

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

WEDNESDAY's WORD – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler

to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week

October 3 in the year of our Lord 2018 - #760

BLESSING

Last Sunday my dear friend, Pastor Gilbert Romero, and his Bittersweet Gospel Band were at Bermudian. It was glorious! Pastor Gilbert and I have been friends for a long time. This once gang member & drug dealer who was captured by the Love of Christ and became a Church of the Brethren pastor has been such a blessing in my life! The extreme extrovert Gilbert & the introvert Larry make a strange couple, but we love each other. When Pastor Gilbert was on Program & Arrangements Committee for Annual Conference, it was at his recommendation that I was asked to be an Annual Conference preacher in Boise, Idaho in 2003, one of the greatest privileges of my life! I've had the joy of taking a number of groups to Mexico with Pastor Gilbert and his work among the poorest of the poor around the landfill in Tijuana. Those trips were life changing for nearly everyone I've ever taken there. Pastor makes me laugh ... he makes me think ... he challenges me ... he loves me. And so of course when he comes to Bermudian I want to be a blessing to him.

Pastor Gilbert isn't crazy about PA Dutch food. He says it is too bland! When he travels back here he travels with his own personal bottle of hot sauce. Cathy wanted to cook him some real Mexican food. Even though she wasn't feeling well, she cooked & cooked & cooked. As one of Pastor Gilbert's songs goes, "*Beans and rice and Jesus Christ ... everything's right.*" He was so surprised. And the whole band loved the Mexican food added to our Carry-In table. Cathy blessed Pastor!

Brad Replogle had heard me talk about Pastor Gilbert's hot sauce and so went to a friend who makes hot sauces and asked for a bottle of his hottest stuff made with ghost peppers! The little bottle had a fiery red glow to it. It made me wince just looking at it! But Gilbert was elated! And he doused it on everything. Though he wouldn't admit it when he came to me his eyes were watering a bit. "*That's really good stuff!*" Brad blessed Pastor!

The reason for the east coast tour of the Bittersweet Gospel Band is to raise funds for Bittersweet Ministry. The music is great! Lively! Inspiring! But the Love Offering is the "*why?*" behind the event. When it was all counted our sisters & brothers gave \$1248. Our Church Family blessed Pastor!

My point ... my thought today ... is that there are so many ways you can bless another person. And certainly we have been blessed by Jesus so that we can be a blessing in His name to others. A visit blesses. A card blesses. A call blesses. A post blesses. A gift blesses. A prayer blesses. A hug blesses. Today, I invite you to stop and think. Who in my circle of friends, neighbors, acquaintances, associates ... who among them needs a blessing of the Love of Christ today? And how might I share that blessing? You might not be one to cook the "beans & rice" but maybe you are the one to give a call and say, "*I was just thinking of you today.*" Your friend might not appreciate a bottle of ghost pepper hot sauce but might be overjoyed with a

Frosty from Wendy's. Could you help with an overdue electric bill? Could you invite them out to eat? Would that caring note from you make their day? Help with housework? A drive through the country? Pass along a book that has blessed you? A hug that says, "*I really care!*"? There are so many ways to be a blessing. And our Gracious God has lavished you with blessing upon blessing. Won't you be a blessing today?

"The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped." Proverbs 11:25 Message

"And God is able to shower all kinds of blessings on you. So in all things and at all times you will have everything you need. You will do more and more good works."

2 Corinthians 9:8 NIV

And YOU are a blessing to me! Pastor Larry <><