

Inspire Uplift Renew

OCTOBER 2008

Are you a “Barnabas” or do you have a “Barnabas” in your life? To encourage is to give courage; to inspire with hope; to embolden; to strengthen; to support. Encouragement is a mighty powerful gift! It is saying words that are not insincere or empty praise but words and actions that give us hope and confidence.

If you want to see an “encourager in action” take a look at Acts 11:19-24. Barnabas was sent to Antioch after a large number of Gentiles became believers and he encouraged them to stay true and faithful and devoted to the Lord. It says in verse 24 that he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and strong in faith and a considerable number were brought to the Lord! This really encourages me in my faith to stay close and faithful to God and pray for opportunities to be used by God as an encourager!

Another way we can encourage someone is by doing actions that would help them if they are going through a tough time. In 1 Samuel 16:23 it says that when an evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand and Saul would be refreshed and be well and the evil spirit would depart from him. How many of us have friends that are going through hard times and don't know how they are going to make it, what they are going to do or maybe feel like nobody cares? Probably most of us have at least one or two people we know that are experiencing that. I know a kindergarten teacher at work who teaches all day, goes home and takes care of her three small children ages six, four, and six months all by herself while her husband goes to school for the night. Talking to her I sensed she needs encouragement and I am praying about what I can do to help her. I know of needs in our own congregation that we can fill. How about being a part of Refresh, a ministry that highlights praying for women in our congregation going through tough times, meeting each others' needs and offering a listening ear, a hug or support (physical and emotional) when needed. I urge you to be in prayer about this for we are commanded to do this by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 “Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another just as you are doing.”

Shari

Children Are Like Balloons

By Dan Gauthiers

Children are like balloons with a message inside.

They start out small and we inflate them with something of ourselves.

As we pour of our lives into them, they spread sunshine, give joy, brighten our days, and cheer up the sick.

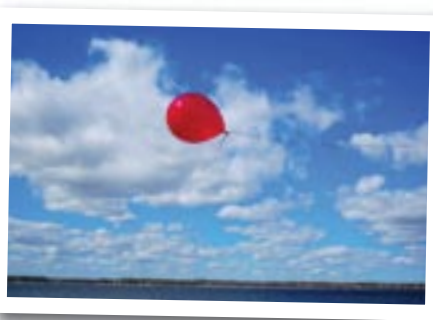
They remind us of being young and that life is fragile.

They celebrate living!

When discouraged, they are like a balloon that deflates.

A simple openness allows us to refill them with hope for the future, a feeling that they are special, and the knowledge that we love them.

Their enthusiasm is like a balloon carried on the wind with never ending energy.



They sway and drift, it is then that they need our guidance, without too much pressure that would cause them to burst.

The time comes, sprinkled with tears and joy, when others are able to read the message we have written on their hearts.

So we let go and let the world have its way with our precious balloons... not the end... but truly the beginning.

Inside...

- ◆ Getting to Know You: Carolyn Paul!
- ◆ Hamburger Soup recipe
- ◆ Letting Go and Letting God Transplant...

Getting to Know You: Carolyn Paul!

1. How long have you been attending Redeemer?

I was baptized in 1940 when it was Dayton's Bluff and later it became Redeemer Baptist Church.

2. When were you born and where? I was born in 1921 in Fessenden North Dakota

3. When did you move to the cities? When I was 18 to work as a nanny.

4. What is an accomplishment you are proud of?
I'm a 3M 30 year retiree!

5. Can you share your testimony? I surrendered my life to Christ at a Heiman Appleman Evangelistic meeting. God has seen me through some very difficult times and my favorite saying is "Let go and let God!"

6. What are your hobbies? I love reading and crossword puzzles. Another love of mine is music- especially gospel, Christian and classical. I always feel closer to God when I listen to music and it always blesses me. Some former hobbies of mine have been golf, bowling, travelling, I was a choir director and I loved entertaining at Thanksgiving and Christmas!

7. What places have you travelled to? I worked in Europe for 2 years in the civil service, I was in Japan with the Red Cross for 1 1/2 years and a few of the other places I've been to are California, Mexico, Texas, Florida, New York, Chicago, all along the East Coast and I've been to Alaska on a cruise, and Venice and Canada!

8. What is your favorite:

Book: *The Mitford Series* by Jan Karon

Colors: Blue and Green

Verse: The first one I learned- John 3:16

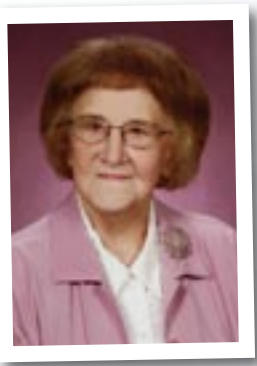
Hymn- "I Will Sing of My Redeemer"

9. What are some things that keep you busy? I work 3 days a week and I love to help others.

10. What are some things you enjoy doing with your friends? Going to lunch or dinner, a "good" movie, plays and musicals and concerts!

11. Can you recall a miracle God has done in your life? The many prayers He has answered!

12. Carolyn's favorite recipe is on the upper right!



Carolyn's Hamburger Soup

Ingredients

- 1 lb. hamburger
- 1 can chicken broth
- 2 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1 pkg. instant onion soup
- 1 can tomato puree
- 1/2 c. soup macaroni
- 1 pkg. frozen mixed vegetables



Directions

1. Brown hamburger in a pot and Pour off excess fat.
2. Add chicken broth, bouillon cubes, onion soup and tomato puree.
3. Simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Add macaroni. Simmer 20 mins.
5. Add vegetables. Simmer for 15 minutes longer.

October Birthdays & Anniversaries



- 8 Cindy Schwerdtfeger
- 8 Pedro & Val Ruiz
- 14 Jim & Cheryl Arney
- 15 Rachel Schwerdtfeger
- 19 Millie Herr
- 21 Laurie Arco
- 23 Kathy Reck

Letting Go and Letting God Transplant...

By Cindy Schwerdtfeger

Have you ever been given a gift, cherished it, nourished it and then “let it go”? Almost 19 years ago, Dave and I received the gift of a beautiful daughter, Rachel Kay. After 18 and a half years of cherishing and nourishing, we moved her into her college dorm in August.

It was bittersweet leading up to this time. As she began her Senior year, we decided that we were going to ‘celebrate’ each moment and enjoy them as the ‘lasts’ (as we called them) throughout that year. We all laughed and congratulated on her ‘last’ of this and “last” of that... the last basketball game, the last prom, the last semester—and then finally the last day of school. This kept Rachel’s spirits up as the soon to be graduate of Fridley High School celebrated these days, and mine, too. It wasn’t until May that the “lasts” started to get me down as I realized I only had one “last” week left with her when she would come back from working at VCBC; then she would be off to college. We had a taste of the ‘empty nest’ with both Rachel and Kyle working at camp. It was quiet as Dave and I spent our evenings relaxing or riding our bicycles to prepare for the bike trip to VCBC in July. I had good days and bad days with them both gone, realizing the “letting go” day was coming near. On the bad days, I missed both of my kids terribly, cried, but then I prayed and rejoiced in the fact they were serving God in a wonderful place and affecting the lives of many children and youth at VCBC, and then the day wasn’t so bad after all.

In August, I felt God calling me to spend more time in his Word so I began a new Bible study by Beth Moore, “Beloved Disciple” about the life of John. As I read about the calling of James and John (Mark 1:20), I realized that their father Zebedee had trained his sons in the family business of fishing, and one day, they up and left him to follow Jesus and fish for the souls of men. Zebedee knew my pain! I began to reflect on others in the Bible who had to ‘let go’ of their children; some did it even when their children were infants! Moses’ mother put her baby in the bulrushes and then actually nursed him so Pharaoh’s daughter could raise him as her own (Exodus 2:1-10). Hannah prayed for a son and when God answered her prayer, she dedicated Samuel to God and presented him to Eli to stay in the temple once he was weaned. (1 Samuel 1:21-27). Even, Mary had to let go of her son to watch Him roam all over and preach the Good News—and later see him crucified on a cross.

God, the Father, understands, too. He watched His Son die on the cross and heard the excruciating words of Jesus, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46). For centuries, men and women have been ‘letting go’ of the precious gifts that God had given them and ‘let God’ transplant them to their next destination. Beth Moore sums it up well, “Just about the time you get to reap some of the fruit of your parenting labors, the young, flourishing tree gets transplanted elsewhere”. I am thankful for what God has done in my life in the ‘last’ year, and for the many friends who e-mailed or asked me ‘how I am doing’ and gave me hugs of comfort. We have officially joined the ranks of millions of parents who have had to “let go and let God transplant!” Blessed be His Name!



Elephant in the Room

By Helen Martin

In late summer of 2007, I wrote about deciding to home school, and I said that only God could turn



my dread into “eager anticipation.” I am retracting that now—not because God can’t transform dread into eagerness; He can. But I now have a lot more respect for the power of positive thinking to do it, too.

This is *no reflection on home schooling* as an educational choice. It is a huge reflection on me, and my need for... reflection. When true hindsight arrives to tutor me more fully, I hope to understand this better, but I can tell you now that my “eagerness” evaporated about a week into the process and never came back. (Compare that with Romans 11:29.)

Recently I heard someone on the radio discussing finding one’s calling. He said we should ask ourselves, “What am I really, really good at,” “What do I really, really love to do,” and “How can I use that thing for God’s glory?” I felt like weeping by question two.

Ask my kids if I love home schooling. Ask them if I am good at it. At. All.

Our first grader and third grader joined their older siblings at their private school within a week of me hearing that radio interview.

Could it be that I’ve learned what a “calling” *doesn’t* feel like? I hope so. I’d like to think I learned something over the past year. Well, I did learn there is something I like less than admitting failure. Ask my kids what that is. :-)

Book Review: *Blue Heart Blessed*

By Helen Martin

When author, Susan Meissner, posed the question to herself, “What kind of a person would open a used wedding dress shop to give lovely dresses a second chance,” she immediately had the beginnings of her book, *Blue Heart Blessed*, and her main character, Daisy, in mind. Daisy is clever, funny, and dear. She is also a jilted bride, who was told by her fiance just ten days before their beautifully planned wedding that he couldn’t marry her. Six months later, her custom made wedding dress becomes the first piece of inventory at her shop, but she can’t seem to part with it, finding an excuse not to sell it whenever anyone shows interest in it.



To give “something blue” to the brides-to-be who are her customers—and to signify a fresh start for the gowns she sells—Daisy sews a little blue satin heart on the inside of each one. But first, Father Laurent, a retired Episcopal priest and Daisy’s friend, confidant, and spiritual advisor, says a blessing over each of the hearts. The blessing take the form of a simple prayer—each unique and heartfelt—for the woman who will wear the dress; anyone on the verge of a new life would want such a blessing prayed over them.

The characters are interesting and authentic, and their dialogue believable. The story is told from Daisy’s point of view and since she esteems those around her, so do we. The one or two people she is not so crazy about, we empathize with, or at least pity. Susan Meissner deftly bestows upon each one what would be their God-given value were they real people.

And she wisely lets the faith of those of her characters who have it speak for itself naturally; thus she avoids out-of-place or artificial witnessing at her readers, while still telling the truth. We see Daisy sincerely trying to get over her disappointed engagement and in the story God is the driving force behind that process. At times she is sincerely confused, and now and then feels a little side-tracked in her progress. We don’t know if her quirky friend Max, her blind-date (the perfectly fine guy) Maxwell Mitchell (or was it Mitchell Maxwell?), or even Ramsey, Father Laurent’s heart-broken and somewhat “Mr. Darcy-like” divorced son—or none of the above—are going to help heal her heart. But it is clear that there is a Love above all other loves that wants to, and will make her whole again; romance (or the lack thereof) notwithstanding.

So, if you haven’t guessed yet, I highly recommend *Blue Heart Blessed* by Susan Meissner. (Harvest House Publishers, Feb. 2008; Paperback: 288 pages.)

Cool Water Ministries’ October Calendar



Thursday, October 2
Self-check Day

October 13

Blood Drive

Holy Cross Lutheran Church,
Oakdale (contact Karen)

October 17-18

Women of Faith

October 18

All Church Cleaning Day

November 1-2

Minnesota/LaCrosse Assoc.

Fall Women’s Getaway!

It’s finally time! Can you wait?

“Getaway” Music

By Helen Martin

I’m beside myself with delight that Elizabeth Hunnicutt is the worship leader and musical guest at our much anticipated retreat!

Recently, I had the pure pleasure of meeting Elizabeth and hearing her perform! She is a breath of sweet, fresh air. (If you like Nichole Nordeman, you may like Elizabeth even more!)

ElizabethHunnicutt.com is her website, or visit her Myspace.com music page and listen for yourself.

(I can’t decide if *Drink You Deep*, or *Alright* is my favorite... so far.)

Register NOW for this Nov 1-2 event! (It’s just a hundred bucks!)

