	Pr. John Chandler

1	Bryce Brennan	8	Chelsea Dunlap
13	Kassidy Wackerly	15	Shirley Ray
20	Suzanne Borum	27	Gabriel Forsberg
28	Molly Wackerly	28	Noah Forsberg

August