

# County-Wide Chaplaincy

## Thanks you!

2500 NE 78<sup>th</sup> St. Vancouver, WA 98665 ~ (360) 573-7127

January 2019

### **“In the Beginning”**

January signals the beginning of a new year. We will be writing “2019” on a multitude of documents this coming year. Officially it is A.D. 2019; the A.D. stands for the Latin phrase, anno domini, meaning “In the year of the Lord.” Close to 1500 years ago, a monk in Rome, Dionysius Exiguus, initiated a system of dating that began with the year he believed Christ Jesus was born. This method of marking the years now dominates the world. Each time you write this date, be reminded of the Son of God being sent to earth to take the form of a man, the long awaited Messiah.

The first verse in the Bible states, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Before the beginning, time did not exist. The triune God lived in an eternal state with nothing else. In the beginning, He created space and time, “space-time.” He also created matter, energy, atoms, stars, angels, planet earth, water, land, plants, animals, and humans. There is no other reasonable explanation for the existence of our complex and finely tuned universe, only unreasonable explanations. My favorite book on apologetics is entitled, *“I Don’t Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist.”*

The first verse of John’s gospel account states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Thus, the Word already existed before time began, before creation. The Word was with God the Father; the Word was God; the Word became flesh and dwelled among us, referring to Himself as the Son of God.

As chaplains we see end of life on nearly every call. I can’t help but think the person who died is beginning a new life in either heaven or hell. Hopefully, they made the most of their short stay on earth, finding salvation and meaning through Jesus the Messiah. I do not like to think about hell, the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. People in my family have died, not leaving behind a sufficient expression of faith that would give me assurance of their eternal destiny. I have to trust God and not depend on my own limited understanding.



Family members left behind also have a new beginning, having lost their loved one. The grief process may last weeks or months or even years. Weeping, anger, regret, guilt, sadness, and/or depression eventually gives way to a new normal; yet things are never quite the same. The new normal may be self destructive. In one family the death of a daughter was followed by the suicide of one of her parents.

The new normal can be the beginning of a good work. John Walsh lost his six year old son when a criminal kidnapped and murdered his child. Walsh channeled his anger and grief into a national quest to help other parents find their missing children. A chaplain among us lost his daughter through an accident. His deep grief turned to joy through the power and grace of the Lord. He now serves God by helping others in their grief.

Despite the possibility of trials, distresses, and even death; we have good reason to hope for the best in this new year and rejoice, knowing that God will work all things together for the good for those who love Him.

Chaplain Al Walter

*We are thankful for our first responders. Please continue to pray with us for their safety as they serve our county!*

---

***You can give online or by mail.***

*Your donations can be given by mail using the enclosed envelope, or online. To give online and/or set up recurring billing there is a link to give on the donations page of our website: [www.911chaplain.org](http://www.911chaplain.org).*

*Or you can go straight to it with the following web address:*

*<https://911chaplain.churchcenteronline.com/>.*

---

*If you shop on Amazon.com, they will donate a portion of your purchase to County-Wide Chaplaincy if you designate us as your preferred non-profit. It doesn't cost you anything extra and you send some support our way. We have a posted a link to the smile.amazon.com portal on the donations page of our website and as long as you order through that initial page it will send us some proceeds. Or you can type that link in and designate us as your preferred charity. Thank you, and thank you Amazon.com!!*