

**Audio sermons:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/caboose-ministriesaudiopodcast/id506049887mt=2>

**YouTube channel:** "Michael Robert Guertin". **NOTE:** I've recently uploaded many more videos, re: dramas, sermons, etc.

**\*Note:** I've attached an **mp3 file below** of a staff devotion I gave at our recent Kids Camp. About 11 min. long re: the kindness & severity of God.

**September 2019**

**"THE SUMMER IS ENDED, THE HARVEST IS PAST..."**



Dear **Friends & Family**,

**[8/25]** Well, it has been a little over a week since I parted ways with the 89 children of hsc's annual kids camp. I suppose they're back in their little beds with visions of sugarplums dancing in their heads. I sure do miss them, though-their smiles, their laughter, their hugs, their relative innocence, & their relative tenderness toward the things of the Lord. Yes-we had children there with issues. We always do. And the number & intensity of the issues are ever-increasing as our deplorably wicked culture grows even more so. But-they're still children. And oh, how they responded to the Lord at camp that week. Because of this, there is no other place I'd rather be on the planet than with them in the Lord's presence. This was my 29<sup>th</sup> season with **Hopewell Summer Camps**, & my 37<sup>th</sup> year of camp work overall.

### 'INCUBATE, INCULCATE, & INSULATE'



Every summer, at every camp, I meet with the staff the evening prior to the campers arriving. It is an absolute must. I do not think I would do camp without this feature. The purpose of the meeting is to impart vision to the staff re: ministering to the campers for the rest of the week. I setup a makeshift incubator, complete with straw & a warm overhead light. I told the staff I remembered reading in my college psychology book years ago of an experiment conducted with baby monkeys. One was placed in an incubator alongside a wire replica of a mother monkey which had a water bottle attached to her. The monkey would not drink from it. However, when the experimenters wrapped the wire mother monkey in soft fabric, they were surprised to observe that the baby monkey did then “nurse” from the artificial mother! I told the staff that it was my burden to make camp an incubator to the children: safe, warm, secure, & nourishing. Next, in this safe & secure environment, my ache was to inculcate into them the deep truths of God-the rich God-inspired texts that comprise all of Sacred Scripture. I based this on the epistle of Jude which I have been studying all summer, vis, “the faith [the body of doctrines of the Lord & His Apostles] once for all handed down to the saints”, vs.3. Thirdly, I told the staff it was our solemn duty to protect the children, not only physically, but to protect them by protecting the precious doctrines that we taught them! One of the sacred, sobering, somber aspects of children’s ministry is that if you stumble them or lead them astray, you have the Lord’s Own warning that you are in soul-damning danger from the Godhead! Hence, we take what we do with His young very seriously.

**“VISION FOR CAMP-FROM A GENIE IN A BOTTLE!”**



Believe it or not, that caption is true. About 2 weeks before kids camp, I watched the 1940 version of The Thief Of Baghdad, based on Rudyard Kipling’s novel. I’m virtually positive Disney based its 1992 “Aladdin” movie on it. I had only seen it once before, but I have used for many years one of the songs in its soundtrack, vis, “The Love Of the Princess” for my background music when going through the 6 days of Creation in my “The Gospel Elaborated” sermon. When I saw **Abu** unknowingly release this gargantuan genie from a bottle that Abu found on the beach-a genie that proceeded to try & crush the **young Indian boy** under his foot, I couldn’t help but think of the forces of darkness that we Christians are up against in our endeavors to preach the gospel. I told the staff even the lowest-ranking demon could wreak havoc & destruction among many men, given their awesome power-evil power, yes, but still awesome compared to human strength. And yet, I told the staff to recognize how much our Lord keeps back these evil entities from hindering & harming us in our efforts to share the news of eternal life with the young. Yes-with the young. Our **adversary** is so evil he does whatever he is permitted to do to try & stop even children from hearing the gospel! You can check out this YouTube video of this movie to watch what I showed the staff that Sunday evening: <https://youtu.be/RW1Onrygq1E> To observe the scene I described above, please go to **1:08:00**.

“WHEN WE PLAY-WE PLAY. WHEN WE PRAY-WE PRAY”



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This is a camp philosophy slogan I learned decades ago & have put into practice at our camps ever since. There are times to play at camp-many times. And, there are times to pray at camp. We endeavor to do both “off the charts”. When we play I love hype-lots of it. When we pray, I hate hype. All of it. My ache has been that the emotional responses evoked at camp chapel services are Bible-originated. Re: spiritual experiences, **“God’s deepest fountains are in the foundations”**, vis, the Holy Spirit moves, anoints, & confirms sound doctrine.

*"THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS"*



Of the 3 camps the **Hopewell Network** graces me to do each summer, my favorite of the 3 has always been kids camp. Don't get me wrong-I love all 3; each has its own preciousness. But kids camp has a uniqueness all its own. This is due not only to the age of the campers [ages 8-11], but due to what we do with them that we don't do with the campers of the Sr. & Jr. Hi camps. At kids camp, unlike the other two, puppets & costumed characters come out-with all kinds of different personalities. It can be a hillbilly mountain man, to a California surfer dude, to an ornery chipmunk. At camp last week we had a surprise visit from "**The Candy Man**", of Willie Wonka fame. Also, "**Banana White**" [Vanna White's twin sister] came out to help us with one of our Bible games. Like I said, you just never know *who* will show up! One of my faithful assistants in children's camp ministry is my robot, a.k.a., "**The Master's Multi-Media Monitor Man**", "M5" for short. He critiques biblically children's TV shows & movies. He is assisted by a spaceman named "Ray Gunn". In addition, kids camp has its own superhero to protect it, vis, "Captain Caboose!". He flies overhead & lands in our chapel every year at this time to make sure the children are safe & sound.

### "CHARLIE BROWN GOT SAVED"



Every Friday a.m. at every camp, "Charlie Brown" shows up. Before the campers share their testimonies about what the Lord revealed to & did for them, I come out in my decades-old Charlie Brown shirt that my mother bought me so long ago. Why? Well, about 36 hours before the Lord apprehended me in a convent in Missouri as a senior in high school, I played the leading role in our high school production that year, vis, "**You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown**". Hence, I have my camp soundman play "Christmastime Is Here" from the Charlie Brown Christmas special sound-track. I then proceed to re-enact the part where Charlie Brown cries out in his school auditorium after having become so disillusioned with the commercialism of Christmas, "Can anyone tell me what Christmas is all about?!". Linus Van Pelt then comes across the stage & tells him, "Sure, Charlie Brown-I can tell you what Christmas is all about." Linus then proceeds to quote the Christmas story from Luke 2. I do the same before I share with the campers my testimony re: how Jesus apprehended me for Himself & His work. We then follow this with the camper testimonies. **"SMALL AUDIENCE BUT STRONG MEAT"** I mentioned above "the best of both worlds" & that is so at kids camp. Again, we get to do things at this camp that are so much fun that we don't do at the other two, & yet-these precious little ones receive very weighty teachings from the Scriptures. I had a solid corpus of men & women who came to assist

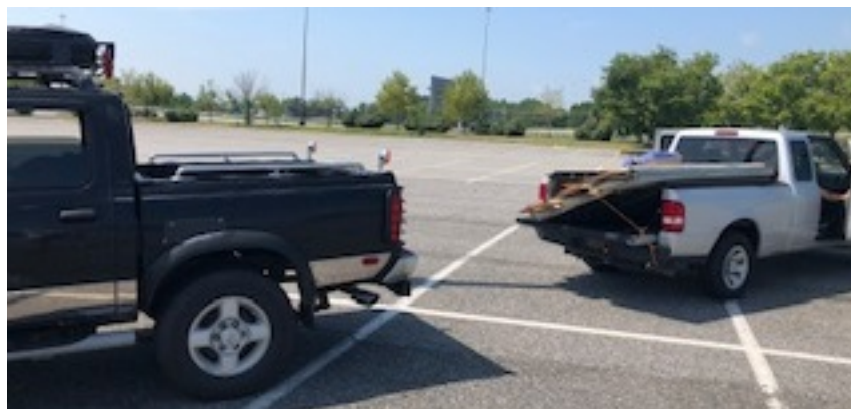
me in feeding Jesus' lambs. And the solid biblical messages they brought would have fed adults. And, as I've written many times over the years, this is the usual fare for Hopewell Summer Camp campers. And, receive it they do. Speaking of which-speaking of "genies & lamps", I use a very special lamp for teaching re: sexual purity at this camp-yes-at this camp. The Devil now has drag queens conducting story hours in public libraries to the very young-we must counteract this with healthy, solid, biblical teaching re: gender & purity.

"RED & YELLOW [black & white]"



I have used a *Cootie toy & Barbie doll* for years now at kids camp to do so, but I also use my "lava lamp", which I use to illustrate the two natures in a Christian, vis, his new nature, i.e., his new man birthed by the Holy Spirit at regeneration, & a Christian's "lower nature", his flesh, that residual fallen human nature that resides with all of us which we must subdue, crucify, & conquer every day until we die or until Jesus comes back-whichever comes first. The yellow side of the lava lamp stands for our new man, the red side our sinful fallen nature. I use this to teach the boys what comes into play when their God-given hormones begin to do what God ordained them to do-make them into men. The Devil is aware of this too. Hence, his relentless effort to pollute young boys' minds at this tender, pivotal time in their lives. And we? The Lord's servants? What do we do? We stand underneath the massive "genie's foot", but walk right in under our Lord's sovereign protection & tell them the truth!

"PUPPET STAGE RESURRECTION & RENDEZVOUS"



A few days after camp I was on the road all day as I rendezvoused with a former Elim colleague who had borrowed a puppet stage I had built in Reading, PA in 1993 for his VBS in July. The

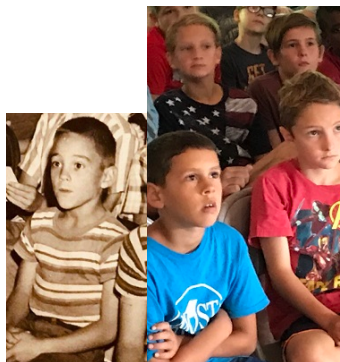
church whom I built the stage for could no longer keep it, as they had moved their children's ministry room to another location which was too small for this 8' tall X 16' wide edifice. I was so happy & blessed that some dear friends of mine [also former campers/counselors!] were interested in it for their newly renovated church building they were soon to occupy.

### "THE CAMP MAN ON WHOSE SHOULDERS I STAND"



How very surprised & blessed I was to learn that at this church where I was delivering the puppet stage for its new home, a certain man named **Dean Landis** was there. Dean is a very special man to me as he is to so many others. However, unlike the others, I have the unique honor & privilege of having succeeded him as the pastoral director of **Hopewell Summer Camps**. Dean actually founded the camps in 1985. However, in 1991, as I was moving to the Hopewell church in Reading, PA to pastor its children, Dean at the same time was moving away from the area & hence the Network. Well, the overseers of the Hopewell Network had heard of my previous camp experience [in NY, OH, MI] & asked if I would take over the reins from Dean. The rest is history. Dean's shoes are way too big for me to fill. It is a humbling honor to try & do so. I considered this "day of deliverance" [of a puppet stage, i.e.!] a sweet one for me via reconnecting with Dean.

### "THE ANSWERED CALL RE: THE LORD'S AWE"



Some of you may recollect in last month's newsletter re: my referring to a Bible camp from the 1950's in Missouri where I was so challenged & awestruck by the facial expressions of the campers as they sat in on the sessions. I told the camp staff that was my ache & prayer-that our



Lord would put our campers in the same awe of Him. Well, in a way our Lord did just that. Even though the picture below shows a little boy in awe as he beheld my “M5” Robot-yet-he was still in awe! And yet, based on how the children responded to the preached Word at night & adored accordingly: on their knees, on their faces, weeping, praying for each other, etc. they were surely in awe of other things besides “Guerty’s robot”! There are few things I could ask for than this-to see young ones in awe of the Living God. O dear Father, please let it continue! Amen!

“CAMPERS OF CAMPERS’ TESTIMONIES”:



\***Former camper** re: her daughter this past week: "Kenzie fell asleep reading The Word last night! Pretty incredible;) praying the seeds grow and grow!"

\***Camp nurse** [former counselor] re: her son: "This kid cried himself to sleep last night chanting "I miss Miguel (his counselor). I miss camp, I don't want to forget anything!" May what these babes learned this week stay FRESH in their minds & hearts ❤️🙏🙏🙏"

\*From a mother who is a mother of 5 re: her son who came for the first time. Btw-this mom came herself as a camper as a 9 year-old & she & her husband counseled years ago: *"First thing Christopher told me about camp was getting touched by the glory of God in worship. Those were his words. He said it was the first time he knew God like that & he can't really explain it. 😭 Christopher didn't want to go home. Thank you to you, & the whole team & counselors. I know all the kids are impacted in ways we don't always hear about, & you guys are poured out after camp season."*

\*Another mom (former camper) whose son & daughter came for the first time: "They had such a wonderful time!! Non-stop camp chatter here. (And I was in trouble for not having breakfast ready at 8:)) Thank you again for all you invested in these guys!"

\*Another Mom: "Thank you for ALL you do, your rewards are in Heaven ❤️ My two older boys (jr. high camp) couldn't say enough about Camp Tel Hai ❤️ They were skeptical because they are familiar w/their typical former church summer camp, However...They didn't want to come home... now that says A LOT!

\*Another Mom [former camper/counselor re: a video I sent her from camp]: "I'm crying! Lord Jesus is so faithful to keep drawing hearts!! Thank you for sending this! I can't stop watching & crying with a grateful heart!

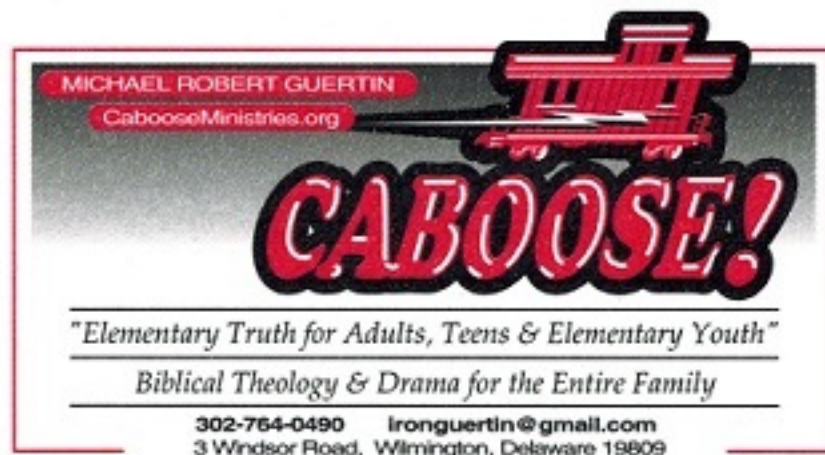
*\*[Another Mom, again, who was a former camper!]: "Guerty, I can't tell you how overjoyed I have been all week knowing that Natalie [her daughter] has spent time with you! This camp was so fundamental to my faith. I don't think there have been many places where I have felt God's presence like I have here at Tel Hai. There's a sweet richness here, an unforgettable taste of Heaven. Thank you for being such a diligent, faithful, servant in ministering to me, my daughter,*

*& many more in between. We love you & are so thankful you answered the call to this ever so important Kingdom work. Love ya, buddy. Peg & crew"*

\*Grandparent of camper: "Thanks for taking care of my granddaughter she had a blessed time."

**\*Former camper/counselor** from many years ago whom I was in touch with today:"**1996** was my very first year at Tel Hai, & brother Bohner or Brother Klein was my counselor... it's funny to reflect back sometimes, but a lot of my leadership style & how I handled my subordinates I attribute to camp, with being a camper & grow-ing into being a counselor...what I learned from being a counselor, is patience & understanding of diversity, that as leaders we have to invest in figuring out how to reach each person since not everyone learns the same way, or not everyone has encountered the same events. I occasionally still use an abridged version of your counselor orientation speech about the many hats counselors have to wear. One of the key things being young & being a counselor taught me that I carried over into **the Army** was being attentive & observant of the individual...& tailoring what personality to assimilate when interacting on a one-on-one level either to teach, train, advise, discipline or just listen without judgment."

**"WILL OUR CABOOSE! FIT IN YOUR SANCTUARY?"**



Well, after conducting 3 camps for the young in a very full summer, I have been striving daily to get some downtime, fill up, & refresh. It hasn't been easy. We already have events on our Fall agenda, but Kim & I have been praying for more. If you think your church would be interested in our services, please feel free to contact me. I conduct services for all ages, from children to senior citizens, either separately or combined, imparting much Scripture & systematic theology, using both drama & numerous & various object lessons & visual aids. I also conduct youth & men's retreats. My "ache" is always that God's people will be led to adoration of Him via the ministry He enables me to do by His great grace. I've never charged a fee, & never will. I always leave that up to my hosts. May our Father open His doors in His timing to spread the excellencies of His Son. 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]: "I've seen a lot of people die-they're aren't a lot of death-bed confessions." [Geo. Bowen, a very respected colleague & friend]; "Toning down the gospel message loosens the grip of its adherents." [M.R.G. 12/11/2008]



**Caboose! On the Loose:**

**\*Lookin' out for the little guys...**

**Ministry/Events for *SEPTEMBER* & those not listed in last month's newsletter:**

Aug. 18: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Father's House children's church service

Sept. 3: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.//Network pastors' mtg.

Sept. 13: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: THC spaghetti dinner fund-raiser: association member

Sept. 19: New Covenant Community Church, Audubon, NJ: Elim area credential holders' mtg.

Sept. 22: Abundant Life Church, Birdsboro, PA: New facilities' dedication service [attendee]

Sept. 26: Sight And Sound Theater, Strasburg, PA: performance & dinner for ministry leaders

Sept. 28: Birdsboro, PA: Scott Drumheller [former camper] wedding

Sept. 29: Newport Church, Newport, PA: Sun. a.m. family service

**\*Michael is an ordained *Elim Fellowship* itinerant Stateside missionary & is also licensed to preach the gospel by the local church he attends, *Immanuel Church*. *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 the link below to give directly. Any gift no matter how small would be greatly appreciated! Thank you! [click here](#)**

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