

COLLABORER

November • December 2004

AMAZING MAIZE

can
you
hear
the bells?

Hospitality With a Heart

A Time
to Pray

50 Years
and Still
Pioneering
PRETHANKSGIVING
WEEK OF PRAYER

holiday expectations

WOMEN NATIONALLY ACTIVE FOR CHRIST

Labor of my heart



Sarah Fletcher

UNEXPECTED

How could we have been so careless, and on Christmas Eve? We'd been out last-minute shopping, excited about Going Out of Business Sale finds at a toy store. Our joy quickly changed to stress as we discovered we were locked out of our house. With baby blanket tied around his face toward the blustery below-zero temp, my husband proceeded to break in. After an hour of crying baby, shivering bodies and shimmying a venetian blind in a door, we found our way inside. An unexpected bother.

The following holiday season, an unexpected phone call brought the grave news that two college classmates had perished in a fire at the parsonage we'd vacated just months before. The very house we'd struggled to enter, they'd unsuccessfully struggled to exit. An unexpected tragedy.

Holidays are filled with great expectations. Yet, they are often laced with the unexpected. No matter how much we purpose, plan or prepare, things happen. Something goes awry. A soldier dad gets deployed. A loved one passes into eternity. A job terminates. A doctor's report reveals an incurable illness. Though these sorts of things happen year-round, they especially bear heavy upon us during holidays. What do we do with the unexpected?

We seek good company. When the Mayflower landed in Massachusetts instead of Virginia, Pilgrim fathers faced a multiplicity of trials and heartaches. In the midst the bleakness, they found an unexpected friend who helped them survive. Friends make holiday griefs and glitches bearable. *"A friend loveth at all times,"* Proverbs declares.

We rely on God's sovereignty. Knowledge that every unexpected event is known and preordained by the One who loves us most, lends hope and meaning. Mary and Joseph experienced the unexpected when they entered Bethlehem. They planned for an inn; they got a dank, hillside cave. Today we recreate and celebrate this stable scene that brought Hope to the whole world.

We rest in His promises. Holiday rest may seem an oxymoron. Yet, when unexpected and holidays coincide, rest becomes a dear friend. Physical rest may be rare, but spiritual rest is always available. Jesus said, *"Come to Me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* Sometimes a minute vacation, even a thirty-second reflection upon a Scripture refreshes and revives us. It doesn't hurt to prepare. Select a few encouraging verses. Write them down. When the unexpected hits, quiet your mind and rest your soul with the Word.

We look for the blessing. Romans 8:28 reminds us that *"all things work together for good"* in the life of God's followers. One of my most blessed memories earmarked a holiday sorrow. A dear friend's funeral fell on Thanksgiving Day. I'll never forget the praise, the rendition of "Give Thanks," and the tearful reassurances that her homegoing truly was a cause for thanksgiving.

Not all unexpected is sad. Sometimes God showers us with unexpected blessings and arranges divine appointments. God brought two unsaved Japanese into our home one Christmas. This past Easter, He transformed our family feast into an international delight. Unexpected holiday joys balance the hurts and renew our great expectations.

Unexpected guests included John Weaver, Tracy Jennette, and Korean students, So Yeon Moon and Hee Jeong.



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**GREAT
EXPECTATIONS
BABIES
ARRIVE**

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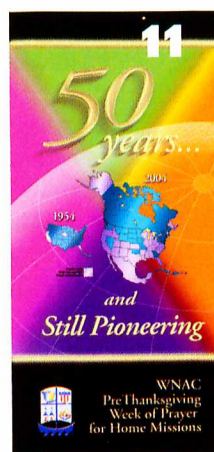
*Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.

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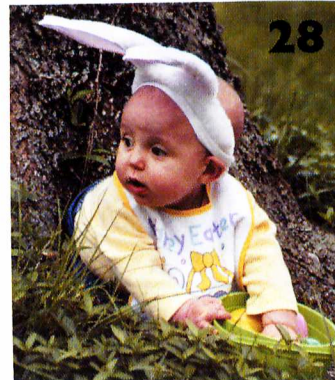
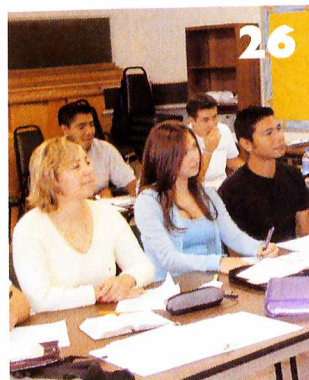


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amazing maize

by Debbie Burden

Not many things taste better to me than a pan of steaming, hot cornbread fresh from the oven. Serve that up, along with a pot of brown beans and a skillet of fried potatoes, and you'll have a meal fit for a king, or at least mighty tasty to this Oklahoma girl. Corn and cornmeal. How interesting that the number one U.S.A. crop and a staple in most American pantries, were not really liked by the first European settlers in this country.

When Columbus discovered America, maize or corn ranked the Indians' most important food. Although Columbus found no gold, silver, precious stones or spices, he did find a plant so valued that it's been called the Native Americans' gift to civilization. Corn held such importance in the American Indians' way of life; they almost worshiped it. If the corn crop failed, it meant hungry Indians. For this reason, many tribes called on their gods to bless the corn at planting time and offered thanksgiving to their gods at harvest time.

Curious about the origin of maize, those first Americans posed many theories about how the first corn came to earth. One story suggested that a crow brought the first grain in its ear. Because of this belief, some tribes would let a flock of crows eat a whole patch of corn rather than kill a single bird. Corn made such a difference in the life of the Indians. Those who learned to grow corn left their nomadic life of hunting and fishing for a more settled life of farming.

Without the help of these first farmers, the early colonists would have faced an even more difficult settlement in America. The seeds they brought with them from Europe would not grow. Had the Indian Squanto not come to their aid, there probably would have been no Thanksgiving dinner in Plymouth that first fall because there would have been no crop.

Squanto taught the Pilgrims how to plant and cultivate corn and how to put fish into the soil to make the plants grow better. If the Indians had not shown them how to plant corn, our forefathers would have starved that first year in America.

Corn was not grown in Europe. The settlers knew nothing of the food's goodness. Ironically, though not the food the colonists would have chosen for themselves, corn turned out to be a lifesaver.

As we reflect on that first "thanksgiving" we should be reminded of another lifesaver. Like those Native Americans who held the seed that would enable the Pilgrims to make it in the New World, those of us who have accepted Christ hold the secret to living successfully in a difficult world. Are we doing all we can to share the Bread of Life with those who are spiritually starving? Are we ourselves just barely surviving?

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Mark 4:26-28

"The pastures are clothed with flock; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing."

Psalm 65:13

"They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine:"

Hosea 14:7a

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

John 12:24

In John 12:24 Jesus said, *"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."* What a revealing illustration the Lord used to describe what was about to happen in His own life. One of the first science lessons most of us learned in school was the process of germination. A seed must be planted in the soil and literally die out before it can come alive and sprout a living plant. So it was with the death and resurrection of Christ. Commentator Matthew Henry explains it this way:

Christ would have never been the living quickening head and root of the church if he had not descended from heaven to this accursed earth and ascended from earth to the accursed tree, and so accomplished our redemption. He must pour out his soul unto death. He *fell to the ground* in His incarnation; but this was not all; *he died*. He lay in the grave like seed under the clods; but as the seed comes up again green, and fresh, and flourishing, and with a great increase, so one dying Christ gathered to himself thousands of living Christians. The salvation of souls hitherto, and henceforward to the end of time, is all owing to the dying of this *corn of wheat*.

We have the good news of this gospel and we are instructed to go forth bearing our precious seed. Squanto shared his knowledge of cultivating corn with the Pilgrims. We have a much greater responsibility to share our knowledge of Jesus with a hungry world. Will everyone receive it gladly? No. Even as many peoples of the world today refuse to eat corn, considering it food fit only for animals, some will also despise and reject the One who can give them life and give it more abundantly. Paul said that the preaching of the cross would seem foolishness to some but to those who believe it is the power of God. Some *will "taste and see that the Lord is good."* His Word promises that if we sow in tears we shall *"doubtless come again with rejoicing"* bringing our sheaves with us.

Not only is the Word a lifesaver to the lost, it is also the life sustainer for the Christian. Why are we sometimes content to exist on minimum rations or what someone else may dole out to us when we can feast on manna from heaven every day? Our spiritual success is dependent upon a regular diet of the Word. We are encouraged to *"search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life."* (John 5:39) Jesus truly is the *"bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die."*

This Thanksgiving as you indulge in the turkey and all its trimmings, the corn or cornbread dressing, pause and give thanks for that precious *"grain of corn which fell from heaven, died for us and rose again"* to purchase our salvation. He really is Amazing Maize.

Debbie Burden, Nashville, TN, is the wife of FWB Executive Secretary Keith Burden. A former pastor's wife, Debbie enjoys singing in the church choir, cooking, entertaining, and collecting flow-blue china. Debbie's gifts are evident in her article, *"Hospitality with a Heart"* (page nine). Debbie is the mother of two girls and grandmother of two boys.





First Thanksgiving Trivia

1. Which U.S. president declared that the last Thursday of each November would be the day of national thanksgiving?
2. What was the name of the ship that brought the Pilgrims to the New World?
3. What year did the Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock?
4. What did the women do the first Monday after they landed?
5. What famous document drawn up by the Pilgrims before they landed greatly influenced the type of government we have today?
6. Knives, spoons or forks. Which one was missing from the Pilgrims' dinner table?
7. What famous early American thought that the turkey (not the bald eagle) should be our nation's emblem?
8. What was the name of the Indian that Chief Massasoit introduced to the Pilgrims, who then lived with the Pilgrims until he died?
9. What were this Indian's special instructions to the Pilgrims on how to plant corn?
10. How many Indians came to celebrate the Pilgrim's first Thanksgiving dinner?

ANSWERS: 1. Abraham Lincoln (in 1864). 2. Mayflower. 3. 1620. 4. Laundry. 5. The Mayflower Compact. 6. Forks. (The first mention of forks was in Virginia in an inventory list in 1677.) 7. Benjamin Franklin. 8. Squanto. 9. Place fish along with the seeds into the soil. 10. About 90, plus the 50 Pilgrims who'd survived the first winter.

THANKSGIVING is my favorite holiday. It's all about praise and thanks to God. I was delighted when my mother, Elizabeth (Dixon) Bloomer discovered that we are descendants of the Mayflower Pilgrim William Bradford. Governor Bradford's official proclamation of a day of thanksgiving contains five references to God. President George Washington included fifteen references to God in his first Thanksgiving Proclamation of October 3, 1789. Both these documents indicate that our thanks should be directed to God. This hymn says it well:

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD, WITH HEART AND HANDS AND VOICES,
WHO WONDROUS THINGS HATH DONE, IN WHOM HIS WORLD REJOICES.
WHO FROM OUR MOTHERS' ARMS, HATH BLESSED US ON OUR WAY
WITH COUNTLESS GIFTS OF LOVE, AND STILL IS OURS TODAY.

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD
BY MARTIN RINKART AND JOHANN CRUGER.

Cheryl Chamberlin and her husband of thirty years, Dennis, are charter members of Three Rivers FWB Church in Cranberry, PA, (formerly a Home Mission church.) The Chamberlins have three grown sons and one daughter, Betsy Anne, a junior at FWBBC.



OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION

Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and had made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from the pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; now I your magistrate, do proclaim that all Pilgrims, with your wives and little ones, do gather at the meeting house on the hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November the 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty three, and the third year since Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to the pastor and render thanksgiving to Almighty God for all His blessings.

William Bradford



HOSPITALITY *with* a HEART

From the 2004 WNAC Convention
Monday Seminar, "HGTV-WNAC."



GOURMET COOK TO FROZEN AISLE QUEEN, GOD'S WORD INSTRUCTS ALL OF US TO PRACTICE HOSPITALITY. THE HOLIDAYS OFFER NATURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARING HOME AND FOOD WITH OTHERS.

THE ART OF HOSPITALITY comes naturally to some women. To others, even the thought of having people over for dinner sends them into a state of panic. How can we *"use hospitality one to another without grudging"* (1 Peter 4:9)?

HOSPITALITY VS. ENTERTAINMENT

First, we need to qualify the term. Christian hospitality is something quite different from social entertaining. Entertaining focuses on the hostess—the home must be spotless, the food must be perfectly prepared and abundant, the hostess must appear to be relaxed and good natured. Hospitality, on the other hand, focuses on guests. Their needs—whether it's a place to stay, nourishing food, or maybe just a listening ear—are the primary concerns.

The act of hospitality is the outgrowth of an attitude of the heart. It does not seek to impress, but to serve. Though people of hospitality may derive pleasure from giving, loving and serving, they do so without thought of reward.

BIBLICAL BASIS OF HOSPITALITY

The biblical list of ministry qualifications includes, *"given to hospitali-*

ty." "Whew," you may be thinking, "That let's me off the hook. I'll leave this up to the pastor's wife." Not so quick. Actually, the Bible is full of examples and admonitions for all Christians concerning hospitality.

Much of Jesus' ministry was home-centered. On more than twenty occasions, Jesus participated in a meal or told a parable related to a mealtime experience. In fact, one writer has quipped that Jesus threw the first "dinner on the grounds" party when He invited more than 5,000 to stay for lunch.

Paul instructed the church in Rome to share with God's people and practice hospitality. Abigail's act of hospitality prevented bloodshed; Lydia's hospitality proved instrumental in spreading of the gospel, opening up an entire new continent. Yet, probably the most compelling reason why we should share with others and receive them into our homes comes from our Lord. In Matthew 10, Jesus said, *"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me... And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I*

tell you the truth he will certainly not lose his reward.

Obedience to the Lord in every area of our life includes exercising this Christlike virtue and reaching out to others.

IF YOU COULD ONLY SEE MY HOUSE...

"If you could only see my house, you would understand why I don't have people over." It's easy to fall into this thinking trap. We'll have people over when we get a new sofa or new curtains or after we do spring cleaning, and on and on and on. Often delaying, we ultimately never get around to doing it. We need to remember that guests come to see people, not houses.

While a nicely decorated house is not a prerequisite for inviting guests, before we can be hospitable, we need to feel at home where we live. It stands to reason if we feel comfortable in our home, we'll be more likely to open it to others. But don't wait until everything is perfect to issue that invitation. Go ahead.

WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?

Who should be on the guest list? Start with the obvious. Invite family or close friends. Include your

TAKING THE LUCK OUT OF POTLUCK

Where would the church be today without covered dish dinners? Yet these wonderful gatherings don't just happen. Follow these tips to ensure a good-time-had-by-all.

1. Every church needs an organizer. Appoint one.
2. Give people choices, but create a workable system for bringing foods. (Names A-F bring a main dish, G-L salads, etc., then rotate. Post a signup list by category. Consider a Pick-up or Pay List for the domestically challenged.)
3. Divide the work: set-up, decorating, serving, clean-up.
4. Consider these easy centerpieces: fresh flowers, stacked or staggered Bibles, hymnals, or Sunday school books, candles.
5. Collect crockpots, warmers, and coolers to keep foods at proper temperatures.
6. Make sure serving line will flow (food, drinks, desserts). If possible, set up multiple lines.
7. Cover the clean-up. Set out trash cans, dishpans for liquids, and containers for recyclables.

children's friends. Just set an extra plate. How long has it been since you've invited the pastor and his family over for dinner? Visiting ministers or missionaries? Widows and widowers in your congregation? The woman in your church who's going through a painful divorce and just needs some encouragement? College kids who'd love a home-cooked meal? And what about the Bible verse concerning entertaining strangers? While we should use discernment when bringing unknowns into our home, have we prayerfully considered whom the Lord would have us invite?

Erwin Lutzer writes, "Hospitality is a test for godliness because those who are selfish do not like strangers (especially needy ones) to intrude upon their private lives. They prefer their own friends who share their lifestyle."

Practice hospitality with international students. If you live in or near a college town, God has brought this mission field to your doorstep. Of those thousands of students who come to the USA to study, 80% of them never see the inside of an American home. And they would love to. What an open door of opportunity!

THE FAMILY TABLE

Consider the significance of mealtime. The dinner table is traditionally the symbol of togetherness. It's the place where we eat,

talk, relax, and enjoy the company of those we love. There's something special, warm and wonderful about taking a meal together.

WHAT'S COOKING?

Our guest list completed, now what will we serve? Menu planning and meal preparation may seem intimidating to a novice. But it doesn't have to be. Lifestyles have changed so much in the last twenty years. Involved and on the go, we just can't do everything like our moms and grandmothers. Still, there are ways to put a tasty meal on the table in less time than you may think.

Practice. If you feel you are not a good cook, don't despair. Choose five or six good recipes. Practice until you are confident making them. Hospitality doesn't require a huge repertoire of menus. Decide on something you really like and make it your specialty!

Plan. Think through the preparation and cooking process. This can save minutes, even hours of work when dinnertime comes. Use common sense. Keep it simple. If your main dish requires considerable time and effort, choose easy-to-fix sides and dessert.

Prepare. Do as much as possible beforehand. Most casseroles and many salads or desserts can be assembled ahead of time, even frozen. Keep an item or two on hand, ready to take out and bake as needed. This eliminates the frantic running around the kitchen at the last minute and curtails dirtying up every pot and pan in the house. Use a crockpot. And don't feel guilty if you take advantage of time-saving convenience foods.

Presentation. If you've gone to the trouble to cook a nice meal, why not make a nice presentation? Let your meal appeal to all the senses. Not only should a dinner delight our taste, but also tantalize our senses of smell, touch and sight. Pop in a CD for soft background music, allowing ears to also get in on the good times.

SET THE MOOD, SET THE TABLE

Table settings go a long way in creating the right atmosphere for your dinner. Adding a few special touches to your table communicates to your guests that you think they are special—they are worth the effort.

Is your china or silver gathering dust in a china cabinet? Bring them out occasionally. Use those cloth napkins you've stored in the drawer.

No china? No silver? No worry. Something as simple as a plain, white dinner plate is appropriate for almost any kind of dinner. Dress it up or down as you would a basic, black dress. Inexpensive stemware is also a good investment.

Set the mood with candles. They're inexpensive and effective. Votives, tapers, pillars, floating—the possibilities are endless. And nothing is more romantic than a candlelight dinner.

"Hospitality can be as simple as chicken salad and chocolate covered raisins. I dropped in on a friend who was having an early lunch. She offered me what she had—a chicken salad sandwich and chocolate covered raisins. That simple lunch was one of my most memorable and enjoyable. It taught me that hospitality doesn't have to be fancy, elaborate, or gourmet."

—Anne Worthington, NC

"Expecting a close friend for a visit? Look through pictures of previous times together, choose a fun one of you both and place in a cutesy frame. Place in her room with a warm welcome note along with body wash and lotion."

—Carolyn Dwyer, NC

"One of the nicest hostess gifts I have received was a beautiful beaded Christmas ornament. When I bring it out each year, I remember the person who gave it to us and thank the Lord for them."

—Penny Turner, OK

"Here in New Brunswick, you offer a cup of hot tea or something cool to drink along with a cookie or some type of sweet. This shows the guest that you are glad they came for a visit and they are welcome to stay for awhile."

—Donna Crabtree, NB, CA

A \$1.00 White Plate

SAY THE BLESSING, RECEIVE A BLESSING

Truly, the ministry of hospitality begins in the heart. Yet it is not a ministry where we continually give and get nothing in return. Our guests are blessed, but so are we. We are blessed just in knowing we are following the example of Christ. Our lives are richer because of conversations and time spent with other people. Guests also enrich the lives of our children.

Like most Free Will Baptist pastors of my parents' generation, my father and mother had very little money when I was growing up. Because they practiced hospitality, I now own precious memories of sitting down to dinner with Pop Willey, Miss Laura Belle Barnard, Archie Mayhew and many other outstanding men and women of God. On Sunday nights after service, church people would come to our house for fellowship over cheese and salami and crackers.

From my folks I learned the importance of opening our home to down-and-outers, wayward teenagers, lonely servicemen, or folks passing through town who needed a place to stay. We children thought it was fun to sleep on pallets when we ran out of beds. These early life-lessons have held me in good stead all these years as I've sought to open my heart and our home for encouragement of saints and evangelization of sinners.

What a blessing to now see my own children following this path, To hear that my married daughter gave away her Mother's Day pizza dinner to a hungry couple who knocked on their door. When we share in this way, we receive much more than we could ever give.

Practicing hospitality blesses our guests; it blesses us; it blesses our children. Most importantly, it blesses the Lord. When we extend hospitality to others, it's as though we do it for Jesus himself. That's definitely hospitality with a heart.

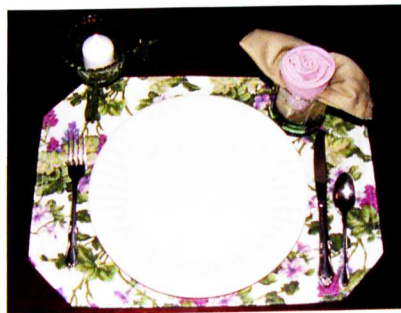
Casual. Formal. Children's party. Women's tea. Start with a simple white plate. Add these accents or some of your own. The possibilities are endless.



Lace scarf and napkins of white cotton and blue gingham add elegance to this tea setting. Blue and white accessories in various patterns lend a cozy warm appeal.



Teacher appreciation or harvest home, this warm setting uses real carved apple candle holders, plaid fabric and accent color salad plate. A sprig of fall flowers finishes the contrasting double napkins.



Brunch or Sunday dinner, this setting adds beauty to your table. White plate mutes the bright floral placemat. Pink and green napkins are rolled and folded inside glass to create a rose. Candle holder is common green glassware.



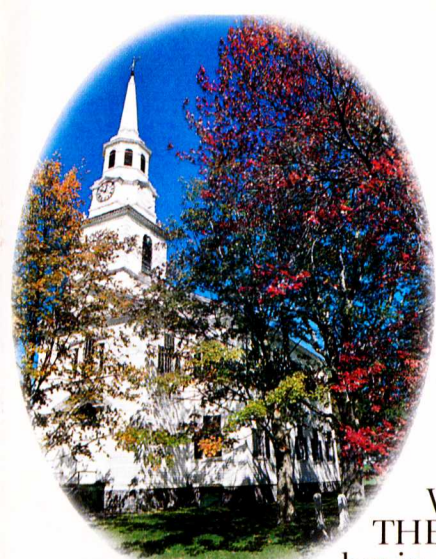
Perfect for holiday or a romantic evening. Votive sits on a mirror tile. Charger plate and tableware add a golden touch. White pillar candle makes an elegant centerpiece.



Head 'em up and move 'em out with red gingham and blue denim. Checkered melamine salad plate, mason jar, boot candle and bandana napkin tied with rope complement the western theme.



Perfect for a children's picnic or summer birthday. White plate sits on rubber weave placemat. Salad plate is inexpensive melamine. A bold blossom adorns the bright plaid napkin. Bubbles, sunglasses and a sipping straw parasol make for fun.



Autumn means

A Time to Pray

by Carla Pollard

W H E N
THE LEAVES
begin to turn
and crisp winds
begin to blow, Good News
Free Will Baptist Church in
Chesterfield, Virginia, begins
to prepare for more than the
Thanksgiving holiday. We
know it's time to get our
hearts, minds and spirits
ready for our annual prayer
revival.

Over the last eight years, our
pastor, Rev. Glen Johnson, has set
aside ten days in November for us
to enter into supplication, interces-
sion, and thanksgiving. During this
ten-day period, we endeavor to live
as close to Christ as possible. The
intent is that this practice will carry
over into our everyday lives, well
beyond the prayer revival.

Each year we are given an oppor-
tunity to enter into a voluntary
covenant with God, laying aside
those worldly distractions that
would keep us from focusing on
Him. No one knows who has
entered into this covenant or who
has not; it remains solely between
the individual and his Lord.

Preparation begins months in
advance as we pray and ask God to
lay on our hearts the names of at
least seven souls who need to be
saved. We call this list of friends
and loved ones our *Seven for
Heaven* list. During this time, we
pray and fast for lost loved ones,
for our missionaries, and for many
other pressing needs. We gather
pictures of our friends and family
to include in a PowerPoint presen-
tation—a reminder to us of the

many souls who need the Lord. We
are encouraged to pray over each
soul.

We've sought for souls, and God
has given us souls. Many have
accepted Christ as personal Savior
during our revivals. The first year,
nineteen souls prayed to receive the
Lord. Of those nineteen, fourteen
were baptized. Over the past eight
years, we've seen visitors come,
pray and become active members
of our congregation.

The theme for this past year's
revival was *Abiding in Him*. Jesus
said in John 15:7, "*If ye abide in me,
and my words abide in you, ye shall
ask what ye will, and it shall be done
unto you.*"

On the opening Sunday, Rev.
Johnson urged us to call upon
God. "We are living in crisis times
as in the days of Noah or Sodom
and Gomorrah." He went on to say
that in these crisis times, we need
to passionately cry out to God. In
the evening service, Rev. Johnson
called all the men of the church
together, and they spent time cry-
ing out to God in prayer.

When Pastor Johnson went to
the airport to pick up a visiting
minister, he stopped and spoke
with a security officer about Jesus.
Before the conversation ended, the
officer prayed to receive Christ.
Other decisions were also evi-
denced. One member's brother
and another's sister both came to
know the Lord.

During the day we attended cot-
tage prayer meetings. Members of
the congregation opened their
homes for people to meet together
and pray. Over sixteen separate cot-

tage prayer meetings were held
in addition to the evening
prayer services.

On the last Sunday of our prayer
revival, God did a special work. The
minister was moved to read one
passage of Scripture. "*Confess your
faults one to another, and pray one for
another, that ye may be healed*"
(James 5:16). Spontaneously,
members of the congregation,
many with tears, began to stand
and confess their faults and ask for
forgiveness. The sweet Holy Spirit
had His way in our hearts.

What a time of refreshing this
revival has become! Sometimes
our souls get dry and thirsty as we
walk this dusty earth. But God is
good; He meets us at our need.
When we set our hearts to seek
after Him, the refreshing waters of
the Holy Ghost begin to flow in
our souls once again.

While many churches hold effec-
tive revivals with guest speakers,
we've noted good success in our
prayer revivals. Saints are encour-
aged and uplifted; sinners are
repentant. We've experienced
growth in our Christian walk. Our
2003 revival proved no exception.
To God be the glory. We eagerly
anticipate what God will do in our
church this November through the
prayers of His people.

Carla Pollard serves as a Christian
Education Committee member and
heads up the Women's Prison Ministry
at Good News FWB
Church, Chesterfield,
VA. A freelance writer,
she holds a B.A. in
Philosophy and Religion.
Carla and her husband
reside in West Point, VA.



THURSDAY

One of those early 1954 missionaries established a Free Will Baptist church in Florida. Various works continue to flourish in that state, focused primarily on its large Hispanic population.

Churches all along the Eastern seaboard are catching the pioneering spirit as they seek to reach their growing Hispanic populations. The Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Bible Institute in South Carolina trains workers for this cause.

Free Will Baptist pioneers did not stop at the shore. They expanded their borders to include U. S. territories in the Caribbean. St. Croix, Virgin Islands is now home to a large Free Will Baptist church and Christian school with a growing multi-cultural ministry. A vital Hispanic ministry is also touching many lives for the Lord in Puerto Rico.

Pray today for missionaries, teachers and staff working in Eastern regions of North America.

FL: Andres and Nora Sancho
 NC: Fernando and Damaris Hernandez, Victor and Tanya Nafayuk,
 SC: Fernando and Reyna Bustamante, Gerardo and Maria Rodriguez, Todd and Teresa Smith,
 VA: Paul and Patricia Collins, Paul and Stephanie McKissick
 VI: Ken and Paula Dodson, Scott and Dawn Real
 PR: David and Connie Roy

FRIDAY

"Go West, young man." One young man, Rev. G. C. Lee, followed the call, beginning a work in Nebraska in 1954. Today's western ministry encompasses two large states, Texas and California, with its sizeable cross-cultural church network. Missionaries are presently planting churches in Arizona, Colorado, and Kansas. Pioneering continues in Utah, New Mexico and Idaho, home to a new Hispanic work.

Give thanks for these fifty years of expansion. Give glory to God for mission works-gone-self-supporting which are now pioneering other efforts. Today, pray for missionaries in these expansive yet sometimes isolated areas. Pray for West Coast cross-cultural ministries.

AZ: Paul and Deniece Hammons, Rick and Stephanie Morris, Jerry and Brenda Rayburn, Jason and Melissa Taylor

CA: Keith and Janet Bartlett, Jesus and Vilma DelAngel, Jose and Alicia Gonzalez, John and Esther Joo, Woo-Jong and Eun Sook Kang, Eun Ki and Young-Ae Kim, Seong Jin and Susan Kim, Hong Hyun and Myung Sook Lee, Vladimir and Anna Lopuga, Paul and Velina Park

NM: Mark and Khristi Shores

CO: Scott and Rebecca Cheatham, Dexter and Dennise Guin, Bob and Brenda Lewis, Roger and Sandra Raper

ID: Alfredo and Ruth Bottello

KS: Mark and Shelly Braisher

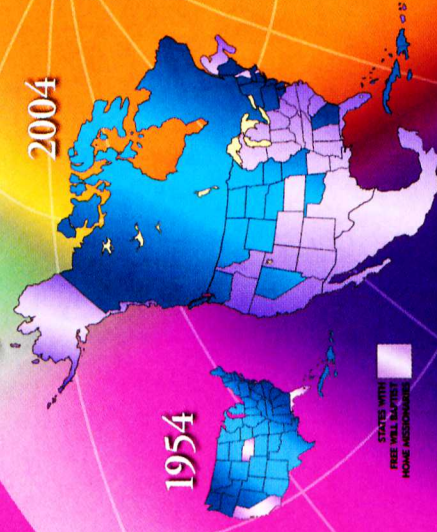
TX: Don and Sonya Bailey, Randy and Shelly Puckett, Jarvis and Kelly Reed

UT: Tim and Jessica Lewis

50 years...

2004

1954



EXETER WITH
 FREE WILL BAPTIST
 HOME ASSIGNMENT

and Still Pioneering



WNAC
 PreThanksgiving
 Week of Prayer
 for Home Missions

EAST

WEST

MONDAY

The first Home Mission Board in modern Free Will Baptist history was chosen in 1938. Its members included Rev. M. L. Hollis, Rev. J. K. Warkentin, Mrs. J. E. (Agnes) Frazier, Mrs. Lizzie McAdams, and Rev. George Dunbar. The reported budget for that first year totaled \$256. Work was limited to helping, in a small way, new churches organized by "tentmakers." In 1954, the first home missionaries were sent out with pay under the Home Mission Board. Board members fervently prayed and sought the Lord's leading as they began this pioneering work of planting churches in North America.

Over the past fifty years, Home Missions' emphasis on planting churches has grown. In 2003, total income for the department stood at \$4,181,871.89 with approximately sixty missionaries in church plants across North America. The department's ministry has expanded to include chaplaincies in all branches of military service and an ever-growing cross-cultural ministry. Current board members also seek the Lord's clear direction concerning future North American ministries.

Pray today for board members and the Home Missions staff.

BOARD: Jerry Atwell, Rev. Harold Blankenship, Rev. Loyd Locklear, Rev. Ron Parker, Rev. Jim Puckett, Rev. Bobby Shepherd, Rev. Bob Thebeau, Rev. Matt Upton, and Rev. Lynn Wood.

STAFF: Rev. Larry Powell, Dr. Richard Adams, Rev. David Crowe, Rev. Richard Atwood, Ida Lewis, Carolyn Adams, Kathy Brown, Sue Hayes, Janice Donoho, Iva Mae Bracey.

TUESDAY

Early church planter Rev. Lee Whaley pioneered into Alaska. Today, Free Will Baptist ministry continues in Fairbanks, Alaska, under the leadership of missionary Ron Wallace.

Many regions in the North remain uncharted for Free Will Baptists. Home missionaries currently serve in Oregon, Wisconsin, upper Michigan, Canada (New Brunswick), Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. Ironically, Free Will Baptist ministry in New Hampshire once flourished during the days of founding father Benjamin Randall.

Today, remember these works and workers in the North. Pray that God would give them open doors for sharing the gospel.

AK: Ron and Janice Wallace
OR: Eric and Tara Thompson
RI: Bill and Christy Reynolds
NH: Joel and Hope Nason
WI: Terry and Margaret Hardison, Mitchell and Lori Strickland, John and Cheryl Reed
MI: Greg and Lea Floars, Jeff and Charissa Isaacs
OH: Tim and Lori Byers
IL: David and Pam Portere
IN: James and Laura Caudill
WV: Nicholas and Esperanza Hernandez, Allen and Nancy Whitt, Russell and Kathy Wright
NB, CA: Jeff and Donna Crabtree

WEDNESDAY

Throughout the South, Free Will Baptist missionaries have planted works that are now growing, established, and self-supporting churches. Pioneering in this region continues as veteran missionary Rue Dell Smith charts a new work in Monroe, Louisiana.

As Free Will Baptists churches became more plentiful in the south, the Home Missions Department sensed a burden to go "south of the border." Mission works in Mexico began many years ago. Today, Mexican Free Will Baptists include a number of established churches and a seminary in Reynosa, equipping students for ministry within this large country.

Pray today for ministries in Louisiana and in Mexico. Pray specifically for Mexican seminary students. Pray that God would burden churches in the South to charter new works, especially among internationals now living in this region.

AL: Dennis and Judy Haygood, Fred and Barbara Jones, Wayne and Jeanette Wilson
KY: Rufo and Maria Gomez
TN: Frank and Brenda Bratcher, Cliff and Kathy Donoho, Clayton and Tammy Hampton, Shane and Lupita Wilson, Rick and Linda Bowling
AR: Jim and Kim Fairchild
LA: Rue Dell and Ozella Smith
MS: Gary and Jackie Elder
MX: Jerry and Julie Barron, Thomas and Wilma Marberry

DIRECTION

NORTH

SOUTH

can you hear the bells?

by Linda Simons

tHE LIBERTY BELL, proudly displayed in Philadelphia, reminds America of her freedom. Ohio's 2003 bicentennial bell project unified eighty-eight counties in celebration of two hundred years of statehood. Bells. Can you hear them? Calling children to class, warning of impending danger, ringing in the new year? Whenever bells ring they get our attention.

Through the years, that same attention has been summoned through ram's horns, sirens, thunder, dynamite, angels and even God's voice. Methods have changed but not the message. We still preach the good news of Jesus Christ in song, in pageant, in word, and in deed.

When Isaiah and the other prophets proclaimed the message of God, they pointed to a coming Messiah. When ministers and Christians proclaim the message today, they point to the second coming of Christ. Warning signs and sounds accompanied each Biblical event. Today we see the signs as well, and soon we will hear the trump of God.

Isaiah's book is full of prophecies concerning the coming of Christ. One verse, Isaiah 9:6, richly resounds the Savior.

hope

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given..." When Isaiah spoke this prophecy, a bell of hope sounded for all the Jews. For the next four hundred years, these words rang in the ears of Israelites. The world waited and clung to a single ray of hope that one day a Messiah would come and free them from their oppression. Then, one glorious day He came!

In the middle of the night, angels appeared to the shepherds and announced, *"Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2:11). Excited shepherds ran to Bethlehem to see this new born King. There they worshiped Him.

Two thousand years later, we are waiting for the bell of hope to sound again. But this time we won't run to Him; He's coming for us! *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Oh what a blessed thought to be with Him forever. Are

you *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;"* (Titus 2:13)? He could split that eastern sky at any moment as the bell of hope continues to ring.

authority

"And the government shall be upon His shoulder..."

Some Jews believed the One born in Bethlehem was the earthly King they anticipated. They expected Him to overthrow the Roman government and bring peace to the land; instead, He brought peace to the human heart.

From the time He was born, His authority was challenged. One day the chief priests asked Him, *"By what authority doest Thou these things?"* Sadly, they recognized His power but not the One behind the power.

He exercised authority over the calamities of nature. Contrary winds and boisterous seas raged around the tiny boat on the Sea of Galilee, but at His command, the wind and the sea became calm. He also has the authority to calm the turmoil in our souls because it is He who made us. Soon the One who created the universe with great authority will call us home.

He told John the Revelator, *"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death"* (Revelation 1:8). It is He who holds tomorrow in His hand. One day we shall see Him as He is—in all His glory and splendor. *"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:"* (Revelation 19:1). Can you hear the bell of authority ringing?

comfort

"...and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor..."

He is wonderful because He has redeemed us from death. *"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"* (1 Corinthians 15:55). He is the great Counselor and Comforter. Anna, the prophetess was comforted when she saw the redemption of Israel in her old age. She'd always believed God would allow her to see the Christ before she died. And He did.

Frightened fisherman in a storm on the Sea of Galilee, a crowd of hungry people, or a dying child, Jesus desired to comfort. How marvelous that He wants to comfort His people. His arms are always open. He longed to take Jerusalem in His arms, but they would not. They rejected His counsel, and later they rejected His Comforter. Still, one day He will come to reclaim Jerusalem, and they will eagerly accept His arms of comfort.

However, we don't have to wait until then. We can be comforted now. Whether we're weary, sad or

depressed, He's only a prayer away. *"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away,"* (Revelation 21:3-4). Can you hear the bell of comfort ringing in the background?

glory

"...the mighty God..."

Jeremiah 32:18 declares, *"...the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is his name."* Our mighty God designs to work miracles in the lives of His children. His power is displayed in the tiny bloom of a flower, in the force of an earthquake, in the gentleness of the clouds, and the beauty of a rainbow. But the greatest miracle of all is when He transforms a sinner into a child of God.

He is the mighty God who rules kingdoms, subdues the powers of evil, humbles the hearts of proud and boastful men; yet, He condescends to hear and answer the faintest cry. There is nothing too hard for Him.

When my youngest daughter April ran away at sixteen, I was devastated. She was gone for about six months. Fortunately she was only five hours away, and I would visit her once a month. In June of 1993, she returned home pregnant.

That November, we decided to go home to Ohio for Thanksgiving. While there, my mom contracted pneumonia and was hospitalized. On Sunday morning we were called to her bedside.

As we gathered around the hospital bed, she called my daughter's name twice. Tears rolled down April's face as she watched her grandmother take her last breath and realized she would never know what my mother had tried to say. For two years, Grandmother's voice rang in April's heart. Then one day, she came back to the Lord. She's now married to a Christian man, and they're serving the Lord together.

Are you amazed at what He can do? Have you seen the works of the Mighty God? One day the world will see His might works as He comes to earth to claim His own. Every eye shall see Him. We will praise Him with all the heavenly host, *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created"* (Revelation 4:11). His bell of glory is ringing. Do you hear it?

immortality

"...the everlasting Father..."

Not only did Christ come as a child, but Isaiah reminds us that a Son was given. He was given to us as a sacrifice. He came to redeem us. When He died on the cross and rose three days later, He became our Everlasting Father. As Adam is the father of our flesh, Christ is the father of our Spirit. All who have been born into God's family has access to the Everlasting Father. Aren't you glad we have a heavenly father who loves us so dearly?

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:" (Matthew 25:31). We shall see our heavenly Father as He is. How glorious that we shall spend an eternity with our everlasting Father! He won't leave or forsake us; He'll be with us forever. Praise the Lord. The bell of immortality is still ringing today; do you hear its call?

My earthly father died when I was nine, and I grew up not remembering his gentle arms around me nor the sound of his voice. How blessed I've been to have an Everlasting Father who cares for me. He has tenderly watched over me, held me when I was sad, and been my strength when I was weak. Oh, how I look forward to spending an eternity with One who loves me so much that He gave His only begotten Son just for me.

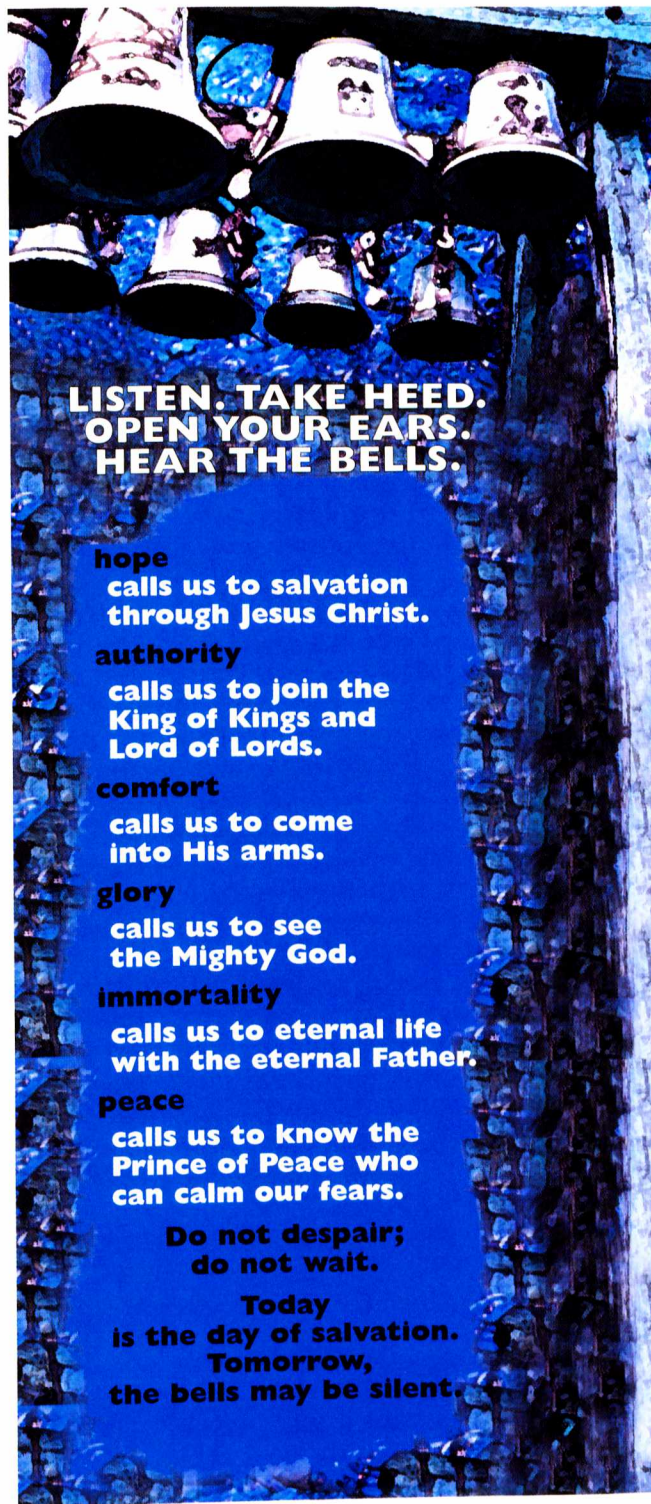
peace

"...the prince of peace"

Echoes of 9/11 rumble in the background as our world seeks for peace. We've searched in America, Africa, Russia, China, Japan, Europe, and the Middle East. We've climbed mountains, searched ocean floors, crossed deserts, and descended valleys, but peace still evades us. Experimentation in drugs, alcohol and sex, entertainment and pleasures of the world—none of these bring peace.

Yet, believers hear and know the answer—Jesus Christ. He said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"* (John 14:27). We can have peace in a troubled world. With the escalation of wars, terrorists threats and domestic problems, isn't it comforting to know that the Prince of Peace lives in our hearts?

Will we share this message with our world? As the last days approach, the thirst for peace will grow stronger. With that thirst will come the antichrist who will deceive. Peter reminds us, *"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless"* (2 Peter 3:14). How can we bring peace to the world if we deny the Prince of Peace?



**LISTEN. TAKE HEED.
OPEN YOUR EARS.
HEAR THE BELLS.**

hope
calls us to salvation
through Jesus Christ.

authority
calls us to join the
King of Kings and
Lord of Lords.

comfort
calls us to come
into His arms.

glory
calls us to see
the Mighty God.

immortality
calls us to eternal life
with the eternal Father.

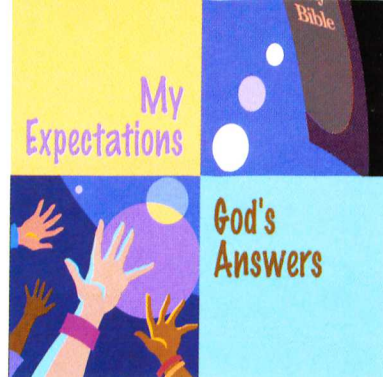
peace
calls us to know the
Prince of Peace who
can calm our fears.

**Do not despair;
do not wait.**

**Today
is the day of salvation.
Tomorrow,
the bells may be silent.**

Linda Simons serves as WAC Mission Prayer Chairman at Sherwood Forest FWB Church, New Bern, NC, where she also teaches an adult Sunday school class and writes for the church's monthly newsletter. She and her husband Richard have three grown children and seven grandchildren. When she's not working at her own cleaning business, Linda stays busy in Bible study and genealogy research.

God, Grant
My Wishes
and Fulfill
My Desires



Starry-eyed children. Wish lists. Hopes and dreams. Early morning anticipation. Unconstrained excitement. Christmas, of course. That wonderful time of the year when children believe anything is possible and everything attainable.

As a parent, I know each wish won't be granted, nor every desire fulfilled. It's just not possible and often not prudent to give them everything they ask. Parental wisdom dictates gifts with the child's best interest in mind—age, maturity, and safety must be considered.

It's tough being a parent. We want to give our children so many good gifts. Jesus said, *"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"* (Matthew 7:11).

Like children, we want what we shouldn't, and our wish lists contain what we may not be ready to receive. We beg, "Please, God, let me have this. Oh, God, I need...If only I had..." We wonder why God doesn't grant every wish. Right now.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). We can trust God to do what's best for us every time. He who is faithful loves us, cares for us, knows all about us, sees what we can't, and understands everything concerning us. We wait for the fulfillment of our hopes and desires in the knowledge that God will not withhold any good thing from us. In faith, we let Him define good.

It's easy to become discouraged when we've prayed and prayed, and it seems our prayers go unanswered. *"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick..."* (Proverbs 13:12a). But don't stop there. Look at the second half of the verse. *"...but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life"* (Proverbs. 13:12b). We hope in what we cannot see. We wait in faith for what is yet unknown.

Psalms 37:3-5, 7 offers instruction and promises. Trust Him. Delight in Him. Commit everything to Him. Rest in Him. Wait patiently. He will give you the desires of your heart. He will bring it to pass. He, who has promised, cannot lie (Titus 1:2).



Suzan Hutchison attends Mt. Gilead FWB Church, Brinson, GA, where her husband Tim serves as interim pastor. A gifted writer, Suzan has served as CoLaborer's guest columnist for 2004.

Mary's Thoughts

The pain of birth is past and gone,
As I behold my firstborn Son.
So small He is, and yet so dear,
I wipe away a joyful tear.

He sleeps: His tiny fists enclose
A tattered edge of swaddling clothes.
The manger filled with pungent hay,
The slight smell of cattle drifts slowly away.

A miracle, this Son of mine
So human: and yet so clearly divine:
Begotten of God to become a man,
The culmination of God's great plan.

But to me, He is just a baby boy,
A mother's pride; a mother's joy.
He's restless in his makeshift nest,
So I clasp Him snugly to my breast.

And as the hours move swiftly past,
I cherish each moment, to make it last,
Knowing that soon my helpless Son
Will face His task that must be done.

"His name will be Jesus," the angel said.
A Savior, the word fills me with dread.
For I know there must be a terrible cost
Involved in saving people who are lost.

The shepherds come from nearby hills,
Their simple story is full of thrills,
The angel of the Lord appeared,
Instilling trust, eschewing fear.

To tell good tidings of greatest joy
About my Son, my baby boy.
Savior was the angel's word.
"A Savior which is Christ the Lord."

He makes no sound as they come near,
Just stretches and yawns in lack of fear.
I watch them worship at His feet,
And ponder the mysteries of God so deep.

A God that could send His only Son,
Born of a woman: a lowly one.
My soul doth magnify the Lord,
My spirit rejoices in His word.

As I look down on His angelic face,
I'm thankful for God's great mercy and grace.
And whatever shadows tomorrow may come,
Today I rejoice in the birth of my Son.

"MARY'S THOUGHTS" BY JOAN WARREN

Joan Warren is president of First Mission District WAC (OK). A retired minister's wife, Joan teaches Sunday school at Oilton FWB Church and two weekly Bible studies. She and her husband John enjoy three children, nine grands and two greats.



Joseph's Themes

Though Joseph is rarely mentioned outside the context of the Nativity, his character speaks volumes. What can we learn from the character of Joseph? Consider these themes.

HIS EXAMPLE

Joseph's example shows us how to

MANAGE a difficult situation. (Matthew 1:18-25)

MOLD a powerful life. (Luke 2: 40, 51-52)

MODEL a spiritual walk. (Luke 2:41-42)

MASTER a life of humility. (Matthew 13:34-35)

MUSE over the working of God in a life. (Luke 2:49-50)

MAINTAIN a consistent relationship with God. (Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:39)

MAKE supreme sacrifices for the safety of family. (Matthew 2:13-23)

MEDITATE on the wonders of God Incarnate in the form of a child. (Luke 2:16-20, 48)

MINIMIZE self (Matthew 1:18-25)

MARVEL at the miracles of God (Luke 2:16-19; 46-50)

HIS ABILITY

God gave Joseph the ability to

BELIEVE the unbelievable.

SURRENDER to the impossible.

ACCEPT the inevitable.

God chose Joseph for a specific purpose. And God makes no mistakes. He knew Joseph would accept the responsibility of caring for His Son. He accepted God's intervention in his life. What God asked of him was not easy, but He knew God would enable him to do it. Would we do the same?

Excerpted from

"What Can We Learn from Joseph"

by Fran Tinsley

Fran Tinsley attends the First FWB Church, Richmond, VA.



by Freeda Lucas

I gathered the boxes from the closet and walked slowly to the living room. Kneeling before my stripped-bare Christmas tree which only hours earlier had housed angels, doves, and miniature creches, I stared sadly at the joy of Christmas, scattered forlornly on the carpet, waiting to be put away until another season.

I picked up two matching angels, gifts from my daughter, cradled them gently, straightened their halos, and placed them in their box. These were followed by a crystal angel, a gift from a fourth-grade student; a sphere-shaped nativity scene, also a gift from a student; and the tiny white doves, all treasures of happy times. One by one, each priceless piece, now in its own container, was placed into the larger box for storage.

After what seemed like hours, I rose, carried the box to the closet, put it on the shelf, and shut the door. But I could not shut out the images of Christmas that flooded my mind. Smiling clerks and friendly customers in store lines. Children waiting their turn to sit on Santa's lap. A packed church house for the Christmas play. The *oohs* and *ahs* while unwrapping gifts. The wonderful aroma of Christmas goodies. Love poured out to and from everyone.

What happens to this contagious spirit after Christmas? Christmas—when doors are opened by strangers, greetings flow like Christmas punch, and the smallest gift is received with the greatest pleasure. How can we put all this away in a box? After all, it is the birthday of our Savior, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Prince of Peace. In 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul admonishes us to "*Be instant in season, out of season.*" Though the symbols may be stored, let's labor to keep the spirit alive, floating, running, dancing in our hearts throughout every season.

Freeda Lucas lives in Cromona, KY. A retired school teacher, she serves as co-song leader for Haymond FWB Church. Freeda enjoys writing, gardening, and spending time alone with God.



Meet our babies on page 28



a baby? a grandbaby? Wishing, waiting, wondering. WNAC invites you to join the journey of two women. Experience the great expectations of a first-time mom and a soon-to-be grandmother as they journal through the months.

mother

August 26

My husband comes with me so he can help ask the doctor questions. When she mentioned C-section last week, I was too flabbergasted to say anything. I've had time to think about it now. If it's what is best, I will be all right with it. Still no progress. When the doctor says the baby is over 9 lbs., I'm thinking, "Uh oh." My options are a scheduled C-section or be induced with a 50% chance of having a C-section. I'm over to the hospital for another ultrasound to determine her size. The ultrasound shows the baby at 9 lbs. 11 ozs. Now I am in shock. I knew I was getting big, but I didn't expect her to be quite that big. We spend time back and forth on the phone with the doctor's office determining what to do. We decide the best option is a scheduled C-section. If she ends up not being that big, then next time we could try natural. The C-section is scheduled for my due date, Thursday, August 28, at 7:30 a.m. I begin calling family and friends, telling them the baby will arrive on Thursday. My family makes plans to come.

August 27

The doctor's office calls. A conflict at the hospital has my delivery rescheduled for Saturday morning. I'm back on the phone calling everyone about the change.

August 28

I'm up getting ready. Today will be a short day at work because I just don't feel like doing much, but I might as well accomplish what I can. Out of the shower, I answer the phone. It's the hospital, "Have you eaten?" I answer, "Uh, no!" "If you want, you can come in and have your C-section today at either 11:00 a.m. or 5:00 p.m." I ask if I can call back. Doesn't having a scheduled C-section mean planning and not having to wonder? I guess not. I call my family. If I go for 11:00 a.m., they won't get here until after the baby is born. But I don't think I want to go all day without eating. They say, "Go for it." I call the hospital and tell them I'll be there as soon as possible. I finish getting ready, start throwing things together and make more phone calls. I'm still making calls on my cell phone on the way to the hospital. I arrive a little late. I don't even have time to think that I am getting ready to have surgery. At least I got a good night's sleep. The nurses pretty much slap me down on the bed and start doing all the prep work. Two ladies from church come expecting to see the baby. I forgot to tell them about the date change. Instead of being a little late, they're a little early. At 11:00, I am in the operating room. They bring in my husband. A few minutes later we hear a cry, and there she is. The nurse holds her up above the curtain. (I didn't feel a thing except the bed moving.) They weigh her—9 lbs 11 ozs., 19 inches long. The ultrasound was right on target. Now I am really thinking we made the right decision. I don't remember too much after this. Later, I'm taken back to my room. After what seems a long time, they bring our baby. We have a beautiful baby girl, Chaney Elise Morris. She is pretty much perfect. We've lived with great expectations awaiting Chaney's arrival, but I think the "great expectations" are only beginning.

grandmother

Dear Autumn Reese Hicks,

I can't tell you what a joy it was to finally see your face. Your mom and dad were the only ones in the birthing room, but I was as close as I could be just outside the door in the hall. Your other grandma and I, your grandpas, your aunts, one uncle, and your pastor's wife were all out in the hall cheering you on. It was so funny. We were like waves coming in on the beach. Every time the doctor would tell your mom to push, we would put our ears up close to the door. Then the nurse would come out and we'd all jump back like we were behaving ourselves. We finally heard your little cry and we knew that you were here. Then we heard them say that you were a girl. A GIRL!

Your mommy was so sweet to let us hold you right after you arrived. All I could do was gaze at you with wonder and awe. You have your daddy's nose and your mommy's mouth. You have big hands and long toes from my side of the family. (I'm sorry.) I know that when others look at your picture, they just see any baby with chubby cheeks. But to me, you are so beautiful and precious. They try to "ooh" and "aah" appropriately, but it just doesn't seem to do you justice.

Autumn, you are so blessed to be born into a family with Christian parents who put the Lord first in their lives and will introduce you to Jesus. This is the greatest legacy that you could receive, because it's for eternity. God is so faithful. He answered my prayers. Your mommy had a perfect pregnancy and delivery.

I love you, Autumn. I want to always be there for you. I can't wait to hear you say...

Nana

Women Nationally Active for Christ invites you to Pursue His Heart at the 2005 National Retreat, March 3-5, in Branson, MO.

Missionary speakers, worship, drama and time alone with God will give you a renewed vision of God's heart for the world.

All sessions of this Thursday evening through Saturday morning event will be held at the beautiful Chateau on the Lake. Branson's only AAA four-diamond hotel, the Chateau offers comfort, convenience and excellent service.

Each room boasts real beds and a breathtaking view of either the hills or the lake.

Relax near the indoor waterfall. Chat with a friend at one of the many sitting areas. Explore the library.

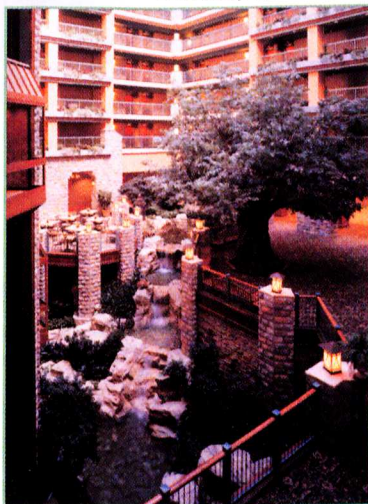
If you're inclined to shop, Branson's nearby outlet malls, antique shops and craft venues offer a wide variety in products and prices.

Meals are not included in the retreat package, but the hotel will offer a special event rate on certain meals. Fast food and other restaurants are a short driving distance away.



Chateau King room

Hotel lobby with indoor fall



ROOM RATES

FOR TWO NIGHTS' LODGING

Traditional Deluxe—either doubles or king
(1-4 persons)—\$218

*Per person rate with four in a room: \$54.50
(plus taxes and resort fees)*

Chateau King—one king with sleeper sofa
More spacious room with comfortable sitting area
(1-4 persons)—\$262

*Per person rate with four in a room: \$65.50
(plus taxes and resort fees)*

Ambassador Suite—one king and sleeper sofa
Spacious room with sitting and kitchen areas
Complete with microwave and mini-fridge
(1-4 persons)—\$328

*Per person rate with four in a room: \$82.00
(plus taxes and resort fees)*

*Rates good only until registration deadline.
Payable directly to the hotel. Rates do not include applicable taxes or resort fees. To secure reservation, individuals will be charged one night's room and fees. Any room cancellation after January 31, 2005 will incur one night's charges.*

MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH HOTEL 1-888-333-LAKE MUST ASK FOR WNAC RATES

MAIL REGISTRATION FEE AND FORM BELOW TO WNAC

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY

Name _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Address _____

Church (or WAC group) _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

REGISTRATION FEE

\$35

\$50 AFTER JANUARY 31

\$15 ONE DAY ONLY

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 31, 2005

RETREAT REGISTRATION FEE MUST ACCOMPANY THIS FORM.
GROUPS ARE WELCOME TO MAIL FORMS TOGETHER AND PAY WITH ONE CHECK,
BUT EACH PERSON MUST FILL OUT A FORM. FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE BUT
SUBSTITUTIONS ARE ALLOWED.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO WNAC

MAIL TO: **WNAC**

P. O. BOX 5002

ANTIOCH, TN 37011-5002

OFFICE USE ONLY

SPRINGBOARD

LEADERSHIP

ROLEPLAY. The November feature works well with two presenters, a Pilgrim and Native American woman who alternate speaking. For more information see the 2004 PROGRAM AND PLAN BOOK.

REPLACE. If you want to involve more women, use "Hospitality with a Heart," p. 7, sharing this biblical principle hands-on.

RETREAT. It's time to promote and preregister for the 2005 Retreat, March 3-5, in Branson, MO. Find registration information and instructions on p. 19. A detailed program will appear in the next issue of *CoLaborer*.

RESPOND. Encourage your group to adopt the WNAC 50/50 National Project, giving a \$100 gift to support women's ministries worldwide. \$50 allows one woman to attend the Sisters Prayer Fellowship for Revival of the Nations of Central Asia. \$50 goes toward the current indebtedness of the WNAC office, enabling WNAC to continue helping each woman find her place in the Great Commission.

NOW AVAILABLE

\$8.00

PLUS SHIPPING AND HANDLING
Order yours today!

LET US PURSUE

**2005 WNAC
PROGRAM &
PLAN BOOK**

SERVICE

SEND care packages to deployed soldiers from your town or area. Include a Christian magazine or book and a personal letter sharing your testimony.

SHARE the FOCUS article, pp. 26-27. Discuss the possibility of ministry to local Hispanics (or another ethnic group).

EXCHANGE gifts at your December meeting. These could be baby, children's or seniors items. Give these gifts to a local outreach ministry.

STUDY

CHALLENGE women to read through the Bible in 2005. Consider using a One Year Bible. Encourage women to journal their daily thoughts or insights.

PLAN now for 2005. Consider one or more of the studies on p. 30. These complement the "Let Us Pursue" theme.

MISSIONS

PROMOTE the 50/50 project. Sponsor a Central Asian sister as a Christmas gift (individually or group.)

HIGHLIGHT the Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Institute (pp. 26, 27) and consider support of this ministry.

ACQUAINT women with Home Missions office women. Print individual pictures and job descriptions from their website www.homemissions.org or read aloud names from the PreThanksgiving Prayer Guide. **PRAY** for 2005 retreat speakers.

NEEDS

PROVISION CLOSET. Wal-Mart gift cards, full sheet sets, bath towels. Please no phone cards at this time.

WNAC OFFICE. Funds to purchase a G-4 or G-5 Macintosh Computer and software necessary to produce *CoLaborer* magazine.

OUR WEBSITE
www.nafwb.org/wnac

Contact us:
wnac@nafwb.org

FRUIT OF OUR HANDS

LOOKING FOR A HOLIDAY GIFT? WNAC has a limited supply of its cookbook, *The Fruit of Our Hands*, still available for purchase. The padded three-ring binder-style book contains over 1200 recipes from nearly 800 women. These will not be reprinted. Order your copy today. Cost is \$20 plus \$3 shipping for each copy.

PRAYER

USE miniature ornamental corn ears as prayer reminders. Print requests on cards. Tie with a bow.

PRAY for evangelistic outreach among U.S. Native American groups.

PARTICIPATE in the PreThanksgiving Week of Prayer. Quantity color brochures are available at no cost from FWB Home Missions. Call toll free (1-877-767-7674).

SEND a representative to World Prayer Summit 2005, March 31-April 2. Call FWB International Missions (1-877-767-7736) for information.

FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...

Dear WNAC,

Ron and I wish to express our thanks to all the Women Active for Christ. During our many years with the Foreign Mission Department, every four years, when we were on stateside assignment, we made a trip to the Provision Closet. We always found it well-stocked, and many of our needs were met there. The Provision Closet always represented to us how much our ladies cared for their missionary families.

We were graciously afforded one more shopping spree to help us get settled into our Nashville home this past February. We made our last trip, and retired our much-used card. After having reread everything we had been given from the closet since 1975, we knew that we needed to express, one more time, our gratitude to each lady. We wish to commend each of you, for Jesus said: "As you have done unto one of these my children, so you have done unto me." With deep-felt gratitude,

Ron and Linda Callaway
Nashville, TN

Dear WNAC,

As I reflect on this year, I am excited about what God has done for us and look forward to what He has in store in the coming months. I want to take this opportunity to thank WNAC for your tremendous role in the continuance of our ministry, with your loyal support and being open to our needs at the Hope Center as well.

Dr. James Kilgore
Free Will Baptist Family Ministries

Dear WNAC,

We want to thank you, WNAC, for your prayers and support of us and the mission work in Mexico. We praise God for the churches being built and the souls being saved all over Mexico. May God richly bless you in Christ.

Jeff Cates family
Berea Ministries, Mexico

Dear WNAC,

I was moved beyond words by several of the articles in the September/October issue of *CoLaborer*... Two articles were of special interest to me. "The Toys of Life" by Monica Bryan—being a woman born with cerebral palsy myself, I thought Monica brought an awesome perspective on the uniqueness of all around us, those who are able-bodied, or those who may not be. And, I got chills reading Miss Karyn Pugh's "Right of Passage" article.... Lastly, in last month's issue you highlighted *Moments for Singles*, by Leigh McLeroy. I ordered it, and began using it immediately. It's a wonderful devotional book that speaks directly to the majority of the issues single/divorced/widowed women are dealing with. Thank you for making it available for your readers. I read *CoLaborer* from cover to cover every time it comes, and just wanted to share

how blessed I was by this particular issue.

Thank you to the authors, editors, and who ever else may work behind the scenes to get this publication to our doorstep. I've been blessed by it time and time again.

Wendy Southwell
Atoka, TN

Dear WNAC,

I just wanted to say thank you for all the hard work you put in there at the office that I am afraid too often goes unnoticed. You do so much to make the lives of women in local WACs around the country easier and richer. Also, although I know you are only the representative of the generous ladies of our denomination, thank you, thank you, thank you for supplying the Missionary Provision Closet. It has helped us so much as we prepare to go overseas for our first term, and I am confident that it (and you) will continue to be a blessing in the future. Thanks again.

Steve and Lori Torrison
Panama appointees

Dear WNAC,

I would like to transmit to you my sincere gratitude through this letter for your spiritual and financial support. Through you and other brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord has permitted the total payment of my seminary fees for the 2003-2004 academic year. In spite of difficulties encountered in satisfying some primary needs, the Lord has been faithful throughout the school year 2003-2004.

Concerning my academic work, even though the end of year results have not yet been released, my performance has so far been good with the exception of Hebrew language where I have some difficulties. A lot of effort has been made in spite of my anglophon background, but there is yet more to be done for the four years remaining. I have been able to face financial challenges of the academic year thanks to God and to you. May God bless you. I very much appreciate your care for the progress of God's work. Thank you.

Philip Bonsu
Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

50 50

THE WNAC NATIONAL PROJECT

For CENTRAL ASIA and the WNAC OFFICE

Your \$100 gift will make a difference.

Monies must be received by January 15, 2005

CoLaborer NOV • DEC 2004 21

LABORS OF LOVE

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father:"
1 Thessalonians 1:2,3



PICTURED: 1. Sandra Bishop holds gift from Midway District (GA). 2. Group from Albany WAC (GA) who attended the Midway District. 3. Cross-Pointe WAC (OK) officers Lori Gray, (left) Bethany Lewis and Kathy Bishop (far right) celebrate with Deleen and Kristina Cousineau (left, center). INSET: Deleen at various life stages. 4. Donelson WAC (TN) women pack bags for Belgium ministry.

✿ When missionary Dale Bishop's camera equipment was stolen out of his car, women of the Midway District WAC (GA) responded. The group presented a new digital camera to his wife Sandra when she spoke at their district meeting.

✿ Women's Ministry of CrossPointe FWB Church, Oklahoma City, OK, sponsored a 50th birthday party for missionary Deleen Cousineau, July 23. A photo display depicted the various stages of her life. Gifts included encouragement Scriptures inside birthday cards. A money tree provided funds for last minute expenses before their return to Cote d'Ivoire in August.

For the first time in 25 years, the Cousineaus returned to Africa childless, as their two grown daughters remained stateside.

✿ "Pack a Bag for Belgium" served as project theme for Missions Partners WAC, Donelson, (TN). The group collected needed personal items, children's clothing, and ten pieces of rolling luggage for Pete and Tina Matteson, members of their church who will be serving for a year as worship leaders at an International English-speaking church in Brussels, Belgium.



Is your group involved in a special project or noteworthy endeavor?

Share your

**LABOR
OF
LOVE**

Send news and photos to:

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

EMAIL: sarah@nafwb.org





TWO STATES CELEBRATE FIFTY YEARS OF WAC

ARKANSAS AND KENTUCKY Women Active for Christ recently celebrated 50 years of organized state works. Both groups met in conjunction with their respective State Associations.



Kentucky WAC Golden Jubilee attendees.

KENTUCKY'S celebration occurred Friday, June 18, 2004, at the Bucyrus Free Will Baptist Church, Bucyrus, OH. "Golden Jubilee" served as theme for the day. Sixteen women and ten visitors took part in the special services led by President Jonda Patton.

Emogene Chandler and Mary Rigsby, charter members of the first organized state work, shared both history and their heart for Kentucky WAC. Both women are still active in WAC.

Dorothea Willis, wife of former Home Missions Director Homer Willis, was instrumental in the 1954 founding of the organization. Mrs. Willis, now deceased, also served as Kentucky's first president. Several people shared their own memories of the Willises and the impact of this couple.

The celebration included special singing by Judy Delong and Brenda Ward. State treasurer Cindy Justice gave thanks that Kentucky women exceeded their past year project goal of \$40,000 by almost \$6,700. In addition, Women gave over \$12,000 in gifts and cash not sent through state WAC.

The celebration ended with a circle of prayer as individuals recommitted themselves to the work of Women Active for Christ.



KWAC charter members



Present Arkansas Women Active for Christ officers

ARKANSAS women chose to "Honor the Past, Celebrate the Present, Anticipate the Future" at their fifty-year celebration, August 3, 2004, at the Conway Public School Auditorium in Conway, AR.

President Lisa Bowden reminded women that "any accomplishments made from 1954-2004 could only come from God.

WNAC Executive Secretary-Treasurer Marjorie Workman spoke of Arkansas' contribution to WNAC. Former national officers Jean Wilson, Genelle Scott, Alene Coffman, and current WNAC President Debe Taylor hold ties to the Natural State. Mrs. Workman shared highlights and historical events from their terms of office. President Debe Taylor expressed commendation from 1 Thessalonians 1:2.

"Memorable Moments" offered women time for reflection of the past fifty years. Arkansas' State Woman's Auxiliary Convention grew from the vision of one woman, Margaret Dixon. Its organization occurred September 25, 1954, in Willoughby, AR. Several leaders gave recollections of their most memorable WAC moments. Jan Morrison provided a delightful 50-year review entitled, "You Might Be a Woman Active for Christ If..."

Highlights of the day included a PowerPoint presentation by Belinda Adair and Lisa Bowden and a banquet. Each of the 173 AWAC attendees received a commemorative fifty-year history and a WAC tote bag.



Two 50-year AWAC veterans

Judy Delong and Sue Patton contributed to this article.



THAT'S NOT ABOUT JESUS

DEBE'S DELIGHTS

*"thy commandments
are my delights."
Psalm 119:143b*

Debe Taylor
WNAC President

Last Christmas, driving around town on several errands, Tama sang Christmas carols with her children. After several traditional carols, she began to sing, "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Her daughter Bailey, then four years old, became very upset and told her, "Don't sing that—that's not about Jesus!"

When Tama shared this story with the ladies at our church, we all got a chuckle out of it. Yet, it got me thinking. How often, as Christmas arrives with all its hustle and bustle, do I allow myself to be preoccupied by things that are not about Jesus?

I fret myself trying to come up with just the right gift for everyone. I write out a list and throw it away. This procedure repeats itself often during the months preceding Christmas. Watching the newspaper ads and looking through catalogs consumes a great deal of my time. I have to find that perfect gift. Truth be told, Mary wrapped the perfect gift when she wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes and laid Him in the manger. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son..." (John 3:16a) Jesus is the perfect gift!

At Christmastime, I give Betty Crocker a real run for her money. I pride myself on my great culinary talent. My husband and children have favorites they want prepared every Christmas. I always make time to bake the goodies everyone will be expecting. Yet, I often forget that I should also be sharing spiritual food. "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." (Psalm 107:9) Jesus satisfies every hunger!

No doubt about it, Christmas is a time for family. Many Christmases, the only family for us was the four of us (my immediate family). We've often invited others who were alone to become part of our family for the day. In all our family activities did we include Jesus? Was He even on the guest list? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God..." (1 John 3:2) Jesus is family, too!

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (Luke 2:11-12)

You're right, Bailey. Christmas should be all about Jesus.

HELP! I'M A MOM

bright ideas for mothers from mothers

What about home remedies?

Home remedies. Pioneer fathers and mothers depended upon them. But not all home remedies are foolproof. Not all home remedies are feasible. Putting cow manure on a sprained ankle?* Not pleasant.

Yet, with all the scares of over the counter cough medicines, and the rising interest in herbal medicines, home remedies are quite in demand.

How can you know what works and what doesn't? How can you know what is safe? Here are some practical suggestions.

—If it sounds dangerous, don't try it.

—If your child is on medication, check with a health professional about any possible interactions.

—Make sure the home remedy is designed for children. Some remedies are only for adults.

—What works for some may not work for all.

—Try it at your own risk.

—If problem persists, see a health professional. We've gathered these home remedies.

EARACHE: use blow dryer at lowest setting. Or put a few drops of warm mineral oil in the ear.

CANKER SORE: crush a TUMS tablet. Mix with a small amount of Maalox. Dot on sore.

SORE THROAT: Thin light corn syrup with a small amount of warm water. Gargle.

EXPECTORANT: In bowl, chop one onion and press

three cloves of garlic. Cover with sugar. Let set an hour until it makes a syrupy juice. Give as needed to break up congestion.

SUNBURN: mix 1 cup white vinegar, 5 TBSP. salt, 5 TBSP. plain yogurt, and 2 TBSP. aloe gel. Pour into pump-type container. Store in fridge. Rub on affected areas.

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS: drink plenty of water. Give cranberry juice. Avoid colas and teas.

VOMITING/FLATULENCE: mix two drops of peppermint oil in a half cup of cool water. Drink.

CONSTIPATION: mix a half cup of olive oil with a half cup of orange juice. Drink before bedtime.

*from By the Way by Rev. Raymond Riggs. **Some remedies taken from The Doctor's Book of Home Remedies for Children (portions online) at www.mothernature.com

Last spring, we asked students to share expectations about a summer opportunity in restricted access countries. One girl relates her experiences and reflects upon her journey.



Hollie (center) rejoices with her team.

I am excited to share with you how God is working in Central Asia. Free Will Baptist International Missions sent out four teams this summer to serve in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. My team was part of a camp ministry in Kazakhstan. Eighty-four kids, ages seven to fourteen attended the first week of camp. During this week we helped with crafts, relay games, skits and sports. We were also given the opportunity to share our testimonies in the evening services. God truly worked in the lives of these children. One night in our nightly cabin devotion, all eight girls in our cabin got saved.

The next week of camp brought about 60 kids ages 13-20. We helped with games and sports again and also took the opportunity to hold an English club each day with all who wanted to come. We taught campers English songs with motions and helped them practice their English through speaking and games. Many spoke English very well. We were able to spend time talking to them personally about God. One of these girls accepted Christ into her life at the end of the week.

God definitely worked in my life as well. It was so encouraging to be a part of what God is doing in Central Asia. The youth of the church we served with were amazing. About twenty youth served as counselors during the two weeks of camp. They were extremely hard workers and did a wonderful job with the kids. Their lives were truly committed to Christ and they were great examples of Him. All the Christians we met in Central Asia are so devoted to God. He is their number one priority and their lives revolve around His church.

I am very grateful for the opportunity given me to serve. It was so energizing to see God moving in the hearts of these kids and to see God building his church in Central Asia. I praise God for all that He accomplished and for allowing me to be a part of it. Thank you so much for all of you who supported us through finances, but most importantly through prayer. He kept all of the teams safe as we traveled. No one on our team got sick. Most importantly, He moved in the hearts of young people. More than fifty young people were saved over the course of two weeks. I know this would not have been possible without the prayers of God's people. Thanks again for all you have done.

Hollie Hubbard is a 2004 graduate of FWBNC who currently lives in Nashville, TN.



AMAZED IN ASIA

by Hollie Hubbard

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY

—For those who were saved at camp—many come from Islamic households.

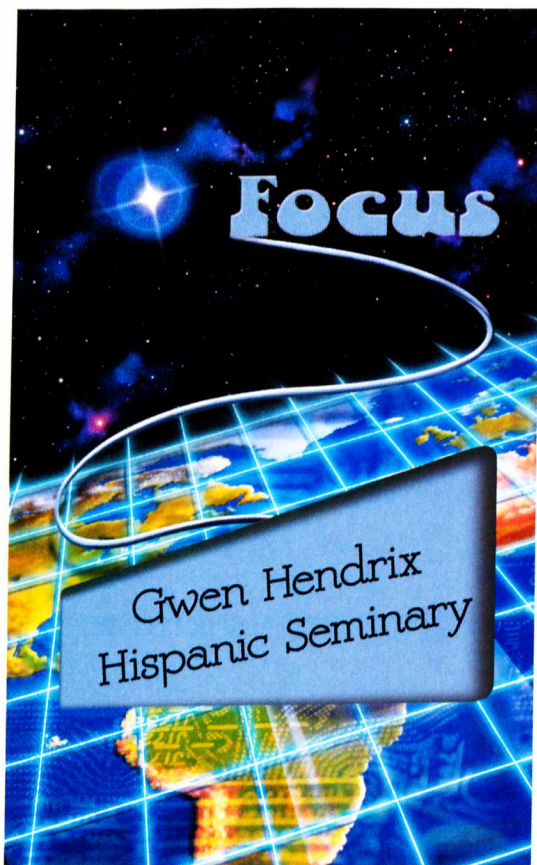
For strength to continue to follow God in a family where He is not welcomed.

For boldness to share their faith with family and friends.

—For the reopening of one camp in Tajikistan recently shut down because it is Christian.

—For guidance as God continues to build His church in Central Asia.

YOUR 50/50 GIFT FOR THE WNAC NATIONAL PROJECT WILL HELP UNIFY AND STRENGTHEN CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN FOR MINISTRIES SUCH AS THIS.



Pray:

—for current Seminary students: Frank and Erika Cartegena, Diego, Marta Isabel, and Sara Cueva, Alfredo Cenicerros, Jesus Gonzalez, Jaime Huante, Gabriel Mondaagon, and Jeanette V.P. Cortez Moreno.

—for 2004 graduates Guadalupe Hernandez, Elias Perez, and Jesus Delangel, currently serving in ministry positions.

—for faculty and administration as they teach and prepare.

—for Rick Bowling as he directs Free Will Baptist North American Hispanic Ministries.

—that more congregations would gain a vision for Hispanic outreach in their communities.

A WELCOME OPPORTUNITY



Current students at Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Seminary

Listen to the chatter in checkout lanes of city supermarkets. Walk down Main Street in thousands of farming towns. It's easy to forget, if only for a second, that you are still in the United States. The language, the look is Hispanic. Today's U.S. Latino community is almost 40 million strong, ranking third largest in the world, behind Spain and Mexico.

Are they welcome? The economic world thinks so. The buying power of the U.S. Hispanic market is more than 228 billion dollars. The business world thinks so. Hispanics are no longer stereotyped as field hands or construction workers. They are the new business men and women of our cities, working in health, education, and political fields.

Are they welcome? Free Will Baptist North American Missions thinks so. Typically, Hispanics are a people hungry for the gospel and open to the message of salvation. Free Will Baptist Hispanic works continue to emerge and thrive. Yet, the need is great for discipleship and training among Hispanic believers. Who better to reach this mushrooming segment of our population than those who speak the language and know the culture?



The Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Seminary, Inman, South Carolina, opened in January 2004, providing biblical and practical instruction for Hispanic pastors and church leaders. Named in honor and memory of WAC leader Gwen Hendrix, the school maintains close ties with Women Active for Christ. To date, South Carolina WAC groups have contributed \$13,000 toward this project. Many other local WAC groups also support the endeavor.

Located on the campus of Inman First Free Will Baptist Church, the seminary's physical plant includes four houses for married students



Four homes comprise present Seminary faculty/student housing.

and faculty. Church classrooms and a cafeteria are available for daily use. The seminary is now remodeling buildings for use as dorms for singles.

Currently, ten students are enrolled. The intense 760-class hour-program includes studies in Bible doctrines, pastoral theology, evangelism, Bible survey, church budgets, personal finance and many other subjects. Students participate in practical ministry assignments, working alongside area pastors, filling ministry roles in local FWB Hispanic congregations.

Future vision for the school includes purchasing acreage, building larger facilities, and expanding enrollment. The seminary's immigration attorney is now working to secure student visas, permitting students throughout Latin America to enroll and study for the ministry.

Fruit from this effort is evident. All graduates are currently working as pastors or church planters within Hispanic communities across the U.S. According to Rick Bowling, director of Hispanic



Houses contain kitchen/laundry facilities.

Ministries, FWB Home Missions has now established twelve Hispanic churches.

Are they welcome? In your community? In your congregation? Is God calling you to financially or prayerfully support the training ministry of the Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Seminary? Would your church offer its funds or facility to birth a local Hispanic congregation? *"The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few."*

Will you welcome this tremendous opportunity?



Furnished bedrooms provide places for rest and study.

Other Prayer Concerns

—Pray for holiday services and special events in mission works both internationally and state-side.

—Pray for good reception of Tekmerion Films' documentary, "Bloodstain on the Silk Road," detailing the life of a recently martyred pastor in Central Asia.

—Pray for persecuted brothers and sisters around the world. Pray that God would grant them an extra measure of grace and open doors for sharing Christ.

—Pray for overwhelming response to WNAC's 50/50 Project and for WAC leaders preparing to attend the Central Asian Sisters Prayer Fellowship April 26-28, 2005.

—Pray for wisdom in selection of 2005 E-TEAMS and college student missions groups.

—Pray for an abundant Benjamin Randall Day Offering supporting Home Missions staff and services.

—Pray for rebuilding and evangelistic efforts in hurricane ravaged areas.

WHILE WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING, THEY'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING.
OUR MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER REFLECT ON THE PAST YEAR

beyond expectation:

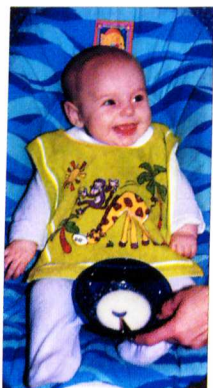


MOTHER:

Traci (Epps) Morris
Oklahoma City, OK

DAUGHTER:

Chaney Elise Morris



Chaney has just celebrated her first birthday. What a fast but exciting year it has been. We have watched Chaney's many firsts—smile, laugh, rolling over, sitting up, pulling up, tooth, etc. We are still waiting on the walking and the first haircut. At this rate, she might get her first haircut by the time she is three!

Chaney has been, and is, a wonderful baby. She is very happy and loves to be around people. She has spent her first year growing up at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. Chaney has *worked* with me in my office for most of the year. During the spring semester she stayed in the girls' dorm with the Resident Life Coordinator while I was working. She thinks she just belongs at Hillsdale. She has received lots of attention from the students and staff; consequently, she never meets a stranger. I am so glad I was able to keep her with me for the first year. She now goes to a sitter and enjoys playing with another child her age. Chaney likes going to church, especially to the nursery. When we turn the corner of the hallway leading to the nursery, she starts jumping up and down. Chaney has already attended a National Convention, experienced Truth and Peace on our campus, and observed the youth competitions.

Chaney loves music. The first time I felt her move during my pregnancy was when my niece was

singing in the choir. I guess her love for music started then; nothing has changed. She attempts to sing "The B-I-B-L-E." She gets *b-i-b-i-b-* and *Bible*.

At first, Chaney didn't really like to sleep. She would get up every two to three hours at night, but at about nine months, she decided she wanted her rest. Now she sleeps all night. All I have to do is put her in her crib and, of course, turn on the music.

Chaney now weighs 22.4 pounds and is 30 inches long. She loves to babble and say words like *Mommy*, *Daddy*, *PaPa*, *puppy*, *ball*, *bye*, *hi*, *ouch*, and *uh-oh*. Her favorite words are probably *uh-oh* and *ball*. One day, when Bro. Wade Jernigan was giving her a kiss on the forehead, she said *love*. He thought it was great. We turned her car seat around at her first birthday. Now that she can see us, she likes to play a game. She says, "Mommy," and I say "Chaney" back to her. This can go on for quite awhile and she thinks it is great fun. She is such a good baby. Probably, if and when we decide to have another baby, our second will be a bit more challenging.

This has been a fulfilling year of expectations. Chaney has not only met my expectations; she has far exceeded them.

Traci Morris is Teacher Education Coordinator at Hillsdale FWB College. A former FWB missionary, Traci, her husband Charley, and Chaney attend Crosspointe FWB Church, Norman, OK.

our bundles of joy

What a joy to be a grandmother! Autumn, of course, is the brightest child I have ever seen. Her smile lights up the room and melts the heart of anyone she comes in contact with. I have learned that I cannot bear to see her cry. When I see tears well up in her eyes, I tend to sometimes just cry with her. I would move mountains to try to make things better for her.

I have learned that dishes and housework *can* wait, and will always still be there after Autumn goes home. When she is with me, she is the priority and everything else comes later. If only we, as parents, could see that truth when our children are small. I see women in the grocery store wrestling with screaming toddlers and I just want to say, "In the blink of an eye they'll have their license. Then you will covet time spent with them."

I have seen my son and his wife turn into the most precious and doting parents. My son, who is the most avid deer hunter, makes comments like, "I was going to go shoot my bow the other day. But I thought, why would I do that when I can lay in the floor and play with Autumn?"

I cannot wait to hear her say the name *Nana*. Right now it is difficult for her to distinguish between *Nana* and *Ba-nana*. I do thank God for the privilege of being a grandmother. My second son and his wife are expecting a baby boy in a few weeks. I hope I get a new grandbaby every year.

Barbara Hicks is active in the Women's Friendship Circle WAC at Ina FWB, Ina, IL. A registered nurse and former nursing instructor, she is the mother of grown sons Jon and Jason, and daughter Katie, a freshman at FWBCC.



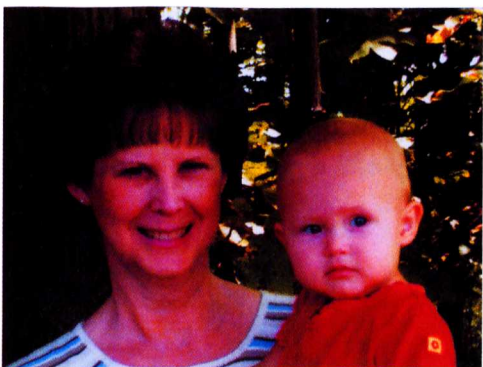
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Mt. Vernon, IL

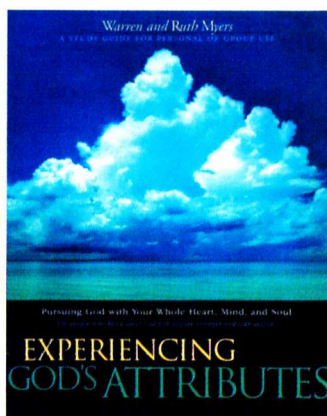
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Autumn Reese Hicks



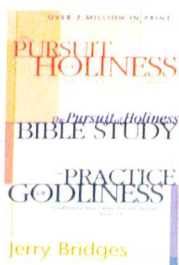
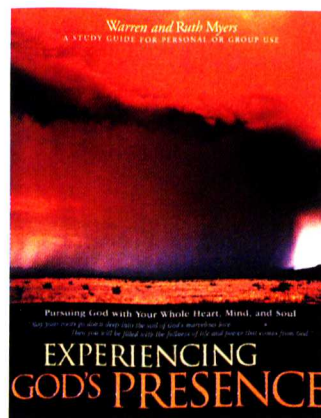
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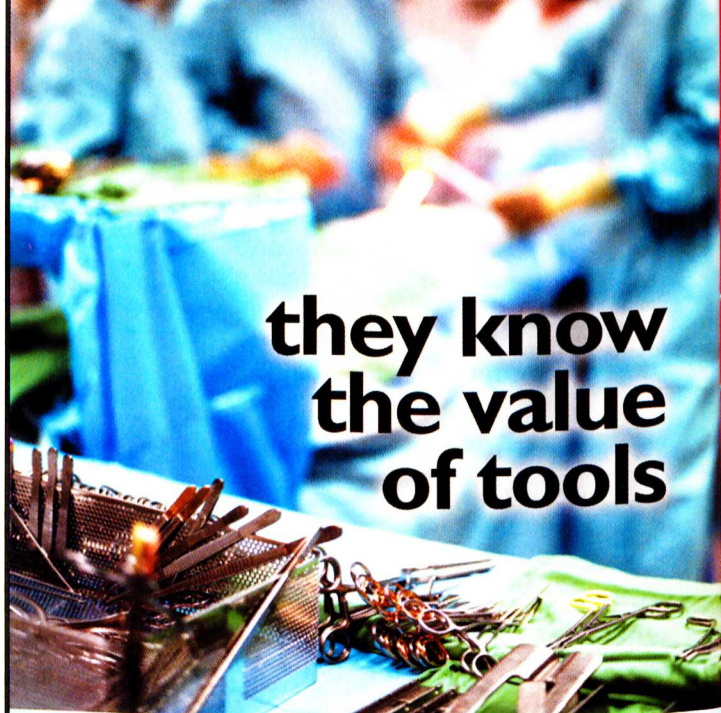
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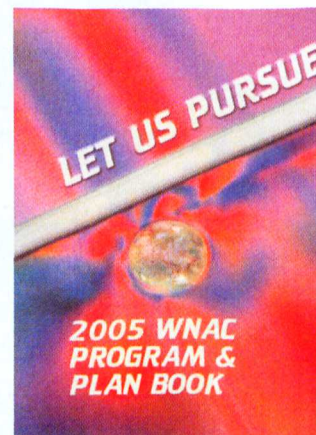
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Words for Women



Executive Secretary-Treasurer

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

Whether it's Cinderella's glass slipper, Imelda Marcos' excessive collection, or the Israelites' forty-year guarantee, shoes send a message. Their stories will always say something about who we are, what we do, where we've been, and where we're going.

One of my shoe stories happened at Christmas. I must have been nine or ten. I was a typical kid already caught up in "what am I gonna get?" My expectations included much more than my parents could afford or what I knew I would receive. There would be the usual—clothing, fruit, and candy. (I really needed a pair of shoes.) But my real hope was for a toy.

Then came the dream. Now I don't believe in dreams, but I couldn't shake this one. I dreamed that all I got for Christmas was a pair of shoes and socks. That's all! No toy. Maybe my subconscious (the source of our dreams, I've been told) had figured out the connection between a recent trip to town to try on saddle oxford shoes and the soon arrival of Christmas. I told Mom my dream. Very quickly she shattered my expectations for a toy with, "Well, isn't that enough?" Reality set in. We were a large family and we were poor. There would be no toy.

At the first hint of daylight on Christmas morning, my older brother awakened my siblings and me. Anxious to see what we had got for Christmas, we tiptoed to the living room. Hearing no sounds of our parents, we pushed open the door and headed for our traditional spots—by our shoes. At our house, gifts were not wrapped. There were no nametags. You marked your spot with your shoes, placing them by a chair or sofa.

I quickly spied my shoes and lifted my eyes to the shoebox sitting in the chair. Inside the box were the black and white saddle oxfords of my dream. But there was more. Leaning against the back of the chair was a beautiful Chinese checker set made of tin. It was fancy and colorful. The top turned, providing pockets to store the colored game marbles. I screamed with delight. Truly, it was a wonderful Christmas. I'd expected shoes; I received a treasure as well.

The Bible also records some interesting shoe stories. In each account, God went beyond the person's expectations. Exodus 3:1-6 records the story of Moses and the burning bush. Moses' curiosity caused him to check out a bush that would not be con-

sumed. This was the moment God was waiting for. He asked Moses to come near, but not too close, and to take off his shoes. He was on holy ground. Taking off shoes was a sign of reverence or respect, much like removing a hat is in our culture. "*Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.*" Moses expected a fearful encounter. He received a life calling and assurance of the ever-present help of the Great I AM.

Shoes represented surrender, a contract, and a testimony in the Book of Ruth. Boaz wanted to redeem Naomi's property and marry Ruth. A man of propriety, Boaz made known his intentions and gave opportunity for any nearer kinsman to come forth. In those days, passage of property from one party to another did not involve signed documents but rather a sign or ceremony. When the unnamed kinsman pulled off his shoe and gave it to Boaz, witnesses observed this surrender. All rights, both property and proposal for marriage were passed to the next nearest kinsman, Boaz (Ruth 4). Boaz received a kinsman's shoe, yet He gained recognition in the lineage of our Lord.

In New Testament times, the most popular evangelist around, John the Baptist, proclaimed, "*...He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear*" (Matthew 3:11). Servants carried shoes; John felt undeserving of even servant status. He who declared himself unworthy to untie the shoe of his earthly cousin and Messiah, Jesus later declared "none greater born among women."

Shoes represented total abandonment to material possessions as Jesus sent out His disciples. He instructed them to go, taking nothing with them—not even a second coat or shoes (Matthew 10:10). The disciples expected a barefoot journey. Yet God graciously supplied all their needs.

What do these biblical shoe stories say to us as Women Active for Christ? Do we sense God's presence in our lives? Like Moses, are we willing to take off our shoes before Him? Who are we? What is He asking us to do? Have we surrendered our rights to our great Kinsman Redeemer—the Lord Jesus? Are we ever aware of the greatness of our Messiah and the smallness of ourselves? Are we confident that God can supply all our needs and exceed our expectations?

Do some "sole" searching. Then share *your* stories.

SHOE STORIES

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