

THE LAST *Letter*



GAME OF THRONES, CROWN OF THORNS—1

DWIGHT K. NELSON

MARCH 16

PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

9:00 & 11:45 AM



WELCOME

to Pioneer

Worship is much more than just listening to a good message. Because if it were basically about that, we could all save a lot of gasoline and just stay home and watch the sermon online. Worship is also much more than just having a musical experience. If it was merely about the music, I could just listen to my favorite worship CD or playlist on Spotify.

True worship is all of those things, yes, but it's even more. David, the Psalmist of Israel, gives us a clue in Psalm 122:1:

"I was glad when they said to me,
'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Did you catch that? There is definitely a place for private worship, but the Psalmist is revealing that there's also a life-giving purpose to gathering together. It's not one or the other, it's both and why is it so important? Because gathering is a confession that I, too, am a sinner celebrating the grace that God has bestowed on me. We are not alone. We're in this together, with God, and with each other. Welcome to worship today.

-Rodlie Ortiz



PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

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OFFICE HOURS

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

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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.



**FIND A
SABBATH
SCHOOL**

FIND IT HERE

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO



*Love
each other
as I have
loved you*
- John 15:12 -

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THE FOURTH WATCH BLOG

"Can't Buy Your Way into
Harvard or Heaven?"

6

WE WORSHIP

9:00 AM Service

8

UNDER THE ROOF

"A Place for Support"

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WE STUDY

Family Discipleship
Sabbath School

11

WE WORSHIP 2

11:45 AM Service

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CAN'T BUY YOUR WAY INTO HARVARD OR HEAVEN?

BY DWIGHT K. NELSON



The elite college entrance scam that broke into the news cycle hours ago is a stunning morality tale of the you-can't-buy-your-way-into-heaven-or-maybe-even-Harvard truth. Turns out cheating your way in doesn't pay either. Not in the long run.

Look, most of us can sympathize with a parent's desperation to pursue a stellar education for her child (actresses Lori Loughlin and Felicity Huffman are the first to be charged with soliciting this scam). But to buy your child's admission, to cheat on entrance tests and buy off college coaches' support—that is simply a bridge too far.

Turns out the perpetrator is college entrance coach William "Rick" Singer, who promised his clients "he had the inside scoop on getting into college, and anyone could get in on it with his book, *Getting In: Gaining Admission to Your College of Choice*. 'This book is full of secrets,' he said in Chapter 1 before dispensing advice on personal branding, test-taking

and college essays. But Singer had even bigger secrets, and those would cost up to \$1.2 million" (www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2019/03/12/college-scam-rick-singer-william-singer-felicity-huffman-lori-loughlin/3142687002).

Not surprising, Singer had well-heeled clients who were so eager for their child to make the cut, they shelled out the "bribe" money and condoned their child's entrance tests administered by proctors in on the take. "A 204-page affidavit from an FBI agent laid out a scheme involving proctors changing test results, fabricated credentials and even doctored pictures to make non-athletic students appear to be accomplished athletes" (ibid.).

Transcripts of recorded conversations between Singer and his parent clients reveal some "parents seemed to get cold feet before Singer assured them that he's done this kind of thing hundreds of times. 'Let me put it differently: If



somebody catches this, what happens?' Caplan [prospective parent] asked him. 'The only one who can catch it is if you guys tell somebody,' Singer said. 'I am not going to tell anybody,' Caplan said. They both laughed" (ibid.).

But nobody is laughing now. Tuesday, Singer pleaded guilty "to racketeering, money laundering, tax evasion and obstruction of justice in a federal courtroom in Boston."

The ancient Book declares, **"Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23)**. A truth as old as the human race and one worth learning sooner rather than later.

But a more good news, gospel moral invites our reflection. The truth is you

really *can't* buy your way into Heaven. And why would you want to? Turns out the entrance fee has already been paid. In full. By the nail-scarred One who promises: **"Whoever comes to Me, I will never drive away"** (John 6:37). Why, that would be like a parent discovering Somebody has not only paid their child's entrance fee but has already assured their entrance! No shenanigans necessary. No back room deals to cut. No cheating at all. Just a quiet, trusting faith in the One whose invitation remains unchanged.

And what shall we say to that? How about, "Thank you, Jesus"? ■

WE WORSHIP

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO

Opening Voluntary

The King of Love My Shepherd Is • Charles Stanford

Introit

How Lovely, Lord, How Lovely • Hal Hopson

Call to Worship

Rodlie Ortiz

Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?

We follow where you lead, O Lord!

Behold, the Son of God will be delivered to the chief priest and scribes who will condemn him.

Give us faith, O God, that we may be courageous and strong.

Let us praise the name of the Lord.

Doxology

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow • 2

Invocation

Dwight K. Nelson

Hymn of Praise

Lord of All Being, Throned Afar • 17

Congregational Prayer

Rodlie Ortiz

Spirit of the Living God • 672

Worship in Music

King of Glory, King of Peace • Alfred Fedak

Children's Story

Allegro Moderato • Felix Mendelssohn

Scripture

Bruce and Jan Wrenn • 1 John 2:12-13; 5:4-5 NIV

I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name.

I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.

For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Hymn of Preparation

Faith Is the Victory • 608

Sermon

"The Last Letter: Game of Thrones, Crown of Thorns—1"
Dwight K. Nelson

Connect Card, Tithes & Offerings

PMC Operating Budget

Hymn of Commitment

Soldiers of Christ, Arise • 616

Benediction

Closing Voluntary

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven • John Goss

PRESIDING PASTOR: Rodlie Ortiz; ORGANIST: Kenneth Logan
WORSHIP IN MUSIC: PMC Sanctuary Choir; Brenton Offenback, director

MUSIC ALIVE

"PRAISE"

With this bold, succinct title, a 1913 publication of a poem by George Herbert (1593-1633) appeared in a London publication. "PRAISE", indeed... and today's Worship in Music uses most of the stanzas of this poem, after a short musical introduction with words by another poet. Herbert was a poet of outstanding insight and remarkable creativity concerning the personal experiencing of

Christianity. Especially memorable aspects of this poem include "I will praise thee" seven days, not one. . . . praise is not to be confined to just one day a week! For the Christian singer, amateur or professional, the stirring words "with my utmost art I will sing thee" can be most inspiring, while "the cream of all my heart I will bring thee" also speaks to an ardent response. ■

A Place for Support

BY JOSE BOURGET

RENOVATE

heart & house

PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

Last week we partnered with the launch of a new initiative entitled “Rise Up Against Abuse.” Ty Gibson, the founder of Light Bearers Ministries and the Solidarity Wall project, shared a moving biblical message. If you missed it, take a moment to check it out on Pioneer Memorial Church’s Facebook page.

Later that afternoon in the Youth Chapel, panelists responded to some questions posed by attendees. Since then many have affirmed that we want Pioneer to continue to be a place that helps to bring healing to hurting people. Amen!

Here are some of the ways we are doing it:

As I shared Sabbath morning, we have begun work to get all of our volunteers who work with children screened through Verified Volunteers. The screening trains individuals on how to identify and respond to signs of child abuse. We are then going to work through screening members of our other core volunteer ministries. This strategy is being implemented around the country

and required by NAD Policy—one more step toward helping provide a safe place for children.

Our campus community welcomes over 300 college students each year.

Here is a stunning statistic: 1 in 5 male children and 1 in 3 female children are sexually assaulted before they reach adulthood. Additionally, 1 in 15 is exposed to intimate partner violence.

As a campus church, our care and ministry extends well beyond Sabbath morning. Our Lead Elder’s team has begun conversing about a strategy to provide more intentional care, especially with new students. Additionally, each semester our GROW Groups have groups ranging from self-defense to challenging the “Lies Young Women Believe.” You could start thinking now of a

group to host and, even better, partnering with a young adult to be part of one of these groups. Finally, begin intentionally welcoming and connecting with the students God puts in your path, the pew across from you, or the ministry you work in together. How else can we be a healing

**UNDER
THIS ROOF,
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place for students? Share your ideas!

For many with whom we worship each week, abuse is or has been a part of our reality. I'm sorry. Under this roof, we want to make sure you feel safe and that we can connect you with pathways to healing. Last Sabbath, we connected with local professionals who are a part of our congregation to begin to ask questions about what can we do well to support those hurting from abuse. In the meantime, here are some local resources identified by one of the expert panelists.

Shelters:

YWCA in South Bend / 574.233.9491
Safe Shelter in Benton Harbor / 269.925.9500

Free Counseling:

Andrews University Community Counseling Center / 269.471.6238 (wait list sometimes)

Counseling with sliding scale based on finances:

Samaritan Counseling
South Bend office / 574.277.0274
Benton Harbor office / 269.926.6199
Christian Counseling & Psychotherapy in Stevensville / 269.429.7727
Life Coach Psychology in Berrien Springs / 269.815.5331 (ask for Social Work counselor)
Riverwood Center in Benton Harbor / 269.487.9332

If you have ideas or resources for how we can provide support, especially to our children and students, please don't hesitate to send an email. ■

WE STUDY

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO

Song Service	Grades 3, 7 & 8
Welcome	José Bourget
Prayer	Ana Slavujevic, Grade 7
God's Family	Debby Suhendra, Grade 2
Object Lesson	David Randall, Grade 6
Song	<i>O Friend, Do You Love Jesus</i> • Grades 7 & 8
Mission Story	Joffre St.Hillaire, Grade 4
Family Discipleship	Ben Martin & Glynis Bradfield
Skit	Chosen By God • Grade 5
Song	<i>I Have Decided to Follow Jesus</i> • Grades 7 & 8
Lesson Study	Primary, Junior, Earliteen & Adult
Song	<i>He's Able</i> • Grade 3, 7 & 8
The Lord's Prayer	Richard Mackie, Grade 1
Theme Song	<i>Make Me a Blessing</i>

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
©1924, Renewed 1952 Word Music, LLC; Used by Permission. CCLI License #392652

ORGANIST: Kenneth Logan
PIANIST: Vladimir Slavujevic

WE WORSHIP 2

CONNECT • GROW • SERVE • GO

I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

—Genesis 1:26-27 NIV

We Begin

The King of Love My Shepherd Is
Charles Stanford
How Lovely, Lord, How Lovely
Hal Hopson

Praise

Open the Eyes of My Heart
Forever
Yes and Amen
Give Thanks

Prayer

Tara Thona

Baby Dedication

Abigail Rose Bussey presented
by Seth & Caroline Bussey
with Ben Martin

Children's Story

Allegro Moderato
Felix Mendelssohn

Worship in Music

King of Glory, King of Peace
Alfred Fedak

Sermon

"The Last Letter: Game of Thrones,
Crown of Thorns—1"
Dwight K. Nelson

Connect Card, Tithes & Offerings

Soldiers of Christ, Arise
616

As We Depart

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
John Goss

WORSHIP COORDINATOR: José Bourget; ORGAN: Kenneth Logan

PRAISE LEADER: Sinegugu Katenga

VOCALS: David Ortiz, Linda Sanchez, Mujuni Menani; PIANO: Joshua Goines

ACOUSTIC GUITAR: Lorian Guillaume; CAJON: Trevor Furst; Keyboard: Sheldon Lee

WORSHIP IN MUSIC: PMC Sanctuary Choir; Brenton Offenback, 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

Michigan Advance Partners

SUNSET TODAY • 7:52**SUNSET NEXT FRIDAY • 8:00**

PIONEER PULPIT

| 03 • 23 |

DWIGHT K. NELSON

"The Last Letter: Game of Thrones, Crown of Thorns—2"

| 03 • 30 |

DWIGHT K. NELSON

"How to Survive the Coming Economic Crisis"

FINANCIAL FEATURE

PMC OPERATING BUDGET

God's care for His own. Swallows can fly 7,000 miles without a chart, compass, or radio beam and land at the place they left six months before.

Bees, wasps, and ants solve their housing problem by building well-ventilated, weatherproof, well-designed, and practical apartment houses.

Can a Creator God like that take care of you and me? Of course! And shouldn't we respond to His loving care, most of which we take for granted, by living just as close to Him as we can? Yes! Let us praise God for His blessings and respond in loving gifts for Him today.

Florence Gillman Memorial

One of the beloved ladies of our PMC office team years ago has died. Florence Gillman, 100, fell asleep in Jesus on February 28, at the Riveridge Care Home in Niles. As church clerk and office secretary, she will be remembered by those of us who served with her for her gracious spirit, faithful work and contagious sense of humor. There will be a memorial service in the PMC youth chapel this coming Tuesday at 2:00 PM. With those who loved her, we pray the Bible's last prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Family Discipleship Sabbath School

TODAY • 10:30 AM

PMC SANCTUARY

As part of PMC's new family discipleship vision, families with children in Grades 1-8 are invited to attend a special Sabbath School together. Adults regularly attending the Sanctuary Sabbath School will be warmly welcomed too!

PMC Vespers

TODAY • 7:00 PM

EARLITEEN LOFT

Sabbath sundown vespers is on the topic of prayer.

PMC Traffic Team Volunteers Needed

The Pioneer Traffic Team is in need of volunteers to commit one Sabbath a month to help with the flow of traffic during Sabbath services. If interested or for more information, call or text 732.379.1300.

Pathfinder Bible Experience— Union Level

TODAY • 3:00 PM
PMC SANCTUARY

We invite you to experience the Pathfinder Union Level Bible Experience (PBE)! Thirty-four Pathfinder teams from Michigan, Indiana, Lake Region, Illinois and Wisconsin will be testing their knowledge on the book of Luke. Come support the teams and test your knowledge on the book of Luke.

Kindergarten Parent Night and Visitors' Day

APRIL 2 • 6:30 PM
RUTH MURDOCH
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Come meet Mrs. Curnutt and check out the developmental, hands-on program. Get a \$50 coupon for tuition credit. Enjoy refreshments & meet other parents. Kindergarten Visitors' Day at RMES April 3, 8:15–11:30 AM. There will be singing & worship, crafts & stories, P.E. & music classes, play in some of 20+ centers and have outdoor play time. Call 269.471.3225 to register.

Achtung, Octomen!

Bruce Moyer is beginning a men's group (anyone around 80 or older) once a month. This coming Tuesday at 10:00 AM at Hoppers. Join several colleagues for breakfast (dutch treat). For more info call Bruce 269.473.5124. Anyone concerned for Migrants? Please call Bruce Moyer: 269.473.5124.

Youth Missions Lebanon

On Wednesday, the 26-member youth missions team flew to Beirut, Lebanon, for missions and ministry. The team will conduct the week of spiritual emphasis at Middle East University and the local Adventist elementary school and academy. These schools have a minority Adventist population. Our mission team includes 16 physical therapy students and clinicians led by Kim Ferreira, chair of the Physical Therapy department, who will be partnering with a medical clinic for Syrian and Iraqi refugees and the local population. A special aspect of the mission will be partnering with John Bradshaw and the It Is Written team conducting evangelistic meetings. Thank you for your support of PMC Youth Missions. We solicit your fervent prayers for God to do a mighty work in this challenging mission field. For further information contact the mission team director, Glenn Russell (glenn@andrews.edu).

Volunteers Needed at Neighbor to Neighbor

Now that N2N (Neighbor to Neighbor) thrift store is now open every Wednesday, we need more volunteers! We need volunteers in the following areas: cashiers, sorting clothes, general organizing, praying with customers (Spanish- and English-speaking volunteers needed), unloading donations, sorting donations, restocking shelves & clothing racks, vacuuming, dusting, food shelving and more! Pray for us and please consider volunteering at Neighbor to Neighbor thrift store and client services Monday through Thursday any time between 9:00 AM–5:00 PM.

Renovate: Heart & House

Under this roof people from birth to 104, through every season of life, gather in this space to connect with God and each other. We have so many beautiful and hope-filled moments right here each week. Under this roof we partner in growing the Kingdom in our hearts, serving this campus community, and going to the world with the Good News. Let's keep it going! You can use your Tithe envelope to donate or write the word "pledge" to make a pledge; or you can go online to www.pmchurch.org/renovate to make your pledge.

Equipping Missionaries to Cuba

After 60 years of strict communist rule, the doors have opened to equip Cuban pastors and Bible workers with crucial resources like technology, transportation, and ministry materials. Help today by adopting a project like a computer, a smartphone, a bike, or tablet. We are also conducting a special musical instrument drive. Bring these items to the church and visit www.CareforCuba.org to donate online. Your donation of any amount is 100% tax deductible. For more info mdivstudy-tour@andrews.edu.

Resolve to Be Healthier This New Year!

PMC Health Ministries offers free co-ed exercise classes for anyone 18+ years old:

ToBoFit (Total Body Fitness)

Tuesday & Thursday • 5:00-5:50 PM

Lamson Hall Health Club Aerobics Room

H2OFit

Monday & Wednesday • 7:30-8:15 AM

AU Beaty Pool (free admission to class members)

Tai Chi

Wednesday • 4:30-5:00 PM

James White Library (begins mid-Jan.)

Check www.healthTent.org for updates.

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