

For Annick Dubresson Young

April 14, 2013

From her friend, Jeffrey Warren.

I would like to open this afternoon with a reflection on a children's book by Judith Viorst entitled, "Alexander and the Terrible, No Good, Horrible, Very Bad Day." Nothing at all was right; everything seemed to go wrong. On Wednesday of this week, when I learned of the untimely, unexpected, and unbelievable passing of my friend Annick, I was Alexander.

What do you do on a day like that? Well, you eventually get through it and as Alexander climbs into bed to at the end of the day and at the end of the story, he recognized that tomorrow was just around the corner, and tomorrow would be better.

It's going to take a lot of tomorrows to grieve, and today is one of those tomorrows. But today is also a blessed opportunity to come together in this place of worship to reflect on the life of our friend Annick. She is the tie that binds us all together. It is also a time to thank God for giving us Annick for as long as he did, and to also thank God for our continued blessings.

How fitting it is that I first met Annick seven years ago in this church's praise band that had just been assembled for the new contemporary worship service called Celebration! Today, much like that first day I met her, truly is a celebration.

In honor of this celebration, I would like to share with you some of my favorite things I remember about Annick.

- First and foremost, Annick was a mother that loved her boys (Ben, Adam, Eric – the love and pride your mother had for you is simply astounding and immeasurable);
- She loved the beach (her second-to-last post on Facebook was a picture of two people in lounge chairs at water's edge with the caption, "The Beach Fixes Everything");
- She loved being around friends (Karen – how many episodes of **Army Wives** did you watch at Annick's place while just hanging out?);
- She was generally a lover of life (my French is awful, but she would appreciate me trying to say that she had a certain *je ne sais quoi*, a certain *joie de vivre* – the only other French phrase I know is *omelette du fromage* – that's right, I just said cheese omelette. In a church. During a eulogy. That was for you, Annick.);
- She was scatter-brained at times – How many times did she misplace her keys? (that's why Karen Chauvaux always had a separate set);
- The amount of stuff she could cram into her car defied the laws of physics;

- When she finally joined the texting generation (and it took her years to move beyond her flip phone), you needed either a Navajo wind talker or the Aztec codec to decipher her mistyped messages;
- And spiders freaked her out.

She also loved music. She lived for music. In fact, her **last** Facebook post on Tuesday just after noon was “Love me some Glen Hansard” (Her words, not mine.) For example, she always looked forward to going out to open mic night with the ladies (Karen and Lynn, you were there). She was spiritually fulfilled playing with CFX and taking the U2charist on the road with Brent, Karl, Kevin, Al and others. She was always looking for new musicians to play out doing classic covers. She absolutely loved to go out and support fellow musicians like Winslow and Gene when they gigged at The Umstead or Kevin when he played at Aviators.

And I consider myself lucky to have played in this band, this band to my left, with Annick for five wonderful years. We were the ultimate small group. Many of us have gone our separate ways to continue on the journey that God has chosen specific to each of our lives, but I am blessed to see us all come back together this day, to play in honor of our dear, sweet friend and fellow band member Annick.

So it is appropriate for me to close my comments with a story from the band. During rehearsals or warm-ups, I often blurted out something that was completely politically incorrect, utterly offensive, wildly inappropriate, shockingly irreverent or all of the above. After which I would always ask, “Am I in the House?”

For those of you non-performance folks in the crowd, let me explain. Most of the time we played with the speakers in the hall turned off since we could still hear the mix in our ear buds. However, many times without notice, the sound engineer would bring the house speakers live to set the audio levels in the hall. And, when this happened, all of the idle commentary between songs (and sometimes during) was being broadcast to the world. And, like clockwork, I would realize, always too late after an inappropriate editorial comment or bawdy joke had floated into the ears of a little old lady or a family with young children and ask with a panic-stricken look on my face, “Are we in the house?” After which, also like clockwork, Annick would usually erupt with that loud, boisterous, wildly infectious laugh – a sound, by the way, that I will miss dearly.

I had always said I wanted “Am I in the House?” to be emblazoned as the epitaph on my tombstone. But for today, I’d like to change this catch-phrase up a bit, look to the heavens, and ask Annick: “Are **you** in the House? The House of the Lord? The House that God has been preparing for you since before you were born?” Of course, we won’t hear the answer with our ears, we’ll hear it with our hearts. And my heart knows she is definitely, most certainly, undeniably “in the House.”

So watch over us Annick. Look down upon us from your heavenly lanai, which I am sure is already adorned with patio lights in the shape of flip flops. A place that, for your sake, I trust is arachnid free; a place where I hope to meet you once again for eternal fellowship...every Wednesday night after rehearsal.

In my version of Heaven they have wine. In fact, whenever you run low, you simply stop by Jesus' place with a gallon of water. So, Annick, pour yourself a glass, sit back in your lounge chair, look out over the Lord's majestic landscape from your eternal balcony, and please watch over us. Look down at the hundreds if not thousands of people on which you left an indelible mark with the Sharpie that was your time on this rock. Watch them mourn your loss but, more importantly, watch them – watch us – celebrate your life.

Annick – I will be forever thankful for the fact that you departed my life the same way you came in – through Celebration!