

Inspire Uplift Renew

AUGUST 2008

Exodus 4:10-11 But Moses pleaded with the Lord, "O Lord, I'm not very good with words. I never have been and I'm not now, even though You have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled. Then the Lord asked Moses, 'Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see? Is it not I, the Lord?'"

One of my favorite radio hosts, Randy Carlson, said something that really got my attention. He said, "Your future need not be dictated by your past failures and limitations. You CAN do ALL things through the Lord who strengthens you--including things you thought were far beyond your capabilities! Listen to this--with God at the helm, the future is as limitless as your imagination! Don't hinder God with your low expectations of yourself. Dare to believe He can take you to places you've always dreamed about! Remember--you serve a POWERFUL GOD!" When I got done reading that, all I could say afterwards is "Wow!" Ask yourself what are your dreams? Your big dreams and small dreams--give them all to God!

I want to leave these next verses with you. Psalm 18:28-35 "You light a lamp for me. The Lord, my God, lights up my darkness. In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall. God's way is perfect. All the Lord's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to Him for protection. For who is God except the Lord? Who but our God is a solid rock? God arms me with strength, and He makes my way perfect. He makes me as sure-footed as a deer, enabling me to stand on mountain heights. He trains my hands for battle; He strengthens my arm to draw a bronze bow. You have given me Your shield of victory. Your right hand supports me; Your help has made me great."

Shari

The "64 Pack"

By Helen Martin

When our two oldest kids go off to school, they'll be taking some "old friends" with them. So much of their supplies from last year are leftover that we've been able check many things off this year's list. I've already sorted and sharpened the longest and nicest looking colored pencils, in a rainbow-array of colors, I might add. We have leftover folders, pens, sharpies, rulers, and the like, that show little to no signs of wear. Even their backpacks are still in great shape! So we have a few less things to buy, right? Nope.

We're still going to buy an entire list's worth of supplies; in all brand spankin' new packages, too. And all this will be stuffed into a brand new backpack and dropped off at our local Frattallone's Ace Hardware store as part of the drive organized by the Union Gospel Mission.



My kids are living in the lap of luxury compared to the rest of the world, and even compared to some kids in their own neighborhood. This is especially evident considering the fact that their parents love them and care for them to the degree that we track their colored pencil supply!

Without one bit of true sacrifice on their parts, they are going to give a child something that he or she probably has never had. A first day of school where they are fully supplied... A year full of days when they won't need to borrow a pencil... A chance to draw the sky God made with Robin's Egg Blue, Cerulean, Aquamarine, and even Sky Blue, if they feel like it.

(Not to mention the really neat sharpener in the box!)

Inside...

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Getting to Know You: Carole Herum

1. How long have you and Vern been coming to Redeemer?

We have been coming for 7 years

2. When were you born and where? I was born on November 24, 1931 at West Side General Hospital in St. Paul.

3. How did you meet Vern and how long have you been married? Vern was living with his aunt and uncle across the driveway from my house. He had just broken up with his girlfriend and my girlfriend and I were laughing about it. I bet her I would have a date with Vern within 2 weeks! I did it and we went to a basketball game! We have been married 58 years on July 28.



4. How many children and grandchildren do you have? We have 3 children and 7 grandchildren. Two of the grandchildren live in River Falls, WI, the oldest lives in Texas and she is married and the two youngest live in Blairsville, GA with their parents.

5. What is your testimony? I grew up in a Nazarene church but I was not saved. When I was married we had 2 young boys at the time and I would bring them to Sunday school. But I was saved one afternoon when Pastor Williams came to our house to visit.

6. What are your hobbies/God-given talents? I used to love to cross-stitch and I love music and singing. I also used to direct a church choir in River Falls, WI!

7. What places have you traveled to? We were fortunate to have friends who loved to travel so we traveled with them often. A few places we were blessed to visit were Norway, Germany, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada and Japan. For our daughter's 18th birthday, she wanted to travel to Europe so we were able to fulfill that dream for her! We also have traveled to all 50 states!

8. What are some places you have lived? Minnesota, Florida, West Virginia, North Carolina and Arizona.

9. What is something nobody knows about you? I played the clarinet for the Saint Paul Symphony Orchestra!

10. What is your favorite:

Book: The Bible; **Color:** Blue; **Verse:** John 3:16;

Hymn: He Touched Me; **Food:** Lobster

11. As you grow older, what are some things you have learned about God? That He never leaves me or forsakes me.

12. What did you dream of being growing up? Sonja Henney- an ice skater and Esther Williams- a swimmer. My daddy was very athletic and he taught me to tap dance and I really loved swimming!

Thanking All Heroes!

"Admiral Jennifer" Loucks might look a little tired when next you see her, but we bet she'll tell you it's a good kind of tired! We had an average of over 40 kids join us for each day of our VBS adventure, and it was great fun!

Many thanks to everyone who helped! It took a lot of willing hands and praying hearts to see it come to pass. If, Lord willing, we have another VBS next year, we trust that He will build upon this year's success and touch more kids' hearts through this ministry, and grow our Awana, through the connections we made.

Our theme centered on *being a hero with God's help!* And the kids who attended were heroes for the children at *Chain of Love* by raising nearly \$200 for that ministry!

August Birthdays & Anniversaries



- 4 Jennifer Loucks
- 5 Duane & Karen Voy
- 7 Alicia Carlson
- 9 Judy Ruka
- 10 Margaret Peterson
- 13 Dorothy Heckman
- 16 Dave & Cindy Schwerdtfeger
- 19 Barbara Zimpel
- 22 Chad & Sheri Pope

Standing on the Edge

By Jennifer Loucks

Recently I found myself standing on the edge of a precipice, clinging to a small piece of rope and looking down 800 feet into a valley where my daughter was and thinking to myself, “How did I get here?”

Two of my girlfriends had decided that I needed to stretch myself and they had invited, pushed and lovingly prodded me into going on a women and girls’ retreat with my daughter. If you knew me at all, you would understand that words like “outdoor adventure” are far more likely to strike fear and trepidation



in my heart than rejoicing. But God worked on my heart and convinced me that this weekend would be a chance to deepen my relationship with my daughter. So we left behind the MP3 player, email, instant messaging and the comfy indoors and headed out to camp for an “outdoor adventure” together.

Saturday brought everything I dreaded, cold weather and hiking. We ventured out in gale force winds--me in my winter attire and my daughter in a sweatshirt--across the countryside. We hiked across an overflowing dam, through the mud, up and down the hills until we reached a valley. As we looked up a steep hill on the left we could see our final destination. Taking a deep breath we ascended the last part of that climb hand in hand. Several minutes later I found myself harnessed in and climbing 25 feet into a tree preparing to fly 800 feet across the valley on a zip line.

Clinging to a small rope and trying to keep my balance in the wind which was trying to push me off into nothingness, I thought again, “How did I get here?” Waiting for the wind to subside, I looked down at my daughter smiling and waving below. I realized that she had a lot to do with why I took this journey. I leaned forward, sent up a prayer and jumped screaming into the air trusting that the rope would be strong enough to carry me through to the other side. The trip was exhilarating, amazing and fast. As I hit the ground on the other side I laughed out loud. I’d made it!

Later looking back at that day I realized that these next three years were probably going to be a lot like this trip we had taken together; scary, buffeted by the winds of change and female temperament, difficult but not bad. Our journey is being directed by God. We need to harness ourselves to God through prayer and his word as we zip along this path in life. He has said in his word to trust and to lean as he directs us down our life’s path. Proverbs 3: 5-6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.”

Thank you my dearest friends for pushing me along this path. Thank you dear daughter for being on this outdoor adventure with me! And thank you Lord for being our navigator as we take this path you have laid out for us!

We are His Body

By Helen Martin

Sometimes we can feel like we’re drowning in a sea of sad news, with stories of anguish of body and soul crashing over us like the relentless surf.

Because I am limited in this one body, and can only be in one place at a time, I can only be useful in a relatively small number of ways. I’m so painfully aware of this that when I hear the next bit of bad news, there’s this split-second, almost subliminal, message from the pit that says, “If you pray, you’ll have to care, and then you’ll have to act; and you can’t even keep your bathroom clean!”

Instantly I’m weary. Instantly I feel guilty. Instantly, I’m of pitifully little use.

And just look how little sense that lie from our enemy makes!

Praying is acting! It’s our first act; our most basic and foundational act. Not only is it “doing something,” it’s doing a lot! I am able (and instructed) to pray without ceasing—like breath, like a heartbeat. So even though I can’t be His “hands and feet” in every situation, I can be His “heart and lungs” for each one as I hear of it.

When the next hurricane hits, or the next person with cancer requests prayer, I need to just stop in my mental tracks and pray. Then God is able to call me to go on to the next step of service, or the next breath of prayer. But neither will happen if I cover my ears. They’re supposed to be His ears, after all.

“Wait” Means “Stay”

By Helen Martin

Are you familiar with the classic Christian devotional, *Waiting on God*, by Andrew Murray? It was recommended to me by author and speaker, Susie Larson, and it has been amazing to read. No, Susie and I don't grab lunch in between her many speaking engagements to chat about life (Yowsa, I WISH!). We met at the IJM benefit, and have since gotten a tiny bit acquainted through her blog. (I highly recommend it, go to www.susielarson.com and follow the link.)



She wrote a beautiful post about transformation as we experience it in different seasons as Christians. She used the caterpillar's metamorphosis as an illustration, but she drew unexpected comparisons from that perennial favorite.

In a comment on that post I said, “I really feel it sometimes... like I am on the edge of something amazing. It scares me beyond anything I can express. If I open my eyes and it's just a cliff, it will kill me. Is it going to look like a cliff no matter what? Is the secret that I will have wings then?”

I also confided, “I know at the core of my problem is my sorry prayer life... I lack the heart to stick with it. I want to push past the “I feel nothing” but I have this horrible fear [...] that I will have labored in vain and never end up feeling anything. The worst temptation I have is [to believe] that I am in the center of His indifference.”

(Remember, I can get about as transparent in this newsletter as the butterfly pictured above; don't be too worried about me, OK? I know God loves me. I just haven't been feeling it. And probably more importantly, I haven't been feeling my love for Him.)

She replied with comforting wisdom and the name of the devotional. I started the book as soon as I could after she suggested it. Here's what I wrote in my journal the first day:

Day One: There is a theme going on in my life: “Wait.”

I started the book today. I appreciate the picture of Adam, made to draw life from God moment by moment like breath. Waiting isn't a result of the fall. Waiting was a blessing lost by the Fall, and it's restoration a chief goal of Salvation.

It suddenly occurred to me about 15 minutes later—bam!—out of the corner of my head, that when God says “Wait” I hear, “Come back later.” Or, maybe more accurately, “Wait here, I'll be back later.” No wonder the concept of “waiting on God” has always been so disappointing and depressing to me.

But glory and wonder, “Wait” means “Stay with Me.” What a tender picture. What a unfamiliar thought, of Him loving me like that, and wanting me around.

(I hope to share more “days” in next month's issue.....)

Cool Water Ministries' August Calendar



Saturday, August 2

Remember to do your self-check!

August 3-9

Junior Campers @ VCBC

Friday, August 8

White Cross, 10 am to noon

Looking ahead...

November 1-2

Minnesota LaCrosse
Fall Women's Retreat

E-tiquette

By Helen Martin

After making sure that an e-mail “forward” is true, (always, always, always check snopes.com) there are a few very polite things you can do before you send it on to others.

Un-Quote: Remove all the “quote levels” from the e-mail. Even the most heartwarming story can be painfully annoying to read with all those lines and stars and indentations.

Fresh Start: There's no point sending a charming email to someone if they have to scroll down past all the previous senders' correspondence, dates, subject lines, etcetera. For lots of reasons, always remove all traces of other people's email addresses.

Use the BCC Field: You can send the same email to a thousand people and still respect the privacy of all recipients. Find the menu that will allow you to send it “blindly” and use it every time.

Happy Forwarding!