

# .†. is my Shepherd

*The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*



**BOISE, IDAHO**

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## THE MOON

Several years ago, July of 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin climbed out of the lunar model Eagle and took their historic first steps on the moon. Several months later Buzz Aldrin told about a little known "first", that also took place that day.

Before lift-off, Aldrin was looking for a way to honor God's presence in the Apollo 11 space mission. He talked about this with his minister, Dean Woodruff, of Webster Presbyterian Church in Houston. When in their discussion the Christian sacrament of communion was mentioned, a plan emerged.

Two Sundays before the moon shot, Aldrin participated in a small, private communion service at Webster Presbyterian, after which Dean Woodruff broke off a corner of the communion bread and gave it to Aldrin along with a tiny chalice and some wine. Aldrin sealed these in plastic packets and safely stowed them in his personal preference kit (each astronaut was allowed to take a few personal items with him).

July 20, 1969, was a Sunday. At 3:17pm (Houston time) the Eagle touched down. Aldrin took out the communion elements from their flight packets and put them on a small table in front of the abort guidance system computer. Then he called Houston, and asked for a few moments of silence.

In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, he poured the wine, watching it curl gracefully up the side of the chalice. From a slip of paper he read the biblical passage, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5, RSV). And then he took communion.

So it was the first food eaten by man on the moon was done in the name of our Lord.

## REFLECTIONS

### BROKEN BRANCHES

By Stan Manley  
...is my Shepherd editor  
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It was Wednesday evening, prayer meeting had just concluded. People were standing outside enjoying the conversation of friends looking for children and making an effort to head for home. Nothing unusual about the scene but something was about to happen that I was privileged to witness, not only visually but also spiritually. It would appear to be an insignificant occurrence at first but would have a lasting impact on me.

The scene begins to unfold with some children playing on a bench that encloses a beautiful flowering fruit tree. At one point the playing included a little girl reaching out and swinging on a branch of the small tree. The branch broke and the little girl, along with the branch full of beautiful blossoms, fell to the ground.

Almost immediately an adult who had anticipated what was going to happen hurried toward the group of children, scolding them as she went. As they parted to let her through, I saw for the first time the little girl.

She was not hurt, but on her face was the look of embarrassment and humiliation. As one finger found its way to her mouth, she began nervously pulling on her lower lip. She received another warning; while at her feet lay the beautiful branch full of blossoms, damaged beyond repair. It was then that it happened, it is still fresh in my mind and the impression forever in my heart. A young man emerged from one of the small groups of adults and approached the circle of children and the little girl, still standing at the foot of the tree with the look of hurt on her face.

He reached down and picked up the broken branch and began to remove the smaller branches and twigs and after collecting a (Cont.)

my shepherd is not affiliated with any church or religious belief.

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(Cont)handful presented the little girl with a beautiful bouquet of blossoms buds and leaves. As she reached out to accept the gift, a beautiful smile broke across her face and a warmth filled my spirit.

I watched as the young man proceeded to give bouquets to all the other children from the broken branch. The courtyard was soon filled with children running to their parents, playing and clinging to their beautiful bouquets of flowers.

My thoughts quickly went to the broken branches in my life and how so many times Jesus came and out of the embarrassment and hurt, presented me with a beautiful bouquet. Not condoning the deed but influencing the circumstances to effect the results so that I may enjoy His glory. Out of the struggles of life, if they are committed to Him, there is no failure in defeat or glory in victory but only service to the King. Release to Him today, all of your broken branches and receive His beautiful bouquet.

Stan Manley

## I BELIEVE IN MIRACLES

I believe in miracles;  
they happen every day.  
If we but look more closely,  
they're just a breath away.  
One needn't be a poet  
to see each new surprise.  
Greater things can happen yet,  
more than we surmise.  
I used to be a cynic.  
I couldn't really see,  
until my eyes were opened  
to the miracles of thee.

*Diane D. Lake*

**MISSION STATEMENT:  
TO ENCOURAGE THE FAITHFUL  
TO SAVE THE LOST**



**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY  
SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVES  
IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE  
ETERNAL LIFE. JOHN 3:16**



**IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, DO IT TODAY.**

## HIS MYSTERIOUS WAYS

It was 5:30 when my three children and I left the grocery store, so in order to be home before dark, we took the short cut. A cold mist fell-the dreariness of a February dusk in Michigan. When we came to the train tracks, my six-year-old, Lynda, tripped and fell, and her right foot became wedged between the wooden tie and the steel track.

"Untie your shoe, honey, and slip your foot out," I said. But Lynda had already pulled her shoelace into a tight knot. I tried to unravel the knot with my house key, then a hairpin. Still it held fast. I tried yanking Lynda's foot free of the shoe, but it wouldn't come. I had to get the knot untied. Starting to worry, I scooted my other two children down the embankment, then dropped my bag of groceries and ran back to Lynda. Just then I felt a faint vibration. An approaching train! I dug at the knot, ripping my nails, bloodying my fingers. Lynda and I both broke into fearful sobbing.

"Oh, God," I cried, "Help us. Please, God." To little faces stared up at me from the ditch, terror stricken. My eyes then strayed to the spilled bag of groceries. "The ham! The ham!" I screamed in a strange fit of revelation. I grabbed the canned ham, ripped the key from its bottom and peeled off the lid. Using the sharp edge of the lid, I severed the shoelace and pulled Lynda out of her shoe. In the glare and roar of the oncoming train we tumbled into the ditch, safe.

Now, I've heard it said that God gives us what we need when we need it. But I've since wondered, what did the Lord give me just then? The sharp lid on a can of ham, or an imagination sharpened to the quick?

Helen S McCutcheon, Lakeland, Florida  
Guideposts January 1987

**HAPPY  
4TH  
OF JULY**