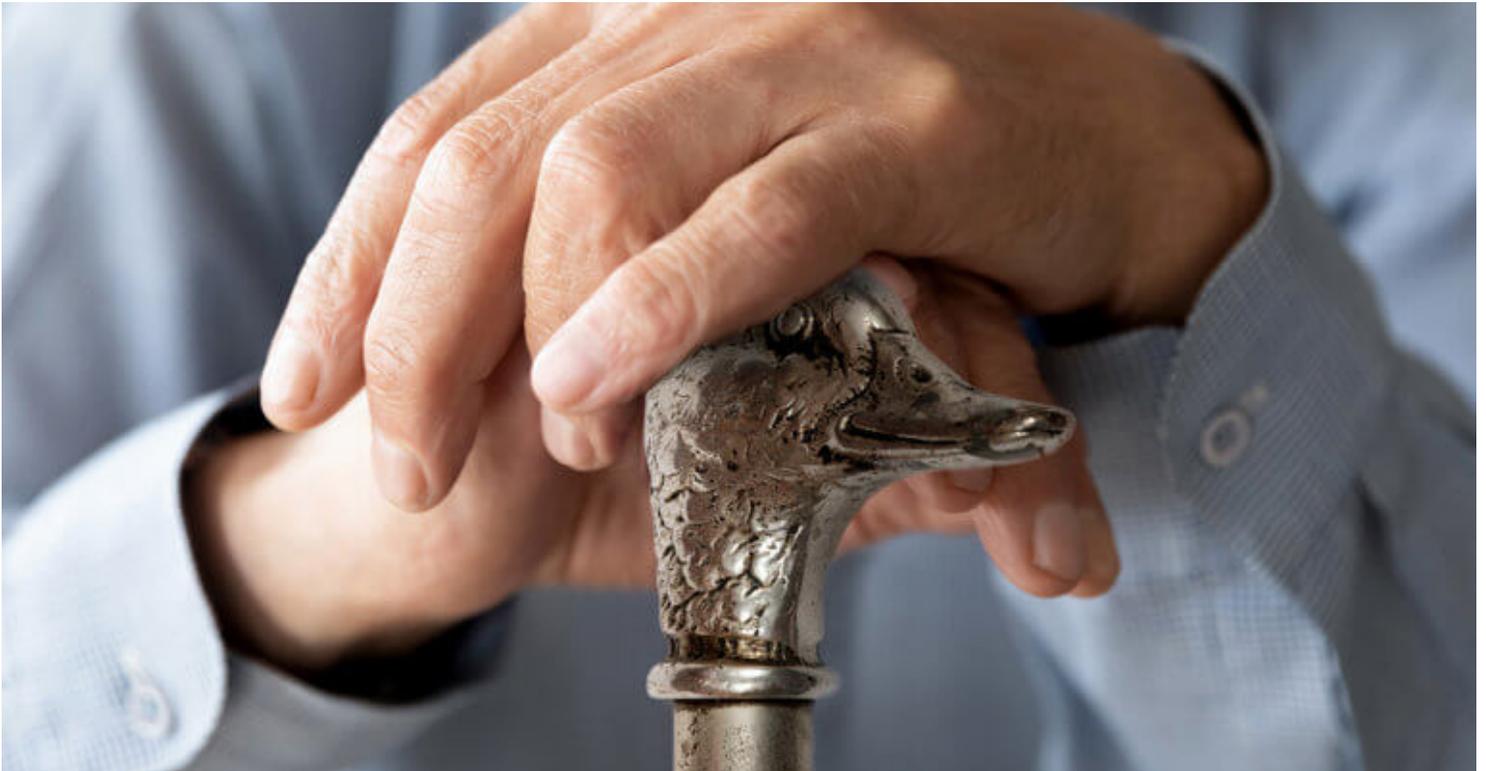




## The Ducky Cane



*by Connie Vandeman Jeffery—*

Two Christmases ago, way back in 2018, my husband received the best gift from our son and his family. A beautiful cane with a brass duck head as a handle. The cane wasn't a joke gift or a decorative gift; it was a useful gift. He needed it. His steps were faltering a bit more, and he had stumbled and fallen twice in the months before receiving the gift. Dubbed the "Ducky cane" by our two granddaughters, aged two and five at the time, it was a huge hit.

All of us played with the cane, used it when he wasn't using it, took turns walking outside with it. He didn't leave home without it. Until he did.

The kids live only a mile away, and we arrived one evening for dinner and realized we had left the cane at home. He



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held my arm as we walked to their front door and rang the bell. When Kenzie answered the door, she immediately saw what was missing.

“Let me be your Ducky cane, Grandpa,” she said, as she slipped to his side. He placed his hand on the top of her head, which turned out to be the same height as the duck head on the cane. Then, she slowly guided him into the living room and over to the couch where he always sat, all the while urging him to put all his weight on her. “Lean on me, Grandpa; I’m strong,” she said.

During the pandemic, our kids and grand-girls have been part of our quarantine “bubble,” the only four people we will be with indoors. At first, we didn’t see them, during March and April. But then, we did. We’d drive to their house or the girls would come to our house. And now, we always conveniently forget the cane. Madi and Kenzie, now four and six, become double Ducky canes, and “Grandpa” walks all over the house with his two hands gently placed on two sturdy heads.

“We will always be your Ducky canes,” they chimed together, just last week. And I can’t help but reflect on the joy they receive from being the ones “leaned upon” and the happiness they give to their grandpa, the one doing the “leaning.”

I am reminded of a favorite hymn:

*What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
What have I to dread, what have I to fear,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms?  
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

A sturdy cane, or little girls offering support, or the “everlasting arms” of our Savior—truly a joy divine!

*Connie Vandeman Jeffery is the host of All God’s People, a weekly short video series highlighting the people and ministries of the Pacific Union Conference, and has had a long career in media.*