

MM Email Blue Sheet — May 23, 2012

Semi-occasional Publication from Moment Ministries — Our 34th Year

Morgan's Moment...

She was a "member"
of my "church"
she said for 25 years or so.
Told me I was designated
to do her funeral
if I outlived her.
I couldn't convince her
I had no "church"
and no "members."
She insisted to the end
an avid Blue Sheet reader
and thoughtful responder.
I was "family pastor"
a wedding and funeral
for one son.
I did a blessing of ashes
to be scattered together
for husband and two sons.
So I was with family
when she breathed her last
this past week at age 90.
One of many in my field of concern
as pastor to "outsiders"
for these many years.
I have no idea how many
count themselves "members"
in one way or another.
Jesus is said to have sort of said
*"I don't call you members...
I call you friends."*
— Art Morgan

BOOK CORNER

Our most recent Book Club read was *"Empire of Delusion — The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle"* by Chris Hedges. It's Pulitzer Prize book that reminded me a bit of the Prophet Amos and my Grandfather Weage's poems about Mammon and Militarism. One of my margin notes reads: *"How far down this road can America go before the disparity between wealth and the rest of us, and the impossibility of supporting an uncontrolled military system, produce a people's revolt such as those in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Syria, and so on?"* Another note: *"How far can America go before a conservative right movement backed by the religious right and the military rises as did Hitler and the Nazi movement before World War II?"* Read it and judge for yourself.

BISHOPS SPEAK ABOUT SEX

You may know that Roman Catholic Bishops brought suit against the health care plan citing restriction of conscience and religious liberty. They are joined by some conservative religious groups, including Mormons.

They say Catholic Churches and hospitals and agencies should not be required to provide insurance that includes birth control. I say that sex is their issue. Even so, the mandate issue is big.

In all the years of ecumenical dialogue with Catholics we tended to avoid the sex issues like contraception and birth control. Protestants, at least the brand I associated with, believed that women had a right to choose about things that mattered more to women than men.

That being said, what was unsaid is that there would be little need for debate over abortion if Catholics would join the rest of the developed world in teaching and practicing birth control.

Result? No unwanted pregnancies. Virtually no need for abortions. Sounds like a no-brainer argument.

One would think that anyone who doesn't want abortions (and that includes right to choose people as well as right to life people) would think that birth control education and practice was a good thing.

It seems that politicians, mostly men, and Bishops (all men), try to control sex-related issues. You would think God was against sex from the get-go (Garden of Eden?) and wanted abstinence from lustful thinking and doing what comes naturally without benefit of clergy.

They contrived the "just say no" abstinence education program which cost millions of dollars and was a total failure. Churches developed "promise" programs with statistics showing virtually the same failed results as those not involved in "promise" programs. Maybe creating more guilt is good for church business?

Beyond these thoughts is probably a more important thought. Overpopulation may be the greatest problem, even beyond global warming. To have the Pope campaigning among the poorest and hungriest and overpopulated segments of humanity against use of contraceptives doesn't seem to make sense. Unless God wants to keep women poor and create more hungry, starving, sick and dying children. Or more abortions.

Maybe it's time for more of us to be less ecumenical in this regard and "just say NO!" to this kind of thinking.

If the issue is religious freedom, that's one thing. But it looks like a cover for another agenda.

Maybe we should debate the theology of procreation or whether the instruction to "be fruitful and multiply" might be amended for sake of our species and the health of the planet. Just some of my thoughts. What are yours?

— Art Morgan, May 22, 2012

MEMORIAL DAY

We move to Puget Sound May 22 for the summer with brief exceptions for a graduation, wedding and memorial service. On Memorial Day we will hold a brief moment of memory on our deck for the dozen or so friends and relatives whose ashes are scattered there. We will add ashes of another friend to that number.