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CoLaborer

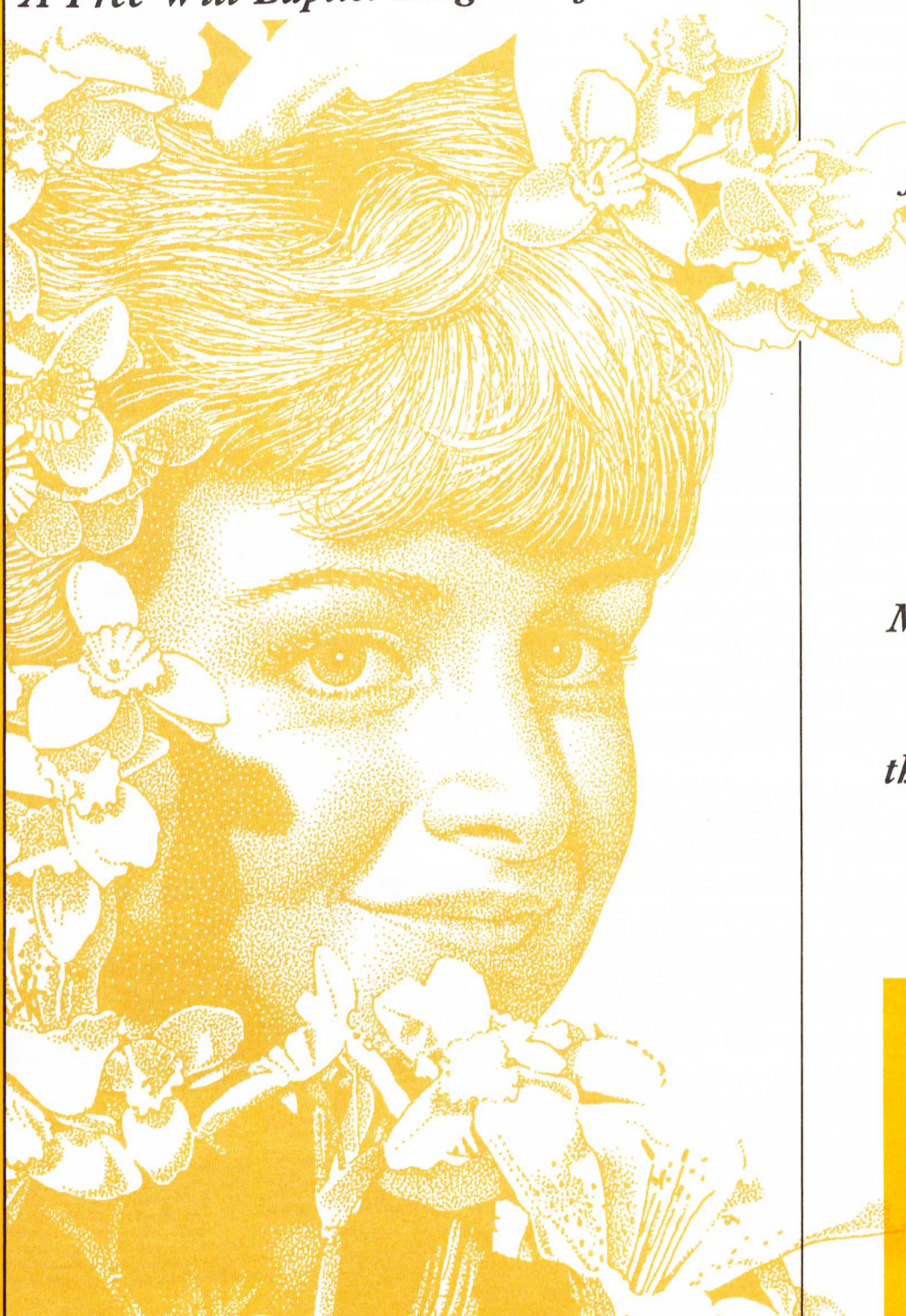
A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

*Lighting
the Way
for Women*
4

*Whatever
It Takes*
10

*Mission Call:
A View
from
the Mountain*
28

*Ruby:
That
Woman from
Proverbs 31*
26



VISION

SUZANNE FRANKS

Crime and Compassion



I wonder if we've become calloused.

The shocking front-page murder-suicide story is the talk of the town. Evil seems to have overtaken everywhere. We see it on the news, read about it in the newspaper.

The child I saw with his mother in the grocery store was just learning to talk. He already knew some terrible words. I think no one took the time to teach him *Jesus Loves Me*. Offensive language floats around in the most ordinary places.

We are frequently reminded of evil's presence in our own neighborhoods. What is your reaction to evil in today's world? Rage? Shock? Dismay? Disbelief? Resignation? Numbness? You have probably experienced all these reactions at one time or another.

When evil appeared in the garden of Eden, things changed forever. Though God loved Adam and Eve, He could not ignore their sin. He could no longer visit them in the evenings. He had to expel them from paradise. They had to pay with death. Yet God had a plan to turn death into victory. God knew His plan would climax with Christ's horrible death.

The plan—conceived in incredible love—was ultimately designed to stamp out Satan and evil. Yet, this wonderful plan is, in a sense, a response to evil. Though God turned His back on His Son because He could not bear to look upon the ugliness of sin, He followed through with His plan. As a result, we must only accept His gift by submitting to His will. He has taken care of the rest. Provision was made for all who will accept.

God offers us life in spite of the evil within us. So let's do the same for others. Let Him teach you how to use an "unfortunate incident" as an opportunity to offer life.

Crime reminds us of how Christ died the death of a criminal. Human weakness becomes a chance for God's strength to manifest itself in an unlikely place. A disability can teach us to look forward to Heaven.

Sorrow for the death of a loved one may produce an occasion to share our eternal hope. Sickness is an occasion to speak of God's healing for body or soul. Loneliness is the opportunity to offer the friendship of the greatest Friend. Difficult circumstances allow us to share our reason for joy in spite of hardship. We can turn abuse into an opportunity to show kindness. The point is that if people didn't have problems, they wouldn't need a solution.

Lord, help me turn evil into good. I can't do it without your help. ❖

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7

**SHE LOOKED AT ME
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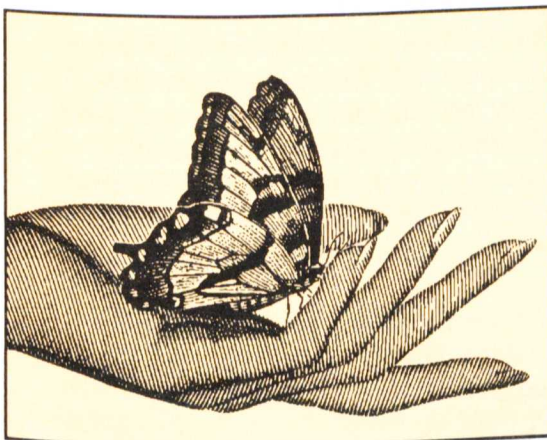
10

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QUIETLY AND LET
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28

**"A FRIEND
IS SOMEONE WHO
SINGS WITH YOU ON
THE MOUNTAINTOPS
AND IS SILENT
WITH YOU THROUGH
THE VALLEYS"**

CONTENTS



MAY PROGRAM:

Lighting the Way for Women

Ministering to Single Mothers

Ministering to Women in Prison

—Shiela Scarborough

—Ethel Whaley

4

JUNE PROGRAM:

Holding the Light High in the Trenches of Society

Give Them Jesus

—Angie Outlaw

7

Whatever it Takes

—Pat Franks

10

Wounded Lambs

A 6-part series from Shirley Combs' *They Deserve A Second Chance*

13

Food For Thought / Poet's Corner

14

SPRINGBOARD: Ideas for Officers

15

Daddy's Helper

—Donna Garrett

18

Communicator

19

Women In Action / Letters to WNAC

20

The Love Chapter According to Motherhood — Annette Aycock

22

National Convention Pre-Registration Form

23

Life!Action: I Survived 13

25

Ruby

—Carol Reid

26

Mission Call: A View from the Mountain

—Tanya Hart

28

Mission Alert: *Evangelism News from Around the World*

30

Words for Women

—Mary Ruth Wischart

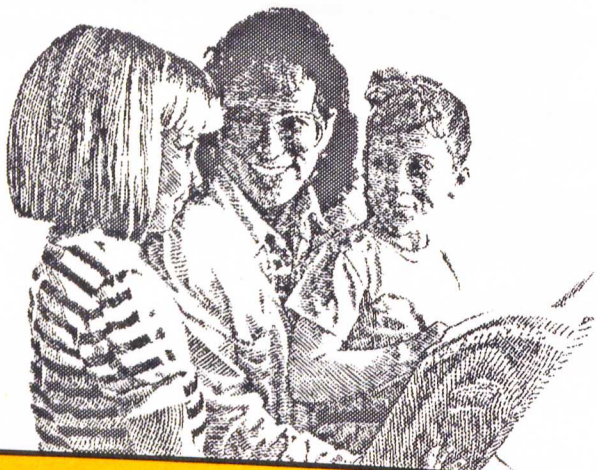
31

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Lighting the way for women



Ministering to single mothers

by Sheila Scarborough

Scripture: Acts 13:47

Song: Let My Life Be a Light

Introduction

Being a single mother is no different from being a married mother. You are still a mother with all the responsibilities motherhood entails.

No single mother ever expects or desires that title. Never in my wildest imaginings did I dream I would carry the title "single mother." I believed that marriage lasted a lifetime until that fateful day when life thrust single motherhood upon me.

Through difficult days, months, and years since, I have made many important decisions. The most important one was to trust my heavenly Father for guidance and for support systems for myself and my daughters. Our church has been our mainstay, our place to belong, our place to become.

As a congregation, your mission field may not just be Africa, Spain, and France. It could be just across the church aisle with that single mother or single father or their children who have lost a parent through divorce or death. They need to belong and become.

Single motherhood is a difficult life and circumstances may be awkward. You already feel rejected.

You can now benefit from all aspects of the church and the church family.

Benefit 1: Show respect

Criticism, fault finding, or acting as though single mothers aren't around or can't function any longer is damaging to their spiritual well-being.

The church needs to fully accept their family and help them come to realize and cope with their new life. Respect comes more naturally when two work together, putting spiritual gifts into action.

Call the single mother and listen closely. Let her know the church family cares. Many times, a single mother finds her only confidante is her children.

Benefit 2: Find something in common

Many who find themselves in this new frame of life withdraw from contact with the church. Some withdraw because they feel that they will not be accepted by the church family. Others may feel it is too much of a burden to ask the church to accept. Some may be deeply burdened with guilt. They may fear that the church secretly blames them for failure in the case of a divorce.

Sharing goals pulls people together. It teaches children that working together is a powerful force to reach a common goal.

Benefit 3: Make friends to form a safety net

As Christians, we don't help others to get something from them in return. But many times, the help you give comes back to you when you need it most.

The church can help the single mother maintain hope. She never needs to lose faith and hope. The church family needs to continually fill her with love and hope for a brighter tomorrow. There must be support for survival.

"Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously . . . for in you the fatherless find compassion" (Hosea 14:2-3).

Benefit 4: Model a caring Christian life

"The Christian life is not so much taught as caught."

The church's support helps the single mother reach the plateau of total acceptance—of herself, of her daily

responsibilities, and of a hope for the future. Acceptance can never be reached without support from others.

In spite of their circumstances, single mothers, as well as fathers, can add a real contribution to the ministry and growth of the local church.

The local body must look past the circumstances to the depth of the single mother. Particular interest needs to be given to her emotional and spiritual needs.

The difficulties the single mother faces focus on the emotional reactions she has to confront in others. Everyone in the church must recognize these feelings as natural and be willing to minister to them.

Unless the church family ventures out and makes these families a part of their ministry, the single parent probably will not look to the church for guidance.

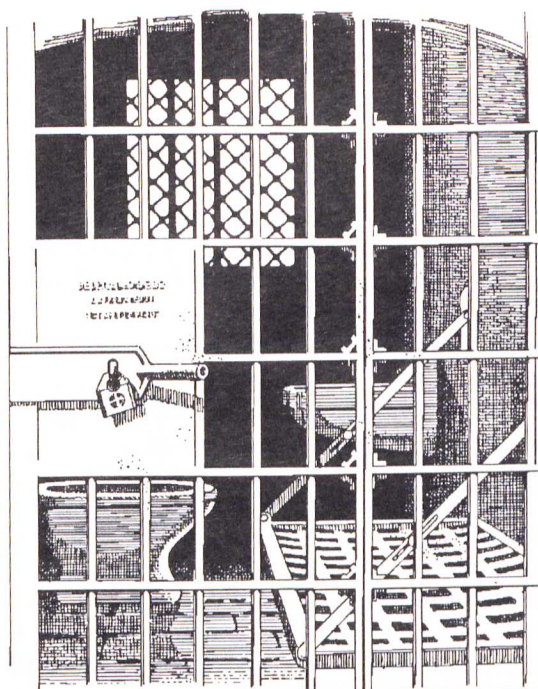
How can the church and women's group minister to the single mother?

They need to help the single mother adjust. This can be done by accepting her and her children with open arms and hearts.

They need to support her in whatever problem she encounters. Support can include giving financial assistance or advice, providing child care, listening, being a friend, accepting her children, adapting classes to include this new family, or just showing love and compassion.

By these actions, the church proves their acceptance of her and her children as part of the church family.

Sheila Scarborough is a member of Cofer's Chapel FWB Church in Nashville, TN. She has three daughters and works for Davidson County Public Schools.



Ministering to women in prison

by Ethel Whaley

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-45

Song: So Send I You

Behind Those Walls

Ten, twenty-five years of life in prison! The handcuffs are clipped on and she is led away. Looking over her shoulder she sees her mother drying tears and hears the sobs of her children as she walks away from freedom.

The moment the prison lock clicks behind her, she is a convict. She loses her personal identity. She becomes a number. Her clothes are replaced with a uniform. She surrenders her personal belongings, loses her power to make decisions, eats what she is given to eat, sleeps where she is placed and does what she is told to do. The very core of her personality is taken into captivity. Realization of her total helplessness grips her soul.

A Christian inmate in the Tennessee Prison for Women made these random statements during an interview. "When you get in here, you learn how to be a criminal; lying, stealing, etc . . ." "You become distrustful." "Many become homosexuals if only for survival." "The staff is as guilty as we are; alcoholics, abused sexually and physically." "At least one half are drug users, many murderers."

"Many under the age of thirty, . . . several children in the family, . . . divorced parents, . . . little support."

When asked, "How can Christians help these women?" she replied:

Never tell an inmate you will do something and fail to do it. There is much distrust. . . .

Never ask her what her crime is, nor be judgmental. Seek to know the real person. . . .

Most inmates are open to love. Many have never been shown true love. They don't know how to love. . . .

Have confidence in our sincerity. We have to fight for motivation. At times I feel I have no reason to move. . . .

Outside things are moving, in here we are stuck in a time warp. There is nothing we can do except be totally helpless.

Who are these imprisoned women?

To walk among them and listen to their stories, it is easy to understand they are individuals just like you and me. They have made bad choices and are trapped by their consequences contributed largely by background and environment.

One cannot stereo-type prisoners. Each has her own unique reason for how she landed behind bars. They are hurting, lonely, depressed, and broken hearted. Often they are overwhelmed by guilt and resentment. About eighty percent are mothers who are grieving over the loss of their children (statistic provided by Research Development).

A disadvantaged background gives no license to commit crime. Giving understanding to a prisoner does not mean we excuse her behavior. Everyone is responsible for good or bad choices. The example of love given by Jesus did not sacrifice the principle of righteousness when Jesus reached out to fallen mankind.

Isaiah used the troubled sea as an analogy describing the restlessness of the human soul without Jesus Christ. "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isaiah 57:20-21).

While inmates have broken the laws of the state, all of us have broken the laws of God (Romans 3:23). We have just sinned differently and are equally con-

demned. God saves people not because of their goodness, but because of His love and forgiveness.

Jesus had compassion for the multitude

When Jesus saw the multitudes clamoring about Him for home, the sight stirred within Him the deepest emotion of pity. He saw them as distressed and scattered. To add to their plight, they had no shepherd to act as their protector.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJU) over one million people are now incarcerated in the US. Our prison population is growing at an alarming rate—ten times faster than the general population. Since 1980 the number of women in our prisons and jails has more than quadrupled. The number of women in our state facilities grew seventy-five percent between 1986 and 1991 (latest survey released).

These unsettling figures serve as a voice of the hopelessness and wickedness of the heart of mankind. Our prisons are a ripe mission field!

Why should Christians be involved in prison ministries?

Why should our local women's groups include prisons in their missionary outreach? The answer is simple—it is God's command. Hebrews 13:3 reads, "Remember those in prison." Think of them as if we were in prison with them. Many prisoners are Christians, having accepted Christ or renewed their commitment to Him while in prison. They need our fellowship and encouragement.

Thousands of inmates have never understood the Gospel or seen it in action. They need to see lives that are testimonies of God's love and transforming power.

God's love within should move us to obedience. We are not superior to, or more righteous than those behind bars. If it were not for the grace of God, we would be living behind bars.

May God grant that we see these multitudes through the eyes of Jesus and that we be moved with His compassion to action. ♦

Ethel Whaley attends Bethel FWB Church in Kinston, NC. She has been involved in prison ministry for many years.

Information, statistics, and insight provided by Prison Fellowship.

Holding the light high in the trenches of society



Give them Jesus
by Angie Outlaw

Purpose: To remind women of Jesus' command to "love your neighbor" and compel them to actively minister to the needs of people in their church and community.

Songs: *I Will Serve Thee* or *People Need the Lord*

She was not what I envisioned while reading her file to prepare for our first meeting. Ringlets of curly brown hair framed her face and her beautiful eyes sparkled like the sea. Her petite size and winning smile made me feel strangely comfortable.

I expected to see a tattered young life with a heart hardened by her circumstances. She told me her story. A family torn by divorce, a mother who had no desire to parent her, a father who abused her for four years, and a home for children where she lived after her family abandoned her.

She paused to catch her breath. With huge tears rolling down her sweet cheeks, she continued. Since running away from the children's home, she had lived on the streets. She searched to fill the void in her life. But the void only grew deeper as she now mourned the loss of her five children—one lost to abortion, one to miscarriage, two to adoption, and most recently, one lost just nine days after birth as a result of her crack addiction.

I was warned to be careful of her kind. "Don't trust her. She will only use you for what you can give her." But she looked at me with tears in her eyes and said, "I just want to know how to love and be loved; forgive and be forgiven." I thought to myself, "I'll give her Jesus."

Jesus' Response

Throughout Jesus' ministry, he offered love and forgiveness to many people we might consider undesirable or undeserving. Luke 19 records the story of Zaccheus, a tax collector who had stolen money from the people of Jericho.

The disciples grumbled that Jesus would be the guest of such a man—"a man that is a sinner." Jesus quickly reminded them that the Son of man came to "seek and to save that which was lost." Not just rich men, righteous men, or royal men—but **any** man who is lost.

When the immoral woman entered Simon's house, in Luke 7 and began anointing Jesus' feet, the Pharisee questioned His wisdom in letting that sort of person touch Him. "She is a sinner." Jesus rebuked Simon for he was a sinner, too. This woman had shown more love toward Jesus than Simon had. He said to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

The encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4 serves as another example that Jesus would not have us to be a respecter of persons. This woman from whom he solicited a drink of water was from another race. Even she wondered why Jesus would ask her for a drink, since the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans.

Not only did his love transcend racial barriers, He was also aware of her immoral lifestyle. He knew of her five husbands and her present extramarital relationship. She was a sinner. He offered her living water for eternal life.

As Christians, we often face similar attitudes about ministering to those with whom it is unpopular to associate. We find ourselves bothered by those who seem undesirable or undeserving: people whose lives are torn by drugs; youngsters involved in gangs; women who have chosen abortion. They are sinners. Sinners in the most heinous ways.

But have we forgotten that we too are sinners? Our sins nailed the precious Savior to the cross. Without accepting His sacrifice, we too are the most wretched of sinners. We ought to share the story of how He ransomed us with those who have not yet found His love and forgiveness.

The Christian's Response

How can we minister to people in need? The story of the good Samaritan lends a good outline for reaching out to those in need. A lawyer asked Jesus to expound on His statement, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Jesus responded with a parable that is recorded in Luke 10. Thieves had attacked a man on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho. The thieves stripped him, wounded him, and left him for dead. A priest, probably on his way to the temple, simply passed by on the other side of the road offering no help to the wounded man.

Then a Levite, a religious leader, stopped and looked at the man. But he too passed by on the other side. Finally, a Samaritan saw the man and had compassion on him.

Despite the fact that the wounded man was a Jew and Jews hated Samaritans, the good Samaritan bandaged his wounds, set him on his own donkey, and took him to an inn. He took some of his own money to pay the innkeeper for any expenses that he incurred.

After giving this parable, Jesus asked the lawyer, "Which of these three men was a good neighbor to

him who fell among thieves?" The lawyer replied, "He who showed mercy on him." Jesus responded with the command to "Go and do thou likewise."

Christians today must follow Christ's most basic command to "love your neighbor as yourself." Don't be guilty of being like the priest who did not acknowledge the wounded man. Are you so wrapped up in religious ceremony that you fail to carry out Jesus' most basic command?

As Free Will Baptist women, we can become so involved in our church activities that we forget that God created us for His glory to offer His love and forgiveness to others. Perhaps as an active member of your local women's group, always busy planning meetings and socials, you fail to see those people who have fallen among thieves. How long has it been since you stopped to recognize that there are people all along your path wounded by Satan who will die if you don't tell them of God's redemption?

Don't be like the Levite who perhaps felt some compassion. He may have considered helping him, but was in too much of a hurry. As Christians, we often look at the wretched world crumbling around us and feel some compassion.

What a tragedy that lives are being shattered by drugs, divorce, death, and disease. The problem seems so huge, what could one person do? So we go on, wrapped up in our own problems and activities, not taking time to reach out to those in need.

The Lord would have us be like the good Samaritan. We can begin by bandaging wounds as He did. This may mean spending hours in prayer with a woman who lost a husband to disease. It may mean offering the hope of Christ to a young woman struggling to escape a life in the topless dancing industry.

We can give of ourselves and our resources. This may mean offering transportation to a struggling mother. Perhaps this means committing several hours of your week to working in a homeless shelter, or visiting a local nursing home. Some of us could provide babysitting for a single mom who is trying to turn her life around and has to balance work, school, doctor's appointments, and daycare. Some can use their sewing talents to make blankets for babies with AIDS at your local children's hospital.

We can give our own money. This may mean donating some of our income to fund a Christian outreach ministry. Or buying items to help fill a food bank or a clothes closet. Perhaps one of you has your own business and can donate some of your proceeds or services to help build or furnish a home for unwed mothers.

Ministries to consider

- ◇ crisis pregnancy center
 - ◇ homeless shelter
 - ◇ nursing home
 - ◇ tutorial program for disadvantaged youths
 - ◇ church bus ministry
 - ◇ food bank or clothes closet
 - ◇ shelter for battered women and children
 - ◇ local hospital or hospice program
-

Your Personal Response

You may be thinking that you don't have opportunity to minister to these sorts of people. But be assured that along every path there are people in need. Many of the examples cited here are ministry opportunities that the Lord has given people in their early twenties.

Just look around. In your own family. Your church. Your neighborhood. Your child's school. Your work place. Just as the Samaritan did, stop and give of yourself. As Jesus did, be involved in people's lives. Even those people who are unpopular or undesirable.

Ready to start? Begin praying now that the Lord would open the door for you to encounter where you can minister. Pray that God would prepare your heart to use your talents or personal life experiences to reach out to those in need—perhaps those who are walking where you once walked.

As you become involved in a ministry, remember that it is important to meet people's physical needs, but your ultimate goal is to introduce them to Jesus Christ. Each time you have the opportunity to meet someone's physical needs, you have opened the door to sharing the love of Christ, who is the ultimate provider and healer.

The women that come to me for counseling at the crisis pregnancy center come with so many needs. They often need a place to live, employment, medical assistance, educational options, clothing and food. When I assess their needs and begin to think about how I can help, one thing always comes to mind, "I'll give them Jesus." ♦

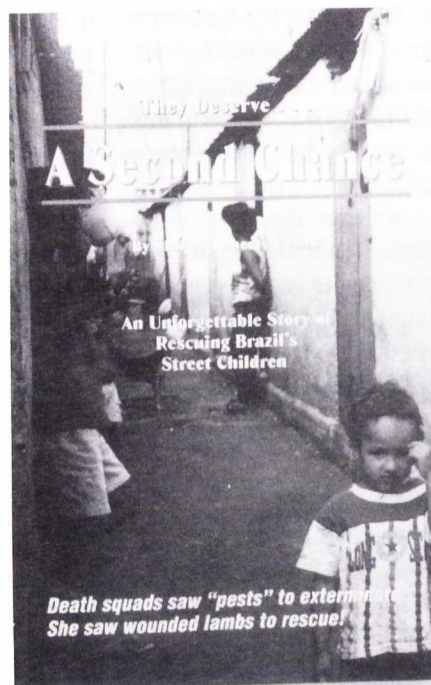
Angie Outlaw is a mother and social worker at Life Choices in Memphis, TN. David, her husband, pastors Arbor Grove FWB Church in Walnut Ridge, AR. He is pursuing a Ph.D. at Mid-America Seminary.

Order Today!

They Deserve . . . A Second Chance

An Unforgettable Story of Rescuing Brazil's Street Children

by Shirley Combs



It will make you cry and rejoice at what God is doing through Brazilian Christians who are making a difference.

Whatever it takes

The mother of a special needs child shares some ABC's for coping and ministering.

by Pat Franks

Be careful what you pray. God may answer your prayer! During my teen years and early twenties, I remember praying often that God would make me a vessel He could use for His glory.

I knew God wanted me to be a missionary. So I had images in my mind of God helping me to learn the Bible, to speak in public, or to live in a far-off country. God gave me a wonderful missionary husband and we went to Brazil to live and work.

Several furloughs later, I was invited to a WNAC meeting. During the meeting, a woman with a beautiful voice sang a Gospel song I had never heard. She sang with conviction, "Whatever it takes, Lord, my will to break, that's what I'll be willing to do." I wanted to put my fingers in my ears and run out the door. I was the visiting missionary; so I sat quietly and let the tears flow. But for a long time I wanted to tell that lady she didn't know what she was singing. I was still struggling to accept my special needs child to the point that I could always be thankful for her. I knew God could use her to make me a usable vessel.

Regina—God's Gift

When our children were ten and eight years old, they eagerly awaited the arrival of this baby. Regina Ruth came a month early and required surgery immediately to correct an intestinal problem—atresia of the duodenum.

I worried because I needed someone to cook for the family while I was in the hospital. A Christian newly-wed couple had recently moved to town. She offered to cook, probably

thinking I would need her about a week. For a month, Adeilde cooked and Nilo, her husband, ate with our family while I stayed in the hospital in the capital city to care for this tiny baby. We still thank God for this couple.

When she was a month old, we brought her home from the hospital, still vomiting often and weighing a little over four pounds. The pediatricians who cared for her at birth had their office on the street where we lived. Doctor Nelson would stop by the house occasionally to see us.

He gently guided us to take her for a blood test for chromosome studies. He did not immediately tell us the diagnosis which was obvious to him. By her first birthday, the diagnosis came—Down's Syndrome.

God also provided support from family. My brother, Jim Sturgill, and his family had recently begun missionary service in Brazil. Jim has a strong preaching voice. When he would laugh, during her first year of life, Regina would cry. Noise upset her for several years. She and Uncle Jim have a special relationship today.

She gained no weight until we discovered that she was allergic to milk. When she started drinking soy bean milk, she blossomed. Then the soy bean milk disappeared from the market. Uncle Jim used his ham radio to locate some and have it shipped to Brazil. In suspense, the whole family waited for the arrival of the milk—the soy bean milk that would keep her alive. Getting it through customs was a long process.

A's for Adapting

Accepting a special needs child is more difficult for some people than for others. Most parents go through a period of mourning the loss of the perfect, normal child they had awaited so anxiously. When a child is diagnosed as handicapped, it takes more time to accept a child's handicap than it does for the brain to process the information. The Christian has to fit this "error of nature" into his view of a loving, merciful God.

The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 119:73, "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me . . ." and 139:15-16, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, . . . thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written . . ." Sure, I was formed by God for a purpose; but my child was the product of a chromosome which did not divide properly—a mistake. How could my child be included in Isaiah 43:7, "for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him"?

With more recent diagnostic techniques, parents may learn the diagnosis before the child is born. Ultrasound allows us to see that substance being formed in secret. The process of accepting may begin before the child is born.

Parents of handicapped children experience some or all of the following. Crying. Depression. Determination to work hard enough to help the child catch up with his peers and be "normal." And at times a desire to give up. These are part of the acceptance phase. Acceptance may take several years.

When the initial shock has passed, the parents begin **assessing** the situation. What changes must be made to care for this child? We had questions we could not answer alone. Could we continue our cross-cultural ministry? Could our child adjust to the stresses of moving often? Would two languages be too confusing? Could we give this child the necessary attention without neglecting the other children?

A few decades ago, doctors sometimes suggested putting the child in an institution. This may still be the answer for some families.

In studying the question of having our child live in a bilingual home, we sought advice from a university professor of special education. He told us of studies involving Down's Syndrome children who had been exposed to two languages without adverse effects. Several experts told us that we could not let one child dictate our whole family lifestyle. After much prayer, counsel and study, we decided to continue as foreign missionaries.

Achieving a workable situation was the next step. I stopped home schooling our older children. We transferred to the nearby state capital which had a school in English for our older children. We gathered all the information we could find and took it with us to the field. I learned to do physical therapy and teach concepts to our handicapped child. Later, we found a special education school for her.

Some people with handicapped children wonder, "why me?" Some feel guilty or that God is punishing them. Defects caused by alcohol or illegal drugs are natural consequences of sin. But when asked why the man was born blind, Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." (John 9:3). Maybe "why" has not been as important to me because I knew God was using her to answer my prayer.

Coping has required much of our time and energy. The "how to" list includes facing new situations when the child does best following a routine in a familiar place. We have traveled to different churches, gone to different Sunday school classes, stayed in different homes.

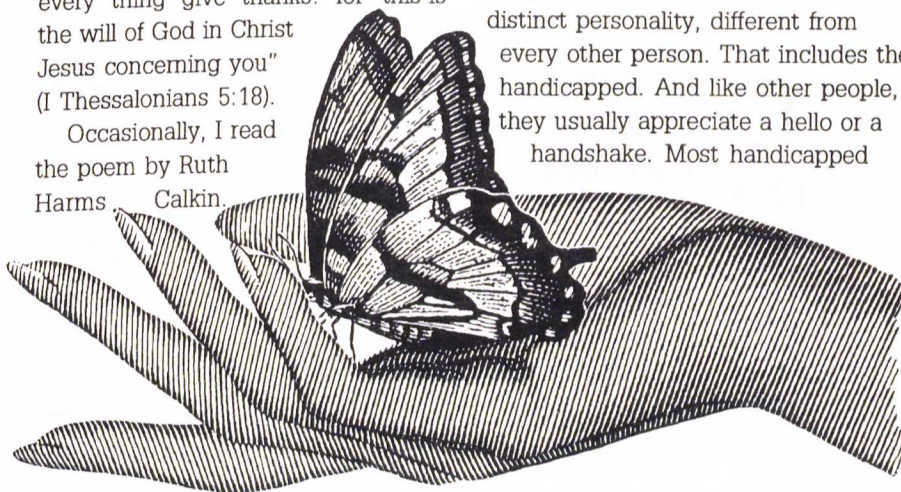
Overnight flights posed a problem. There seems to be an unwritten international law which states that all flights between the US and Brazil must be between 10 P.M. and 6 A.M. Staying in hotels and attending the National Associations have been difficult for us.

Regina apparently has developed a strong dislike for suitcases. Several years ago I packed hers and left it on her bed. When I went to get it, she had put everything back in the drawers.

Once a visiting university professor almost missed his flight because Regina unpacked his suitcase and put his clothing in the drawers where her father kept his clothing.

After accepting the child, assessing the needs and achieving a working situation, **arriving** at a position to be thankful should be rapid and automatic. Not necessarily. When everyone is happy and healthy, being thankful is easy. When extended illness, repeated surgeries, or discouragement lead to exhaustion, being thankful must be based on God's Word, not our feelings at the time. "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thessalonians 5:18).

Occasionally, I read the poem by Ruth Harms Calkin.



I Wonder

You know, Lord, how I serve You
With great emotional fervor
In the limelight.
You know how eagerly I speak for You
At a women's club.
You know how I effervesce when I
promote
A fellowship group.
You know my genuine enthusiasm
At a Bible study.

But how would I react, I wonder
If You pointed to a basin of water
And asked me to wash the calloused
feet
Of a bent and wrinkled old woman
Day after day
Month after month
In a room where nobody saw
And nobody knew.*

This manner of serving the Lord is not exactly what most of us women active for Christ are seeking. Washing the quadriplegic's hair is not on the top of our lists. Whatever we do, we must do it for the glory of God. Self-pity retreats within itself; but the happy individual turns problems into challenges and opportunities for service.

Be's for a Beginning

How can active women serve Christ by serving the handicapped?

BE natural. Do not be overly solicitous to the person. Do not ignore the person. Each individual has a distinct personality, different from every other person. That includes the handicapped. And like other people, they usually appreciate a hello or a handshake. Most handicapped

people can understand what is happening around them even if they cannot communicate verbally.

BE helpful. After establishing a friendship with the person and the family, make opportunities for contact with the person gradually increasing the time until you gain self-confidence in understanding the person. Then, offer to sit with the person so the caregiver may have time off. Once while on furlough, a thoughtful friend kept our child for my husband and me to go to our church Christmas party. I really appreciated it.

BE a good example. My daughter is an imitator. She cannot comprehend the concept "Do as I say, not as I do." For months I could not understand why she sometimes made her bed neatly; while at other times she left the bed unmade or stripped everything off.

Finally, I discovered that each morning when she woke up, she looked in my room at my bed and fixed hers like I had left mine. What a challenge to live like Christ!

C's for Consideration

Communicate to the family that you are available. We do not need pity; but we do need understanding and prayer.

Contribute to the spiritual development of the handicapped by providing a Sunday school class for them or a video tape of the service if they are homebound. If there is no need for a special class, a teacher's aid could help the teacher of a regular class.

Comfort the family by assuring them that you are praying. Any service done in the right spirit or with

the right attitude is important and is acceptable to God. In Matthew 10:42, Jesus said, "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water . . . shall in no wise lose his reward."

Occasionally someone will say to me, "I don't think I could take care of a child like yours because I would not have time for my ministry." My answer is that at the present time caring for my handicapped child is part of my ministry. "Blessed be God, . . . the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, **that we may be able to comfort them** which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted" (II Corinthians 1:4).

The parent-teacher meetings at the special education school provide opportunities to share our faith and to encourage other parents.

Recently, a parent said her husband was moving out and leaving her to care for their child. I told how caring for our child had united our family as we worked together. The principal of the school said that was the exception to the rule.

Many families split up because of the added stress. How thankful I am for a husband who loves God and his family. We achieve happiness by giving ourselves to others. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matthew 10:39). God is answering my prayer His way.

Let's review our ABC's and enter God's team for helping those who need it. No member of God's team prepares for the task without one day being given a chance to participate. Sooner or later God will say to each person who is ready, "Look, your moment has come. Take it and go. Give that person a cup of cold water." ❖

Pat Franks, Dave (her husband) and Regina live in Belo Horizonte, Brazil where they are missionaries.

**Reprinted from Tell Me Again, Lord, I Forget by Ruth Harms Calkin © 1974 Chariot Family Publishing, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Used by*

Letters to God

Dear God,

You understand me. You created me. The doctors say my chromosomes got mixed up. Mommy and Daddy love me. So do brother and sister. But some people stare at me. They treat me like I was a dummy. I can't talk. I walk crooked. But, I can see, eat, hear. I feel hurt and left out sometimes because people don't accept me like you made me. Help them, God.

Love,

Ruth

Letters to God: A seven-part series of letters from a special needs child.



Shirley holds a child on his day of arrival, a scary experience for a two-year-old.

Wounded lambs

Brazil Headlines:

Death Squads, perhaps moonlighting police officers, rid neighborhoods of "social undesirables" by killing street children.

"Pest Control" hired by local businesses are executing street children who are seen as thieves and criminals.

Seven more street children assassinated in city square last night!

Bruises and scars from the many beatings were visible on the thin, little arms of the child as he buried his head in them. He surrendered to sobs and cried, "I'll never be able to do it. Never!" He yielded to the sobs that had been locked inside him since that awful day two years before and the many terrible days since then. That day was locked inside him, but it came out through screams during his nightmares or it was expressed in his fear to be seen in the street by day.

The policeman had found him this time beaten almost unconscious by his stepfather who accused him of being lazy and not bringing home enough money after a day of begging in the streets.

The police officer confided to me before we were given the child, "You need to understand something else besides these beating he is receiving. When he was six years of age, he was raped. Now he is so introverted that he can't approach people in the streets to beg."

"What about his mother?"

"She has two younger children by this man who inflicted the beatings and she is an alcoholic. We told her to choose between the man and her boy. She chose the man."

And now he was with us, tormented by this rejection, the first child sent to us even before the official opening of the Children's Home.

"I'll never be able to read and write," he mumbled as he lifted his head.

"Why do you say that, José? Sure you can," encouraged Marcos, one of the volunteers in the home.

"Nobody big in my family can read. My mama can't read. I don't know anybody big who can read." The pencil trembled in his slender fingers.

This conversation was taking place only days after we opened *Lar Nova Vida*. The sobbing, wounded child was being comforted by a young man who was an ex-street child himself. God had sent him [Marcos] to live with us seven years before when we lived in another city.

After being rescued from the streets, Marcos and José had a long way to go, but by the grace of God, they had escaped the death squads who were killing Brazil's street children. They had escaped nights of sleeping under cardboard in dark, cold alleys. Marcos could be confident that José could have a new life because of what God had done for him years before. ❖

This article is taken from Shirley Combs' book, *They Deserve A Second Chance*. Used by permission. To order this book from WNAC, see page 9. For more information about this work with street children in Brazil, write: Rejoice Ministries International, P.O. Box 50, Owasso, OK 74055.



Food For Thought

"I really need a larger home because I need more storage space." "If only I could live closer to work, I wouldn't have to wake up as early." "I wish I had more money to make life easier or to wear nicer clothes."

Have you ever caught yourself sighing and thinking similar thoughts? I have.

Try this one: "I wish these chains were not quite so confining." Or, "If only I knew when my time in prison will end." Or this one: "Oh, Epaphroditis, wouldn't it be nice to have a fireplace in my cell?"

That's not what I read in Paul's letter to the Philippians. Instead, he declares, "I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel." In the same chapter, he says, "... what has happened to me [imprisonment] has really served to advance the gospel." "Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice."

May we find joy in what brings joy to God's heart. And let's concentrate more on those things. ❖

Quotes taken from the first chapter of Philippians (NIV).

Poet's Corner

Don't Stop a Beating Heart

Cindy Weaver, Campobello, SC

Don't stop a beating heart
that grows stronger every day.

God has a special plan for it
and you must seek His way.

That tiny life inside of you
was designed by the Master's
hand.

He formed this child in secret
to fulfill a part of His plan.

We cannot know the future
nor see beyond today,

But, God's strong hand will
guide you and show you and
your child the way.

Hurt Feelings

Arlene Branum, Purcell, OK

Now that I've hurt your feelings,
how do I make amends?
So often I speak without thinking,
saying just what I don't intend.
Now that I've hurt your feelings,
how can I undo the wrong?
And remove all your anger,
from where it doesn't belong.

Careless words said without
thinking, whether they are
wrong or right
Build a wall in our relationship
and haunt us in the night
I never meant to hurt your feelings
and I really want you to know
That I am really sorry
and that I love you so

I hope that you can forgive me
for speaking out of turn
You'd think that as old as I am
one of these days, I'd learn!

Love, Mom

Alley Sally

Sharon Anderson, Lemont Furnace, PA

The weather turned colder toward evening and Sally pulled her thin coat together as the wind whipped around her. She was defeated by life and hardened by the streets. Her nostrils were not assaulted by alley smells and she clearly saw the ugliness of reality and accepted it.

She had not aspired to be homeless, wandering the city streets daily with her shopping cart of treasures, but to that end she had arrived.

She pushed a stray lock of gray hair under her moth-eaten hat, ignoring the tears stinging her eyes, her gnawing hunger and her hopeless situation.

Continuing on to her cardboard shelter, Sally suddenly stopped and retrieved an object from the gutter. It was a doll. She cleaned the dirt from the doll's face, kissed her lightly, and carefully placed the doll in her cart and moved on.

The city watched, God waited and life went on as usual. ❖

**Open thy mouth, judge
righteously, and plead the
cause of the poor and needy.**
—Proverbs 31:9

**Blessed is he that considereth
the poor: the Lord will deliver
him in time of trouble.**
—Psalm 41:1 (KJV)



Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WNAC Officers

Coordinator

The Free Will Baptist National Office now has voice mail. If you call the office outside office hours (before 7:30 A.M. or after 4:00 P.M. central time) you can leave a message by following the instructions in the greeting and dialing the extension number for the person you want to reach. The extension numbers for the WNAC staff members are the following:

Mary R. Wisehart	210
Yvonne Wolfenbarger	211
Suzanne Franks	212
Martha Harris	213

Springtime means graduations and weddings. A group of friends gave me a cookbook as a college graduation gift. I still use it today. Do something special for the high school and college graduates in your church. Your group can go the extra mile and contact Home and Foreign Missions for a list of missionary kids that are graduating this year. They will appreciate a card or care package.

Read Communicator on page 19 of this issue and see pages 23-24 for information about this year's National Convention. Up to four people can stay in the same hotel room to save money. We hope to see you in Texas!

Assistant Coordinator

Planning a Mother's Day or Mother/Daughter Banquet? See Annette Aycock's piece on page 22. You may reproduce this page on pretty paper. Roll it and tie the paper with ribbon to place at each place for your banquet. Try your hand at writing your version of this chapter. Another idea for a banquet is Carol Reid's humorous piece on page 26. If you know someone in your church with a knack for comedy, ask this person to present something about Ruby. Plan your banquet decorations according to what you use as a program.

If these ideas don't appeal to you, check out the following Mother's Day dramas in our Play Books: "Mother of the Year" (vol. 8), "What Shall We Do with Grandma?" (vol. 9), "The Very First Time" (vol. 10), "Songs of My Mother" (vol. 11). Play Books can be ordered from WNAC, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Another banquet possibility is to invite a guest speaker.

Provision Closet Needs:

Sheet sets, all sizes
(fitted sheets should be deep pocket sheets)

Twin-sized mattress covers

Bedspreads

Pillows

Towel sets, hand towels and wash cloths

Irons

Electric can openers

Baking pans

Cookware

Flatware

Corelleware

Whenever possible, leave prices on items to help the office keep up with inventory.

Secretary/Treasurer

You are a key person when it comes to encouraging stewardship. Remind your members to pay their dues. Dues to WNAC are \$10 per person per year. This is less than \$1 per month. Each district and state organization may agree upon an extra amount to help underwrite their cost of operation. Commend your women for paying their dues. Your dues help WNAC serve you, as a local ministry, and so many other Free Will Baptist ministries.

Accurate minutes and treasurer's reports are important to keep everyone on track and they serve as a historical record for those who will follow. Keep up the good work!

Missions Chairman

When you and other women in your group preregister for the National Convention, remember to buy your Fellowship Dinner tickets. The dinner usually has a sellout crowd, so it is important to buy them early. When you buy your tickets, how about getting an extra set for a missionary couple? Send your request to WNAC and we will see that the missionary gets it. Or pick them up at the WNAC booth in Fort Worth. Your pastor and his wife would also appreciate banquet tickets.

Several new Home and Foreign missionaries have been appointed in the past year and most are in the process of raising support and preparing to go to their field of service. Your people would enjoy getting to know some of these new missionaries. And the new missionaries will enjoy getting to know you and securing your prayer support. Contact the Home or Foreign Missions Department for updated directories. They will be glad to help you set up a service with the missionary of your choice.

Prayer Chairman

A prayer calendar for the summer months would help the whole family pray for missionary requests each day. When making the calendar, check the birthday calendar on page 18 of this issue and in the Yearbook on pages 8-11. Pray for them on their birthdays. Also, include specific requests (such as, spiritual vitality, a consistent prayer life, a joyful spirit) on each date. Encourage your women to keep the calendar in a visible place where they can pray throughout the day.

Service Chairman

Offer your help to prepare for the June program which is written by Angie Outlaw. She is a social worker for Life Choices which is a ministry to single mothers. Besides support and counseling, they help arrange adoptions. Look in your local yellow pages under the heading "Abortion Alternatives." Do your own research to see what is available and what you as a group can do to help. Did you know that there are more Crisis Pregnancy Centers in the United States than there are Abortion Clinics?

Provision Closet supplies arrive and missionaries come and take what they need. One day the closet may be well stocked, the next day it looks bare. You have been faithful in giving to the Provision Closet over the years and it is a wonderful and gratifying ministry. Did you know that FWB missionary kids going to college in the fall can stop by and pick up sheets, blankets, towels, irons, and other needed items for dorm life?

Devotional Outline

Jewels

Malachi 3:17

God compares us to jewels.

Jewels . . .

are rare.

are tough.

shine.

sometimes need cleaning.

are guarded. ❖

(Original idea from sermon by Floyd Wolfenbarger)

This outline is to help you meditate on Scripture. If someone asks you to give a devotional, you can use the outline and add your own insights and illustrations.

HID IN MY HEART

I Timothy 6:6-10

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (NIV)❖

Plan a shower for the closet and publicize it well in advance so people can have time to save up for it. Always check with WNAC or in *Co-Laborer* (this issue, page 15) for current needs.

Study Chairman

If you haven't had a Manual study yet, there is no time better than now. Plan two one-hour sessions on the same day or on different days. Ask those who are interested (not just officers) to sign up ahead of time so enough Manuals can be ordered. The one presenting the study should read the Manual well ahead of time. If she has any question, she should contact a field worker or WNAC for help. Your district or state field worker may be willing to come and do the Manual study for your women's group. If there are other FWB churches close by, they may want to participate as well.

If you have done a missions or prayer study recently, write us and let us know how it went. What materials did you use? Would you recommend the material to other women's groups? We, at WNAC, like to hear from you and know what is going on. ❖

Lucy & Marge

Lucy: I think I'm going to try to catch a couple of yard sales on Saturday. Do you have time to go with me?

Marge: Time? Who has time for anything nowadays?

Lucy: What's the matter, Marge? I thought going to yard sales was your favorite spring pastime.

Marge: Well it is, but I can't seem to get caught up. Just when I think I see the light at the end of the tunnel something else comes up.

Lucy: What is it this time?

Marge: Freeda put me in charge of decorations for the Mother/Daughter Banquet. When I told her I would do it, I didn't know so many things were going to come up. And the banquet is just around the corner. Do you think I've done anything yet?

Lucy: Have you?

Marge: Of course, not. I've been too busy fixing up the bathroom that got flooded when the pipes burst this winter. And then there's spring cleaning.

Lucy: Bless your heart. Can you use some help?

Missionary Birthdays



May

1	MK, Melody Williams, Georgia
4	Katrina Williams, Georgia
7	Jon McNay, JPN
9	Howard Gwartney, Oklahoma
10	Delores Burns, Georgia
11	Elaine Holland, C'I
12	Charlotte Childers, SC
14	Brenda Lewis, Colorado
16	Dale Bishop, JPN
16	MK, Robert Cooper, California
16	Elaine Parker, Louisiana
21	Ernest Holland, C'I
21	José Rodriguez, Florida
25	Lynn Midgett, SP
26	Phyllis Adams, Kentucky
26	Kenneth Eagleton, Jr, C'I
27	MK, Kayla Williams, Georgia
28	MK, Aaron Morgan, C'I
29	MK, Melissa Cowart, BR
29	MK, Katherine McDonald, JPN
30	Sue MacMillan, Massachusetts
30	Alice Smith, C'I

June

1	MK, Kathryn Barber, SC
1	MK, Fawn Gwartney, Arizona
2	Jean Deeds, BR
2	MK, Dawn Phillips, Idaho
2	Levan Hubbard, Arkansas
3	MK, Brooke Gwartney, Arizona
3	Christy McNay, JPN
4	MK, Amanda Jones, PA
6	Stan Bunch, PAN
7	Kathy Paschall, C'I
8	MK, Monte Bivens, Mexico
9	Terry VanWinkle, Kansas
10	MK, Elisabeth Franks, UR
11	Suzanne Cooper, California
11	Kathy Donoho, Iowa
11	MK, Janet MacMillan, MA
13	Vicki Hubbard, Arkansas
13	Mabel Willey, Texas
14	Steve Lytle, PAN
15	June Hersey, JPN
16	Charley Carmack, Tennessee
19	MK, Vicki Hunt, Washington
20	MK, Emily Paschall, C'I
22	MK, Haylee Hubbard, Arkansas
22	MK, Matthew Turnbough, SP
23	MK, Rebekah Nichols, C'I
25	MK, Joseph Criswell, Oregon
25	MK, Valerie Sturgill, BR
26	MK, Rebekah Potete, Illinois
28	Nelda Gwartney, Oklahoma
28	Ron Parker, Louisiana
29	Steve Riggs, FR

Marge: Do you have any banquet decoration ideas?

Lucy: Not off the top of my head. But I'll think about it.

Marge: Now that you mentioned it, a yard sale is not such a bad idea. I might find something to use for the banquet or at least an idea. And then a bargain always cheers me up.

Lucy: Come on over early Saturday. I want to get there before everything is picked over. Why don't you stay for lunch, too? Then we can talk about our ideas.

Marge: Lucy, you're such a friend! Two heads are better than one any day. We'll come up with something exciting for the banquet. ❖

Lighting the Way for Women

Are you doing all you can to minister to the women around you? Come to our women's meeting ready to learn new ways you can help.

place _____

time _____



Springboard Illustrated: Stories to Grow By Volume 36/ No. 3

Daddy's helper by Donna Garrett

My Daddy's lean long arm flew up fast. No, not to hit me. But to signal, **stop!** He was driving the tractor in front. The tractor was running the corn cutter and it had bogged down and needed to catch its breath.

I was driving the old farm truck behind the tractor. The cut corn arched over into the truck bed to be hauled back to the farm. At 13, I was quick like my Dad, but not quick enough that it didn't bump the bumper.

The emotion on Daddy's face never changed. He knew I was doing the best I could to stop the old rugged two-ton truck. To do any better, I would have to know the instant he knew he was stopping—and I couldn't know that.

Country silos were fed in the fall. Their hungry bellies gobbled up the smelly corn. It was the cow's steak—food for the winter—much like the squirrels' nuts they hunt and store.

The farm had hired hands, tenants. But occasionally I would pinch hit for a while, putting me in the big league with the best of them. Another challenge was to push the hay fork hook in the hay, step back and signal, "take her up!"

You see, Daddy had three girls . . . I was the one who liked the outdoors. How proud I was to walk in Daddy's footsteps! He stood next to God in my eyes.

It was one thing to love it and entirely another not to and still go without a whimper. That was my sister. She liked inside chores—sewing, cooking. But she never refused.

It was rewarding to see Daddy's pride in his girls' interest in his work. Drops of sweat on a hot summer day formed on the help—whether young or old.

I didn't run into him many times. I tried hard to stomp on the brake as fast as his hand went up.

We all loved our dad—and mother too. We would try to please them any way we could.

No, we don't have to be perfect to have our mom's and dad's love. And do you know that we don't have to be perfect to have God's love either? He loved us even as sinners. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

My father's hand never went up to come down across my face. He was a respectable, God-fearing father. The pride he showed when we succeeded in our chores was all the thanks we needed.

The respect I learned from my dad made it easy to accept and give my heart to a heavenly Father. And at an early age, too!

My earthly father is now with my heavenly Father. ❖

Donna Garrett is a freelance writer who lives in Roanoke, VA. She is a wife, mother, and grandmother. She likes to take her grandchildren places and bake cookies with them.

COMMUNICATOR

BY MARY RUTH WISEHART

The Convention Approaches

The WNAC convention is scheduled for July 23 in Fort Worth, Texas. See the program on the back cover of this issue.

The women in Texas are excited about the meeting and looking forward to your coming.

Pre-Convention meetings begin Monday, July 22.

Make Certain Your Group Is Represented on the Nominating Committee

The nominating committee will be organizing at 9:00 a.m. to submit officers for nomination in 1997.

Each state should have a representative on the nominating committee. Be sure that the nominee can be in Fort Worth for the 9:00 a.m. meeting on July 22.

The nominating committee performs an important service for the convention.

Don't Miss the Seminars

Two seminars will be held Monday afternoon, one for pastors' wives and one for women who want to be a blessing and help to their pastors' wives.

Secretaries, Complete those Reports

State secretaries, district, and local secretaries need to get reports to the national office by July 1. The national office staff tries to make the annual report and the membership report as accurately as possible.

Also, the registration desk must have the names of delegates at registration time.

Usually a list of delegates, state presidents, and state field workers is sent to the national president to help her in selecting committees. Anything we can do ahead of time helps.

Some groups may want to use the reports for chairmen in the *Manual*. Report blanks are provided for state secretaries to summarize those reports also.

Plan to Attend the Officers' Meeting

Monday, July 22, from 3:00-4:00 p.m. all state, district, and local officers present are invited to attend the officers' meeting in the Radisson Hotel.

The new *Manual* will be discussed, including suggestions for filling out the new reports.

If you have questions about the changes or reports, they will be welcomed at the meeting.

Preregister and Get Tickets to the Fellowship Dinner Early

The pre-registration form is included in this issue (pages 23-24). If you preregister, you may pick up your materials on Saturday, beginning at 3:00 p.m.

Marcia Ellison will speak at the Fellowship Dinner. You will want to be sure to get a seat.

There's room for anyone who wants to attend, but we must guarantee a certain number and let the caterer know 72 hours in advance in order to have the food ordered.

Look Forward to A Report from Côte d'Ivoire

Mary Wisehart, executive secretary, had the opportunity to visit with the women of our work in Côte d'Ivoire. The women began organizing a national group at their retreat in February.

Keep checking the *CoLaborer* for a report on this trip and the new organization.

At this point we have organized national women's groups in Cuba, Panama, Brazil, and Mexico. Praise the Lord for these sisters in Christ. Pray for them as they serve where they are.

Have You Forgotten a Birthday?

WNAC's birthday is June 13. She will be 61.

Last year a few women and groups sent birthday gifts of \$60 to WNAC because we made a special effort for her 60th birthday.

Did you forget? Most of the women did not send a special gift.

Maybe you will remember this year and send an extra special gift for the 61st birthday.

Gifts may be sent to the Co-Laborer Fund, the name for WNAC's general expense fund, or to the Endowment Fund. Endowment gifts may be sent in honor or in memory of a person. ❖

Women In Action



A. Surprise Quilt for Pastor Appreciation

Greenbrier FWB Church (Pryor, OK) celebrated Pastor Appreciation Day on September 10, 1995 by giving Pastor Berka and Trudy, his wife, a homemade quilt.

Wanda Rae Gage, a charter member of the women's group, came up with the idea and put it all together. Wanda gave each family in the church a blank quilt square. The family put their own names on them and individualized each square with their hobbies or interests. Wanda Rae Gage did the piecing of the quilt and Cleta Hopper, her mother, helped with the quilting. It was kept a secret until the Sunday morning service, when it was presented to the Berkas. They were thrilled. The Berkas have been with the church for 13 years.



Pictured (left to right): Wanda Rae Gage, Trudy Berka, and Pastor Francis "Red" Burka Sr.

B. Thanksgiving Program a Blessing

The First FWB Church Ladies Auxiliary in Sylacauga (AL) presented a Thanksgiving program for the church. After the program, they received an offering for Home Missions.

The women in the picture participated in the program. Back row (left to right): Odessa Ledlow, Sharon Thrash, Cynthia Woodall, Wanda Moore, Dorothy Chappell. Front row: Sandy Chance (president), Rikki Lee, Martha Liner, Delora Rayfield.

C. New Actionettes Sponsor the Acts 1:8 Plan

Union Grove FWB Church (Russellville, AR) formed an actionette group in June 1995. The group is sponsoring the Acts 1:8 plan with \$1000. They have sold calendars and made hot cocoa to sell in jars. Other activities include pastor appreciation and a Christmas party. The group has 17 girls and 3 sponsors.

Pictured: Back row (left to right): Kaci Haralson, Melissa Moore (president), Kayla Moore (action chairman), Jaime Ashmore (secretary/treasurer).



Kendra Hubbard, Stacy Potts (vice-president), Amber Higgins

Front row: Melody Proctor, Kayla Higgins, Ashley Taylor, Deanna Simmons, Kayla Kinder (study chairman), Brittany Kinder (prayer chairman), Jenah Higgins

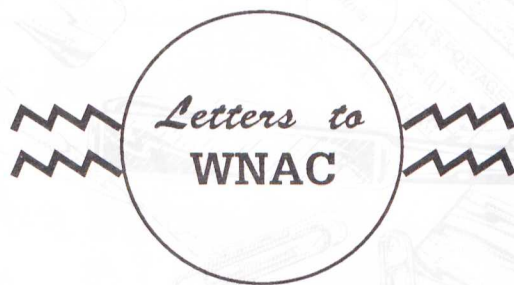
D. Florida Children Help Alabama FWB Children's Home.

The children of Wesconnett FWB Church of Jacksonville (FL) bring coins to put in the Eldridge FWB Children's Home jug every Sunday morning. In 1995 they accumulated \$500 and the treasurer of the Pansy Murray Woman's Auxiliary mailed the check before Christmas.

E-F. Christmas for the Cousineaus

Since the Mike Cousineau family left for Côte d'Ivoire on December 25, 1995, the women of the First FWB Church of Norman (OK) gave them an October Christmas shower.

Pictured: (left to right) Deleen, Kristina, Brooke, and Mike Cousineau ❖



Dear WNAC.

I am really proud of the *CoLaborer* Magazine! Any woman, christian or not, could get so much out of it. We should be proud to give it to a friend or family member as a gift.

Nora McCarty
Gainesville, GA

Dear WNAC.

What a joy it was to meet with the missionary wives for a time of sharing with WNAC at the national office.

Being a pastor's wife, active in local women's groups, and participating in sending items to the missionary provision closet, I never realized what it could mean to the missionary wife until we made our way through the closet picking out items to replenish our needs.

How grateful I am for our women throughout the denomination who share of their means to help us in this way. Thank you so much!

May God bless WNAC and our women as they engage in His service to the missionaries.

Bonnie Doggett
Missionary to Springfield, IL

Dear WNAC.

Thanks for all the great ideas and all the helps. Keep up the good work!

Debbie Beck
Missionary to Moberly, MO ❖



The love chapter according to motherhood by Annette Aycock

- 1 Every day my children hear many words come out of my mouth. Even if they are prayers and Scripture, words of encouragement and praise—my words are nothing but a noise in their ears.
- 2 If I understood everything about life—about motherhood, if I knew everything about the Bible, if I knew everything about everything, what good would it do? If I had such great faith as to tell my children something one time and believe they would always do it without hesitation, I would still be worth nothing without love.
- 3 If I gave all my kids' outgrown clothes to poor children and if I were burned alive for telling Bible stories to little ones who had never heard, but did not love others, it would be of no value whatsoever.
- 4 Love listens to a three-year-old say her ABC's for the fourth time in an hour and love tells a two-year-old it's okay when he wets his pants for the third time before lunch. Love never boasts that I could do a better job at a particular task.
- 5 Love does not speak harshly—even when you feel like screaming! Love often means a late supper so I can play a game of Monopoly. Love often means no nap, even though I am so sleepy—so I can help with school work. Love is not moody and doesn't take note when a four-year-old makes up her bed and it looks like a four-year-old did it!
- 6 Love is happy when my children tell the truth, even if they did break my favorite picture.
- 7 Loving your children means standing by their side. You will always believe in them, always expect the best of them and pray them through whatever they may have to face.
- 8 A lot of things my children will rely on in this life will fail them. They will find disappointment. But one thing I can give them will never fail or disappoint them—and that is love. Love will be a solid rock and fortress for them to stand on and build their lives on.
- 9 Many books have been written on being a good mother—but there is so much I don't know.
- 10 Even the experts fall short when it comes to being the mom God intends each of us to be. But one day God will put His stamp of perfection on me and I won't need any of these silly books.
- 11 My children speak of childish things because they are children. I try to think and reason as an adult to the best of my abilities.
- 12 In the same way my understanding of God right now is like that of a child compared to what my understanding of Him will be when I see Him face to face. I'll have all the answers to all my questions. I will be able to see everything clearly then, just as God now clearly sees my heart and knows what kind of mother I am.
- 13 I can instill faith and hope into my children—that's wonderful! But the greatest thing I can teach them is love. The greatest thing I can model before them is love. The greatest thing I can give them every moment of every day is **love! ❖**

Read along with I Corinthians 13.

Annette Aycock's article won second place in the 1995 Creative Arts Contest. She has four children. David, her husband, pastors Fellowship FWB Church in Florence, SC.

Pre-Register by June 21 and Pick up Your Convention Packet on Saturday!

Early Pick-up available at
Tarrant County Convention Center
for those who pre-register:

Saturday, July 20
3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, July 21
1:00 p.m.

Pre-Registration ends June 21, 1996

Meal Information

Fellowship of Encouragement
Meeting / Dinner \$20.00
Monday, July 22 / 3:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Convention Center / East Hall, Bay 3

Children's Banquet \$7.50
Monday, July 22 / 5:00 p.m.
Convention Center / East Hall, Bays 1-2

Hillsdale FWB College Reception . . . \$15.00
Tuesday, July 23 / 12:00 noon
Radisson Plaza / Texas Ballroom

Youth Banquet \$25.00
Tuesday, July 23 / 4:30 - 11:00 p.m.
Texas Lil's Western Ranch

Ticket purchase includes transportation,
western activities, all-you-can-eat buffet,
evening worship service, and a real Texas-
size Rodeo!

Music Fellowship Breakfast \$9.00
Wednesday, July 24 / 7:00 a.m.
Radisson Plaza / Texas Ballroom A-B

Youth Workers Reception \$7.50
Monday, July 22 / 9:00 p.m.
Ramada Downtown / Trinity-A

WNAC Fellowship Dinner \$15.00
Tuesday, July 23 / 5:00 p.m.
Convention Center / West Hall, Bay 4

FWBBC Luncheon \$15.00
Wednesday, July 24 / 12:00 Noon
Convention Center / East Hall, Bay 3

Master's Men Dinner \$18.00
(S20 at convention)
Wednesday, July 24 / 4:45 p.m.
Radisson Plaza / Grand Crystal Ballroom D

Only one person per form.
Make additional
copies if needed.

Pre-Registration Form

for
National Association of Free Will Baptists
Women Nationally Active for Christ
National Youth Conference
Fort Worth, Texas / July 21 - 25, 1996

By completing the Pre-Registration Form, you will save **valuable** time at the convention. If you pre-register, proceed to a special registration area where you will receive a packet containing your pre-printed name tag, tickets and materials.

Please Print

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Church: _____
Pastor's Name: _____
Hotel (if known): _____

Phone #: (____) _____ - _____
Area Code
☐ Male ☐ Female
State: _____ Zip: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____

Mail completed form(s) and fees to
Convention Registration
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002.
Must be postmarked on or before **June 21, 1996.**

You may register for all three conventions on this form.

I. If you want to register for the **National Association**, complete Section I.

District Association: _____
MINISTER: ☐ Ordained ☐ Licensed ☐ Pastor
(I certify that I am a member in good standing with the above named church and association which belong to the National Association.)
MISSIONARY: ☐ Foreign (Country) _____
☐ Home
DELEGATE: ☐ Ordained Deacon
☐ State
☐ National Officer
☐ National Board Member
☐ Local Church (\$25.00)
VISITOR: ☐ [Visitors can not vote]

Meal Tickets:	Quantity	
Fellowship of Encouragement Dinner	_____ x	\$20.00 = \$ _____
Youth Workers Reception	_____ x	\$7.50 = \$ _____
Music Fellowship Breakfast	_____ x	\$9.00 = \$ _____
Hillsdale FWB College Reception	_____ x	\$15.00 = \$ _____
FWBBC Alumni Luncheon	_____ x	\$15.00 = \$ _____
Master's Men Dinner (before conv.) (\$20 at convention)	_____ x	\$18.00 = \$ _____

If Local Church Delegate _____ \$25.00 = \$ _____
Signed credentials card enclosed **Yes!** ☐ **SUBTOTAL** \$ _____

II. If you want to register for **WNAC**, complete Section II. (Check only one of the following:)

Delegate: ☐ Local (\$5.00)
☐ State
☐ State President or Field Worker
☐ National Officer
VISITOR: ☐ [Visitors can not vote]

Meal Tickets:	Quantity	
WNAC Fellowship Dinner	_____ x	\$15.00 = \$ _____

If Local WNAC Delegate _____ \$5.00 = \$ _____
SUBTOTAL \$ _____

III. If you want to register for the **National Youth Conference**, complete Section III. (All those in 1st grade through age 24 must register to attend NYC.)

Are you a youth worker? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Grade completed Spring 1996: _____ Age: _____
Birthdate: _____ / _____ / _____
Parent's (or Guardian's) name: _____
Youth Leader's name: _____

Registration Fee
Pre-Registration Fee \$17.00 = \$ _____
On-site registration fee is \$20.00.
Adults over 24 do not pay NYC fees. Competitors pay **separate** entry fees.
You MUST register for NYC to purchase meal tickets/attend banquets (unless age 25 and up).

Meal Tickets:	Quantity	
Children's Banquet (grades 1-6)	_____ x	\$7.50 = \$ _____
Youth Banquet (must be in grade 7 to age 24 or an accompanying youth worker)	_____ x	\$25.00 = \$ _____

SUBTOTAL \$ _____

For Office Use Only
Rec _____ / _____ Ck/MO # _____ Amt \$ _____
Ck _____

Make ALL checks payable
to FWB Convention.
**No refunds mailed after
June 21, 1996.**

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____
Check/Money Order **MUST** accompany this form.
Enclose **ONE** check to pay all fees and tickets.

"I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me."

Micah 7:7 (NIV)

a column for young people

Life!Action.

... for everyday life



i survived 13

The worst year of my life was 13. I went to a small school and wanted to be a cheerleader. Oh yes, I could probably do the cheers, clap in rhythm, and perform some gymnastics. What I couldn't do was wear the uniform. Well, I could, except for the length of the skirt.

Every other girl in my small 7th-grade class made the cheerleading squad. This meant I was the only one who didn't get invited to cheerleading parties. One or two of the girls were nice to me but I wasn't with the "in" group. I desperately wanted some real friends at school, yet we seemed to live in different worlds.

Maybe 13 hasn't been (or won't be) such a bad year for you. But sometime in your teen years you will have some confusing times. You will have to make some hard choices in a hard world.

So for a few moments let's take a journey in time and space to Israel, sometime around 700 B.C. Chapter 7 of Micah describes how godly men and women vanished from Israel because they turned away from God.

The chapter starts out, "What misery is mine!" That's how I felt at 13. Some of your friends may be in a terrible fix because they don't know God or they have turned away from God. When an epidemic of sin sweeps over the land, the whole society suffers.

If you have a "friend" who is doing something wrong and trying to pull you in with her, listen to the warning in verse five, "put no confidence in a friend." This doesn't mean we have to stop trusting everybody.

But we must beware of ungodly people—people like those who turned their backs on God in Israel.

The scary part is that the first six verses of chapter 7 sound so familiar. I feel like I'm reading today's newspaper. Everyone betrayed everyone else. You know, like a soap opera.

The good news is that Micah didn't stop writing at verse six. God didn't stop writing my story at 13, either. Time moves on. Things change. Verse seven is my favorite, "But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me."

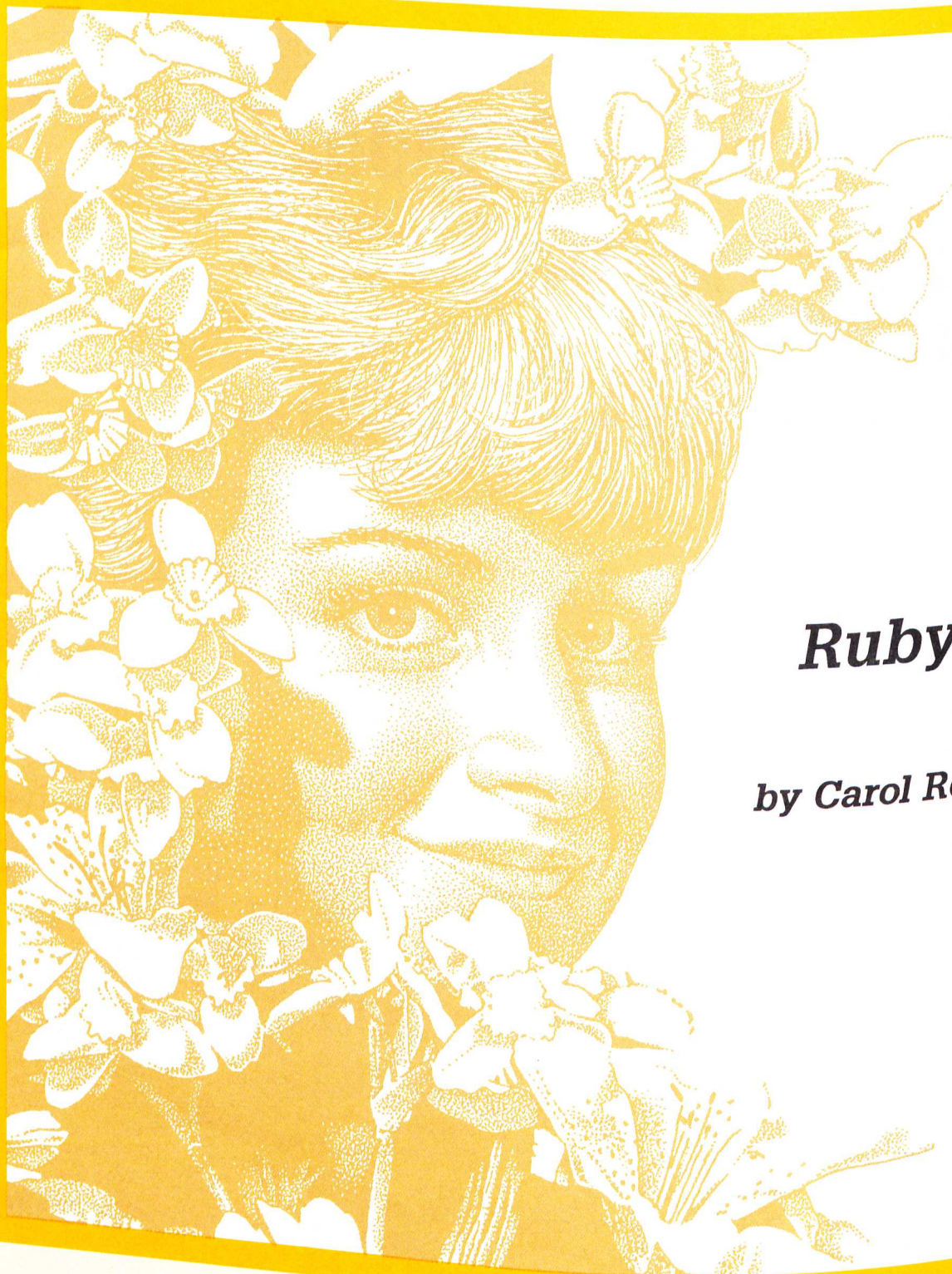
No matter how awful your situation, no matter how miserable you feel, in God, you always have hope. Hope that God is with you every moment. Hope that the situation around you will change. Hope that you will survive adolescence. Hope that even hard times will make you a better person.

You know what? My situation changed—for the better. Being 14 was better. Turning 15 was wonderful. Sixteen felt great.

What about the cheerleading bit? Well, I finally got to be a cheerleader, in college, where the skirts were longer. After the first year, I decided I couldn't yell loud enough—I wasn't the type. It wasn't that big a deal after all.

Hang in there. Hold on to your biblical convictions. Classmates may tease you today. Someday they will respect you and it may be as soon as next month or next year. Read the rest of Micah, chapter 7. God defeats Israel's enemies. God is true to His people. ❖

A Note From the Editor: Hey Actionettes (or any teenage readers), this page is for you—to help you grow in Christ and to let readers of *CoLaborer* know about the great ways you serve God. I invite you to send in material or topics you want to see talked about on this page, and pictures—we love seeing your fabulous smiles! Mail your ideas, etc., to *CoLaborer* Magazine, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, Tennessee, 37011-5002 ❖



Ruby

by Carol Reid

Oh, you know her—that woman from Proverbs 31, Ruby. I think King Lemuel's mom wanted him to look far and wide for a girl like Ruby because she wanted him never to marry and stay home to care for her. Or maybe this description of Ruby was so impossible because the passage is a Hebrew acrostic, and she had

to think of something for every letter of the alphabet. But, get real, Lemuel. You are asking for too much!

Maybe that's the point of saying, "Who can find a Ruby like this?"

First of all, Ruby's husband has it made. After sitting all day at the gate, he probably comes in at dark, hungry, wondering why supper isn't ready.

"What have you been doing all day anyway?"

"Just the regular, dear. I worked with the wool and flax. I made this little purple linen outfit and a tapestry scarf. I made a few linen garments to sell at the craft booth and several sashes to sell to the merchants. I took some things down to the needy. Oh, and I had to go "afar" to find the groceries. You just sit down here with the newspaper and I'll have your dinner in a few minutes."

Now Ruby can get away with it, but my husband would string me up if I went and bought some field without him along. A garden I could manage (maybe), but a vineyard? That's all I need—a vineyard to take care of.

Ruby must have a real problem with insomnia. She gets up before daylight to get the day's menu working, and her lamp doesn't go out at night because she's still working on her merchandise! Maybe she takes a long nap in the afternoon.

Sometimes people like Ruby make me nervous. She can't sit still—working on her crafts all the time. There's no "idleness bread" at her house, oh no. Probably sourdough bread, Amish friendship bread, banana bread, poppy seed bread, and yeast rolls, but no idleness bread! She's got flax, wool, handwork, merchandise, weaving, sewing, kids, and who knows what else! And **my** husband complains about the cross-stick, twisted paper, and hot glue guns!

Just a note about her clothes. Now the tapestry and purple fine linen might be nice together, though I'd think linen might be a bit too springy for the tapestry. But what about the red long johns? I think that's what Ruby meant about not being afraid of the winter snow because her household was clothed with scarlet.

But those other things she wears: "she girds herself with strength, . . . strength and honor are her clothing." You just try to leave the house in that outfit!

A ship? I don't think it's very complimentary for someone to say you're like a merchant ship! But if beauty is deceitful and charm is vain, then maybe being some ship is okay. Oh, and the strong arms—don't forget. A ship with strong arms, dressed in purple linen. And red long johns.

Servants. That's part of the answer. Ruby had to provide food for her household and a portion for her maidservants. Tell your husband, "Now dear, I'll be like Ruby is you'll find me a couple of maidservants!"

Ruby must not have to help with homework, pick up from football practice, try to bleach out those grass stains, talk on the phone to her mother-in-law, clip coupons, keep the grandkids or the nursery, do the taxes, work at the office, mow the yard, or go to WNAC meetings. Why, I might spin a little flax myself if someone did all of that for me!

But Ruby can really irritate me because she does it all without complaining. "She opens her mouth with wisdom and on her tongue is the law of kindness"—even on the telephone. "She does her husband good and not evil all the days of her life"—even when she has a bad day.

Take it from me, King Lemuel, there is no such woman. And if you find her, you'd better marry her fast before she keels over from exhaustion!

Poor Ruby! All of this and for what? A nice Mother's Day card (i.e., the kids rise up and call you blessed)? The work of your own hands? Hardly. But now, your husband's complete trust, his praise, your children's blessing, being known as a woman who fears the Lord—those things will make you rejoice in time to come!

Ruby may be out of my class, but maybe Proverbs 31 is kind of a cumulation—a lifetime of work. Put it all together and we could have a pretty nice chapter too!

Come to think of it, I would like for my sons to find a Ruby like that—diligent, kind, resourceful, discerning, creative, strong, faithful—forget the ship part, though.



Carol Reid is librarian at Free Will Baptist Bible College. She is a member of Cross Timbers FWB Church in Nashville, TN.

A view from the mountain

by Tanya Hart

Being from the state of North Carolina, I have had the pleasure of enjoying one of God's natural beauties—the mountains. Granted, they are not the Rockies or the Andes but the Appalachians, which have their own grandeur to me.

The mountains are my favorite place to go when I need a new perspective. Not only do they represent beauty but solitude, strength, and inspiration. The mountain experience changes during the various seasons of the year.

Spring brings the blossoms which evidence new life and growth; while summer yields the maturity of the new growth with a vibrance of life. Fall displays brilliant colors that are not only breathtaking to behold but give us new zest of life. Winter brings a time of rest as the trees stand tall but stripped of their color. However, the trees remain rooted for inner strength in order to bring renewed life once again.

There is another truth about the mountains—for every mountaintop there is a valley! It takes both to experience the beauty that God intended.

Before I left for my ministry in Africa, a dear friend gave me a parting gift. Inscribed inside the cover she wrote, "A friend is someone who sings with you on the mountaintops and is silent with you through the valleys." Little did I know at that time how soon I would realize the magnitude of that statement.

Africa and International Christian Academy (ICA) were mountaintop experiences for me. It was a door of service that opened for me. I loved what I was doing and learning. Life was challenging but exciting. ICA is a place where God is working among the staff, students, and the city. God is using us to accomplish His goal for ICA and Africa.

My loyal supporters were there singing along with me in my heart. Every joy, every step toward success, every victory, and accomplishment resulted in a joyful noise lifted up to the heavens. Without my supporters, I would have never reached that mountaintop view in Africa. And what a view it was! Their love, support, and prayers carried me there. I climbed to the top and rejoiced. That view is one I will never regret or forget as changes within my life resulted. It will serve to

inspire me and push me to greater heights.

Then came my valley. My health broke which forced me to come off that mountaintop against my will. Truthfully, I do **not** understand why. I can only accept God's plan. The decision to come home was made by the doctor in Africa because he could not properly or safely treat me in Bouaké. Leaving my students behind was the difficult part. It was a **deep valley** for me.

I've asked God for strength but I'm having to accept my weakness. I asked God for health and healing but I have been given infirmity at this time. But I will keep looking unto the hills for my help.

Now, my partners of the gospel have rallied again to my side. They have been with me in my valley. Their prayers, presence, and calls have given me strength and encouragement during this silent time in my life.

Yes, my plans have been forced to change. For health reasons, I cannot return to teach at ICA for this year. But my hopes and my heart have not changed. I remain committed to future service.

We are not made for mountaintop experiences alone. As Oswald Chambers once wrote,

We are made for the valleys of life, God will sometimes allow us a view from the hills, but only so that we might be refreshed enough to return to the valley. This is where the action is located and that we might be of service to Him. Mountaintops are for views and inspiration but fruit is grown in the valleys. God sees the end from the beginning. He will supply and provide. To be victorious in the valley, a Christian is one, who in spite of worries, inner conflicts, sickness and tensions, is confident that God is in control and will be victorious in the end.❖

Editor's note: Tina Tolbert stepped in to carry the torch for Tanya during her illness. It was a miracle for Tina to be able to go. Most missionaries take months or years to prepare for their departure to the mission field. She had to get ready to leave in a month's time, which meant she left without enough money in her account for her support. Please pray for Tina as she adjusts to life in Côte d'Ivoire and that she will finish the semester with her account in the black.

Tanya Hart went to Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire in the fall of 1995 to teach missionary kids at ICA. She is now on medical leave in Ayden, NC. Continue praying for her health and future ministry.

A graphic featuring a dark, oval shape with a string tied around it, resembling a gift tag. The text "A gift designed to last" is written in a white, elegant script font across the oval.

*A gift
designed to last*

Honor a loved one with a
gift of remembrance
to the

WNAC *Endowment* *Fund*

Donations may be made in memory of or in honor of a loved one. The names of person honored and the donor will be entered in the Book of Remembrance on display at the WNAC office. Notification cards will be sent to confirm your gift.

For information call or write:

WNAC
P.O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002



MISSION ALERT:

Evangelism News from Around the World

Loconia, NH

Joel and Hope Nason rejoice as they help Tony and Wendy take their first steps in Christ. This couple had been searching for the truth concerning life and salvation for several months. Wendy made a phone call as the result of an advertisement in the paper. The call brought Nason to their home. "At about 12:30 in the morning they came to the realization that they needed to receive Christ and be forgiven," writes Nason about their salvation in December of 1995. He continues, "There is no better Christmas present in the world than to be used by God to bring more souls into His kingdom." Both were scheduled to be baptized on January 28.

Madison, MS

Mississippi FWB's have provided the new work in Madison with a building and more than three acres of property. According to Home Missionary, Ken Bozeman, the Madison/Ridgeland/North Jackson area is the fastest growing in the state. Services at Harvest FWB Church began in October 1995. Three families had been praying for a church in the area for some time. Since then, the Bozemans have been working hard to spread the word about the new church. Several visitors have come to services.

Chandler, AZ

Joey Bilbrey, a newly ordained young man, has been approved by the Home Missions Board as a Tentmaker Missionary to Chandler, AZ. This work has new (rental) meeting facilities as well as a new name—Grace Free Will Baptist Mission. Rev. Larry Reynolds started this church in 1989.

Fredericton, Canada

Newly appointed Home Missionary, Jeff Crabtree, shares that he has had a burden for Canada for several years. At the 1995 National Association, God

dealt with Jeff and Donna, his wife, about moving to Canada to plant a church. The Lord has led this family of four to Fredericton, located in New Brunswick. Crabtree reports that there are few churches of any kind in this city and no FWB church. Because of schooling for their sons, Benjamin (16) and Eric (14), they want to move to Fredericton no later than July 1996. They need your prayers as they raise support.

Appimadoum, Côte d'Ivoire

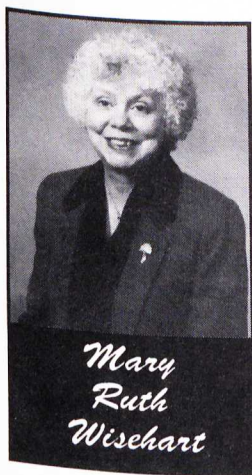
Jalayn Martens praises God for 24 people who were saved recently in the village of Appimadoum. The youth at Bondoukou conducted a three-day camp in the village and held an evangelistic campaign on the last night. Among those saved was a girl in her twenties who was a fetisher. Jalayn asks for prayer that the Lord will guide as she follows-up with her.

Camdenton, MO

Eddie and LaRhonda Bowerman are currently studying language and linguistics in Missouri. This is part of their preparation to minister with the Cuna Indians in Panama. They will have deputational services in Arkansas during their school break this summer. At the end of the year, they are scheduled to start language school in Costa Rica.

Ukraine/Russia/Japan

Leroy and Fay Forlines have been teaching at various Baptist seminaries and Bible colleges since the beginning of February 1996. Mr. Forlines is specifically teaching the modified Arminian position of perseverance. This is at the request of Russian and Ukrainian Baptists who are "free will" in doctrine as are Free Will Baptists. Pray for their continued safety, health, and spiritual stamina as they travel and minister to their students. They are scheduled to return to the United States in July of this year. ❖



Words for Women

Risk! Recently a friend handed me a card with this message. "You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

I wonder if we are willing to lose sight of the shore for the sake of Christ?

Jesus once said to His disciples, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Simon Peter objected. After all they were tired. They had fished all night and not caught a single fish. Half heartedly, Peter agreed to do it since Jesus asked it.

The disciples were overwhelmed by the catch. So will we be if we are willing to launch out for Jesus Christ.

Oh, it's going to be risky. We'll not always have smooth sailing.

It's risky to love, isn't it? For the beloved may hurt us, turn from us, even turn on us. The loved one may be taken away from us by distance or death. But God says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love."

It's risky to reach out to a homeless person on the street. What do we know about these people? How do we know that they will not take advantage of us?

It's risky to surrender completely to the Lord and say, "I'll go wherever you want me to go; I'll do whatever you want me to do."

Bill Leonard wrote a book called *Risk the Journey*. In it he writes, "This journey is an adventure as well as a responsibility. It is also a risk, since none of us can ever know what lies ahead."

Are we willing to take the risk?

Along the way there are lots of adventures. I can hardly believe it! A shy little girl from the foothills of the Ozarks has the opportunity to fellowship with Christian women across the country and even visit sisters in Cuba, Panama, Brazil, Uruguay, and Africa.

It all began when I said as a teenager, "Lord, I want your will for my life from this point forward." I admitted at the time that I might not always act as though I wanted His will. I might sometimes rebel and resist. "But really, Lord," I said, "I do want your will and I know it will always be best for me." How wonderfully He has led and provided for me through the years.

We used to sing a song, "Launch out into the deep, O let the shoreline go."

Adventures await those who are willing to leave the shore behind and launch out on the love and provision of God. ❖



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carole@fwbfm.mhs.compuserve.com



WNAC National Convention

61st Annual Session

Fort Worth, Texas

July 22-23, 1996

Theme: Hold the Light High

Fellowship Dinner Speaker: Marcia Ellison

Tuesday Morning / July 23

9:00 Women Nationally Active for Christ

Presiding: Everyl Getz

Congregational Singing

Devotion: Marie Hanna

Special Music: Nancy Copeland

Welcome: Brenda Doffing

Creative Arts Awards: Suzanne Franks

Credentials Committee Report / Seating of Delegates

Executive Secretary-Treasurer's Report: Mary R. Wischart

Resolutions Committee Report

Appreciation Committee Report

11:10 Missionary Service

Congregational Singing

Offering

Music: Elaine Holland

Message: Carlisle Hanna

Tuesday Afternoon / July 23

1:30 Congregational Singing

Music: Terry and Ramona Van Winkle

Registration Committee Report

Special Feature: Marjorie Workman and Susan Turnbough

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