



NASHVILLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
FIRST ADULTS
F.A.I.T.H. WATCH

Faithful-Active-Involved-Trusting-Hoping
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Everybody
Likes a
good story.

by Tony Rankin

Long before books on tape (and now CDs), books downloaded on iPads and Nooks, and even stories read on the radio- stories have been told. Some were around the campfire, others were written, and some were told while sitting on the back porch or on the couch while sipping on sweet tea. Life experiences were shared because people wanted to know about each other, relationships centered on connections, and our ancestors wanted us to know about their world.

Story telling was a gift and was offered with nothing expected in return.

I always loved being with my granddaddy Plunkett. As early as I remember he took me to Dewey, the barber on the square in Lawrenceburg, TN. (I quit going to him when he nearly cut my ear off because his hands were



shaking!) He farmed cows and crops and told experiences of being a carpenter. In fact, the tool-box that holds the golf balls in my office was a gift that he made for me. When I was old enough to start thinking about

driving, we used to ride in his old GMC truck to the mail box (one-quarter of a mile long but seemed shorter when he would see how fast his truck would go on gravel) and on Hwy 64 to show me Mennonite buggies, a movie theater that ran movies for 25 cents, and men who whittled on the court house benches.

During my high school years he began to struggle with what my parents called “hardening of the arteries” and he began to display some indications of irrational thinking. I don’t know what his official diagnoses were or should have been but I don’t doubt he had

“The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”
Galatians 2:20NIV

some heart problems and realized his mind was slipping and became illogical, unhinged, and bizarre at times. But I still wanted to hear his stories.

One day he wanted to tell me about a purple spaceship that had landed next to the big tree in the front yard. He indicated that it had small green men that come down a set of stairs and walked around the yard and looked into the fields and then reloaded before flying slowly away. The moment intrigued me.

Months later he told me had been fishing at the blue hole portion of the creek where he, my dad, and I had fished dozens of times when I was younger. I inquired with some concern but did not worry too much because I knew he didn't always think or remember things clearly. The blue hole fishing area add grown up with high-level brush and weeds and had not been fished much (if at all) for years. He told me he cleared a path with a long machete and had grabbed the old cane pole from the rafters of the dusty, musty detached garage. The truck had been parked for a while!

He told me he caught a 22-inch trout. Unbelievable, clearly. We used to get excited when we caught 6-inch brim, bluegills, or small bass. I asked what he used as bait and he said "Just a little bit of a cold hotdog." Even though we had done that before it generally didn't produce much luck. But I loved his passion, excitement, and creative details even in his lost and confused mind. He could tell some great stories!

A year or so later I was at the farmhouse for a visit with my granny (who taught me about cooking biscuits!). She was cleaning out the freezer and asked me about a tightly wrapped foil package that she found in the back of the

top rack. She said, "Is this yours?" It was not mine- but it was a 22-inch trout!! Unbelievable- he really did catch the fish. This was in the early 80s- long before you could buy fresh fish at Krogers and there was no Publix or WholeFoods. He definitely could not buy it at Simms Market. My granddaddy had taught me lesson-

Stories are a gift and will be remembered forever!

Hints for good story telling:

1. Make sure your audience wants to hear what you desire to tell them.
 2. Think through whether or not the story is going to add to the experience and does not keep you in the spotlight.
 3. Tell your story in less than two minutes.
 4. Just give the important details- leave out the unnecessary facts and this will allow the listener to use some imagination. If you have a lot of details that you feel like you've got to say, use them in your upcoming novel.
 5. Include the emotions without letting them take over the story.
 6. Allow other persons present to feel like their story can be told next and realize this is not your chance to remain on stage and tell another one until others have had a chance.
- Tell your story and inform upcoming generations what you remember about life and meaningful moments (before you have heart issues or loss some of your capacity to think as clearly as you do now).

Frank Lewis

Gene and Margaret Lewis were my paternal grandparents. Gene owned a small grocery store and during the Great Depression he kept a lot of families well fed by allowing them to purchase their groceries on store credit by simply signing their names on a statement. Years later I grew up in the house that my grandfather built and lived in during the Depression. One day while going through a number of boxes in the basement, we found those statements with the words CANCELED stamped across them. My dad told me that he never expected to be paid back. He was also the church treasurer for the Vinesville Baptist Church in Birmingham during that time. I have a check he wrote to pay the preacher during that same time period. It was made out to a college student who would later go to Southern Seminary and pastor several prominent churches. His name was Herschel Hobbs.



Right: Pastor Frank's mom's parents, Robert and Annie Laura Page, sitting at a church banquet.

Left: A birthday, I'm guessing mine. It's me and my siblings with my Granddaddy and Grandmother Lewis.

Across town, my maternal grandparents often hosted the traveling evangelists or guest preachers in their homes for dinner when the church had a Revival. My mother got to meet R.G. Lee as a little girl. This seasoned preacher and famous pulpiteer taught my mother how to catch crawdads with bacon by the creek that ran by their house. During World War II, my grandmother was a riveter for an aircraft manufacturer where she also stitched parachutes to help the war effort.

Joe Fitzpatrick

I have always liked the reference in the hymn Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart which honors those who have reached the age of maturity as the "snow-crowned age." The text is based on Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice." It is important to note Paul wrote these words while a prisoner in Rome. This hymn is a wonderful reminder of our call to be joyful and give thanks regardless of our circumstance.

The first two "snow-crowned aged" I remember were my great-grandmother, "Granny White." and Grandpa Dawes. I will forever cherish those times when I stayed with "Granny White." She would fix me fried chicken and red velvet "Granny" cake. The toys she offered were kitchen utensils, pots, and pans, offering my first experiences as a percussionist. Lying in front of the water cooler in the summertime, we would listen to the Chuck Wagon Gang on the radio late at night. "Granny" was a saintly woman who loved the Lord and lived a life of gratitude as one of the grand "snow-crowned aged".

Grandpa Dawes was a big time Oklahoma rancher, who took me fishing, hunting, horseback riding, cattle feeding, and riding on the tractor. We also had great fun watching Gunsmoke and John Wayne movies together. I will never forget picking large, ugly green worms from tomato plants to use as bait for fishing on the "back 40" pond. Grandpa never had

a chance to fish that day because he was constantly taking the fish off my rod. I caught at least ten large catfish that morning and was the most fun I ever had fishing. "Granny" and Grandpa Dawes lived through the Great Depression and had a much more difficult life than I, but they knew what it meant to live a life of gratitude and rejoice regardless of circumstances. I express thanks and honor to all of you who are among the "snow-crowned age" and are the backbone of our church and are the foundations through which we serve as the hands and feet of Jesus. We salute you and exhort you to continually "Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!"

Lori Towns

There are a lot of things I loved about my grandparents. Any time spent with them felt special. My grandmother Tyree was particularly special because she lived with us much of my life. I loved being in her presence. She was who I came home to from school, she was who I learned how to clean house from. I loved watching Name that Tune and the Lawrence Welk Show with her. It was a gift to experience so much of life with her. Family trips and picnics, everyday play, church, and so much more. She was a steady, faithful presence, my friend, and inspiration.

PAM'S Corner



I hope you have enjoyed this unique issue of FAITH WATCH. I had the pleasure of hearing Tony share the importance of telling and writing down stories for grandchildren a few years ago at a conference. After asking him to share, I thought what a fun way to get to know our ministers on another level.

I can remember when my grandfather would pick me up at my house in Madison and as we drove by the National Military Cemetery on our way to his house in East Nashville, he would ask, do you know how many dead people there are over there, I would spend a brief moment trying to determine how to count all the markers, only to have him reply, "All of them!," he would always chuckle because he knew I would try to count every time.

I hope you will spend some time reflecting and writing about your favorite members.

Pam

Tim Wildsmith

My maternal grandmother, Nana, worked as a traveling salesperson for a company called Nearly Me. In her basement home office was an old hutch that had an 8-track player installed inside of it. When I was a child, she and I would go to her office and listen to Elvis Presley on that 8-track player. Nana loved Elvis, and because of her, so do I.

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108 Seventh Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203

Anniversaries 50+

**Ron and Daisy Hamlin
10-11-63**

**Tommy and Serrena Vaden
10-14-55**

**Bill and Annette Howse
10-19-63**

**Curtis and Shirley Freed
10-20-56**

**Eli and Barbara Landrum
10-30-65**

In Memoriam

William Fred Kautzman

UPCOMING DATES

October 18: Day trip to Whitwell, TN
to Buttonwillow Civil War Dinner Theater.

October 21: WOW Lunch cost, \$6.00 |
Program: Come and meet the lady and hear the story of how she kept a secret for 42 years.



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