

## A TICKLE IN OUR EAR

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

A number of years ago there appeared in The Los Angeles Times a poignant story of a four- and one-half-year-old girl named Katie Sleeman, a patient at Children's Hospital, who was dying of cancer. "She had originally been diagnosed as a seven-week-old baby with retinoblastoma, a cancerous tumor in the eye. She lost both eyes, and despite the best that medical science could do for her, a tumor appeared near her brain and it could not be removed. So Katie suffered more hardship in her brief life than most of us do in all our years. But despite her hospitalization, all of the treatments and pain she suffered, she radiated love and joy for all. She was like a light on the 4th Floor West of Children's Hospital, for she had the time of her life, even though she was fully aware that she might die anytime. As she neared the end of her life, Katie talked a lot about going to Heaven. Because she could not see, touch became one of her means of communication. One of her favorite things was to snuggle close to her mother and rub her mother's ear. Not long before she died, Katie said to her mother with a smile, "When I am in Heaven, and you feel a tickle on your ear, it will be me telling you 'I love you, Mommy.'" (Donald Shelby, "Grace-Full Humor").

Does that make you smile, or feel teary? Want to cry? Or laugh? Either is appropriate. Because Jesus is preparing a place for us in his eternal kingdom, Katie could believe what she said. And if those who have gone before us can't "tickle our ear" as Katie suggested she would do with her mother, it is enough to know that our loved ones who have died in Christ, believing in him, and trusting him for salvation those who have died in Christ are waiting with Christ to welcome us when our time comes to go home.

This coming Sunday we will observe All Saints Sunday, a time to remember those who shared their faith with us so that we might know Christ today. Who will come after us when we are gone? Who are we sharing our faith with today to build the Kingdom of God for tomorrow? May we plant seeds of hope today for the glory of God's kingdom.

God bless,  
Pastor Barbara