

November 2008

life at CENTRAL

Central Baptist Church, Pretoria

life@central.org.za

Joy

"Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace,
Goodwill toward men"

Peace on earth

Peace

Great Joy



"For there is born to you today
in the city of David a Saviour ,
who is Christ the Lord"

Peace



PASTOR'S CORNER

Senior Pastor: Charles de Kiewit



Dear friends

Many of us can identify with “the third little pig” who had the sense to build his house with **solid materials**. On completion of the task the house was able to withstand the repeated efforts of the wolf to demolish the house and consume the pig.

Ministry can be likened to the process of building. We often quote Jesus, who promises to “build His church...”

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

This undertaking by Jesus **often encourages us**. It gives us a great sense of relief knowing that He will not fail. It also provides a great sense of anticipation knowing that people from every tribe language and nation will gather before His throne in worship.

What of course we must not forget is that **He uses people** in this process of building His church. Paul points this out to the Corinthian church with a very important warning

1 Corinthians 3:9-10 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.

Paul goes on to **expose the reason** for diligence in this task of building

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day

will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

This passage is emphasizing the **personal responsibility** in this building process. That is each one of us will have our building work exposed for what it is.

There is also a **corporate responsibility** in the building process.

Ephesians 4:11-12 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

You and I and the rest of the church are builders. We are to build people in the church. **Ministry is done so that** the body of Christ may be built up. This building is a comprehensive activity; it includes the building up of the local church, local evangelism, church planting as well as missions to the ends of the earth.

In 2009 I would like us to have an emphasis of building the body of Christ. Please pray for us as a church and join us in building the body of Christ.

As this will be the last edition of 2008, I would like to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks to you for your partnership in the gospel. May our God richly bless and keep you over this holiday season. Have a happy Christmas and God glorifying New Year.

Charles

LIFE at CENTRAL MAGAZINE

Download the magazine in pdf format (colour) from the Central website:
<http://central.org.za>

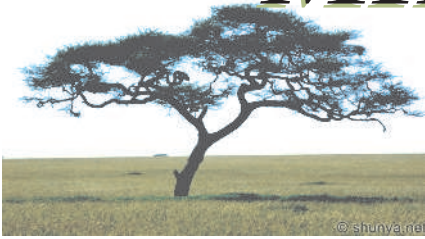
Past editions (2006 to 2008) are also available.

Thank you to all those who contributed to this edition! Any articles or contributions for the next edition can be emailed to
life@central.org.za.

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CARING MINISTRY

by Pastor Eric Robbins



"PRETORIA'S TREES"

Ros and I were visiting with one of our church folk last week. She is a horticulturalist and is appointed as the guardian of Pretoria's trees. That afternoon together we learned so much about the different species that line our streets. And as she spoke I began to think of her as the pastor of the trees.

She spoke with such fondness of her trust – as if she really loved them. Some, she said, were sick with a viral disease and it was her task to provide them with special care and to make sure they did not infect others. Then there were the trees that had to be removed to accommodate road and other developments. Here our tree lady would have to make sure that they were transplanted and not destroyed completely. Then there were the plans to plant more trees so that Pretoria could continue to be a beautiful and shady place.

As we left I found myself thankful that our municipality have had the foresight to protect and care for our trees. But I was also challenged

about the caring ministry within the church. Christian leaders in particular have been given the responsibility to care for God's people. Hebrews 13 speaks of this in the following terms - "keep a watch over people's souls, as one who will have to give an account". But while leaders have the primary task, all Christians are urged to care for one-another. We are all familiar with the "one-another" passages of the Bible. May I challenge you to find and to implement as many of them as you can during this holiday and Christmas time. Here are some to start with.

- Care for one-another
- Forebear with one-another
- Love one-another
- Be kind to one-another
- Comfort one-another
- Pray for one-another

Have fun doing some real pastoral ministry and remember the tree lady!

Eric Robbins

If people talk negatively about you, live so that no-one will believe them.

Those who can, do; those who can't, criticize.

Ignorance is always eager to speak.

Above the clouds, the sun is always shining: it's not your outlook but your up-look that counts.

Trials provide an opportunity to grow, not to die.

Taken from the "Engineering News"



Does anyone remember Zee's prayer request... ?

HOW ARE THE MIGHTY F A L L E N

by
Noel Durrheim

A loud “crack” accompanied by a violent shaking of the canopy of the forest, which burst open, letting in the rays of the sun, as a giant indigenous tree lurched violently before plummeting to the ground with a reverberating crash. It was almost inconceivable that this beautiful tree, which for decades had provided shelter and sustenance for many species of birds and myriads of insects, had come to such an ignominious end. I was nonplussed as to the reason for the tree’s demise, particularly as its outward appearance indicated that it was perfectly healthy. Closer examination to determine the root of the problem revealed that the problem was in its roots (excuse the pun!). Termites had infiltrated it and the stem was rotten to the core, weakening the tree trunk to such an extent that it was susceptible to any gust of wind.

Israel’s first king, Saul, started off his career with great promise, however he pursued pride, jealousy and corruption, which gradually destroyed the core of his being. The well-known proverb “Power corrupts – absolute power corrupts absolutely” could certainly be applied to Saul. His ultimate demise was sealed when he consulted an evil spirit for guidance instead of seeking God’s direction. The story of his defeat and death at the hands of the enemy and David’s lament, “HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN”, is recorded in 2 Samuel chapter 1.

Human history provides many examples of corrupt leadership, resulting in nations and empires, which were considered to be indestructible, crumbling and collapsing. (To cite just a few examples: Medo-Persian, Roman and Greek empires.)

The French Revolution which resulted in a tremendous social upheaval late in the 18th century and into the 19th century, was



characterised by bloody violence, which traumatized not only France but spilt over into other countries in the continent of Europe. That England did not suffer the same fate can be attributed to the fact that God graciously visited the British Isles

with a spiritual revival (often referred to as the Great Awakening), during the latter half of the 18th century. He raised up John Wesley and George Whitefield to lead thousands upon thousands of folk to repentance and a vital experience of salvation.

Heartlines prepared a series of films seeking to promote the following “godly values” to South African society via the national T.V. network, viz. **Grace, Forgiveness, Compassion, Acceptance, Responsibility, Perseverance, Honesty and Self Control**. A breakfast was hosted recently by Heartlines to review the outcome of this aforementioned campaign and to promote a strategy for the future. One of the speakers at this function did a power-point presentation depicting, inter alia, an iceberg with its beautiful, glistening apex protruding above the surface of the sea. He stated that 90% of the mass of the iceberg was submerged below the waterline. He went on to assert that government was seeking to address the chronic issues plaguing our society by channeling vast resources in a futile attempt to stem the tide



of crime, AIDS, corruption, etc, instead of focusing on the root of the problem, i.e. the spirit of corruption in the very soul of the nation.

Let me hasten to say that I do not have a problem with the promotion of moral values, however such efforts, apart from individuals' lives being transformed by the Holy Spirit through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are doomed to fail.

Angus Buchan, author of the book, ***"Faith Like Potatoes"***, the film version of which was on the movie circuit in South Africa, recently declared, "Good people don't go to heaven --- only Believers go to heaven", i.e. ***"those who confess with their mouths the Lord Jesus and believe in their hearts that God raised Him from the dead"*** (Romans 10:9).

You may recall that hundreds of reporters, from the international press corps, descended on South Africa just prior to the democratic elections in 1994. Many, who had anticipated making a news scoop on the bloody conflict which had been predicted, went home disappointed. What reason can be given for the peaceful transition to democratic rule? ***GOD GRACIOUSLY INTERVENED*** in response to the earnest prayers of countless Christians in South Africa and further afield.

South Africa is once again on the brink of a crisis of mammoth proportions. Corruption, which has infiltrated all tiers of government, is eating away the moral fiber of our nation. The failure to separate political objectives from the judicial system has been highlighted by the intense conflict between the leadership of the dominant political party and the president of the country, forcing the latter's resignation. The aforementioned, coupled with extreme poverty – it is reported that more than 4 million of our people cannot afford to purchase a loaf of bread a day – has the potential of plunging our country into anarchy, similar to that experienced by many countries on the African continent.

An urgent appeal is made to all Christians to stand in the gap, by praying that the Lord will intervene by raising up people, whose lives bear testimony to intrinsic integrity flowing from an intimate personal

relationship with Himself, to fill leadership positions at all levels of government.

"UPRIGHTNESS AND RIGHTSTANDING WITH GOD (MORAL AND SPIRITUAL RECTITUDE IN EVERY AREA AND RELATION) ELEVATE A NATION, BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE."

(Proverbs 14:34 AMP)

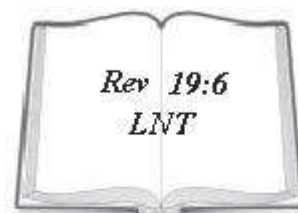
We are reminded that:

"GOD REMOVES KINGS AND RAISES UP KINGS."

(Daniel 2:20)

Let us trust Him to heal our land by sending spiritual revival to all segments of our population. We join with the heavenly host in proclaiming:

***"PRAISE THE LORD!
FOR THE LORD OUR GOD THE
ALMIGHTY REIGNS!"***





WOMEN's VALUE



FROM CAROL

To my dear friends

Watching the Olympic Games this year and the way the bar was raised little by little in the high jump event, I thought about our Kings Rubies meetings we have enjoyed through this year.

Each month, we looked at various areas where 'raising the bar' was necessary in our lives.

In **January** we decided that the first bar that needed to be raised was practically learning and being challenged on how to have a more meaningful devotional life. We realised that it was imperative to clear the bar with ease when it comes to our own personal relationship with the Lord before we can go higher in any other challenge area of our lives or in fact reaching out to others. As I prepared to speak at this meeting I was once again challenged to raise the bar in my own personal devotions.

February month brought with it a programme where Charles spoke on 'raising the bar by learning how to walk in the Spirit'. Once again a challenge to keep short accounts with God on a daily basis so that we can be effective and live victorious Christian lives.

'Raising the bar by learning how to think and talk in a Godly manner' was the title of our **March** meeting. Carol Cryon a very gifted speaker stretched us and encouraged us to please the Lord in our very thinking and speaking. From the overflow of our heart come our very thoughts and words. Godly thinking is bound to drive Godly behaviour.

It was wonderful having our new and much loved pastoral couple Pastor Eric and Ros speak to us in **April** on the topic 'raising the bar by learning how to live with integrity and commitment'.

Certainly there could not have been a more suitable and Godly couple share with us on this most important topic for any Christian.

Dr Marion Seabrook was our speaker on 'raising the bar by learning how to cope with fear' in **May**.

A very dynamic speaker, who dropped nuggets of gold into the laps of each lady who attended.

There was a bumper crowd on this morning.

July meeting dealt with 'raising the bar by learning how to make the most of who God made me'. Marsha Skinner from Johannesburg was our guest speaker.

How we all long to have a genuine friend, but for this to happen we have to be a good friend ourselves. So we decided that in our **August** meeting we should 'raise the bar by learning how to be a loyal friend'. As Christians we have to set the example and clear the bar at a height which the world will never be able to achieve. We only have to look at Scripture and learn from the example of the friendship between David and Jonathan and their loyalty to each other.

Our final meeting for the year was held on **October**. Pieter Swanepoel most adequately dealt with a bar which needs raising in most of our lives - because we are still being sanctified, and that is 'learning how to forgive and not judge' What a challenge, yet so practical.

I would like to be a little pushy here and share with all of you 7 very important points Pieter brought to us which can help you and me when we struggle with forgiveness.

To put these instructions into practice, we have to have experienced Christ's forgiveness. Only then will **HE** give us the strength to forgive.

> **Resist all thoughts of revenge** Romans 12:19
"vengeance is mine says the Lord" **Entrust the matter to the Lord.**

> **Don't try to do your enemy harm** 1 Thess 5:15

> **Look to seek them good, wish them well** Luke 6:28

> **Don't rejoice at their calamities** Proverbs 24:17

> **Pray for them** Matthew 5:44

- > **Seek to reconcile with them** Romans 12:18 - **be a peacemaker, it doesn't matter who wronged**
- > **Be willing to come to their relief** Exodus 23:4

Tough isn't it? No, impossible! But it is true that nothing is impossible with God - even the decision, which we have to make, to forgive.

As we end our theme and meetings for Kings Rubies 2008, we need to seek God's face for a theme for 2009. I would encourage ladies (all ages, colour and size) to join us each 3rd Saturday morning of the month. I dare you to come and be challenged to grow in your faith and fellowship with your sisters in Christ. We start at 8:30am and do our best to be finished by 10:30am, you are then free to be with family or do shopping or whatever. Please join us, we would love to see you there.

Baptist Union Assembly News

I am pleased to report that the 2008 Mooi River Baptist Union Assembly went smoothly and well. The snow made this Assembly a particularly exciting one and brought with it a wonderful atmosphere.

The ladies meeting was held on Sunday afternoon with 114 delegates present. Mrs Bernice Moji took her place as incoming president (2008/2009) at the table and Mrs Glyn Nash from Kwa-Zulu Natal was voted in as president for 2009/2010. Mrs Patricia Ihlenveldt was voted in as our BWD Director for yet another term.

Our annual offering for 2008 went to boost the Laura Reimer Fund. This fund goes to our Pastors' widows at Christmas time each year. There are 77 pastors' widows in our Baptist Union at present.

The 2009 annual offering will be used to fund short term mission trips into Africa.

Fees to belong to the Baptist Women Association for 2009 will be R300 for all churches.

Ladies' Seminar for next year will once again be held at Skogheim in Natal from 14 - 17 May at a cost of R700.

After a very pleasant time together, the meeting was closed in prayer at 16:45.

"What's in that bag of yours?"



I am continually being teased by my family because of the size and contents of my handbag. My answer to their sarcasm is always "I have everything in this bag" and then under my breath "except the thing I need". So needless to say when I came across an article written by a 'gentleman' about his wife's handbag I was attracted to it like a bee to pollen. In order not to have an altercation with copyright scavengers, I will endeavour to re-word this incredibly funny (well it appealed to my sense of humour any way) yet close to home article.

Men are not gifted to carry out more than one task at a time, they are, however, far more focused on that one thing. For ladies, this appears to be a total waste of time.

This waste of time though, is nothing compared with the amount of time a husband wastes while standing outside the front door in the freezing cold waiting for his wife to find the keys in her handbag. Then of course the accumulated hours wasted in his lifetime waiting for her to answer her cell phone. After ringing for about 48 hours she might find it at the bottom of her bag, underneath a receipt for something she bought in 1970. So if, dear husband, you suspect your

wife's phone might be in her handbag, I suggest you write a letter instead; it will be quicker.

Have you ever thought that maybe the American army should try looking in your wife's handbag for Osama Bin Laden? He could be in there you know, feeling rather safe with his AK-47 and his video recorder. Maybe he's using her cell phone she lost a couple of years ago to supply Al-Jazeera with news.

A spokesman for fashion guru Jimmy Choo once said that if a woman has good shoes and a good bag she will look right. That's not true. If she is obese and only has one tooth there's no handbag in the world that will mask the problem - unless she wears her handbag over her head! But then that's not a good idea because if she puts her head in a handbag it would take 2 years to find it again.

Oh patient husband, if you dare, take a couple of those wasted hours of yours and examine the contents of your wife's bag. You might discover a fortune of valuable articles in there. You might also find ...

- > A pair of 'pick n pay' spectacles (even if her eyes are fine). Her reasoning - she might need them at some point. Your reasoning - 'does that mean there's a wheelchair in there as well?'
- > An accumulation of a variety of restaurant sweeties
- > Coins for countries that don't exist anymore
- > Pills for ailments that cleared up 20 years ago
- > That purple-spotted ibis that ornithologists believe became extinct 55 years ago - well it didn't
- > Cough medicine for children who have already finished university

Why do women need to carry everything they've ever owned around with them at all times?

Ladies - take a leaf from your man's book. He leaves the house wearing his jeans and a t-shirt carrying in his pockets his cell phone, wallet and car keys - but then of course, he usually leaves with his wife and her handbag, what's the problem?

Finally Thank You

I want to just take this opportunity to thank every one of you who has taken time out of your busy schedules to come to the Kings Rubies meetings. I trust that they have been a blessing to you and worth the sacrifice of giving up some of your Saturday morning.



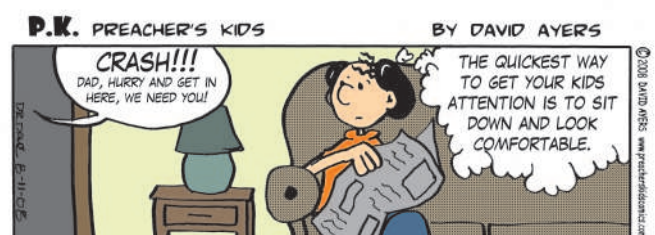
Thank you to each one of the committee members who have put many hours (including early morning hours) to make our meetings so very special. Your labour is not in vain when you labour for the Lord.

Thank you to each one of you for the support and love that we as pastors' wives feel and which makes it a pleasure to serve firstly our Lord and Saviour and secondly to serve you.

We want to be available to you, we want to minister to you and be ministered to by yourselves.

God Bless each and every one of you as we continue to serve one another as the family of God here at Central Baptist

Much luv Carol





**BUT ALAS
– ON A LIGHTER NOTE –
TIME ALSO CHANGES OUR
BODIES!**



Although it is said “Change is as good as a holiday” we do feel uncomfortable with all the changes in the world around us.

In the time when so much is changing, surround yourself and those you love with beautiful reminders that what matters most, stays the same.

A Prayer

Lord

*There is so much happening
In our world right now
In the midst of it all
It's so good to know
You're in control
Your love is never-ending
And You provide for us
As the trees turn green
And the nights grow warmer
May we be reminded
That every season of our lives
Is part of your loving plan*

Jer 29:11

*"For I know the plans I have for you,
declares the Lord, Plans to prosper you and
not to harm you, plans to give you hope and
a future"*

Metal and Mineral Value

*We older folks are worth a fortune
With silver in our hair
Gold in our teeth
Steel in our veins
Lime in our joints
Stones in our kidneys
Lead in our feet*

Two Friends

*Although I have aged a little since we last met
I am quite a lively old girl
And live with two friends that you may not
know yet
There is Arthur Ritus, who is with me even at
day's dawning
And Will Power who gets me out of bed in the
morning*

Count your blessings!

*When you start to count flowers, you cease to
count weeds
When you start to count blessings, you cease
to count needs
When you start to count laughter, you cease
to count tears
When you count happy memories, you cease
to count years*

(Source unknown)



CEASELESS SUNSHINE

*Ceaseless sunshine makes the desert
Constant heat and burning sand
Winter's snow makes healthy climate
Summer rains the fertile land*

*And do not our light afflictions
Like the rain and like the snow
Keep our souls from being deserts
Where no heavenly fruit could grow?*

W. Blane (in Resource Centre)

NICOLE'S CRUNCHIES

250 ml (1 cup) coconut
250 ml (1 cup) brown sugar
500 ml (2 cups) oats
185 ml (3/4 cup) cake flour
5 ml (1tsp) bicarbonate of soda
125 (1/2 cup) raisins
125 g (1/2 cup) margarine/butter
30 ml (6tsp) syrup

Preheat oven to 180 degrees.
Grease a 20 x 30 cm baking tin.
Mix together coconut, sugar and oats.
Sift together flour & bicarb, add to oats mix.
Add raisins.
Melt margarine/butter and syrup together
and add to dry ingredients.
Mix well, pour into baking tin and press
down well.
Bake 20-25 min.
Cut into squares while still warm and allow
to cool.

Variations:

Use rye flour instead of cake flour.
Replace raisins with nuts or choc chips.
Add 5 ml cinnamon.



SNOWMAN *for Christmas decoration*

You will need:

2 polystyrene balls – one smaller than the other
Wood- or craft glue
2 small twigs for arms
Toothpicks
Piece of thick wool for scarf
2 small buttons or “eyes” or a black koki pen
2 bigger buttons for body
Black paper for a hat

Instructions:

Cut two flat ends on either side of the bigger
ball and one flat end of the smaller ball.
Glue the 2 balls together (can be secured with
a toothpick).
Use 2 small buttons for eyes and 2 bigger
buttons for body.
Insert twigs for arms.
Tie piece of wool round the neck.
Use end of toothpick for the nose.

Make hat:

Cut 2 circles from felt or paper – one small for
top and one bigger for brim.
Cut 1 rectangle for height of hat and glue ends
together. Glue top and brim in place and glue
to head.
Finish face with koki pens if needed.

WHAT IS IRIS FOLDING?

Iris folding is a fun and easy paper folding technique. It can be used to make greeting cards, scrapbook pages, etc.

Iris folding is very versatile in that any type of easy-to-fold paper can be used. You start with a numbered pattern like the one below, cut out the shape from a piece of cardstock and then use the pattern as a guide. Pieces of folded paper are stuck on the back of the cut-out. There is always a “hole” (IRIS) in the centre.

The lines on the pattern indicate where to place your strips of paper, the numbers indicate the order that the strips are placed, and the pattern instructions tell you where to place each different coloured paper, such as

Pattern/Colour A: 1,5,9,13,17...

Pattern/Colour B: 2,6,10,14,18...



HOW TO MAKE AN IRIS FOLDED HEART

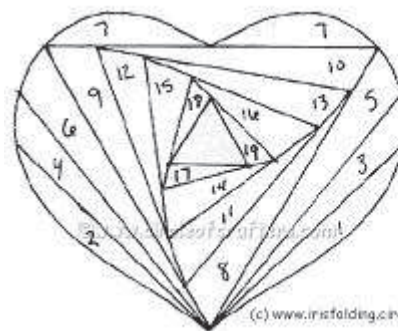


To complete this project you will need:

A piece of cardstock that is larger than the pattern.
3 different colors of papers, each about 6 inches x 6 inches.

Scissors or craft knife and cutting board.

Scotch tape or masking tape.



Pattern Guide:

Pattern/Color A:
1,3,5,8,11,14,17

Pattern/Color B:
2,4,6,9,12,15,18

Pattern/Color C:
7,10,13,16,19

(c) www.irisfolding.com/lotsofcrafters.com

MOVING BEAUTY

Some people, no matter how old they get,

Never lose their beauty –

They merely move it from their faces

Into their hearts.

Author Unknown

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself, that I am growing older, and will someday be old.

Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from the craving to try and straighten out everybody's affairs.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details – give me wings to get to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Help me to endure them with patience.

But seal my lips on my own aches and pains. They are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others.

Teach me the glorious lesson that I may occasionally be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint – some of them are so hard to live with – but a sour old woman (or man) is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful, but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it; but thou knowest, Lord, I want a few friends at the end.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me, Lord, the grace to tell them so.

Dale Evans Rogers, from *Time Out Ladies!*



Teachers are Needed

If you are a teacher or a classroom aide and looking for an exciting ministry and opportunity to serve the Lord, please consider Bethesda Outreach Ministries. We have a school in our village that includes grades R – 6. We would be happy to speak with you about your desire to teach at Bethesda. If you are interested, please contact: John Mixon at jmixon@boi.org.



**BETHESDA
OUTREACH
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We're on the Web!

www.bethesdaoutreach.org

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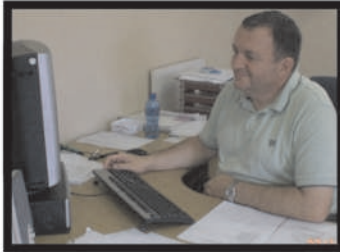
Teachers:

Tryphina Matjebe
Elizabeth Maboea
Heather Rumley
Tonya Small

Raised to Praise

October 2008 Newsletter

From the Director



Dear Friends of
Bethesda,

Another month and here I am again to give you exciting news and to share some of the blessings we experience each day at Bethesda. I write this letter on a warm day. Spring is here and the brown grass and weeds are beginning to turn a beautiful green and the budding trees are popping out with colorful blossoms. We praise the Lord for the rain that refreshes the land.

It was a sweet, united time of fellowship as we hosted our Annual General Meeting here in South Africa. Our board members and their wives met from both sides of the ocean to assist, and

encourage this ministry as well as make plans for the years to come. Please continue to pray that God will give wisdom as we forge ahead. There is much to be excited about as we press on to meet the needs of orphans in this sub-Saharan region. I am thankful for the Bethesda team. God has blessed Bethesda abundantly with a wonderful staff of both American and South Africans. Each one sacrificially contributes so much to this ministry. Together we can make a difference and that difference will be made by God's grace. What we do, we do for His glory alone. We must keep our eyes focused on Christ and the mission we are here to accomplish as we daily trust God for the results for His honor and glory alone.

In closing I want to thank you all once again for walking

this road with us, for praying faithfully, and giving sacrificially. God has blessed Bethesda with the privilege and responsibility to go and make disciples. That is our aim and mission, but we know that only He can make this ministry prosper and without Him we can do nothing. As Bethesda continues on the journey to care for neglected and needy orphans, we will continue to praise Him and give Him all the glory as He accomplishes much.

Serving together,

John, for the Bethesda
Team


Bethesda
OUTREACH
Compassionate Care for African Orphans

MARRIED TO DEPRESSION

by Thelma Lockhart

The following two questions were asked of me by a presenter of Radio CCFM following the publication of my book on depression.

“To have and to hold from this day forward – for richer or poorer I am sure you could not have imagined what those vows would have ultimately implied.”

No, I really did not. We only had eyes for each other as all do when they get married but I could never have imagined what emotional walk the next 52 years would hold with depression and bipolar.

“Did you know that Jimmy suffered from depression when you got married?”

At that stage no. He did however tell me that he had experienced some anxiety attacks for which he was hospitalized and later discharged medically unfit whilst serving in the Police Force. He was now in another job and feeling better. Jimmy however, did go for a lot of counselling and my missionary uncle and aunt said that they foresaw dark days ahead should we get married as Jimmy was going through a spiritual struggle. But you know, when one is young you feel that you can conquer the world and that all would be well and rosy like you read in the story books.



Chapter one of my book starts as follows: “As I sat in the sunroom of our retirement home some weeks ago, watching the sunset with its glorious brush strokes of colour across the sky, praying about what God would have me share with you, I thought – can it be, can it really be, that after so many, many years one can be happy, in spite of?”

And you will wonder in spite of what? Memories, however good or bad, make up some of the fabric of who we are and what we become.”

Fifty three years ago people were quick to whisper about other people going through a spiritual struggle or suffering from depression, many times even predicting that such a person would end up in a mental institution. It was this kind of talk that put fear into my heart after we were married as I became more and more aware of Jimmy’s mood swings. However, my marriage vows have and always will be very sacred to me together with my trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Marriage to me is a 100% commitment to each other.

Our marriage was first and foremost built on a solid foundation - the foundation being the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus said in Matt 7:24b + 25: *A wise man built his house on the rock: the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the Rock.* So it should be with a marriage. Bipolar depression, serious illness, financial troubles, broken promises, job or even

home losses, children who may disappoint one – all these can be overcome by God's grace alone.

The night before our youngest son got married, he lay across the bottom end of our bed and asked what was most important to us on our wedding day. Jimmy replied that God was the most important factor and I said, the vows I made as well as the fact that the two of us plus God would form a three-fold cord, which could not be easily broken. In Ecclesiastes 4:12 we read: *Though another may overpower one, two can withstand him, as a threefold cord is not quickly broken.* (How fitting then for me that the publisher of my book is called THREEFOLD PUBLISHERS and that they are Christians).

The “switch-off mechanism” does not work in the state of the mind of a person suffering from bipolar disorder – emotional excitement increases and develops into manic behaviour and being downcast worsens into continued depression. Some key needs of a bipolar sufferer are to be loved and acknowledged. They also need recognition and praise for what they do well. They need acceptance and encouragement as well as regular exercise. Their minds need to be taken off of themselves. In my book I give more details.

Forgiveness and Love played a vital role in our lives.

The power of forgiveness is something that only God can give. It is not about forgetting or condoning the person's behaviour whether it is mental or physical abuse. True forgiveness breaks the cycle of revenge and anger. Forgiveness is love's toughest work and love's biggest risk. Revenge imprisons us – forgiveness sets us free.

The greatest and most important command, God gave is to LOVE one another. John 15:12 reads: *This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Love never fails* – 1 Cor. 13 : 8. 1 Cor. 13:13 reads as follows: *And now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.*

Our lives can be likened to a river flowing forward – it never runs backward as our eyes and trust is in God Almighty – our El Shaddai who has given grace upon grace – to Him be all the glory.

*Books available at the Resource centre, Cum Retail Park
or order direct from www.threefold.co.za*

The way to love someone is to lightly run
your finger over that person's soul until you
find a crack, and then gently pour your love
into that crack.

Keith Miller

ADVENTURERS / BLAST OFF CAMP 2008

by Ryan van Rensburg



We had a fantastic camp with the grade 4-7 children from Friday the 24th to Sunday the 26th of October at the Nyala Nature Reserve near Brits. A total of 28 of us went, 21 children and 6 adults. The campsite is located in the bushveld and has many animals including zebra, giraffe, kudu and nyala. We tried an experiment this year in using an organization known as Adventure and Beyond to run the entire camp. It was a good change and the kids thoroughly enjoyed it. Some of the activities included abseiling, obstacle course, water games, paint ball, air riflery and messy games with shaving cream, flower and syrup. The facilitators had some fun worship times and dancing to Christian dvd's. There were also times of team building and devotion. A highlight for me was the appreciation time. Each child went into the middle of the circle and the leaders from Central took turns in sharing positive qualities about each child. I believe this had a very positive impact on the lives of the children.

GRADE 7 MPUMALANGA TRIP - OCTOBER 2008

by Ryan van Rensburg



Nine grade 7's and four teachers woke up at 3.30am and departed from the church at 4am for a full day's road trip to Mpumalanga. It was a fantastic time where we all experienced the wonderful beauty of God's creation. We managed to fit in most of the sights including God's Window, Berlin & Lisbon Falls, Bourke Luck Potholes, the Pinnacle, Blyde River Canon and Pilgrim's Rest. The highlight for me was definitely Blyde River Canyon. We took some time to find a spot on our own and look out over the canyon. This is truly one of God's most amazing creations! Our trip ended at about 9pm the same day, where we all arrived very tired but very satisfied.

MISSIONS

EMMANUEL PRESS - WHITE RIVER



MAX & CHRISTOBEL ANSELL

by Gisela Nicholson

15 Years of “Retirement”

Max and Christobel Ansell have been members of Central for a very long time. Max worked as a quantity surveyor for the Pretoria City Council for many years, and both were active in the church (i.e. as teachers, departmental leaders and superintendent of the Sunday School, as well as youth leaders and on the Diaconate).

In August 2008, Max celebrated his 76th birthday (after celebrating their 51st wedding anniversary in March!), praising the Lord for “15 years of wonderful opportunities to serve Him after retirement “ in the White River area. He can look back to more than 100 preaching appointments, both teaching for 5 years at Phumelela Bible

College, and now 7 years serving with Emmanuel Press (EP).

Emmanuel Press

Emmanuel Press sends tracts in many languages to servants of God who distribute them in places all over Africa – about 60 000 in a month. These tracts contain a response slip by which people indicate their decision to follow Jesus and ask for Bible studies which are discipleship lessons. In 2007, 28 750 such response slips were received and 93 820 lessons distributed from EP’s office. After completing these courses the ‘graduates’ receive certificates (4 915 in 2007!).

In April 2008, the Joyce Meyer organization, in

conjunction with EP, reached out to prisons in Gauteng, distributing 52 000 packets containing a Joyce Meyer book, toiletries and a set of EP tracts. By mid-May letters of thanks and testimonies of conversions were being received. The doors of prisons in S.A. remain open for gospel literature distribution, and prisons in Namibia, Botswana and Zambia are now also using EP lessons and tracts.

This year EP was able to consolidate the outreach into the whole of Africa through the appointment of coordinators. These are pastors, deacons, youth leaders, prisoners, teachers, office workers, house wives – 300 of them all over Africa! They have a group using their postal address and this has resulted in many more Bible students completing the course.

More Outreach Opportunities

The Lord also opened a door to the camps in the Kruger National Park. At Skukuza, those who did the EP Bible courses meet regularly as the Skukuza Tsonga Church where Max has been preaching on occasional Sundays. Another fellowship has been started at Pretorius Kop. By May 2008, entrance gates at Kruger, Numbi, Phabeni and Malelane had been visited, and at Skukuza, Pretorius Kop, Lower Sabie and Malelane camps, almost all the staff had received EP gospel literature.

Road Running is another ‘mission field’ for Max and Christobel. They organize the weekly time trials and support the local races (“although I run very slowly now”). Christobel accompanies Max and gives out tracts to people passing by and security guards on duty.

Max also preached frequently in the Sunday services of the White River Baptist Church which had been without a pastor for some time, besides ministering to the old age Silver Seniors and doing a weekly Bible study at the local Post Office.

After giving a short testimony about his “retirement” in a Sunday service at the White River Baptist Church in August, Max was approached by a visitor who publishes a

Community Paper called Bush Voice for the area around Sabie, Graskop, Bushbuckridge and White River. He had been trying to contact Emmanuel Press for two years. Now the publishers are either printing or inserting one of the EP tracts into this newspaper every month.

Pray

> That all the tracts distributed in various ways will bring salvation to those reading them or listening to those who use them as preaching material.

> That the coordinators in different African countries may not grow tired.

> That another fellowship may be established at Lower Sabie in the Kruger Park, and that doors will open to get gospel literature to the camps in the northern part of the park.

> That EP will be allowed to provide each prison in S.A. with a DVD called “the Light of the World” in Zulu and Tsonga.

> For continued health and strength for Max and Christobel, and much fruit for their labour for Christ.

MOTHER TERESA

Spread love everywhere you go:

First of all in your own house:

Give love to your children, to your spouse, your neighbour....

Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier.

Be the living expression of God’s kindness:

Kindness in your face,

Kindness in your eyes,

Kindness in your smile,

Kindness in your warm greeting.

Campus Outreach

'GOD OF THIS CITY' ACTS 2 :42-47

There comes a time for everyone when they must sit down and plan the next stage of their life. For varsity students, this is when they are about to graduate. This next phase of life is both exciting and scary. This entails the reality of an 8 to 5 job, heavy responsibilities, and the tax man knocking at your door. The real question becomes where does Christ fit in all of this? Campus Outreach has realised this about our students and has developed a ministry called Mobilisation, which helps our graduate students mobilise or transition into the next phase of their lives and still keep Christ in the centre of everything they do. There is a Mobilisation team right here in Pretoria, at Central Baptist waiting to explode into 2009 and to see God work in the lives of people in our very own city of Pretoria.



Having coffee together at one of our meetings



Fellowship and supper

HOW ON EARTH IS THIS GOING TO HAPPEN?

We strongly believe that God is all about community and because of this we have formed a team. This team is made up of guys and girls who want to live together. (1 house for girls and 1 house for guys) Living together will not only keep us accountable but will encourage us as we seek to do life and ministry together. We believe that is how the early church functioned as in the book of Acts. We also want to be the light in the darkness in the suburbs we live in, as we engage and love our neighbours, that they might see Christ in us and come to the knowledge of Him, one neighbour at a time.

WHAT ABOUT WORK?

Being a student leader in Campus Outreach, ministry has always been in the context of varsity students or bible studies in the residences. But now how do you apply that in the workplace? We realised that Jesus is very relational and when He walked the earth He built relationships with people, which lead to the softening of hearts and the salvation of lives. The same applies in the workplace. We want to go into the office with the same heart Jesus had and build relationships and environments that can allow conversations about the Gospel. The same faith that brought us to the Cross is the same faith that will make us be radical in the workplace, from starting early morning prayers to small bible studies to Christ centred Workplaces making business decisions to the Glory of God.



Discussing the Word together

IS THE CHURCH INVOLVED?

God calls us not only to be part the universal church, but the local church. We are so blessed to be part of Central Baptist and our desire is to get more involved within the church and different ministries. We are excited about the mobilisation team and Bethesda Outreach Ministries potential partnership in 2009, which would give us the opportunity to go out to Bethesda and be the arms and legs of Jesus, serving where we can. Seeing as Central is our home, it will also be a place where we desire bring those we have been ministering to in the workplace and our neighborhoods, to fellowship with our bigger family and to partake in the great love of Jesus Christ.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for us as we Trust God in all the decisions we make and to believe the promises that He has faithfully given to us. He is a God of this City and greater things are yet to come.

Growing by Leaps and Bounds!



By Miriam Cain

Writing about our babies is always a challenge as their rights are protected by legislation and we want to honour that and protect their identity, privacy and dignity. At the same time, our babies are very cute and we would love to share with you the every-day joys and struggles that we face. Showing photos of them is even worse as we cannot show photos of them where they are recognisable and yet a photo says a thousand words and the details are the most interesting!

I'm just delighted with the progress of one of our babies, he came in just over two months ago – tiny, tense, distressed. He was 45% of his expected weight for his age, with eyes that looked too big for his head. We didn't know how long we would have him, but our doctor recommended a very special milk and we found a kind sponsor so for the past eight weeks he's been growing in leaps and bounds! In another two or three weeks, he will have doubled his admission weight. His eyes look much more in size with his head and he's now got dimples! He's delightful. Laughing often but also well able to express his needs.

Every milestone is celebrated, every tooth is an achievement and there's nothing that warms a volunteer's heart like walking into the Nursery and receiving a baby's first smile!

We currently have 13 babies, ranging from two weeks to almost 9 months. Last year for some unknown reason, we had 50% more boys than girls, but suddenly that's swung around and now we have seven girls and six boys.

Many of the babies do come from difficult situations, but there is hope once they reach us. Through our networking



with social workers, we are able to make a permanent, positive change in their lives. Often they come in fearful, anxious, and insecure and we can see a daily difference as they are loved, cuddled and fed. It's amazing to watch them grow and develop personalities. Sometimes they are older when they come in and it's heart breaking to watch them cry for a mother who doesn't come. And how rewarding then, when they start to smile for you and later what a joy to be able to place them in the arms of a Dad and Mom who will love them and care for them – not for a season, but for a lifetime. One of the special things about ABBA House is our focus on adoption. It's a transitional home where we can bring babies and parents together to form lasting families.

You are welcome to come and visit ABBA House and cuddle a baby for a while. Come and see for yourself that ABBA House is not a place of sadness, but a place of hope, baby smiles and laughter (at least most of the time) and a place where babies know that their needs are met and they are loved. We firmly believe that God sends each little one to us that He has a purpose for their lives and that as we seek His face that He will direct us to the right family for each baby.



Dreams Fulfilled – Our New Website and 'Baby Safe'

ABBA House has a brand-new website! It's designed by three second-year students and I think they did an amazing job. For the first time, you can download volunteer application forms, access our current wish list and see a range of photos. Please explore our new site and feel free to make suggestions on what you would like to have on this site. Its www.abbahouse.co.za

Three other students decided to design a baby bin for us where a mother can safely leave her baby. There's a few finishing touches left to do but it is operational! We trust that it will be used to save baby's lives. We would rather mothers came to us for counselling and signed consent for adoption, but if that's not possible, then a safe place to leave her baby is a good alternative. Our prayer is, that as the 'Baby Safe' gets known, mothers will place their babies in our box, instead of in the veld or on the garbage heap. Please help us spread the news about our 'Baby Safe'!

Thank you for praying for us, and please continue to do so. It's the invisible prayer that makes the visible difference in our babies' lives!

31st October 2008

"THE NEW BIRTH"

by Pastor Joseph Bolandza Epombo-Mwenge

After having spoken of “a new commandment” in the last edition, I am again focusing on the gospel of John, this time in speaking about another topic, which is “the new birth”. The reason for me concentrating on this Gospel is twofold: Firstly, the Gospel of John is one of the more theological ones in the New Testament. The author of the fourth gospel deal with important themes which he introduces in terms of contrasts, such as: light & darkness; life & death; truth & lies; flesh & spirit and so on. Secondly, the gospel of John emphasizes the life that Jesus Christ is going to bring to humanity. This Gospel is written with the goal of showing that “Jesus Christ is the Son of God and believing in him, you might have the eternal life.” (John 20:31).

Now, let us return to the topic. Our life experiences teach us that all that lives (trees, fishes, animals human beings) commence life by being born, then grows and finally dies. In this passage, the evangelist John tells us the story of the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3:1-15), in which Jesus shows Nicodemus that there is another way of being born. Nicodemus was an important man in Israel, and was without a doubt a leader, ruler and teacher. As Brodie reminds us, Nicodemus was also “a member of the Sanhedrin, the seventy-member governing body of society”(1). His need to know about divine matters pushes him to come and see Jesus at night. Why does he come at night? Among other reasons it could be that Nicodemus did not want to place his reputation as a member of the Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court) at risk. In addition, he did not want to mix with people below him in status. However, during their conversation, Jesus reveals one truth to Nicodemus: “You must be born again” (v3, 7). Nevertheless, the reply of Nicodemus: “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” (v4), proves that he has great difficulty in

understanding spiritual matters, in spite of his position in society. Indeed, what he needs is not scientific knowledge that demands an explanation, but rather inner renewal. Nevertheless, in order to help Nicodemus to understand, Jesus begins by explaining that the birth of which he speaks is of “water and spirit” (v5). In other words, the birth that is questioned here is not a mere repetition of man’s first birth, but regeneration, a begetting. However, this is only possible if we are conducted with the Holy Spirit. It is for this reason that Jesus asks Nicodemus to be born of “water and spirit”. The water obviously plays a twofold role in baptism: it represents a sacramental ritual, and at the same time a process of moral cleansing. As Brodie states, “the crucial factor in this process of rebirth is that of spirit”(2). However, it must be noted that the life born of spirit is more mysterious because we see everything outside, including the behavior of others. However, we cannot see what God is doing inside him. It is for this reason that Jesus compares the action of the Holy Spirit to the blowing of the wind that we can feel, but cannot see or touch (v8). Nicodemus again asks: “How can this happen?”(v9). This question once more demonstrates that Nicodemus like most of us has not clearly understood the teachings of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this illustrates the inability of man to understand matters related to God by himself.

Dearly beloved, the point that I would like to emphasize here is that entry into the Kingdom of God requires a ‘new birth’, which is of the water and the spirit. It is a radical renewal, a birth made possible by the Spirit. Paul the Apostle, says : “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God”(1Cor 15:50). As Barnabas argues, “the man born from the flesh is a man is by nature impelled by the forces of his own nature endowment. The man born from the spirit is a man with his nature forces brought under the control of the Spirit”(3).

I would like to encourage and challenge you to ask yourself the following question: "Am I born again?". You might believe that it is difficult, as Nicodemus did. However, I tell you that it is not impossible. It is made possible by the ascent of the Son of humanity (Jesus Christ), the one who first descended from heaven, and who died on the cross and rose. The important thing here is to know that Jesus does not expect us to know things happen. He only asks us to believe, if you abandon your old nature, which is the renewal of your whole nature, and if you really believe in Jesus Christ, you will be saved. This is important

because entry into the Kingdom of God is impossible. Unless you have been born again.

May God richly bless you.

(1) Thomas, L. Brodie. *The Gospel according to John: a literary and theological commentary*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 194.

(2) Brodie. *The Gospel according to John*, 197.

(3) Barnabas, Lindars. *New Century Bible: The Gospel of John*. London: Oliphants, 1977, 153.

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BOOK REVIEWS

by Val Nowlan

BACK TO JERUSALEM

*By Brother Yun, Peter Xu Yongze, Enoch Wang
With Paul Hattaway*

Reading this astonishing account of the growth of the church in China, was like reading a companion volume to *The Heavenly Man*. Brother Yun is in fact *The Heavenly Man*. One reviewer refers to this book as a blockbuster and that young people reading it would say Yes, this is what missions is about.



The Back to Jerusalem movement has been born in the House churches in China. The name Back to Jerusalem does not mean the Chinese want to rush to Jerusalem with the Gospel. It refers to a call from God for the Chinese churches to preach the Gospel and establish fellowships of believers in all countries, cities, towns and ethnic groups between China and Jerusalem. In those regions lie the three largest spiritual strongholds of Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.

The Back to Jerusalem movement is no wishful thinking project. In March 2000 the first team of 39 Chinese missionaries departed China for a neighbouring Buddhist country. Only three of the 39 got out of China – the remaining 36 were imprisoned for their faith.

One of the ‘qualifications’ for these missionaries is to have already suffered for their faith – even imprisonment. This qualification stands in stark contrast to the Western world’s requirements of special training.

In China the Government has come to view the House churches in the same way the Egyptians viewed the Israelites in captivity - the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites - Exodus 1:12.



A QUIET SALUTE TO A FLUFFY FRIEND

I’ve just been reading a neat and appealing little volume titled *Cathedral Cats* by Richard Surmon (I wonder – did he have that name before he wrote this book?) In the short cameo-like text the author tells stories of cats who are part of the life (and soul!) of some of the largest Cathedrals in the UK, including St Paul’s and Coventry, to name but a few. Photographs by the author, which accompany these little insights, are appealing and amusing.

Reading this book has reminded me of Kitty who was part of the furnishings of Central Baptist Church, and who, I understand, has departed this life. Kitty was equipped to successfully patrol the territories that rats and mice would dearly love to overrun on the church property. Little is known of how she terrorised these shady characters. One thing I do remember about her was the quiet delight she took in sitting on the lectern of the top pulpit from where she enjoyed a commanding view of the empty sanctuary!

Although not exactly an institution in Central Baptist Church, her absence will be missed by many in the congregation and welcomed by the inhabitants of the dark corners of the church complex!



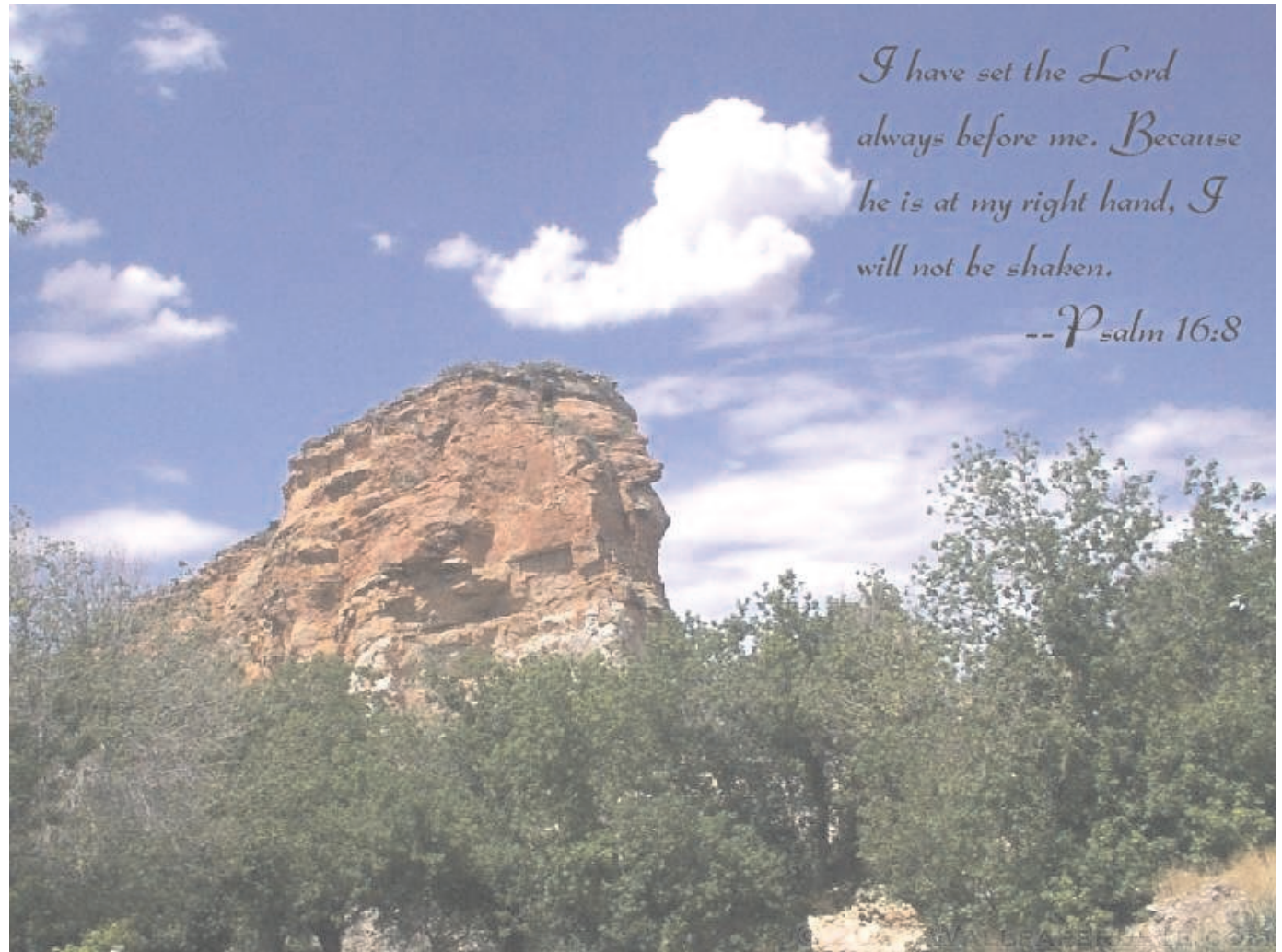
*Dear Family and
Friends*

*Attached are some of
the latest pictures of
Joy. She will be 9
months old on the 14th
of November. Time does
fly!*

Lots of Love

Mish, Gareth and Joy





International Fellowship German Luncheon



Herman Wehrmeyer giving a testimony about his father to those attending the International Fellowship German Luncheon on 26 October.

HOLY ALPHABET:

For those who are fighting their own personal battles.whatever it may be. NEVER GIVE UP!

The Holy Alphabet...



Although things are not perfect
Because of trial or pain
Continue in thanksgiving
Do not begin to blame
Even when the times are hard
Fierce winds are bound to blow
God is forever able
Hold on to what you know
Imagine life without His love
Joy would cease to be
Keep thanking Him for all the things
Love imparts to thee
Move out of "Camp Complaining"
No weapon that is known
On earth can yield the power
Praise can do alone
Quit looking at the future
Redeem the time at hand
Start every day with worship
To "thank" is a command
Until we see Him coming
Victorious in the sky
We'll run the race with gratitude
X-alting God most high
Yes, there'll be good times and yes some will be bad, but...
Zion waits in glory...where none are ever sad!

"I AM Too blessed to be stressed!"
The shortest distance between a problem and a solution is the distance between your knees and the floor.
The one who kneels before the Lord can stand up to anything.



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" For my eyes have seen Your Salvation
Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel"
Luke 2:30-32

