

## **20 Yards of Gravel**

By Anne Chapman

The rain was coming and there was a need for more parking at the Ranch before the ground turned into mud. The “Ranch” refers to where Pastor Mike and his family live. Some of you may remember a Torch article in February 2014 “The House Hunt.” The family had rented an older ranch-style house on five acres. One might think there would be unlimited parking on five acres; however, with the exception of the driveway and regular grass areas, it all turns into mud when it rains. On the day of moving, Luanne, along with the owner of the house and one helper all got their vehicles stuck in the mud and Pastor had to pull all three out with his truck!

Now, winter was approaching with rain expected the next day. To park on the graveled area meant people would be parking behind each other and waking up someone to move a car when time to go to work. This hasn’t worked well in the past. So, we had the brilliant idea of getting some gravel delivered, shifting things around, and having plenty of parking. Sounds simple, right? Meanwhile, Pastor was scheduled to go to San Diego for three days starting on a Wednesday. The gravel truck could come Thursday afternoon and the rain was to start on Friday. No problem. Luanne (Pastor’s wife), Jim (Pastor’s dad) and I could spread it out. We’d spread gravel before.

Have you ever ordered three scoops of ice cream only to find out you could only eat ½ scoop? We were undaunted, however, and shoveled for two straight hours! We managed to get about 1/5<sup>th</sup> of it placed. So, in 10 more hours we should be done! WHAT! Now it was 3:30 p.m. and we were exhausted!

Suddenly a white pickup truck came down the long driveway. It was a neighbor from down the road. No one had met him, but had seen him drive by occasionally. “Looks like you could use some help,” he exclaimed. “I’ll be back in a few minutes.” We thought, how nice of him, he must be going home to get a shovel. (We must have looked like three people using table spoons to try to move a mountain!) In a few minutes we heard a rambling and, lo and behold, we looked up to see him coming on his Bobcat! To us he was an Angel dropping straight down from heaven!

In about 30 minutes, he had it all spread out. He even took two scoops to the back where we needed them. We thanked him numerous times and told him he just saved us from putting ourselves in Emergency. When he was almost done, we headed his way to thank him again and ask if there was anything at all we could do for him. However, he was already spinning around, waived and said “have a good day.” With that, he drove off on his Bobcat and disappeared.

We thanked God and asked Him to bless this man and his family immensely. Then we had another (terrible) thought! What if we were to send Pastor Mike a picture of the finished job and tell him it went really well, that we got it all done but are Very Tired. Oh, but that wouldn’t be fair to God – even as a joke – and what if Pastor pretends to believe us (and pops our bubble) and then we’d have to confess right away! God most surely blessed us in an unexpected way that day. Of course, He can Do Anything and Everything, and He Does!

*Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Hebrews 13:16*