

Norman Stanley Doty Sr.

March 26, 1934-March 12, 2010

Rev Dick Piscatelli, pastor

“Norm, you have pancreatic cancer” Came words from the doctor just about 4 years ago. They weren’t words neither he nor his family wanted to hear. They had enough knowledge about this particular cancer to know there weren’t going to be many more days on this earth. Not many survive this cancer. How long? Who could tell? Only God knew. And with that news Norman Doty’s life and the lives of his family changed forever. You see, it was four years ago in June that Norm’s brother Don, who is a retired United Methodist pastor, sought me at Conference to introduce himself and to ask if I would visit with his brother who just found out he had cancer. I said I would. It wasn’t long after I became pastor here that I “popped” in to visit with Norm and Nancy. What a great visit. He was doing well at that time and very optimistic. He had various other ailments and was having chemo and I believe radiation treatments. He was handling them well. God had given him the strength to receive all these treatments. He approached them with the idea that these would help contain that nasty cancer in his body. And with that thought, with his faith in God, he told me he was doing fine. I prayed for him and his treatments asking God’s blessing and I left that day hoping to see him in church. And there they were the next Sunday full of energy and just about every

Sunday after that as well. And when I would ask how it was going, he would say it was going well, he was still here. The God Lord was still working it out. Sometime along the way, on one given Sunday I invited him to come and have us lay hands on him and be anointed with oil as Scripture invites us to do. Many came and laid hands on him and we prayed for God's will to be done, that the cancer would be controlled, and that he could tolerate his treatments. I believe, and Norm would tell me, that Sunday morning was a changing in his life. And each time he went to his doctor the doctor would be amazed that Norm was still kicking. He would say he was on borrowed time. But Norm knew it was the grace and mercy of God that was at work. And this went on and on and on for four years. He outlived most cancer patients with this same disease. Even when his heart would act up, he fought the good fight, kept the faith, and relied on God to give him the strength to make it another day. Even when he had a stroke back a few months ago he looked at it as a blessing because somehow the pain from the cancer subsided for awhile. He enjoyed a few pain free days, even being able to take fewer pain pills. I believe his motto was to take it one day at a time. Give God thanks for each new sunrise that came, each new day to praise his name, and each new adventure he would see. Through these 4 years he was allowed to see three grandchildren get married, one great-grandson born, and to know one more was on the way, which was born this past Tuesday. Along with that God permitted him the strength to be Nancy's

helpmate in the kitchen at fish fries, chicken dinners, funeral dinners, potato bars and a whole lot more. God allowed him to make many trips to Ohio with Nancy to spend time with her mom and enjoy one holiday after the other. These past four years have been filled with many rich blessings, more than one could count.

So we rejoice today. We rejoice not only for these last four years Norm dealt with cancer and other illnesses, but we rejoice because his fight is over, he has won the victory. As we have already sung, the victory is ours, not on our own merits, but through the merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whose victory over death and the grave we will celebrate in just a few weeks. *“Oh victory in Jesus my Savior forever, He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood. He loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is due him, he plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.”*

I love that song at a time like this because we realize though those who are left behind suffer pain in their loss and lots of grieving goes on, the one thing we celebrate is the victory. You see, because of Calvary sins have been forgiven. Because of an empty tomb we have eternal life. And today we celebrate Norman Stanley Doty Sr.’s victory in Jesus for his Savior plunged him to victory beneath the cleansing power of his sin cleansing blood. Praise the Lord!

You have already heard his granddaughter Kara share a few words about her grandfather. Then you listened to his kid brother Don as he brought more about his

“older” brother, things that touched his heart. It’s great to hear about Norm’s life, a life of a guy who was fun loving, a hard worker, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend. When God knitted Norm Sr. in Mabel Husted Doty’s womb, God made someone special. When you read his obituary he was a man who loved to serve, whether it was at his work at Fiatallis, in the Army serving his country, or as a fireman on the Williamsville fire department or serving the Williamsville United Methodist church where he was a lifetime member, and to top all that off, he belonged to the Masons and served as village officer for several years. Whew! That sounds like a pretty complete life to me. Throw in his time with family and enjoying trips and camping and even a canoe ride once, well you get the idea that no grass grew under Norm’s feet. And he was a great handyman. There wasn’t anything he couldn’t fix....or at least attempt to fix.

He loved camping and cooking. The family laughed as they shared some of their stories, like the times Norm would cook outside even though it was raining. It didn’t bother him; he just got an umbrella and stayed with it until all the food was cooked. Instead of singing “I’m singing in the rain” he would sing “I’m cooking in the rain.” Or his and Nancy’s canoe ride with the family that ended up like one of those crazy vacation movies some of you might have seen. He fell out of the canoe. Nancy says somehow she got a bump on the head, and bruises elsewhere as they had to carry their canoe and they all were soaked. But they had a great family

time, many laughs, and good memories. However, I understand that was the only canoe trip they made.

He was a practical joker. In fact little Nancy, the daughter, has learned well from her dad about that. He was always playing practical jokes, like the time when he would put little match box cars on a neighbors door at Christmas time because this lady used to love to look out windows at cars and say how nice they were. When he was confronted he would say, "Who me?" Or maybe putting peanut butter on steering wheels, or switching lunches, and I'm sure there were other things they didn't want to tell me for fear I might use them today. And his little brother remembers back many years ago when Norm was driving they had an old truck that the family had which didn't have seats in it because they wore out. So they used old milk cartons to sit on so they could drive around. Well one day when mom and dad were gone, as the story goes, Norm wanted to take the truck for a spin but it would not start. Someway he talked his little brother into getting in the truck as he pulled it around the block with a tractor or something to try and get it started. Anyway as Norm pulled the car around and it got to be going faster I guess Don's job was to pop the clutch and get it started. Good plan, so it seemed, until they came around the corner, over the tracks, and did I tell you they didn't have seats, but old milk crates?...so somehow as Norm pulled the truck instead of popping the clutch, Don fell out of the truck, therefore could not steer it, and lo

and behold it crashed into someone else's parked truck. Not sure what their parents did, but they paid to get the other car fixed.

Then there was the sheep they raised in the house, bottle fed it and it was like a pet dog or cat one would have around the house. It was allowed to come upstairs once in awhile from the basement where it was kept and they would play with it. A friend they had in FFA needed a project and asked if he could borrow the sheep. So they took the sheep to the farm and it wasn't but a few weeks that the sheep was gone. You might say he couldn't adjust to the farm life. He was a city sheep, being bottle fed and trained as a pet.

Norm had a sense of humor that was enjoyed by all. Even his in-laws enjoyed it. He could get away with things others weren't able to.

He had his very favorite chair in his house that he loved to sit in with his ice tea right there beside him on the table. Then there is Lucy, their cat, who loved to be with Norm. In fact she sat nearby in his hospital bed the past few weeks. He and big Nancy as Nancy his wife is often referred to, love to read. They loved going to bed and read. In fact little Nancy said that rubbed off on her because she also loves to read.

Nancy remembers at her wedding Norm had just gotten out of the hospital because of a bad back. She said instead of him helping her down the aisle, she had

to help her dad. And I guess the wedding was too much for him for he ended back in the hospital a few days later.

He was a bus driver for the school and all parents felt very safe for the kids who rode on his bus. Besides he had that kind of voice that just one word brought silence and the kids would straighten up.

He enjoyed family and he loved his grandkids and he was loving every moment he had with his great grandson Matthew. His one biggest disappointment was that he didn't get to see the newest grandson Nicholas Scott Doty born this past Tuesday, March 16. But you know, I bet he had a chance to see him in heaven and tell him a few things before he came to this earth. Maybe that's why there was a delay in his birth so Norm could see and talk with him and get him prepared to be part of the Doty clan. Isn't God amazing in what he can do?

We know Norm will be missed, but we also know that he lived a full life and made an impact on many people's lives. He made lots of friends and served his community, his church, his family well. I'm sure when he was greeted at the pearly gates he heard those great words of praise from His God and from Jesus himself, "Well done my good and faithful servant. Much was given to you to accomplish. Much you have done. Welcome to your new eternal home where you can rest from your earthly chores and get ready for what I have planned for you here."

So it is time to bring this message, this service to a close. We do it with gratitude and thanksgiving to our Father in heaven who has allowed us the pleasure and the privilege of knowing and being around Norman Stanley Doty Sr... He comes from a fine stock and has passed that on to his family. He has left you all with many stories to tell, many blessings you've shared, and much love that he gave to all.

One last piece of information I will leave you with. I was told that his grandfather or it might have been his great grandfather had a great friend that all of us know and he palled around with some. His name, Abraham Lincoln. Isn't that amazing?

So to the family of Norm Doty, to wife Nancy, to son Buddy and his wife Deanna, to daughter Nancy and her husband David, to granddaughter Kara, to grandsons Nathan and wife Elizabeth, David and his wife Rachael, and Robert and his wife Andrea, and his great grandsons Matthew and Nicholas, as well as his brother Don and wife Helen, we say we know your pain. God offers his grace and his loving arms to comfort you. God knows your pain in losing a loved one for he also lost a Son, a Son who died in order that we all could have eternal life through him.

I believe Norm would say these words to all of us who are gathered here today to celebrate his new life in heaven. "Don't weep for me for my pain is over,

I have fought the good fight, I've persevered to the end and now I rest from my labors. It is time to get on with your lives and to remember the stories, the good times, and the fun times. I'll see you again sometime over here. I'll keep the light on and the ice tea cold."

Now as we conclude this service of celebration may we remember the God Norm Doty served is the same God that reaches out to us and offers his arms in comfort and healing. His words of invitation are "Come to me all who have burdens and I will give you rest."

So until the day we meet again on the other side of this life, may the peace, the grace, and the mercy of our great and loving God always be with you. So we don't say farewell or good bye. We say to Norm, "Until we meet again, save us a place in heaven." So may it be.