

COUNTY-WIDE CHAPLAINCY

"There to Help
When it Hurts"

14000 NE 191st Circle, Battle Ground, WA 98604 Phone: 360-687-4596 Email: chapepp@msn.com. <www.911chaplain.org>

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Dear Friends of Chaplaincy,

Do you feel like I do, "Where has this summer gone?" As I was getting some office supplies the other day, I saw a bunch of kids there with their parents getting school supplies!! Well, it has been a busy summer, and much of it has been filled with happy times. Our daughter and her 4 children spent 3 weeks with us, and our son-in-law Edgar was able to join them for the last week. We even got to go to the lake together for a few hours one day; another day two training-wheel-dependant grandchildren learned to ride without the extra stability, both in one day. So I have been getting in a bit of GRANDPA TIME!

I have also had the joy of preaching in a number of churches this summer during the pastors' vacations or sabbaticals. One church, Felida Baptist, gave their pastor the whole summer off for rest and recuperation, and I spoke there five Sundays. This Sunday I will be at a little white country church, with a small cemetery beside it. A beautiful setting and some wonderful people. My goal has been to seek to encourage people in the midst of some very unsettling times with the world scene, the rising costs of housing and just plain existing in general. The pressures of living seem to be increasing. I spoke to a lady this week who was involved in a fatal accident when a young man ran a traffic light in an attempt to allude the police who were after him for a burglary. She couldn't avoid hitting him, and he died at the scene. It really doesn't matter that we call it an accident and that she was totally innocent of any fault. The fact remains, she carries the guilt and weight of an accident in which she was involved as a driver and a young man lost his life. What compounds the struggle is that she is the mother of boys, one of which is about the same age as the boy who died, and she feels for this boy's mom. Then too, she is a single mom, who does not have the luxury of taking time off work to "heal emotionally."

I spoke to her about the fact that it takes time to heal, just as if she had broken her leg. Unfortunately, our society sort of pushes us along and wants us to "get over it" in a week or two. If it was a broken leg, we would still be in a cast and on crutches, and people would be coming up to us and feeling sorry and opening doors and not expecting

us to join in a foot race for a long time.

As I was leaving after a weigh-in at the LA Weight Loss office last Friday, a lady called me by name. When I asked her how she knew me, she reminded me of the time, now 7-9 years ago, when her son had attempted to race his bicycle across the road in front of a pick-up truck. The poor lady was unable to stop in time; and the young man, after being life-flighted to the hospital, died. At this time, she was able to recall memories of his life with a smile on her face; but I am sure the driver of that truck still recalls the horror of that day, and will never be the same.

This past week I have had the privilege of assisting a family with the personal effects of a sister and daughter who, at the age of 52 and apparently depressed, drove to a remote area and walked off into the woods, and even though a search was made at the time, her remains were not found for a number of weeks. As I left this family home, I was called to a possible drowning at a popular swimming and camping spot. I assisted chaplain Sam LaPore as we helped the friends cope with the fact of their 35 year old friend's death. He had some health issues and most likely had a heart attack; but the result is the same, that he was dead.

Yes, life is complicated, expensive, fragile, etc., and we sure need each other for strength and encouragement on the journey. Thanks again for faithfully standing by and supporting this ministry.

Let me take this opportunity to again remind you, as some have asked - **County Wide Chaplaincy** is a 501 C 3 - Tax exempt organization, which simply means that any gifts given are tax deductible. May I also remind you to put "**County Wide Chaplaincy**" on the check rather than my name. We are trying to do everything according to the rules. Our volunteers who open the contributions as well as our treasurer would so appreciate that. Also, we send out records of your giving after the first of the year, rather than after each gift, so as to cut down on expenses.

It trust this is helpful and may God Bless you for your part in this minis-

**I remain, joyfully serving together with you,
Chaplain Landis Epp**