

**"THE PROCURATOR" opening night this Thursday night! Grace Church, Wilmington, DE 19802
7 p.m. Free Admission**

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YouTube Channel [for dramas, sermons, & puppet shows for kids]: Michael Robert Guertin

Website: www.cabooseministries.org

Facebook: "Michael Robert Guertin"

April 2023

"FAMILY 'FUEL' ?"



Dear **Friends & Family**,

[3/21] Earlier this month, our Lord granted me a dream-come-true. It is a dream I have had for perhaps decades-the dream of having a camp for *adults*. The idea was first sparked in my mind by a friend, **Bob Buck**, the father of one of my long-time friends & assistant directors, **Gary Buck**. Bob said, "Hey Guerty? Why can't we have a camp for *adults*?" I've never forgotten that. One of my favorite aspects of camp every year, especially at Kids Camp, is that the children AND staff are encouraged to be *children* again. And this is what they do. Well, the years have gone by & that idea never materialized, But, some months ago when I pondered the idea once again, I did so in the context of a Winter camp *family* reunion, that involved not only the campers, but their entire families as well. As I prayed about it, I felt such a heart-swell of love & compassion rise up in me to minister to *the families* at the altar as we typically do for the campers each summer. Gratefully, the **hsc** camp board loved & approved the idea & we began to pray & plan. Families, because they're *human*, have their "feuds", like the old TV game show "Family Feud". However, I wanted these evenings to be a time of "family *fuel*". I wanted our Lord to touch, bless, inspire, encourage, & strengthen the families of our campers. And, that He did.

"ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK"



We decided to divide the reunion up into *two* camp reunions services-one for the children campers & the other for the Jr. & Sr. High campers. Again, the invitation to these reunion services was not only extended to the families of the campers but to the general public as well. The Kids Camp reunion service was held first. My strategy was to plan the service as a combination of a Kids Camp a.m. & p.m. chapel. This is much easier said than done! Kim & I brought two full truckloads of camp equipment from our house & also from our **hsc** camp shed in the woods at Tel Hai Camp. As always, with limited time & personnel, I tried to make the *Life Center* at **Hopewell Church** in Elverson, PA where the reunions were held [pastored now by Gary Buck mentioned above] a “Christian Chuck E. Cheese”-just as I do with the chapel at camp, a.k.a., Hemlock Hall each summer. Again, we wanted the parents to become children again, if only for one night. As is the case with every camp, I wear many hats to “do what I do”. As I’ve often said, I have had no greater outlet for my spiritual calling, giftings, & personality than at camp.

“PUPPETEER”



My trademark puppet since 1991, a.k.a., “**Chip**”, who is now a **YouTube** “star”, ahem, came out first with a space helmet on. Why? He heard we were going to be bringing in time travelers later that evening from King Solomon’s time, nearly 3,000 years ago, & he, too, wanted to time travel as well! [You’ll never know how many times over the past three decades I’ve

wanted to send him somewhere else in time! 😊] We had another “furry visitor” that evening- “**Vinny the Lamb**”. My friend **Gary Buck**, mentioned above, is one of the most gifted people I know: musician, songwriter, teacher, preacher, pastor, cartoonist, etc. “G”, as I affectionately call him, is also one of the funniest people I know. I’m two weeks to the day younger than his Dad, yet, when I’m with G I feel like he & I are both 15 again! (I met him when he was 15). Here he is, the pastor now of a burgeoning church, which, by the way, he started attending when he was **8 years old**, doing HIS trademark puppet, “**Vinny the Lamb**”! And this is Saturday night-the night before he would be feeding the flock the Lord has entrusted to him. By the way, Vinny has the appearance of a tiny tender, innocent little lamb, but when you go to pet him, he rebuffs you & talks like a gangster! (Yes-you had to be there! 😊) But, I will say this-Vinny is definitely one of the campers & staff’s favorite camp characters of all time!

“GAME SHOW HOST”



After our furry rascals finally departed, we commenced with our combination Bible game, vis, “Bible Volleyball”, which is comprised of 3 different games, vis, volleyball, musical chairs, & hot potato. A decades-old camp saying is, “When we play, we play. And, when we pray, we pray.” We play with the children because we *like to*, but also I firmly believe in what one of my former pastors taught me decades ago, “Relationship should always precede ministry.” That pastor was **Calvin Kurtz**, who honored us with his & his wife Esther Mae’s presence at the second reunion service that Sunday night. My “**Caboose!**” ministry had its inception during the time I served under Calvin as his children’s pastor. As **Kobi Martin** (Gary’s children’s pastor & one of my assistant directors at Kids Camp) & I led the game, my heart was warmed & blessed watching the parents & their children playing the game together. To further heighten the excitement, for the first time ever, we added a **4th** game to this mix-**Ezekiel’s Wheel!** This is my version of the TV game show “Wheel of Fortune”. We couldn’t acquire *Vanna White* to assist us with the game, since she’s already under contract, so we procured our very own “Banana White”, “dramatically” portrayed by **Elisabeth Kolb**, a former camper & counselor. When the camp sermon/lesson questions were asked, we always had *the parent* come up & spin the wheel & win the corresponding prize. Kim made sure she bought *family-oriented* prizes for this particular event.

“INTERCESSOR”



As soon as the Bible game was over, we had all of the camp staff & leaders present stand up & go around the chairs & lay their hands on the head or shoulders of the campers & their families. As they did so, I asked the families to bow their heads before the Lord & ask Jesus to touch them as the staffer did. I do this at every camp, virtually every night, every year. What a joy it was to be able to do so, again, this time, with *the parents* of the campers!

“ACTOR”



As soon as this prayer time was over, more prayer was offered for the worship-in-song leaders, **Caleb Guertin & Thomas New** & his **Abundant Life Church** worship team—two of which were former campers &/or counselors! (An indispensable servant to this event was the host church’s worship leader & tech man, a.k.a., **Rick Taylor**, who not only did so much re: setup but played on the worship team as well). While this pre-worship prayer time was happening, I scurried backstage as quickly as I could to get my costume on for the next item in the evening’s agenda, the Time Machine drama. This event’s Time Machine drama was **“King Solomon’s Livery Crew”**. **“WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND?”** The very unique thing about my doing this particular drama of the dozens I could do, was that 21 years prior, in October of 2001, in this very same room, I performed my one-man Time Machine drama, **“King Solomon’s Chariot Keeper”**. Now, two decades later, I was back in this same room for another purpose [the first time it was the building dedication], with a much-expanded version of the same Time Machine drama, encompassing 5 other actors with me this time. We enacted what a typical day might be like in Jerusalem’s chariot city, the primary chariot city of three others in King Solomon’s kingdom, vis, **Hazor, Megiddo, & Gezer**. While we scurried about in the stables near the chariot arena, striving to get our work done before the Sabbath began that evening, all of the sudden, the Temple doors in the distance open. Two Levite temple guards guard the precincts of the Temple. I gather my livery crew around & muse re: the beauty, adornments, & glory of the Temple, which we, as members of the tribe of Judah, could never see. Only the Levites could get

close. I could only relate to my crew what a Levite friend of mine told me via stories his priestly uncle had told him.

"PREACHER"



When the *Time Machine* drama had ended, as always, I hastened backstage to remove my costume & accessories as quickly as possible. While doing so, my stagehands were placing my sermon object lesson table out in front of the audience. When I reentered the chapel as "me", I prayed, & then began to preach. My text: Psalm 84. This psalm was written by one of the sons of Korah. To understand & appreciate this psalm, one must understand the background of it. It is very obvious as you read the psalm, that its author *had been to* the Temple at least once on a previous occasion. Now, far away from the Temple & the glory of it, the author has a "holy lovesickness" for it, as Charles Spurgeon commented. The psalmist longs & yearns, & is even pale for its courts. He's sick at heart until he once again returns to the Lord's manifest presence there. I could think of no better text for this particular event, vis, a camp reunion, than Psalm 84. Every year, both staff & campers hate to leave camp when it's over, & can't wait to return the following camp season. Many get depressed, including myself, when the "afterglow" of camp dissipates when the event is over. Hence, both staff & campers alike easily relate to this "son of Korah".

"ALTAR WORKER"



When I finished preaching, the Spirit of the Lord was very manifest in the room, at both reunion services. THIS is why I planned & pursued holding these services in the first place. I wanted to “cuddle”, as I put it, in the Lord’s presence with both campers AND their parents. AND, our Lord gave me this gift. As our staff once again laid hands on the campers & their families at the message’s close, all of them just sat there, not wanting to leave. This is exactly what happens at camp each year. I’ve often said re: the primary purpose of our camps: “HSC camps are a place where we train teens & children to spend long periods of time in the Lord’s presence-& enjoy it.” Lord willing, my hope is to continue these Winter camp reunions.

“BEHIND THE 8-BALL?”



I wrote above that my friend Gary Buck starting attending the church he now pastors when he was 8 years old. [Ray Boltz](#), one of the most famous Christian recording artists in the 1980’s, recorded what was probably his most famous song-“Thank You”. One of the lines in the 2nd stanza reads: “You used to teach my Sunday School, when I was only 8...”. **King Josiah** of Judah began to reign when he was 8 years old (II Chr.34), (85% of all people who receive the gift of salvation do so between the ages of **5 & 14**). Our youngest son Caleb’s oldest son [Elliot](#) is 8 years old. Caleb was coming for the Kids Camp reunion service to lead worship for us. He had initially told Kim & me that he was not bringing Elliot. They live quite far from the church where the event was being hosted plus it would be a very late night, plus, that weekend was the commencement of Daylight Saving’s time! Hence, Elliot would also lose an hour’s sleep as well & he had church the next morning. I totally understood these reasons, yet, my heart was sick with sadness. “Elli-oh-tase”, as I call him, is very special to me. I prayed about it, then left Caleb a voice text. I asked him & his wife Elizabeth to prayerfully reconsider this decision. The age of 8 is such a very pivotal, impressionable time in a child’s life. I said to Caleb, “Just think how very few little boys could ever say, ‘I remember when I was 8 years old, my Dad took me to a church far away. He led worship, & my grandfather came out of a Time Machine & did a drama & preached. I saw some other campers there too. Dad & I got home really late but it was so worth it-I’ll never forget it’, et al.”. I then told Caleb I cannot count the times over the decades I have reminisced re: the time my Dad took me, out of his 6 children, on a trip with him to N.Y. I still remember his friend’s basement where we slept & details about it. I have also frequently mused for countless years on the unforgettable childhood experience of my brother Jimmy & I riding on my maternal grandfather’s milk truck in the wee hours of the morning. We’d go to the [Blue Ribbon Dairy](#) in North Jersey & get the glass milk bottles in metal crates. We’d then proceed to the ice house, where Pop would shovel ice onto the crates. Jimmy & I would stand on the truck

bed's running boards & deliver the milk to the customers per Pop's instructions. When we woke up the next morning Pop would give us a dime or a quarter for our services & we thought it was all the money in the world! I told Caleb this evening's event could be such a priceless memory for Elliot-& him! Up to the night of the Kids Camp reunion service, I did not know what Caleb & Liz had decided. Needless to say, I couldn't contain my joy to see Elliot show up with his Dad. Kim & I learned later that Elliot told his Dad, "It was the 3rd best day of my life"! I don't think we as his grandparents could ask for more.

"THE NOT-SO-SECRET FORMULA FOR BIBLICAL LOVE FOR GOD"



[3/24] As I look back over decades of preaching God's Word, I feel there are two main biblical passages that accurately depict my ministry: **I Cor.2:2**: "I am determined to know nothing when I'm among you, except Jesus Christ-& Him crucified." The 2nd: **Rom.11:22**: "Consider therefore, the kindness & severity of God...". It is the 2nd text that was a major point of my message to the audiences of the two camp reunion services described above. When Moses asked the Lord to show him His glory [Ex.33], the Lord replied that He would cause all of His *goodness* to pass in front of him. When the Lord did so, He described Himself with several aspects of His goodness (His kindness), but, He didn't stop there. He finished His Self-description with, "...but He, by no means, will leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the 3rd & 4th generations..." [Ex.34:7]. It was *after* the Lord said this, that His servant "bowed to the ground at once & worshiped" [vs.8]. The psalmist said, "*Power* belongs to You, God & with You, Lord, is *unfailing love*" [[62:11,12]. The **Lord Jesus Christ Himself**, upon entering a certain region, encountered demons screeching in terror of Him, shrieking, "What do You want with us, Son of God? Have You (Who *created the Lake of Fire!* (Mt.25:41) come to torture us (God's **severity**) before the appointed time?!" [Mt.8:29]. Yet, this same Jesus is the very same One Who became indignant with His disciples for deterring *children* from coming to Him-children, whom He took in His arms, laid His hands upon them, & blessed them (God's **kindness**) (Mk.10:13-16). The same Jesus Who in His compassion entreated burdened-down sinners to

come to Him (**kindness**) (Mt.11:28), also said to those who hated Him, “Depart from Me, you accursed!” (**severity**) (Mt.25:41). These are only *a few* of the *countless* biblical passages that depict these non-conflicting, adorable aspects of God. Countless American churches in the past 35 years, via the “Seeker-sensitive” movement, have robbed God of His glory & people of the full counsel of God by preaching the *kindness* aspect of God *exclusively*, for fear people wouldn’t come to their churches. Beloved? I have often said, “I’d rather have 10 people in my church who wanted *all* of God than 10,000 who only wanted half of Him!”. We have not even begun to know Him if we haven’t feared Him-the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ps.111:10). I have also often said that some of my most deeply profound times of adoration of God occurred after contemplating His fierce, yet, adorable wrath. May He steer His Church in these days by His Spirit to preach His whole counsel-starting with me.

****Kim & I wish you the most blessed of Easter Seasons! He is risen-indeed!***



****Caboose! Commentary Corner:*** [Our daughter Laura once said she’d love to have my old Bibles when I passed for all of the notes I have written in them over the decades. This was quite humbling to say the least, especially coming from one of your own children. Hence, I’ve decided to post each month random notes/comments from Bibles I have studied from]: **“If you ignore God in history, He will ignore you in eternity.”** [MRG 2/19/’23]



Caboose! On The Loose!

Ministry/events for APRIL & those not listed in last month’s newsletter:

March 17: Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: “The Procurator” logistics meeting

March 19: Grace Church/New Community Church, Wilmington, DE: *The Procurator* prep

March 26: Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: Preliminary stage setup for *The Procurator* production

March 27, 29: Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: continued setup & soundmen orientation meeting

April 1-8: "The Procurator" Via Dolorosa setup, rehearsal, & tear-down, Grace Church, Wilm., DE

April 2: Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: The Procurator cast rehearsal #1

April 4: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg./Network pastors meeting

April 5: Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: The Procurator cast rehearsal #2

April 6 & 7: "The Procurator" Via Dolorosa performances, Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: act & preach

April 16: Hockessin Evangelical Community Church, Hockessin, DE: Sun. a.m. service: preaching

April 17: Shady Maple Banquet Center, East Earl, PA: Tel Hai Camp Fundraiser: hsc representative

April 18: Elim Fellowship Children/Youth/Families interview & podcast with Kevin Neville

April 19: New Hope Community Church, Audubon, NJ: Elim area credential holders mtg.



*Michael is an ordained [Elim Fellowship](#) itinerant Stateside missionary & is also licensed to preach the gospel by [Immanuel Church](#), Wilmington, DE. [Caboose!](#) is also an affiliate ministry of [The Hopewell Network of Churches](#). For 14 years he served on various local church staffs as their children's pastor. Since 2000 Kim & he have lived by faith, [having no set salary, retirement, etc. to speak of](#). Yet-this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches God's Word & systematic theology, using both drama & visual aids, to all age groups, from children to senior citizens, either separately or combined. To help support this work [any amount no matter how small is greatly appreciated!], please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: [Elim Fellowship](#), c/o 1703 Dalton Rd., Lima, NY 14485, marking it "Preferred-Michael Robert [Guertin](#)" or you may click on the link below to give directly. Thank you! [click here](#)

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