

Show Me Your Glory

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FAIRFIELD

April 2017

Having A Hospice Heart

Across the last twenty years, Shannon Hohlbauch has served as a nurse in many capacities. She has served in hospitals, schools, long term nursing home, prison, and now hospice. Each step along the way she states, "I feel like God has directed each one of them."



Shannon spent her younger years growing up in Marion, Illinois, and moved as a teenager to Clay City. She

attended church there with her family, and after her marriage, she struggled to find a church that she was comfortable in. As she traveled through Fairfield over the years, she recalls being drawn to First Baptist as she would drive by. As a teenager, she had attended Second Baptist Church in Marion along with Ed Falcomata. She knew Ed had served First Baptist so she thought that might be part of the draw, but it wasn't until her daughters were part of All State Youth Choir that she walked in the door. At an audition, the family was invited by Sheila Tomberlin to come visit and they did. They joined our church and have been members since 2010.

When Shannon and her family started attending church here, she was recently divorced with three daughters: Brooke, Gracie, and Hannah. She was living in Clay

City and working at the Clay City Elementary School, but there was a draw to be in Fairfield more. She prayed for guidance and trusted God to lead her where she should be. To hear her tell the story of what she prayed for and how God opened doors is such a blessing. She started a job at Fairfield Memorial that brought her to work here. She started looking for a house next. All the things fell into place. Clay City Bank opened a Fairfield branch, so she didn't have to start new accounts which helped when she applied for a mortgage loan. Then two houses met her requirements for size and price, but one was immediately off the market. So the right house was waiting for her, and it was only two blocks from the church.

Shannon thought that being in Fairfield would give her an opportunity to be in church every time the doors were opened, but that isn't quite what God had planned for her. She shares, "Maybe it wasn't 'church' he was wanting me to do, but he was wanting me to minister." Her job working in ICU led into contact with many families and even church members she hadn't met before. Working in the ICU, she was able to spend more time with people and did not hesitate to share her faith or to pray with families. As this job progressed, she witnessed end of life decisions for families and was drawn to how best serve them. She felt God was drawing her to serve in some sort of hospice capacity, and she was willing to go where needed. Shannon had seen hospice firsthand through different family members and knew the value of dignity in end of life.

Soon the opportunity opened up for a hospice position. While she was content with the hospital job she had, she was drawn to serving this population. Once again, she prayed and trusted God to guide her where she should be, and she is now serving as a hospice nurse through an agency in Mount Vernon.

While Shannon is happy working through the hospice agency, she is interested in someday developing a hospice house. Shannon explains that a hospice house is an alternative place for someone to be served when their own home is not the best option for end of life care. Currently if you wish to enter hospice and are unable to be in your home, you may have to enter a nursing home just for the hospice care. This is not always what a family might desire for the last days of their loved one's life. So along with some other people, Shannon has been praying for God to lead her in this ministry; she trusts that His timing will be right just as it always is.

The evidence of how God has worked in Shannon's life is clear when you talk with her. She is faithful and willing to serve where God leads her.

Audio transcript is available on
fairfieldbc.org

After discussing hospice care with Shannon, it seemed appropriate to further educate our congregation on the subject. Praying this helps us to begin to see hospice in a new light.

What is Hospice?

Hospice is many times misunderstood. These are some facts about what hospice is and helps us to serve one another:

- ◆ Hospice is a special concept of care designed to provide comfort and support to patients and their families when a life-

limiting illness no longer responds to cure-oriented treatments.

- ◆ Hospice care neither prolongs life nor hastens death. Receiving hospice care does not mean giving up hope or that death is imminent. The earlier an individual receives hospice care, the more opportunity there is to stabilize a patient's medical condition and address other needs.
- ◆ Hospice staff and volunteers offer a specialized knowledge of medical care, including pain management. The goal of hospice care is to improve the quality of a patient's last days by offering comfort and dignity.
- ◆ Hospice addresses all symptoms of a disease, with a special emphasis on controlling a patient's pain and discomfort. Hospice patients are living with a wide range of diagnoses including heart disease, cancer, dementias, lung disease and others.
- ◆ Hospice deals with the emotional, social and spiritual impact of the disease on the patient and the patient's family and friends.
- ◆ Hospice offers a variety of bereavement and counseling services to families before and after a patient's death.
- ◆ Hospice is not a place. Hospice services can be provided to a person wherever they live.

Serving families entering hospice care is about bearing God's image. Sometimes serving in this ministry is simply a ministry of presence or volunteering to help with various needs that the family may have. A recent Christianity Today editorial reminds us, "Instead of requiring the weak and hopeless to seek us out, we should be seeking them out, bringing with us the presence of Christ. And, if sensitively timed and led by the Holy Spirit, we may be asked to speak of the 'reason for the hope that you have' — even in the face of death. It's the uniquely Christian hope in the Resurrection that should compel us to share it with those who need it most."

Selecting Songs for Worship
Cheryl Harl
Praise Team Part 4 (continuing series)

Cheryl Harl has been saturated with song from the time she was in the womb. Her mother sang praises to God while pregnant with her children and taught them to sing praises as well as soon as they were able to talk. Cheryl recalls her first memory of singing being around the table with her mom playing guitar. “She told Denice to sing higher than lead and for me to sing lower than lead. We learned harmony this way.” Cheryl gives all glory to God that she was raised in a family that loved to sing praises and has been gifted with the ability to do so.

In her role as part of the Praise Team, Cheryl spends a considerable amount of time studying scripture and selecting songs that highlight the Word. She says that before a song is selected to sing she goes through it line by line to meditate on whether the song is scripture filled, magnifies God and His greatness, and encourages the church to seek Jesus. Since this is such an important task, she does not take the responsibility lightly confessing, “I spend many hours praying about this, praying the songs, and mostly looking at scriptures.” She adds, “Since God has allowed me to seek Him in this manner, I can’t even begin to express the joy that fills my soul.”

Cheryl feels that for her personally, the most important part of worship is seeing Christ. Through her daily Bible reading and meditation, her goal is to be transformed into Christ’s image. She states, “When I am shown Christ through the holy Word, I can’t help but be changed, to respond in repentance, praise, thanksgiving, and confession; then I want to proclaim it to the world.”

Psalm 63

*O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek
you;
my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for
you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is
no water.*

*So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.*

*Because your steadfast love is better than
life,*

my lips will praise you.

*So I will bless you as long as I live; in
your name I will lift up my hands.*

*My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich
food,*

*and my mouth will praise you with joyful
lips,*

*when I remember you upon my bed, and
meditate on you in the watches of the
night;*

*for you have been my help, and in the
shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.*

*My soul clings to you; your right
hand upholds me.*

*But those who seek to destroy my life
shall go down into the depths of the earth;
they shall be given over to the power of
the sword; they shall be a portion for
jackals.*

But the king shall rejoice in God;

all who swear by him shall exult,

for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

We are thankful for Cheryl and the way she prepares for worship, but she reminds us, “All glory be to God alone, for it is by His great grace that I can utter any of these words.”
