

south shore fellowship

"it's all about relationships"

bridgman, michigan



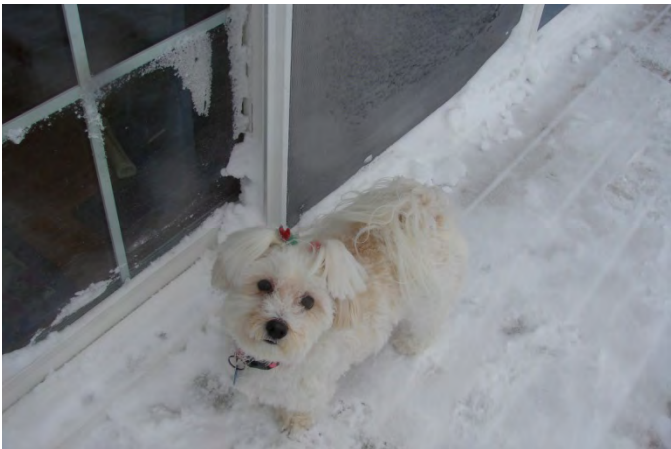
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Winter greetings from snowy Michigan! 😊

January 2009

It was a typical Saturday morning except for the 6 new inches of snow on the ground. Jack and I were up early, getting ready to meet with our special group at Roma's restaurant at 9 a.m. for S.O.A.P.'s. (Those letters stand for scripture, observation, application, and prayer. We meet together and read some scripture and then write in our journals and discuss what we have learned that day from God's word). It is a highlight in my week and I can't wait to get there.

We have two tiny white dogs...Max and Jazz...who can get lost in the snow drifts, so that morning I hurried out to shovel them a path to their out door bathroom facility...our back yard! Did I mention I was in a hurry? I didn't want to be late so I was taking big piles of snow and flinging them recklessly. I tweaked my lower back...nothing major, but it was uncomfortable. So, when I came back in I grabbed the bottle of Ibuprofen and swallowed down three pills with water. I shut the cabinet and then it hit me....



Jazz

I had grabbed the wrong bottle of pills. I said out loud, "Oh my god," and Jack heard me. He came into the kitchen and asked, "What happened?" I told him nothing. I was still processing what I had done. Maybe I hadn't done what I thought. But, what if I had? He questioned me again and I opened the cabinet and confirmed my fears. I did not take Ibuprofen. I had taken 3 of my prescription pills for anxiety and depression! Jack was still asking me what was going on and I was dodging his questions telling him we'd better hurry up or we would be late.

My mind was racing. Could I die from what I had done? How could I have been so stupid? I was so angry at myself. I finally told Jack what was going on and he freaked. He wanted to take me to the hospital. It was snowing hard outside. I wanted to get to Roma's. I just wanted to make everything go away. If only I could rewind the last few minutes and be more careful.

Jack got online and typed in my medication and found a number for poison control. He talked to someone and told her what I had done and she said we needed to get right to the hospital. I was

crying and pleading for him to just forget about it. I was so scared and embarrassed at my stupidity. I didn't want anyone to know what I'd done.

It took over half an hour to get to the hospital because the roads were so slick. Jack called Dave and Christina and told them what was going on and they headed up the Bible study. I was mortified that they knew what I'd done. At the hospital I had to tell the triage nurse the story and answer her questions. I just wanted to fade away. Then the doctor came in and I had to tell my story again...to him....each time I just wished the floor would open up and swallow me.

The Dr. came in and explained that there could be complications....such as seizures. So, he prescribed a delicious little cocktail known as liquid charcoal and an I.V. of anti-seizure medicine. He also said they wanted to keep me there for at least 12 hours for observation so, I was crying really hard by now. Not only did my carelessness ruin our Saturday morning but now we were going to have a hospital bill on top of it!! It felt like a bad dream only I just couldn't wake up!



Trent and Danny color their Sunday School papers.

All the while this was taking place I noticed something profound. My husband, Jack, was just looking at me with love and relief. He kept saying over and over that he was glad I was okay. The doctors and nurses that attended to me were so kind and non-judgmental. I kept wanting to explain myself to them. I didn't want them to think I was trying to commit suicide...or even worse, I didn't want them to think I was as stupid and careless as I seemed.

As the anti-seizure meds began to kick in I became more relaxed and calm and it was then that God was able to get thru to me. I thought about my children and my grand children. What if they had taken an overdose of something? Would I have sprung into action and gotten them help? You betcha! And yet, when it came to myself, I was willing to take a chance with my life because I was afraid of what people would think of me!

As ridiculous as that sounds I know that this kind of thing happens in the church on a regular basis. The Bible says in Romans 3:23 that ALL have sinned and fall short of God's standards. Yet, we all try to

pretend that we are okay. We don't want people to know how we are struggling or hurting. We are afraid that they will judge us and think us stupid. So, we put up our barriers of false pride and we hide behind our fake smiles and we walk through life telling everyone that we are okay.

The next day was Sunday and I was up in the front of our church leading worship. The Holy Spirit nudged me to tell everyone what had happened the day before. Talk about a power struggle!! Do you think I wanted *one* more person to know what a dumb thing I had done?

One thing I've learned over the years is to do what God is asking me to do. Why? Because it is ALWAYS the right thing to do!! So, during the worship time I told everyone what I just wrote here.

I wanted our people to know that while South Shore Fellowship is not perfect it will always try to be a place where people can come to get well. It will try to be a place where we will love you as is and while we pray for you, listen to you, & disciple you, we want to be like those kind doctors and nurses at Lakeland hospital....to serve you with a non-judgmental attitude of acceptance.

Jesus said these words in John 13:34,35 "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." Jesus loves us so much he died for us....while we were all messed up! There is nothing we can do to make ourselves "okay" to be in His presence. He is perfection. And through His love and acceptance we are being made perfect each and every day.

From now on, I know that I will be much more careful each time I take a pill. But I also know that I will make more mistakes in my life. I hope I have learned, however, that I am loved by God and nothing I can do...no matter how careless or stupid....will change His love for me. And the sooner I run to Him and let Him heal me....the faster I will get better! Oh...that goes for you, too.

SSF Updates:

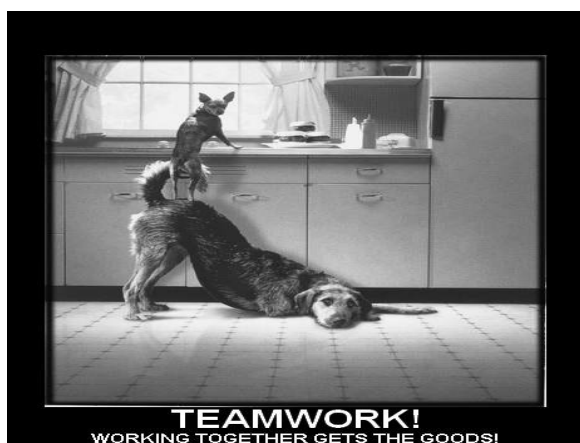
Doing Church as a Team-our sermon series has started.

1-18 "Spiritual Gifts-No Christian is without one".

1-25 "Finding Your Fit".

2-1 "Dream Releasers".

2-8 "Developing Servant Leaders"



Ed Duvall was our guest speaker 12-27-08

EXCITING NEWS! We now have a youth pastor! Chris Dewey came on board with us the beginning of January. He has lots of energy, loves kids, and loves the Lord with all his heart. Last summer Jack met him at WEKO Beach. He saw him pulling a surf board out of his car and of course he just had to meet him. That began a friendship centered around their love of God and all things surfing. Chris was very involved at his own church but God began calling him to partner with us and his leaders graciously released him to follow this call on his heart! We are excited to see what he and God can cook up for our kids in 2009!!



Billy, Danny, Abby, Alley, Ashley, Chris, Rosie & Chelsey

MORE EXCITING NEWS! We are adding another daughter to the Nordgren clan! Our son, Josiah, became engaged to Alexis Stephanos on January 1st. As soon as we got the news that she said 'yes,' I texted our grand daughter Bethany. She responded...."Yay! I have another aunt!" Alexis has been a part of our family for several years and our grand children love her so much...and so do we. Please pray for them as they make decisions on when to set the date and where they will live. Right now, Josiah is in California and Alexis is in Hawaii.



Josiah & Alexis

Aloha Ke Akua,

Jack & Maree