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|  | By **Martha Rodman** on March 13, 2025 |

*Therefore, I will always remind you about these things--even though you already know them and are standing firm in the truth you have been taught. And it is only right that I should keep reminding you as lo*ng *as I live. 2 Peter 1:12-13.*Reminders, we all need them. This weekend our church celebrated their 50th Anniversary! We were wonderfully reminded of the history and blessing of Life Church, Oak Harbor. It reminded me of what our God can do when people say yes to God's purpose and plan.The unique blessing of our church, is that in the 50 years, we have only had 3 pastors. In 1975, our founding pastor Jim and his wife Roberta Cargill received an invitation. They were asked to hold a meeting in Oak Harbor, Washington. They had been doing traveling ministry with their two children, and felt it was time to come off the road. Oak Harbor was God's direction, and the fledgling church came to being. Lighthouse Christian Tabernacle moved from rental space to rental space as they grew. Finally, a parcel of land became available and they trusted God for provision. Not one, but two buildings were eventually erected on the site. In 1993, Pastor Jim, through the leading of the Holy Spirit turned the leadership over to his son, Marc Cargill.The church continued to grow and develop under Marc and his wife's Cheryl's leadership. Many of the outreach programs they developed are still touching lives today. God began stirring Marc and Cheryl's heart toward the south lands. But what to do with this church? After much prayer and seeking God's will, Pastor Michael and Reshaun Hurley were asked to prayerfully consider taking the helm. They joined the church staff and about two years later, they were set in as lead pastors in 2010. It was an amazingly smooth transition, marked by God's grace and peace.The church continues to grow and develop, with a name change to Life Church. Our 50th Celebration Sunday was the beginning of transitioning to three services. We can only give thanks and honor to the Lord for His amazing favor. People are getting saved and maturing at our church. Pastor Michael is a man of integrity, a hardworking man who loves God and His people. Our mission is to encourage people to invite, love, and transform. His authentic transparency and care for others is amazing. He and Reshaun's hearts are here to serve the Lord and bring glory to His name. At the celebration, all three pastoral teams were represented. The founding pastor, Jim Cargill is now with Jesus, but his wife Roberta was there. I know there must have been times they wondered, is it worth it? Fortunately, a few months before Jim's passing, he visited the church. It was wonderful to hear how it blessed him to see God's handiwork. Who knows what obedience to God's call will bring? I am sharing this story to remind us it is always worth it to follow and obey the Lord. Pastor Jim was bi-vocational for many years. Listening to the stories of his faithful service to our Lord was humbling and motivating. Darryl and I joined the church in 2002, under Pastor Marc. So I have almost been there for half the history! Pastor Marc and Pastor Michael honor and support each other. This is another hallmark of God's favor and grace.Another remarkable story that's developed in these 50 years is about our Associate Pastor, Joshua Hubbard. Josh came to the church as a young boy and served under all three pastors! He shared that under Jim and Roberta he stacked chairs! I am so thankful that he (and now his wonderful family) has stayed the course. My friends, this is a reminder to sow good seeds and trust God will water them! Watching him grow and develop over the years is a testimony of God's faithfulness. It is heartwarming to watch our young people grow into leaders right before our eyes. It is a reminder that God is always working His plan for the future.We were reminded about the necessity of prayer. The prayers of the early members is the foundation for our present blessing. Our prayers for the future are being laid now. What a joy to pray in faith for God's will to keep on being done! There is much more land to take. We were reminded that we've only just begun. Once more I remembered the blessing of surrender. I realized that God gives the increase. I felt the privilege of being part of His Kingdom.This is a reminder to pray for, give guidance to, and encourage the younger ones in our midst. Not one of these leaders would tell you they are perfect, or have done things perfectly. But each one of them has a heart to seek the Lord for His will, not their own. I pray that the seeds God has allowed me to sow for His kingdom will bear long-lasting fruit. Oh my friends, do not give up. Do not despair, God sees your hard work. He sees your tiredness, and He says, keep going. I will strengthen you. I will help you. Trust me. Do not let the enemy distract you or turn you aside from your plowing. You will reap. It is in His hands when that reaping will occur, so simply take this reminder and keep going. Pastor Jim and Roberta did. Some of the amazing seeds sown through their ministry are still serving God and bearing even more fruit. *Father, I thank you for reminding us not to quit. I ask you to strengthen any weak hands and feeble knees that may struggle today. I thank you for the reminder of the blessing of obedience and we walk by faith not by sight. I thank you that we are privileged to see what Jim and Roberta hoped for and is now a reality. In Jesus' Name, amen.* |

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