

“SideLines”

Tracy L. Gorman – SouthSide Church of the Nazarene – November 15, 2007



Hello friends!

Having a good Thursday? Well, mine has been good. I typically am off on Thursdays, but I am going with Seth and his grade on a field trip tomorrow, so I switched days this week. That's worked out well, too, because there were lots of things to wrap up from last night's Board meeting. That's what I've been working on today. Later this evening (at 5:30), Seth has his first home game of the year at Yorktown Middle School. I am really looking forward to that. Of course, you are certainly invited to come. He'd love to have you there. When he walks out onto that court, it's a miracle! It's nothing but a miracle, because that court is a long way away from his bed at Riley Hospital (where he was at just a few weeks ago).

Speaking of Seth, I was spending some quiet time the other day, really just reflecting on the last few months. As well, I was celebrating God's blessings in our lives. You know, I feel that my son was changed by his illness. I've seen a great deal of maturity that's developed in his life, and he seems to be much more interested in "spiritual things" than he was. I am thankful for that, and I think his illness plays a part. (But, I also think that his youth pastor is having a major effect on his life, and I am so thankful for Pastor Neal, and the role that he's playing all of our teens' lives!) As well, I believe that experience changed me, too. I find myself, first of all, a lot more thankful than I've ever been. Also, I find myself more desirous of focusing on things that really matter, and are really important, rather than trivial issues. This is the same for my personal life, as well as my life as a pastor. So, in a very measurable way, my family was profoundly affected by this time in our life.

Have you ever experienced a time like that? Has there ever been a time when you had a "coming to Jesus moment," and your life was profoundly changed and affected? What did you learn from that experience, and what are you still learning? Those moments come along and shake us to our core, and when that happens, we either grow, or we shrink as individuals, as Christians, etc.

Well, we're just a week away from Thanksgiving! Can you believe it? I mean, time is just flying by so rapidly. I hope you're making plans to spend that special day with those you love. I am trying to find a place for the boys and I to go and serve dinner to the homeless that evening. We've always done that, and since Tammy is working that evening, we really want to find a place to go this year. Let me know if you know someplace that we could do this. As well, I encourage you to find a way to minister to someone in need of your love, support, or compassion. It doesn't have to be on Thanksgiving Day, but rather, any day you can do that.

I also hope you're making plans to be at SouthSide Church this weekend. Sunday morning, I will preach a message called, "Dear God, Thanks!" Of course, it's a message about Thanksgiving. When you arrive, be sure to write a couple or three things on "The Wall of Thanksgiving" in the Lobby that you're thankful for. I ask that everyone participate in this. Then on Sunday evening, please join us at 6:00 for our 2nd Annual Family Thanksgiving Dinner in the Gym. We ask that every family bring an abundance of food to share. The church is providing the turkeys, but we need lots of side-dishes, desserts, salads, etc. Everyone is invited to attend, and I hope that you will. This event will take the place of our regular Sunday evening service.

If all goes well, we will be back in the Sanctuary for worship this Sunday morning. We're on schedule with the expansion of the stage, and it's looking good for us to return to that room for the service. Thanks to the MANY who have helped with getting this project completed. It's going to really help us going forward to have that additional space for musicals, special events, and for our regular worship service. I appreciate the leadership of Pastor Andy Cole on getting this project completed for the church. We've

wanted to get this done for a VERY long time! In fact, when I first arrived, plans were already in place to move this ahead, and now, it's finally done. That's called progress, and I love progress!

Speaking of progress, we're going to soon be ready to talk to the church family about some other areas in the church facility where our attention is needed. Those areas are important for many reasons, including our desire to "put our best foot forward" when guests come into our building. In fact, our ability to retain guests once they come is diminished when the areas (such as the restrooms, nursery, children's areas, etc.), are not first-class and attractive. Our future ministry success depends on our ability to not only attract guests to SouthSide, but also to retain them and minister to them. We want our facility to be an asset in this endeavor, and not a hindrance. So, with that in mind, we want to get some of the areas mentioned above in great shape, and we're going to definitely need your help to get this done. We'll talk more about it very soon, and in the meantime, I ask that you begin to pray about how you can be involved. We have a profound responsibility in keeping our facility in good working order, and in protecting the investment that's been made in that building. Take the time to look around the building, and you'll see some areas where we definitely need to do some work. Look for the obvious things that we sometimes overlook when it's in our face all the time, but that newcomers see immediately. Ask God to "give you a fresh pair of eyes" to see what they see! In advance, I thank you for the part you will play!

Well, I think I'll stop for now! Just know that I am excited about what God is doing at SouthSide. Over the past several months, He's been working and moving in a tremendous way. Lives are being touched, and people are being helped. There's a lot more to do, but we also must take time to thank God for what He's already doing! Obviously, when He's working and moving, Satan will work very hard to distract, discourage, and derail (there's a three-point sermon outline). Please resist his ploys, and don't allow him to work in your heart or life. He will do all he can to defeat you (there's a fourth point, just in case you don't get the first three). That's what he does best!!! Focus on what God is doing, and what you can do to further His work in the church, and around the world through His kingdom's work.

My family loves you very much, and we thank God for you! It's a joy to work alongside you to get some things done for the Lord and His church! After all, that's what we're here for!!! That's why we came here, and that's what we continue to want to see happen in Muncie and around the world through SouthSide's endeavors; through our obedience; and by our sacrifice.

***With much love,
Pastor Tracy Gorman***

"I am determined to experience growth, giving, and grace in 2007!"

