

## The In Between Blues



By Dina Moon

Once, I was terrified to pray in front of people. By that, I don't mean the way you recite a prayer that someone made you memorize, nor do I mean the way that you listen and absorb a prayer someone else is saying. That simply requires an affirming mmm hmmm and an occasional whispered yes here and there. I mean being the person who says the prayer in front of other folks while they play the role of mmm hmmm and yessing. This phobia was a recent one, too, like a year ago. I was pinch-hitting as a table leader for a Bible study where the usual table leader was out. The prayer was up to me. Egad.

I went in strong. I can say that for myself. Soon, however, I lost my footing a bit. The pauses became longer than necessary. A couple of back-to-back sentences regurgitated the same meanings with different synonyms. But then, something amazing happened. The words came fast and furious — beautiful, flowery words that swept over the table like a crescendo in a Chopin masterpiece. I said Amen. They all said Amen. A few people relayed exclamations of awe. They really

liked the prayer. I became exuberant, like a runner crossing the finish line first. Did I win? Heck yes, I did. I'm that good. I looked at the one remaining person at the table with pride on my face. "Did you just quote Hope Floats?" she asked. I still don't know which was worse, my blatant theft of Birdee Calvert's words or my haughtiness in allowing the execution of the words to triumph over the meaning. See, I was so scared of how the prayer would be in the end that I failed to realize the truly scary part is all the pieces that accumulate just before the finale. Transitions are terrifying.

As I sit here typing, I am weary. This has been a week. My father-in-law passed away a few days ago. While it is not my story to tell, I will say those days left me forever changed, good and bad. Veteran of loss that I am, I foolishly keep thinking I can somehow opt out of the sting of losing someone dear. The loss — the moment where the loved one leaves both earth and your scope of vision — is what we fear. Death — scary. Die — scary. End — scary. Except, it isn't. It is sad and depressing and oh so lonely, but not really scary. The transition to death, that's horrific. Moments ago, my daughter-in-law walked into the room in

tears. Their young cat, my granddaughter's life joy, is dying. He has a rare genetic mutation with an explanation so many pay levels above my ability to decipher that I refuse to try to explain. We fear pets dying. But in reality, it's the right now part that is so scary. Death we know. But those transition times just before death, those are fearfully unknown to us. And we fear fear.



This is how things are in many of the world's trials. Life is hard in the in-betweens. It's that way when we lose people. Same with pets. Same with marriages. Same with friendships, both the ones we outgrow and the ones that outgrow us. We steady ourselves and ready ourselves for the last moments of any tragedy. No one ever says, "watch out for that mid-way turn."

It would be easier if Cheeto, the world's most handsome orange tabby, were either fine or no longer here. But he is in the limbo, fear, and pain of his last transition. It is a street paved in pot-holes. It is a movie scene where everything is a disaster. It is a song with no chorus where the bridge goes down an octave and never comes back up. Our maladies in this world are clusters of dark clouds that come long before the things we've dreaded hit us.

It seems I have penned a cautionary tale. It is good news, I tell you. Truly. You can handle the actual thing. You are better and stronger and altogether more fantastical than you give yourself credit for being. Just be tender with your heart through the transitions. Lord, help us all with these worst things that are far more horrid than the last things we thought were the worst. As you say mmm hmmm, and someone please

give me a soft yes, I will leave you with the words of Birdee Calvert. Just don't use them in a public prayer, I beg you.

"Beginnings are scary. Endings are usually sad. But it's the middle that counts the most. Try to remember that when you find yourself at a new beginning. Just give hope a chance to float up. And it will, too." Amen.

## Obituary

### Mildred Louise Ferguson Collier



Mildred Louise Ferguson Collier

Mildred Louise Ferguson Collier peacefully left this world and was reunited with her beloved husband and noted artist, Carroll, on Tuesday, August 13, 2024. Her sons and their families were by her side during her final days.

Our family mourns the loss of a strong and beautiful woman who loved exceptionally well. Mildred was born in Dallas, May 12, 1927, to Ray and Lillian Ferguson. Ray was a carpenter, and Lillian was a gardener. After moving back to Burkesville Kentucky, Mildred and her family later relocated again to Dallas where she attended Adamson High School.

Developing her own artistry from her teens, Mildred

embraced her husband's artistic interests, and she became an accomplished painter. Our Dad was very proud of her. She was a deeply devoted wife and mother, raising sons and daughters who became professional artists, architects, a Ph.D., a photographer and coordinator of volunteer services for Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, and a nurse. Above all, Mildred cherished her family, personifying steadfast love and selfless servanthood.

Mildred is preceded in death by her husband Carroll, daughters Lilla and Lori, sister Barbara, and daughter-in-law Shirley. She is survived by her four sons, John, Steve, Tom, and Grant, their spouses, sixteen grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of her life will be held at New Hope Funeral Home in Sunnyvale, Texas, on Saturday, September 7, 2024 at 10 AM. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

## How Do You Keep Going When Things Get Tough?

By Carey Kinsolving

"By trying we can easily learn to endure adversity — another man's, I mean," wrote Mark Twain.

If you're reduced to human resources, there's wisdom as well as wit in Twain's quip. Severe personal adversity has a way of undoing us. The self-assured masks we love to wear become difficult to maintain.

Taylor, age 10, knows what it's like to be embarrassed: "Once I remember I was not doing good in my baseball game. I really wasn't batting or fielding well, so I asked God to help me be better next time I go to bat or go to field. I keep going because I go to the Lord in prayer."

At times, everyone drops the ball and strikes out. The difference is where you go when you're down and out.

"One time I thought nobody loved me," says Anna, 7. "My mom said that she loves me, but sometimes things don't go your own way. She also said that if I trust in God, he will lead me to the right path. After that, I trusted in God. Guess what, my mom was right."

God created us with a deep desire to be loved. If you have loving parents, you're blessed. But even the best parents can't fill all the capacity you have for love. Neither can your spouse.

If you feel unloved, you'll create your own adversity.

No one can carry the overwhelming weight of feeling unloved. Adversity merely brings it to light. Until you're in a relationship with the most passionate lover of all, Jesus Christ, you'll try to fill the void of feeling unloved with all kinds of things and people.

"I keep on going when life gets tough by knowing that there is more to life than just that one moment," says Robbie, 11.

"Do not lose heart," the Apostle Paul wrote. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (II Corinthians 4:16-18a).

If there were a Suffering Hall of Fame, the Apostle Paul would be inducted unanimously on the first ballot. Maligned, misunderstood, shipwrecked, beaten, stoned, jailed, ill, betrayed and eventually beheaded, Paul unquestionably was afflicted.

Think about this: Jesus persevered for us in his suffering on the cross.

Memorize this truth: "For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls" (Hebrews 12:3).

Ask this question: Can you see God's purpose in enduring a difficult person or circumstance?



Dear Aunt B,

My parents have just recently passed away. I think they left their affairs in horrible order. They have lots of bills. Can I be forced to pay their bills? I can barely pay my own bills, and I'm scared and kinda mad at being left with this mess.

I can't even grieve

Dear I can't even grieve,

I'm so sorry to hear about your parents. Losing them is hard enough, but now to be left with a mountain of bills and a mess to clean up? That's a lot to handle, and it's no wonder you're feeling scared and mad. Let's unpack this together and see what can be done to ease your mind.

Remember my dear, that this advice is just general advice. Aunt B will never give you direct legal, financial,

or medical advice. To obtain serious advice that you can hang your hat on, you will need to seek out the professionals and speak to them personally. That being said, hopefully this is a little direction.

The good news is that, generally speaking, you are not responsible for your parents' debts. I know, it feels like a burden's been dropped in your lap, but legally, their debts are tied to their estate, not to you personally. That means their assets—like any property, money, or possessions they left behind—are what creditors will go after to settle those debts. Your personal finances should stay out of the equation, so take a deep breath on that front.

Now, if your name is on any of their accounts—like if you cosigned a loan, or if you're a joint account holder—that's a different story. In those cases, you could be held responsible for that specific debt. But otherwise, their bills aren't automatically yours to pay.

Start by collecting all the bills, statements, and any other financial documents you can find. This will give you a clearer picture of what's owed and to whom. It might be a bit of a scavenger hunt, especially if things

were in disarray, but the more you know, the better you'll be able to handle it.

The estate—the sum of your parents' assets—will typically go through a process called probate, where debts are paid off before any remaining assets are distributed to heirs. If you're the one handling things, or even if you're just trying to make sense of it all, it is wise to consult with a probate attorney to help navigate the process. Yes, it's another expense, but it could save you a lot of headaches in the long run.

Be careful not to start paying off these bills with your own money, even if creditors try to pressure you. Their job is to collect what's owed, but you're not legally obligated to dip into your pockets. The estate is the only thing responsible for paying off the debts. If the estate doesn't have enough money to cover everything, the debts may go unpaid, and that's not something you need to worry about.

It's completely understandable that you're feeling a mix of emotions right now—grief, anger, fear, frustration. Losing your parents is a big blow, and being left with what feels like a mess on top of that can make it all feel even heavier. Give your-

self permission to feel what you're feeling. It's okay to be mad at them for not getting their affairs in order. It's okay to be scared about what comes next. And it's definitely okay to ask for help.

While you're dealing with all of this, don't forget to take care of yourself. Grief has a way of sneaking up on you when you least expect it, and the stress of handling your parents' affairs can make it even harder. Make sure you're eating, sleeping, and finding moments to breathe. It's easy to get lost in the to-do list, but your well-being is more important than any bill or paperwork.

As you move forward, try to remember that this isn't just about cleaning up a mess; it's also about finding closure and honoring your parents in your own way. That might mean taking care of the business they left behind, but it also means giving yourself space to grieve, to remember, and eventually, to heal.

Love,  
Aunt B

If you would like to send Aunt B a question please email your question to [news@forneymessenger.com](mailto:news@forneymessenger.com).

## Texas Health Resources Expanding

- Continued from page 1-A -

While the hospital is being built, Texas Health will continue to build on our existing presence in the community, including a new medical office building on the future Forney hospital's campus. Kaufman County residents also have access to a variety of other care sites, including Quick Care video visits, which connect consumers to virtual urgent care services in minutes, Texas Health Physicians Group practices, and nearby facilities such as Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas and Texas Health Hospital Rockwall.

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Kaufman has served and invested in the community for more than 40 years and will continue to do so. Over the last several years, Texas Health Kaufman has continued to invest in care advancements including unit renovations and refurbishments, improved testing and diagnostic capabilities with the addition of 3D mammography, and other new equipment.

Texas Health is also working with others to build healthier communities as evidenced by the more than \$1 million in grants we've provided in Kaufman County over the last five years to address issues like mental health, social isolation and food insecurity in underserved areas.

"North Texas continues to flourish and as the leading health system in the market, we intend to continue investing in new ways to serve our community in Forney and beyond," Berdan said. "By ushering in new access points, enhancing our existing care sites, and introducing innovative new care models, we're committed to remaining the healthcare system of choice for North Texans."

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Wednesday Bible Study: 7 p.m. [www.escocforney.org](http://www.escocforney.org)  
[eastsideforney@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eastsideforney@sbcglobal.net)

Thomas O. Fitzgerald, Jr  
Minister

### ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

CATHOLIC CHURCH



MASS Schedule  
Saturday (Vigil): 4:30 pm  
Sunday 8:00 am, 10:00 am  
Weekdays: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8:30am, Wednesday 6:00pm

#### Confession Schedule

Wednesday: 5:00-5:45 pm  
Saturday: 3:00-4:00 pm or by appointment

Phone: 972-564-9114 or [www.stmartinforney.org](http://www.stmartinforney.org)  
Located: FM 1641 at Interstate 20, 9470 CR 213, Talty Texas