

From: [Jim Tasker](#)
To: [Wenger, Fred & Bea](#)
Cc: [archives](#)
Subject: Re: Reading & Singing - 7/18/13 - "Hello. Kitchen. Fred."
Date: Friday, July 19, 2013 2:53:42 PM

Thank you, Fred, for the wonderful, wonderful memories of ENC and treasured friends and God's many miracles that your writing always evokes...

And Jim Fischmann!

Can you imagine my astonished surprise to my having spent 3 weeks together with Jim each summer at Akron's Rotary Club Rex Lake Crippled Childrens Camp for 6 years (1945-1950) -- Akron Children's Hospital attending surgeons during my multiple operations repeatedly opined that I would spend my entire life in a wheel chair --, and then 7 years later in 1957 suddenly seeing Jim sitting across from me, face to face, in Dr. Mel-Thomas Rothwell Logic class?

In the interim while not seeing Jim I had served 4 years in the US Navy -- including a U.S. Naval Academy appointment and as designated "Man overboard!" swimmer on both destroyers I was on -- and had not seen Jim since our Crippled Children's Camp summer in 1950 until ENC in 1957.

Jim & I were blessed with lives benefiting of God's miraculous grace in many, many ways.

Among the treasures I have known on this earth was Jim Fischmann...

Memories of Jim Fischmann... We were two 10-year-olds sent separately by our doctors to Crippled Children's Camp, sponsored by the Rotary Club, on beautiful Rex Lake in Akron, Ohio -- Jim with what he told me was a "bum ticker"; me with a left leg scheduled for amputation. During the 6 summers that we spent those 3 weeks camping together, Jim's ever-present humor and radiating friendly spirit were stamped indelibly as treasured memories for me. One memory from the last day of camp when we were 13: We were opponents in the team horseshoe pitching contest. Jim's partner was a large tall girl everyone called "Big Martha". My partner was very good at horseshoes. As we played for the horseshoe championship the score became tied. The next point would win. Camp counselors began yelling that we needed to go to the cars and buses that were ready to leave to take us home. Jim made a toss that tumbled

into a leaner , and he and Martha went home camp champions.

My last year at Rex Lake camp I was 15. I joined the Navy at 17. Incredibly, my left leg was still intact. At 21 further surgery caused me to withdraw from my Annapolis Naval Academy midshipman appointment at the same time I received my call to the ministry. In 1957 I walked off my last ship at South Boston shipyard, and went straight to the campus of Eastern Nazarene College. I had not seen or heard from Jim Fischmann since summer camp 7 years before.

My first class was Dr. Mel Thomas Rothwell's Logic. Seats were arranged in a square. Taking attendance, Dr. Rothwell called, "Tasker". "Is that Jim Tasker from Akron, Ohio?" I heard someone say. I looked up. Jim Fischmann was sitting directly across from me, about 10 feet away. Astounded to see each other there at a Christian college far from Akron, Jim and I launched into earnest conversation. Dr. Rothwell looked to his left to see Jim when Jim spoke, and to his right when I spoke -- back and forth, back and forth. With eventual mutual awareness of our prolonged interruption of Logic class, Jim & I ended our surprised reunion conversation. Dr. Rothwell then resumed the class, with the comment, "Well it sure is nice to meet old friends..."

As a close childhood and college friend, Jim visited our ENC apartment often, always bringing good humor and cheer to my wife and I and our young sons. During my 3+ years as Boston Chapel pastor, Jim served faithfully as a very valuable Boston Chapel Board Member.

**O to be like Thee, lowly in spirit, Holy and harmless, patient and brave,
Meekly enduring cruel reproaches, Willing to suffer- others to save.**

**O to be like Thee! O to be like Thee, Blessed Redeemer, pure as Thou art!
Come in Thy sweetness; Come in thy fullness. Stamp Thine own image Deep on my heart.**

Thank you again, Fred. Jim

On Wed, Jul 17, 2013 at 5:35 PM, Wenger, Fred & Bea <[REDACTED]> wrote:

My High School year, 1951-52, I doubt if I ever answered the phone in the cooking area of the kitchen. I'm not really sure when I began. As I increased my involvements from "Stock Boy" to "Breakfast Assistant" to adding on other duties including overseeing the breaking in of new help, dealing with assisting with scheduling during unusual times like Pastor's Retreats and Laymen's Retreats, and even unofficial liaison between Students (sometimes even faculty) and Bob Harding. In that process I began being asked to answer the phone. From "Get that phone." to "See who's calling." to, "Handle it yourself if you can." So I regularly answered the phone. At some point I realized that I was continually asked the same questions. 1. "Is this the Kitchen?" 2. "Who am I talking with?" After awhile I knew those questions would come so I just answered, "Hello. Kitchen. Fred." Then we could get right down to business.

My first year Rev. Frank Bowers ran the kitchen. He did the menus and oversaw all the ordering. His wife, Donna Bowers, and Mrs. Plant did the cooking. I assisted by lifting heavy kettles of food and getting things for them. Frank Bowers had been a Nazarene Pastor and fell into some difficulties and ended up at ENC running the kitchen. His diabetes was getting to him so it was his last year. His wife and Mrs. Plant were retained to assist hands-on Chef, Bob Harding. There were some adjustment issues because the new Chef didn't do things the same way as Frank Bowers would do them. One clear difference was that Mrs. Bowers would spend most of Saturday lovingly baking pies for the Sunday noon meal. Former army chef, Bob Harding, would just as soon buy them from a bakery. Mrs. Plant, a plucky and godly lady from England, was able to take on rough/tough Bob Harding and it wasn't too long until she won his respect and things settled down.

I recall cooking breakfasts with Mrs. Plant. Her idea was that I needed to be in the kitchen to assist so that all the food was ready BEFORE Dean of Women, Esther Williamson, ("Dean Willie"), came to be hostess of a sit down breakfast which she began by having brief devotions. I was a full-time student, doing monitor duties that kept me up later at night, and I did not wish to be in the kitchen any earlier than necessary in the morning. Since we always had juice and cereal before the main dish, I saw no reason to have all the main dish ready BEFORE devotions. Since we offered seconds, I reasoned that we could even be cooking halfway through the meal. Mrs. Plant was horrified at the thought! So though Mrs. Plant was like a second Mother to me spiritually, she got pretty fidgety if ALL wasn't ready before Dean Williamson came through the kitchen to begin breakfast. The year I went on to Seminary in Kansas City, MO I was replaced by Chuck Howard. I got this long letter from Mrs. Plant. In it she

extolled Chuck's virtues. He was so reliable. He always showed up "on time"; on her time, that meant. Meals were always all cooked when Dean Willie came through the kitchen. Then in a concluding sentence she added, "Sometimes with all that excitement gone it's boring and I sure do miss our times cooking and talking together."

Ancel Tikasighn was our pots & pans man. Such a fine, intelligent, Christian gentleman! One day he seemed uncharacteristically down. Subsequent conversation pried from him his concerns. There were adverse reactions and feedback from his dating relationship with Terri. He sensed that some guys in the dorm were prejudiced against him. Even Dear "Dean Willie" called both Terri and Ancel in and gently approached the controversial "mixed" racial aspect. I stood with him, a man whose heritage was Indian from India and whose family was living in Trinidad. To demonstrate my support I even asked him to room with me the next year. We had a wonderful year together. We've kept casual contact with Terri and Ancel all these years.

One day some kitchen buddies, Don Green, Stu Fretz and Duane Herron decided that we should swap roomies for second semester. Only I wasn't informed. I returned from the afternoon in the kitchen to find the decision had been made and implemented. After the original jolt, I went along with it. After all we kitchen workers were all "family".

How does one describe Jim Fischmann? Converted Jew from Akron, OH at ENC with a call to preach. He served faithfully in the dishroom with quality work and a wittiness that was ever present in kind humor. "Excuse the stump. First World War," always caught me off guard. "I don't get a weekly pay check. I get a weekly insult." "_____, you're a steady employee. If you were any steadier your movement would be imperceptible." And so on. He taught me to lighten up on my humor. He became my chief assistant in Christian Service involvements. What few knew were our end of day "Lower Room" talks and songs and prayer times. He'd hang around until I finished up my last daily task, mopping the kitchen floor. An outsider would see just the two of us. We knew God was there too.

Once in all those years I was asked to be a waiter. Mrs. Williamson was hosting about 20 area college level music teachers. She carefully instructed me to put the food on from the right (I think) and take it off from the left (I think). At the end of my first and only time to be a waiter I asked her if it was satisfactory. She kindly expressed her appreciation. Then I asked the question that would have been best unasked: "Did I make any mistakes?" Reluctantly and with kindness, "Only in getting serving food and taking it away backwards."

I seldom stood by one of the doors that were kept locked until Head Waitress, Bea Wycoff, signaled that all was ready to bring them in. Men were in one holding area. Women in another. 3 of each would sit at a table. There was commotion outside the Men's door. I opened to discover that the group had turned upon a student they nicknamed, "Hot Lips". He was a bit immature and the others teased him, but he didn't quite understand they were making fun of him. The name "Hot Lips" came from guys urging him to rock his girlfriend backwards at the dorm door at night and really lay one on her. I thought it was cruel and told some of them so. Nothing changed. That night something in me kicked in. In a loud voice I found myself loudly proclaiming: "I want that to stop now! It's not right and you all know it!" I closed the door awaiting the signal to begin. The commotion

continued. I opened the door and in even a louder voice said, "I told you to stop picking on him. If I hear one more remark, I'm not going to open this door for you guys for supper tonight!" That got their attention. They got silent. They remained silent for the next two minutes. They all got to eat on time. I felt an inner satisfaction that lasts even now, that despite taking a big risk, I had done the right thing.

I have a different view than most of what Jesus did in the temple when he took on the "Den of Thieves" who were "marketing" in the gentile section of the temple that God intended to be "A House of Prayer for All Nations". I see Jesus with quiet determination turning tables over and shooing animals away. He had the moral high ground and everyone knew it. (I'm at my best when I have the high moral ground and express it with quiet but firm confidence.)

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Come in Thy sweetness; Come in thy fullness. Stamp Thine own image Deep on
my heart.

Fred

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Web site: www.jimtasker.us (This Boston Chapel history site is being updated. Thank you to you all who have sent photos & documents to the Archives for future generations.)

Preferred Email address: [REDACTED]