

THE COMMUNICATOR

From the President's Desk

March 2009

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer,” Romans 12:11-12 NIV



Do you ever have the mid-winter blues thinking spring will never come? It has been a bitterly cold winter, hasn't it? Do you find it difficult to keep up that zeal, that spiritual fervor? Try a triple dose of Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" Then read the rest of that chapter to remind yourself of God's wonderful provision for our every need. Singing a song of praise to God will boost your spirit even when you are at a low point. Going to the edge to help another in need will bring an early spring to your heart! Terri Simpkins, our National AB Women's Ministries President concluded her recent article in *Leader's Reader* with these words from Mother Theresa: "JOY is a prayer. JOY is strength. JOY is love. Joy is the net of love by which we catch souls. We give most when we give with joy. The best way to show our gratitude to God and to each other is to accept everything with joy. A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love." Joy is a choice! I pray you choose JOY today.

Nicaragua/Costa Rica Missions Trip-I am so thrilled to be a part of this 13-member missions team, Feb. 9-25. Log on to our daily blog at www.abwministries.org to keep up with the highlights of our journey. I will be eager to come to your churches/associations to share the stories of the Mansion of Light Church, CR, with missionary Mylinda Baits in its outreach to victims of human trafficking and the medical mission of David & Laura Parajon, Nic. Thank you ladies of PA/DE for making this trip possible for me.

One of my Joys in serving as your president is visiting with you in your associations/churches. It was a special blessing to visit with the women of Oil Creek Assoc. in Erie last Oct. and share our **E.W.E. "Water Walking" retreat**. Ten of the 75 women present were Refugees from Burma and Nepal. Oil Creek was the first association where I served as an assoc. ABWM officer. Our next retreat will be with the Bradford Assoc., April 24-25. I will also be visiting

with the French Creek Assoc. May 15-16.

2009 National Women's Conference will be held July 25-31, at the Lake Williamson Conference Center, Carlinville, IL. The National Gathering for Girls will also be there allowing us to fellowship with them. **"Women...Destined for God's Purpose,"** is our theme. In our last newsletter I gave the wrong figures for the cost. All inclusive (registration, room, meals) price per person are as follows: \$500-4 or more women in a room (2 dbl.beds, 1 bunk bed); \$550-3 per room; \$600-2 per room. For more information, go to www.abwministries.org Click on "Upcoming Events." Don't forget that PA/DE ABWM offers a \$200 scholarship to any woman wishing to go. Our own Barb Diefenderfer is the registrar bbkcdief@ptd.net

Leader's Reader, our national ABWM publication is available with a click of your mouse! The last two issues have been chock-full of excellent articles and helpful ideas. Don't miss out! Go to www.abwministries.org and click on "Resources." You'll be glad you did!

Share Your Ideas-I am compiling a **PA/DE ABWM Idea Notebook** and I need your help. Would you please email me some of your better ideas that have worked with the women of your church or association? I received a few at our fall board meeting from some of our ladies, but I would like to include yours, too. These can be ideas for programming, outreach to young women, fundraisers, etc. I want to print this to share at our **Conference at Bucknell, June 5-7** (see article inside).

We have lost a dear friend. Elijah Crumity, President of the ABWM of the Philadelphia Assoc. passed away suddenly on Dec. 30. She will be greatly missed. Please keep the women of Phila. Assoc. in your prayers as they seek to find a new president.

Blessings, Sue Fitzgerald

Tidbits from Sue's Journey to Nicaragua and Costa Rica

We serve a mighty God whose power and majesty are revealed in His creation—His world and His people. Our team of 13 AB Women from 11 states traveled together for 15 days visiting our missionaries in Nicaragua and Costa Rica and saw the transforming power of God in the midst of illness, poverty, aging, bondage, and ordinary daily struggles.

Drs. David and Laura Parajon serve through AMOS (A Ministry of Sharing) to the people in the rural mountains and plains of Central Nicaragua. Thanks to your gifts to White Cross, thousands of people are given much needed medicines and first aid in remote areas. School children are being taught proper hygiene to prevent diseases. We met **Jaclyn**, a “**health promoter**,” who is one of 15 who recently completed training to assist her community with essential medications and health care. Her home is a two-room mud hut, but it is a haven of mercy for neighbors who previously had to walk two hours to get any health care. Drs. David and Laura are available for referrals for more serious problems.

Our visit to **Bluefields, Nicaragua**, introduced us to the church-planting ministry of **Ketly and Vital Pierre**. In 8 short years, they have started two churches, completing buildings in both places and starting a school in each. The first is a compound, complete with swimming pool, basketball courts, and dormitories. We traveled by speed boat to Kukra Hill to witness their first day of school in their newly opened building. We heard the



testimony of their new pastor, mentored by Ketly for this position, and learned again of God's power in transforming lives. Ketly shared that as soon as this church was well on its feet, he intended to begin a church in Ramah. Oh, to have his faith and energy!

Costa Rica's Mansion of Light Baptist Church, is using funds from your gifts to **Break the Chains** to establish The **Mariposa Transformation Center** (butterfly) in their community. They are so **grateful to you** for your generous gifts and they thanked us through dance, song and simple gifts. They have already begun an

educational program to reach the children and youth to prevent future activities of prostitution and drugs. Missionary Mylinda Bates took us to the red light districts in both downtown San Jose and Jaco. We did a prayer walk with women from Mansion of Light Church for their city. We truly felt we had “come to the edge,” and in the midst of the darkness, we knew that it was still possible for God's light to penetrate and bring freedom to these women. How they need our prayers!

Thank you, American Baptist Women of PA/DE for giving me this life-changing journey to witness the power of God in remote corners of Central America where even the “least of these” is finding hope in Christ Jesus our Lord. I am available to share my journey in your church or association.

Sue Fitzgerald

For more details and pictures, go to our blog at www.abwministries.org and click on Nicaragua/Costa Rica Mission Encounter.

White Cross and World Relief

Beth Arment—501 Kennett Pike, Chadds Ford, PA 19317—610-388-6912—arment2@verizon.net

"Baby, It's Cold Outside!" But many babies, children and adults will be snug and warm this winter, thanks to your generosity in providing 60 receiving blankets, 15 infant blankets, and 140 quilts/comforters to our designated **Overland White Cross** recipients, as well as hundreds of other much-needed items. Special Thanks to the Oil Creek Association for providing 15 comforters for another Association that was unable to fill their quota!

Chris Marziale has provided an update on **Overseas White Cross** for PA/DE as of December 31, 2008:

- Purchase Plan Assigned Request (Bulgaria/Congo) - \$31,200.00
- Amount Received - \$10,407.00
- % Received - 38.59%
- Still Needed - \$20,793.00
- Kits for the Dominican Republic - \$10.00
- Sewing for the Philippines - \$532.00
- Congo Supplies - \$55.00
- Gifts of the Heart - \$976.00

Deadlines!

Our completion deadline for this year's White Cross is fast approaching – March 31. Remember that **Local** White Cross reports are due to the Association Coordinator by **March 31**, and the **Association** report is due to me by **April 30**. Please honor these deadlines, as they are crucial to obtaining accurate reports for the year. If you need any additional forms to complete your reports, please call or e-mail me (see phone # and e-mail address above).

Philippines

I am still fielding questions about the changes to White Cross for the Philippines, so I want to reiterate that **no items** are to be mailed to the Philippines at this time. This change was announced last August, 2 months after the White Cross Quotas for 2008-2009 were given to the Association Coordinators, and many of those Coordinators had already distributed quotas to their local Coordinators. If your church was assigned items to be sent to the Philippines, please contribute cash instead, so the ministries in the Philippines can purchase the items locally. **However, do not send that cash to the Philippines.** The money should be sent to International Ministries in Valley Forge with a Triple Payment Form.

Health Kits - \$4.00 per kit

School Kits - \$4.00 per kit

Sewing Kits - \$4.00 per kit

Cloth Remnants - \$2.00

If your church was assigned baby gowns and/or baby blankets for the Philippines and you wish to send money for these items, please include them under "Sewing Supplies" on your Triple Payment Form.

Bandage Rolling at Conference

I hope many of you are planning to attend the Region Conference at Bucknell in June (see the Conference Coordinator's article for more details). We will again have a "bandage rolling room" which will be open throughout the weekend, or if you would prefer to work in a group setting, sign up for one or more of the bandage rolling workshop sessions. The bandage rolling workshop sessions are also a great opportunity to learn the proper way to prepare the bandages for sending to mission sites.

Your monetary gifts, handwork, and purchased items are much appreciated by those who receive them.

Keep up the good work!

BETH

Personal Development Ministries

Rev. Wynetta Dukes—6467 Milton Street, Philadelphia, PA 19119—215-549-4531

PS.20:7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the LORD, our God.

Since the last publication, there have been happy times, exciting times, challenging times and sad times. Hearing my grandson play the violin at his first recital was a happy time. The inauguration of Barak H. Obama, the 44th President of the United States of America, was most exciting. Indicative of the social and economic decline, several families' welfare is challenged. Grieving the transition of Sis. Elijah Crumity, president of ABW of PBA, is a bittersweet mixture of sadness for her absence, yet gratitude for God's precious grace. Elijah's love, encouragement and sense of humor are missed. This wide range of experiences and others prompt us to **trust** Him even the more at the edge.

To trust God is more than believing in Him. Trusting God is having **unshakeable confidence** in His sovereignty and granting Him control. Taking our hands and mouths off situations, gives God the right of way. After all, He knows the valleys, the hills and the mountains we face before we do (Job 23:10). Mary believed in God, however she demonstrated trust when she said, "*Be it unto me according to thy word.*" (Lk 1:38) Belief is an attitude of the heart and trust is the action that displays one's faith. Without anxiety or meddling, Mary met challenges with meditation (pondered) and waiting on God. Trusting God invites inner peace, stirs praise for His mercy

and faithfulness (Lk. 1:46-55, Jdg.5) and deepens faith.

God is trustworthy because of His boundless, steadfast, everlasting **love**. Like a spigot, we turn love for God and others on and off; yet, God's love is endlessly flowing. Love like trust is known by its action. The highest expression of His love was the willing sacrifice of His Son, the Worthy for the unworthy. Jesus who knew no sin became sin for us, shed His blood, died on Calvary and granted us full pardon, redemption, fellowship and eternal life in Him (Rm:5:8, Jn:3:16). We

are secure in and can count on that kind of intimate dependable love.

Accompanying God's love is His **faithfulness**. He is the supreme promise keeper of covenants. The spouse, boss, politician, neighbor or friend are subject to a change of mind. The Lord says what He will do and does what He says. He promised Israel Canaan and they occupied it. His greatest act of fidelity is His fulfilled promise of the Messiah to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem, through the lineage of King David, to save His people. Neither time nor the waywardness of people hinder God's allegiance to His plans. God's immutability spurs one to trust Him and exclaim, "Great is thy faithfulness!" (Lam.3:22-23)

Related to God's faithfulness is His enduring word of **truth** (Ps.119:160).

Since God is truth and cannot lie, His word is truth (as is Jesus & Holy Spirit). His word is the moral compass (Gal.5:16-26) and transformational standard for living (Jn:17:17, Heb.4:12). Some entertainers, legislators, new age thinkers, etc. try to normalize or legalize immorality. Moses warned of the consequences of accepting or rejecting God's revealed truth (Dt.31:14-20). The stance for Christians is, "God said it, I believe it and that settles it." God's value of His word above His name (Ps.138:2) brands His truth—superlative and trustworthy.

Sisters, currency says, "**In God We Trust**". His name gives us hope because in illness, He is Yahweh Rapha (healer), in trouble He is Yahweh Shalom (peace), in poverty He is Yahweh Jireh (provider), in bondage He is Yahweh Parate (breakthrough), in weakness He is El Gibbor (strength), in lostness He is Yahweh Rohi (shepherd). In loneliness He is Yahweh Shamma (present) and He is much much more. Instead of fretting and directing at the edge, trust God for victory and sing this hymn-

"Father, I stretch my hands to Thee. No other help I know. If Thou withdraw Thyself from me, O' whether shall I go? I will trust in the Lord, I will trust in the Lord, I will trust in the Lord until I die."

Rev. Dukes

Bible Reading—Read about these women in scripture and journal how the results of their trust in God inspires you.

Anna—Daughters of Zelophehad—Deborah—Esther—Hannah—Jochebed—Noah's Wife—Puah & Shiprah—Ruth—Shunamite Woman—Syrophonician Woman—Widow of Zarephath

Missions and Service

We regret to inform you that Louisa Christleit, our Missions and Service Coordinator resigned her position. In place of Louisa's article, Sue Fitzgerald wrote a wonderful report on her recent mission trip to Nicaragua. Please make sure you see her story on page two of this newsletter.

Below is a picture of Sue with some of the children that she had the opportunity to work with during her visit to Central America.



For more details and pictures, go to our blog at www.abwministries.org and click on Nicaragua/Costa Rica Mission Encounter.

Please contact me at suefit@gmail.com if you would like me to speak at your church or association. I look forward to hearing from you. Blessings, Sue

Message from Chris Marziale

International Ministries Consultant to AB Women

It has come to our attention from several of our missionaries that they are seeing their addresses posted on region/states websites. This has become a concern. Therefore, for this reason, we are asking each region/state or association to include the following in their newsletters, websites or publication to inform churches.

Missionary mailing addresses are not to be

shared publicly in church newsletters or posted on blogs or websites. We need to respect the desires of the missionaries and also do what we can to not compromise their security. This has been a concern in recent years. Also, if someone contacts you individually for an address, please indicate to the person requesting it that the information is for their own use only and not to be shared or posted in any way.