

Life of Reilly

They played the oddest game in high school football history last month down in Grapevine, Texas.

It was Grapevine Faith vs. Gainesville State School and everything about it was upside down. For instance, when Gainesville came out to take the field, the Faith fans made a 40-yard spirit line for them to run through.

Did you hear that? The other team's fans?

They even made a banner for players to crash through at the end. It said, "Go Tornadoes!" Which is also weird, because Faith is the Lions.

It was rivers running uphill and cats petting dogs. More than 200 Faith fans sat on the Gainesville side and kept cheering the Gainesville players on—by name.

"I never in my life thought I'd hear people cheering for us to hit their kids," recalls Gainesville's QB and middle linebacker, Isaiah. "I wouldn't expect another parent to tell somebody to hit their kids. But they wanted us to!"

And even though Faith walloped them 33-14, the Gainesville kids were so happy that after the game they gave head coach Mark Williams a sideline squirt-bottle shower like he'd just won state. Gotta be the first Gatorade bath in history for an 0-9 coach.

But then you saw the 12 uniformed officers escorting the 14 Gainesville players off the field and two and two started to make four. They lined the players up in groups of five—handcuffs ready in their back pockets—and marched them to the team bus. That's because Gainesville is a maximum-security correctional facility 75 miles north of Dallas. Every game it plays is on the road.

This all started when Faith's head coach, Kris Hogan, wanted to do something kind for the Gainesville team. Faith had never played Gainesville, but he already knew the score. After all, Faith was 7-2 going into the game, Gainesville 0-8 with 2 TDs all year. Faith has 70 kids, 11 coaches, the latest equipment and involved parents. Gainesville has a lot of kids with convictions for drugs, assault and robbery—many of whose families had disowned them—wearing seven-year-old shoulder pads and ancient helmets.

So Hogan had this idea. What if half of our fans—for one night only—cheered for the other team? He sent out an email asking the Faithful to do just that. "Here's the message I want you to send:" Hogan wrote. "You are just as valuable as any other person on planet Earth."

Some people were naturally confused. One Faith player walked into Hogan's office and asked, "Coach, why are we doing this?"

And Hogan said, "Imagine if you didn't have a home life. Imagine if everybody had pretty much given up on you. Now imagine what it would mean for hundreds of people to suddenly believe in you."

Next thing you know, the Gainesville Tornadoes were turning around on their bench to see something they never had before. Hundreds of fans. And actual cheerleaders!

"I thought maybe they were confused," said Alex, a Gainesville lineman (only first names are released by the prison). "They started yelling 'DEE-fense!' when their team had the ball. I said, 'What? Why they cheerin' for us?'"

It was a strange experience for boys who most people cross the street to avoid. "We can tell people are a little afraid of us when we come to the games," says Gerald, a lineman who will wind up doing more than three years. "You can see it in their eyes. They're lookin' at us like we're criminals. But these people, they were yellin' for us! By our names!"

Maybe it figures that Gainesville played better than it had all season, scoring the game's last two touchdowns. Of course, this might be because Hogan put his third-string nose guard at safety and his third-string cornerback at defensive end. Still.

After the game, both teams gathered in the middle of the field to pray and that's when Isaiah surprised everybody by asking to lead. "We had no idea what the kid was going to say," remembers Coach Hogan. But Isaiah said this: "Lord, I don't know how this happened, so I don't know how to say thank You, but I never would've known there was so many people in the world that cared about us."

And it was a good thing everybody's heads were bowed because they might've seen Hogan wiping away tears.

As the Tornadoes walked back to their bus under guard, they each were handed a bag for the ride home—a burger, some fries, a soda, some candy, a Bible and an encouraging letter from a Faith player.

The Gainesville coach saw Hogan, grabbed him hard by the shoulders and said, "You'll never know what your people did for these kids tonight. You'll never, ever know."

And as the bus pulled away, all the Gainesville players crammed to one side and pressed their hands to the window, staring at these people they'd never met before, watching their waves and smiles disappearing into the night.

Anyway, with the economy six feet under and Christmas running on about three and a half reindeer, it's nice to know that one of the best presents you can give is still absolutely free.

Hope.

Rick Reilly
ESPN The Magazine

Looking Ahead

March	
7	Illinois State University Students FH Overnight
11	Business Meeting
13	Walker Street Fiddlers—FH
27	Forever 39 Club
April	
5	Passion Sunday
9	Foot Washing Service
12	Easter
20	Bright Sunday
	Alternative Transportation to Church
26	Youth Sunday
May	
3	Tentative Date for Church-wide Picnic
10	Mother's Day
13	Business Meeting
16	Young Adults Sunday School Class Reunion
25	Memorial Day
29	Forever 39 Club
June	
20-23	Passport Kids Camp, Lynchburg, VA
21-26	Youth Passport Camp, Wingate NC
July	
11	Rusty Chamberlain's Wedding

Gratitude

It was an ordinary Thursday morning getting ready to go out shopping when all of a sudden I felt kind of strange. Bill caught me as I was falling near the bed and laid me down and said you are having a stroke, I need to call 911. At that time I burst into tears, Bill joined me; but left to call 911. I could hear everything that was going on but could not speak. The next thing I knew the firemen and the EMS people were all around me. They got me in the ambulance and off to cone Hospital. I got there about fifteen minutes later. The “Stroke Team” was waiting.

They started work on me immediately. I had a blood clot in the left side of my brain which affected about 65%. The first try with the “block buster” medication did into work. They went the groin route and up the artery to the blood clot and pulled it out with a corkscrew (thingamajig). My daughter said she heard the doctor or technician who was trying to wake me say, when I finally came to, “Thank you, Jesus!” That made me feel good. Another one of God's servants.

By the grace of God and the expertise of the “Stroke Team” I came out with minimal damage. God gave me another miracle. Thanks be to God!

I am so grateful for my family, friends and particularly my friends and soul mates of College Park Church. You have flooded the heavens with prayer. I humbly and sincerely thank you. Also, friends, neighbors and the CPC casserole team kept us in food which was great. (Bill was quite pleased that he didn't have to cook so much.)

Thank you so very, very much for the food, beautiful flowers, visits, the overwhelming volume of cards and all the goodies you provided. My heart is filled with thanks and praise for all of you. (My handwriting is not up to par, so please accept this as my thank you.)

Betty Withers

Thank You

Dear Friends at College Park,
Thank you so much, Michael, for remembering me on my 90th birthday, and making it so very “special.” You were the “granddaddy” of it all.

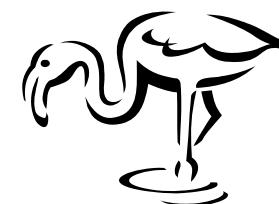
I haven't been at College Park for as many years as my dear friend Rozette, but I have made so many friends since I've been coming to College Park, and I appreciate all of you more than I can say.

I also appreciate all my Sunday School Class members, as well as my children, in joining me for lunch at the K & W Cafeteria. It was really a special time for me, too. I so enjoyed talking with each of you. And again, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the nice cards, all of them, and last but not least, those “beautiful pink flamingos” (all 39 of them) adorning my yard was wonderful. Wow! Wee! I loved them!

Agnes, I'm so sorry that you couldn't be with us; Betty, I'm also sorry that you weren't able to stay any longer than you did. I hope you will be better soon,.

Thanks again so much.

In Christian love,
Marie Chambers



COLLEGE PARK collage

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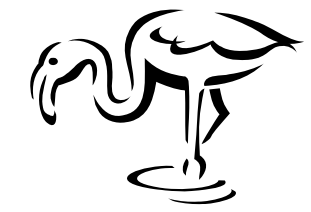
March 2009

Outrageous Outreach

Calling all 4th and 5th Graders!

When: **Sunday, March 1, 3:00-5:00p.m**

- Here's your next chance to make a difference.
- Meet at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 3906 West Friendly Avenue, and we will be preparing a meal for the families presently served by the Greensboro Interfaith Hospitality Network. The families will be arriving that Sunday evening, so we will cook, make posters to welcome them and put small candy treats in each room.
- In addition, we will be collecting personal care items and making cookies to be shared with individuals in a local shelter for women and children escaping domestic violence.
- So, come to Westminster at 3:00 on Sunday, March 1 and bring a few toiletry items (toothpaste, shampoo, toothbrushes, soap, etc.).
- Please email Terri Ramsey (t_ramsey@uncg.edu) to sign up. We hope to see everyone there for this important Ministry.



College Park
An American Baptist Church
1601 Walker Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27403

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Alliance of Baptists - American Baptist Churches - Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

February Peanut Butter Donations = 33 Pounds
 Total Peanut Butter Donations for year = 103 pounds
 Total Other Food Donations for year = 375 Pounds

Save the Date!

Sunday School Class Reunion for the "Young Adults" of the 80s

If you were a young adult in the Sunday School class taught by Libby during the Jamison years of 1981-1992 - this is for you!

May 16th, 4:30 p.m.,
Potluck at Rusty's Retreat
(Sally White's farm)

More details to come. Please pass on the word to anyone you know from the "old days". Or contact Tammy Stocks with email addresses or locations. (rstocks@thefellowsip.info).

Preaching from the Choir: A Lenton Sermon Series

- March 1 When in Our Music God is Glorified (Ziengenhals)
 God Be in My Head (Rutter)
- March 8 The Heavens Are Telling (Haydn)
- March 15 If My People Will Pray (Owens)
- March 22 The Majesty & Glory of Your Name (Fettke)
- March 29 Be Not Afraid (Davis)
- April 5 Who Am I? (Harrison)

Hey! What's for dinner? CPC Wednesday Night Fellowship

- 3/4/2009**
Bourbon Pork Chops
Salad
Scalloped Potatoes
Chocolate Cheesecake Cupcakes
- 3/11/2009**
Pasta w/ Grilled Chicken & Zucchini
Mixed Green Salad
Pecan Pie
- 3/18/2009**
Pork Chops w/ Chili-Apricot Glaze
Penne Pasta w/ parm
Squash w/ Peppers
Coconut Cream Pie
- 3/25/2009**
Hawaiian Chicken
Couscous/Green Beans
Banana Pudding