

From Pastor Greg's Heart ~ The Greatest Expectation

Luke 1:31,32, *"31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."* [\(NIV 2011\)](#)

When a woman tells you that she is expecting what does that mean? It means that in about nine months she will be having a baby. A new addition will be added to the family. For many women and their families this is a great expectation. There is a special joy a newborn baby brings. Marion and I are proud grandparents to our second grandchild Lucy who was born on Sunday, November 21. Lucy is so precious. She is a beautiful reminder of God's handiwork. She is a masterpiece created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for her to do (Ephesians 2:10).

The birth of Jesus Christ was the greatest expectation for the Jew and the Gentile because the coming of the Messiah would mean salvation for the sinner, good news of great joy to all mankind. However, the news of Mary expecting a baby did not have a joyous affect on her betrothed, soon to be husband Joseph. In **Matthew 1:18b, 19**, *"His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. **New International Version (NIV).**"*

Joseph could not see past the problem of marrying Mary who was expecting someone else's baby. His eyes were fixed on the law. The law demanded public disgrace of any virgin that was expecting out of wedlock. Instead of subjecting Mary to this disgrace he wanted to divorce her quietly and let her fend for herself.

How often do we have expectations that don't turn out as we hoped? A dream vacation turns into a nightmare. A job promotion passes you by. A newly elected government does not come through with keeping its promises. Your retirement has to wait because you can't afford it. Finding that special someone is taking longer than expected. Your last physical comes with new expectations you did not want. What do you do next? Can you see past the problem?

The best we can do is surrender our expectations to God. We can pray, "God this is what I hoped for, but I clearly see that this is not your plan." It may not be that God wants you to give up on your expectation. It may just be that His way of getting you there is different than yours. God still wanted Joseph to marry Mary, and He wanted Joseph to be involved in raising His Son and provide for His daily needs. Joseph adopted God's plan and named the boy, "Jesus, God saves."

Our expectations can become great when we adopt God's plan over our own. This Advent season ask God to reveal how your expectations can fit into His plan and become great for His glory.

Bits and Bites:

1) Two weddings and God's blessings in each. I had the joy of being a part of Anne Ryan's wedding to Rodney Conoley on October 7th. God gave Rod and Anne the right weather as we enjoyed a pleasant evening under two big tents. What a blessing to hear Anne and Rod celebrate their former spouses and vow to keep honouring Christ in their new marriage. We also had a great time of laughter as Jed, sister Emily and their new step brother Craig put on a comedy show about how Anne and Rodney met online. Can you believe it turned into a musical? That's typical Ryan humour!

Marion and I had the joy of being a part of our nephew Tobias's wedding near Columbus, Ohio. Marion walked up the aisle with her father (Tobias' Opa) on Saturday, October 9th. The weather was warm. The ceremony was heartwarming and Christ-centred. The reception was all American Ohio State Buckeye. We felt a bit invisible because we were not alumni of Ohio State University. I still think there are some Americans who believe there is no intelligent life outside of their borders. God bless America! And God bless the Great White North!

2) Life Groups are underway. In the month of November six groups have started. The Life Group leaders are Chris Coker (meeting at his home); Kevin & Bethany Hannah (meeting at their home); Dan & Cheryl Shepherd (meeting at their home); Jearim Woodall (meeting at Anne & Rodney Conoley's home); Greg & Marion Gaensler (meeting at our home); and Mike Roy (meeting at the church). There is also a ladies Life Group meeting at church on Mondays led by Ann Parlee. If you are interested in joining one of these groups, please contact the individual leader or contact our office for more details.

3) Come to Gingerbread bash on Sunday, December 12 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. This is a fun event led by Kid's church in place of the annual Christmas Concert. This family friendly event starts in the sanctuary and proceeds to our basement for the assembly of Gingerbread Manger scenes. Please register by December 9 by sending an email to calvarybiblechurchkids@gmail.com.

4) Our congratulations to Wilf and Lorraine Lawrenson and their 70 years of marriage. These are Andrea Minaker's parents. They live in Port Elmsley.

5) Birthday celebrations ~ Inez Molloy turns 80 years old in December. Tim Bourne is turns 60 in December.

Prayer Corner

- 1) Pray for our Life Groups to develop well with the intention for growth and formation of more groups in the future. Pray for meaningful fellowship and spiritual growth in Christ.
- 2) Praise God for his healing power in the lives of Georgina MacIntosh, Wayne Hamilton, Dianna Robertson, Madeline Hawe, Francine Hill and Lorraine Lawrenson.

- 3) Praise God for Lucy Ryan's arrival. Pray for her adjustment and healthy growth in her new family. Ask God's blessing on Jed, Hannah and Fletcher.
- 4) Pray for God's healing touch and peace in these ladies – Beth Laming (shoulder), Cora Collison, Sandy Boyd, Rose Elliott (improving well), and my mother Karin.
- 5) Pray for a safe Christmas-Advent season. Ask God to bless our services including our Christmas Eve Candlelight service.
- 6) Ask God to appoint two stewards to fill the vacancies in leadership over the Mission and Outreach Ministry and the Care and Body Life Ministry.
- 7) Pray for Inez Molloy who fell on her way into a church in Ottawa this past Sunday. She hit her head.
- 8) Pray for Sheila Ifill's mother Wilma Miller who is in the hospital in Perth. She needs extra care and may not return home. Pray for God's healing and leading in next steps.
- 9) Pray for Judy Nicholas' son-in-law Mike who has a collapsed lung and has a chest tube. He is married to Judy's daughter Kate, and they live in Calgary.
- 10) Pray for recovery from flooding in British Columbia and in Newfoundland and Labrador. Ask God to hold back any other storms for now.
- 11) Pray that Bill C-4 criminalizing conversion therapy will not become law. This would prevent people who have gender dysphoria from getting the help they need.