



# News from the Blue Ridge



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Claire & Lorin Cranford

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## Family Events:

Although Claire and I have struggled with health problems recently, this picture really isn't of us. One of the delightful things we get to do is decorating

for special seasons of the year. This year we set up Tex and Mrs. Tex on our front porch to greet folks passing by during the Halloween season. With a spotlight on a timer in the evenings, they could be easily seen from the street



at nighttime until about midnight each evening during the second half of October. Neighbors had a lot of fun noticing these straw people as they entered the West Lake edition. Some commented that they felt the need to slow down and wave back. It did serve to give all visitors in our edition a friendly greeting just as they came into the area. Our next project is going to be Mr. and Mrs. Santa Clause during the Christmas season.

Another delightful activity each fall is our annual trek into the mountains to take pictures of the fall foliage. We made two trips this year to see first the early foliage at the higher elevations and then two weeks later at the lower elevations. The trip from Chimney Rock eventually ending up at Grandfather Mountain and Blowing Rock provided some stunning views of God's majestic handiwork. This picture, taken north of Chimney Rock, is but one of numerous ones that Claire got during the second trip. What made the trips even more enjoyable was that Angie, Brian and the kids went with us and we shared the scenery together as well as spent two absolutely delightful Saturdays visiting with one another.



Both of us did struggle with some health issues during October. Ironically we came down with the flu the same time and it put me to bed for a week. I missed three days of classes at GWU -- one of the very few times this has happened in five years. Even more challenging was the reaction to one of the medications Dr. Bobby gave me. Some way it nullified the progress on managing the feet pain caused by the neuropathy condition. During the seven days that I was taking the medicine, the level of pain exploded to degrees I had not experienced in over a year. But after the medicine washed itself out of my body, the feet pain has diminished back down to the uncomfortable but manageable levels previously. The body is really strange, and unpredictable.

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## University Happenings:



### The Parable of the Chicken Yard

Once there was a fine chicken yard in the foothills of western NC. There were all kinds of chickens in that yard -- Road Island Reds, White Leghorns, Plymouth Rocks, Dominiques, even a few Bantams. One day a White Leghorn hen slipped up behind the old rooster that ruled over the flock and began pecking him. Before long other hens joined in the fray and er long they had the old rooster bleeding profusely. Some other hens tried to intervene but true to chicken nature the pecking frenzy couldn't be stopped once it started. Quickly the whole hen yard was caught up in the frenzy -- Reds pecking Whites, Rocks pecking Dominiques etc. Now the Bantams fled to the high weeds in the corner of the pen because they knew from experience where this kind of stuff leads. Nobody comes out without being bloodied and some die from their wounds.



All the while this frenzy was exploding in the chicken yard, an ominous sight began taking shape high over head. The noise of this frenzy caught the attention of several chicken hawks. Slowly they began circling overhead just waiting until all the hens were bloodied and too weak to run fast. Then they would swoop down, catching the hens off guard, and devastate them. The chicken yard would then be theirs for the taking.

These November storm clouds from the north also blew up other fowl who began circling above the hawks. One, then two, then a whole host of buzzards smelled the possibility of supper just waiting on the ground below them, once the hawks finished killing off the hens. Their only challenge was to get to the remains of the hens before the old red fox, sitting patiently just outside the barely opened gate to the yard, managed to dash in and grab off the prized hens.

"Stop! Stop this madness," cried out the Bantams from the safety of the weeds in the corner of the yard, "Can't you look up and see the danger?" But the passion for blood was strong and the pecking of every moving hen in sight was well nigh irresistible. Chickens will be true to their nature and the sight of blood is like a powerful magnet, especially for the young pullets.

Alas! The hens, blinded by their rage and set on getting rid of the old rooster, failed to realize the greater dangers above them and just outside the yard. They were attacked from above and from beyond. The old fox snatched up some of the choicest hens, while the hawks swooped down and finished off most of the rest. Only a very few of them managed to flee back into the safety of the hen house. The rest became buzzard meat! The once fine chicken yard now lay in shambles and quickly began to smell with rotting flesh. The Bantams quietly slipped out of the yard to the safety of other yards down the road. They knew the hawks would come back to knock off the remaining hens, caught unawares out in the yard.

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## Claire's Musings:

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I recently discovered I have sleep apnea, which is interesting because I keep hearing about a lot of others who also have that. The best part of this is that I finally have an excuse for being so tired all the time other than old age. I was really wondering about myself as to why I was so exhausted all the time and needing so much sleep. I just don't have the time to sleep that much. For most of my life I have given up lots of sleep to keep up with everything. As it is with most people, there is just not enough time to get everything done. That was the one thing that had to suffer to keep up with job, family, home, etc. It was hard to do that with the allergies and asthma, too.

The hardest part now is trying to adjust to wearing a breathing mask at night. Sometimes it becomes difficult to breath with the asthma alone. Now I am supposed to wear a mask that seems almost suffocating at times. Thank goodness I am slowly beginning to adjust.



But, oh what a scary sight I am. I sleep like Rip Van Winkle, look like an alien or Hannibal (Silence of the Lambs), sound like Darth Vader (Star Trek). At least we can laugh about how crazy it is. I have been using this for three weeks, but it is hard to see any improvements yet, because I have been sick with a flu bug for most of that time. I believe that I will begin to see some improvement soon. I need to sleep less in order to spend more time working on my masters.



The most fun we had this month was spending a couple of Saturdays with Angie, Brian, Clay, and Taylor looking at the

beautiful changing leaves in the mountains. The first trip was to the higher elevations and this past weekend we went to the lower elevations. We all took pictures and hope that they turn out well. As usual we had fun being together, plus lots of laughter.

The mess at Gardner-Webb continues and Lorin is so disheartened with everything. It's still hard for me to believe how the situation seemed to turn into a witch hunt. I admire Dr. and Mrs. White in coping with this and was glad to see him beginning the church service with hymns on the piano. He is an excellent pianist and I enjoy listening to him play.

itself in musical praise. In the Ephesian passage above singing is one of the ways the fullness of the Holy Spirit manifests itself in the community of faith. In the Colossian passage, singing is a major way of expressing thanksgiving to the Lord as well as incorporating the Word of Christ into our lives.



## Lorin's Musings:

As we resume our study of literary patterns in the body section of the letters of the New Testament, not only do we encounter narrative passages where Paul or other NT writers describe some event that has taken place in the lives of the readers of the letter. Also, other more teaching or didactic materials dominate the letter body. This is especially true of the letters of Paul.

Several types of teaching materials come to the surface. The first genre to be explored has to do with materials taken over from early Christian tradition. See the discussion in *New Testament Genre* (<http://cranfordville.com/NT-genre.htm>). Scholars in this field have identified two types: (1) those from worship liturgy and (2) those from early preaching. With the orientation of the ancient world toward memorizing materials and passing them down orally, it is not surprising that this oral teaching of the Christian faith quickly achieved a rather well established form that could be easily taught and learned.

Somewhat like the offertory prayer in modern worship services is characterized by stock phrases that are frequently repeated, early Christians developed oral expressions of the essence of their faith and used them extensively in worship. Three sub-forms from worship can be identified in the NT letters, as well as elsewhere: hymns, confessions of faith, and the Lord's Supper narratives.

This time we will look at the first of these, hymns. In Eph. 5:19-20 and Col. 3:16, Paul mentions the use of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs as being used in early Christian worship.

"5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, 5:19 addressing one another in *psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, 5:20 always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father. 5:21 Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph. 5:18-21, all one sentence in the Greek).

"16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing *psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Col 3:16).

In both passages the OT psalms served as one source of singing, while hymns and spiritual songs provided two additional sources of musical worship. These appear to be Christian musical compositions honoring Christ. Specific examples of what is intended can be seen in several places. In the infancy narratives of the Lukan gospel, we find the Magnificat (Lk 1:46-55), the Benedictus (Lk 1:68-79), and the Nunc Dimittis (Lk 2:29-32). In the letters of the NT we have the Christus Hymnus in Phil. 2:6-11 for sure and also Col. 1:15-20. Additionally, spiritual songs are preserved in various sections in the book of Revelation such as 4:8-11 and 7:10-12. To this listing some NT scholars would add others such as 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:6-8, 2:21-25, 3:18-22. The difficulty is in knowing with certainty whether poetically oriented passages reflect a song or not. Most likely they do, given ancient patterns in Greek.

The rich Hebrew heritage of singing praises to God in the temple rituals by the Levites, as well as in the sabbath services in the synagogues and in family worship experiences, provided early Christians, who were mostly Jewish in the beginning, a wonderful legacy in which to praise God and to celebrate their Savior musically. This Hebrew heritage included both oral singing and the use of all kinds of musical instruments. Something that early Christians continued to utilize as opportunity presented itself. Vibrant religious experience will naturally express