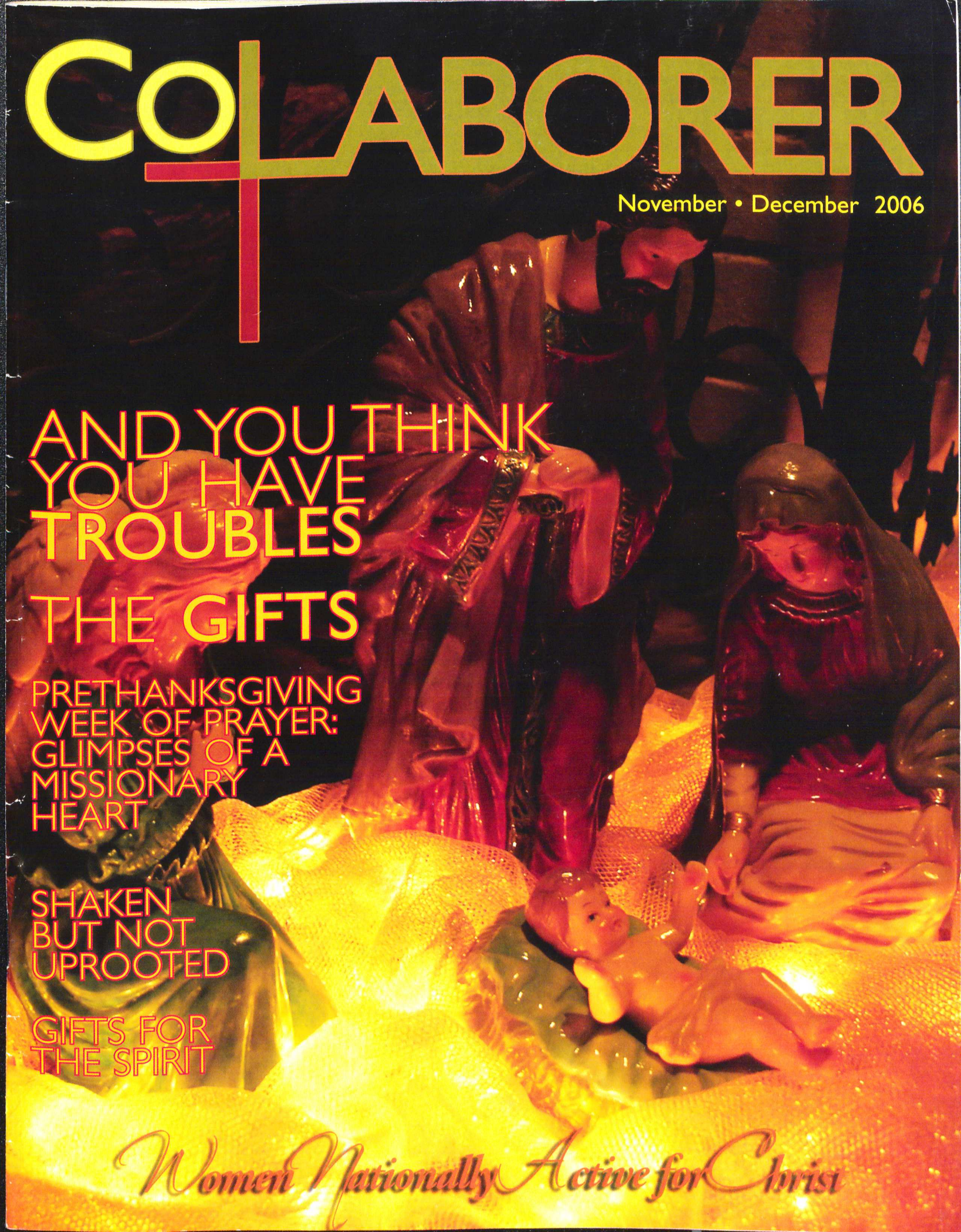


COLLABORER



November • December 2006

AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE TROUBLES THE GIFTS

PRETHANKSGIVING
WEEK OF PRAYER:
GLIMPSES OF A
MISSIONARY
HEART

SHAKEN
BUT NOT
UPROOTED

GIFTS FOR
THE SPIRIT

Women Nationally Active for Christ



WILL YOU PRAY?

As a lover of words, I'm drawn to the Book of Isaiah. Its 66 chapters, a mini-Bible in itself, contain some of the most eloquent, poetic and symbolic writing in God's Word. Each time I read the book, I come away with a sense of awe, not only at the prophet's craft of language, but at the messages God breathed and revealed through His servant Isaiah. Glimmers of holiness, salvation and future hope shine through the shadows of doom and destruction.

Interestingly, Isaiah's call to ministry coincided with a death. *"In the year that King Uzziah died..."* Uzziah was a hero king. The list of his accomplishments in 2 Chronicles 26 is lengthy and impressive. He was a good king who loved the Lord. He was the only king Isaiah had ever known.

Yet, God used the timing and circumstances of this king's death to turn a young man's focus toward a greater King. Isaiah saw the Lord, high and exalted in holiness and beauty. The majestic folds of His robe filled the temple; His glory filled the earth. The posts of the house shook; Isaiah trembled. And against this heavenly backdrop, Isaiah owned and mourned his sinfulness and the condition of his generation. Singed and cleansed by a burning coal from the altar, the lips of Isaiah answered, *"Here am I, send me."*

Knowing this is the final issue of *CoLaborer* may seem like a death. For 46 years, it's been the official publication of WNAC. It's been good; it's all we've ever known. Yet, leaders and staff sense God's hand in this ending and the beginning of *Together With God* magazine.

In the midst of this monumental transition, may our focus shift from the magazine to the majestic King. May we see Him highly exalted, view His glory that fills all the earth, own and mourn our sinfulness and present ourselves for service.

Like Isaiah, we live in an age that confuses good with evil and darkness with light. Even in our churches we find a generation shaped by postmodern thought and influences where feeling rather than form determines commitment. Our present form appears ineffective. The gap between the older/younger generations continues to widen.

How can we connect? We can pray. Isaiah said, *"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer...thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in"* (Isaiah 58:9-12).

Over the next eight months, designated a season for prayer, I challenge you to join me, daily seeking God's direction for the future of WNAC, and specifically praying for women in our own churches. Pray for salvation and spiritual growth; pray for effective ways to help each one live as a Great Commission Christian.

God will answer. Houses may shake and heads may turn. Holy encounters may prove painful. But *we* will be changed.

Isaiah's lifetime spanned the reigns of at least four kings. He decried wickedness in the time of Ahaz, but he witnessed great revival in the days of Hezekiah. Someone has said that prayer is the fountain from which revival springs. Will the next generations remain untapped? Or will you pray?

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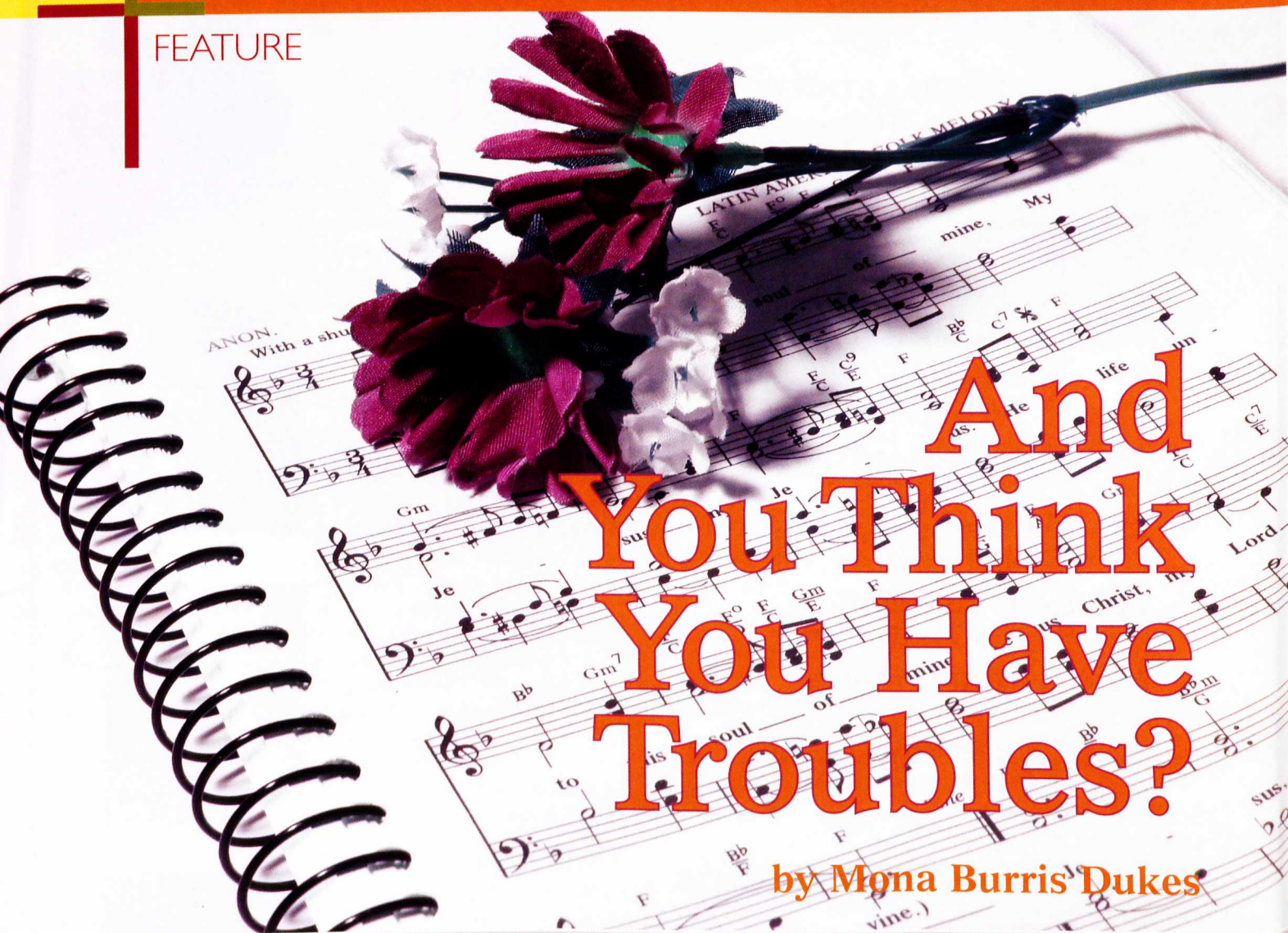
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And You Think You Have Troubles?

by Mona Burris Dukes

WHEN LIFE HURTS...WHEN YOU'RE CAUGHT OFF BALANCE
...WHEN YOU'RE THROWN A CURVE...SING.
"HE WHO SINGS, PRAYS TWICE," THE ANCIENTS
NOTED. SOME OF THE BEST LOVED HYMN WRITERS OF
MODERN TIMES DISCOVERED THIS SECRET AS THEY
ENDURED EXTREME DIFFICULTIES AND TRAGEDIES.
AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE TROUBLES?
WAIT TILL YOU HEAR THEIR STORIES
AND THEIR SONGS.

This feature is designed for dramatic presentation. Download the script at www.wnac.org. Find additional program helps and suggestions on pp. 62-65 of the 2006 WNAC Program and Plan Book.

FANNY CROSBY

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

HEBREWS 10:19-23

I was born with sight, but an incompetent doctor blinded me at the age of six weeks while treating me for an inflammation. My father died when I was only one year old, so my mother was left to raise my sisters and me. At the impressionable age of nine, I moved with my family from the familiar home place I had grown to love in New York to a new home in unfamiliar Connecticut. Imagine a blind girl having to learn a whole new set of circumstances.

I wanted so badly to learn things from books, but I had to gather information both in school and at home by listening to lectures or readings. (Braille

pathetically remarked, "I think it is a great pity that the Master did not give you sight when He showered so many other gifts upon you." I quickly replied, "Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition, it would have been that I should be born blind?" "Why?" he asked. "Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior!"

JOHN NEWTON

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

ROMANS 5:1-4

I was born in London in 1725 to the commander of a merchant ship. My mother died when I was a small child, so I became a sailor when I was only 11. At 19, I was drafted into service on a warship. Conditions were intolerable, so I deserted. But I was soon recaptured and publicly flogged and demoted. Exchanged to serve

"For he that singeth praise, not only praiseth, but only praiseth with gladness: he that singeth praise, not only singeth, but also loveth him of whom he singeth. In praise, there is the speaking forth of one confessing; in singing, the affection of one loving." —Augustine

was not invented until 15 years later.) I also loved to write poetry and rhymes. But one day the principal of the New York Institute for Special Education where I was attending summoned me from my schoolroom to his office, a meeting that would bring me to tears. He told me that making rhymes was a distraction to students, and that "we have no right to be vain in the presence of the Owner and Creator of all things."

I spent 35 years at that school, first as a pre-teen and teenager, and then as a teacher of English and history. There, I met my husband-to-be, Alexander Van Alstyne, who was blind as well. When we became romantically involved, we were forced to resign our jobs. Our only son died at birth and we had no other children. I lived to be 95 years of age.

My name is Fanny J. Crosby, and I wrote over 9,000 hymns in my life, including "Blessed Assurance," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," "I Am Thine, O Lord," and "Tell Me the Story of Jesus." You might think I'd have every right to be bitter about the hand life dealt me? Contrary to what some people might feel, placed in my circumstances, I am thankful for the lot that God gave me. One time a preacher sym-

on a slave ship, I eventually became a servant of a slave trader, during which time I was brutally abused.

In 1748, at the ripe old age of 23, while steering the ship upon which I was employed, we encountered a violent storm. I was convinced that the ship would sink and all would be lost. After all, my life had been one calamity after another to this point. Why should it be any different now?

My name is John Newton, and I will tell you that, though my mother died when I was young, something she taught me reared up in me that night on that storm-tossed ship. When all seemed lost, knowing the ship would surely sink, I drew on what I'd heard my mother tell me long ago and I exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy upon us!"

For the rest of my life I observed the anniversary of May 10, 1748, as the day during which I subjected my will to a Higher Power. You will most probably recognize me through words I penned to commemorate that fateful night when I realized just how amazing God's grace is. "Thro' many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come; 'tis grace has bro't me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

HORATIO SPAFFORD

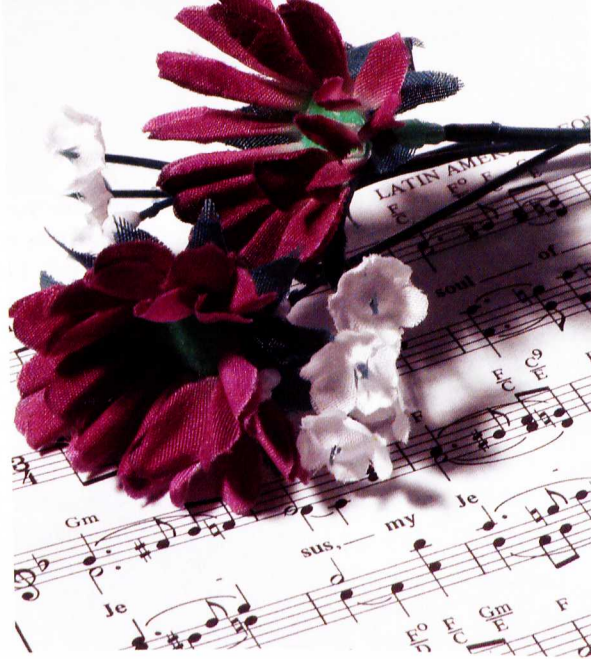
Praise ye the LORD.
Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever: Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners: The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD. PSALM 146

All my life, I lived right. I was a devout Christian and a successful businessman. I possessed the perfect life...a lovely wife and four beautiful daughters. My family lived comfortably, so much so that we were able to plan a wonderful European vacation in the fall of 1873.

At the last moment, I was unexpectedly detained in Chicago because of business. Not wanting to disappoint all of my girls, I told my wife and daughters to sail on without me and I would meet them later. Midway through their transatlantic voyage, another ship struck their vessel, causing it to sink. All four of my precious daughters—Anna, 11, Maggie, 9, Bessie, 7, and Tanette, 2—drowned. My wife was miraculously spared and eventually sent a telegram to me that said, simply, "Saved alone."

What more could God expect out of me? I had not only lived a Christian life, but I had even devoted myself to evangelism with my friend, Dwight Moody. How could I ever praise God again?

My name is Horatio G. Spafford and I sailed for England to join my grief-stricken wife immediately upon receiving her telegram. As the ship passed the location where my daughters drowned, I was crushed with sorrow, but my unwavering faith in God's goodness welled up within me and gave me the following sentiments.



*"When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul!"*

Later, I wrote to Rachel, my wife's half-sister, "On Thursday last we passed over the spot where she went down, in mid-ocean, the waters three miles deep. But I do not think of our dear ones there. They are safe, folded, the dear lambs."

CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT

And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. MARK 2:13-17

I lived a dreadfully sad life, plagued with depression, anxiety and fear for most of my early years. An invalid by the age of 30, I found myself bitter and anxious most of the time. I visited many churches and solicited the help of many pastors, all of whom counseled me simply to "pray more, study the Bible more, perform more noble deeds, and resolve to do better..." Easier said than done, I can assure you.

For many years I continued struggling in vain against sin, all the while mired in self-condemnation. One night while entertaining Dr. Caesar Malan, a visiting minister, I came face to face with the crux of the issue. Trying to again find answers for my weary soul, I asked him how I might be saved. I braced myself for the same diatribe about "doing all the right things," but somehow Dr. Malan sensed the enormous burden weighing upon my conscience. Unlike the many others before him, he responded compassionately, "Go to God just as you are."

I asked him incredulously, "Do I not have to do better, make more progress, and improve more before I believe in the Lord Jesus?" He simply repeated this

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Free Will Baptist pastor and author Robert J. Morgan details the stories behind hundreds of hymns in his works, *Then Sings My Soul* and *Then Sings My Soul Book 2*, while *Come Let Us Adore Him* reveals the stories behind favorite Christmas hymns. Both paperback volumes of *Then Sings My Soul* contain printed words and music for each hymn. The hardback Christmas gift book contains a companion Christmas CD. All three make great gifts for under the tree.



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simple, priceless phrase, "You must come to Him just as you are."

These few liberating words of fellowship had a deep and indelible effect on me. I am Charlotte Elliott and Dr. Malan's words, coupled with the revelations of the Holy Spirit in my life, caused me to pen the traditional invitation hymn, "Just as I Am."

ANNA WARNER

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. MATTHEW 18:1-6

My father was a wealthy New York City lawyer. Our lives were fairly comfortable until he lost most of his fortune in the 1837 depression. This forced our family to move to Constitution Island on the Hudson River.

My sister Susan and I began writing to help earn money. We also conducted Bible classes for cadets at the nearby West Point Military Academy. This was not the life to which we had become accustomed in our wealthy days. Women of our day didn't have to work.

Yet here we were—former ladies of stature and private women's school graduates—forced to earn money to help meet expenses. What an atrocity!

My name is Anna Warner. And I can tell you that through all those trials, we learned some valuable lessons—lessons all the money on Wall Street cannot buy. We grew to understand the absolute spiritual truth which we later encapsulated in the lyrics of a song. The lyrics have been memorized by scores of children down through the centuries. That song is "Jesus Loves Me." Never was that truth more evident in our lives than during those times of service and spiritual prosperity.

THE PSALMIST said, "But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. (Psalm 59:16). And you think you have troubles? Hum a few bars; strike up a tune; praise Him in joyful song.



Mona Burris Dukes lives in Johnsonville, South Carolina with her husband, Steven, who is mayor of their hometown. Mother of two grown sons, Mona works as a marketing and development director in higher education. The Dukeses are members of Westside FWB Church, but Mona's drama, music and comedy ministry takes them to many churches each month.

WHEN THE WORD ADVISES US TO
"COUNT IT ALL JOY," DOES THAT
EVEN APPLY TO A BAD HAIRCUT?

A BAD HAIRCUT

by Ruth McDonald

I always go to Japanese hair salons with fear in my heart. You see, my thin, fine, lifeless hair is an inheritance from my Scotch-Irish roots. (The other *roots* I hide with a box brought over in my suitcase from WalMart, but I digress.) The problem is that Japanese *roots* are attached to thick, shiny, voluminous manes. And these are attached to the people who cut my hair. They've never seen hair like mine. They've certainly never *cut* hair like mine. This meeting of cultures can be, at times, nothing short of disastrous.

I went to have my hair trimmed today. After 20 years in Japan, I speak Japanese and know how to communicate the concept of trim vs. cut it all off. However, this sweet Japanese girl barely older than my daughter didn't quite catch the difference in nuance. From the first wield of the scissors, I knew this was to be no ordinary trim. I began to wonder what color and shape of paper bag I should don for my trip home.

Actually, I think part of the problem was that she was distracted by our conversation. She had just asked what brought me to Japan when she made her first splice. She was trying to recall anything at all she knew about missionaries or Christianity as she continued her pruning. It seemed that finding common ground with this particular customer was a bit challenging.

Over the next few minutes I learned that this beautiful young

woman had never been to a church, never met a Christian—never even been to a "Christian" wedding (any Western wedding ceremony in which the bride wears a wedding gown), though they are quite common in Japan. The only thing she could think of

have a *gaijin* (foreign) friend.

Tomorrow I will go by the salon and drop off a flyer about the Gospel concert coming up next

I BEGAN TO WONDER WHAT COLOR AND SHAPE OF PAPER BAG I SHOULD DON FOR MY TRIP HOME.

was to ask me if we are the ones who believed in *Maria-sama* (the virgin Mary). Well, yes and no, I explained. Then, are we the ones that cross ourselves and say amen? Well, yes and no, again. She asked what amen means and I explained. She looked a bit confused.

We finally found a bit of common ground when I mentioned gospel music and *Sister Act*. She liked that movie and the music in it.

And then she said an amazing thing. She said that she and her family weren't particularly Buddhist. That, in fact, she didn't really have any religious ties and that she would really like to visit a Christian church sometime. Yes, she would be interested in attending a gospel music concert, she said. And she would love to get to know my daughter Katie—it would be cool to

month. I will give her Katie's cell phone number and email address. And as I brush and brush and straighten and tug at my very short hair for the next few weeks, I will pray for my new friend Aki, that she will come to the concert...or to our home...or to our church...and learn about Jesus, who loves her deeply.

It really was a bad haircut. But it was a great day and, yes, I do "count it all joy."



Ruth McDonald is part of the church planting team at Good News Chapel near Tokyo, Japan, where she works with music ministry and directs community gospel choirs. FWBIM missionaries since 1986, Ruth and her husband Donnie have four children—one in college, high school, junior high and elementary school.





PECAN HARVEST IS UNDERWAY HERE IN CENTRAL GEORGIA.

IN TIMES PAST, IT WAS A SLOW PROCESS. Nuts fall when they're ready—when the wind blows them, when squirrels knock them, when frosts loosen them. Collecting the fallen treasures was equally slow and laborious. But, it wasn't something that could have been delayed because the longer the nuts lay on the ground, the greater the possibility of damage and loss due to rot, water, freeze, animals, insects and the clutter of fallen leaves. Pecan trees have a lot of leaves, and fallen nuts quickly become obscure.

Harvesters would often spread bed sheets under the pecan trees to catch

the nuts as they fell. Made sense, but it took a lot of sheets. And who has that many sheets?

I've seen some pretty ingenious ways for coaxing the nuts from the trees. I watched one man spread sheets under his tree, attach a band of thin metal around the trunk of the tree, wrap a chain around it, hook it to his tractor, throw that baby into drive and give the tree a good yank or two. Nuts fell like hailstones.

Precious things, these southern pecans. The outside hull isn't all that much to look at—it's rough and ragged. The thing splits open and the nut falls to the ground. The shell of the pecan is smooth and shiny—a pretty pecan-brown with darker flecks. But, the real gem lies within. Crack the shell open

and the creamy flesh of the sweet nut begs the holder to pop it into her mouth and savor the deliciously fresh flavor.

Fresh, it is delicious and sweet. But, let that nut lie on the ground very long or spend too many freezes in the tree and the flavor turns. It develops a harshness, a bitterness, and the color darkens as it becomes rancid.

Yesterday while out with my husband, we passed a pecan grove. Billows of dust caught my eye and I marveled at what I saw.

The old ways have passed away. There were no sheets under the trees, no scores of people on the ground with white five-gallon buckets before them. There wasn't even a tractor to tease the nuts from the trees.

by Suzan Hutchinson

SHAKEN BUT NOT UPROOTED



No, it's a new day and new days call for new ways. As we drove past, I saw three men and two pieces of equipment. One was a large hopper to hold pecans; it was sitting idly by. The other was a huge vacuum, kicking up the dust as it sucked up the fallen leaves and nuts. I wondered what they had used to knock the pecans from the trees. I didn't have to wonder long. Another machine came into view. It wasn't very large; it was built rather compactly. But two long arms reached out and wrapped around the pecan tree and held it close. When activated, it shook that pecan tree with a purpose. And, as it shook, the pecans loosened and fell to the ground.

We drove on to our destination. Yet, the whole time we were away, my mind strayed back to that pecan grove. I wondered how the trees *felt* during and after the shaking. I wondered if the shaking had hurt them. And, I decided I would look closer as we passed again on our way home.

The pecan shaker was still attached to a tree. The workers had not yet made their way that far down the line. I searched for signs of injury on the trees, on the bark, on the trunk; I looked for broken limbs. I found no evidence of harm. The trees were still firmly rooted in the ground.

The few dead limbs strewn and scattered under the tree, I assumed, were knocked loose in the shaking. Grass is always cut close prior to pecan falling time so any sticks or limbs would have been picked up and stacked away from the trees. No, these were definitely shaken out of the trees. I looked into the tree tops to see if any nuts remained. Not one did I see. The hulls had even been shaken to the ground.

Those shaken trees looked ready for their winter rest, ready to begin the next season of bearing abundant fruit. It wouldn't be many weeks before the trees would be marked and trimmers would arrive to cut away dead wood and that which didn't bear fruit. Everything done to and for a pecan tree is designed to enhance its production of pecans. I knew that; I've lived in Georgia long enough to learn a few things. My curiosity satisfied, I thought little more about the pecan grove—until this morning.

As I took my son to school, I noticed more pecans on the ground under the

old pecan tree in our yard. Some were in the street and I hoped they wouldn't be crushed and wasted before I could return and claim them. Arriving home, I scooped up the treasured nuts and thought of that tree shaker. I wished I had one to shake the remaining nuts out of my tree. After all, it's the best nuts that are the hardest to shake and the last to fall.

"I am your tree shaker." The words came loud and clear and I turned to see who had spoken. There was no one. I felt foolish for turning around. "I am your tree shaker." The voice sounded again. "I want the choicest treasures. Since you can't release them, I'm going to shake them from you."

I was silent as thoughts ran through my mind. I thought of the prayers I'd prayed and how I had fallen on my knees, on my face before God as I'd poured out my needs and anxieties to Him.

Silent. Just like the pecan trees in the grove, I stood silent, realizing what God is doing in my life. Fear reached for me. But in my heart I heard, "I will not hurt you. The pecan trees are not harmed by the shaking and neither will you be harmed. They were created for this. And, so were you. Now is the time. Trust me."

I stood beneath the ancient pecan tree in our yard and looked up through its branches toward heaven. And, I breathed a prayer in the cold morning air. "Even so, Lord Jesus, shake me as a pecan tree is shaken. Shake my being—until precious fruit falls from me. Shake the dead branches and dying leaves from my life. Continue to shake until I am empty, then prune me and make me more fruitful next season. Rattled but not uprooted. Shaken but not broken. Empty but not forgotten. Pruned to bear more fruit."

Suzan Hutchinson recently moved to Dublin, GA, where her husband Tim now pastors the First FWB Church. She enjoys her roles as pastor's wife, friend, mom to Timothy, Amy and Ryan and sweetheart to Tim. She jokingly admits her current hobby is unpacking boxes, seeing how many she can throw away. Suzan loves to write and enjoys interacting with victims of abuse.



THE GIFTS

by Joanna Felts



In twelve simple verses from the second chapter of Matthew, we find a story that has captured the imaginations of people for 2,000 years. Piecing the story together from the four Gospels, we discover that a baby would be born to a virgin. Joseph would decide to take on the responsibility of raising this child, even though he knew there would be talk about the situation. The young couple, Mary and Joseph, would travel to Bethlehem for the census that just *happened* to be occurring at the time when the Christ-child needed to be born in that city. This child would be born in a stable because of the city's crowded inns. Angels formed a choir and frightened some shepherds on a hillside. Hearing and understanding their angelic song of hope concerning a coming Messiah, the shepherds went to see this child. Royalty would visit this same child and bring costly gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Babies capture our attention. Add the manner of this baby's birth and the diverse groups of people who attended His coming and we have a classic story, well told, and greatly revered by those of us who have come to love this baby who became our Savior. As women, we view this story with all the romance that surrounds it and we eye with wonder those gifts given to this baby.

The gifts presented by these Wise Men were kingly offerings. They met the King of the Ages with joy in their hearts, with an attitude of worship, and with gifts that announced to the world that this Christ-child was a King.

Just what kind of King would he be? The Jewish nation was waiting for an earthly king who would set them free from the Roman tyrants who ruled their lives and tried to rule their religion. Jesus' kingship was of a different nature; he would be a shepherd for the people (Matthew 2:6). He would preach the gospel to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, preach deliverance to the captives, heal the blind, and give liberty to the bruised (Luke 4:18). He would enter the city of Jerusalem riding on a donkey as an emissary of peace (Mark 11:1-11).

How then do we, as the Magi of old, offer our King gifts that will please Him? Even though God himself established the system of sacrifices in the Old Testament, he abhorred those sacrifices offered without a true spirit of repentance or praise or thanksgiving. Over and over again, He makes a basic statement,

**HOW
THEN DO
WE...OFFER
OUR KING
GIFTS THAT
WILL PLEASE
HIM?**

December program helps and suggestions are found on pp. 66-69 of the 2006 WNAC Program and Plan Book.

**GOD
IS NOT
LOOKING FOR
LIP SERVICE;
HE IS LOOK-
ING FOR HEART
SERVICE.**

"I do not want your sacrifices for the sake of sacrifice." God is not looking for lip service. He is looking for heart service. Mark 12:32-33 describes the answer of the scribe when he and Jesus were discussing the greatest of all commandments. *"And the scribe said unto him, 'Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.'"* Jesus praised this scribe for his answer because he understood the attitude of the heart to be foremost in our actions as we follow God's commands.

OFFERING OF GOLD

The wise men came before Jesus as little children; they offered Him the gift of gold. Said to be one of the most precious of all metals, this gift carried with it the idea of paying tribute to the King. Frequently we read in the Old Testament of conquering kings demanding tribute in the form of gold.

The Apostle Peter likens faith to gold. Both are purified through fire (1 Peter 1:7). As we approach the Christ-child this Christmas season, let us examine the gift of faith we offer Him.

As a teenage girl, I enjoyed receiving gifts of jewelry, especially from young men who wished to

win my admiration with such gifts. Since these young men were not rich, the gold in these necklaces or bracelets was usually only superficial. After a little while and wear, I could tell that my admirer had not bought the purest of gold.

However, as I grew older and the relationship I began to establish with my future husband grew deeper, we began to look for the rings that would symbolize our future commitment to each other. We did not look at the bargain counter in the local supermarket or at the jewelry counter of the local dime store. We took our time and invested in rings that would stand the test of time and would show their beauty and our commitment for years to come. We bought rings made of gold; not surface gold but gold that had been tempered by fire and cast into circles that we could wear to symbolize our enduring love.

In the same way, we offer God hearts full of faith that will stand the tests of time and the fires of endurance. This is a gift we must continually offer since we are continually trying to take our heart back or get it out of harm's way when the hard times come. Yet, the only way God can have all our heart is when we allow him to keep it, so He can nurture and, yes, even test it for the sake of His kingdom.

OFFERING OF FRANKINCENSE

I'm amazed, as I study God's Word, at the number of times God has

been appeased or appalled by the sense of smell. It was God who established the burning of incense in the Tabernacle; it was God who established the variety of sacrificial offerings, each noted as a "sweet savour" or a pleasing aroma to Him; it was God who inspired the Apostle Paul to write, *"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish"* (2 Corinthians 2:15).

And it is God who states that our obstinance and disobedience are like *"smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day"* (Isaiah 65:5). Just like a campfire



**OFFER
GOD HEARTS
FULL OF FAITH
THAT WILL STAND
THE TESTS OF TIME
AND THE FIRES OF
ENDURANCE.**

WHY THIS GIFT?



MYRRH? A bitter perfume used for embalming. Why were we giving the gift that goes with death to a newborn—to a king? Not only was he a newborn and a king but he even had His own star. Surely, this child of the star was promised long life. I just don't understand. Maybe you can help me. Let me tell you my story.

We were from the East. Magi. Kings, if you will. We were highly trained and qualified in the professions we chose. One day while studying the earth and the heavens, suddenly, out of nowhere, we noticed a new star. It was dim at first, but eventually grew very bright. We watched the star with bated breath, wondering about this phenomenon. And as we watched, we noticed that the star was actually moving. We decided to follow it. We got a caravan together and headed in the direction of the star—toward Judea. As we traveled, we deliberated. We determined that this star was the birth star of a new king. But, what king?

If this king were in Judea, we figured the ruler of that country must know of something that important. So we went to Herod and asked, "Where is the one who has been born—the king of the Jews? We want to worship Him."

Well, unbeknownst to us, this caused quite a stir in Herod's mind—and in all Jerusalem, for that matter. Herod gathered together His chief priests and scribes and teachers of the law to discern where this Christ would be born. After much consultation, they reported their findings to Herod, "This child will be born in Bethlehem. Micah, one of our prophets, said to us, 'But you Bethlehem of Judah, you are not the least among the leaders of Judah; a ruler will come from you—a shepherd for the people of Israel.'"

This news was a bit unnerving for Herod. You see, Herod was not very—uh—nice. He wanted to be the only ruler in Judea. By this time in our sojourn, we had learned that Herod even had some of his own children put to death to insure that they would not rise up against him.

Herod called us to him secretly and said, "The child will be born in Bethlehem. When you find him, come back and tell me where he is so I can worship Him also."

We went on our way, following that star. And what a star! Day after day, all the way from our homeland, that moving star had led us. Then it stopped. The king star stood still—not above a palace, but over a humble home where a child lay. When we entered the home and saw this child, we were overjoyed. We knew he was the Christ, the Messiah.

We had gifts. Special gifts—important gifts. Gold, because He was the King. Frankincense, because He was God. And myrrh, the ointment used for burial. Why had we been prompted to bring this gift? There must be a reason. Maybe you know.

—JOANNA FELTS

Just like a campfire prepared from damp wood, this flame sends out smoke without warmth or light, simply clogging the air with its particles. This type of fire provides no pleasing aroma, but it does provide for closed bronchial passages and watery eyes.

The wise men offered the sweet gift of frankincense to the Christ-child who was

**WHAT...
CAN WE
OFFER TO GOD
AS A SWEET
SAVOUR OR
AROMA PLEAS-
ING TO HIM?**

God in the flesh. What in our lives can we offer to God as a sweet savour or aroma pleasing to him? Micah asks the same question in Micah 6:6, 7. "Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will

the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" The answer is given in verse 8, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" To bring all the right sacrifices and do all the right things is not what God requires, although as we begin to allow righteousness to reign in us, we will offer these as well. But the sweet smelling incense that delights the Lord is when we allow justice and mercy and humility in our walk to become the theme song in our relationship with God.

OFFERING OF MYRRH

Vine's *Dictionary of Biblical Words* tells us that the Greek word for myrrh is *smurna*. This is the gum resin from a shrubby tree that grows in Yemen and neighboring regions in Africa. The taste is bitter and the substance astringent. It has been used in perfumes, as an embalming fluid, and as a painkiller. So, as we follow our passage in Matthew, we have to ask the question, "Why this gift?" The other gifts represented beauty and sweet aroma and were gifts given to honor a king and a deity. Yet, this gift did not signify royalty and deity, but humanity.

Jesus was born as our King and our God, but He was also born as our Savior. He was born to die that we might live in His presence forever. The only way that He could accomplish such a feat was to become like us—to become a human being. The Wise Men offered the gifts of gold, of frankincense, as well as the gift of myrrh, the "bitter perfume" that "came to represent mortality, suffering, and sorrow because it was used in the embalming or anointing of the dead."* Because of its astringent nature, myrrh was used to "postpone the decay and alleviate the odors of the deceased."*

**GOD
ASKS THAT WE
BECOME LIVING
SACRIFICES,
HOLY AND
PLEASING
TO HIM**

How can we offer the Christ-child anything proportionate to this gift of the Magi? God asks that we become living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to him (Romans 12:1). Jesus came to conquer death, to erase its effects on humanity. He asks us to live—in the light of His love, mercy, and sacrifice for us on the cross. As we deny ourselves and take up our crosses and follow Him, we give Christ opportunity to cancel the decay and odor of sin in our lives that we might become a sweet savour to those who perish.

* Tucker, Suzetta. "ChristStory Christmas Symbols—Myrrh." ChristStory Christian Bestiary. 1999. <http://ww2.netnitco.net/users/legend01/myrrh.htm> (31 March 2005).



INTO CHRISTMAS AND BEYOND

The gifts of the wise men or Magi probably did not remain in Jesus' family. Perhaps they were sold to finance the flight into Egypt so that Herod's murderous wrath would not find the baby Jesus. Evidently, the Magi gifts brought no earthly wealth as the Christ-child grew into manhood. As an adult, Jesus had "no place to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58). This was probably both a literal statement and a figurative statement in that He had no earthly belongings.

Yet, the gifts were given through the prompting of God. While Jesus' family and the Magi were probably aware of some of the symbolism surrounding the gifts, they were not prepared for all the realities of the road Jesus would eventually travel.

As we look back on these gifts and the life and death of our Savior, we know that we, too, have gifts to offer. During the Christmas season, we are vividly reminded of the significance of gifts. However, our gifts of faith, righteousness, and sacrificial living should be given freely *throughout* the year to this Child who came to be our Savior.

Joanna Felts serves as ministries coordinator at the Clovis Free Will Baptist Church in California, working with children and adult music/drama programs and leading the choir. She and her pastor/husband Dan have two sons, Ryan (21) and Brett (15). Center District WAC president and California WAC vice-president, Joanna enjoys writing, speaking, decorating, scrapbooking and reading.



Glimpses of a Missionary Heart

Today's Lizzie McAdamses

Lizzie McAdams, in her report to the Free Will Baptist National Association in 1945 said, "One woman wholly in God's hands outnumbers thousands in the enemy's hands." Lizzie McAdams, a great lady of faith, led the way for Free Will Baptists in the early twentieth century. The late Reverend Damon Dodd, whom she led to the Lord, called her a *trailblazer*. What a wonderful description of our missionary wives today. They are, together with their husbands, blazing trails across our land— from sea to shining sea, some even in the sea—spreading the gospel of our Lord, and planting Free Will Baptist churches.

OVERVIEW

An Understanding Partner

As wife of the general director of Home Missions, I hear firsthand from many missionary wives. Having served thirteen years as a home missionary wife, I understand many of their fears and frustrations: moving, finding affordable housing, countless contacts with little results, children's schooling, long distance grandparenting, deficit accounts, locating a meeting place, setting up chairs/classrooms in rented buildings, discovering the high cost of land/development, and realizing a total dependency on a miracle-working God. On the other hand, I also know the joys: prayers answered, lives changed, excitement of a first meeting place/first people who attend, new believers sharing their faith, praying together, seeing God's hand at work, purchasing land, beginning construction, and best of all, finding joy in serving God, trailblazing for Him.

—Wanda Powell, WNAC Office, Antioch, TN



Thank you for supporting all our Home Missionaries with finances and prayers and remembering them during this special week. Will you also partner in prayer with our Home Missions Office Team as they lead and direct this great work? Pray especially for the wives of these men who are away from home much of the time. Include in your prayers our dedicated office staff ministering behind the scenes.

DAY ONE

A Lot Like Yours

My life as a home missionary wife may look a lot like yours. Homeschooling my children, helping with newsletters and church mailings, involving family in the community in order to cross paths with unbelievers, opening my home to guests, and faithfully attending and serving in a local church—these things fill my days just as they fill the days of many other godly women. That's the job description of this missionary wife.

However intense the job, the benefit package far outweighs the work. This may be the only difference between a missionary wife and any other committed Christian lady. I face each day knowing thousands of Free Will Baptists are praying for my family. We have received countless cards of encouragement. My children get birthday cards from churches all over the country. Many times God has met our needs through the WNAC Provision Closet. Words cannot express how awesome these blessings have been to me. I'm so thankful to be a Free Will Baptist home missionary's wife.

—Christy Reynolds, North Kingston, Rhode Island



Pray today for missionaries serving in isolated areas. Pray for family unity, healthy relationships, and balance amid the hectic pace of everyday life and ministry.

DAY TWO

Ministering in Unfamiliar Territory

Much could be said about loneliness in going to an area where culture and people are unfamiliar. I could make a case for how rejected we feel when people don't trust us because we are Free Will Baptists. I could talk about the people who have refused the gospel or closed a door in our face, but I would rather tell you about people like John and Mimi Todaro who have come to know Christ as a result of this ministry. Or Joe Abbey, who is in Heaven because Free Will Baptists sent a missionary family to the Pittsburgh area. Space would not allow for details of the children and adults who have been led to Jesus. We've faced challenges but found great rewards. There is nothing like living in the center of God's will. This gives peace that money can't buy. Missionary work is sometimes lonely and occasionally discouraging. But I am blessed beyond measure as the wife of a home missionary, following the Lord's leading for my life.

—Pam Jones, Greensburg, Pennsylvania



Pray today for cultural adjustment of missionaries who are pioneering uncharted territories for FWB. Even in the USA, regional customs and cultures differ greatly.

WNAC PreThanksgiving Week of Prayer
November 13-17, 2006

Gain a Greater Glimpse

These are only glimpses of a missionary heart, small representations of the trailblazing spirit that fuels FWB Home Missions. Find a complete listing of FWB Home missionaries, staff members, and office personnel, as well as current praise and prayer items at www.wnac.org (*Missionary News-Home Missions*) or call **1-877-767-7674** (7:30-4:00 CST) for information and assistance.



DAY THREE

On the Way to a Miracle

I find it hard to believe that it's already been a year since my family and I drove into Salt Lake City, Utah. We were so excited to finally be here. After a couple of years of praying, planning and traveling to raise our support; it almost seemed like a dream. God was so faithful and we saw Him do so many amazing things along the way, we just couldn't wait to see what lay in store. Our family hit the ground running, leaving little time to adjust. We just jumped into life, beginning with school activities for our boys the morning after we arrived.

When I look back over the past year, to say that it has been easy would not be true. There have been hard days. But there have also been days when I am speechless as I watch God work. I frequently pray that I would not run ahead of God, nor lag behind. With each passing day He is teaching me how to stay in step with Him.

—LeAnn Ledbetter, Salt Lake City, Utah

Pray today for missionary teams. Ask God to give team members unity and encouragement as they utilize and build upon each other's strengths.



DAY FOUR

His Strength Through Our Weakness

I accepted the call to missions in junior high, while at church camp in Missouri. I later studied missions at both Free Will Baptist Bible College and Hillsdale. I researched cross-cultural ministry and ways to reach people of different religions. Nothing, however, prepared me for administrative work at the mission school here on St. Croix. These kids come from very difficult backgrounds and they desperately need Jesus. Balancing a good education and discipline, while trying to witness, often gets very difficult. We have to rely on God to guide us.

Managing two campuses and the church can really begin to wear us down, but God has taken our weaknesses and given us His strength. Every time another student gives his heart to God we know that it is worth it all.

—Dawn Real, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

Pray today for cross-cultural and affiliate missions ministries (schools, various community outreaches). Pray that God would grant His strength to missionary wives, specifically in the area of time management.



DAY FIVE

Unique and Amazing

Being an ambassador for Christ in the US Air Force for the past twenty years has been an amazing experience. Serving in the Protestant Women of the Chapel, an international military ministry, as a Bible study writer and leader has been one of God's greatest blessings in my life. I've met many wonderful women from all over the world. Yet even God's calling is not without sacrifice and heartache. As I write this, Tim is serving in Baghdad, Iraq. Lord willing, by the time you read this he will be home. Loneliness has just about overcome me at times during this deployment. Because of the uniqueness of this lifestyle, I have learned to trust in God's promises more deeply and have experienced His provision abundantly. Thank you for your prayers for Tim and me. I'm deeply humbled by them and count it an honor to partner with you in ministry.

—Ronda Sturgill, Fairborn, Ohio

Pray today for FWB chaplains and their families. Pray for safety and effectiveness during their deployments. Pray that God would give wives unique and amazing opportunities to share Christ within the military community around the world.

A STEP FARTHER



Take your prayer life and devotion to Christ to the next level. Go "A Step Farther" at the 2007 WNAC National Retreat, February 22-24, in Branson, MO. Gail MacDonald, nationally acclaimed speaker and author of several books, including *A Step Farther* and *Higher*, will lead women into the Word and before the Throne.

Gail is married to Christian leader and best selling author Gordon MacDonald, (*Ordering Your Private World, Renewing Your Spiritual Passion*). A former pastor's wife, Gail knows the stresses of ministry and the value of prayer and time alone with God.



Refresh your heart in worship; retreat in the winter beauty of the Ozarks. Pamper yourself at the luxurious Chateau on the Lake Resort and Spa. Enjoy fellowship with hundreds of Women Active for Christ. Browse the book tables and missionary displays. Scout out the sights and shops of Branson. *This is one retreat you won't want to miss.*

ROOM RATES

(TRADITIONAL/DELUXE

two double or one king w/sleeper

1-2 persons \$119 per night+tax

3 persons \$134 per night+tax

4 persons \$149 per night+tax

AMBASSADOR SUITE

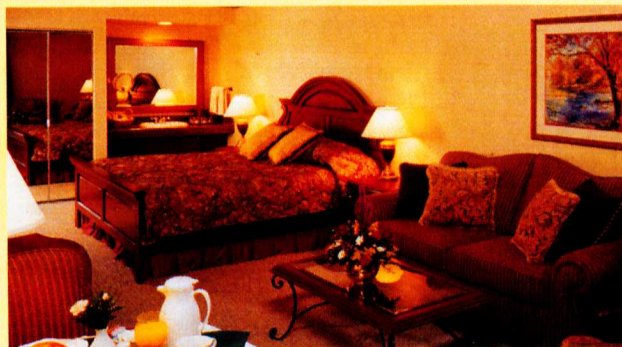
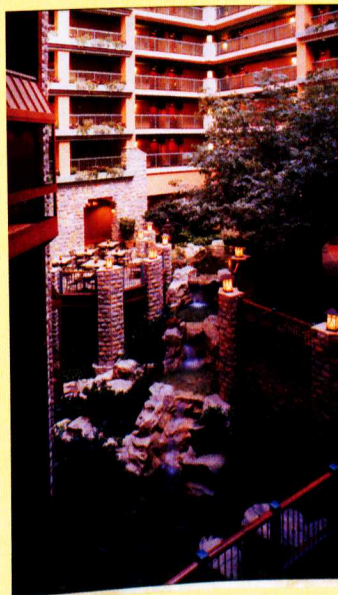
one king bed and sleeper sofa with sitting area and microwave/minifridge kitchenette

1-2 persons \$144 per night+tax

3 persons \$159 per night+tax

4 persons \$174 per night+tax

Rate is per room per night, **NOT** per person as at Ridgecrest. Prices are for lodging only and do not include meals or WNAC retreat fee (see below).



HURRY. MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW. REGISTRATION ENDS JANUARY 22, 2007.

FIRST: MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE CHATEAU RESORT.
1-888-333-LAKE.
YOU MUST ASK FOR WNAC RATES

THEN: COMPLETE FORM AT RIGHT AND MAIL WITH REGISTRATION FEE TO: **WNAC**
P O BOX 5002
ANTIOCH, TN
37011-5002

Name _____

Address _____

Amount Enclosed: \$35 (WAC members) \$50 (non-members)

Church (or WAC group) _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 22, 2007

Make checks payable to WNAC. Retreat Registration fee must accompany this form. Groups may pay with one check, but each person must fill out a form. Fee is non-refundable, but substitutions are allowed.

SPRINGBOARD

LEADERSHIP

ENCOURAGE women to register for the 2007 National WNAC Retreat in Branson, February 22-24. See p. 17. If you cannot attend, prayerfully consider sending someone from your group. This would make a great Christmas gift for your pastor's wife.

PROMOTE *Together With God*, WNAC's new magazine which premieres in January 2007. Find a description of the magazine and its features on the WNAC website.

PURCHASE the Program and Plan Book for the upcoming season for prayer, January- August 2007. See the ad below for more information. If you've never used the Plan Book, this would be an ideal year to begin since the book includes monthly "Adventures in Praying." These are vital for implementing monthly programs. Why not order copies for each woman in leadership?

OBSERVE the 2006 PreThanksgiving Week of Prayer, November 13-17, and support the Lizzie McAdams/ Benjamin Randall offering for FVB Home Missions.

CHECK the WNAC website for updates and info. The site is currently updated with each new issue of the magazine.

CONSIDER a missions project for next year. Contact Steve Lytle (International Missions) steve@fwbgo 1-877-767-7736 or Richard Atwood (Home Missions) richard@nafwb.org 1-877-767-7674 for current needs or ideas.

finding us on the web
just got easier...
www.wnac.org
Email: info@wnac.org

STUDY

HIGHLIGHT the book suggestions on p. 7. Challenge each woman to find the story behind her favorite hymn.

PROMOTE the upcoming *Together in the Word* Bible studies beginning in January 2007. Present meeting options (either monthly or weekly) for these studies.

ENCOURAGE women to do the Bonus Word study on p. 30.

SERVICE

OFFER a gift of sweet-smelling laundry. Volunteer to wash clothes or bedding for elderly, shut-ins, or for your church nursery.

PREPARE Thanksgiving baskets for local outreach. Include a hymnal (or a card with words from a favorite hymn) along with food items.

FIND more service/missions/ prayer/study ideas each month in the WNAC Program and Plan Book.

WNAC NEEDS

PROVISION CLOSET. Twin sheet sets, towel sets and coffee makers.

WNAC OFFICE. Three flat-screen computer monitors, small printer. Sufficient finances for daily office expenses.

MISSIONS

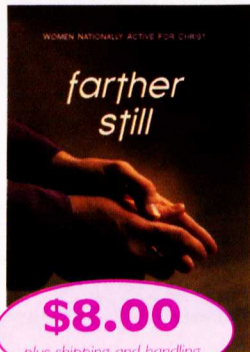
HIGHLIGHT the Focus story (p. 24) concerning women's ministries in Mexico.

PARTNER with a Central Asia Christmas Joy team member (see listing p. 29).

SHARE the "A Bad Haircut" on p. 8. List ordinary-type activities women hold in common with missionaries and women everywhere. Discuss ways these can become avenues for outreach.

ORDER Glimpses of a Missionary Heart cards from the Home Missions department (1-877-767-7674).

TAKE YOUR MEETINGS TO A NEW LEVEL



farther still

the new WNAC Program and Plan Book is now available. This book will guide you through the upcoming Season for Prayer, January-August 2007.

Order today by calling 877-767-7662.

\$8.00

plus shipping and handling

LOOKING FOR LUCY AND MARGE?

You'll find the these long-standing promotional skits inside *Farther Still*, the Program and Plan Book for Jan-Aug 2007.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Email your event name/date/location/contact person to TWG@wnac.org

- NOV:** (2) MISSISSIPPI STATE WAC MEETING, PINE GROVE FVB CHURCH, STATE LINE
(13) INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH
(13-17) PRETHANKSGIVING WEEK OF PRAYER & LIZZIE McADAMS OFFERING FOR NATIONAL HOME MISSIONS
(14) TENNESSEE STATE WAC MEETING, EAST SIDE FVB, ELIZABETHTON
(19) BENJAMIN RANDALL OFFERING FOR NATIONAL HOME MISSIONS
- DEC:** FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE MONTH

PRAYER

PERFORM the skit, "My Name is Christian" from www.wnac.org, in observance of the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, November 13.

OBSERVE the PreThanksgiving Week of Prayer for Home Missions, November 13-17. Encourage women to keep the Glimpses cards in their Bibles and pray for missionary wives.

PRAY for special Christmas outreach activities and observances in homes and churches worldwide.

MAKE sweet smelling sachet or potpourri prayer reminders for your December meeting.

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

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for the wonderful things we found during my last visit. The Provision Closet is such a blessing. We are blessed to have so many groups of women throughout the country that give so generously and faithfully. Thanks for helping make our transition back the states so much easier. Thanks for all you do for the Kingdom.

Tim, Di, Eli, Ethan and Ezekiel Keener
France

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for your gift to our account. You are so thoughtful and generous. We appreciate so much all you do: sending us CoLaborer and providing us with much needed items from the Provision Closet. Recently we picked up some pans, bake ware, Tupperware cups, and a beautiful handmade quilt. Thank you for all you do to reach the nations.

Shane and Joy Davison
France

Dear WNAC,

Ladies, you do a wonderful work. May God continue to bless your ministry. We really appreciate what you do for our Lord. You touch many lives through CoLaborer.

Belk FWB WAC
Alabama

Dear WNAC,

What a wonderful time our children had at VBS raising money for the CA project. Our prayers will be with you all.

Sandy Luna
Harmony FWB, Warren, AR

Dear WNAC,

Every minute of energy toward the WNAC Convention paid off. I really enjoyed it all. Thank you for your service to our women. We're excited about the changes that seem good.

Rebecca Pugh, President
Tennessee Women Active for Christ

Dear WNAC,

The September/October issue of CoLaborer is the best. The CoLaborer article by Sister Gore about her son ["Guilty! A Parent's Worst Nightmare"] really did touch my heart. I have been praying for Brother J. L. and Sister Dot. I also desire the prayers of all women. I have a liver disease that is now causing lung problems.

Barbara Bullock
New Lebanon WAC, Cairo, MS

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for your help with the Hillsdale House. Your contribution is a blessing to our current Missionary in Residence family, the Nichols, and to those who will follow in the future. The goal of the MIR program is to provide a place for furloughed missionary families to live and have access to Hillsdale students. Our hope is that these students will be challenged to participate in the Great Commission, gain cross cultural experience, increase their commitment to Christ and consider the call to missions as a discipline for Christian living. WNAC continues to champion our

missionaries. I want to extend my gratitude to all who contribute to the cause and to you for your leadership.

Timothy W. Eaton, Ph.D.

President, Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College

Dear WNAC,

I was so touched by the last CoLaborer (*really the last three issues*). This one really made me think about what people go through—so much more than what I experience most days. My favorite was Eddie's [Bowerman's] article about *how* not *why*. He really brought up some issues about how we see our problems and how God wants us to see them. In light of the things he's been through, his article holds a lot of weight with me. Thank you, WNAC for publishing the personal testimonies of our FWB people. We are all just normal people, serving God the best we can, in light of what He shows us to do. I'm awed and humbled by God's ways of teaching us. May I be ever more mindful of His will in my life....I was re-reading the book, *What Happens When Women Pray*, and was reminded that there are so many suffering people who can praise God through it all as they go through a learning experience. Thank you for all that you do, all of WNAC. I appreciate you and am so thankful for you ladies. I love you! (*In an earlier note, Tammy also said:*) Thank you so much for allowing me to choose items from the Provision Closet (and for the gift card). I am reminded of your kindness and the generosity of women all over the US each day, when I make up the beds of my boys. The green and blue sets and soft Velux blankets are beautiful in their room. For everything I have from the closet I say thank you from the bottom of my heart. For a missionary setting up house so many different times (overseas and stateside) the Closet is a huge blessing.

Tammy Lancaster
Uruguay

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for the gifts to the bookstore here in Nantes for paying for Bibles—our best-seller. God bless all of you.

Patsy Vanhook
France

Dear WNAC,

I enjoyed the conference [WNAC National Retreat] so very much. I was able to attend all the sessions. I had never before heard Lynette Morgan speak. She was great. The music was superb. I don't know when I have felt so blessed as I did [that] weekend. I hope that I can attend the Ridgecrest retreat again.

June Griggs
Swannanoa, NC

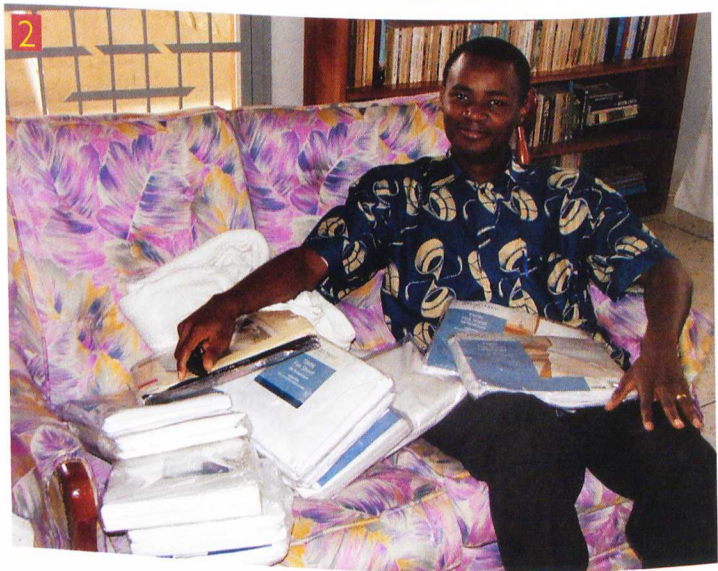
Dear WNAC,

We are excited to tell you about the things that are happening in Canyon, TX. We are working on the building, turning it into a church—pouring concrete floors, putting in plumbing, heat and air, and doing many other needed things. Thank you so much for your prayers and help that make this work possible.

Jeff, Sondra, Whitney and Alyssa Cates
Canyon, TX

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



☀ State Line District WAC (AL) held its 6th annual missions cookout, August 26, at Goodwater FWB Church. Attendance topped 150 and an offering at the event totalled \$1,143. This amount, along with gifts and proceeds from local WAC groups, netted \$13,831.87 for the Alabama Acts 1:8 program.

☀ Ever wonder where those Provision Closet items go? One thermal blanket and some white sheets went to Cote d'Ivoire to help Free Will Baptist doctor Dr. Gabriel Dongui open his medical clinic. Missionary Carol Pinkerton hand-delivered these unexpected items. (Read Dr. Gabriel's story in the premier issue of *Together With God*.)

Presently, Dr. Gabriel's clinic is closed, due to a toxic waste dumping that claimed at least eight lives. Pray that God will enable the soon reopening of this medical ministry outreach.

☀ Harmony FWB WAC, Rye, AR, recently celebrated its one-

year anniversary. The group organized August 2, 2005, affiliating with Arkansas' Saline District and WNAC. In one year, the group's membership grew to 30, including 10 teen and junior girls. This energetic group filled Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, bought school supplies for Hurricane Katrina victims, supported five missionaries, conducted projects for the church's building fund, held their first ever Mother Daughter Tea with 60 in attendance and recently hosted their first district meeting. Read more about this special group currently featured in *Spotlight* at www.wnac.org.

☀ Ladies of the New Life Fellowship FWB Church, Statesboro, GA, sponsored a baby shower for the Provision Closet this past July. Anita Price of the group commented, "We hope these items will be a blessing to all who receive them."

Likewise, Sherwood Forest WAC, New Bern, NC, held a Tupperware shower for the



Closet, responding to a need for pitchers and tumblers. Ladies of Lakehills FWB Church, Cedar Park, TX, planned a tea party, asking each woman to bring a gift for the Closet. Women from DeSoto First FWB, MO, organized a trip to tour the WNAC office and hand deliver a check for the Provision Closet.

Other recent Provision Closet contributors include Ruth's Chapel WAC, New Bern, NC; North Warren WAC, Warren, MI; Mary Wilkinson Auxiliary of Ebenezer FWB Church, Glennville, GA; First FWB WAC, Greeneville, TN; Hilcrest WAC, Wagoner, OK; Pleasant Hill



PICTURED: 1. State Line District (AL) missions chairman Cynthia Knowles presents gift to Rev. Troy Bordeaux, missions cookout special speaker. 2. Dr. Gabriel Dongui (Cote d'Ivoire) proudly displays gifts from the Provision Closet 3. Lighthouses and sea shells adorn tables of Saline District WAC meeting at Harmony FWB Church (AR). Attendees wore yellow, reflecting the theme, "Let the Son Shine In." 4. Women from DeSoto First WAC (MO) present Provision Closet check to Marjorie Workman. 5. Women of New Life Fellowship FWB Church (GA) display Provision Closet baby shower gifts. 6. WV state president Jody Sullivan addresses crowd at their annual fall retreat. 7. WV retreat attendees add "green" leaves to the money tree.

WAC, Dover, TN; First FWB WAC, Seffner, FL; Corner Stone WAC, Murfreesboro, TN; Woodhaven WAC, Woodhaven, MI; Heart and Home group of Pine Level FWB Church, Alma, GA; First FWB WAC, Greenville, SC; as well as several gifts from individuals.

☀️ Around ninety women gathered at Camp Virgil Tate, Cross Lanes, WV, September 8-9, for the annual WV Fall Retreat. Following the theme of Extreme Christian Maturity, WNAC representatives Marjorie Workman and Sarah Fletcher spoke on prayer, attitudes and actions.

The jam-packed overnight retreat also included testimonies

and special music from "Soul Purpose," greetings from missionary Alice Smith, a Galilean bonfire service, and a Spoken Word worship service in which several women shared selected Scripture passages.

Leaders revealed plans for next year's retreat noting a change in location. Due to rising rental costs at the current camp facility, future retreats will be held in local churches.

Women filled two money trees, contributing \$450 Friday evening for Shirley Williams, ESL missionary to Japan and \$625 Saturday morning for Central Asia Christmas Joy.

Share your Labors of Love in WNAC's new magazine **Together With God**

Send photos and news of local, district or state events, outreaches, or projects.

EMAIL: **TWG@wnac.org** POSTAL: **Together With God, P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002.**

NOTE: For photos taken with digital cameras: JPG files are preferable to prints. Send as an email attachment (highest resolution possible).



DEBE'S DELIGHTS

Debe Taylor
WNAC President

*"thy commandments
are my delights."*

Psalms 119:143b

*It's a world of laughter
A world of tears
It's a world of hopes
And a world of fears
There's so much
that we share
That it's time we're aware
It's a small world after all.*

*There is just one moon
And one golden sun
And a smile means
Friendship to everyone
Though the moun-
tains divide
And the oceans are wide
It's a small world after all.*

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

words and music by Richard M. and
Robert B. Sherman

It's A Small World

I've been thinking about this song quite a bit lately. No, I haven't been longing for Disneyland or Disney World, and I'm not entering my second childhood. (At least, I don't think I am.) I've been weighing this song in light of the Great Commission. The world is small. I am truly convinced that God believes we can accomplish the task He gave us. "...Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

As a child I learned that dropping a rock into a pool of water causes ripples. God's plan to evangelize the world also involves "ripple effect." Acts 1:8 declares, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (emphasis mine).

Close examination of Scripture reveals that this ripple effect for world evangelism begins at home. So important is the Word of God that Moses directed the children of Israel (and us) to do everything possible to remember God's Word and incorporate it into everyday life. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 confirms that teaching should take place when we get up; when we sit in our homes; when we take a walk; and when we go to bed. We can teach our children in so many ways. Allow them to hear us call their names in prayer; let them know that "God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good." Give them examples of God's Word, alive in their lives; read the Bible through with them. "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). In other words, begin at home.

As the home waters begin to ripple, the church will be affected. Emilie Barnes wrote:

I remember an elderly woman who sat in the front row of the church when I was teaching *More Hours in My Day* seminar. She took notes the whole time. I later found out that she was 92 years old. I thought, at age 92 who cares about organization? But she truly had a teachable spirit, and I am sure she went out to teach someone else. Training young women in the church is an important part of the responsibility of spiritually mature women. Our main goal is to show the younger women how to live out the gospel in a lifestyle that is pleasing and truthful to God's Word.

She would get a hearty amen from the Apostle Paul. "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children" (Titus 2:3-4).

Reaching out farther, the ripple touches our community. Paul wrote to the church at Colosse concerning making a difference in their community. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Colossians 4:5). If we are the only Jesus others see, will they want to know Him? Be involved in your community—touch your world. Nowadays, we have so many opportunities—food banks, Toys for Tots, rescue mission, shelters for abused and battered, juvenile detention centers, nursing homes, crisis pregnancy centers, etc. What will the ripple effect do in your community?

"Though the mountains divide and the oceans are wide," the effect of Acts 1:8 should ripple to the world. David Bryant, founder of Concerts of Prayer International, said, "God's primary goal is not to get us into the Great Commission, but to get the Great Commission into us."

How can we touch the world?

With our purses. Not everyone can go, but everyone can give. "Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

With our praise. Encourage a missionary today. "...And edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake..." (1 Thessalonians 5:11b-13a).

With our prayers. Every missionary will tell you that if they can have only one thing from you, they would choose your prayers. "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified..." (2 Thessalonians 3:1a).

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Revelation 5:9). What are you doing to touch the world? It's a small world, after all.

It's
Your
Life!

DEUTERONOMY 32:48-49

Strangers in the Land

BY
SARA CUEVA

us here for a reason and with a purpose. God loves the lost. He doesn't care about their color, or their nationality or what language they speak.

My first day of high school was better, because by this time I was a little more familiar with all these changes. With a lot of effort, I finally graduated.

God has called us to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. All of us should answer to this commandment, because in our schools, jobs, or colleges, millions of people need the Lord. We don't have to travel far to be a missionary. We simply need to go into our neighborhoods and find foreigners who need the Lord.

In deference to the world, who often sees immigrants as a problem, we need to prove ourselves responsible with the opportunity God has given us, since one day we will give an account to God.

I learned firsthand that when we know Jesus and obey what He says, everything turns out good, just as He promised. Joshua 1:8 says, *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shall make thy way prosperous and then thou shall have good success."*

During 2004, my family studied at the Gwen Hendrix Bible Institute in South Carolina. Now we live in the State of Virginia where I am helping my parents plant a Hispanic church.

In these years since coming to the United States, I have seen the love and the power of God transforming my life, and the lives of many others. I can now understand the commandment of the Lord in Deuteronomy 10:19 that says *"Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."*

Sara Cueva lives with her family in Woodbridge, VA, where she is involved in a Hispanic church planting effort in connection with the Bethel FWB Church. She is the oldest daughter of Joint Project Home Missionaries Diego and Maria Cueva.



In December 1998, my parents, answering the call of the Lord, decided to move to the United States. We are from Quito, Ecuador, South America.

We are a family of six, my two parents, my two sisters who were six and eight at the time, my brother who was three, and me. I was 13 years old and suddenly, my whole world was changing.

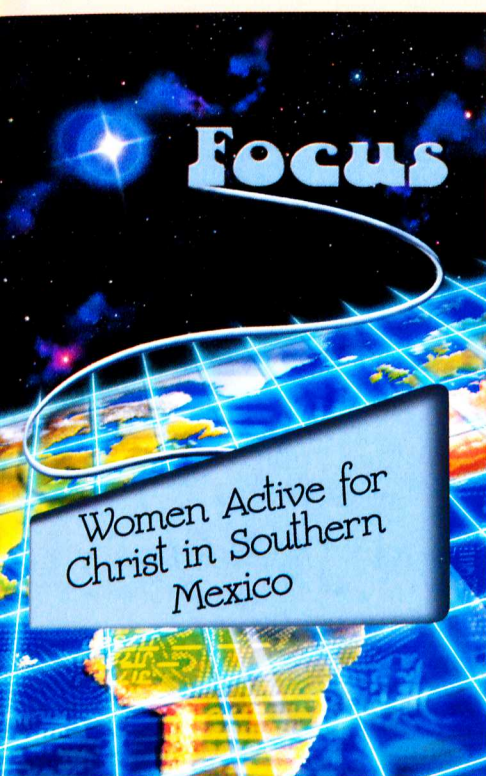
My friends and the rest of my relatives lived in Ecuador. I was used to everything there. Although I'd had the opportunity of getting to know some missionaries (the majority American) who in obedience to God had come to share the truth about the gospel of salvation, I never thought about their feelings. I did not understand how they must have felt in a country so different from their own. I never realized what a big decision they had made.

When we arrived in the United States, I still had to finish 8th grade. It was so hard for me because I didn't know this new language. We needed to find a school that offered classes in English as a second language.

We finally found a school that could help me, although that meant riding a new school bus, having different teachers, and meeting new people that I couldn't even talk to. I was really scared.

My second day there, a group of girls whom I had never even met before wanted to fight me during lunch. For my parents and me, this was very difficult. But we knew it was going to be okay because the Lord who had led us here would give us strength to keep going. I ended up being homeschooled. That year, everything changed for me—the language, the people, the culture, the food, the weather, the seasons. Everything.

The summer ended and I had to start high school. I was very nervous. But I knew that God had brought



Pray:

—for Eufemia Munoz Tapia as she leads the *Feminil* of southern Mexico.

—for students at the newly reopened IBLAC Bible Institute in Altamira, Tamps.

—for Bud and Ruth Bivens as they work with leaders and in the Bible Institute

—for those in Mexico affected by recent torrential rains. One FWB church, several believers' homes, as well as parts of the Seminary of the Cross Bible Institute in Reynosa sustained substantial damages due to severe flooding.

—for the Lord to call out workers, because the harvest truly is white and the laborers are few.



A Blessed Retreat

Below a beautiful hand painted banner of a lady in a little boat, missionary Ruth Bivens addressed the Mexican National Association Women's Retreat. Ninety-six ladies registered for the March 17-18, 2006, event at the IBLAC Bible Institute campus in Altamira, Tamps. Mexico.

Following the theme, "Let's Go Sailing," Ruth spoke about packing for the voyage called life. As she opened suitcases loaded down with visual aids, she described important and useful things women want to take on this journey: faith, family, friends, and sweet memories.

Opening a large bag full of concrete blocks, she called attention to unnecessary baggage women sometimes carry through life: heavy weights of personal pain, bitterness, unforgiveness, and low self-esteem. She then directed listeners to the liberating power of Jesus who helps followers leave those things behind.

Ruth described other luggage—gifts and abilities bestowed upon each person. Pulling a beautiful embroidered pillow from her backpack, she demonstrated how women can either carry these hidden gifts, never receiving their benefits, or unpack them, using them and blessing those nearby.

In the second session Ruth shared how Peter stepped out of the boat to walk on water toward Jesus. She challenged ladies to take similar risks—to step out of their comfort zones and serve the Lord in ways they have never dared to try before.

During the Friday afternoon session, ladies chose from three workshops for further study. Unaware of the retreat theme or the direction Mrs. Bivens planned to go with the title, ladies planned workshops that coordinated perfectly with the main sessions. Leaders felt humbled at the working of the Holy Spirit.



Saturday morning, attendees boarded a charter bus bound for a well-manicured acreage on a lake shore. There, women joined in prayer circles under the beautiful trees. Many of the women wept as they gave testimony of the way the Spirit had ministered healing to their hearts during the retreat. At the end of the morning prayer session, ladies enjoyed a lovely meal served near the lake. This proved a sweet time of blessing and fellowship for everyone in attendance.

A New Project

Recently, the *Feminil* (women's organization) of the National Association of Mexico undertook a new national project. Ladies in the churches had been working, raising money and they needed a place to invest it. President Eufemia Munoz Tapia and other national officers attended the biweekly pastors' meeting to seek advice.

The pastors recommended they put their money toward the planned construction of a kitchen and large open-air dining pavilion on the campus of the IBLAC Bible Institute. This will accommodate meals for the national convention and various other outdoor youth events. Convention crowds of 800 or more cannot easily be served in the present IBLAC dining room designed for 30 students.

According to Mary Elena Vasquez Guzman, member of the Sinai Church Feminil, each church group formulates individual plans for raising money. Some women make and sell handcrafts; other groups hold bazaars selling good, used clothing and donated household goods. Mary Elena noted that the Sinai women have had greatest success in selling meals following Sunday evening services.

The national women's group planned an Independence Day celebration, September 16, on the IBLAC campus. Women served traditional foods, using the event as a fundraiser for the new kitchen.

ABOVE LEFT: retreat crowd. LEFT: Ruth Bivens speaks to women. RIGHT: Institute class. BELOW: IBLAC Bible Institute campus.



Other Prayer Concerns



—Pray for holiday outreaches in mission works worldwide and for further contacts with unsaved families who attend:

- cantatas and gospel concerts
- children's programs
- Christmas dramas
- Thanksgiving/Christmas meals
- other church sponsored events

—Pray for staff needs (principal and teacher vacancies) at the Christian school in St. Croix, VI.

—Pray for the fragile political situation in Cote d'Ivoire. Pray also that cleanup from August's illegal toxic waste dump in Abidjan will be expedited and neighborhoods restored.

—Pray for believers in North India who are experiencing famine conditions due to lack of rain.

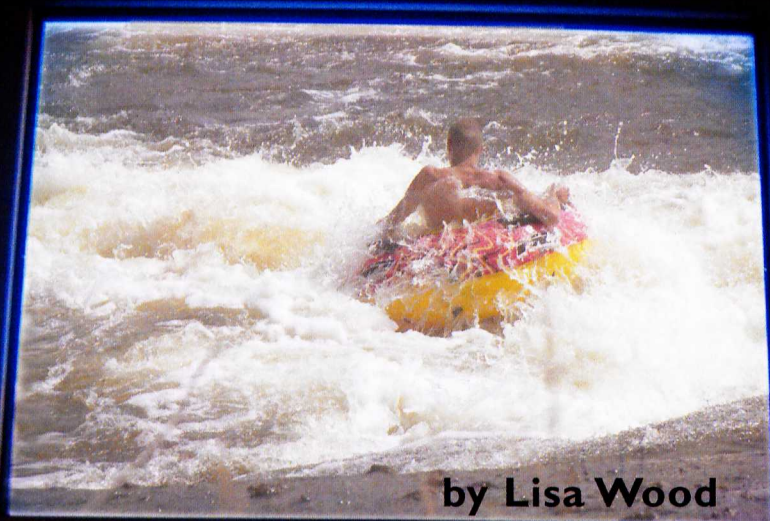
—Pray for new itinerate missionaries seeking to raise monies quickly so they can go to their fields of service.

—Pray for God's guidance in the selection of a director of development for FWBIM.

—Pray for Central Asian believers facing increased persecution from government and/or militant groups.

—Pray for generous gifts and givers to the Lizzie McAdams offering.





by Lisa Wood

SOUL SURVIVOR

FLOATING ADRIFT ON A RAFT, SOMEWHERE OFF THE COAST OF BELIZE, HE'S BEEN ABANDONED. HIS GOAL: SURVIVAL. USING ONLY A FEW ODDBALL ITEMS, FORAGING FOR FOOD, MAKING A SHELTER FROM WHATEVER HE CAN FIND, HE MUST LIVE OFF THE LAND (OR WATER) FOR THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS.

Lost At Sea

The show on TV stirs my intrigue and interest. Why anyone would put themselves in such a situation is beyond me, no matter what the pay.

My focus shifts from the TV to the table—to the sea of bills before me. Financially, things are tight. At times the burdens seem overwhelming. Given the choice between becoming shark bait and being poor, the latter does sound slightly more appealing. But, watching this adventure program I note similarities. It's all about survival.

Eight years ago, a difficult pregnancy, emergency C-section, and no maternity coverage landed us a spot on life's Soul Survivor reality series. Our medical bills set us adrift into a sea of debt. Since then, every month, it's been a struggle to stay afloat.

We've heard friends say that when you've been married for ten years, things tend to get a little easier. It's been twelve for us and we are still waiting for some relief.

Time for a commercial. It's for an office supply chain, the one where there is an "easy" button. Believe me, there's no such button. I have looked for it and even prayed for it to spontaneously show up at the first of the month when the mortgage is due.

Now back to our survival saga. Our two-income family is considered the norm, yet sometimes even that second salary doesn't pay all the bills. My husband and I both work 30 miles away from home. The "liquid gold" we pump into our vehicles every few days is another source of anxiety. Deciding how much to spend at the grocery store is like watching a slow leak of air that's causing our raft to take on water. Home equity loans and credit cards might get us by for a while. But, it's like bailing water with a thimble. We're still sinking.

Rescue Boat

A rescue boat sits within sight of the survival expert's raft, although he cannot seek help unless absolutely necessary. In this episode,

there's a storm brewing. The predicted force of the winds will be enough to send the life raft miles away from the safety team if not tied to the boat. Reluctantly, the castaway agrees to be helped.

Surely, this must be the Lord's hand...his timing...airing this particular show on this evening when I'm watching. My Wednesday night preschool class has been studying Jesus' miracles. Our lesson this past week was about Jesus walking on water.

We adults all know the story. Jesus feeds the five thousand and goes into a mountain to pray. The disciples are crossing the sea to Capernaum. He sees the disciples struggling to row the boat with the wind against them. Jesus walks upon the sea to the ship to save them and the twelve are afraid when they see Him. He goes up unto them into the ship; the wind ceases; they are amazed in themselves beyond measure, and they wonder. *"For they considered not the miracle of the loaves; for their heart was hardened"* (Mark 6:52).

How like us—astonished at what the Lord could do, though they'd just witnessed one of His miracles. The same Savior has carried us through so many difficult times, performing wonders in our lives at every turn. So, why is it so hard to believe He will do so now? He is the ultimate rescue boat. In every storm He longs to tether us to His side to keep us from drifting away. We reluctantly throw Him a line, wishing we could have weathered the storm on our own accord. Then when the storm is over, we pull in our line and start to float away again. If we were wise, we would stay close to our Refuge instead of heading out on our own way.

Psalm 34:19 declares, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

Emergency Provisions

A new Christian friend asked me the other day, "Are you supposed to give a tithe when you know if you do, you won't be able to pay your bills?" I answered that we must give from the firstfruits of our labor, and God will provide for our bills if we are faithful to give.

Now here I am, worrying about money. How hypocritical is that? If I could only remember what Paul wrote in Philippians 4:6 "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God." Be careful, or anxious, for nothing? For me, the world's biggest worry-wart, this would be quite an accomplishment. But, it can be done. We are called to have faith as a child. Do children worry about money? No, they think there is a money machine called an ATM, that gives you what you need.

Learning not to worry about finances is not about ignoring bills, hoping they will go away. It's not about trying to keep up with Brother and Sister Jones, whose new SUV gets four miles per gallon and practically drives itself. It is about giving God control of my life

and my budget and giving thanks for His provision. Jesus left His glorious home at the right hand of the Father to be born in a barn. What better example of humility?

Compared to most people in the world, we have it good. In many countries, a 1500 square-foot house and a ten-year-old car would be considered luxurious. Besides, if we were rich, would I trust the Lord at all? Hollywood is evidence that money and fame are not survival solutions.

James 2:5 says, "Hearken, my beloved bretheren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" If we have Him, we have more than we need.

The episode is over. The music starts to play. But I'm singing another song—my favorite hymn.

I'd rather have Jesus
than silver or gold.
I'd rather be His than
have riches untold.
I'd rather have Jesus
than houses or land.
I'd rather be led by His
nail-pierced hand.

Than to be the king
of a vast domain,
or be held in sin's dread sway.

I'd rather have Jesus
than anything
this world affords today.

"I'D RATHER HAVE JESUS" by George Beverly Shea
from REJOICE The Free Will Baptist Hymnbook



Lisa Wood lives in Fulton, MS with her husband Steve and sons Tyler (9) and Brady (4). The family stays active in the Fulton FWB Church where Steve is a deacon and Lisa teaches Wednesday night preschool and sings with the praise team. An ophthalmic technician, Lisa enjoys reading and songwriting.

Sharing Your Joy

**Pray for this team of women
who will travel to Central Asia
January 10-20, 2007,
to assemble and distribute
WNAC Christmas Joy.**

Bobby Bowen
Huntington, WV

Ann Brown
Spotsylvania, VA

Janice Buck
Chocowinity, NC

Jayne Cash
Washington, NC

Phyllis Detherage
Huntsville, AL

Angela Emerick
Central Asia

Nelda Highsmith
Winterville, NC

Jean McCraney
Decatur, AL

Lynette Morgan
France

Jody Sullivan
Huntington, WV

Marjorie Workman
Antioch, TN

Phyllis York
LaVergne, TN

From Arizona to Pennsylvania, they came to set their hearts.



Almost 400 women, representing 15 states and six international regions, attended the 2006 WNAC National Retreat, September 21-23, at Ridgecrest, NC.

The phrase "set your hearts" resounded repeatedly from the crowd as women responsively read Bible passages and sang unto the Lord. Special music by four soloists, a mother-daughter duet, and a woman's chorale complemented the session themes. Rebecca Pugh, WNAC vice president, served as worship leader and music coordinator. She also composed a special theme song, "Set My Heart," for the retreat.

Missionary speaker Lynette Morgan shared her heart, her tears and her passion for the world as she led women to know and understand what it means to truly set our hearts on God. Using the example of the children of Israel, she noted that it's easier to remember the bad things rather than the blessings. "Setting our hearts is a choice," she concluded. "Today, we have to make that choice."

Attendees gained a glimpse of the world through video clips of Central Asian orphans (CA Christmas Joy), Ivorian children (Hanna Project efforts), and women throughout the world who have set their hearts on God.

During one Friday session, FWBIM Mediterranean Team members Joy Davison, Dana Portell, and Becky Derby shared personal missionary heart experiences of the past few years in France.

A special drama presentation, "A Winning Army," written by Monica Bryan, traced the history of Free Will Baptist mission work from its roots in the Anabaptist movement to the present day. In reader's theatre fashion, participants from North and South Carolina portrayed scenes from the lives of FWBIM missionary pioneers Laura Belle Barnard, Pop Willey, LaVerne Miley and others.

Women gave generously from their hearts. At the close of the drama, an offering for the 13 missionaries who attended the retreat exceeded \$4,000. Throughout the weekend, women decorated a Christmas Joy tree with money gifts totaling \$2,545.

Attendees refreshed their hearts through afternoon and late night fellowship. Some enjoyed puzzles and games; others shopped. Several women took advantage of free facials, while many frequented the onsite coffee shop. One group enjoyed a spontaneous prayer meeting as they sang and shared together in the prayer garden. A room full of exhibits and displays gave women opportunity to browse and buy books or meet and talk with individual missionaries, WNAC staff and representatives of three FWB childcare facilities. Thursday evening fun time with Sheri Woolard and friends (NC) featured comedy skits and a mock fashion show.

Women came to set their hearts on God and left challenged to set their "hearts toward the highway," going into all the world, declaring His glory and proclaiming His salvation every day.



"A heart that pursues God can be trusted."

—Lynette Morgan

"I couldn't love the masses of people until I loved my Savior dearly."

—Joy Davison

"I encourage the sisters of the United States to set their hearts on God because He is our only refuge. You have to support us in prayer."

—Central Asian woman



One of the greatest things about Free Will Baptist women is their diligence in meeting the needs of our missionaries. Whether in household items for the Provision Closet, gifts of time, designated offerings throughout the year, or special offerings (*sometimes two at the same event*), I've witnessed our women give sacrificially. Our rich history paints a picture of women giving, sometimes when it seemed they had little to offer. Giving is our heritage, and one I hope we continue to pass on to the generations who follow us.

While always making sure that our missionaries' physical and material needs are met, let's also think about meeting those needs that might not be so easily seen, and probably won't ever be requested.

WNAC GROUP MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS.

A home mission church might never think to ask for a *CoLaborer/Together*

With God group subscription for its women, but what greater way to introduce new Free Will Baptists to their sisters in Christ and show them the bigger picture of how they came to be.

PHOTO CARDS. Help a missionary feel like she knows your group by sending Christmas cards and enclosing a picture of your group. Take the picture at the beginning of your meeting, and while everyone else addresses envelopes, one woman can run to the nearest instant photo developing spot and print just enough pictures to go in the cards. This can be a rich blessing that's not very expensive.

MK PLANE TICKET. Is there an MK in college who needs a plane ticket home for Christmas? If your group commits to this early in the fall, Missionary Mom's heart will be lighter for several weeks anticipating a son or daughter's arrival.

GIRLFRIEND FELLOWSHIP. Perhaps a home missionary wife lives near enough to include her in a ladies' group shopping day. Treat your missionary to lunch at her favorite restaurant and an afternoon of girlfriend fellowship.

BOOKS, BIBLE STUDIES, AND MAGAZINES. Are there books, Bible studies or magazines that your missionary friend might enjoy? Magazine pictures and stories can keep the missionary abreast of cultural changes so they aren't so surprised when they arrive home for stateside assignment.



CRAFT SUPPLIES.

Does your missionary friend have a hobby? Cross stitch materials, yarns, scrap booking supplies,

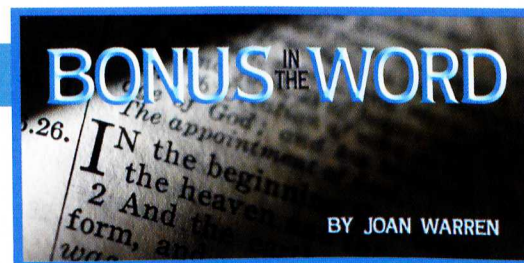
fabrics—all of these are scarce in some parts of the world. Just as you need to relax and rest your mind with an activity you enjoy, so does the missionary.

PROVERBS tells us that a merry heart "doeth good like a medicine." Every woman wants to feel loved, and who doesn't enjoy a lift in her spirit? Let's use our creativity and generosity to encourage merry hearts among our missionary sisters.

Diana Bryant, Florida WAC president, writes from experience. Pastor's wife at Ryanwood Fellowship FWB, Vero Beach, FL, she's led her WAC group in several creative missionary giving projects.



A Heart That Pleases God



1.A Generous Heart

Matthew 5:42

Matthew 19:21

Luke 6:38

2 Corinthians 9:7

2.A Steadfast Heart

1 Corinthians 15:58

1 Peter 5: 8, 9

Galatians 5:1

1 Thessalonians 5:21

3.A Courageous Heart

2 Chronicles 19:11b

2 Chronicles 32:7

Deuteronomy 31:6

Philippians 1:28

4.A Loving Heart

Matthew 22:37

Matthew 22:39

Matthew 5:44

1 Thessalonians 3:12

Joan Warren is a longtime WAC leader and Bible teacher from Oilton, OK.

THE INVITATION



Diane Thomas Bridgman

Reader, one morning not long ago I sat in my place of prayer after a long conversation with God. I wrapped my hands around a mug of coffee, drew my feet to curl underneath me and looked out the large front window beside my chair. I saw a pair of thrashers diligently making a nest in the boxwood shrubbery. They were fascinating to watch. I sat there, feeling absolutely content.

Over the years, as I have spoken to women's groups and shared some of the trials of my life, someone inevitably asks how I have been able to handle them. Most people will say to me, "I would go crazy." I usually smile, knowing that they would not, because this is not an option. It seems that very few periods of my life have been without trauma and drama. So how can I be content, sitting and watching birds?

Reader, from this place in my chair I can look out and take pleasure in what I see. Once when I was so sick and could not leave the house, my husband planted a beautiful flower garden in the corner of the yard. Irises from his mother's house and some azaleas from an old Sunday school teacher grow there. Both women

have since passed away, but memories of them are so fresh. When I see the blooms, this pleases me. The treasured spot also contains a festive garden flag which I change with each season.

Turning my head in the other direction I can see out the back patio door. This view includes two bird feeders, some wind chimes and a whimsical frog statue sitting atop a planter. I see my tomatoes; I love to watch them grow.

My gaze returns indoors. In front of me I see a music box. My treasured books lie in neat stacks all over this room. I am never bored when a book is close-by. I have just finished reading my Bible, now stationed on the table beside me. How can I be content? I am content because I have surrounded myself with the things that I love and enjoy.

Reader, I smooth my hand over my worn Bible, acknowledging the reason for my contentment. It's because, at age twelve, I set my heart upon Jesus and invited Him in.

Every morning I come to this leather chair and talk to Him. I finish the last sip of my coffee and rise to face this new day.

Diane Thomas Bridgman lives in Grifton, NC with her husband Richard. A writer and speaker to Christian women, Diane plays an active role in WNAC, serving as local study chairman at her church, Grifton FWB, Palmer District study chairman and NC state field worker. Diane is the mother of two sons, Christopher and Brian, and the proud grandmother of Nathanael and Hannah.

A NEW NAME

A good name is better than precious ointment. (Ecclesiastes 7:1)

IN THE WORKS



**Marjorie H.
Workman**

Executive Secretary-Treasurer

"We're having a baby!" someone announces. What are you going to name her? Parents will select a name that sounds good, or one that's popular, or possibly one that's unusual. Some parents choose Biblical names. Others purchase name books to peruse. In our culture, names are, for the most part, just a blank label.

In biblical times, names indicated an individual's character, function or destiny. Naming was a token of command and authority. God gave Adam the authority to name the animals as they passed in front on him. Adam also named Eve, his wife.

Names often revealed the traits of that child, like Esau (*hairy*). Sometimes given names related to events in the course of a nation, like Ichabod (*the glory is departed*). Isaiah gave his son a prophetic name, Shear-jash-ub (*a remnant shall return*). Hosea gave symbolic names to his children: son Jezreel (*God sows*), daughter Lo-Ruhamah (*no mercy*), and son Lo-Aammi (*not my people*).

God changed some Bible characters' names Himself: Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, and Jacob to Israel. He gave names to some before their birth—John the Baptist and the Messiah. He sent the Prophet Nathan to change Solomon's name to Jedidiah (*because of the Lord*).

People are not the only ones with name changes. Many churches have changed their names or dropped a denominational designation. *Community* and *Fellowship* seem to be the current church buzz names. Several years back, Baptist Book Stores changed their name to LifeWay Christian Stores. Name changes are not isolated to the religious community. Good Morning America is now GMA. And due to buyouts, a growing number of retail department stores now bear the name of Macy's.

Why change a name? All in an effort to reach as many people as possible. LifeWay changed "to reflect an expanded product line and to expand the customer base to Christians who are uncomfortable with the Baptist denominational appellation."*

*www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist_namechange
Reference for Biblical names: Unger's Bible Dictionary

Sometimes you have to change or die. Remember the diet chocolate candy—Ayds? This company liked their name and refused to change it, even as culture shifted and AIDS, a same-sounding word, added new connotations. Can you find an Ayds chocolate candy today?

Women Nationally Active for Christ is birthing a new name for **CoLaborer** magazine. Why? We want to expand our readership. For some time we have agonized over our inability to reach the younger postmodern woman. At the same time, we have experienced a slip-page in **CoLaborer** subscriptions—we don't want this trend to continue. It is time.

Since the first issue of **Co-Laborer** in 1961, this publication has served our women well. Did you know that it replaced two pieces of literature, the *Yearbook* and *Newsletter*? The goal of WNAC continues to stay flexible and current in order to meet the needs of our women of all ages. The first **Co-Laborer** fulfilled a dream of many years. It began as a 9"x 6" quarterly magazine with a varying number of pages, usually 34-40.

The first *new look* for **Co-Laborer** came in January 1987 when the magazine's dimensions expanded to letter-size and publication became bimonthly. Editor Lorene Miley wrote in her editorial, "We confirm our past commitment: to present missions information and challenge in such a way that each woman will fulfill her unique place in the Great Commission, and to enrich the spiritual life of each woman."

Another big change came in 2004—an aesthetic change that was long overdue. **CoLaborer** became a full-color magazine. Minor changes have occurred within her pages all through her history, a column added or removed, font changes, and even paper changes.

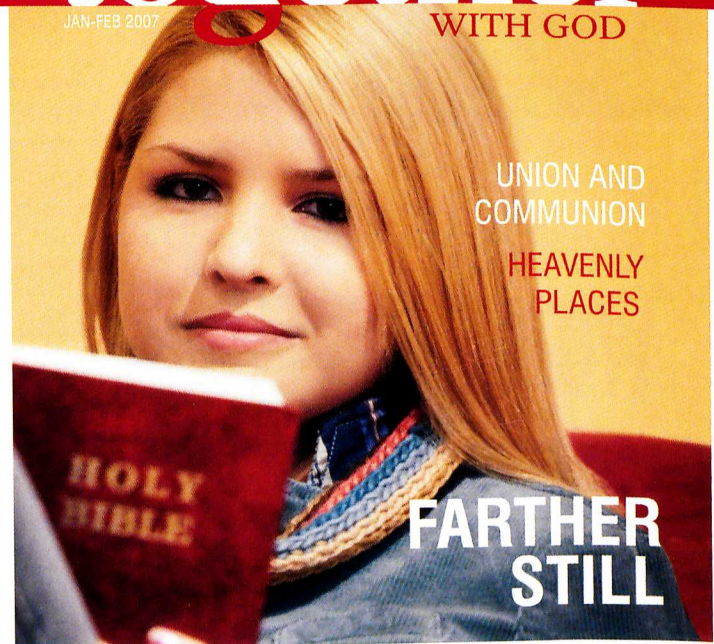
Now her time has come for a significant change—her name. **CoLaborer** will become **Together with God** beginning January 2007. We are women working together with God to build His kingdom. The name comes from 1 Corinthians 3:9, "Laborers together with God"—our WNAC watchword. I hope you like her name.

together

JAN-FEB 2007

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