

Draftee (2015)

Houston Hodges, for Writer's Corner on WLRH, Huntsville, AL USA

I recruited little Savanna for worship leadership this week. After all, the girl is already five, and it's time for her to get off her duff and get to the service of God Almighty.

She did fine. She and her mom have been coming to our early worship service, for three or four weeks now. Savanna has been clinging pretty close to mom. When you're greeting the two of them, she grabs her mom and buries her face in that nice, warm thigh. So that's what she did when I said, "I need to talk to you, Savanna." (Face buried.) "I need you to help us take the offering. Can you do that?" (Violent head-shake.) I'd put on too much pressure. I backed up. "Your mom can help you and the two of you can do it together. Would that work?" I paused, and then she looked up into her mother's face, looking for a signal. Nicole was smiling and giving that "You can do it!" smile that mothers give. I was nodding and smiling, too: "The two of you can do it together, okay? From Savanna the slightest hint of a nod. "Good!" I chortled.

When the time came they were both looking at me as if awaiting the summons to face the lions in the arena. Of course they did it well; everyone helped them, all the way! With mom working all the way across the room, Savanna was by herself: but everyone she came to reached eagerly for the plate, reached to hand it back to her, then pointed to the next row. Then I noticed that everyone was smiling, not only because the Lord loves a cheerful giver, but because of Savanna. She was smiling herself, just beaming ear to ear at the fun.

I know she won't remember this when she's thirty, and elected a church officer, or when she's a minister serving communion for the very first time. Next time I tap her it won't be just the offering; it'll be handing out bulletins and greeting, or being a member of the four-person song team. Later she'll get to help serve communion, handing out pieces of pita bread for folks to dunk in the cup... time after that she'll get to take part in a little skit to help open the sermon.

Savanna may not know how important this morning was, when she's the

“MODERATOR (ta-dah!) of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY (ta-dah!)” and that I started her on that pathway this week, because I want her not to be able to remember when she couldn’t take an important part in service to God.