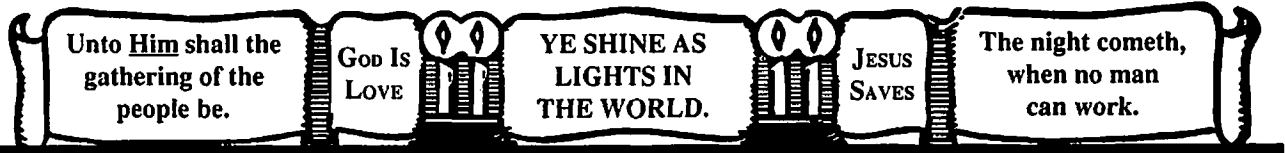


FAITH AND VICTORY

USPS184-660

Church of God Servant



Volume 90, No. 1 90th Year Guthrie, Oklahoma \$5.00 Per Year Mar—Apr 2012

Femininity

By Sis. Brenda Wilkins

"And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*" The all knowing, all loving, all magnificent God created "Femininity." Culture and opinions cannot take away God's creation from us.

The tone of the world today is set to demean, ridicule and devalue our God ordained place as 'feminine' women. True success and freedom comes with the knowledge that we have a vital and important role in life as God's handiwork, as His creation.

A fulfilled successful life only comes through a life that lives to glorify God. As we were created for fellowship with God, so we find life's truest blessings only through Him. As a single woman carries out the duties of life that are put in her path, living to glorify God in all that she partakes in for His best advantage, she will find her fulfillment through God and not dependent on a mate to fulfill her happiness. A successful and happy single woman will make a successful and

happy bride. Why? Because, she has found her hearts longing, her femininity is fulfilled through serving God.

As married women, we know and live our God ordained place when we live to glorify God. Femininity is not imposed limitations, submitted and subdued womanhood, oppressed and created by a harsh domineering God as the feminist movement of the world would have us believe. Femininity finds joy in affirming the leadership of her husband and being a caretaker of her home. Proverbs 14:1, "Every wise woman buildeth her house:..." Living out the God ordained role to glorify God uplifts and enables the woman in an abusive and broken relationship to find her fulfillment in Divine love. When God is the ultimate authority, femininity is fortified in a willingness to battle the devil and not concede to bitterness and malice. We must not allow the dictates of our culture steal from us the joy of our God given femininity. True femininity is strength and gentleness under the control of our Creator. The Proverbs 31 woman portrays for us the beautiful example of God's positive, vibrant womanhood. Again, we cannot let our culture steal the true meaning of being a woman from us; only we by relinquishing control to satan can give that up. Adam and Eve overturned the marvelous order by God's design for the true beauty of the home. God created a beautiful difference, masculinity and femininity, equal in God's sight but different roles. Jesus, the ultimate example of a sacrificial loving husband gave us another chance through His submission, by His death on the

Contents

Femininity	1
Tornado Praise	2
Editorials	4
Prayer Requests	6
Meeting Dates	6
Tornado Praise (Cont.)	8
I Am Your Tongue	9
Little Things	9
Obituaries	10
Under His Wing	12

cross for us, to reverse the chain of destruction set out by satan.

The feminist of the world betray femininity as languid, weak, and insecure. They feel they must come across as tough as any man, severe and masculine. Dress and speak with boldness and vulgarity to compete in our society. We cannot define our own existence, Romans 9:20-21 tells us the potter has power to make us as he sees fit. Who are we to question our Creator or oppose His purpose? Any success that sacrifices the God ordained place for femininity **never** brings true joy or happiness. Regardless how elevated or esteemed the position, it will ultimately breed selfishness, loneliness and frustration.

We have numerous examples in the Bible of feminine, strong womanhood. Godly women who were given many talents besides the traditional role of wives and mothers. But, never do you see an example of a godly woman betraying or sacrificing her calling of wife and motherhood.

Mary: mother of Jesus, highly favored one, blessed among women, a woman that found her fulfillment in glorifying God. Chaste, humble, devoted, her strength was in her self-discipline for God's glory. When given the agonizing, humiliating task of a virgin birth, Mary's response was, "...Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Luke 1:38.

Debra: a woman of wisdom and integrity. She was a homemaker, the wife of Lappidoth, a prophetess, a singer, a poet, a Judge and a deliverer, she referred to her self as "a mother in Israel." She had a faith and a willingness to trust in God unlike the fearful and unfaithful nation of Israel.

Esther: a courageous woman, a woman of influence because she allowed herself to be used "For such a time as this" by God to help deliver the Jewish nation from extermination. Esther 7:3-4.

Ruth: "I am Ruth thine handmaid..." Ruth 3:9. Loving daughter-in-law, committed and courageous.

Abigail: prepared, accepted responsibility for her households well being, humble in her wisdom, intelligent, God's servant to David in interference from murder.

And...so the list goes on and on. Submission and a close relationship with God made these women role models. As godly women we are also chosen by God to fulfill our purpose in the lives of our family, neighbors, co-workers, etc. in the

world around us. A true reflection of God's glorious creation will give us confidence to understand the full value in our God ordained places.

Submission and sacrificial loving and living, both male and female, is the true example of God and His church. This life, lived out and carried over into Godly homes, illustrates the God ordained flowchart for blessed unity. A unity our loving God desires for His children and His church to **enjoy!**

By refusing to esteem our femininity, cherish our God ordained talents and roles as women, whether single or married, we are demeaning God's plan and refusing to honor Him. If we as woman usurp authority as helpmeets, neglect sustaining, fulfilling, and honoring our God ordained role we are returning to the place of rejection in God's eyes, just as our mother Eve did in the beginning.

Understanding the valued, beautiful place God ordained for us as women sets us free from the lies the devil set out to destroy us with. True freedom revolves from self-discipline, all working together to bring about a safe enjoyable place to grow. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make your free." John 8:32. Liberated freedom is to cherish and embrace our roles with God's approval and for His glory.

Tornado Praise

By Sis. Elina Elwell

I have hesitated almost a year to write about my experiences during the tornado, as I felt the need to just praise God and not claim any glory or sensationalism for myself. It has been one of those things that people are curious about, and everyone wants to tell their bit of history, but my story is one of mercy, love and revelation. One in which I truly did nothing but obey God's leadings, and He revealed His unimaginable love and protection to me.

Due to some of life's twists and turns, I began working in the Joplin, MO Walmart in March of 2011, and while I was thankful for the job, one of the hardest things was having my family go to church without me on Sunday morning, while I went to work. I struggled on Sundays more than any other day, to keep the joy of the Lord in my heart. This particular Sunday, May 22, 2011, was no different, and on the way to work I had a little consecration service. There is a contemporary Christian song

called, "I Will Praise You in This Storm," and that song played on the radio as I was driving to work. I felt like the storms of life were overtaking me and that the only hope I had, was to ask God to help me during this battle. Little did I know that one of the greatest storms of my life was about to occur.

The day progressed normally and while the morning was hot and humid, it was nothing unusual. I worked through the morning and went to lunch at a little place called Freddie's in front of Walmart. When I came back from lunch, I had to finish watering the displays in the front of the store by the entrances and the rose display, so I took the watering tank and went up to the front of the store. I worked for a couple of hours and as I worked I was just enjoying the flowers and did not notice the sky was getting darker. I had just finished watering and I noticed how heavy the air was, how absolutely still and oppressive, to the point that it almost hurt to breath as I rolled the watering cart back down. The sky was ominous, a dark dirty grey-black. It almost looked like nightfall. As I got back to the lawn and garden area, one of the young men that worked there was leaving, as he got off at 5:00, and he told me the tornado sirens were going off and I needed to get inside. I did not hear the sirens, so I put the watering cart away, and went to sit down for a rest in one of the displays of outdoor furniture, as it was my break time, and I was tired. I sat there for five or ten minutes and one of the managers came through telling us all to go to the "Site to Store" area. I did not know there was a tornado and thought they were just taking precautions, but I obeyed and went to the back of the store. As we sat there nothing was happening and after ten minutes or so, I went around the counter and used the restroom. I thought about staying in the bathroom as I thought it would be safer, but then changed my mind and went back inside the counter area where they told us to go.

The site to store area was a D shaped ring of counters with an opening in the counters at about 5 o'clock in the D. The back of the D was along a wall, and I was standing in front of these cabinets that ran along the wall. I was directly across from the opening in the counter, and this is where people were coming into the D shaped area as they urged more and more people inside the "Site to Store" area.

While we were waiting, one lady brought her 2 and 3 year old children inside and was standing by me. She asked me to watch her children while she went back out to get her Granny Faye.

I said, "sure" and she went back outside the D area to find her. She came back a couple of minutes later with Granny Faye, who was 85, a young Down syndrome woman, and another young lady who had her other baby who was about 6 months old. They all came back with her inside the D area. As they came through the gap in the counters, I felt God tell me, "These are for you to take care of." I did not know what was coming or what that meant, but my heart said, "amen".

I was sitting on the counter, and just seconds after they all got beside me, the lights went out, and there was a mighty rush of wind, which caused extreme pressure in my ears, and blew out the doors and windows. Someone yelled "Get down!" And we all jumped off the counter into the sea of people in front of us. I landed on and pulled down Granny Faye, and several others. We were a mass of twisted arms, legs, and bodies, who were screaming, crying and praying. I had a moment before all this happened when I thought, "I should pray, but what will people think?" And then again, "I should pray, but what if I get into trouble." I decided I did not care what happened, and began to pray as I covered Granny Faye and the Down syndrome woman. I was praying as loudly as I could when the roar, the shaking and rumbling, the shrieking of girders and I-beams breaking began. I did not know if I would live or die, but there was no fear. I was in the presence of God, and there was complete peace. I actually felt an area of protection around me. It was, and still is, one of the most remarkable moments of my life, for before this time I had struggled with wondering if God loved ME, Elina Elwell, with all my struggles and imperfections. It was an intimate, God and I, moment, and I will always be thankful for that witness of God's love to me.

The tornado lasted for about 90 seconds, but if you had asked me, I could not have told you how long it lasted, as time was warped. Some things happened instantly and others seemed prolonged, but eventually the roar faded and only the screaming and crying of hurt and scared people was all that was left ringing in the wreckage that remained. We found ourselves and about 40 other people trapped inside of the D shaped area. The space we were in was triangular in shape with the highest end of the roof about 36" on top of the counters and the lowest point being about 12" off the ground. There was a wall on top of the roof on the low

(Continued on page eight.)

FAITH AND VICTORY 12 PAGE HOLINESS MONTHLY



This non-sectarian paper is edited and published in the interest of the universal CHURCH OF GOD bimonthly by Willie Murphey, and other consecrated workers at the FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 4318 S. Division, Guthrie, OK 73044.

Notice to subscribers: When you move or change your address, please write us at once, giving your old and new address, and include your zip code number.

Dated copy for publication must be received by the 18th of the month prior to the month of issue.

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Single copy, one year \$5.00
Package of 5 papers to one address, one year \$20.00
Larger quantities are figured at the same rate.

This publication teaches salvation from all sin, sanctification for believers, unity and oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17:21, and manifested by the apostles and believers after Pentecost. By God's grace we teach, preach, and practice the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—the same gospel that Peter, John, and Paul preached, taught, and practiced, including divine healing for the body. James 5:14-15.

Its motto: Have faith in God. Its object: The glory of God and the salvation of men; the restoration and promulgation of the whole truth to the people in this "evening time" as it was in the morning Church of the first century; the unification of all true believers in one body by the love of God. Its standard: Separation from sin and entire devotion to the service and will of God. Its characteristics: No discipline but the Bible, no bond of union but the love of God, and no test of fellowship but the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Through the Free Literature Fund thousands of gospel tracts are published and sent out free of charge as the Lord supplies. Cooperation of our readers is solicited, and will be appreciated in any way as the Bible and the Holy Spirit teach you to do or stir your heart. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Read Ex. 25:2; I Chron. 29:9; II Cor. 9:7; and Luke 6:38.

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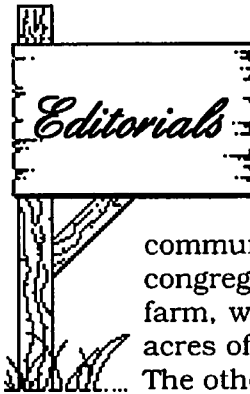
In order to comply with Oklahoma laws as a non-profit religious work, the Faith Publishing House is incorporated thereunder.

The *Faith and Victory* is published bimonthly for \$5.00 per year by:

FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE

P. O. Box 518, 4318 S. Division, Guthrie, OK 73044
Office phone numbers: 405-282-1479, 800-767-1479;
fax number: 405-282-6318.
Internet address: <http://www.faithpublishing.com>

Postmaster: Send address changes to: *Faith and Victory*, P. O. Box 518, Guthrie, OK 73044.



"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." Proverbs 10:22.

There is a story of two elderly sisters who lived in a community and attended the same congregation. One of them lived on a farm, which included a number of acres of once very productive land. The other sister resided in an average size home that was kept clean and tidy.

The sister who lived on the farm had lived a hard life and after the passing of her husband had become very weary and needy. She didn't socialize with others much and as the years passed she became quite reclusive. Her sister, however, was very outgoing, had a wonderful husband and a lot of joy in her life. To one looking on, it would not appear that the two were even related, but they had in truth been brought up on the same family farm. While their father was living the one sister had managed to get Him to sign over the ownership of the farm to both herself and her husband. After their father passed, the other sister was left out of the inheritance completely and required to move from her farm home to live in a public housing unit in a nearby village. Her life was not blessed with financial riches but in time she had a loving husband, a joyful disposition and their lives were enriched with wonderful children.

The sister who continued to live on the farm had, in the beginning, a sizeable financial windfall. However, through the years that fortune gradually diminished through unwise business decisions, poor management and excessive living. In time she ended up with a bad marriage, estranged-spoiled children, poor health and a guilty conscience that troubled her the balance of her days. A beautiful part of this story was that in her declining years, her sister from the nearby village visited her on the farm and kindly cared for her each day. One sister seemed to have an abundance of worldly possessions, but alas it had come to naught, the other sister was poor in the things of the world but was rich in the blessings that are only given by God and had a lifetime filled with loving service to others.

In the end it would not be hard to say which sister had lived the better life, for those looking on could easily see how the Lord had blessed the sister who had been wronged, and in the begin-

ning had to struggle to make ends meet to be able even to survive. But life goes on and there are changes that take place through the years. Some folks choose to follow the Lord and do the things that are right and just even though they have been faced with many heartrending circumstances in life. Soon the evidence of God's blessings begins to reveal themselves in their life. Peace and love reigns in their household and an attitude of loving service to others crowns their humble home. Riches, which are reckoned as treasures in Heaven, add to the joy of that household and a countenance that sparkles with bright anticipation for the future brings hope and cheer to each inhabitant. The reality of Heaven blesses the days of the righteous man and that hope becomes brighter and brighter as the years go by.

We can see from this story that the choices we make early in life have a tremendous impact on our future. It would be wise for each one to carefully consider what that impact may be. Decisions that are made on the basis of pleasing and gratifying the flesh often turn out to, in fact, cause one to lose the blessing of the Lord. When God's blessing is lost, sorrow and heartache is bound to follow. Notice this verse recorded in Galatians 6:8 "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." This concept should become a standard rule of thumb to be used in all of our decisions in life. Decisions made on the basis of comfort and ease, without regard to the will of the Lord, are recipes for failure.

In the Old Testament we find two sisters-in-law that were widowed and made decisions that brought about two totally different outcomes. Ruth and Orpah both had married sons of Naomi and both loved their mother-in-law. In the passing of time, both of their husbands passed away and they were left to face life alone. When Naomi heard that the famine in her homeland of Israel had come to an end, she decided to return to her own country. As she started on her way home both followed her for a ways, then Naomi, knowing that the future held hardship and uncertainty, entreated them to return to their own people and families. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and returned to her people, but Ruth made a choice in life that caught the attention of Almighty God by a statement that she fulfilled with her actions.

Notice her famous words, "And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God; Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem...." Ruth 1:15-19.

To make a statement like this Ruth obviously knew something about the God of Israel, and knew that He was merciful and kind to His people. It also indicated how much she loved her mother-in-law. After they returned to Bethlehem, Ruth was so attentive and good to Naomi that the women of Israel said she was better than seven sons! When a portion of the blessing of the Lord was upon Ruth for her notable choice she was given a home, a financially established husband and a family. And the story doesn't end there! God included Ruth in the lineage of Jesus Christ! She became a part of the blessing that has blessed the whole earth.

The Scriptures are full of those who made right, noble and courageous choices—choices that exhibited faith in the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. There are many other names that could follow these pioneers of faith. Perhaps your name could likewise be included to an elite list of faithful men and women. They are there because of the choices they made to follow God and do His will and they rejoice in the riches that have no sorrow with them!

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From 1977 through 1993 Bro. Ostis B. Wilson wrote answers to questions that people presented to him and those questions and answers were published in the *Faith and Victory* paper as a regular feature column. Prior to this time the *Questions and Answers* have been available in a digital form, but there has been some who had a burden to see them in a printed book form.

These *Questions and Answers* are now available in book form for \$15.00 plus \$2.40 postage. The book consists of 282 pages and is bound in a heavy paper cover. You may order a copy by calling us or sending an email to the following address. —Bro. Willie E. Murphey

wemurphey@yahoo.com

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(405) 282-1479



SC—Please remember my husband, Bro. Floyd Crummie, in prayer. He suffered a light heart attack and is still in need of special help from the Lord. We also have an unspoken request.

Honduras—Dear Saints: We would like to request prayer that the Lord would bless us with transportation for the church here in Honduras, Roatan. Please pray with us that the Lord would somehow bless us in this need. There has been trouble and complications in getting to and picking up the Saints for service. If you have any questions please contact Sis. Bennett at 011 504-875-32213 or Sis. Judy at 011 504-896-60233. (Note: International phone number.)

Standing Prayer Requests

Bro. Roger Anderson
 Sis. Agnes Burleson
 Bro. Gary Burleson
 Sis. Gladys Cashio
 Sis. Helen Carson
 Sis. Genevieve Carver
 Sis. Elizabeth Corteway
 Sis. Waneta Creel
 Bro. Terry Dawson Sr.
 Bro. Mancil Doolittle
 Sis. Guy Domin
 Sis. Dorall Forbes
 Bro. Dan Gellenbeck
 Bro. Troy Gentry
 Jaden Howard
 Sis. Patsy Jordan
 Sis. Earnestine Jordan
 Sis. Karoline Kessler
 Bro. Mark and Sis. Darlene Knight
 Sis. Evodna Marler
 Sis. Virginia Myers
 Sis. Elsie M. Offerman
 Bro. Vernon Robinson
 Bro. David Runion
 Bro. Edward and Sis. Gloria Taylor
 The Mitch Taylor family
 Sis. Norma Tiller
 Bro. Delmar Wilkins
 Sis. Jan Wood

MEETING DATES

Los Angeles, CA (Spring Revival)—May 18-20
 Vanceburg, KY (Spring Meeting)—May 18-20
 Oklahoma State (Guthrie, OK)—May 25-June 3
 Holly Hill, SC (Camp Meeting)—June 3-10
 Tulsa, OK (Summer Revival)—June 14-17
 Green Bank, WV (Camp Meeting)—June 15-21
 Jefferson, OR (Camp Meeting)—June 16-24
 Sisters' Retreat (Wichita, KS)—June 22-23
 Fresno, CA (Camp Meeting)—July 1-8
 General Southern (Loranger, LA)—July 1-8
 National (Monark Springs, MO)—July 20-29-
 California State (Pacoima, CA)—
 August 17-26
 Wichita, KS (Fall Revival)—September 9-16



MEETING NOTICES

LOS ANGELES, CA, SPRING REVIVAL

The congregation at Los Angeles welcomes you to our Spring Revival. May, 18-20, You are invited to come praying for Divine liberty and inspiration.

Services begin Friday, May 18th, at 7:30 p.m. with evening worship.

On Saturday, May 19th, an ordinance service will be held at 12:00 p.m./noon. Saturday afternoon there will be a Youth Focus from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday evening singing and worship service will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday School is at 9:45 a.m. followed by Sunday morning worship at 10:30 a.m. Sunday afternoon worship will be at 2:30 p.m.

The Church of God chapel is located at 1381 Walnut, Los Angeles, CA 90011. Chapel phone: (213) 742-0123

In His Service,

—Pastor A. P. Johnson
 pastorx2@gmail.com
 (760) 780-6707
 Minister James Kelly

VANCEBURG, KY, SPRING MEETING

Lord willing, the Vanceburg, Kentucky congregation will be holding a spring weekend meeting May 18-20th. There will be services on the grounds at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, with Sunday morning service beginning at 10:00. There are rooms and RV/camper hook-ups on a first-come, first-served basis. There are also dorms available for those who wish to stay on the grounds and hotels

within 15-20 miles. The weather is unpredictable, so come prepared for warm or cold weather. We also ask that you bring your own linens. The meeting is run on a free will offering. We trust that the Lord blesses and sends the ministers of His choosing. For more information you may call Bro. Dallas Cooper at (606) 796-3645 or (606) 202-1366, or Bro. Matt Howard at (606) 796-6729 or (606) 202-1766. God Bless. Christian love and prayers, the Vanceburg, KY congregation.

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OKLAHOMA STATE CAMP MEETING

The annual Oklahoma State Camp Meeting of the Church of God will be held May 25-June 3, at the campground in Guthrie, OK. The first service will be on Friday evening, May 25, at 7:30, with three services daily thereafter.

An invitation to attend is extended to everyone. Your presence and your prayers will be appreciated. Three meals per day will be provided and every effort will be made to provide lodging for those who come from out of town or country.

We have a ladies dormitory, and sleeping accommodations are also available in the Sunday school rooms. The Lord has provided us with a separate family unit with twelve private motel style rooms. To the extent possible, these rooms will be reserved for families. Please let us know ASAP if you desire one of the family units and the number of nights you plan to stay. We also request you bring the necessary linens and bath items.

Expenses for the meeting will be met by freewill offering. If you would like to make a contribution, you may do so by sending it directly to the State Treasurer, Sis. Brenda Wilkins, 807 W. Lake Rd., Guthrie, OK 73044.

To obtain further information about the meeting, contact the pastor, Bro. Phillip Gellenbeck (405) 282-2999

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HOLLY HILL, SC, CAMP MEETING

We would like to announce the dates for our camp meeting. They are June 3-10. Everyone is welcome to come and be with us. Some rooms are provided and meals will be served.

For more information contact Bro. Floyd Crummie (803) 496-5768, or Bro. Clinton Crummie (803) 759-0302. May the Lord bless you.
—Sis. Judie Crummie

TULSA, OK, SUMMER REVIVAL

The Church of God, Tulsa congregation, is planning a Summer Revival on Thursday, June 14th through Sunday, June 17th.

Evening services will be held nightly, Thursday-Saturday at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday services will include Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., Morning Service at 11:00 a.m., Dinner and afternoon Service at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Bro. Charles Chandler will be ministering at this meeting. We solicit your prayers and extend a warm welcome to all. For further information you may contact Bro. Charles Lowe (918) 584-6838 or Bro. Charles Rhodes (918) 272-9682.

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JEFFERSON, OR, CAMP MEETING

Lord willing, the Jefferson, OR Camp Meeting will be held the third week of June. The meeting will start Saturday night, June 16th, and run through Sunday morning, June 24th, with morning and night services during the week and an afternoon service on the last Saturday. We do have RV hookups and other sleeping accommodations.

For more information you can contact Bro. Cliff Smith at (503) 581-4575. We do thank each of you who has supported the Camp Meeting either in presence or prayer. Please, remember us in prayer.

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WICHITA, KS, SISTERS' RETREAT

The Wichita, KS Church of God will host the Sisters' Retreat, Lord willing, June 22-23. The theme for this two day meeting will be, "*Enjoying the Journey.*" Sessions will begin June 22 at 9:00 a.m. All Meals will be provided for those attending beginning with breakfast at 8:00 a.m.

Limited accommodations are available at the nearby Econo Lodge East, 8302 East Kellogg Drive, Wichita, KS 67207. Their phone is (316) 612-4646. Rooms may be reserved under King's Daughter Church of God Sisters' Retreat. All room cancellations must be made prior to 24 hours of the reservation date.

Come praying that the Lord will bless in these sessions. This gathering is supported by freewill offering. Contributions may be made payable to "King's Daughter" and sent to Sis. Mary McDonald, P.O. Box 21488, Wichita, KS 67208. For further information you may contact Sis. Mary McDonald at (316) 686-1996.

GENERAL SOUTHERN, CAMP MEETING

The General Southern Camp Meeting at Loranger, Louisiana is scheduled to begin Sunday, July 1, with morning and evening services daily through Sunday, July 8. If you can join us, come praying for a blessing.

There are separate dormitories available for the sisters and brothers. Electrical and water hook ups are available for those with campers. Meals are provided and expenses met by freewill offerings.

From Loranger, go two miles south and about three and one-half miles east on Hwy. 40.

For those traveling I-55, the grounds are about 10 miles east of the Tickfaw exit. (At the exit, take Hwy. 442 which runs into Hwy. 40.)

For more information or to request family accommodations, contact Bro. Carlos Doolittle at (985) 878-8122. Email correspondence may be sent to cdoolittle@selu.edu (Please label all messages as Re: Camp Meeting). The chapel phone is (985) 878-2788. Please do support this meeting with your prayers.

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PACOIMA CAMP MEETING NOTICE

The annual California State Camp Meeting of the Church of God will begin, Lord willing, on August 17, ending August 26, 2012. The first service will be on Friday evening, August 17 at 7:30 p.m. with three services daily throughout the remainder of the meeting.

The campground is located at 12312 Osborne Pl., Pacoima, CA 91331. A hearty invitation is extended to all. Your presence and prayers will add much to the success of the meeting. Three meals are provided daily and accommodations for those needing them. Expenses are met by freewill offerings.

For more information you may contact: Sunset Guest Home (818) 899-2022; Bro. Paul Phillips (661) 251-6956 or Bro. Herbert Clay (818) 897-1396. The chapel phone number is: (818) 899-9021.

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Tornado Praise

(Continued from page three.)

end, where the wall fell inward on top of us. There were people trapped under the rubble, some who had the roof and wall resting on them and others who had not gotten off the counter, and were pinned. Where we were, the roof was about six inches from my back, but we were

completely unharmed. After the tornado was gone, we could only see a bit of sky around one girl, who had girders around all four sides of her and her head was sticking up through the roof, a collar of ceiling tiles around her. She was screaming, the lady behind me was screaming and the baby was crying as though its life depended on it. The Down syndrome girl had gone into mod mode, and was making a horrendous noise, rocking back and forth. This was causing the girders and rubble to shift and was hurting several of the people who were down at the narrow end of the triangle. I began to pray again, and she calmed down. Once again God intervened for us, and I have learned since then, that it is not normal for those in this condition to calm down so quickly and completely.

I am not sure how long we were trapped, but eventually others began breaking the ceiling away from the one girl with the girders around her, and people began crawling out of this hole. My legs had lost their feeling, and I could not get untangled from Granny Faye, so we let the rest of her family get out as quickly as they could, to keep the down-syndrome girl as calm as possible. We helped get everyone out that could walk, and as space allowed, untangled ourselves. Granny Faye could not walk or stand yet as she was weak and could not gain use of her legs yet, so I began uncovering some of the trapped people and helping them out. We eventually got everyone out, except us and one man that was pinned on the counter. He was conscious again, but in serious trouble, so we moved girders off of him and got him out.

Finally we were able to get one young man to push with me from the bottom while two pulled from the top, and we lifted Granny Faye out. I crawled out after her, and looked around at the complete and utter devastation that surrounded us. Some things were untouched, while other things were unrecognizable. There were racks of clothes that were in the back room, and the clothes were still hanging there perfectly in place, while a few feet over, the tiles had been sucked off the floor, and glass shards were imbedded in the cement wall. There was no pattern or reason to it all, it was just sheer chaos. It was as though God had held the roof off of us. All of the people around me were safe. I do not cease to marvel that God was there and have felt almost guilty at having nothing hurt or broken, while others all around us were dead, dying or forever altered. I can honestly say it was nothing I did, but the pure, true, mercy of God.

After I got Granny Faye out I helped some of the people who were assisting others with extreme medical needs, as I was smaller and could fit in some tight spaces, while Granny Faye rested. We then were told to get out as there was a gas leak somewhere and so we slid down the wall that had fallen and began trying to find her family. We did not know that they had made everyone else go a couple of blocks away because of the gas leak, so we could not find her family. After we got off the wall, we walked around the building and found my car. Since I had started at Walmart, I had not been able to get the lock on my locker to work so I began just tucking my car key into my pocket, and locking my purse and phone in the car trunk. When I found my car, it was demolished, but I could still reach my hand in and pop the trunk button. Amazingly, the trunk opened, and I was able to get my phone. I was finally able to get enough cell coverage to send a text to my family and let them know I was OK. This was another small miracle, as almost all the lockers were gone with everyone's belongings gone also. We looked for a couple of hours for Granny Faye's family, but she began suffering from exhaustion and shock, so I took her to the triage center they had set up. I promised I would try to find her family, although I did not know what else to do.

I helped those I could, but as darkness began to fall, they began asking those of us who could walk to get out of the way, as they were bringing in heavy equipment and we were in the way. So I walked over to Hobby Lobby and waited for my family to come get me. It took them some time to navigate through and around the streets to reach me, but eventually they found me and we went home. I continue to marvel at the grace and mercy God showed to me that day, and to know that no matter what happens, God is always one prayer away. He loves me and cares for me, even when life is rough or uncomfortable. I still struggle with why I lost so little and others lost everything. As I sit and type this, I am grateful that I am sitting in the living room with all my children and my husband nearby. So many people lost so much and will never be "normal" again. Their children and parents are gone. Their homes rebuilt, but empty of sentimental treasures that we hold dear. God has truly been good to me, but most precious to me is the knowledge that He truly loves me. I have so much to be thankful for, and I want to glorify God with every day that He gives me.

I Am Your Tongue

Beware of how you use me, for though I am one of the smallest members of your body, I am yet one of the deadliest. I am able to set the world aflame with justice or with injustice. I am able to keep homes alive or to kill them. I am able to inspire or to discourage. I can knit loved ones together or be a sword cutting swiftly through the strongest bonds.

Put guards upon me and use me aright and I will become one of your strongest weapons for good. Misuse me and I will become the means of your destruction. Let me run wild without thought of consequences and I will tear down all that you hold dear. —Selected

Little Things

'Twas only a kind, "Good morning,"

She spoke as she hurried by,
Nor paused to think that this greeting
Would brighten a clouded sky.

'Twas only a little errand
For someone—she thought not at all
That He who ruleth the heavens
Would notice a deed so small.

'Twas only a look so tender,
Only a fond caress,
But the heart of the aged was lightened
More than ever she'd guess.

'Twas only a letter she'd written
And sent to a distant friend,
Quite thoughtless, perhaps, of the mission
'Twould fill at its journey's end.

'Twas only a word of comfort;
Only a smile to cheer;
'Twas only a prayer in secret,
But it fell on a list'ning ear.

And thus the day had ended
With only the little things done,
Although she'd unceasingly labored
From the rising of the sun.

Only the little things—only
These things we regard as so small—
But had she been waiting for great things,
She ne'er would have done these at all.

And how many blessings were scattered
As swift on her way she sped?
She never will know till in Heaven
The Book of Remembrance is read.

—Elsie E. Egermeier



Della Mae Gutwein, age 70, of Springfield, OH, went home to be with the Lord Tuesday, April 17, 2012. Della was born, December 31, 1941, in Dayton, OH to the late William and Dovie Abbott. She was preceded in death by her husband of 46 years, John Gutwein and brothers, Donald, Carl, and Charles Abbott. Della is survived by her sons, Jeffery Gutwein and Michael (Ami) Gutwein, Grandchildren, Alison Gutwein, and Jacob Gutwein; sibilings, Betty Reynolds, Kenneth (Lois) Abbott, James (Sylvia) Abbott, and Larry (Cecelia) Abbott; sister-in-law, Phyllis Abbott; and many other relatives and friends.

Memorial services were held at Newcomer Funeral Home South Chapel Saturday, April 21, 2012, with Bro Larry Abbott officiating. Interment followed at Miami Valley Memory Gardens.

Gerald Eugene Harmon, 86, a resident of Loranger, LA, died Jan 24th 2012. He was born Mar 30th 1925 in Glendale, CA. He was the grandson of pioneer Church of God minister George E. Harmon, and the son of Church of God minister Aaron E. (Gene) Harmon.

Gerald was a retired master carpenter and home builder. He learned the building trade as a lad working with his father erecting and remodeling homes and apartments while growing up in southern California. He built and renodeled many homes and other structures in the communities of Tangipahoa Parish, LA and surrounding areas. He was a WWII veteran who served in the U.S.Navy 1943 -1946 in the south Pacific, and participated in several Pacific Island invasions.

Gerald met Katherine Williamson through travels with his family to Church of God camp meetings. They were married in Loranger, LA

June 26th 1947 at the Williamson family home. They lived in the Los Angeles, CA area from 1947 until 1951. A son, Kelly Harmon, was born in Burbank California in 1949. In 1951 the family moved and settled in Loranger, LA. A daughter, DeDe Harmon, was born in Loranger, LA in 1962. Gerald lived the remainder of his life in Loranger, LA while returning to California occasionally to help his father with building projects. Gerald dearly loved his entire family, his children, grandchildren, and all his nieces and nephews. Gerald loved Jesus and his desire was to have an unbroken family circle in heaven.

Bro Michael Williamson conducted services on January 28 at the Oak Grove Church of God in Loranger, LA. Burial followed at the Oak Grove Church cemetery.

Gerald is survived by: a son, Kelly Harmon and his wife, Patricia, of Morgantown, MS; a daughter, DeDe Hayden and her husband, Kelly, of Loranger, LA; four grandchildren, Brooke Harmon Wells (Hunter), Sean Harmon, Kody Hayden, and Holly Hayden; one great grandchild, Elliot Wells.

He was preceded in death by: his parents, Aaron "Gene" Harmon and Beulah Seddon Harmon; his wife, Katherine Williamson Harmon, two brothers, Ralph and Richard; one sister, Virginia.

Note of Thanks

The Gerald Harmon Family wishes to thank the entire Oak Grove Church congregation for their gracious support in the service as well as for preparing and serving dinner on the grounds afterwards. May God reward you richly for your love and kindness.

Lawrence S. Sneed passed away, April 21, 2012, after a brief illness. He was introduced to the Church of God through Bro. and Sis. Stover when they made a trip through New Mexico in the 1940's. Later he helped with the building of the original dining hall at the Guthrie, OK campground. In the 60's he worked very dilligently in the dining hall at Monark.

After reading a testimony in the Faith and Victory paper from Sis. Eva Wilkins, he moved his family to Michigan to join the fellowship of believers in Kalamazoo, MI

—Kathy Sneed Burger, daughter

Imogene Delores Simpson Taylor was born at Harper, KS, June 1, 1921, to Jesse O. and Gertrude E. (Woodside) Simpson and passed

from this world to her reward on April 23, 2012.

She spent her childhood mostly in Oklahoma and Colorado. She attended Meridian schools until her grandfather Simpson passed away. Her grandmother needed her father, Jesse, to come help her on the farm during the depression years, where she attended school from sixth through ninth grades.

On June 15, 1940, Imogene married Joe Taylor, a childhood friend she had known since she was six years old.

There were four children born to this union, Merle Richard, Nancy Ann, Joyce Elaine and Ronald Joe.

Imogene spent her married life working along the side of her husband Joe in their family business. In her early married life she helped Joe operate the Bluejay "Skating rink for a few years until she got saved, then she gave it up.

She is survived by her children, Nancy Davison of Guthrie, OK, Joyce (John) Cunningham of Sasakwa, OK, and Ronald (Mickey) Taylor of Edmond, OK. Nine grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, and a host of relatives and friends.

Imogene was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Joe, son, Merle and his wife Ruby, son-in-law, John Harold Davison, a grandson, Baby Davison, and a granddaughter, Mary Dilks. Also four sisters, Wanda Lou Simpson, Evelyn Taylor, Vivian Holiday and Betty Temple. Three brothers, Foley, Aubrey, and Russell Simpson.

Services were held Thursday, April 26, 2012, at the Church of God, 304 Lakeview Ave. with Bro. Phillip Gellenbeck officiating. Burial followed at Taylor Cemetery.

Mary Belle Averett Wascom was born March 4, 1922, to Etta and George Averette. She passed away Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011, at her home in Loranger, LA, at the age of 89. Mary Belle was born and raised in Livingston, LA and was a resident of Loranger for the past 25 years. She was a long-time member of Oak Grove Church of God in Loranger. Mary Belle and Clifton owned Wascom's True Value Hardware in Walker, LA for many years and worked side by side.

She is survived by a son, Clifton H. "Sonny" Wascom Jr and wife, Dot Wascom, of Holden; daughters, Andria Wascom, of Loranger, and Delores Wascom Messer and husband Robert Messer, of Houston, TX; Ten grandchildren, Robert Messer Jr., Kevin Messer, Gary Husser, Karen Husser Dickens, Cliff Wascom III, Ryan

Wascom, Krystal Wascom, Alicia Sharp, Jodi Campbell and Brandie Olsen; 22 great-grandchildren, two great-great grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews; two sisters-in-law, Margie Averett and Gladys Averett Nezat. She was preceded in death by her husband, Clifton H. Wascom Sr.; parents, Etta and George Averett; two brothers, Gerald Averett Sr. and Edward Averett; and two sisters, Mae Averett and Maythel Bankston.

Before her passing, she told her son of a dream she had of a beautiful river, flowers, trees, and people she knew from her past. Her son asked her if he was there, and she replied that he was not. He believes she may have been dreaming of Heaven and of the ones there. Mary Belle Wascom left her testimony that there was nothing she knew of that stood between her and God. May we all leave with that testimony and make Heaven our home.

Memorial services were officiated by Bro. Michael Williamson, and interment followed at Oak Grove cemetery.

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Under His Wing

By Sis. Lana Johnson

*The place where you are seems very dark,
And you cannot see a thing!
Although it is dark, you are close to His heart
Because you are under His wing!*

*If we can't see our own way,
We'll see His much more clear.
To let Him guide us every day
Will help us overcome our fear.*

*He'll give us treasures in darkness,
Hidden riches in secret places,
What is better wealth to the righteous
Than to have His love and graces!?*

*So when it seems dark, and you feel alone,
And the fight is too hard to do,
Remember that God is still on His throne,
He is fighting these battles for you!*

*You'll see more clearly in the dark
If to Him you'll hold on and cling.
Because you're never closer to His heart
Than when you are under His wing!*

*Then, oh, what spoils you will behold,
When His light dispels the dark!
And that all the while His wing did enfold,
You were right there next to His heart!*

Isaiah 45:3; Psalm 17:8; Psalm 91:1, 4; II Chronicles 20:1-25.

Using the singular wing is to depict the wing that is on the side of His heart; and it also expresses the thought that it is a place for each one of us individually and personally.

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