

**WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, September 3, 2024**  
**Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN**

**“Becky’s Birthday!”**

**READING:** Proverbs 31:10-12, 25-30 – A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life...She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her. Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all. Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Today is my wife Becky’s birthday. I won’t say how many years, but she is now just one behind me. I started dating her when she was just 16. We got married when she was 17. She was 21 when she graduated with me from Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, IL, and not yet 22 when Andy was born. Fifteen months later Dan entered our lives. At 29 she gave birth to our daughter Christa. By then she was teaching kindergarten at St. Paul in Royal Oak, MI, and I turned in her master’s thesis the day Christa was born. Two years later she moved with me to Evansville, IN, where she established the preschool program and put up with me as her principal. Three years went by and another move came, this one to Ft. Wayne and the Seminary. On August 20, 1990, we arrived at Grace, New Albany. While we have stayed put for the past 34 years, Becky has not been static.

She worked as a trainer for 4-C Community Outreach in Louisville, then started the daycare program at Epiphany, New Salisbury. From there she made the jump to public school teaching – kindergarten and first grade. During that time more college classes were taken in administration, and then she did an internship at Parkwood Elementary in Clarksville. From there she made the jump to principal of the largest elementary school in the district at that time, Wilson, in Jeffersonville. Ten years of that, then back to the classroom for a couple of years until retirement came some five years ago. Sit around and drink tea? No, not Becky. She established York Academy of Discovery in New Albany where she herself takes five 4-year-olds of various abilities and economic means and preps them for kindergarten four days a week from 8:30-4:00. And, what an education those kids get!

Now, besides her professional endeavors, there were eight grandchildren born in the past 18 years. Five of them were close enough by to warrant weekend babysitting and holiday and summertime sleepovers. There were birthdays to celebrate, graduations to attend, weddings to plan, our parents to tend to and mourn when they passed, confirmation parties, and scores of games to attend or listen to on her phone app. And she did all these things while married to a pastor who had a big parish to tend. I was out of the house nearly every Monday through Thursday with meetings, confirmation, pre-marital counseling, visitations, etc. And the weekends weren’t much better: Saturday services when I was preaching, Sunday mornings getting the kids ready for church by herself, and often classes or visitations after church. Had she been less understanding and less supportive of my calling, she could have made things harder for me. But she understood hard work and dedication because she practiced those things herself. She was the first to recognize my calling, and she honored God’s call by standing beside me all these years. She was a “helper fit for me”.

The pastor’s wife is often seen in the background of the ministry. She doesn’t preach sermons or do children’s messages. She doesn’t necessarily lead the Sunday School or greet people at the door. But a pastor’s wife does a hundred little things every month that enable her husband to meet the needs of the

congregation. Becky helped with a lot more homework than I ever did. She gave more baths, fixed more hair, washed more clothes, took more messages, affixed more Band-Aids, and dried more tears than I did because she was home in the evenings when I wasn't.

Now, she's not the only pastor's wife who has done all those things. Most of them are just as self-giving, supportive, and sacrificial as her. She just happens to be MY wife, and on her birthday I wanted to acknowledge her service to me and the congregation. Her help and patience made my years of ministry possible and more effective, and I wanted to say, "Thank you, Dear, and I love you."

The last chapter of Proverbs has a husband lauding his wife in much the same way. He stands in awe of her abilities and her efforts. He finds himself confident that while he is immersed in his ministry or vocation, she has his back. He not only trusts her, but he admires her skills and aptitudes. She is a marvelous match, and she is also a woman who honors God by serving her family, her husband, and her neighbors. Reminds me of the woman I have at home.

Since today is Becky's birthday, if you would be so moved, why not send her a birthday greeting? Her cell number is 502-797-7406. She'll be at first puzzled and then tickled that people know it's her day and are taking the time to send her blessings. Thanks for letting me express myself and my love for my helpmate. I'll talk with you next week. God bless you.

**PRAYER:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- 1) The trip to the Women's Professional Soccer match is cancelled. No one wanted to go!
- 2) **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 is a BIG DAY!** We will celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year in our Sanctuary with a **CONGREGATIONAL PICTURE** to be taken between the services. Want every possible member to be there around 9:15. After late service the Elders will serve their BBQ. Come!