Welcome to the Chaplain’s Corner newsletter. If you have a joy or concern you’d like to share with our staff, send an e-mail or give us a call at Ext. 8348. We only share concerns with the campus community, via newsletter or e-mail, with permission. You can view previous and current issues of our newsletter (in PDF format), on the Spiritual Life page of the Lynchburg College website—www.lynhburg.edu/spirituallife.

A Mother’s Musings on Marriage

The This past Saturday I experienced one of the most profound events of my life – the first of my three children’s marriage. Zachary, our second son, wed Molly, the love of his life. As a chaplain I probably officiate at almost a dozen weddings a year, but none have come close to the celebration of one of my own. I was overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and the sense of joy that permeated each moment of the weekend. While not every member of Zach and Molly’s extended families could attend, those that did traveled at great sacrifice of time and resources and did so willingly and wholeheartedly. Friends from as far away as Seattle made the trek in support of the newlyweds, and memories were shared even as new friendships were formed as everyone gathered together.

When the time for the mother and son dance arrived during the reception, I found myself even more emotional and sentimental than I had imagined. As the words to “Forever Young” serenaded our movements, I thanked Zach for the man he had become and the new daughter he had brought into our lives. In welcoming Molly into our family, we were gifted with a new community of her loved ones as well. Love shared is multiplied a hundred times over at a wedding.

I was also touched by Zach and Molly’s decision to invite guests to consider making a donation to Equality Virginia which believes in a truly inclusive Commonwealth where all are equally welcomed and valued, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. I believe it took both courage and compassion for them to publicly witness their support of this organization, and I applaud their decision. As stated in a display at the wedding venue and later in Molly’s Facebook post, “Zach and I also believe that everyone should be able to marry the person they love in the home where they live.”

Commitment and partnership, faithfulness and devotion can be experienced in many ways outside of marriage to be sure, and not all are called to live as Zach and Molly have chosen to live. But I hope that their example and the witness of others like them who profess unconditional love and care for another might inspire each of us in our own relationships and within our own communities.

As families of every shape and size gathered for this upcoming Parents and Family weekend, I offer a New Zealand prayer used at Zach and Molly’s wedding and slightly adapted:

Blessed One,

We thank you for families
And for everything parents and children
have to share:

By your Spirit of peace
draw them together
And help them be true friends
to one another.

Let your love surround them and your care protect them…..Amen.

By Anne Gibbons
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