

## Those Who Serve

### January 3

**Opening Prayer** John Story  
**Song Leader** Joe Burnsed  
**Communion** Olan Bacon  
**Assist** Joe Burnsed  
**Assist** Kwesi Garvin  
**Dismiss Services** Charles Hall

**January 10**  
Olan Bacon  
Kwesi Garvin  
Joe Burnsed  
Charles Hall  
John Story  
Joe Holloway



*Colin has completed his trek across America.*

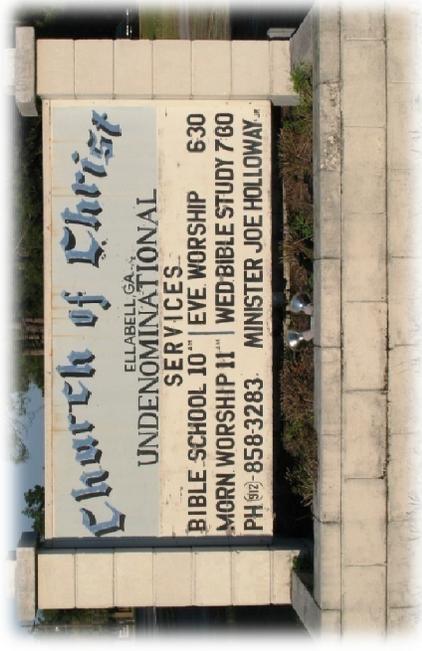
*Congratulations Colin!*

**<http://ellabellchurchhome.org/>**

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Ellabell Church of Christ  
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Ellabell, GA 31308

# Ellabell Church of Christ



## Speaking Where The Bible Speaks; Silent Where The Bible Is Silent

January 3, 2009

### Two Choices

**What would you do?....**you make the choice. Don't look for a punch line, there isn't one. Read it anyway. My question is: Would you have made the same choice?

At a fundraising dinner for a school that serves children with learning disabilities, the father of one of the students delivered a speech that would never be forgotten by all who attended. After extolling the school and its dedicated staff, he offered a question:

"When not interfered with by outside influences, everything nature does, is done with perfection. Yet my son, Shay, cannot learn things as other children do. He cannot understand things as other children do.

Where is the natural order of things in my son?"

The audience was stilled by the query.

The father continued. 'I believe that when a child like Shay, who was mentally and physically disabled comes into the world, an opportunity to realize true human nature presents itself, and it comes in the way other people treat that child.'

Then he told the following story:

Shay and I had walked past a park where some boys Shay knew were playing baseball. Shay asked, 'Do you think they'll let me play?' I knew that most of the boys would not want someone like Shay on their team, but as a father I also understood that if my son were allowed to play, it would give him a much-needed sense of belonging and some confidence to be accepted

by others in spite of his handicaps. I approached one of the boys on the field and asked (not expecting much) if Shay could play. The boy looked around for guidance and said, 'We're losing by six runs and the game is in the eighth inning. I guess he can be on our team and we'll try to put him in to bat in the ninth inning.'

Shay struggled over to the team's bench and, with a broad smile, put on a team shirt. I watched with a small tear in my eye and warmth in my heart. The boys saw my joy at my son being accepted.

In the bottom of the eighth inning, Shay's team scored a few runs but was still behind by three. In the top of the ninth inning, Shay put on a glove and played in the right field. Even though no hits came his way, he was obviously ecstatic just to be in the game and on the field, grinning from ear to ear as I waved to him from the stands.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, Shay's team scored again. Now, with two outs and the bases loaded, the potential winning run was on base and Shay was scheduled to be next at bat.

At this juncture, **do they let Shay bat and give away their chance to win the game?**

Surprisingly, Shay was given the bat. Everyone knew that a hit was all but impossible because Shay didn't even know how to hold the bat properly, much less connect with the ball. However, as Shay stepped up to the plate, the pitcher, recognizing that the other team was putting winning aside for this moment in Shay's life, moved in a few steps to lob the ball in softly so Shay could at least make contact.

The first pitch came and Shay swung clumsily and missed.

The pitcher again took a few steps forward to toss the ball softly towards Shay. As the pitch came in, Shay swung at the ball and hit a slow ground ball right back to the pitcher. The game would now be over.

The pitcher picked up the soft grounder and could have easily thrown the ball to the first baseman. Shay would have been out and that would have been the end of the game.

Instead, the pitcher threw the ball right over the first baseman's head, out of reach of all team mates. Everyone from the stands and both teams started yelling, 'Shay, run to first! Run to first!'

Never in his life had Shay ever run that far, but he made it to first base.

He scampered down the baseline, wide-eyed and startled.

Everyone yelled, 'Run to second, run to second!' Catching his breath, Shay awkwardly ran towards second, gleaming and struggling to make it to the base.

By the time Shay rounded towards second base, the right fielder had the ball . . . the smallest guy on their team who now had his first chance to be the hero for his team.

He could have thrown the ball to the second-baseman for the tag, but he understood the pitcher's intentions so he, too, intentionally threw the ball high and far over the third-baseman's head. Shay ran toward third base deliciously as the runners ahead of him circled the bases toward home.

All were screaming, 'Shay, Shay, Shay, all the Way Shay' Shay reached third base because the opposing shortstop ran to help him by turning him in the direction of third base, and shouted, 'Run to third!'

Shay, run to third!' As Shay rounded third, the boys from both teams, and the spectators, were on their feet screaming, 'Shay, run home! Run home!'

Shay ran to home, stepped on the plate, and was cheered as the hero who hit the grand slam and won the game for his team

'That day', said the father softly with tears now rolling down his face, 'the boys from both teams helped bring a piece of true love and humanity into this world'.

**Shay didn't make it to another summer. He died that winter, having never forgotten being the hero and making me so happy and coming home and seeing his Mother tearfully embrace her little hero of the day!**

Thanks to Brother Kerns of Booker, TX who sent me this story. I checked on the truth of the story and it appears that this is true although the child's name is Shaya. I passed the email along to those on our mailing list so this is the only new part some of you will read. This speaks to one of the core beliefs I have as a student of sociology and also how we put the ideals of the Gospel into practice in our everyday lives. It also made me wonder what I would do in this situation. When I was coaching, I am afraid of how I might have made this decision. It speaks to how mature we are as a society and as a people.

How we treat those less fortunate determines what kind of people we are. Think for a moment how our society treats the handicapped, elderly, children, and animals; those who cannot help themselves. You only have to watch the news to see how immature we still are in the world population. I believe we have gotten a little better and made some progress but there is much to do and more work left undone.

Society begins with each of us. Be on the lookout for Shay's in our life. The father was right. Shay came into the world to allow society to judge itself. You be the judge. How are we doing? Remember to judge those things we do but then also remember those things we have left undone. How do we treat those who can't help themselves? Remember each society is made of individuals...individuals like you and me. Making the world a better place begins with you and me. -JH

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Save** –Labels, Food Pantry Items, Change Jar, Cans, Medicine Bottles

**Social** – Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> after Bible Study

**Calendars**-on the back pew if you didn't get yours last week.

**Food Pantry**-Our food pantry has been depleted. Please consider canned good for the pantry as you shop this week.

*This is the first Sunday of 2010. You are in church. You made a good start...only 51 Sundays to go. Come then too!*