



A Newsletter from On Wings Like A Dove Ministry December 2023 Vol. 19 Issue 12

The Word

became flesh & dwelt among us, & we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

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Office Hours:
Tuesday-Thursday
10 am-2 pm
or by appointment
336-829-5060

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Prayer Support

JOIN US FOR
Prayer Support
December 4th
6:30 PM
at On Wings Office
Glenda Mott will share
We will provide snacks and
celebrate Christmas together

Can we pray for you?
Please call us at
336-829-5060
or email us at
Sandra@onwingslikeadove.com
We have a prayer intercessor
praying each Tuesday in our
Prayer Room

Ladies Bible Study

Each Tuesday
At On Wings Office
From 12:30-2:00
We are currently studying
Masterlife Together
by Matt and Allison Willis
Led by Jan Sharp
Come Join Us!

A Year of Mercy

**“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”
Leviticus 19:18**

We find ourselves at the end of another year filled with challenges and blessings. Our focus word for 2023 has been mercy. We have had many opportunities to show mercy within On Wings and in our community this year. My prayer is that we will continue to put mercy in action as we approach 2024.

Our Board prepared for our Planning meeting by reading Tim Keller’s book *Ministries of Mercy*. In it he says, “One of the tests of Christian love is the ministry of mercy. In 1 John 3:17-18 God’s Word says, “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”

Mercy to the poor and needy is an evidence of true heart commitment to God. What is your response to the lame, the homeless, the one begging on the street? Does your heart leap with love and compassion or judgement and condemnation? How are your putting your words in action to show God’s love to someone else?

Christ’s mercy was not based on our worthiness to receive it, thankfully. In like manner God’s Word tells us to be merciful as our Father is merciful. In other words, as we have received mercy so should we extend it to others.

We have had a year of changes on our Board, with new volunteers stepping into positions of leadership, with issues within our Hope Houses, and we are stepping out to upgrade our computers to a more secure system, which is a huge step. I can not say I understand all that process but thankfully God has provided those who do. We are excited to be able to work more efficiently in the future.

The close of a year always leads us to seek God for His vision for the coming year and we are being challenged to develop a 3-year strategic plan. The Board covets your prayers as we come together in January to bring together what we have each heard the Lord saying. We have seen God do mighty things in the way of provision this year and we are praising Him for His faithfulness to us.

Even though a plan is written we are always open to God’s change of those plans. We thank each of you who have participated in our study of God’s Word, attended our Prayer Support Group, come to our Retreats, volunteered in some way or financially supporting our continued mission. Our Prayer Partners are lifting each family up to our Heavenly Father so know you are being prayed for.

Please pray for On Wings as we go forward in God’s call to occupy until He comes.

Never lose hope,

~ Sandra



FINDING JESUS

"Mom, I can't see you!" I heard these words ring out from a small child during a recent camping trip. Her mom replied, "I'm in the camper" and yet the child continued to cry out, "I can't see you!"

Hearing this exchange made me think of how often I cry out to Jesus when I don't understand what is happening in life. Jesus - where are You? Why is nothing changing?

One of my favorite things to experience in southern Italy are the Presepi. "Presepi are a time-honored tradition in Naples credited with putting the idea of the Nativity into mainstream life in Italy." Presepi can vary in size from a small tabletop crèche to scenes that take an entire city block. Presepi depict the activities in a town while Jesus is being born in a manger. There are shepherds tending their flocks, women doing laundry, blacksmiths working with metal, running children, pizza makers and men napping near the hay bales. I imagine that if a Presepe were created in today's world there would be people looking at cell phones, binge watching shows on TV, out raking leaves, putting up Christmas trees, running children and exasperated mothers!

While all the normal activities continue in a town, tucked away in an unobtrusive spot are Mary, Joseph and Jesus. It always strikes me that the world didn't stop when Jesus was born and most people were unaware! To find Jesus in these Presepi takes some time and some searching...being intentional and expectant.

Back to the crying child at the campground and me when I can't see Jesus in the midst of my circumstances: Where are You?

He's here. He's working. He's showing Himself. It often takes some time, and being intentional and expectant to find Jesus in the midst of our chaos. As Blackaby teaches in his Experiencing God study, "The Holy Spirit speaks through the Bible, prayer, circumstances and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes and His ways." Take time to quietly read Scripture, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself. Be intentional in looking for Jesus in daily encounters and in nature. Be expectant that He is revealing Himself in the middle of the chaos.

Jesus, where are You? I can't see You!

I'm here, child. Look and listen. I'm here.

During this time of year when we celebrate the birth of Christ, keep looking and listening. The business of the season can drown out His presence. But He's still speaking. He is still near. He is – and faithfully remains always – Emmanuel, God with us.

It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Deut 31:8



Prayer Thoughts

Shortly after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, an angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds guarding their sheep at night and announced to them, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" And the sign given to them was that they would find "a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger". Of all the possible signs that could have been given to these shepherds, why did the Lord choose a baby lying in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes? There is speculation that they were Levitical shepherds, trained and tasked with the responsibility of tending and guarding the flocks used for sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem. When it was time for one of their flock to give birth, the shepherds would bring the sheep into one of the caves surrounding Bethlehem that were used for this purpose. These birthing caves were kept in a state of ritual purity since these lambs were destined to be used as sacrifices in the temple. In fact, many of the male lambs born around Bethlehem would be used for the Passover. Since there was no room in the local inn, Mary and Joseph used one of these caves around Bethlehem. Messiah was born in one of the many caves used for birthing these sacrificial lambs, because He Himself would be the ultimate sacrificial Lamb. Not only would the location of Jesus' birth be significant to these shepherds, but so would the fact that Jesus was swaddled in cloths. These shepherds were responsible for making sure that the new-born lambs did not contract defects, for only animals without spot or blemish could be used as a sacrifice in the temple. Baby lambs are very clumsy when they are born, so many scholars believe that these shepherds would swaddle their newborn lambs in order to prevent these future sacrificial lambs from becoming blemished by injuring themselves on jagged parts of the cave.

Additionally, Jesus' swaddling clothes could have been made from torn priestly garments but where would Joseph and Mary have gotten them? Mary may have gotten these cloths from her cousin Elizabeth, who was married to the priest Zechariah. As soon as Mary entered the home of Elizabeth, who had miraculously conceived in her later years, the unborn baby in her womb leaped, filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth cried out, "You are blessed among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Who am I, that the mother of my Master should come to me? For even when I just heard the sound of your greeting in my ear, the unborn child leaped with joy in my womb. Blessed is she who trusted that there would be a fulfillment of those things spoken to her by ADONAI".

So the shepherd priests, who encountered angels, went to a place where the lambs used for the sacrifices were born and swaddled. There, they saw the baby Jesus swaddled like a sacrificial Passover lamb in priestly garments.



These pictures ARE FROM OUR VOLUNTEER DINNER CELEBRATION IN NOVEMBER. IT WAS A TIME OF REMEMBERING WHAT GOD HAS DONE OVER THE PAST 17 YEARS. IN ONE OF OUR RECENT BIBLE STUDIES WE HAD THE HEBREW WORD, ZAKHAR WHICH MEANS REMEMBER. WE STEP FORWARD BECAUSE THE SAME GOD WHO WAS FAITHFUL TO BE WITH US IN THE PAST IS THE GOD WHO WILL BE FAITHFUL TO BE WITH US IN A FUTURE THAT MAY SEEM UNKNOWN. WE DON'T REMEMBER FOR REMEMBERING SAKE, BUT WE REMEMBER TO MOVE FORWARD WITH RENEWED FAITH AND HOPE IN THE GOD WHO IS SHEPHERDING OUR WHOLE LIVES. A VOLUNTEER IS A PERSON WHO FREELY OFFERS TO

TAKE PART IN AN ORGANIZATION OR

MINISTRY WILLINGLY AND WITHOUT BEING FORCED OR PAID. RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT VOLUNTEERING OFFERS SIGNIFICANT HEALTH BENEFITS, ESPECIALLY FOR OLDER ADULTS. WE THANK OUR VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR SERVICE AND IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING IN SOME WAY PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT ONWINGSLIKEADOVE.COM AND FILL OUT A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION.





Merry Christmas!

MATTHEW 10:29 SAYS
NOT ONE SPARROW FALLS TO THE GROUND
WITHOUT OUR FATHER KNOWING IT.
THE VERY HAIRS ON OUR HEAD ARE ALL
NUMBERED.

BE REMINDED OF GOD'S PROVISION AND LOVE
FOR THE COMING *New Year*

