

...publish with the voice of thanksgiving,
and tell of all Thy wondrous works.
Psalm 26:7



The Olive Leaf is a monthly publication of the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Rectortown, Virginia. Deadline for article submission is the 3rd Sunday of each month. Give your article to the editor, or place your article in The Olive Leaf mailbox.



My service of medical missions in Haiti for a week in April continues to be a blessing in my life. It is difficult, however, to communicate all I saw, heard or felt.

The level of devastation and need is beyond comprehension. Yet there is a strong sense of hope. The level of sensory overload drives you to do one of two things: to walk away because it is too much, or to forge ahead and try to make a difference.

The people who anticipated our visit lined the streets early with the hope of being seen. The medical infirmities were vast and spanned across multiple body systems, from hypertension, diabetes, infections, TB, scabies and even some close to dying. Although we identified needs beyond those in the medical arena, the people were so grateful for the least of things. A roll of toilet paper was received as graciously and gratefully as a box of rice and beans.

At times I just wanted to cry, like when I held an infant who I know was dying, but her mother continued to smile and say thank you when we did all we could do, or when I encountered a woman who had a gangrenous foot that most probability will need to be amputated unless she develops an overwhelming sepsis and dies as a result of it. Still, people continue to rebuild their lives as we witnessed excavation of some buildings being done with a sledge hammer while men, women and children carried the shattered pieces, one brick at a time, away from the area they were attempting to clear.

I see life in a different perspective since this experience of missional service in Haiti. Although the situation seemed dire, what impressed me the most was the faith of so many people that remains unshaken. Church services were held morning, noon and night. You could hear the voices singing, prayers were going forward, and praise reigned. I may not have understood the native tongue, but you could feel the spirit that flowed through the air. I could hum along when the old hymns of the church were sung. I could clap my hands when I heard "hallelujah". I saw the presence of God in the small things. I have no idea why God permitted me to take this trip, but I do know that in His infinite plan, there is a reason.

I am thankful to Lott Carey for facilitating this experience for me. I ask all who read these words to pray for our sisters and brothers in Haiti.

Jane Bibb
Portland Memorial Baptist Church
Louisville, Kentucky
[excerpt from Lott Carey Mission Alert]

In Spring

James McAlister, © 1999
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As a young man, I never understood an activity that the "older" folk seemed to take some pleasure in doing. But my outlook has changed quite a bit in the last few years. Now, each time I visit a cemetery I am confronted with reminders of powerful truths that need frequent reinforcement.

Wander among graves and you'll learn some things. For one, death is no respecter of persons; he visits infants and aged alike. Our pilgrimage here is brief, and the grave awaits us. We must prepare for that day.

But there's something more certain than death: the resurrection of the dead. "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51). As friends and family precede us into death, the hope of the resurrection becomes even more precious and compelling.

Epithets from tombstones often have a ring of that hope. Here are two I have recently seen: "Weep not father and mother for me, for I am waiting in glory for thee."—A 21-year-old wife. "Sleep on dear child and take thy rest, in Jesus' arms forever blest."—A 14-year-old girl. Though death may bring sorrow, Christians can see beyond the horizon of physical life into

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Greetings my Sisters!

Welcome to the wonderful month of May!
Our May scripture reading is Psalm 70.

Our theme for our Pre-Mother's Day Fashion Show/Luncheon is "Leap into Spring with Trendy Fashions". I'm looking forward to seeing you on May 8, from 2-4 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall.

Our next meeting is June 12 at noon. Plan to attend and join our Tea Ministry as we go out to lift the spirits of another sister.

Our "Women of Faith" fellowship is June 26; the sign in sheet will be up soon. Please plan now to attend this inspirational service—we are excited as we put this together. Also, we're working on our 54th Annual Day, October 3. We will observe this day during our morning worship hour.

I'm glad to see those who are participating in the "Secret Sister" fellowship enjoying their sister. On Sundays, I see lots of bags or cards in the basket. We will reveal our sisters in December—more details later.

"Radiate His Light" each day as you go on your journey. Happy Mother's Day to all!



President Carter

Pressing Toward the Mark!—by Robert J. Young — ©2001

"A certain Christian once said to a friend, 'Our church costs too much. They are always asking for money.' The friend replied in emotional words, 'A few years a little boy was born into our home. He cost a lot from the very beginning. He had a big appetite, he needed clothes, medicine, a puppy and toys. Then he began school and that cost even more. He needed more clothes. Later he went to college and that cost a small fortune. He began dating regularly, and that cost another small fortune. In his senior year at college, he became very ill and died. Since his funeral he hasn't cost me a penny. But I would trade anything, even all my material wealth, to have him back.' "After a pause, the friend continued. 'As long as the church is alive, it will cost money. When it dies, it won't cost anything. A living church has the most vital message our world can hear, so I'm going to give and pray with everything I have to keep the church alive.'"

We are poised on the brink of challenges we have never before seen or met. There is vibrancy and life, vitality and spirit when we assemble. There is developing within us a burning desire to reach out and share the goodness of which we partake. We have caught a missions spirit, and evangelism of this world and community certainly lies within our grasp. That knowledge buoys us and propels us. Our youth are enthused, and an air of expectancy permeates all we do. We are waiting, as though with bated breath, to see the great potential God has placed before us realized.

It does cost money. Living things always have, always will. The message we have, however, is worth the whole world. Jesus said so. To paraphrase, "What will a man give in exchange for the soul of a friend?"

I'm going to give and pray with everything I have to keep the church alive and vibrant and living and expanding. We've not come this far to quit, or even give any slack. "I press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In Spring—cont.

Paradise (Luke 23:43), where the dead in Christ await.

Along with ever-faithful friends Dean and Mamie Baney and Jan Simmons, we recently made another trek to the cemetery where our daughter Jenny is buried. Two things are especially memorable.

For one, we reenacted what has become a meaningful tradition. Before leaving, we stand near Jenny's grave to hold hands and pray. Then Mr. Baney quotes that thrilling passage (1 Thes. 4:13-18) about Christ's return.

We're always aware that the voice of the archangel and the trump of God could shatter our prayers—as the Lord Himself descends from heaven with a shout. What a thrill it will be to see both living and dead caught up together to meet the Lord in the air!

Nature provides a graphic foreshadowing of the resurrection as winter's decay invariably yields to spring's new life. This Spring, Jan lovingly planted a blooming rose on Jenny's grave, carefully watering it with the plant food that husband Keith had prepared.

From spring to spring, that blooming rose should continue to remind us that death is not the end. New life is inevitable. For Jenny ... and for all who are in Christ.

[used with permission]



“Are U ready?”, the youth were asked in daily e-mails leading up to the 30 Hour Famine. The e-mails primed and prepared them for the weekend’s mission work: save lives through World Vision; learn about the Ethiopian culture; fast, play and pray; bond closer to Christ and each other; and feed the local homeless in Washington, D.C.

Excitement grew for me, as God took over the mission, placing all the right people in all the right places. Derek and Marcus had never “did” the Famine, and this year they volunteered to step in! The set-up ran smoothly as the guys moved tables, set up games and sleeping quarters. I was blessed with another volunteer, my sister-in-law Joyce, who helped organize and lead the games.

The youth arrived and excitement buzzed in the hallways. Church was our home tonight.

The youth were divided into tribal teams. With broken arms, wounded legs, blinded eyes (all pretend) and taped mouths, the tribal games began. Team challenges of



word puzzles, barter and trade, egg inventions, wet feet and wheel barrels, led to lessons of faith, endurance, healthcare, and survival.

By 1:30 a.m., the youth were tucked in, except Marcus and Billy who were giving sleep a good fight.

The youth had a morning worship service on Saturday. I added a new twist to the Famine event—special guests from Ethiopia, Eysersalem (pronounced “Jerusalem” in English) and Nardos. Eysersalem Yisma is my co-worker and friend. She graciously accepted my invitation to come sing and teach the youth about Ethiopia. Eysersalem is a lovely young lady who reflects her walk with Christ through her warm smile, humble ways, and faith. She leaves work at 11 p.m. and goes to prayer and choir rehearsal at midnight every Wednesday! How many of us are that dedicated?

Nardos is in their choir and plays the keyboard—a delightful young man! He spoke to the youth about life growing up in Ethiopia. The youth enjoyed listening to him and asking him questions about Ethiopia. It was clear that he was appreciative of his life serving Christ. Nardos, a talented musician, wrote one of

the songs they sang. Nardos & Eysersalem taught us a new song, “Geta Geta Geta, Geta Yahleh! G e t a Yahleh!” (in English, G o d i s With Us).

Eysersalem applauded the youth for serving Christ by helping others, and spoke about how we all will sing together in heaven, no matter what language we sing. Eysersalem and Nardos visited our Youth Room to see the hand-designed t-shirts the youth made on Friday night. We gave them t-shirts to take home.

It was a beautiful day for our mission work ahead! Megan and Sam joined us in Manassas and we headed to D.C. I was blessed to have Tammy join us on the trip. She was the perfect co-pilot, guiding me throughout the city with ease. Lost would not be an option this year!

We located all of the parks and the youth passed out water, sandwiches they had made the night before,



snack crackers, and a bonus this year was socks—thanks to Earsaline & Eysersalem.

Grateful homeless wanderers thanked the children and most said



“God bless you.” And, indeed the youth were truly blessed by the mission event.

Derek, Tammy, Billy, and Marcus
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In the spring, the earth seems to explode with new life. It is a joyful time. God's creation blooms. Find this verse in the Bible that sounds and feels like this special time of the year. Use the code below.

"Th d s rt nd th
p rch d l nd w ll b
gl d; th w ld rn ss
w ll r j c nd bl ss m.
L k th cr c s, t
w ll b rst nt bl m;
t w ll r j c gr tly
nd sh t f r j y."
Isaiah 35:1-2a

Youth News—cont.

ventured the streets offering water, food, and words of encouragement. One man was crying and shouting, "Bless you" towards the church van. Something said or done had given him hope!

After our mission work, we visited the



Holocaust Museum. Then, we said farewell to Marcus, and the tired hungry youth group slept as we headed up 66 to Virginia.

Their test of endurance continued as the smell of luscious breads and chargrilled steaks filled youth's nostrils while they waited in the 'endless' lines at Golden Corral. We finally got seated together.

What a glorious time we had. Joy filled my heart way before the food ever hit my stomach.

Zandra Carmichael
YYA Director



Happy Anniversary!
Gwendolyn & Jerry Williams—
5/1

Maria & Vincent Stribling—
5/19

Happy Birthday!
Fred Carter—5/3
Corin Jackson —5/6
LeKeisha Catron—5/7
Louise Thompson—5/9
Lawrence Garrett—5/18
Joan Grant—5/18
Portia Brown—5/20
Norman Smith, Jr. —5/27



Open
Every
2nd & 4th
Sunday.



THINGS YOU NEVER HEAR IN CHURCH

- » Hey! It's MY turn to sit on the front pew!
- » I was so enthralled, I never noticed your sermon went over time 25 minutes.
- » Personally, I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf.
- » I've decided to give our church the \$500 I used to send to TO evangelists.
- » I volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the Junior High Sunday School class.
- » I love it when we sing hymns I've never heard before!
- » Since we're all here, let's start the worship service early!
- » Pastor, we'd like to send you to this Bible seminar in the Bahamas.
- » Nothing inspires me and strengthens my commitment like our annual stewardship campaign!