

## NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2019

### PASTOR'S PAGE

First of all, I want to express my sincere thanks for all the prayers, cards, emails, and texts that I received expressing concern and sympathy for me and my family at the event of my son, Carson's, death. It was truly a shock and a devastating blow to have a 39 year old son die before his parents. As we say, that is not the natural order of things, parents are suppose pass on before their children.

Dying at an early age is tragedy enough, but to know that it was an unnecessary tragedy even makes it more heart-breaking. As I shared in church when my son was first hospitalized, his condition was an alcohol induced illness. Some people can drink excessive amounts and never be stricken with the illness that took my son's life. Even still, alcoholism that carries on for a lifetime is filled with its own tragedies in terms of health, relationships, and the loss of personal initiative. Carson clearly made some bad choices in his 39 years of life. But those choices do not totally define who he was as a human being. Carson was a good-hearted person. He loved life and was fun to be around. He enjoyed the mountains, skiing, and the alpine life ... as is evident in his choosing to live in Avon, Colorado. He had friends that I didn't even know, more so, than friends that I did know. But that happens as your children become adults. The event celebrating his life in Avon, Colorado which I attended on July 24<sup>th</sup> was filled with people who will truly miss him; people who spoke of the loyalty of his friendship, his good-heartedness, his smile and laugh, his openness to all people.



I will miss my son. That does not really even need to be said. I've always had a stark awareness for the damage that alcoholism, or any addiction for that matter, can cause in one's life.

I've always had an awareness of the pain that addictions cause in families and in the lives of those who love the addicted person. But now, not only do I have this stark awareness as "*mind knowledge*", I also have it as an emotional wound ... we call it grief. And so, I thank you my faith family for being with me on this journey of grief. You have made the pain more bearable, the sadness less devastating, the loss not as lonely as it could be. In closing, I share with you the words I wrote for the announcements a couple of weeks ago:

While grief on a certain level is a solitary journey, on another level, it is one where many can accompany you with their prayers, support, and love. So, I thank you, the people of Bethany, as you travel with me, in ways that you can, to make more bearable the loneliness of grief. You are my faith family and your prayers mean a lot.

Pastor Rick

### HEALTH NOTE

Almost two years ago I had an operation for prostate cancer. The operation was very successful. But as often happens with men who undergo this operation, sometime down the road the cancer re-emerges. Such is the case for me. Although it is a slow growing cancer and I have no symptoms whatsoever (in fact, I feel really healthy), the medical advice is to undergo radiation treatment at this early stage to hopefully stop the cancer growth altogether, or minimally slow the growth to even a slower rate. Doctors, in their perverse optimistic way, say that I will die of something else before I die of this cancer. At any rate (as of this writing) I do not yet have a date as to when the radiation treatment is to begin, but I suspect it will be sometime in August. I am told I will be able to continue to work, though I may have some fatigue throughout the treatment period. Treatment is a little over six weeks, five days a week. That does not sound like fun at all. I ask for your prayers and patience as I go through the paces of this treatment regime.

Pastor Rick