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Many of you have heard about the tragedy that rocked Lancaster County this past week with the murder of Monica Miller. Randy Shreiner, who took her life, was an active participant in the Lord's House of Prayer and served in many different capacities, most recently as pastor in Quarryville. I only knew him briefly, but I know that he had a tremendous impact for good on many people's lives over the years. Three years ago Randy resigned all responsibilities due to a moral crisis in his life and received counseling. Mark King, his senior pastor reports... 'No one saw this coming'.

Things like this are hard to comprehend and today as a Church family we grieve over this tragedy... that comes so close to home. Let's pray this morning for Monica Miller's family. Let's also pray for Randy and his family as well and let's pray for those close to this situation... those suffering because of this senseless act of violence.

**Slide #1 Prayer and Reflection:**

This is a reminder that life is short, our future is uncertain and there is always a spiritual battle going on for our souls.

**Slide #2 ACC Quizzing** is tonight at Conestoga Mennonite Church in Morgantown at 6:30 PM.

**Slide #3 Bucket Offering** (World Vision Slide)

**Slide #4** You can write it down as a fact: No matter what a man does, no matter how successful he seems

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to be in any field, if the Holy Spirit is not the chief energizer of his activity, it will all fall apart when he dies.

It's kind of like a 4<sup>th</sup> of July sparkler. It is exciting and colorful for about 30 seconds and then we are left holding a hot stick that eventually grows cold.

### **Slide #5**

**1 Thessalonians 5:19-22** Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.

'Do not put out the Spirit's fire'... what in the world does that mean!

**Slide #6** Fire is hot, fire consumes, fire spreads, fire is contagious, fire is intriguing and fire purifies. Fire is essential for survival.

**Slide #7 2 Timothy 1:6** For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

**Slide #8** So for the past several week and for the coming weeks ahead... we are inviting the Holy Spirit of God to ignite the fire of our Spiritual Gifts through a series of messages entitled, 'Fan the Flame'.

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Spiritual Gifts are a part of God's bigger story... the story of discovering our purpose. The Apostle Paul writes...

**Slide #9 2 Thessalonians 1:11** With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.

God is interested in our purpose. He wants all of us to fulfill our purpose. So we have been talking about our SHAPE. Is there anyone bold enough to come up front and tell us what all five letters of SHAPE stand for?

**Slide #10 SHAPE**

S stands for what?

H stands for what?

A stands for what?

P stands for what?

E stands for what?

We want everyone at TL to get in SHAPE! So each Sunday morning we are bringing fire into the auditorium to encourage us to fan into flame these Spiritual Gifts of the Holy Spirit!

**Interview with Dave:** This morning I would like to introduce you to Dave Martin (come up at this point). Dave is married to Nancy and they live on a farm in Little Britain along with their two children, Sarah and Bryce. Dave lives in the same house he grew up in

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and except for a short 6 months after he got married, it is the only house he has ever lived in.

If you ever spend any time with Dave you will soon learn that Dave is a Farmer by birth, a Farmer by trade, a Farmer by desire and a Farmer at heart. He raises hogs, chickens and GMO Free corn. He loves fast cars, old trucks, books and history. He is the only farmer I know who owns a road grader and actually uses it on his farm.

Dave, you use to have a second grader... what happened to that one?

Just like the other guys that I have interviewed for this series, Dave is well acquainted with fire, and one of the ways that Dave employs fire in his job is that occasionally welds, cuts, bends and fabricates steel. So I asked him to bring in his Acetylene Torch and give us a demonstration on how to cut steel. There are several reasons why I asked him to do this. First of all it involved fire, and right now we are on a fire kick. Secondly, I think it is cool, and I like to watch people torch things. Thirdly, It's unique, think about it... cutting steel with fire... what a concept

1. When did you first learn to use a torch? Not sure, I've been using a torch since I was a kid.

2. Why is it important for a farmer to know how to cut steel with a torch? Cutting steel is critical for machinery repairs and for making custom projects.

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3. How often do you use it, daily, weekly or monthly? Probably average weekly, but it varies depending on the season and what projects I have going.
  4. Describe the equipment, what does it consist of? Consists of two tanks, regulators, etc.
  5. How dangerous is it and what do you do to make it safe? Extreme tank pressures, fire danger, slag blowback, losing the hair off your knuckles, etc. What happens if one of the valves gets knocked off the Oxygen Tank?
  5. When you cut a piece of steel... what do you do? Show us.
  6. So if you have a piece of steel that you need to bend and it's too thick to bend when it's cold... what do you do? Show us.
- Thanks Dave for giving us a glimpse into torching a piece of steel without burning TL down. Let's stand together as we read from the Word of God and please pay special attention to the gifts highlighted in red.

**Slide #11 Romans 12:4-13** Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

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**Slide #12** If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is **servi**ng, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is **contributing to the needs of others**, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing **mercy**, let him do it cheerfully.

**Slide #13** Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice **hospitality**.  
Over the coming weeks we are going to be looking at a total of 19 different Spiritual Gifts and this morning we are going to be focusing in on the 4 Ministry of Helping gifts. Let's go to our notes.

#### **Slide #14**

**1. Mercy is** the Spirit given capacity and desire, to serve God by identifying with and comforting those who are in need.

The person with the gift of mercy is able to have compassion on those that are hurting and work joyfully with those whom the majority ignores. They are people who always seem to know how to enter into grief with others and say the right thing at the right time. When there is a death or an accident they are the first person to call, show up or bring a meal. When

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there is a promotion or baby born, they are quick to call and congratulate.

These are the folks who minister to the sick, the poor, the mentally challenged, the prisoner, the blind, the aged and the ugly.

Jesus told us a story, out of the Gospel of Luke, about one of the best known mercy guys and it goes like this.

There was a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, who was attacked by a band of robbers. They beat him up, took everything he owned and left him for dead.

The first person to find him was a Priest, but this priest ignored him, never stopped and went way out around him. A Levite soon passed by and he did the same thing... he kept his distance.

**Slide #15 Luke 10:33-34** But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

Now at the time Jesus was talking about neighbors and the point of the story was that the Samaritan, who was a foreigner, was more of a neighbor to the man than the religious leaders... the Priest and the Levite.

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But this morning we are talking about the gift of mercy and this Samaritan had the gift of mercy. He couldn't pass by the man without helping... he just couldn't do it... and there are some in this room here today that are just like the Samaritan. You just have to stop! It's in your DNA!

Let me make it clear, all of us need to extend mercy to others... none of us can say... I'm just a priest or a Levite and I don't need to deal with people like that... it's just not my gift! But those with the gift of mercy are energized by helping others in need and are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to show mercy. Is this you? Let's go to our notes.

## **Slide #16**

**2. Serving is** the Spirit given capacity and desire to serve God by providing practical help in both physical and spiritual matters.

Serving comes from the Greek word Diakonos and it means to run errands or wait on tables.

The person with the gift of serving usually enjoys manual projects.

They enjoy getting their hands dirty and they have the ability to recognize unmet needs in the church family and community they are willing to take the initiative to provide practical assistance.

This is what our young adult SWAP team will be doing in June. SWAP stand for... Serving With Appalachian



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People... and that's what they will be doing. You see there is a housing need among impoverished people in the Appalachian mountains of Kentucky and this team of people from TL will be working at improving their housing situations.

I would guess that if you would take a careful look at those going... you will see this gift of serving among them. They will most likely be the kind of person I am describing.

People with the gift of serving tend to enjoy working behind the scenes and one of the things that sets them apart from others doing the same task... is their attitude... they love to serve others! All of us serve others in some way... but those with the gift of serving do it with a different attitude.

Probably one of the best pictures we have of the gift of serving is a waiter or a waitress at a restaurant. Think about their lingo and the way in which they take the initiative to serve us:

Are you ready to order?

Can I get you something to drink while you look at the menu?

Would you like to try our special?

Would you like more coffee?

Is there anything else that I can get for you?

Is everyone doing alright?

Would you like to try some dessert?

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We have this story in the book of Acts about a woman named Dorcas who was blessed with the gift of serving. And it goes like this.

**Slide #17 Acts 9:36-37** In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room.

It happened to be that Peter was in a town nearby when she died, and so some of the disciples sent for him and asked him to come to Joppa. When he arrived... an interesting thing happened, all the widows that Dorcas had served were standing around crying and they began to show Peter all the robes and clothing that Dorcas has made for them. So this woman is dead and the focus immediately went to the things she had made and the way she had served others.

They weren't talking about how funny she was or how beautiful she was or how well she could sing, the focus was on how she had served others.

I have no doubt that when some of you die, that will be the topic at your funeral, how well you served others. In fact I imagine that funerals are a great place to learn about the spiritual gifts of the deceased! But my heart this morning is for us to discover this before the casket! This is why we want to talk about SHAPE now!

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Let's not wait until we die! Let's discover our gifts now, so that... we can fulfill every good purpose of ours and every act prompted by our faith... as Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 1:11.

Now the good news is that Peter prayed for her and she opened her eyes and sat up. Serving... is this your gift? Let's go to our notes.

### **Slide #18**

**3. Hospitality** is the Spirit given capacity and desire to love friends and strangers and welcome them into our homes.

The person with the gift of hospitality literally loves strangers and is fond of guests. They have no concept of what would ever instigate a... 'No Trespassing—This means you!'... type of a sign. They have a face like a door mat... that spells W-E-L-C-O-M-E.

This morning I want to give you a bizarre example of hospitality, but in spite of the circumstances... it is a great illustration of this gift.

Lot, was the nephew of Abraham and even though he had some character flaws, God included him in the OT story and Abraham always looked out for him. Lot had settled in the city of Sodom and lived a righteous life there in spite of how evil the city had become.

One day God had enough of the wickedness of this city and told Abraham that he was going to destroy it.

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Abraham knew his nephew Lot was there... so he pleaded with God and bargained with God to save the city... and he finally said to God... if you can find just ten righteous people... will you save the city... for the sake of those that are righteous. And God said OK... so He sent two angels to Sodom to see if they could find ten righteous people

**Slide #19 Genesis 19:1-3** The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. "My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house.

**Slide #20** You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." "No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square." But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.

Here is a man with the gift of hospitality. Strangers arrived at the city gate and he took them in and welcomed them into his home. He had no idea they were angels.

And while they were eating, the men of the city gathered around the house and demanded that Lot send his guests out so they could violate them and Lot refused. The men of the city became so violent that the angels struck them all with blindness and then

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insisted that Lot and his family flee with them before they torched the city.... and they fled and God burned the city to the ground.

Like I said, it's a bizarre story but yet an illustration of the gift of hospitality.... Lot took in strangers.

My mother was like this and those of you that knew her... knew that she exercised this gift on a daily basis. All kinds of people would show up at our door and she would invite them in and never complained about it. In fact... she loved it! It gave her purpose and a reason to live. How about you...do you love strangers? Do you invite people in? Let's go to our notes.

### **Slide #21**

**4. Giving** or (contributing to the needs of others) is the Spirit given capacity and desire to serve God by giving of material resources far beyond the tithe, to further the work of God.

The person with the gift of giving is motivated by the sheer pleasure of giving... not for securing credit, not for praise and not for a reward. They are way beyond thinking in terms of the tithe! They honestly feel that the best way they can give of themselves... is to give of their material gain for the work of the Church. They just love to make money, so they can redistribute it, to further the cause of Jesus.

This spiritual gift means to 'give over' or to 'share' or to 'exchange ownership'.

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We have a great illustration of this in the NT but it's not just one individual... but rather it is a group of Churches.

**Slide #22**

**2 Corinthians 8:1-5** And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.

**Slide #23** Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.

See this gift if not just for the wealthy... but it is for a certain group of people that first give themselves to the Lord... and then give according to God's will.

However, the people with the spiritual gift of giving often make a lot of money and they give a lot of money and they are the people that fund churches and missionaries and charities. I have several friends like this. It seems that they have the Midas touch. Do you remember King Midas? He is commonly remembered in Greek mythology for his ability to turn everything he touched with his hand into gold. This is not unusual for the person with the gift of giving...

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everything they touch turns to gold... and they love to give it away!

Let me clarify something... it's not wrong to make money, it's not even wrong to make a lot of money. The sin comes when we take advantage of others to make money or when we become self centered and keep too much for ourselves. How about you... do you have the gift of giving? The gift of contributing to the needs of others?

**Invite the worship band up:** See we are all different! We are One body, Many members, Different functions! Each gift is different! So where do you fit in? Which gifts can you most easily identify with: mercy, serving, hospitality or giving? How might God be filling you with the fire of the Holy Spirit so that he can bend you, SHAPE you, and make you... so that you begin to exercise your Spiritual Gifts... at Timberline, at work, at school, in your family, in our community! Can you say, Lord, I'm longing for Your ways, I'm waiting for the day, When I am a soul on fire, Till I am a soul on fire! Let's sing together! **Soul on Fire!**

**Slide #24** God, I'm running for Your heart,  
I'm running for Your heart  
Till I am a soul on fire  
Lord, I'm longing for Your ways  
I'm waiting for the day  
When I am a soul on fire,  
Till I am a soul on fire (repeat)

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**Slide #25** Lord, restore the joy I had  
I have wandered bring me back  
In this darkness, lead me through  
Until all I see is You, yeah

**Slide #26** God, I'm running for Your heart,  
I'm running for Your heart  
Till I am a soul on fire  
Lord, I'm longing for Your ways  
I'm waiting for the day  
When I am a soul on fire,  
Till I am a soul on fire

**Slide #27** Lord, let me burn for You again  
Let me return to You again  
And Lord, let me burn for You again  
And let me return to You again

**Slide #28** God, I'm running for Your heart,  
I'm running for Your heart  
Till I am a soul on fire  
Lord, I'm longing for Your ways  
I'm waiting for the day  
When I am a soul on fire,

**Slide #29** God, I'm running for Your heart,  
I'm running for Your heart  
Till I am a soul on fire  
Till I am a soul on fire  
Till I am a soul on fire

**Benediction:**



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Those with the helping gifts are like a light in a distant window;

They beckon those along the road to come and find rest.

The door is opened by the merciful  
    who bids the weary to enter and find relief.

Then a servant comes forth  
    to remove their shoes and find them a place in the room.

The table is filled with the bounty  
    given by those who care deeply; food and drink to mend a tired soul.

The warm fire of hospitality  
    fuels the evening with fellowship and song.  
Such is the joyful work of helpers in His Church.