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The Old Church Pew

By Carol Wallace
Kingsport, Tennessee

In my kitchen, between two windows, sets an old church pew made of beautiful wood with an arched window design on either end. It bears the scars of years of use and movement from place to place. The back of the pew has a hymnal rack.

Over the years, I would see an old pew and admire its beauty and think about a place that one might fit in our home. On a lark day with a dear friend, we entered a store on Broad Street in Kingsport, TN and there it sat. The old longing returned as the size seemed right and it was in good condition. I called my husband and ask him to measure the space between two windows and it was a perfect fit. Being conservative, my mind went back and forth as to purchasing or just admiring and moving on. I caved! The bench found a home in my kitchen and has brought pleasure to the eye from its age and beauty, curious comments as to its origin, and served a useful purpose as extra seating for family and guests.

Time has allowed a gentle whisper to ponder its possible stories and history… Many souls have spent time here, each one unique in God's eyes. He knows the number of hairs on each head that has bowed in humble prayer as they sat or kneeled in His presence.

Families have sat together in worship of our Lord Jesus Christ, sharing in song, prayer, and listening as a Pastor preached from God's Word. These families have "unofficially labeled" this old pew as their very own each Sunday morning!

The Holy Spirit has spoken to hearts as people have sat here, perhaps holding on to the pew in front or bowing their head when Jesus came knocking, and as hearts were convicted by God's amazing grace, a rushing forward to profess publically faith in our Savior. Later, a story has been shared…"I was sitting on this very pew, on this day and the Holy Spirit spoke to me and I invited Jesus into my heart!"

Young couples have courted on this pew, sneaking shy looks and smiles during the service and holding hands and dreaming of their future; writing notes on church bulletins. Minds may not have been totally on the service but parents had them in the right place to begin a courtship!

New parents have brought babies and sat with thankful hearts proudly smiling during the service as the Pastor recognized the arrival of a precious blessing from God to their family.

Children have played, climbed, slept, cried, and giggled as the pew became their regular Sunday morning place to be, as families trained up their children in the way they should go. Parents have made hand motions and given stern looks to quieten these children as the service proceeded; little legs have received a hand of correction or a helping hand out the door for a little conversation about behavior in church.

Tears have been shed and the old pew has witnessed the sadness of funerals of loved ones gone on. It could bear witness to words of comfort from friends and family spoken in reassurance and love. It has held up under the strain of sorrow and heartbroken grief.

Happier days have seated friends and families of a bride and groom joining their lives as one in the presence of God. The wedding march begins and the old pew creaks as the people stand in honor.

Homecomings, baby dedications, children's programs, Easter and Christmas pageants, graduation recognitions, young men and women leaving for military service, Vacation Bible School, and revivals have come and gone as years go by and the old pew served its purpose for each individual providing a place to rest, worship, share, pray, sing, cry, laugh and rejoice.

One can imagine a propped elbow on the arm of the pew with head in hand as a person drifts off for a moment during a service. This old bench could have overheard a bit of gossip exchanged between friends as they greeted each other. Sleeping during service and gossip wouldn't happen in God's house of prayer, would it???

The old church pew might reveal many stories and memories if it had the ability to do so. Only Jesus, the keeper of the heart, knows the beginning and end story of each precious soul that has spent time on this pew. Jesus looks upon the heart and knows each allotted day.

What about you, do you have a pew story?

Matthew 10:30; 19:5; 21:13
Proverbs 2:6
Psalm 90:10; 122:1

My husband, Larry and I reside in Kingsport, TN and we recently joined the fellowship of Buffalo Ridge Baptist Church in Gray, TN. We grew up in Fall Branch, TN and were both saved at a young age. We have two children, Jonathan, and Kala and one grandson, Gaige. I am a retired Administrative Assistant and have enjoyed serving in various Children and Ladies Ministries through the years.

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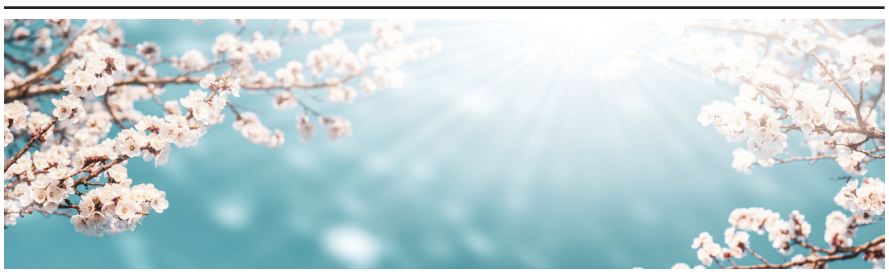
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