

APRIL 2021 | VOL. 1

A LIFE OF FAITH

MBC Women's Ministry Monthly Newsletter

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MISSION: *Develop fully devoted followers of Christ who engage God, connect with the family of God, and impact the world around them. (Col. 2:2)*

VISION: *Supply avenues of growth in a relationship with God. Equip and encourage women to develop relationships with one another and to impact those outside our church with the Gospel.*



EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Promises of God Bible Study (March 24th–April 28th)
- Feed the Kids Food Drive (March 14–April 11)
- Stuffed Animal Collection for OCC (Month of April)
- Summer Book Club starting this summer on Tuesday evenings. We will be reading Another Gospel by Alisa Childers.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD CORNER



Stuffed Animals

April

#OCCitemofthemonth

Each month OCC has a suggested item to use in filling shoeboxes. For the month of April, it is stuffed animals. We all know the comfort and joy a stuffed friend can bring when we're sad or lonely. Think about the love it communicates when we send stuffed animals with our boxes. Ruth Bell Graham used to include a stuffed lamb in each of her boxes that played "Jesus Loves Me." Take advantage of the after-Easter sales and pick up as many stuffed animals as you can. Feel free to bring them to me or to the church for me to store. Our goal is 1500 boxes this year, so let the stuffed animal collection begin.

~Susan

LINDA'S MONTHLY RECIPE

CROWD CHICKEN CASSEROLE

24 servings or ½ for 9x13 pan

- 10 cups diced, cooked chicken
- 10 cups chopped celery
- 2 bunches green onions with tops, sliced
- 2 cans (4 oz.) chopped green chiles
- 1 can (5 ¾ oz.) pitted sliced black olives, drained (optional)
- 2 cups slivered almonds
- 5 cups (20 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese (divided)
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 2 cups sour cream
- 5 cups crushed potato chips

Combine the first 6 ingredients. Add 2 cups of cheese. Mix mayonnaise & sour cream; add to chicken mixture and toss. Spoon into 2 greased 13x9x2 inch baking dishes. Sprinkle with chips. Top with remaining cheese.

Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until hot.

Crafts & Kids with Jenee



Supplies:

Assorted ribbons or scrap fabric

Acrylic paint (This is optional. We did not paint ours because I knew how that was going to go!)

Duct Tape

Strong sticks that have fallen from trees

Scissors

1. Hunt for sticks that are long enough for kids to lean on and strong enough to hold some weight.
2. Duct tape a handle to the top of the stick.
3. Use scissors to cut yarn, fabric strips, or ribbon long enough to tie around the stick. (This is great fine motor practice too.) Just a double knot will do.
4. Use paint to paint the sticks however you choose. We forwent this step because we have short attention spans, and acrylic paint does not come out of clothes. We still had tons of fun.

As the winter has now become spring, our Texas weather is at its best. We have sunny, cool days that are perfect for getting our littles outside. Making hiking sticks can be a fun, easy, and low-maintenance way to enjoy a walk and encourage our kids to bask in what God has created for them.

This time is not limited to those who have kids. This is a great way to spend time with nieces, nephews, friends' kids or maybe your friends (because I won't lie, I love my personalized walking stick). It is never a waste of time to invest in a younger generation and share the love of God's creation with them.

Keep your hiking sticks and use them on regular walks. They are great to explore (especially if you're like me and DON'T touch bugs - beautiful creation or not) or give a normal neighborhood or nature park walk a new spin. As you sit around decorating your sticks, you have an opportunity to chat and engage with our usually busy and active kids. It's also a fun way to observe personalities. I have a very detailed-oriented, 10 year-old girl who only wanted very particular colors and ribbons and not too many. Then I had an 8 year-old boy who seemed to be more concerned with quantity rather than quality. I almost missed the fact, however, that he was thinking of others as he made sticks for my neighbor, his cousins, and his grandparents. The most rewarding moment of all was watching these two big kids who are usually busy with school, friends, or their own ideas sit with their 3 year-old brothers and show them how to tie knots and teach them about colors. It's so simple you almost roll your eyes, "Really, this is life-changing, ..." but this little moment can create a big memory.

Talking Points:

Lets not waste an opportunity to teach and share God with our kiddos. Use this time to talk them through what they are doing, what is happening around them, why the are making the choices they are making. Some talking points that came up in our time together were:

1. How different and unique each stick we found was before and after we put our personal touch on it.
2. Why do trees have branches? What happens when they fall? God created the tree to grow new branches where others have fallen or broken off.
3. What happens when a tree dies? Is it still useful?
4. Why did you pick that color? Do you like it more or less? How is your stick different from ___? Is one more special or more right than the other?

RE-THINKING PRAYER

Written by Jennifer Dyer

A while back, I sat down to pray for a friend in distress. I found myself floundering, unable to think of the right words to use. I've heard many times to pray specifically, to pray with purpose. However, in this situation, I had no idea what was best for my friend. Tired as I was that night, I dove in, praying for God to immediately remove her from the difficult situation. Then I decided to give God a list of suggestions about what might work for her.

Can you relate? Even as I prayed, I struggled. What was best for her? Then it hit me: Why am I telling the sovereign God of the entire...everything, everything, everything how to run HIS world?

I paused, silent, marveling in the moment. God spoke all things into existence. And here I sat, on my floor, trying to give marching orders to the eternal, all-mighty, all-knowing, all-powerful God. I laughed, allowing the truth to flow from my heart and mouth: "Lord, I have no idea how to pray in this situation, but you know what is best. I trust you to take care of my friend."

A profound peace came over me. God had my friend's situation in his hands. Instead of giving God suggestions, I needed to pray for her to have HIS wisdom, to rest in and follow his will. Please hear me, it's not wrong to come to God with needs, requests, and hopes. We absolutely can come to Him with all our hearts. But we don't have to solve all the problems. We can trust that God is sovereign. Sometimes the best prayers I offer are those of asking for wisdom with a heart of trust and submission.

As I thought this over, I kept coming back to the example for prayer given to us by Jesus in Matthew 6:9-13. For today, let's talk about the opening two words of the first line in The Lord's Prayer: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name."

Our Father...

These two tiny words are so profound. Jesus is calling God our father, and the Bible has a lot of say about what this role of God as father entails.

As a father, God is compassionate to His children.

Psalm 103:13 ESV says, "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear them."

As a father, God is a giver of mercy and comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ESV "Blessed be the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction."

As a father, God cares enough to discipline and teach us.

Proverbs 3:11-12 ESV "My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights."

As a father, God loves his human creation so much that he gave His only Son to be a sacrifice that covers all our imperfections.

John 3:16 NIV "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

As a father, God is interested in our needs. He is a provider.

Matthew 6:26 ESV "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

This last reference comes from the parable of the prodigal son, a picture of a loving father longing for his son to be reconciled to him. This is a picture of how our Father longs for us.

Luke 15:20 "And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him."

The Bible has far more to say, but even these six verses paint a picture of a trustworthy father, one who is deeply interested and cares for His children. This is the Father to whom we pray.

Since that initial prayer for my friend, I have watched her situation unfold in unexpected and miraculous ways. God has taken her in a new direction. He has brought people into her life who are helping her. He has solved her problem step-by-step in ways I never could have foreseen. I realize anew how thankful I am that solving her problems is not my burden to bear. I am so thankful for the sovereign God, our Father, who has given her wisdom and guidance. I am thankful that I walked through this with her by praying for trust, strength, and the wisdom to follow His guidance.

May you find peace and hope in trusting the Father along with me.



SALVATION IN CHRIST ALONE

By Brandee Miles

*“He who was delivered over because of our transgressions,
and was raised because of our justification.” - Romans 4:25*

Do you understand these words? Jesus often asked this rhetorical question. Dear sister, do you know how or why you became a Christian? For most of my life I have answered, "Because 'I' (fill in the blank) chose Christ, put my faith in Christ, trusted Christ, or because I tried to do good or go to church or serve the needy, etc..." These answers always felt empty, as though I knew in my spirit something was wrong. For too long I failed to not only hear but more fully understand that the answer is not found in the first person. I may have said, "Well, of course, Christ saves me," but answering in the first person revealed my true and innermost belief. Answering in the first person reflects how my past understanding of salvation was tainted with the sin of self. Profoundly, the answer is beautifully and wonderfully in the third person. I am a Christian because HE was delivered up for my transgressions and raised for my justification.

As a believer, you are a Christian because of what HE did, because of HIS sacrifice, because HE called you, HE redeemed you, HE regenerated your heart before you could ever trust HIM.

To quote C.H. Spurgeon, "It is always the work of the Holy Spirit to turn our eyes off self and onto Jesus but Satan's work is just the opposite. He is constantly trying to make us look at ourselves instead of Christ...but the Holy Spirit turns our eyes entirely away from self. He tells us we are nothing and Christ is everything.

Remember, it is not your hold of Christ that saves you, it is Christ himself. It is not your instruments but Christ's blood and merits. Therefore, do not look to your hope but to Jesus the source of your hope. Do not look to your faith but to Jesus the founder and perfecter of your faith. We will never find happiness by looking at our prayers, deeds, or feelings. It is what Jesus is, not what we are that gives rest to the soul." So, my worth and your worth is not found within ourselves. That is what Satan wants us to believe. That view taints grace. Our worth or value is in the fact that the One of infinite worth died to redeem us in our worthlessness (Romans 3:10-12).

BIBLE STUDY BLURB

Tamara McQueary

What a delight and challenge it has been to study some of the many promises of our God this semester! My prayer has been that the study of the gifts would illuminate the Giver and looking at the promises would stir your affection and delight in the Promise Maker.

"Spiritual application of the promises of scripture, for the comfort of the saints, consists of enlightening their minds to see the holy excellency and sweetness of the blessings promised and also the holy excellency of the Promiser and His faithfulness and sufficiency thus drawing forth their hearts to embrace the Promiser and the things promised." - Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections

Memory Verse of the Month

*For we are his workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus for good
works, which God prepared
beforehand, that we should
walk in them.
Ephesians 2:10*

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

What is your favorite Easter Candy?

Linda: Chocolate w/caramel or Cadbury chocolate peanut butter eggs

Courtney: Peeps **Susan:** Anything chocolate & caramel

Brandee: Jelly Bean Co. beans & root beer Peeps

Jenee: Anything with white Chocolate

Jennifer: Dark chocolate

Tamara: Cadbury Minis

Next Month's Question:

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING YOU LEARNED
DURING QUARANTINE?**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FRWPLXY>



Click the link or use the QR code to respond.

Answers will be in next month's issue.