

Pastor's Corner 8-3-2025:

There are some weeks or fortnights that get indelibly marked in your mind. And I've usually found that there is some piece of media – music, movie, TV show – that you just happen to have been listening to that becomes the shorthand for that time period. The week my brother died it was this CD by a group called Butterflyfish. I was attempting at the time to build a VBS around the songs. Anyone who has done a GROUP VBS knows the format. There is a song of the day for 5 days. There is an overall theme song. There are one or two reworked hymns which are usually the best songs. This disc included a Doxology in that category. Day 4 – the highest attendance day, kids disappear on Friday – is resurrection day. That Butterflyfish CD had this incredible Day 4 song, “All Sad Songs”. “I know all sad songs have another verse/It's the one the heavenly choirs rehearse/For that day when the broken will mend/And the sad songs will end.” It is not Evening and Morning or O God, Our Help in Ages Past, but it was what I was listening to at the time. And it stuck. Putting that record in takes me right to that week or right to my brother.

When in the idiocy of the world we all decided to larp the black death, and all of a sudden my kids were home all the time. And the job of keeping a struggling church afloat became even tougher. Having sheriff's cars drive through your lot most Sunday's because you complied with the “no more than 10” rule by having 4 services instead of one, was memorable. Especially when you got more visitors than you expected because yours was one of the few doors open. The TV show that marks that time for me is Stargate SG1. COMET was showing three episodes an evening. I could DVR them and in 90 mins at the end of the day escape into the fantasy of stepping through the Stargate to a world that hadn't lost its mind. It's not that there weren't some theological works that also kept one sane, but echoing the Apostle Paul sanity isn't always about “prophetic powers and understanding mysteries and all knowledge (1 Cor 13:2).” Those things aren't nothing, but absent love, I'm still empty. And the can-do attitude of Col. O'Neill was honestly more important than any deep understanding. Which five years later we might just be entering into some reflection. I'm told I have to go see the movie Eddington in these matters. We'll see. Might still be too early. I can feel the anger still.

I suppose I should be getting around to a point. The past fortnight has been one of those. Having a major surgery at 86 years old focuses the mind, or at least it focused my dad's. He's been gathering all his “in case this all goes wrong” files and having “last suppers.” This has included many extra evening trips to correct or rescue from disaster various computer files and passwords. It has also included wrangling the entire family together on some type of decent behavior. This fortnight also has graced me with the gout flareup such that walking is difficult. Preparation for a Congregational meeting. Annessa, who keeps me sane

in the office, telling me she's getting a real job. And a few other sidebars. Somehow I stumbled upon Detective Bosch in this fortnight. A salty LA detective that never lets go of a bone. The note he hangs on his desk reads, "get off your a** and go knock on doors." He's got a sharp eye and plenty of courage, but Bosch's greatest attribute? Nothing life throws at him is too much if you just do the work. The truth reveals itself in the end.

"For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossian 3:3-4)" That's the apostle Paul in this week's Epistle lesson sounding very Bosch like. "Put to death what is earthly in you...put on the new self, which is being renewed." What exactly we will be, we do not know. But we press on. We do the work. Because the way, the truth, and the life are hidden in that work. And one day all will be revealed.