

## Lessons About Faith That I've Learned From My Cat

By Cindy Shaw

As I stand at the sink washing the dishes, something comes up behind me and bumps my leg. If I were in the ocean, I'd be afraid that it might be a shark, but since I am in my kitchen, I know that it's my cat, Tori, reminding me that I am her possession.

Tori has taught me a lot about my relationship with God. I presume that most of you with children have learned similar lessons. When I adopted Tori from SAVE in June of 2017, I signed a contract with several stipulations—one being that she had to be an indoor cat. As she watches birds fly by, squirrels romp, and other cats roam outside, Tori might wish that she could be out there exploring, sleeping in the sunshine, or stalking prey. But I've set up boundaries to protect her from cars, predators, and aggressive feral cats. God has established boundaries for us as well, which He clearly outlines in His Word. Some boundaries may seem harsh or unfair or limiting, but they are ultimately for our protection. Among my favorite verses are His promise in Jeremiah 29:11-13: *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

One day Tori jumped up on the windowsill where my begonia had bloomed for at least three years—a Mother's Day gift from Windsor Chapel. The cats that preceded Tori had no interest in plants, but I caught her as she was

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## Jam Weekend



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## “Lessons About Faith, “continued...

ready to take a bite of the leaves. I snatched it away and then looked online to see if it was poisonous—and read that it was indeed toxic to cats. I didn’t want to get rid of the begonia, but I realized that Tori meant more to me than the plant, so out it went. Haven’t we all asked God for something that seemed good to us—only to have Him say, “No”? Isaiah 55:8-9 reminds us that He is our wise, heavenly Father: *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* He knows that sometimes what looks good to us at the moment would ultimately be harmful or hinder our relationship with Him, so He keeps that object of desire away from us, or blocks a path that we wanted to follow.



Sometimes I’ve thought about why I’ve grown to love Tori—she doesn’t contribute to the rent, take out the garbage, help me prepare dinner, or even offer the protection that a dog does. (I have found a few dead centipedes on the floor, with detached legs, so I know that she’s protected me from those

hated creepy critters. I’ve told her she’s earned her keep.) But I enjoy Tori just for who she is—a sweet and entertaining “catpanion.” But my love for Tori is nothing compared to God’s unconditional, eternal love for us! Psalm 47:11 says that the Lord delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love. He created us and loves us; we can do nothing to earn that love. And He is even more delighted when I set aside time to communicate with Him in prayer and study His Word.

In conclusion, I will share one last lesson. Last summer, we had some violent thunderstorms. Although Tori is afraid of most people and many things—like Swiffer mops! — she is not afraid of thunder. I remember one night when I jumped at a particularly loud crack of lightning. I looked over at Tori and she was sound asleep. In the midst of the storm, she felt safe and secure in my home. I wish that I could be as calm and trusting when I face a trial or affliction, whether brief or long-term. Jesus Christ has promised that in this world we will have many trials. Yet in the storms of life, we can rest safe and secure in knowing that our loving Savior is holding us close, protecting and sheltering us. Psalm 91, verses 1 and 2, promises, *“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.’”*

## Join us for a July 4th Picnic

You’re invited to a fun-filled 4th of July Picnic! This wonderful Independence Day celebration will be held at 4:00 pm at the Straubels’ home, which is located at 691 Hughes Drive, in Hamilton.

Please bring a lawn chair, bathing suit and a towel if you wish to use the pool, and a side dish or salad and dessert to share. Hamburgers, hotdogs, and beverages will be provided. The pool will be open, and the fellowship will be great!



## JAM

By Jean LaRosa

A group of six Junior High students represented Windsor Chapel at JAM (Junior High Adventures in Ministry) held at Cairn University on May 18-20. The purpose of JAM is to glorify God by equipping students to serve Jesus Christ by providing them with training in sharing their faith and an opportunity for ministry experience.



Training provided by Child Evangelism Fellowship leaders began shortly after our arrival

Friday evening and continued Saturday morning. By late morning our students were prepared with a method of sharing the Gospel that is understandable even by young children. Before lunch on Saturday, buses arrived carrying the children we would minister to during the Kids Day events.

Our students were paired with younger buddies that they would befriend during a series of fun events including crafts, a petting zoo, a puppet show, and the ever popular Inflatables. The Kids Day activities concluded with a conversation about the Gospel message and a personal invitation to receive Christ as Savior or to grow in faith. The weekend also included worship, praise, and challenging messages – along with some free time for fun and getting to know each other better.



## Sundae Sunday!

*June 3, 11:00 am*

Enjoy a fun time of fellowship and cool tasty treats with your Windsor Chapel family immediately after our worship service on Sunday, June 3. Create and devour your own delicious ice cream sundae! Ice cream and an assortment of tasty toppings will be provided.



## Windsor Chapel Prayer Chain

If you have a heart for prayer and people, we invite you to pray for the needs of our chapel family and community by joining our email prayer chain. For additional information or to become a member of Windsor Chapel's prayer chain, please contact Amy Kasternakis ([akas12@verizon.net](mailto:akas12@verizon.net); 609-516-1753) or e-mail Dorothy at [chapel@windsorchapel.org](mailto:chapel@windsorchapel.org).



Windsor Chapel will be hosting a Kids 5-Day Club again in partnership with CEF (Child Evangelism Fellowship) on July 23 - 27, from 6:30 – 8:00 pm, for children ages 5 - 12. The evening will include Bible stories, games, music, snacks and outdoor play. Please begin to pray for the kids who will come, the families who will be impacted by the Gospel message, and for a few Windsor Chapel volunteers to help along the way. If you can help in this wonderful ministry, please sign your name on the Volunteer Sheet in the chapel foyer.

## Elders' Corner

By Pastor Andy Straubel

### Vision 2028

In recent months the elders have been in discussion about vision and the direction of Windsor Chapel. What we have concluded is that it really isn't our vision that is important but rather Jesus' vision for the church. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, *"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."* That means that Jesus is both the architect and builder of HIS church.

That brings me both great comfort and great challenge. Our goal as leaders is to discern what that means for us in the here and now, and, what that means for the future. It has been said that vision *"is born to those consumed with the tension between what IS and what COULD be."* It sets direction and will prioritize our values; but, it demands change. For some time now it has been my thought that the way forward is the way back, to somehow reclaim the vision Jesus had for His church.

Charles Stanley has rightly observed, *"for a vision to survive, it must be mature and healthy BEFORE being exposed to the cynical, critical, stubborn environment in which it is expected to survive. And, maturity requires time."* So far we have attempted to clarify our purpose and to identify four key elements of our ministry DNA. Our purpose, *"Windsor Chapel exists to glorify God as a Christ-centered family of believers committed to becoming disciples who make disciples."* Key elements including relational evangelism, intentional discipleship, meaningful worship, and Spirit-led service. Like a chair providing stability these key elements are necessary for a stable church. From these key elements the plan is to include strategy, structures, and goals, both short and long term through 2028. Please join the leaders in praying for the Lord to give us wisdom beyond our years, eyes to see, and ears to hear what the Spirit of Christ would say to the church.

## Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in and among us*



By Cindy Bills

### Lost in Translation

As I write this, I am waiting at Newark Airport to board a flight to Minneapolis, en route to Decorah, Iowa, where two of our grandchildren live. Sam is four and a half years old; he knows us well, and he is eagerly awaiting our arrival. His sister Ellie is a year and a half; she doesn't know us as well as her big brother, and it is unlikely that she understands that we are coming to see her. More to the point in my mind is whether she will recognize me and be ready for the hug I am longing to offer.

Sam and Ellie's parents are generous in sharing their children with us via FaceTime. We eat dinner with them once or twice a week, and I have a stack of books in our kitchen, ready to read with Sam. And while Ellie is always glad to see me, the question remains whether she will be able to translate the two-dimensional figure on the screen to the real-life "Grammy" who walks through the door.

As Christians, we have a similar challenge: we must translate what we learn about our Lord from His Word and His creation. And while He has given us His Holy Spirit to work His redemptive will in us, it nonetheless remains difficult to accurately conceptualize God Almighty in all of His dimensions when we are finite human beings.

C.S. Lewis helps us to catch a glimpse of this dilemma in his Narnia book, *Prince Caspian*. In it, Aslan, the Christ figure, appears to the Pevensie children as they hike through a much-changed Narnian landscape. But only Lucy sees Him. Later when Lucy's brother asks her why he couldn't see Aslan, she

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## “Further Up and Further In,” continued...

replies that maybe he—Peter—wasn’t looking for Him—Aslan. At the end of the book Aslan explains to the two older Pevensie children that they will not be able to return to the magical Narnia; it is time for them to know Him in their own world. In other words, they need to learn to recognize Christ as they live their lives in post-World War II Britain. And in his essay “Transposition,” Lewis compares the use of pencil drawings to represent the real world to our conceptualizations of heaven:

*Our natural experiences (sensory, emotional, imaginative) are only like the drawing, like penciled lines on flat paper. If they disappear in the risen life, they will vanish only as penciled lines vanish from the real landscape, not as a candle flame that is put out but as a candle flame which becomes invisible because someone has pulled up the blinds, thrown open the shutters, and let in the blaze of the risen sun.*

In our world, it is not always easy to see our Lord at work in our lives. We know him in a two-dimensional way through His Word, and we can catch glimpses of Him in our brothers and sisters as we worship and serve together. Even Christ’s disciples and followers, when confronted with the resurrected Christ in the flesh, did not always recognize Him. Mary Magdalene figured it out by His voice; John figured it out when Jesus asked him and his companions about their catch of fish after spending the night fishing on the Sea of Galilee.

My first encounter with Eleanor was wonderful but not entirely satisfying. Her face lit up when she saw me, and she came running toward me with a grin. And then...she stopped. Her expression changed from delight to uncertainty. She recognized me but was nevertheless cautious when she couldn’t quite translate her experience with the screen

Grammy to the flesh and blood Grammy. It did not take long, though, for her to merge the two images, and we had a grand weekend together.



The fact is that it is sometimes harder than we would like

to recognize Christ as His resident Holy Spirit guides and directs us, as He remains very much engaged in His glorious but fallen world, and as He manifests His glory in others. As the Apostle Paul observed in his letters to the Corinthians, we see in a mirror dimly. We are busy and distracted. We impose our preconceived notions on the Lord and often miss Him. But there is nothing more important than training our eyes, ears, and hearts to be tuned to the frequency of our Lord. In John 10, the Apostle records Jesus’ observation that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him. The more we consciously abide under the care of the Great Shepherd, the more we direct our eyes and ears toward our Master, the better able we will be to see Him as He is and live in His joy, both now and for eternity.

*Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or [clbills@verizon.net](mailto:clbills@verizon.net)) to continue the dialogue....*

## Financial Update

(Through April 2018)

*“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want...”*

	Actual	Budget
<b>Income</b>	\$73,021	\$103,000
<b>Expense</b>	\$116,237	\$124,484

Windsor Chapel has sent \$16,705 to our missionary partners this year. That’s 23% of your giving!

## Who Are You?

By Janet Berrill

Who are you? How would you answer this question after giving your name? Who do you think of yourself as? Go beyond your marital status and your occupation; who are you fundamentally?

I just finished reading the book "Five Years to Life," by Sam Huddleston. When Sam was only thirteen years old, he had his first alcoholic drink with his friends. For the next four years, Sam led a rebellious life that was fueled by alcohol and drugs. When he was seventeen, he and a friend went to a liquor store to get some beer. Finding they did not have any money, the quick trip to the store turned into a robbery and murder. Sam was soon arrested and sentenced to five years to life in prison.

After spending several years behind bars, Sam gave his life to Christ. Although his decision was genuine, the change was not an easy one. He had been living a depraved life for so many years that he had many bad habits to break. But with God's help Sam persevered and his change of behavior was noticed by others. After serving five years, Sam was paroled and out of prison. But even though he was physically free, he could not let go of his identity as a prisoner.

Following his release, Sam got a job at a construction plant. One day a fellow worker wore a shirt that said *Property of Alcatraz Prison*. Sam confronted the man thinking he was making fun of him. The man had no idea what Sam was talking about and informed Sam he bought the shirt as a souvenir in San Francisco and his wearing it had nothing to do with Sam. Sam said, "Somehow I had assumed that the entire plant knew I was an ex-convict. I felt it was written across my back or something."

Several months later, Sam met a young woman whom he quickly fell in love with. Although he had been out of prison for eight months, Sam continued to identify himself as a former prisoner. When he asked Linda to marry him, he said, "...could you possibly ever be willing to share your life with an ex-convict?"

Sam and Linda got married and, at the encouragement of others, Sam decided to attend Bethany Bible College. As he sat in the parking lot on his first day of classes, he says, "My only thoughts were me, B-36718 (*this was how he was identified in prison*), going to college." For Sam, his identity was as an ex-convict; he continued to see himself as a prisoner. This is what he thought of himself, and how he thought all others saw him.

Several years ago, Matthew West wrote a song called *Child of the One True King*. The words of the chorus are: "Hello my name is Child of the One True King; I've been saved, I've been changed, I have been set free; Amazing Grace is the song I sing; Hello my name is Child of the One True King." What Matthew West communicated so beautifully in this song is that we are not to be defined by our past; who we are is not what we have done.

Who are you? A high school/college dropout? A failed businessman/woman? An unloved child? The cause of your parents' divorce? An addict? A betrayer? A thief? Someone who was abused? Whatever your past holds, that is not who you are! Like Sam Huddleston, some people hold on to their past as their identity. But the truth is, if you know Christ as your savior, you have been set free and now who you are is a child of God! Let the reality of that sink in until that becomes your identity; until that becomes who you see yourself as, who you believe yourself to be; until that becomes your answer when asked "Who are you?"

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*"When Christ died, he died for you individually just as much as if you had been the only person in the world."* C.S. Lewis, "Mere Christianity"

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**If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:**

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