

THE LAST *Letter*



WRETCHED (LAST LETTER FOR AMERICA)

DWIGHT K. NELSON

-
JANUARY 26

PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

9:00 & 11:45 AM



WELCOME

to Pioneer

Winter has finally arrived! The snow blankets the world in a beauty that reminds us of our Creator. As I look out onto my front yard this time of year I am always interested in the tracks. Footprints tell a story. There are tracks from my sons—Emmett and Arlo, as we have played in the snow. There are tracks from a neighbor cat as it has skirted around our home. There are tracks from a raccoon as it has foraged for what it can find. And there are deer tracks. When we pause to look at the footprints we can see the life that is so easily missed.

This morning as we welcome you to Pioneer, I invite you to reflect on the footprints in your own life. How has God been living in you? What is the story that His tracks tell? What has He done in your life and in the life of your family?

-Ben Martin



PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

8655 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD, BERRIEN SPRINGS, MI 49103

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday (9 to 5) • Friday (9 to 12)

PHONE – 269.471.3133

FAX – 269.471.6152

LIVE STREAMING

www.pmchurch.org

Sabbath 11:45 AM

ONLINE

www.pmchurch.org

www.newperceptions.tv

RADIO

WAUS – 90.7 FM

Sabbath 11:30 AM



NOMINATING REPORT

Scan this code to read the
Nominating Committee Report.



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FIND IT HERE

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO



4**THE FOURTH
WATCH BLOG**

"Are We Lying About America?"

6**WE WORSHIP**

9:00 AM Service

8**UNDER THE ROOF**

"Something In Common"

10**WE STUDY**

"Worthy Is the Lamb"

11**WE WORSHIP 2**

11:45 AM Service

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ARE WE LYING ABOUT AMERICA?

BY DWIGHT K. NELSON



Are we lying about America? I'll let you decide for yourself. But I'm intrigued by a new book I'm reading: *Twelve Lies That Hold America Captive: And the Truth That Sets Us Free* (Jonathan P. Walton, Intervarsity Press 2019). Not wanting to spoil your read of the book, I'll resist critiquing Walton's list of lies (though I have held similar convictions regarding several of the twelve for a long time). You may check out a listing of all twelve lies at www.ivpress.com.

But the two recent flaps in the news (the BuzzFeed claim about the Mueller investigation and the viral video "confrontation" of Catholic students and a Native

American at the Lincoln Memorial) have become a provocative Exhibit A for those claiming the news media and social media's penchant for a rush to judgment. Both reports—later retracted, modified or withdrawn by most news outlets—have played into the "fake news" narrative the whole country has been debating. God bless America!

I suppose it is only human to trust the sources that lean toward our personal ideology or persuasion. But in both these cases, hindsight has revealed a rush to judgment and a precipitous publication of the unverified news reports by multiple outlets on both sides of the ideological/

political divide.

And social media? The warp speed with which the faceless social media crowd (mob?) can serve as judge, jury, and executioner is breathtaking! "Don't confuse me with the facts—my mind is made up" seems to be the prevailing "cry de jour" among these anonymous commentators. And even when the press sheepishly withdraws yesterday's hue and cry 24 hours later, no abatement or disavowal appears among the purveyors of social media pronouncements. I.e., the "people" have spoken—so be it.

But the people (like the press) can be wrong, dreadfully wrong. And therein lies my concern.

I belong to a faith community that embraces some countercultural moral/ethical stances that don't play well in Peoria. E.g., the nation recognizes Sunday as the majority day of worship—whereas my faith community worships on the seventh day out of determined loyalty to the Creator God of the Bible Sabbath. We as Sabbatarians are used to sticking out or at least standing out but have flourished nonetheless in this time of politically correct minority protection. Thus worshiping on Saturdays today is hardly a big deal for the public.

But let a news story of some dastardly act become mistakenly (or intentionally) linked with Sabbatarians (not unlike the David Koresh Waco debacle decades ago), the warp speed of the rush to judgment we just witnessed this past week could turn both news media and social media into judge, jury, and executioner overnight. There were no social media when Jews in Germany were branded traitors to the nation by that rogue leader's denunciations to the press. But in a matter of days, the public was turned

against those suspect Sabbatarians, and the rest is tragic history.

"Yes, but we have the Constitution of the United States of America." Since when have rogue voices within social media been regulated by the Constitution? Innuendo, distortion of fact, rumor-as-truth, the list of unethical catalysts for the rush to judgment are myriad.

Which leaves us two dependencies. First, we are dependent on the thoughtful, careful rulings of jurists, political and thought leaders and others of influence. Surely our leaders would resist cries to rush to judgment, we hope. Surely the angry voices in social media could be assuaged, would be tempered by calmer minds and more reasoned thinking. Surely the Jews of the 1930s in Germany would have been safe and protected in this hour of American history.

But unless we inform our civic, political and thought leaders of our persuasions and biblical convictions, how are they to be informed? *Liberty* magazine for decades has been our faith community's collective voice to this nation's leaders. This month you and I have the opportunity to sponsor as many annual subscriptions to this well-respected journal for leaders as we can. Won't you join me in marking your gift to Religious Liberty on a tithe envelope this Sabbath (or soon) and send this magazine on its vital mission?

But there is a second and higher dependency we cling to, wrapped in this ringing assurance no matter the prevailing or opposing winds: "The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (Psalm 46). And that's the one truth that will triumph over any rush to judgment, anytime, anywhere. He is a with—and we must stay with Him. Only then can we effectively pray: "God bless America." ■



THE FOURTH WATCH BLOGS ARE FOUND ONLINE
AT WWW.PMCHURCH.ORG/BLOG

WE WORSHIP

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO

Opening Voluntary

Land of Our Birth • Ralph Vaughan Williams / Taylor

Introit

Precious Lord • Roy Ringwald

Call to Worship

Ben Martin

God has searched us and known us.

God has called us to be a holy people.

God has touched our hearts and our mouths.

God has called us to know and speak in holiness.

Let us walk with God in holiness.

Doxology

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow • 2

Invocation

Dwight K. Nelson

Hymn of Praise

Jesus Saves • 340

Congregational Prayer

Ben Martin

Spirit of the Living God • 672

Worship in Music

My Lord, What a Morning • Spiritual / Harry Burleigh

Children's Story

Poor Wayfaring Stranger / Humility • Kenneth Logan

Scripture

Revelation 3:16-18 NIV • TimEtta Wilson and Judith Peterson

So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Hymn of Preparation

Open My Eyes That I May See • 326

Sermon

"The Last Letter: Wretched (Last Letter for America)"
Dwight K. Nelson

Connect Card, Tithes & Offerings

NAD/Religious Liberty

Hymn of Commitment

I'd Rather Have Jesus • 327

Benediction**Closing Voluntary**

O, When Shall I See Jesus? • Kenneth Logan

PRESIDING PASTOR: Ben Martin; ORGANIST: Kenneth Logan
WORSHIP IN MUSIC: Andrews University Choral Union; Stephen Zork, director

MUSIC ALIVE

"WHAT A MOURNING, OR MORNING?"

WT here are authorities who believe that . . . 'mourning' is an annotation by editors to emphasize the painful conditions reflected in many of the spirituals and is erroneous, while others . . . continue to use ['mourning'] in their own publications," a commentary states. It continues, "[It] must be admitted that . . . 'mourning' does offer a very different perspective [as compared with 'morning'] in . . . intent." If enigma remains,

perhaps this resolves in part through an eschatological perspective. Elsewhere in the text, one version says, "You will hear the trumpet sound," "the sinner cry," and "the Christian shout." Does the song's "stars" refer to the massive Leonid meteor shower of November 12-13, 1833, which Ellen White identified as "the last of the signs . . . promised by the Savior as tokens of His second advent?" Some will mourn in that morning, and some will rejoice. ■

RENOVATE

heart & house

PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

Something In Common

BY DUANE COVRIG

The message to God's church, Laodicea, as Pastor Dwight pointed out last week, is full of some very tense moments. Vomiting is not a pleasant topic to discuss, especially around mealtime.

And that was the setting. Jesus seemed to be showing up on time with his "stuff" for a meal. It seems to have been planned. A time to eat and enjoy some hospitality, community, and intimacy.

For the Jewish listener, the image immediately would have connected to the Song of Solomon where exchange at another door also seemed awkward, tense, planned but potentially failing. Two lovers were trying to figure out the best timing for their hearts to align!

Both scenes—in the Song and for Laodicea—have a door for a good reason.

Doors are essential architectural structures. They guard a space. They can be colorful, ornate, with big handles or small. They can even be painted yellow as we like at our house.

Doors shape boundaries. They define space. But doors have hinges. They are not walls. They are meant to be open.

It seems relationship require both these attributes as well. Children, families, people, need to have boundaries and be

able to find safety in their own thinking and in their own families . . . But they can also be opened for the joy of hospitality to occur.

Opening ourselves to each other and to God is a delicate, complicated experience, but also something that can make us part of the community. It's something we all have in common, even God!

That has been the basic theme of our "Something in Common" Sabbath School (SICSS) for over 25 years. We meet in the PMC Commons" for that reason.

Our goal has been turning the hearts of the fathers and mothers first toward God and toward each other and then toward their children. Or for those who are single or without children, we have tried to create a safe place for all types of relationships using the principles of God's hospitality of grace and truth.

But doors are not the only "architecture" needed to make homes. We quickly saw that in the current Renovate campaign at PMC. Doors open to a shared space. A shared roof is what houses our commonality.

Our SICSS team decided that it would be keeping with the call of our Sabbath School to participate with the Renovate



House and Heart, as this was promoting our fundamental vision of creating something in common. A door opens us to hospitality and then a roof creates a shared experience.

We are thankful to be part of the PMC community sharing our time and resources but mostly our hearts to be part of a movement dedicated to hospitality. Open doors and shared roof seems like a great combination. As we Renovate House, Hearts, and Homes, our hope

is that PMC will continue to be a warm place to work past our divisions—be they economic, national, ethnic, or gender-based—to fulfill the vision of being one in Christ. ■

WE STUDY

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO

Song Service

Laura Meyer & Lucy Randall

Opening Song

I'm Trying to Be Like Jesus

Welcome

Harvey Kilsby

Scripture

Matthew 25:35-40 • Jackie Bikichky

Prayer

Pat Erhard

Mission Spotlight

The Mission • Neighbor to Neighbor

Offering

Phil Giddings
"Deep River" • arr. Jascha Heifetz

Lesson Study

"Worthy Is the Lamb"

Theme Song

Make Me a Blessing

Make me a blessing; make me a blessing.

Out of my life may Jesus shine.

Make me a blessing; O Savior, I pray.

Make me a blessing; to someone today.

"Make Me a Blessing," Ira Bishop Wilson

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Benediction

Lucy Randall

ORGANIST: James North

OFFERTORY: Jade McClellan, violin; Joshua Goines, piano

WE WORSHIP 2

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO

So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.'

But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

—Revelation 3:16-18 NIV

We Begin

Precious Lord
Roy Ringwald

Praise

Jesus Saves
Indescribable
Total Praise
Amazed

Prayer

Ben Martin

Children's Story

Poor Wayfaring Stranger / Humility
Kenneth Logan

Worship in Music

My Lord, What a Morning
Spiritual / Harry Burleigh

Sermon

"The Last Letter: Wretched (Last Letter for America)"
Dwight K. Nelson

Connect Card, Tithes & Offerings

I'd Rather Have Jesus
327

As We Depart

O, When Shall I See Jesus?
Kenneth Logan

WORSHIP COORDINATOR: José Bourget; ORGAN: Kenneth Logan

PRAISE LEADER: Sinegugu Katenga; CAJON: Marielle Kahler; KEYBOARD: Nate Chung

VOCALS: James-Andrew Hearn, Juwel Howard, Mujuni Menani

BASS GUITAR: Jerry Wasmer; ACOUSTIC GUITAR: Lorian Guillaume

WORSHIP IN MUSIC: Andrews University Choral Union; Stephen Zork, director

SUBMIT bulletin announcements by visiting our form online at www.pmchurch.org/announcements/submit. Requests must be received Monday by 5:00 PM for consideration.

NEXT WEEK'S OFFERING
World Budget

SUNSET TODAY • 5:52
SUNSET NEXT FRIDAY • 6:00

PIONEER PULPIT

| 02 • 02 |

AUSA
Gena Gordon

| 02 • 09 |

DWIGHT K. NELSON
"The Last Letter: Reading Between the Lines"

FINANCIAL FEATURE

NAD/RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

"Nothing is more important than liberty of conscience and religious freedom. The good news of the Gospel is a message of freedom.

It is no accident that the Adventist church has championed religious liberty from its very beginning. Our prophetic imperative told us that even in a land of blessed freedoms, powerful forces will again try to compel all to worship falsely. In this offering today, give as if your very liberties are at stake. They are. If the watchmen cry not, who will give the warning?" –Lincoln Steed, editor Liberty magazine and associate director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, North American Division

Visitors' Dinner

Join us today after second service in the PMC Commons (downstairs) for a home-cooked vegetarian meal.

PMC Family Vespers
5:00 PM
PMC YOUTH CHAPEL

Hear the testimonies, answers to prayer and mission stories from our youth mission team that went to Honduras in Dec. The Friendship Team experienced so many evidences of God's blessing and leading in their day camp for 125 children and the children at the Hogar de Ninos children's home, and the community food baskets ... and much more.

We Mourn

- Charles (Knobby) Mauro was a long-time and much-loved member of this community and Pioneer. A Memorial Service, Sabbath afternoon, February 2 at 4:00 PM.
- We grieve today with Pioneer member, Hebe "Abby" Soares and her son, Gerald-Anthony, over the death of Abby's mother, Odete Silva, who lived in New Jersey. Odete went to sleep in Jesus on January 17. May the Lord surround the Soares and Silva families with His arms of love.

Knitting Hearts Together

FEBRUARY 12 • 1:00 PM
MACCARTY HOME

Anyone is welcome to join this ministry to the seriously ill and bereaved. We create and present items to remind others of God's care for them during difficult times.

Young Family Sabbath School

FEBRUARY 16 • 10:30 AM

PMC YOUTH CHAPEL

Parents with pre-school children (0-5-year) are invited to a special family Sabbath School. Join in singing and learning about God together. Become part of a new family discipleship vision. High-schoolers will adventure into the 0-5 year Sabbath School rooms for special workshops during this time.

Ways to Help Children and Youth in Benton Harbor

- 1) Pray for the children, youth, their parents, teachers, and the leaders in the Sabbath School classes.
- 2) Order Rada Cutlery and Gifts—Affordable and durable. Proceeds go directly to Harbor of Hope. www.radafundraising.com/?rfsn=1862551.e0e1d5
- 3) Order Citrus Fruit for yourself and/or a food pantry like Harbor of Hope, Neighbor to Neighbor, or God's Abundant Pantry. Just make a note of where you want it to go on your check memo line. Order it by mid-January--Proceeds go to Harbor of Hope.
- 4) To help and support children and youth of Harbor of Hope contact: Terry Trecartin at fundraising4hoh@gmail.com or 423.645.5684, 2601 Pixley Ave., Saint Joseph, MI 49085.

Papercrafting Together

JANUARY 27 • 11:00 AM

PMC COMMONS

Want to preserve those Christmas memories? Need to make cards for the coming year? Have a mixed media project you want to get done? Bring your supplies/projects and enjoy fellowship while working. We supply the prizes and chocolate, you bring your favorite snack. Questions, sherrie.davis@lakeunion.org.

Seniors of Michiana Dinner Invitation

JANUARY 27 • 1:00 PM

ANDREWS ACADEMY COMMONS

No sign-up is required. We look forward to a delightful afternoon of food and entertainment provided by the Andrews Academy administration and students. We hope to see you there. If you have any dietary restrictions, please contact the Academy directly at 269.471.3138.

**Howard Center Presents...
Jasmine Murray**

JANUARY 27 • 7:00 PM

Jasmine Murray is an independent American singer and beauty pageant titleholder from Starkville, Mississippi. Best known for her powerhouse vocals as a finalist in season eight of "American Idol," Jasmine has worked hard to overcome and achieve so much at a young age. Now at 25, Jasmine's experience contributes to the wisdom and poise she carries. She is on a mission to reach people with the message that God has given her, and she is just getting started.

Natural Remedies Seminar

FEBRUARY 3 • 2:00-5:00 PM

Learn how herbs can help with such chronic problems as inflammation, pain, and many other health issues. Lee Wellard, naturopath, master herbalist, and owner of the American Herb Shoppe in Granger, IN, will present a Natural Remedies Seminar at the St. Joseph SDA Church at 1201 Maiden Lane. Admission is free, but please preregister by email healthy-together25@gmail.com or by calling 269.697.3405 or through our website at www.hffriends.org.

Community Service Opportunities

God's Hands 4 Kids would like to present you with the opportunity to show support to those who foster or adopt in our community. Could you/would you -

- 1) Provide a pot of soup for a monthly support group hosted here at PMC on February 14 or March 14 at 5:30 PM?
- 2) Join us to provide help for setup or cleanup or to help with child care/activities 0-teen on those dates?
- 3) You are welcome to join us as a guest to learn more about fostering or adopting.

4) Join our Facebook group
For more info or to let us know you will help email Godshands4kids@gmail.com or visit us at www.godshands4kids.org.

Give the Gift of Life— Mark Your Calendars

FEBRUARY 27 • 1:00-7:00 PM
PIONEER COMMONS

Sponsored by Andrews University, The American Red Cross and PMC. Contact Larry Ulery at ulery@andrews.edu or 269.471.0467 and watch for more info in the bulletin. You are needed! There is no substitute for human blood.

■ MEMBERSHIP TRANSFERS • FIRST READING

| TRANSFERS IN |

BALTAZAR, Carolyn
BALTAZAR, Tiago
BIKICHKY, Nick
HARRISON, Barbara
HARRISON, Logan
HARRISON, Russell
HARRISON, Vincent
HARRISON, Vincent II
JIANG, Henry
JIANG, Kimberly
LI, Xiujuan
SAMBU, Peres
STELE, Artur
STELE, Friedrich
STELE, Olga

| FROM |

Chapel West/Indianapolis, IN
Chapel West/Indianapolis, IN
All Nations/Berrien Springs, MI
Sharon SDA, Portland, OR
San Gabriel Valley Chinese/Arcadia, CA
San Gabriel Valley Chinese/Arcadia, CA
San Gabriel Valley Chinese/Arcadia, CA
LaCrosse, WI
Sarnia, ON
Sarnia, ON
Sarnia, ON

| TRANSFERS OUT |

CHADWICK, Melody
DESROSIERS, Gina
NICO, Faith
NICO, Josue
NICO, Juana
NICO, Katherine
YEBOAH-AMOAKO, Jeanette

| TO |

Fairplain/Benton Harbor, MI
Edmondson Heights / Baltimore, MD
Carmel, IN
Utica International/Utica, NY
Utica International/Utica, NY
Carmel, IN
Central Valley/Fresno, CA

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Backpacks for Berrien Collection

Each month one of the various denominational churches in Berrien Springs collects food to be distributed on Fridays by Backpacks for Berrien to Berrien Springs public school students who otherwise may not have much to eat over the weekend. January and February are PMC's months. The food must be packaged in individual serving sizes. No cans or bottles. By the types of food we select to donate, we can even make a health statement. Here are the healthful items on the Backpacks' food list: fruit cups, pasta, rice, beans, nuts, protein bars. Food can be brought to the church and placed in the collection box in the lobby.

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. —2 Cor. 9:7