

*To UNSUBSCRIBE, hit “reply” & leave blank. Thank you.

Podcast link: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/caboose-ministries/audiopodcast/id506049887mt=2>

Website: www.cabooseministries.org

YouTube channel: Michael Robert Guertin / Facebook: Michael Robert Guertin

January 2024 “HAPPY NEW YEAR” !!



CABOOSE! MINISTRIES END-OF-YEAR REPORT for 2023

Dear *Friends & Family*,

This week will mark the completion of **38 years** of full-time ministry, & **24 years less a month** of living-by-faith itinerant ministry as an *Elim Fellowship* home-missionary/global worker. Once again, as in previous years, **2023** encompassed traveling several miles to minister in various states, which included **DE, PA, NJ, MD, & NY**. I ministered approximately **62X** traveling **3,485** miles to do so. This doesn't include traveling several more miles for non-preaching ministry-related events. *Venues of ministry* included **Sunday morning whole-family services, 3 youth retreats, 3 weeks of summer camp (Sr. Hi, Jr. Hi, & Kids), a Children's ministry podcast interview, a men's Bible study, men's addictions-recovery chapels, 2 Winter Family Camp services, a Christian school student body chapel, 2 Christmas Eve whole-family services, a summer camp vision-casting presentation, & an Easter season drama & preaching production.** Expressions of the **Body of Christ** I ministered to included: the **Hopewell Network of Churches, United Methodist, Independent, Independent Pentecostal, Baptist, Assembly of God, Chinese, the Evangelical Free Church, & for the first time, the Baptist General Assembly of Virginia,** which is the oldest Baptist group in VA, the U.S., & the entire world!

"A TRAIN & 'STAINED' DISPLAY"





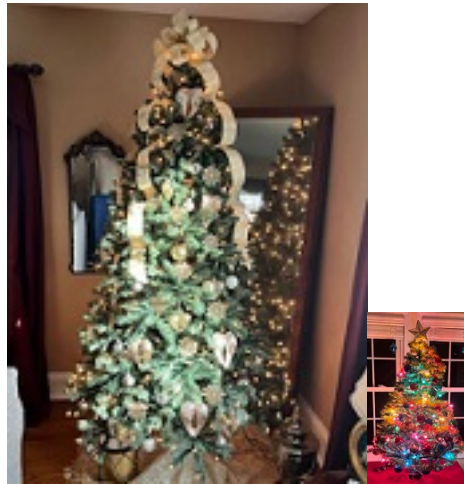
[12/16/23] Earlier this month I went to a nearby Lutheran church for their annual Christmas bazaar. This event has been a Christmas tradition Kim & I look forward to every year [regrettably, Kim wasn't able to join me this year, as she was preparing to head out of town for the day with me to support, via our attendance, a ministry event in Reading, PA]. And, each year, one of our top priorities upon our arrival to this bazaar is to purchase a box of homemade raspberry/pistachio cookie bars. Yes, we know. They are surely off-the-charts for sugar content, but, this is only *once a year!* 😊 How happy I was to discover when I scooted down to the basement where the baked goods are sold, that there was one more box of these sweet de-lights left! Of course, I dove at it! 😊 Another delight to me personally this year, being the founder of our "***Caboose!***" ministry, was to see **St. Mark's** had included a train display, which heretofore I had never seen! Sadly, the train operator had not yet arrived, so the trains weren't running, but it was still a delight to behold his setup.

"GIVE ME 'SANCTUARY'!"



Down through history, fugitives & refugees who were being hunted down, would often flee to a temple, church, or other religious edifice for protection, for “sanctuary”. More than once a biblical figure would hold the horns of the altar, hoping this would spare their life from their pursuer. Several “cities of refuge” were also sanctioned by the Lord for this purpose in Israel. In a very real way, St. Mark’s Lutheran offers a very similar “solace” for those who wish to escape, if only for a few moments, the nonstop bustle & frenzy of the world & all it entails. Upon my arrival to the church bazaar that day, I was soon welcomed by one of its elders to visit their sanctuary to spend some quiet moments in its serene environment. He said there was some beautiful Christmas music playing by the ***Chanticleer Choir***. Well, after making my “pistachio purchase” & visiting with some friends I saw in the church basement, I took him up on his offer. I recollect doing so a few years ago as well. And, just as he said, when I did enter the sanctuary, I *did* sense some peace by its beauty & serene surroundings & environment. In just a few moments, I was humbling myself before the Lord confessing to Him my many sins & weaknesses once again. And, once again, I was entreating Him for His forgiveness for them & grace to overcome them. I also entreated Him not to allow me to waste one moment of whatever life I have remaining but to use every second for Him, His glory, & His gospel. The longer I live & the older I get, the more deeply this desire burns within me as I approach the threshold of eternity. Well, blazing in front of me on the front wall was a massive stained-glass window behind a cross, which was suspended from the ceiling. Daylight piercing through the mosaic of colors seemingly brought them to life.

“WHITE LIGHTS VERSUS COLORED!”



Kim's Tree Michael's Tree

Those close to Kim & me know that as far as Christmas tree lights & decorations go, Kim prefers all-white lights & I delight in multi-colored. And, hence, in the light of this, every year we setup two Christmas trees! 😊 Well, given my multi-colored “proclivities”, to sit before this massive stained-glass window with its panorama of colors with the early morning daylight streaming through them, I felt as if it was an early Christmas present just for me! I spent several minutes just staring at the panoply of hues. I began to associate each color with a different aspect of our **Lord Jesus**:

Red: of course, reminiscent of His precious blood.

Olive: His skin color, being Jewish re: His human side.

Yellow: His resplendent glory.

Gray: the color of the stone-cold tomb He was laid in.

Brown: the wood of His cross; also, I was reminded re: “from dust you came, & to dust you shall return” (Gen.3:19).

Blue: His royalty.

Aqua: “The earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,

as the waters cover the sea.” (Hab.2:14)

Orange: (My favorite color, but I didn't really come up with one for this! 😊)

Early morning sun at His resurrection?

“LUTHER’ TO ‘APPEAR’ @ ST. MARK’S LUTHERAN??”



I probably sat & stared in the sanctuary for about 25 minutes. When I got up to leave, I noticed a woman sitting a few pews back from me, whom I immediately recognized. We had attended the same church many years ago upon our arrival in DE. She was sitting on the pew with her head down & eyes closed. I didn't want to interrupt her, but given it is typically years, &, at times *many* years between us running into each other, I leaned over to her & said her name. She looked up, smiled, & immediately got up to leave the sanctuary so she could talk to me. I apologized again for interrupting her moment of solitude. She did not seem to mind at all, but was happy to see me. Upon our exit from the sanctuary, right outside the door was the elder who had originally invited me to spend time in the sanctuary. She introduced me to him & laid her hand on my shoulder & told him I was a “powerhouse”. That was so kind & humbling of her to do so. Yet, the very ironic thing about it all was I was just moments before, as I said earlier, repenting to the Lord for my *many sins & weaknesses!* ☹️ I had the whim, given this was a *Lutheran* church, to offer to this elder my “services”. That is, I told him I have portrayed **Martin Luther** out of my **Time Machine** for many years (since 2007). To be honest, I had purposed before entering the sanctuary NOT to do so, though the idea had come to me at that time. I kind

of took this unexpected encounter with this sister & friend who happens to attend the church, as a “go for it” incentive to do so. He seemed interested & even suggested an idea of how this event might could happen. I gave him my card & left the potential opportunity with the Lord. His will & timing be done.

“THE NIGHT I WAS A ‘CLOSET’ CHRISTIAN”



[12/30/'23] *“Twas the night before **Christmas**, & all through God’s House, this preacher was stirring, on the floor like a mouse...”*. To wit, this past November, I was invited to preach the two Christmas Eve services at a dear friend’s church in PA. I was asked to expound re: **“Christ’s Kingship”**. I was given **20 minutes** to do so, & understandably so. Why? Christmas Eve was on a Sunday that year, & God’s people will have had already been in church that morning. Also, the age groups in attendance for the Christmas Eve services would be **3-years old up to senior citizens**. And, again, there were **2** Christmas Eve services, not just 1. I had never studied nor preached re: Christ’s Kingship, & I’ve been preaching since **1986**! I *have* preached re: God & Christ’s *sovereignty* for decades, but never specifically re: His Kingship. In the 2 weeks I spent in preparation, I soon discovered what an amazing “theological rabbit hole” Jesus’ Kingship was! Preparation was very slow. Yet, it was “agonizingly glorious”! How so? I kept getting “stuck” in some Old Testament Messianic propheciesà”stuck” in adoration. Tears would come to my eyes. I never knew how rich these texts were. I felt at times as if I was a Jew who lived millennia ago, anxiously awaiting the **1st** Coming of the Messiah! As the time for the services approached, despite having had prepared for 2 straight weeks, I could not believe how unprepared I was! Again, I was only sharing for *20 minutes*!

“DOWN THE CHIMNEY ‘FLU’”?



To further complicate the matter, Kim became quite ill during the time leading up to Christmas Eve. I felt fine. I was working out almost every day too. I would continue to prepare for the services & also care for Kim. Christmas Eve morning came & I felt like I had contracted a slight cold. Despite that, I packed & loaded up the truck & headed to the church in PA. Very regrettably for both of us, Kim was not feeling well enough to go. I was becoming increasingly tired enroute to the church so I stopped on the PA turnpike & got a small coffee. When I arrived at the church I began setting up as quickly as I could. I began to feel quite warm-so much so that I wore just my red t-shirt & Under Armor vest until the time neared for me to preach! It seemed apparent that Kim & I both got the flu for Christmas! ☹️ Some of my friends at the church had told me that many people in their congregation were sick as well. After the 1st service began, I went into a “parents w/small children” room [equipped with a large TV] that was not being used that night. It had a nice couch on it & I laid down on it as long as I could, trying at the same time to review my notes. When it was nearing the sermon time in the service, I put on my dress shirt & sweater vest & microphone headset, & went into the service. Our Lord graciously enabled me to proclaim Him. I had asked Him earlier to give me His strength, as I wasn’t there to talk about myself, but *Him*. And, He did! Now, back to this preacher being a “closet Christian” as mentioned above. When I finished preaching the 1st service, I went out of the sanctuary & sought a *cool*, dark, place of solitude. I went to the rear of the church to hopefully lay down on the stage in the children’s chapel but it was locked. So, I sat in a chair in the rear office lobby. Some of God’s people exiting the building saw me & prayed for me. I wanted so much to go outside into the cool air but feared I would get locked out of the building! I eventually did go & reentered the building near the front of the complex close to the sanctuary. I desperately felt the need to lay down on a cool floor. I went into a dark room that looked like a storage room, cluttered with everything imaginable-hence, a “*closet*”, if you will. (I was later told it was an office not yet setup & organized by its occupant! 😊) I laid on the floor in the dark (in my church clothes!) & once again entreated the Lord for His help, strength, & grace. When it was time to preach again I “felt” much less tense, at ease, & “anointed”. Of the almost 6 pages of typed notes, I perhaps covered 3 of them? It was worth it. God’s people were blessed & fed, & I hope, had their thoughts more deeply fixed on the Christ Child, THE “Son of David”, the Messianic King to come-yet a 2nd time!

As the world becomes increasingly darker with each passing day, it is Kim & mine's sincere prayer that Jesus draws us all into closer fellowship with Him in 2024.

Sincerely,

Michael



****Caboose!* Commentary Corner:** Our daughter Laura once said she'd love to have my old Bibles when I passed for all of the notes I have written in them over the decades. This was quite humbling to say the least, especially coming from one of your own children. Hence, I've decided to post each month random notes/comments from Bibles I have studied from: "You can tell how strong your faith is by how easily and readily you forgive." (Lk 17:3-5) [MRG 12/18/23]



Caboose! On The Loose!

Ministry/events for [JANUARY](#) & those not listed in last month's newsletter:

Jan. 2: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.//Hopewell Network pastors' mtg.

Jan. 5: Hopewell Church, Elverson, PA: multi-youth group service

Jan. 20: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: Hopewell Summer Camps' Winter Reunion/Family Camp

Jan. 24: Converge Church, Moorestown, NJ: Elim area pastors' mtg.



*Michael is an ordained *Elim Fellowship* itinerant Stateside missionary & ***Caboose!*** is also an affiliate ministry of ***The Hopewell Network of Churches***. For 14 years he served on various local church staffs as their children's pastor. Since 2000 Kim & he have lived by faith, having no set salary, retirement, etc. to speak of. Yet-this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches God's Word & systematic theology, using both drama & visual aids, to all age groups, from children to senior citizens, either separately or combined. To help support this work [any amount no matter how small is greatly appreciated!], please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: Elim Fellowship, c/o 1703 Dalton Rd., Lima, NY 14485, marking it "Preferred-Michael Robert **Guertin**" or you may click on this link to give directly: <https://elimfellowship.org/give/4100-GUEMC> Thank you!

Michael Robert "**Guerty**" **Guertin**

3 Windsor Road

Wilmington, DE 19809-2144

www.cabooseministries.org

YouTube: Michael Robert **Guertin**

FaceBook: Michael Robert **Guertin**

www.hopewellsummercamps.org

