



Peace At Last Ministries

Sharing God's comfort with the terminally-ill, their loved ones and caregivers.

eGlimpse #179 — March 2020
Paul & Kathleen Humphreys

Not all my hospice chaplain visits are sad encounters. I recall sitting at the bedside of an elderly patient who could neither speak nor see. Decades and disease had ravaged her frail form. But she could still hear. And she could still squeeze my hand.

In previous visits I learned from family members that she and her husband attended a Bible church in Chicago during the 1950's and 1960's. As a young teenager my family attended a similar church in Woodstock, Ontario, Canada.

I experienced a 'blast from the past' when it occurred to me that my dying patient might recall, "The Hash Chorus," a medley of songs we often sang back in the 1960s. I hadn't heard it sung for ages and so I was surprised that it even came to mind.

A quick internet search on my cellphone revealed various versions of the medley including the one I remembered. After pairing my cellphone to a portable Bluetooth speaker that I use for this purpose, I played the chorus for my patient while holding her hand. Even now, the memory of that experience gives me a happy lump in my throat. While the dear lady could no longer speak aloud, she whispered the words. And with each stanza, I felt her hand tighten on mine as she squeezed, "Amen!"

The Cambridge Dictionary defines 'amen' as that which is, "*said or sung at the end of a prayer or a religious song to express agreement...*"

The squeezing of my hand, the whispering of the words and the smile on the radiant face of this dear soul took all the strength she could muster. But her agreement, her "Amen!" was loud and clear!



She squeezed, "Amen!"

Following, are the words to the Hash Chorus as I recall them:

Let's talk about Jesus, the King of kings is He
The Lord of lords Supreme, throughout eternity
The Great I AM the Way, the Truth, The Life, the Door
Let's talk about Jesus more and more . . .

Isn't He wonderful, wonderful, wonderful
Isn't Jesus my Lord wonderful.
Eyes have seen, ears have heard, it's recorded in God's Word
Isn't Jesus my Lord wonderful . . .

Wonderful, wonderful, Jesus is to me,
Counselor, Prince of Peace, Mighty God is He.
Saving me, keeping me, from all sin and shame.
Wonderful is my Redeemer praise His name . . .

Precious name, O how sweet!
Hope of earth and joy of Heav'n;
Precious name, O how sweet!
Hope of earth and joy of . . .

Heaven is a wonderful place
Filled with Glory and Grace
I want to see my Savior's face
Heaven is a wonderful, heaven is a glorious, heaven is a wonderful place . . .

But until then my heart will go on singing
Until then with joy I'll carry on
Until the day my eyes behold that city
Until the day God calls me home.

God did call my patient home. But in the hours leading up to her passing I couldn't help but believe her heart was indeed singing! And she sings even now in her eternal home. May the truth of these words cause each of us to squeeze a clear "Amen!" in our hearts and to "carry on with joy" in these turbulent and uncertain times.

Some Tidbits:

COVID-19 Impact: This eGlimpse #179 was crafted a few weeks ago before COVID-19 imposed its new normals on us all. While it seems surreal, its impact is real indeed. At last count, 30 cases have come to light in the county where we live in Wisconsin, USA. That number is expected to rise in the days ahead. Perhaps like you, we attended church this morning via an internet streaming service. Imagine what the apostle Paul would have given to have such communication tools in his day!

Chaplaincy: As a hospice chaplain, my freedom to minister God's comfort to hospice patients has, of this past week, been limited to those patients who are actively dying. This restriction is to help minimize risks of COVID-19 exposure to seniors and others whose health is already compromised.

Opportunities do remain, however, to speak with patients, caregivers and family members by telephone, text messages and other electronic means.

Family News: We are well as a family. Kathleen's parents (Harold & June Tiegs) are in their 80s and so we are all taking precautions to minimize risks of exposure for them. Kathleen's mom underwent surgery on Wednesday this past week to remove a polyp in her bladder. She is recovering well at home. In Canada, Paul's family is taking similar precautions with his mother, Muriel, who is in her 90th year. She is well looked after in a Nursing Facility in the town of Durham, Ontario.

Some Sad News: A dear family in Alberta, Canada, needs our prayers as they grieve the loss of Esther Kary, wife, mother and grandmother. Esther died recently after an 18-month battle with cancer. It was the Kary family that opened their home and hearts to our GoodSeed staff back in 2004 when Kathleen and I moved the fledgling ministry from our home in Ontario to Alberta. Pray especially for Trevor, Esther's husband, as he adjusts to life without his beloved wife and friend.

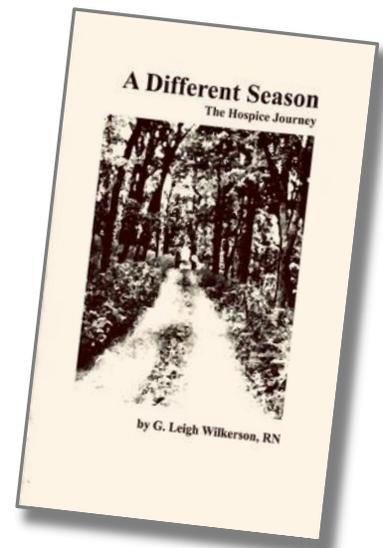
A Recommended Resource:

A Different Season – The Hospice Journey
By G. Leigh Wilkerson, RN

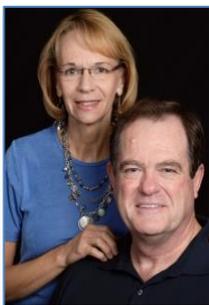
As family and friends of loved ones preparing for end of life, hospice is often an unknown, scary concept. We can greatly help them and ourselves by resourcing materials such as this helpful 32-page booklet by G. Leigh Wilkerson, writer, poet and hospice RN.

Is it time for hospice? Are we giving up? What is comfort care? What about pain control? Should I call family and tell them to come? How can I make this season of life meaningful for my loved one and memorable for me?

These questions and more are answered clearly and gently. Written for families accompanying a loved one through a season of life that is both challenging and meaningful.



Available at: <https://www.compassionbooks.com/a-different-season-the-hospice-journey/>



Ever grateful for your prayers, support and friendship,
Peace At Last Ministries (PALM)

Paul (and Kathleen too)

1e Waukesha, WI 53188 –Paul Cell 262 527 4297 –Kathleen Cell 262 707 9991
paul@palministries.net / kathleen@palministries.net

www.palministries.net

