Part V: Atheism’s Legacy —

God Does Not Exist: It Is Unreasonable

Note: Throughout 2008, my articles (6 part series) focused on Christianity’s Legacy. You can read those bi-monthly apologetics on the Chapel Foundation website [www.fortsnellingmcf.org]. Beginning with the first issue of 2009, I’m sharing with you the legacy of atheism [those who disbelieve in the existence of God or deities].

It is only by faith that we can discover truths that are beyond the domain of reason and experience. I would argue that the atheist’s gamble against God’s existence is clearly unreasonable. Faith is in no way opposed to reason. Given what we know and don’t know about what is to come after death, there is no alternative but to weigh the odds. And when we do this, we discover that from the perspective of reason itself, faith is the smart bet. It makes sense to have faith.

Stephen Jay Gould examines the scene in the Gospel of John in which the apostle Thomas refuses to believe that Christ has risen from the dead. Thomas says, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.” (John 20:25)

So Jesus appears to Thomas and allows him to see and touch, and Thomas says, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus responds, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:29) Gould comments, demand for direct evidence (especially to support unusual claims), represents the first commandment of proper scientific procedure.”

To Daniel Dennett, faith evokes images of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny; beliefs appropriate for children but certainly not for adults. Carl Sagan writes that while science “asks us to take nothing on faith,” religion “frequently asks us to believe without question.” From Richard Dawkins’ point of view, faith is “a state of mind that leads people to believe something — it doesn’t matter what — in the total absence of supporting evidence … Faith seems to me to qualify as a kind of mental illness.”

At first glance the atheist hostility to faith seems puzzling. We frequently make decisions based on faith. We routinely trust in authorities and take actions based on their claims that we don’t or can’t verify. Take history: I wasn’t present at the Battle of Waterloo, but I am quite convinced that it happened. Or take geography: I have never been to New Zealand, but I am quite sure that it is there. I trust the word of others who have been there, and I trust

“God is, or is not. There is an infinite chaos separating us. At the far end of this infinite distance a game is being played and the coin will come down heads or tails. How will you wager?”

— Pascal, Pensées

“I cannot think of a statement more foreign to the norms of science … then Jesus’ celebrated chastisement of Thomas. A skeptical attitude toward appeals based only on authority, combined with a

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President's Corner

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus!

Let me explain why I am writing this article for The Snelling Spirit, as immediate past president.

Bob Bernloehr, the Foundation's President is at Woodwinds Hospital, undergoing tests. Please pray for him and his wife, Connie, for healing and encouragement.

The Bob Peterson family, on the other hand, is involved in a wedding this weekend, 1 August at the Chapel, of great-granddaughter Raven; Chaplain Beale officiating. I mention this as we also were notified yesterday, 29 August, of Clarys' sister's passing in Rogers, Arkansas. The funeral service is Monday morning in Rogers, creating a dilemma for the many relatives coming to the wedding, and especially for Clarys and me. We won't be able to attend the funeral.

Life is like this, full of unscheduled dilemmas, illness, deaths, frustration, stress and disappointments. In times like these we need to turn to the Word of God for encouragement in our faith. I was led to Psalms 142-143. Please read them. A familiar Old Testament figure, King David, is going through some overwhelming troubles in his life, and attacks by his enemies. In verse 142:3 he states, "My spirit is overwhelmed within me, then you knew my path." He is praying to God. In verse 143:4 he repeats, "My Spirit is overwhelmed in me, my heart is desolate." David is actually saying to God, I am deep in trouble, overwhelmed. I am being attacked by my enemies. I am depressed, discouraged, lonely; it's breaking me down (stressed). Then David cried to God, as we should in our times of disappointment, stress, etc. "Hear my cry, Lord, I am very low, bring my spirit and body out of this prison." Psalm 142:6-7 (interpretation by Bob P and paraphrased.).

Friends, there are words in these Psalms written for us today. They are words of encouragement and instruction, for all of God's people. Overwhelmed by life's troubles and afflictions, such as I referred to in my opening remarks.

The truth is most of us live in a world where life can be overwhelming at times. Like David, we can face a ton of troubles; we are afflicted even in our righteousness. We are confronted with sickness, deaths of loved ones, times of discouragement, confusion, not knowing what to do next. We are faced with attacks by Satan against our faith.

It is in difficult, overwhelming times we need to learn to seek God and bring our needs before Him. David said, "I poured my complaint before him, I showed him my troubles." Psalm 142:2 "In my faithfulness answer me." (Psalm 143:1) Are you overwhelmed by circumstances in your life? Do what David did.

"I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsts after thee, as a thirsty land" (Psalm 143:6). "Deliver me, O Lord from my enemies: I flee to you to hide me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: Thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of

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The Board welcomes input from members. If you have an idea or suggestion, please feel welcome to contact the appropriate Board person.

Scheduled Board Meetings:

Saturdays (9:00 a.m.) ...
12 September 2009
14 November 2009 ... in the Fed Bldg

Sunday (1:00 p.m.) ...
20 December 2009 ... in the Chapel

If you would like a copy of the 2008 Annual Report, please secure one in the Fellowship Hall or call the Foundation Office at (612) 970-7866 and leave your name/mailing address that we may send you a copy of this impressive report of last year's accomplishments.
maps. Similarly: I express a lot of faith in air traffic control and the skill of the pilot every weekend I board an airplane to travel to/from Fort Snelling and my Army duty station.

We rely so much on faith that modern life would become impossible were we to insist on evidence and verification before proceeding. How do I know the food I purchase is safe to eat? How can I be sure my car is going to stop when I apply the brakes? Why should I take it for granted that the person whose voice I hear at the other end of the telephone is really there? How do I know my vote for a presidential candidate will be counted as a vote for that candidate?

One answer is that I know because “the system” works. I eat my cereal, and I feel fine. I drive my car, and it gets me to work. And so on. I can trust technology, banking, maps, and democracy because they deliver the goods. But this is no argument against religious faith because, for the believer, faith also delivers the goods. William James makes this point in his classic book *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Faith in God, for the millions who have it, is routinely vindicated in everyday life. People come to trust God for His fidelity and love in the same way they come to trust their spouses — through lasting and reliable experience. In fact, religious people trust God more than they trust airlines, maps, and computers; and this, too, is based on empirical evidence. Computers crash, maps become outdated, and airlines screw up. But God does not.

Religious faith is not merely about what satisfies human wants and needs, but also about what is true. Faith makes claims of a special kind. The soul is immortal and lives after death. There is a God in heaven who seeks to be eternally united with us. Heaven awaits those who trust in God, while those who reject Him are headed for the other place. And so on. These claims are impossible to verify and hence they are radically different from claims about New Zealand or Waterloo. I could validate my faith by going to New Zealand or by combing through the historical records pertaining to the Battle of Waterloo. But I have no way to know whether my soul will outlive my body or whether there is actually a supreme judge in heaven. These things are outside the bounds of experience; and, therefore, they are outside the power of human beings to check out. As Immanuel Kant showed, they are beyond the reach of reason itself. But Kant did not conclude from this that religious faith was unreasonable. On the contrary, he argued that beyond the confines of reason, it is in no way unreasonable to make decisions based on faith.

The important point here is that in the phenomenal or empirical world, we are in a position to formulate opinions based on experience and testing and verification and reason. In that world it is superstitious to make claims on faith that cannot be supported by evidence and reason. Outside the phenomenal world, however, these criteria do not apply, just as the laws of physics apply only to our universe and not to any other universe. Thus when Christopher Hitchens routinely dismisses religious claims on the grounds that “what can be asserted without evidence can also be dismissed without evidence,” he is making what philosophers like to call a category mistake. He is using empirical criteria to judge things that lie outside the empirical realm. He wants evidence from a domain where the normal rules of evidence do not apply. Beyond the reach of reason and experience, the absence of evidence cannot be used as evidence of absence.

Remarkably; there are many people today who wish to conduct their lives on the presumption that there is no God, no afterlife, and no reality beyond the world of experience. These are not only the self-proclaimed atheists but also the agnostics, whose professed ignorance translates into a practical atheism. Often with a self-satisfied smile, they say, “I cannot believe because I simply don’t know.” This attitude is peculiar for two reasons. First, it is entirely incurious about the most important questions of life: Why are we here? Is this life all there is? What happens when we die? These great mysteries press themselves on all humans who ponder their situation; and yet there are people who refuse even to consider those mysteries. Second, they continue to demand evidence of a kind that is simply not available here. Their attitude is also bizarre because it shows no hint of an awareness of the limits of reason. Empirical evidence is unavailable because the senses cannot penetrate a realm beyond experience.

When reason has reached its limit, there are two possibilities: We can stop, or we can continue onward. Some thinkers, such as philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, argued that beyond what we can assert by reason

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Special Patriotic/ Veterans Events...


Sun, 20 Sept 09 — POW/MIA Remembrance — remembering those who are prisoners of war and those missing in action.

Sun, 27 Sept 09 — Gold Star Mother’s Day — a day to recognize American women who have lost a son or daughter in the service of our nation.

Sun, 8 Nov 09 — Veterans Day Remembrance — recognizing U.S. veterans of all branches of the armed forces.

Sun, 6 Dec 09 — Pearl Harbor Remembrance — recognizing survivors ... with the tolling of the ship bell for those who have passed away since last year.

Mark your calendar with these dates ... and join us at 11:00 a.m.

(Continued ... from page two)

uprightness. Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name’s sake: for thy righteousness’ sake bring my soul out of trouble.” (143:9-11)

Be encouraged. God is still in control and has everything under control! He will bring you and us through these difficult days now, and ALL the days ahead. God always keeps his promises. Let’s all trust him; a brighter future lies ahead.

I feel this poem, “The Weaver” is appropriate at this time:

My life is but a weaving between my Lord and me,
I cannot choose the colors He worketh steadily.
Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow, and I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper and I, the underside.
Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why.
The dark threads are as needful in the Weaver’s skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.

— Grant Colfax Tuller

In His Service,
Bob Peterson
Immediate Past President

World-Wide Communion Sunday —
4 Oct 09

Many Christians differ in the way they interpret the meaning of the Last Supper. There are three main views:
1. The bread and the wine actually become Christ’s body and blood.
2. The bread and wine remain unchanged, but that Christ is spiritually with them.
3. The bread and wine unchanged becomes a lasting memorial of Christ’s suffering.

No matter which view, all Christians believe that Christ died on the cross for our sins and will come to us and bring us to His kingdom and glory.

Jesus did tell us to “do this in remembrance of me.”

Let us gather together around the world to profess our faith in remembrance of Christ.

We Remember 9/11

It’s hard to believe it’s been 8 years since the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. How life has changed!

We now take off our shoes at the airport, toss our nail clippers, lotion, candy and gum to board a plane. We also open our bags, and purses for inspection before entering a sports event.

We must never forget those innocent people who boarded a plane or merely went to work that day, or the families who still mourn their loss.

Next time you visit Fort Snelling National Cemetery, be sure to take a moment and visit the new Afghanistan & Iraq monument dedicated to the memory of the soldiers who died fighting for not only our freedom but also that of the Iraqi people. (To locate this monument, if you stand at the main flag pole and face north the monument is about 1 block down on the right side of the road).
we should assert nothing. "We don't get to the bottom of things," Wittgenstein wrote, "but reach a point where we can go no further, where we cannot ask further questions." To the query; "What lies beyond death?" Wittgenstein refused to answer one way or the other. He certainly didn't, with the misplaced confidence of Richard Dawkins' or Sam Harris' answer, "There is nothing." He couldn't say that because he didn't know.

This response — "I don't know" — is an expression of a kind of agnosticism. It involves a suspension of judgment in the face of ignorance that is clearly superior to atheism. Yet curiously this form of agnosticism is shared by the religious believer. The religious believer also does not know. The Bible says in Hebrews 11:1 that faith is "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." If the believer knew, there would be no question of faith. Consider this: I haven't been to heaven, and so I cannot say that I know there is such a place. But I believe that there is. Faith is a statement of trust in what we do not know for sure. Faith says that even though I don't know something with certainty, I believe it to be true.

From this we draw a conclusion that will surprise many atheists and even a few Christians: doubt is the proper habit of mind for the religious believer. There is a story in the Gospel of Mark 9:17-24 about a man who came to Christ to cure his son of possession by an evil spirit. Jesus said to him, "Everything is possible for him who believes." And the man replied, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" This is every true believer's prayer. The Christian has faith even though he is not sure, while the unbeliever refuses to believe because he is not sure. But they agree in being unsure. The skeptical habit of mind is as natural to Christianity as it is to unbelief.

Religious faith is not in opposition to reason. The purpose of faith is to discover truths that are of the highest importance to us; yet are unavailable to us through purely natural means. Faith is an attempt to reach beyond the empirical realm and illuminate the questions of life — Why am I here? What should I love? What should I live for?

Confronted by the supreme questions of human existence, philosopher Brian Magee writes, "We are like soldiers besieging a castle who have sought endlessly and in vain to find a way of penetrating its walls and whose only hope, whether they realize it or not, lies in a different mode of entry, a tunnel that will bring them up inside the fortress without penetrating the walls at all." This account is an excellent description of how faith seeks a route that has been closed to reason. The goal is the same, to find the truth; but faith journeys on when reason has given up the chase. If the agnostic wishes to put down his satchel and quit, he cannot begrudge the believer who is willing to try a new path to reach the summit.

The believer uses faith to gain access to a new domain, that of revelation. There is no other option here because reason has quite frankly run out of steam. The believer hopes that revelation will expose truths otherwise hidden to reason. The believer embraces faith not "blindly" but rather with his "eyes wide open." The Christian relies on faith not to suppress his native powers, but to guide them so that they may see more clearly. He expects revelation to reactivate and guide his reason. Augustine's dictum is applicable here: "Believe and you will understand." That is why religious believers are so perplexed when atheists accuse them of discarding their intellectual abilities. Social critic Michael Novak says that "using reason is a little like using the naked eye, whereas 'putting on faith' is like putting on perfectly calibrated glasses ... to capture otherwise invisible dimensions of reality."

While we have knowledge of an idea or proposition, we have faith in a person; the one monotheistic God, and in His authority and reliability. If there is a divine being who has created the universe with special concern for us as human beings, then it is entirely reasonable to suppose that, absent our ability to find Him, He would find His way to us. The religious believer holds that when man is unable to reach up to God, God can reach down to him. Faith is a kind of gift; it is God's way of disclosing Himself to us through divine revelation. If God did not do this, we have no other way of finding out about Him and He would remain detached from His creation.

Why should we choose to have faith in the presence of doubt? This central human conundrum is the subject of Pascal's famous wager. Pascal argues that in life we have to gamble. Let's say you are in love with a
woman. You have been dating for a while, yet you cannot be certain what marriage to her for the next several decades is going to be like. You proceed on the basis of what you know, but what you know is, by the nature of the matter, inadequate. Yet you have to make a decision. You cannot keep saying, “I will remain agnostic until I know for sure.” If you wait too long, she will marry someone else, or both of you will be dead.

In the same way, Pascal argues that in making our decision about God we will never understand everything in advance. No amount of rational investigation can produce definitive answers, as what comes after death remains unknown. Therefore, we have to examine the options and make our wager. But what are the alternatives, and how should we weigh the odds? Pascal argues that we have two basic choices, and either way we must consider the risk of being wrong. If we have faith in God and it turns out that God does not exist, we face a downside risk: metaphysical error. But if we reject God during our lives, and it turns out God does exist, there is much more serious risk: eternal separation from God. Based on these two possible outcomes, Pascal declares that it is much less risky to have faith in God. In the face of an uncertain outcome, no rational person would refuse to give up something that is finite if there is the possibility of gaining an infinite prize. In fact, under these conditions it is unreasonable not to believe. Pascal writes, “Let us weigh up the gain and loss involved in calling heads that God exists. If you win, you win everything. If you lose, you lose nothing. Do not hesitate, then: wager that He does exist.”

Pascal exposes the pose of the atheist who fancies himself as a brave and lonely man facing the abyss. We admire a man who is steadfast in the face of unavoidable adversity. If we knew we were alone in the universe and that death was the end, then there is no alternative but to stand tough in our mortal skins and curse the darkness. But what would we think of a man who stands ready to face a horrible fate that he has a chance to avert? If you are trapped in the den with a hungry lion, and there is a door that may offer a way out, what sane person would refuse to jump through the door? Viewed this way, the atheist position becomes a kind of narrow-mindedness, a reckless man’s decision to play Russian roulette with his soul.

Atheists are aware of the power of Pascal’s wager. Christopher Hitchens can do no better than to launch an attack on Pascal as a “hypocrite” and a “fraud.” Richard Dawkins proclaims Pascal’s argument “distinctly odd.” And why? Because “believing is not something you can decide to do as a matter of policy. At least, it is not something I can decide to do as an act of will.” Dawkins is right about this, of course, but the real issue is whether he wants to believe and whether he is open to the call of faith.

Pascal writes that there are two kinds of reasonable people in the world: “those who serve God with all their heart because they know Him, and those who seek Him with all their heart because they do not know Him.” Pascal recognizes that faith is a gift. We cannot demand it, but only ask God to give it to us. In the meantime the best thing to do is to live a good and moral life, and to live as if God did indeed exist. And pray the prayer of the skeptic, which I get from philosopher Peter Kreeft: “God, I don’t know whether you even exist. I’m a skeptic. I doubt. I think you may be only a myth. But I’m not certain (at least when I’m completely honest with myself). So if you do exist, and if you really did promise to reward all seekers, you must be hearing me now. So I hereby declare myself a seeker, a seeker of the truth, whatever and wherever it is. I want to know the truth and live the truth. If you are the truth, please help me.”

My friends, the Bible promises that all who seek God in this way with earnest and open hearts will find Him. (read Hebrews 11:6)

Serving God and Country,
Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Beale, Jr., Chaplain
(612) 747-1059
E-mail: kenneth.beale@us.army.mil

For a more in depth defense of the Christian faith, read the book What’s So Great About Christianity by Dinesh D’Souza (Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2007).
History of POW/MIA Bracelet

The idea for the bracelets was started by two college students named Kay Hunter and Carol Bates Brown. They thought it would be a way to remember American prisoners of war suffering in captivity in Southeast Asia. In 1969 they were introduced to three wives of missing pilots. They thought their student group VIVA (Voices In Vital America) could assist them in drawing public attention to the prisoners and missing in Vietnam.

During that time, television personality Bob Doman wore a bracelet he had obtained in Vietnam from hill tribesmen, which he said always reminded him of the suffering the war had brought to so many. Wanting to wear similar bracelets to remind them of the US POWs was the beginning of the POW/MIA bracelet.

They began to check out ways to make bracelets; they were able to find a small shop in Santa Monica that did engraving on silver used to decorate horses. The owner agreed to make 10 sample bracelets.

This is why they carried only name, rank and date of loss, since they didn’t have time to think of anything else.

Armed with the sample bracelets, they set out to find someone who would donate money to make bracelets for distribution to college students. It had not occurred to them that adults would want to wear the things, as they weren’t very attractive. Several approaches were rebuffed to secure a loan at 10% interest. Finally, in the late summer of 1970, a husband to a member of VIVA donated enough brass and copper to make 1,200 bracelets. The Santa Monica engraver agreed to make them and they could pay him from any proceeds they might make. The original price was $2.50; the price of a movie ticket.

On Veterans Day, 11 Nov 1970, they officially kicked off the bracelet program with a news conference at the Universal Sheraton Hotel.

Public response grew quickly and eventually got to the point where they received over 12,000 requests a day. In all, VIVA distributed nearly five million bracelets and raised enough money to produce untold millions of bumper stickers, buttons, brochures, matchbooks, newspaper ads, etc., to draw attention to the missing men.

The Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation vows to never forget our POWs/MIs. Every Sunday we have a reserved seat and a candle in their memory and uphold their families in prayer. Please consider joining us in worship at 11:00 a.m. on 20 Sept as we remember and honor those armed forces service members who are missing.

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Schoen
Worship Chairperson

Explanation of the “Missing Man Table”

On Sun 20 Sept you will see a small table in a place of honor. It is set for one. This table is our way of symbolizing the fact that members of our profession of arms are missing from our midst. They are commonly called POWs and MIAs. They are unable to be with us, and so we remember them.

- The round table symbolizes everlasting concern for missing service members;
- The white tablecloth symbolizes the purity of a service member’s motives when called to duty;
- The single red rose in the vase symbolizes the families and loved ones of our comrade-in-arms who keep the faith awaiting their return;
- The red ribbon on the vase symbolizes the continued dedication to account for the missing;
- The candle is lit symbolizing the upward reach of their unconquerable spirit;
- The slice of lemon symbolizes the bitter fate of those captured and missing;
- The pinch of salt symbolizes the tears of those missing and their families;
- The Bible symbolizes the strength gained through faith, sustaining those lost from their country which was founded as one nation under God;
- The inverted glass symbolizes the service member’s inability to share in our refreshments; And the empty chair symbolizes they are not here, but missing.

Let us not forget … until the day they come home.
Dear Friends:

Words fail me as I am reminiscing about the wonderful service of appreciation and kindness given to me on Sunday, July 19, 2009 as I come — not only to the closing of my ministry of music at the Chapel — but to the end or many years on the piano/organ benches.

Your spoken tributes will be remembered and appreciated. The wonderful picture of the Chapel, the Proclamation, the musical scrapbook and of course the “sole” picture will be memories of an outstanding congregation and chaplain without equal.

I have been blessed throughout my life with places to minister as a musician and I am honored to have been able to be at the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel for ten-and-a-half years. You, as fellow pilgrims, are to be commended for your dedication to the ongoing ministry of the Chapel congregation. Your efforts are noteworthy.

May God richly bless the ministry of the Chapel for many years to come.

With Thanksgiving and Praise,
Ruth Fardig

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Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation

Proclamation

Whereas: Ruth Rosencrantz at the tender age of seven raced home from school in Chicago and surprised her mother by sitting down at the family upright piano and neatly plunking out a tune she’d heard that day;

and

Whereas: at age seventeen, she began playing the organ with the choir at her Lutheran church in Illinois, a profession that spans 70 years;

and

Whereas: Ruth taught music at Bethel College and gave youngsters private piano lessons for over fifty years;

and

Whereas: she faithfully served as Minister of Music for the Fort Snelling Chapel Foundation from September 1998 till this day;

Therefore, the Board of Directors of the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation, do hereby bestow on Ruth Fardig the title,

Minister of Music Emeritus

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set the seal of the Foundation to be affixed. Given this nineteenth day of July in the year of our Lord two thousand and nine.

Robert Bernloehr
President
Kenneth L. Beale, Jr.
Chaplain
Intro to Our New Minister of Music ...

It was said that there was little or no interest shown regarding anything musical or artistic by the Tennison parents (due to bad experiences during early years of piano instruction) until their boys discovered Aunt Arlene’s Hammond M-100 organ.

This started a journey through years of musical instrument study at Minneapolis Public Schools (tuned percussion and later lower brass) culminating with further study at college.

Although other instruments were studied at school, the instrument always at the center of attention was (and still is) the organ in its various forms.

After the Hammond discovery (and related interest), the Tennison parents started the search for an organ of their own. The search ended at Schmitt Music Center (Marquette and 10th Street in Minneapolis).

A new Conn Caprice organ found its way into the Tennison household with ten free lessons and beloved teacher, Florence Mittelstadt. (Each son used five of the ten lessons and continued with Mrs. Mittelstadt – 1962 to 1975.)

Five years later, a Whitney spinet piano also found its place along side the Conn. (Yes, it is true; the Tennisons started with organ study and then added piano study - the reverse of accepted practice/tradition.)

The first exposure to the Foundation was through Daryl Kreutz and Rev. Milo Gronseth. They were both instrumental in securing many opportunities to play weddings, and funerals at the historic Chapel. The first of many services played for the Foundation was through Ruth Fardig and Rev. Dr. Kenneth Beale, Jr. during the early 2000s.

Craig says: “I have been greatly blessed by the above mentioned as well and the members of the Foundation. I am honored that the Foundation has chosen me to be the newest in a long line of very talented musicians that have served you as your Minister of Music during your 40+ year ministry at the Chapel.”

Craig Alan Tennison

Craig Alan Tennison was born March 19, 1952 in Minneapolis, MN. His education started in Minneapolis Public Schools at Minnehaha Elementary and Nokomis Junior High. He transferred to Minneapolis Lutheran High in 10th grade and graduated from there in 1970. His college education was obtained from Concordia College (now University) in St. Paul, MN. He graduated in 1974 with an Education major and Music minor. Further study in the Director of Christian Education program was done the following year. Key board study in organ and piano was held concurrently at Concordia College with Rev. Dr. Victor Gebauer ('70-'73) and Dr. Paul Manz ('73-'75) in organ, and Carlene Rudnick ('70) in piano. Craig started his church music career in January 1967 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church (Mpls.) as a Choir Accompanist. He played his first church service at the same church in July 1967. He has served in various Minneapolis and St. Paul churches during the last 30+ years.
Getting to Know You …

Wouldn’t it be fun to take your youthful imagination with you throughout your life? Eighty-one-year-old Bob Brautigam has. In fact, youthful imagination formed the basis of his profession as a design engineer, and turned the occupation into one of the supreme joys of his life.

Yet there were times when youth was something Bob had to overcome. For example, at nine years old he really needed to be more like nineteen in order to help his single mother make ends meet during the Depression. But he did his best, doing an assortment of household chores for his mother and aunt to lighten their load.

And in 1942, when everyone was working hard for the war effort at home, fourteen-year-old Bob desperately wanted to follow the older guys into the intriguing world of the Milwaukee Railroad to do a man’s work, but he needed to be sixteen. Luckily, with his mature build, no one batted an eye when he lied about his age and got the job anyway.

But the cruelest joke youth played occurred in 1944 when Bob was a sixteen-year-old high school senior. As droves of his school buddies enlisted in the military to have an adventure and “kill Germans,” Bob waited anxiously and helplessly from the sidelines. He needed to be seventeen. By the time he finally enlisted on June 3, 1945, the war in Germany was over. Nevertheless, Bob served his country honorably for two and a half-years.

Born in St. Paul, Bob knew twenty different homes in his first twenty years. He developed a sense of determination early that fueled his ambitions throughout his life. For instance, he had visions of being a fighter pilot, but the Air Corps refused him for being too young.

Undeterred, he entered the Army where, stationed at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, he slipped out occasionally for private flying lessons at a local airport. Somehow, his commander found out and “stopped me on the spot.” Determination won out, however, and twelve years later, Bob earned his pilot’s license.

With imagination and determination, Bob pursued his college degree in design engineering and received his diploma from the University of Minnesota in 1950. A year later, after another kind of pursuit, he married his childhood sweetheart, Janet. In June this year, the couple celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary.

Bob’s exciting work experiences include companies such as Honeywell, in their Aero Division Flight Controls unit, Sperry Univac, in their Defense Product and Program Management divisions, and Metro Machine and Engineering Corp., where he spent thirty-two years designing machines for manufacturing.

"My imagination’s been a good friend," says Bob. Janet agrees and says that Bob’s favorite thing is to work on a project. Once, when his lifelong interest in trains inspired him to make a scale model of the Milwaukee Road train depot in Minneapolis, he and his son found themselves crawling around the rafters of the defunct building, taking measurements for his design plans. Bob says he does “nothing small.”

A case in point is the Antique Outboard Club of America’s national magazine, which Bob single-handedly took from a three-page publication to a 40-page periodical. “I wrote all the articles and did all the editing,” he said. “Then I put in pseudo names of contributors as encouragement to others to send in their articles for the magazine. It worked!”

Aside from pet projects and hobbies that include building motorized bicycles and scooters, and tinkering with antique trains, boats and motors, Bob and Jan have spent their lives exploring the globe. “We’ve prioritized our lives,” said Janet. “No second home, no casino gambling, no expensive cars, and no pets.” They chose travel instead. To date, they’ve taken 77 trips to twenty-three different countries and have discovered that people everywhere “are just like us.” Bob says travel is rewarding and “good for the memory box.”

Bob’s old friend, his “memory box,” is stuffed full of pictures from around the world, design ideas, and all the rewards of marriage, exciting work, friends, and three children and ten grandchildren. Though a recent stroke has slowed him down a little, Bob knows that while the limitations of youth may sometimes need overcoming, youthful imagination is something to cherish for a lifetime.

— Submitted by: Barbara Sommerville

Photo: Bob and Janet Brautigam. (photo by Becky Van Meter)
Benevolent Giving …

During WW1 many veterans suffered shell shock. Today, they call it Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. When our veterans returned home they needed treatment. In 1926, Ramsey County purchased 69 acres with a large home located on the property and donated it to the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp (DVRC), a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.

The camp is located in the city of Marine on St. Croix, 30 minutes northeast of downtown St. Paul. The camp was originally set up like a veteran’s hospital with full time nurses and doctors. Today, the camp is a beautiful camp ground and RV trailer park which is available to all honorably discharged veterans and their families.

The camp manager Tom Ferris is a Vietnam veteran. Tom and his wife started in 2002 as volunteers at the camp doing handyman work. Tom did such a great job that in 2004 the Board of Directors offered him a full time job.

Tom gave me a grand tour of the park and I was completely amazed what Tom has done for the camp. Currently there are 122 RV sites, 14 cabins, 32 boat slip, 30 tent sites and a large 90’ x 90’ pavilion. The price to rent a site at the camp is incredibly affordable. For example, to rent a small cabin for a week is $200; a large cabin $300 per week; tent sites for $60 per week and RV sites with electrical and water are $100 a week. You can rent a fishing boat with a motor with the first tank of gas for $35 a day. Tom also has made room for homeless veterans by allowing them to tent for free.

When Tom took over as manager, he spearheaded a grant from the State of Minnesota to help build a beautiful pavilion. In addition to the grant money many veteran groups assisted to include the Tribute to the Troops, VFW, American Legion and others to make the pavilion a reality. Many other projects were built by the Boy Scouts to earn their Eagle Scout award. Today, new cabins are being built by the Minnesota National Guard combat engineers as part of their annual two weeks of training.

There are many activities for children and adults to include: fishing, volleyball, baseball, horseshoes, hiking nature trails, swimming, fishing tournaments and socializing with many veterans and their families. The camp also hosts veterans from the veteran nursing homes.

At the time of my tour, the camp was holding a fund raiser with a fantastic lunch for $8.00. I recognized some of the volunteers as members of the Tribute to the Troops organization who I interviewed for The Snelling Spirit a couple years ago. They were selling raffle tickets for a beautiful motorcycle which is being raffled on 13 Sept 2009. All tickets are tax deductible and the proceeds go to the families of our Iraq and Afghanistan fallen heroes.

The price to stay at the camp is so low and it operates on a very tight budget making donations and volunteers critical to its operation. The camp does not receive state or federal funds. In 2007, the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp submitted a benevolence request to the Foundation and the Board of Directors approved their request. The Foundation has provided a benevolence gift of $500 each year.

I would like say “thank you” to Tom Ferris and the camp staff and their Board of Directors for doing a fantastic job in caring for our veterans by providing an affordable and relaxing camp. If you would like to volunteer or donate, please write to: 11300 180th Street North, Marine on St. Croix, MN 55047-9437 or call 651-433-2699 or website: www.vetscampmn.org

— Pat Hoy, Chair
Benevolence Committee

This congregation tithes (10%) from its plate offerings. If you know of an organization/ministry … that is in keeping with our purpose … please feel free to secure an application to submit for financial support in 2009. Simply call the Foundation Office at 912/970-7666 … and provide a name and mailing address.
Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation

This is a non-denominational Christian church founded in 1967. We invite you to join us for worship each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at this historic Chapel.

The Fort Snelling Veterans Memorial Chapel is a unique Minnesota memorial — a splendid monument to the patriotism, the moral earnestness and the convictions of the people of this state — a shrine to commemorate those who have died for their country. Weekly Sunday worship is sponsored by the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation and is not subsidized by the state.

For Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation information call the Foundation Office at (612) 970-7866, or write to the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation 1 Federal Drive Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4027

or e-mail to info@fortsnellingmcf.org
or check our web site at www.fortsnellingmcf.org

Ft. Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation Staff
Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Beale, Jr., Chaplain
Craig Tennison, Minister of Music
Leila Campbell, Office Manager
Ruth Fardig, Minister of Music Emeritus

The Snelling Spirit Staff:
The Snelling Spirit is a bimonthly publication of the Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation. We welcome your input, your letters and your suggestions.

Feature Contributors:
Rev. Dr. Kenneth Beale, Jr.
Bob Bernloehr
Newell Chester
Karen Hodge
Pat Hoy
Barbara Sommerville
Craig Tennison
Photographer:
Leland Granberg
Layout/Design/Printing:
Leila Campbell
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<td>Sermon: &quot;Taking Christ to Work&quot;</td>
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<td>Sermon: &quot;Living in a State of High Alert&quot;</td>
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<td>Music: Marys &amp; Marthas</td>
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<td>Sermon: &quot;Missing in Action&quot;</td>
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**Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel Foundation Staff**

Chaplain: Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Beale, Jr. — Phone: 612/747-1059 — E-mail: kenneth.beale@us.army.mil
Minister of Music: Craig Tennyson — Phone: 612/772-3990
Office Manager: Leila Campbell — Phone: 612/970-7866 — E-mail: info@fortsnellingmcf.org
Website: www.fortsnellingmcf.org — Fax: 612/970-7867 — Dial-a-Devotional: 612/970-7866, ext. #2
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<td>Chaplain: Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Beale, Jr. — Phone: 612/747-1059 — E-mail: <a href="mailto:kenneth.beale@us.army.mil">kenneth.beale@us.army.mil</a></td>
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<td>Minister of Music: Craig Tennison — Phone: 612/729-7990</td>
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<td>9:00 a.m. Fellowship Comm Mtg. &amp; 11:00 a.m. Worship Comm Mtg. @ American Legion</td>
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<td>Office Manager: Lelia Campbell — Phone: 612/970-7866 — E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@fortsnellingmcf.org">info@fortsnellingmcf.org</a></td>
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