

**YOUTH SUNDAY
2010**

DANIEL EYNON AND TIFFANI KISH

From Tiffani Kish:

My parents joined Presbyterian Church of the Roses in 1992 – just a few months before I was born. So I have been richly blessed to have gotten to know each and every one of you throughout my entire life.

As I graduate and begin a new chapter in my life, I have reflected on the many changes I have experienced in my lifetime. Before I had time to contemplate the solitude of being an only child, my sister Stefanie entered the world. She has taught me so much about myself and how to get along with someone who doesn't think I am the center of the universe. In the safety of my family I learned how to love, laugh, and argue with her even - if we haven't quite figured out how to share a bathroom together. For many years I have given her cause to never speak to me after brutal arguments, but she somehow has always found the strength to forgive me and love me - even after the great yogurt war of 2005.

Our congregation has seen many changes as well. We have been enriched by the presence of many gifted pastors and we have endured the loss of much loved members such as Carolyn Aloia and recently Harry Marks. I have learned many valuable lessons growing up in this church. I learned to never be afraid of going to the doctor because I saw Dr. Barker at church frequently. I also felt safe going to the dentist because Dr. Bauer's parents worshipped here and they seemed like nice people who wouldn't have raised a mean and scary monster. Knowing that I might see my 6th grade teacher Mrs. Dunkleberger – affectionately known as Mrs. D - on Sundays made me feel comfortable enough to talk to her as a real person who actually wanted to help me succeed instead of a homework generating machine who was intent on spoiling my leisure hours away from school. Carolyn and Dick Aloia taught me I could have fun and learn about God at the same time. Dick was my mentor and he helped me through Jim Wheeler's confirmation class every Wednesday night. He encouraged me to express my innermost feelings about my relationship with God in my statement of faith. It was very difficult to write because I often keep my feelings to myself. Confessing my faith out loud at the session meeting sent my anxiety to a level I had not previously experienced. I was so nervous when I faced the session that I made myself sick afterwards. I lost one of my favorite dinners – my Dad's special, tender, juicy, barbequed, baby back ribs. I was afraid that they would reject me because I didn't know everything about God. I learned that it was OK not to have all the answers. This experience helped me have the confidence to serve as a mentor to my sister Stefanie when she went through Kate's class a few years later.

Being involved in VBS, Logos, and youth group has been a lot of fun. Liz Rhodes was not afraid to show her silly side when we played volleyball or went Christmas caroling. Her relaxed manner allowed me to grow in my faith and not be afraid to share it with others.

Barbara Mack-L-roy has patiently shared her love of music with me. She has taught me to sing out with confidence and smile even when I make a mistake.

I have also been blessed by getting to know the extended family of some of our church members. Normally, freshman orientation is a time to make students feel more comfortable with the campus, pick up their class

schedule, and practice moving between classes prior to the first day of school. Due to a computer glitch, my class schedule was completely blank. The only thing worse than being lost on the first day of school is not even having a place to go. My eyes welled with tears when I found no class changes could be made until I talked to my school counselor on Monday. As it turned out, my counselor was Margie Donaldson's son so it wasn't as horrible an experience as I feared. He was able to create a new schedule for me on Friday so I had time to find my classes over the weekend. Thinking of him as Margie's son instead of "my counselor" made me feel a lot more comfortable when we first met.

The past eighteen years have also brought about major changes in technology. I take my iPod everywhere and I fast forward thru commercials on our satellite TV. Medical advances have created unique treatment opportunities to combat diseases that were considered fatal not long ago. Gay marriage has been legalized and overturned with the final outcome to still be decided. Our nation elected its first black president and our first women president may not be far off.

In the past eighteen years a lot of changes have taken place for me, our church, our community, and our world. And many more changes loom on the horizon. Life brings about many changes but God remains the one constant in our lives if we choose to follow him. I want to thank each of you for the role you have played in my life thus far. I have become closer to you and closer to God in the process. You have helped me discover the secret jewels God has buried in my soul and prepared me to go forth into the world. Trusting myself and trusting God. I am excited about the changes God has in store for me as my life moves forward and – no matter where I go - a piece of you will remain in my heart forever.



From Daniel Eynon:

"This is Col. Henry Blade from the 4077th M*A*S*H unit in Korea. I sent Private Boone away to go get me that lime scented shaving cream I asked him for a while back, but I think he ended up in the Painless Polish Poker Parlor. Ah well, I'll get him later. In the meantime I'd like to talk to you about something." And since I don't feel like talking in an accent the whole time, I'm going to stop that now.

My name is Daniel, and today I've brought with me a special item to help me talk about something: memories – memories of very important people in your life and objects that contain these memories, things you cherish. Does anybody have something like that? I know I do, and it's sitting right on top of my head. That's right, this hat that I'm wearing is probably one of the most special things I have. It has a lot of good memories to it. This hat, as you might have guessed, is the hat that I wore at Rancho Cotate High School recently in the play M*A*S*H for my character, Col. Blake. It reminds me of the shows that I did, the boundaries I overcame and all the people I met through it. I wish I could have been involved in more plays. It was really a wonderful experience, and something I'll never forget.

But this hat offers up a lot more than just that. This hat belonged to someone VERY important to me. It's my grandfather's hat. My grandpa died early this year, which was, of course, very shocking and heartbreaking. A few weeks after he died, I decided to try out for the school play since I had been in drama class, a friend had wanted me to do it, and my teacher/director, Mr. Abbott, wanted me to do it. So I went and tried out and eventually ended up with the part of Col. Blake, the one I had wanted.

When it came time, we needed to figure out costumes for our characters, and one of Blake's main items was a fishing hat. I believe this was suggested by my mom when I told her about how I needed costume stuff. When she told me about it, I thought it was a good idea and brought it up to Abbott, and he loved it. In fact, when I brought the hat in finally to keep backstage, EVERYONE loved it. I mean come on, this is a pretty sweet hat, right?

Anyway, I think using this hat in the play was a great thing for me to do. I was able to honor my grandpa by wearing it during the play. I don't think any other fishing hat would have felt as right as that one. With it I carry memories of the play, but more importantly, I carry the memories of my grandpa and the many things he has done for me. Things like these are things you shouldn't ever let go of. It is important to keep memories

alive, especially of those who are no longer with us. This is one thing that I will keep with me forever to remind me of my grandpa and how much he helped me. If you have something like this, NEVER let go of it. If you want to remember someone, find something like this. I believe it is something that is good to have with you, to keep memories alive, and to put a smile on the faces of those who are watching us from above. I know my grandpa was watching me, proud of the amazing performances the cast gave, and happy knowing that I was using his fishing hat in the play.

Make those you miss happy; keep them alive by keeping their thought within something you can take with you forever.