

# Community of Christ



## WEAVE US TOGETHER

### TESTIMONIES FROM A PEOPLE OF FAITH

Volume 10 – April – July 2009

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Dearly Beloved,

This is the tenth issue of your Testimony Journal. It is my prayer that, as you read and study the testimonies included in this issue, you will come away with a renewal of your own faith in Jesus Christ and will encourage you to share your own.

Love and Blessings,  
Tom Barrett, Compiler and Editor,  
CCM Leadership Team

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### FROM DEANNA BEEBE, INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

#### A Servant's Heart



Over the April 24<sup>th</sup> weekend, I attended a CCM retreat at the Temple in Independence, MO. The theme was Hearing the Voice of God. I believe that all those who were there were highly blessed by God.

During the praise music Saturday morning, I was drawn to take a hold of Steve Ferguson's hand and invite him to sing and dance with those of us who were standing up in the back. We danced and sang together but shortly after we began, Steve felt he needed to go back and sit down as he felt drained and he was to share with us later that day. I pulled up a chair where we were praising and asked Steve to sit as I placed my hands on him to pray.

I prayed some and then was going back to the music, when he asked me not to stop. So I placed my hands on him and continued to pray the name of Jesus over him. As I was praying, I was led to pray that he see Jesus. During this time, Steve said he had a wonderful experience with God. But, I did too.

Normally when I put my hands on someone, I am used just as a vessel of God for the one being prayed over and the experience is with them and the Lord. But this time was different. Steve's heart is that of a servant and full of joy as those of us who are blessed to know Steve know he has a gift of joy. As Steve was receiving what he needed, the joy that is in his servant heart came up through my hands and I was filled with joy. I saw Steve in the arms of Jesus dancing to the music that was being played at the same time that Steve was being renewed with God. I also was able to touch some of those who were still singing and they felt this blessed gift of joy.

When Jesus was on the cross bearing His physical pain, His heart was not only filled with compassion but also with joy. Our Lord knows our specific need. When we feel exhausted or need times of refreshing, He will give us what we need, but He will also have compassion and honor the desires of our hearts to be his servant. We are to continue on as He needs us to be His Eyes, His Hands, His Voice *AND* His Joy.

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**FROM MICHELLE DUNLAP, INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURE**



Just wanted to drop you a line, and share with you an awesome inner-healing experience I had on Friday night, after Healing and Reconciling Together (HART). After HART closed, Heather, Paul, Mark Braden, Donna, and I went to the prayer room, because the Lord wanted to speak to each of us, and pour out a blessing! I was asked by the Lord to release to him, and let go of, all the lies, and hurtful messages of the past. I did, and now I feel so much lighter, and am full of joy! Heather even noticed that my stomach has flattened some! Donna and the rest of the gang have all noticed a

difference in me and my attitude.

Truly, the joy of the Lord is our strength, and we are that we might have joy! Thank you Jesus!!

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**FROM CONNIE EADS, CAMERON, MISSOURI**



Can you feel my presence, my touch on your face? Can you sense my enlightenment in your mind and heart? Love groans where I go, and I am in you, so my love goes wherever you go. Spread my love – it is a commandment. Take my love wherever you travel. Take my love to the people. Be Christlike. Love, heal and mend wherever you go. Grow in me – it is the only way to truly be my hands and feet. I love you and am with you. I go before you and open doors. Open your hearts to me and my people. Let my people go in love and freedom.

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**FROM SHARON GUERRERO, DOUGLASVILLE, GEORGIA**



Lord, you have given so much in such a very short time here this week. Through my sister, Barb, I was charged with forgiveness. I sat there and gave forgiveness in my heart for those you placed in my remembrance of pain that I have carried for so long. And there were others you had me speak to, my daughter for one. Thank you to my sister Marilyn for holding me through that phone call. The depths of my being were ripped out and repaired.

A charge to fast was put forth for one meal. I've never fasted more than one meal, and I felt I needed to fast the whole day. And all this happened in one day.

I promised to be in Bob's class, but I was so very tired from the call to my daughter, that I went back to my room to rest for a few minutes. When I awoke I discovered I had but four minutes to make it to Bob's class. As I left my room

to hurry, I felt as though I was moving in slow-motion. I could not make my feet go.

At the end of class, Bob said something (maybe in different words than these). I had never heard these words before. "Accept yourself totally as you are. When you do this, you can journey with the Spirit." This statement had a huge impact on my soul.

Later, while others had dinner, I went to my room to get my camera. As I passed the mirror, I noticed my hair was a mess. So I picked up the brush to take out the tangles and noticed the person looking back at me. That person was not the homely, wretched, and ugly person that I've seen for 47 years. There stood a pretty woman.

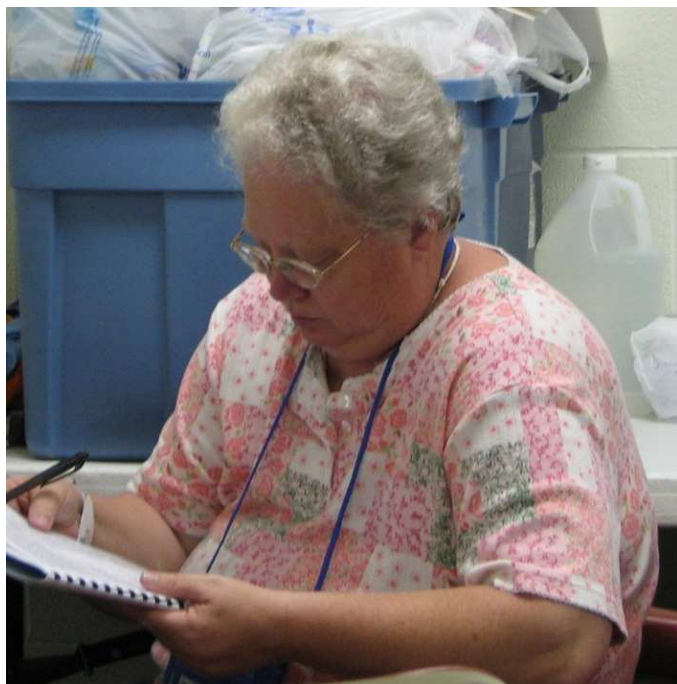
At the Baptism last night I was excited like I've never felt before. It was such a beautiful occasion.

I find myself leaking from my eyes a lot this week. Crying is something that is not acceptable for me. We need criers: not me. Leaking from the eyes is good.

This morning was oh so new. I've always loved the out-of-doors: so much beauty in everything but me. But now what I've seen has been multiplied. God has given me new eyes to see with and new ears to hear with. He has given me a whole new attitude, such as laughter. And most important: I AM NOT ALONE ANYMORE.

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**FROM LINDA HOLDER, LYTLE, TEXAS**



I went to church  
Not in a building  
But in a cathedral  
Sculpted by the original architect

I went to church  
Not to hear a grand organ  
But creative music  
Composed by the original choirmaster

I went to church  
Not to sit in pews  
But sitting among green plants  
Nurtured by the original gardener

I went to church  
Not to hear a human preach  
But to receive words of wisdom  
Placed in me by the original disciple

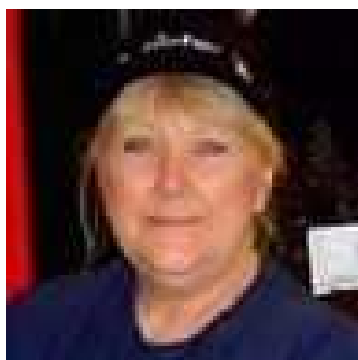
But some would say  
I didn't go to their church  
Not crowded together inside  
Insulated from the original creator

I say  
I went to church

Linda Holder, July 26, 2009

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**FROM JANA MARIE GADBERRY, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI**



We just had an amazing week in Canada. I can tell you one thing that I learned: there is that the Lord wants us to put the past behind us, so He can work with us in the present for our future with Him. If we have one foot in the past and one in the present, we're not balanced and can't stand firm for Him.

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## FROM TOM BARRETT'S JOURNAL, NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS



“And the Spirit hovered over the deep.” These words from Genesis 1:2 came to me as I recount the following experience:

Before Friday morning I did not know Amy. However, I have known Mattie Ott for over 25 years. Mattie and Amy were sharing a room at the local hospital.

Mattie is a woman of deep faith and a passionate love for Jesus. She also believes in the healing power of prayer – as she has experienced miracles that defy human explanations. We, Linda and I, went to visit Mattie on this particular Friday to encourage and pray.

As we talked with Mattie, a voice kept intruding from the other bed, beyond the curtain. Amy also has faith; however, she doesn't know Jesus. She goes straight to God in prayer frequently and has developed a relationship that is in its infancy.

We administered to Mattie. I sensed something to stir in that place. In the midst of the chaos of life, the Spirit hovers. Amy had heard our prayer, and the Spirit bore witness of emerging truth. And so, it is not at all surprising that God would so ordain for the nurses to arrive to tend to Mattie and thus make it possible for us to move beyond the curtain that had kept us separated from one of His children – one who was moving, however tentatively and fearfully, into the light of His love and grace.

Amy shared that she had been visited by the hospital chaplain since being there. The chaplain had sat with her and prayed with her. However, she had never heard anything like the prayers that were just shared with Mattie. She asked who we were and were we pastors of some church. What church, she asked. The stirrings were more intense.

And so I talked with Amy a bit about the Community of Christ and our sacraments, and how this sacrament has brought blessings to many of His children for more than 2000 years. I told her it is available to any who wish to use it.

She asked, “You mean that I, who am not even sure of this Jesus, can receive what Mattie just got”?

With a certainty that sometimes comes into being in the flesh, I anointed and prayed for Amy, not even remembering now the words I shared with her. Linda then confirmed the blessing that Amy was beginning to receive.

When we finished, I looked upon one whom God had just touched in some miraculous way – perhaps no change in her physical conditions, but there could be no doubt that a transformation had just occurred. Amy, as she lay in that hospital bed, had allowed the Spirit of God to hover over the chaos of her life and to bring the beginnings of a new creation upon which she could stand and testify of His love. Amy, for a brief time, had allowed herself to be vulnerable to Divine grace.

With tears in her eyes, and I sensed a fear of getting an answer she did not want to hear, I simply said, “Yes, Amy, God loves you. It has been His joy to see you take the faithful step today that leads to the gates of His kingdom; now rest in His amazing grace”.

As I share this story, it is confirmed once again that the Holy Spirit produces beauty out of the chaos that sometimes invades our lives. What a joy!!

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**FROM GARY MCDONALD, BLUE SPRINGS, MISSOURI**



I just came across an interesting tidbit in my journal dated 2/27/09. The entry reads, “Something strange happened to me last night. I was searching through my Word file on the computer looking for a specific submission I wanted to email for the 2010 edition of the Daily Bread. I could not find it. I looked and looked throughout my files for the essay. I searched line by line, meticulously, opening many files that had lain dormant for years. I did not find it. For all practical purposes it had completely disappeared.

“I did however access a testimony I had written the previous year. It was a dream I’d had about my brother Joe and how I felt guided to pray for him.” In this dream I was having a conversation with my brother about something or other and he quoted me something from the Doctrine and Covenants. This shocked me because Joe has not attended church for any reason for at least these past 38 years. So I asked him in this dream how he knew about these words. He said, “The same way you do. I read them.” Quite frankly upon awakening I puzzled over the dream. What did it mean? I wasn’t sure then and I’m not sure now. But I wrote the experience down, shared it with my mother, prayed some and then forgot about it.

Finding this testimony was a reminder. Again from the journal, “Today I found the missing file. It had been right in front of my face all along. This morning after I’d offered a short prayer to Joe the file name popped into my head. This is God’s way of telling me I must remember Joe in my prayers.” And now I humbly ask all readers of this testimony to pray right now for my brother Joe that he would allow God back into his life. He has been away wandering in the wilderness for many years.

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**DISCLAIMER**

The testimonies shared in this journal are expressions of personal experiences and encounters with God. They do not necessarily represent the theology, beliefs, or practices of either CCM or the Community of Christ.

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This issue of the journal is now complete and ready to go to those who need a reminder from time to time of God's Grace and Love for each of His children. The next issue will be published at the end of October 2009. Please send me your testimonies so others will be blessed. We have been counseled to "share the sacred story". Make no mistake; your story is sacred.

Love, Peace, and Blessings,  
Tom Barrett, Healing Ministries,  
CCM Leadership Team, Southwest