

## **A Great Day in the Kingdom – 3/22/24**

Two weeks ago I was honored to perform a Jewish Celebration of Life. I had previously met this fine man, as he initially described himself, "I am Jewish and my Wife is Christian." This Celebration was in honor of a member of the Aledo Methodist Family. Some of you had the pleasure to meet Gary and Vivian Blum, as they attended most every Sunday. The Blums are a wonderful couple, as Vivian is Christian and Gary is Jewish. I enjoyed getting to know these two wonderful people, before and after Church. Gary helped Kim Watson last year with our Seder Meal, or Passover meal. We learned some Hebrew songs and sayings from our Jews for Jesus sponsors. Gary and Vivian made a great team for that event. This year, out of respect for what is occurring in Israel, and knowing the young men we were blessed to meet last year were in a battle zone, we delayed the meal until next year.

Gary's death came as a surprise to all of us. He had been through a long journey, but it looked like he was moving into the clear. Well, Gary did better than just the clear. He traveled to see the Face of God. As I prayed over what to say at his Life Celebration, I thought of his sense of humor. The day came for Gary's Service and so did the rain. Kim Watson and Trudy rode with me into a thunderstorm. The tent over the family and casket was filling with water, as I stopped the service to prevent the frame from collapsing. We pushed the water off of the canvas, as the rain became louder beating upon it. Finally, I just had to yell that Gary would have Loved this moment!

I realized in that moment that this statement summarized Gary's life. Gary lived the unpredictable and unconventional. It did not take many words to describe such a great man. What a privilege and honor it was to bury my Brother (Christian in Waiting) into God's ground. Gary is a fine man!

**Deuteronomy 8:6, I obey the Lord and live as He commands. I speak the word of God in season and out of season.**

Those of us who know Vivian and Gary have been Blessed. Notice I speak of Gary in the present tense. Gary is not a was. Gary is! He IS with God. Vivian is still with us! What an honor it has been to know Gary and Vivian. Praise God!

Have a Blessed Week!!!

Love You All!!!!

Pastor Joel