



Lorraine L. Summers Feb. 21, 1922-April 4, 2010

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The other day after we got word that Lorraine had gone to be with the Lord my wife Carole asked a question I never thought about before. Sometimes when I do a Celebration of Life message I end with that person being in heaven doing something that they did on this earth. One time it was a farmer who used to love to cut grass. When he moved to town from the farm he still went out and used his good old John Deere mower to mow his yard, so I had him manicuring the grass in Heaven. And if one happens to be a singer I talk about singing in the heavenly choir, or if one plays an instrument I say perhaps that person is in the heavenly orchestra. Well that leads me to Lorraine E. Summers new life in heaven. Think about it. What is God going to have Lorraine E. Summers do for the rest of her eternal life with him? I mean, on earth she was nurse most of her life. Well, if there is no more

suffering nor pain, nor illness, nor death, nor colds, nor flu, nor cuts or bruises nor anything like that in heaven you can see my dilemma. What is God going to do with a nurse? Isn't that something to ponder? I mean perhaps she will tug at Jesus' robe to ask him from time to time what he wants her to do. She will remind him of her resume, though he already knew it, after all he helped prepare her life and gave her the gifts she needed in this life and then in her new life in heaven. Perhaps he could find a place for Lorraine in the mending room. I was told she loved to sew things. I guess when the girls were younger she sewed for Linda and Lois. After I left the other day Linda called to tell me she remembered something special about her mom. She said she made her and Lois' wedding dresses. That must have been something. I bet there was lots of bonding time during those moments. I bet the girls had to learn the patience that Lorraine always seemed to have had. You know maybe God could use a good seamstress to help make more robes for the angels...or maybe she would be in training and doing the hemming and alternations for new angels who enter heaven.

Or maybe they might need some help in the knitting room making new kits for new arrivals in heaven. Now I know they don't need them often because, well heaven is a great place where the temperature is always just

right. It's neither hot, nor cold. And it certainly a whole lot cooler than the other place that people might end up in for eternity.

Maybe she will gladly sit on a financial board if one is up there. But I guess maybe there does not need to be one for you won't need money there. God owns it all and part of the free gift of life is a free ride in heaven. You may work, but no pay. You won't need it. Or maybe she will be a teacher. That could be. You see that was a great joy for her. She loved teaching at the Capital Area Vocational training. And I know she knew her stuff, especially nursing stuff. I watched recently as she watched a tech trying to put a line in her arm. He tried as hard as he could but just could not get it done. They were going to have to call an "expert" to do it. Even a doctor, if need be. If I could have read her mind it might have been saying, "Sonny, if I had taught you how to do this, this would have been done right the first time."

Yes, Lorraine the teacher. Lorraine the nurse. Lorraine the financial secretary, the trusted board member, co-leader this year of the Williamsville United Methodist Women Organization. Add to that a wonderful wife, great mom, a spoiler of grandkids and great grandkids, a servant of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, a friend to all, and you have the life of Lorraine E. Hartsfield Summers.

God certainly blessed her with two wonderful daughters, 5 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. Add to that the many friends she has made over the years and you have the wonderful person God created in her mother's womb some 88 years ago. Plus, let us not forget her wonderful late husband Jack because they shared 48 years together until his passing in 1992. "Great is thy faithfulness" one could say about Lorraine Summers, that soft spoken person with a big huge heart.

Lorraine loved gardening, having flowers around the house watching hummingbirds and doing lots of things for others. She loved to travel with her friends to wonderful places overseas like Sweden, Denmark and other Scandinavian countries. She's been to New York City and other places in this country. She went to Poland on a mission trip and took books with her in order to teach kids and adults how to speak English. But the most exciting trip she perhaps ever made was her trip in a pick-up truck with her husband Jack back driving on the old roads on their way to Alaska and back again. No super highway back then. It must have been a great adventure.

Lois and Linda said their mom was the care giver of the family. Maybe it was her nurses training, but I think really it was her motherly instincts as well as her dedication of taking care of all God's children. I believe it also was the gift that Jesus gave to her as well before she entered this world. She wanted perhaps, to teach her

daughters and others what Jesus meant about being a servant. I bet if she had been one of Jesus' disciples on the last night of his life on this earth after Jesus washed all the disciples feet she would have said, "Jesus, now let me wash yours."

Those of you who knew Lorraine well knew she was still working right up to the time she had her heart attack, about a month or so ago. The girls said when they released her from the hospital to enter the Lewis Memorial home to recoup and have therapy getting ready to return to her home, her church, and her duties at work and elsewhere, the person who was filling out the forms asked, "Lorraine, when did you retire?" One of her daughters blurted out before Lorraine had a chance to answer and said, "Just the other day." That was Lorraine all right. In fact when we didn't have a president for United Methodist Women she decided she would do her part to lead the women during our meetings. She saw a need and she took on the responsibility.

The girls remember her using her knitting machine to knit all kinds of things for them. She made hats, mittens, scarves and several of other things. But here is something funny. Every year she would knit something for the kids and grandkids I guess, wrap the presents up in boxes and paper and at Christmas time put them under the tree. When the gift was opened and held up the person who got it could see it was not finished yet. It became a

joke each year because she began her projects but they were not finished on time so they would give them back until she found time to finish them, which she did. The girls said if you showed her a picture of something you wanted her to make, given a little bit of time, she would be able to figure it out and make it.

Many years ago when she and Jack moved to the Williamsville area they joined the Williamsville United Methodist Church where her two daughters grew up and were married. She served the church well and ever since I've been here she has served on the finance committee and on our Administrative Council. Though soft spoken I think she was like Teddy Roosevelt, you know 'walk softly, speak softly, and carry a big stick.' Or like the old phrase, "When EF Hutton speaks....you stop and listen."

The girls remember with fond memories that when it was your birthday the tradition was you could ask for whatever food you wanted and she would fix it for them and their friends at a birthday party. Linda remembers one time she asked for one of her favor meals, liver and onions. Sure enough, at the party there it was liver and onions. And they added, mom didn't fix any other food but what you ordered. It was either eat that or go hungry. Linda didn't say how many of her friends came back the following year or if they asked her first what her mom

was cooking before they said they would attend. Linda said she never asked again for liver and onions. I'm not sure if she eats it now without remembering that birthday party.

A trip to Disney World with grandkids and Jack was a fun time as well.

I shall remember her as being the ticket taker and ticket seller at fish fries, chicken dinners, and most fund raisers. She did her job with dignity, with honor, with gusto and with dedication. We could joke, poke fun, welcome those who came and serve our church. She, like our treasurer was happy when we didn't have to worry these days about paying the bills. It made meetings so much better. God is good!

She now rests from those labors. I shared with Linda and Lois that I thought what an appropriate time for their mom to go to her heavenly reward. You see she died on Easter morning. I was thinking of the hymn I always open worship with on Easter morning. "Up from the grave he arose, with a might triumph over his foes. He arose a victor of the dark domain and he lives forever with the saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah, Christ arose."

Now apply that to Lorraine E. Summers. On April 4, 2010, at 2:55 a.m. earths time, God's messenger came to her room at St. John's Hospice and whispered in her ear, "Lorraine, it's resurrection time. It's time for you to

join Jesus on his trip to heaven where you shall join with family and friends that has gone on before you.” Today we celebrate her rising, her victory over this world’s chaos and she has risen and will live forever with other saints who have gone on before her, and with those of us who one day will join her.

And when she crossed her finish line the first one to greet her with hugs and kisses was her husband Jack. He has missed his bride and is glad they have been reunited. Perhaps they danced their way to the throne of grace where Lorraine heard God say, “Welcome daughter. You have done well. You have accomplished much. You have left a great legacy for your daughters, your grandkids, your great grandkids and your friends. Now it is time to rest from your labors and enjoy the freedom and blessings of the gift of eternal life which my Son Jesus has given to you. Receive your crown and take your place among the saints and go take up residence in your mansion that Jesus built for you and Jack.”

So though it is a sad time for we who are left behind we rejoice because Lorraine is now in a place where there is no more pain or suffering. She has found the answers to some of her questions in this life. But most of all she has found her eternal home. So today, Linda, Lois and the rest of you her family and friends, rejoice, for this is the part of her faith she was waiting for. She has gone home. She is at rest. Now may her God, her Savior,

continue to bring comfort to us all until we meet again. And one more thing. I don't know what Lorraine will be doing up there, but I can tell you this....she will do it with gusto, she will do it well. We might just add, "Jesus thanks for allowing us to have Lorraine. We release her to you today." And then I might add blessings to her and her new life through Christ, for that is what the Easter season is all about. "Easter people raise your voices in Christ's victory over the grave, for he has paved the way to eternal life for all who believe in him. Till we meet again in a grand reunion in heaven, peace be with us all, amen.