

# PMM

ARE SCREENS  
RUINING YOUR  
FAMILY'S LIFE?

PENTECOSTAL MESSENGER | ABSOLUTE.CONNECTED.GLOBAL.RELEVANT.

# RE DIS COV ER YOUR FAMILY.

101 CREATIVE  
DATE IDEAS



# IMPACTING ETERNITY



FAST PRAY SOW  
2.7.14

On February 7, 2014 we are asking all the families of the Pentecostal Church of God to set aside one day to fast and pray for the harvest of souls into our churches, both home and abroad. Take this time to set down and teach your children about the discipline and purpose of the fast. We are asking you to help us impact eternity by sowing an offering of what you would have spent on meals for that day. Bring it to your local church on February 9, 2014. All of our efforts are for one primary purpose. To reach people who are lost without Christ. Will you help us IMPACT ETERNITY?

# REMAIN IN ME

**E** ENCOUNTER  
CONFERENCE

COMING JANUARY 10-11, 2014 | BFWC, INDIANAPOLIS

[WWW.ENCOUNTERCONFERENCE.COM](http://WWW.ENCOUNTERCONFERENCE.COM)

GRAB A PEN, FILL IN THE BLANKS AND SING TO THE TUNE OF JINGLE BELLS

----- THROUGH THE -----

 {ING VERB}

 {YOUR DISTRICT}

{PASTOR'S  }

WITH -----  
 {PASTOR'S NAME (FIRST, LAST)}

----- IN  OR  -----  
HIS HER  
 {CIRCLE ONE}

  
 DRAW HERE

O'ER THE FIELDS WE GO  SPEEDING  SWERVING  LAUGHING  CRYING ALL THE WAY

 {COLOR ONE}

HA! HA! HA!  ON BOBTAILS RING  
BELLS

MAKING SPIRITS -----  
 {RHYMES WITH BRIGHT}

WHAT FUN IT IS TO -----  
 {VERB} ----- AND SING A SLEIGHING  TONIGHT  
SONG

OH, ,  JINGLE ALL THE WAY  
JINGLE BELLS JINGLE BELLS

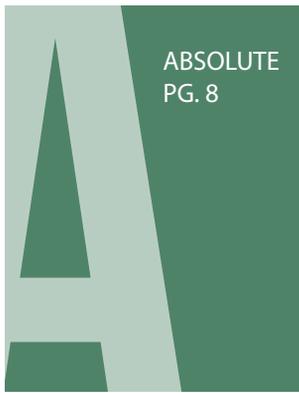
OH WHAT FUN IT IS TO ----- IN A(N) -----  
 {VERB}  {ADJECTIVE}  {PASTOR'S  (MAKE/MODEL)}

# A VERY MERRY PCG CHRISTMAS



PG. 12

ABSOLUTE  
PG. 8



## COLUMNS

### 8 Eye2Eye

Our House

By General Bishop Charles Scott

### 10 Father's Heart

Healthy Families/Healthy Society

By General Secretary Loyd Naten

### 32 Be Our Guest

I 'CAN' -fidence

By Teena Skiles

### 34 That Is Relevant

A Healthy Culture

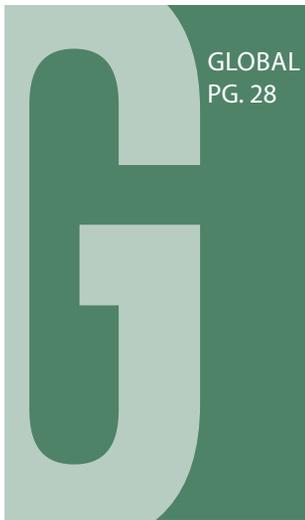
By Randy Lawrence Jr.



CONNECTED  
PG. 5



PENTECOSTAL MESSENGER | ABSOLUTE.CONNECTED.GLOBAL.RELEVANT



GLOBAL  
PG. 28



PG. 18

## FEATURES

### 12 Rediscovering

and Enjoying Your  
Family | By Vernell Ingle

### 16 Born Into it

A story of a PCG girl and  
her musical heritage | By Sarah  
Herring

### 18 Focusing

on Foster Care | Steve  
Archer

### 21 8 Ways Screens

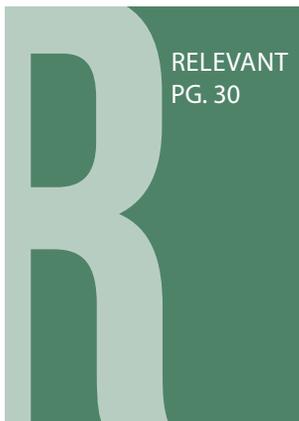
are Ruining Your Family's  
Life | Lori Leibovich

### 24 101 Date Ideas

For Married Couples



PG. 21



RELEVANT  
PG. 30

# CONTENTS

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Charles G. Scott

Executive Editor | **Loyd L. Naten**  
Production Manager | **Brian Ramos**

Communication Lead | **Randy Lawrence**  
Design and Layout | **Josh Rogers**  
Content Editor | **Peggy Allen**  
Content Editor | **Brooke Skiles**

ISSN 427340 • Copyright © 2013

The editorial staff reserves the exclusive right, without further permission of the author, to edit, revise or otherwise prepare any articles, pictures or reports submitted for publication in The Pentecostal Messenger in accordance with the rules adopted by the Editorial Board of the Pentecostal Church of God. All material, both printed copy and pictures, will become the property of The Pentecostal Messenger. Because there are varying points of view in the church body, publication in The Pentecostal Messenger does not necessarily imply endorsement by the Pentecostal Church of God.

Notify publisher promptly of change of address. Published at least four times annually at Messenger Publishing House, DBA The Lettershop, 607 East 7th Street, Joplin, MO 64801. Subscription Rates: Per year—US single subscription, \$12.00 USD, Canada single subscription, \$27.50 USD, other international single subscriptions: please inquire. Single copy, \$3.00 USD. POSTMASTER: Send address correction notices to PO Box 211866, Bedford, TX 76095. Phone: 817-554-5900. Fax: 817-391-4101. E-Mail: messenger@pcg.org

Member of the Evangelical Press Association and the International Pentecostal Press Association



# IN THIS ISSUE

This issue of *The Pentecostal Messenger* is dedicated to the family. The family is a very familiar topic for periodicals and is a great theme to focus in on, especially this time of the year.

The articles and columns in this issue cover a variety of aspects of what we know as the family, hopefully relating in some facet to each one of our readers. As you read this issue, we hope that you are encouraged and inspired to cultivate a healthy family environment that will be an example for the society in which we currently live. As we wrap up the publishing year of 2013, we wish you a Merry Christmas and pray God's absolute best for you in the coming new year!

—PM

# UPCOMING EVENTS



**JANUARY 10–11, 2014:**  
Encounter Conference



**FEBRUARY 7, 2014:**  
Impacting Eternity



**FEBRUARY 18–26, 2014:**  
2014 Trip to Israel



**APRIL 4–5, 2014:**  
WOW4



**MAY 1, 2014:**  
National Day of Prayer



**JUNE 17–21, 2014:**  
Summerfest 2014



## LOCAL FAMILY HEEDS CALL TO SERVE

Photo credit Trevor Jones of the Times Recorder

Bishop Terry Rowland has been a Pentecostal pastor for 37 years. Now he's getting some company at the lectern as wife, Barbara; daughter, Ginny; and son, Donny, were ordained as ministers Thursday night during the 56th Annual Pentecostal Church of God [Ohio District] Convention in front of congregation members at Trinity Full Gospel Church on Munson Avenue.

"Bringing our son and daughter into this, too, it's just so exciting for all of us," Terry Rowland said. "Barbara has been by my side and she and Ginny have been involved in visitation ministry. And Donny has been a youth leader. It's just all come together into something special for us to share with our church and others."

### THE CALL TO SERVE

Being raised in a church family, Ginny and Donny at first rebelled against being pulled to follow their father's footsteps.

"I remember saying, I didn't think I could ever be a preacher. I don't think I could do that. I think we both saw all of the issues our dad had to face helping church members and just didn't think it was for us," Donny said. "Then God began speaking to my heart."

Ginny agreed.

"As we grew up and got older, I just really started feeling that call to serve, too," she said. "So I have been preaching to others here and there

since 2001. It was just time to make it official, I guess."

For Donny, he became caught up in the spirit while competing in a world powerlifting competition in England in 1997.

"I thought being a part of that would be something that would fulfill me. I couldn't understand why it wasn't. But there was something missing, a void there. And I began searching the Scriptures and getting into His service," he said.

Shortly after returning to the states with his "good news," Donny was asked by his father if he might be interested in youth ministry.

"I talked to my wife about it, and it was like, we both wanted to do it, so we knew what we needed to do, and it all fell into place," he said. "And now I've been assistant pastor here with my dad for about nine years and state youth pastor. So this is just a final step of that process."

### A MOTHER'S JOY

Barbara said her husband pastored in Cambridge before he was called to Zanesville, "and through all of

Photo credit: Trevor Jones of the Times Recorder



the ups and downs, God has really blessed our family."

The old adage, "the family that prays together, stays together," is embodied in the journey she and her children have taken.

"It's always been about family, raising the kids in the church; it's just been our way of life," she said.

"The desire to go into ministry, it's something that has grown within us over the years and here we are."

She said it's been a thrill to help

others in the church with their own spiritual journeys over the years, but she's finding a special fulfillment in "knowing we've encouraged our children to take that next step."

She said being able to connect with her children through God's Word has strengthened their bond as they set out on a new journey.

"It's a great honor for us as parents to see our children ordained. I don't think there is any higher calling in life than the call of God to do His work," she said.

#### **A ROAD LESS TRAVELED**

For the Rowlands, being a part of something that hasn't happened

in the PCG before — three family members being ordained at the same time — also is the start of an exciting new period in their lives and for everyone they hope to touch through their ministry.

"It's definitely an honor to be going through this with my mom and sister. But it's an awesome privilege, too. It's an honor that God has called me to help youth find fulfillment and a greater joy in the Lord, offering them some hope and a future," Donny said. "It's very rewarding, being able to speak into their lives the goodness of God."

While Barbara will remain steadfast in helping her husband fulfill his mission to his greater church family — Terry Rowland also is Bishop for the State of Ohio PCG — Ginny is ready to go wherever she is called.

"I really don't want to pastor at my own church yet; I'll just wait and see where they ask me to preach and go where God takes me," she said. "I wouldn't trade this experience for the world, to do this together and continue reaching out to others and be an inspiration for others seeking the Word of God."

Copyright 2013, Zanesville Time Recorder, All Rights Reserved. Author: Brian Gadd. 📷

# SOUTHERN MISSOURI ORDINATION

On Friday, October 18, the Southern Missouri District had the privilege of ordaining 32 ministers. The district usually only ordains ministers at its biennial District Convention. However, a special ordination service was needed due to the action of the General Board allowing licensed or exhorter ministers to take the Ordination test if the minister was currently serving in a ministry capacity of a local church, and he or she had held their credentials for a minimum of 5 years. A total of 38 ministers were eligible to take the test. Thirty two ministers took the test and met the district board for their promotion. Bishop Bob McGee officiated the service. Bishop McGee charged the ministers to fulfill the purpose God has for each of them. 📷



# OUR HOUSE



**H**onestly, the topic of this issue, “Healthy Families,” is not a personal, strong area of ministry. While the subject has been the focus of Married Couple’s Retreats, pastoral sermons, and some special speaking occasions, it remains less studied and pursued than many others. So, instead of writing about a theoretical context from someone else’s perspective, please take a few moments to read what it would be like to come over to our house and visit for a while (emphasis on “a while,” because you don’t want to wear out your welcome!

Our house is reflective of who we are. It is not pretentious but designed on function. It is casual and relaxed. There are no works of art, but plenty of family photos. Our house centers on our family. The timeline of years gone by bring back precious memories and delightful stories. Our 4-year-old granddaughter, Baylee, was looking at family photos and asked her dad, “Dad, why did you wear those great big glasses?” She was looking at me and thought it was Eric. Some of the photos in our house need updated.

Our house is designed for conversation, with several sitting areas. We like to dialogue, a fancy word for talk! We like to discuss ideas, concepts, take positions, and try to prove our points. For some, this would be arguing, but in our house it is sharpening the mind and seeking better thinking skills. Chassity (Eric’s wife) seldom joins in these family discussions. Josh (Michelle’s husband) fits right in.

Our house has two tables, for eating and playing games, two of the most important things in life. Our family traits score high in competition, and “ruthless” would describe most of us when it comes to board games. OK, cutthroat? The competition seldom gets out of hand, but is indicative of people who are passionate and driven. We like to be together and do life together.

Our house is reflective of our loyalty. It is easy to see our faith in Jesus Christ by the symbols of our faith. A copy of *The Pentecostal Messenger* usually adorns the coffee table. Yes, Arkansas Razorback memorabilia can be seen in the family room. No matter how bad the team, our hearts remain steadfast and unmovable. There is always next season.

Our house is our sanctuary, an escape. It is a sacred place to us where we shut out the things of distraction and focus on what really matters most—each other. It can be quiet most days with the rich aroma of fresh ground dark roast coffee filling the air, and loud when we are all gathered for a family event.

The thing I love the most about our house is that the focus is always outward, on someone else. It is the guest being hosted, the friends visiting, or the grandkids playing that is the focal point. The priority of our house is serving. Hopefully, serving is the focal point of our life. Hopefully, your house sees that eye to eye. 📺

**Charles Scott** is the General Bishop of the Pentecostal Church of God and author of the book *Storms Don’t Bother Me*. Follow him on Twitter @generalbishop.

# A LOOK INTO THE PAST

We believe in the biblical principle of honor. As we move forward in the area of publications, we celebrate the heritage of the *PM*. Below is a glimpse into our past from December 1980

## Our Gifts to You

### Sukiyaki — Japan

*(Traditional dish usually prepared at the dinner table.)*

- 1 round steak
- 1/2 lb. mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1 bunch green onions, cut in 1½" lengths
- 3 stalks celery, sliced
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- 1 can (8 oz.) bamboo shoots, drained
- 1 Tbsp. water
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 1 chicken bouillon cube dissolved in ½ cup of hot water
- 3 cups raw spinach leaves
- 3 cups cooked rice

Cut round steak in pieces 2 x ¼" and brown. Add all ingredients except spinach and rice. Simmer until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Add spinach; cook 5 minutes. Serve on rice. 4 servings.

### Pave Delicia — Brazil

*(A layered pudding that is delicious!)*

- 1 can Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk
- 2 cans of canned milk
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 level Tbsp. margarine

Pour into a casserole dish. Place a layer of chocolate cookies or vanilla wafers over creme.

- Second creme: Make a chocolate syrup and cook until creamy.
- 2 cups of water
- 2 Tbsp. of chocolate

Sweeten to taste

Pour over the wafers (cookies)

- Third layer: Beat until fluffy and pour over the chocolate syrup.
- 3 egg whites
- 4 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 can whipping cream

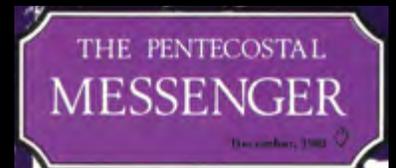
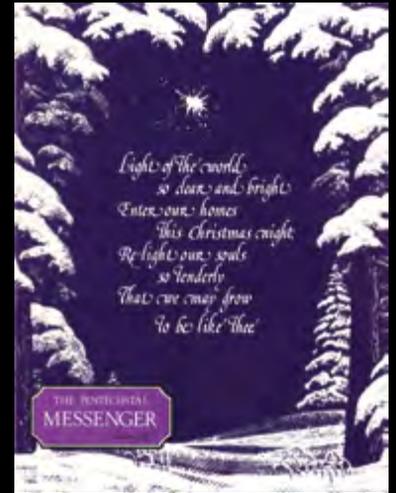
Fourth layer: Top with whipped cream (such as Dream-whip), spread evenly. Chill thoroughly before serving.

### Fiesta Tamale Pie

*Picturesque dish from Old Mexico.*

- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp. fat
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/4 lb. bulk pork sausage
- 1 can (1 lb.) tomatoes
- 1 can (1 lb.) whole kernel corn, drained
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 1½ tsp. chili powder
- 18 ripe pitted olives
- 1 cup corn meal
- 1 cup milk
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1 cup grated Cheddar cheese

Heat oven to 350° (mod.). Sauté onion and garlic in hot fat until yellow. Add meat and brown. Pour off excess fat. Add vegetables and seasonings; bring to boil. Pour mixture into square baking dish, 9x9x1½". Press olives into mixture. Combine corn meal, milk and eggs. Spoon over filling. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake 1 hour — 6 to 8 servings.



**Season's Greetings  
from  
Your Missionaries  
and Staff of  
World Missions**

P.O. Box 816  
Joplin, Missouri 64801

Director and Mrs. Robert W. Boyle  
Reverend and Mrs. S. L. Corley, Sr.

# HEALTHY FAMILIES/ HEALTHY SOCIETY



When I think of the word “family” I think of going to Mama’s for dinner, getting together for holidays, sharing in one another’s successes, or standing with them when things are tough. I think of the intimacy I have with those I love who are a vital part of my life. I’ve found through the years that changes occur, miles may separate us, but distance does not sever that strong bond known as “family ties.”

The truth is, that’s the way God designed and ordained family to be— a type of Christ and the Church, bound together in love, unity, vision, and purpose. However, sad but true, the present concept of marriage and family in America is viewed (in many aspects) to be in devastating contrast to God’s design for family. How sad!

The fact is, stable, healthy families are the major security blocks of our society. Should these vital “building blocks” begin to decay and crumble, it is most certain that the entire structure of society will also decompose. Another definition for decompose is “rot!” All we have to do is to look around us, watch the evening news to see a lot of rottenness in our world today! Sad to say, but true, society is nothing more than the home amplified.

It was hard-working, unified families who obeyed the call of God on their lives and literally built the Pentecostal Church of God! Children who were brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, whose parents were true examples of godly love and dedication to the divine cause of Christ, also became building pioneers under the banner of the PCG! No sacrifice seemed too great, no vision unattainable for our family of founders of the yester-years. Today, the kingdom of God is still being built on the building blocks of prayer, faith, unrelenting vision, sacrifice, and hard work of families who are in one accord with each other and with God.

It is alarming, even a frightening reality, that the family has become a prime target of a Satanic attack. Any rules that God has created and ordained and commissioned for humanity to live by immediately becomes Satan’s objective to destroy. Foundation blocks, such as belief in the Bible and trust in God, honesty, clean living, at every level of life that is in accord with biblical principles are under attack and must be recognized! It is not what the Supreme Court rules, or any level of government permits, or society accepts, if it is not based on the

teaching of the Word of God, it is unacceptable by God!

It is obvious that moral values are rapidly shifting away from God’s rule of living—the “abundant life rule” that only comes from being a follower of Christ. While the loss of a moral compass (in the world in general) is troubling, how much more should it be troubling when this loss also becomes evident among the Christian family who is commissioned to be the salt and light in the world?

Moms and dads, the “salt and light” factor plays a most vital role in family life. Salt, as we know, is a preservative as well as a seasoning for food. And light, as we well know, dispels darkness, shows light on our pathway, and is essential to life itself.

Does not the definition of salt and light, which God says we are to be, clearly reveal what our children need from their mom and dad to form a well preserved family unit? Children need to be literally “preserved” in the truths of God’s Word. They need to experience a well-seasoned life of pleasurable togetherness, making enduring memories that will live on and on, being ever thankful for being a part of a family functioning in the Light of the Gospel of Christ. 📖

*Loyd Naten* is the General Secretary of the Pentecostal Church of God.



BALTIMORE, MD | JUNE 17-21, 2014

# REDISCOVERING AND ENJOYING



YOUR FAMILY



BY VERNELL INGLE

# Relax,

take a deep breath, close your eyes, clear your mind (don't nod off) and go back in time. Now recall one of the happiest memories of your childhood with your family. Usually there are two common features when recalling such warm experiences. First, it probably took place outdoors; and secondly, it was simple. More than likely, it was not an elaborate or expensive event, but nonetheless, it was fun. Four days in the summer of '58, when I was 9, our family went camping for the first time, and I've never forgotten that experience. Near the coast of California, in the redwoods, playing on the beach, hiking, eating tasty meals around the campfire, exploring, and just enjoying the great outdoors—it was simple, but it made a huge impact on my life.

When I grew up and had a family of my own, guess what our favorite thing to do was? Some of our most memorable family experiences have been our annual camping trips. Obviously, not everyone enjoys camping, but there are all kinds of simple pleasures in life that families can enjoy together. Whether it's a camping trip, playing catch in the yard, or a family game night, the important thing is that healthy families spend time together. Healthy families not only take time for each other, but they enjoy their time together. This doesn't just happen; they make it happen. Such families are just as busy as any other family, but their family is top priority.

A young boy with destructive behavior was asked by the family counselor, "If you could have anything you wanted, what kind of reward would you be willing to work for?" The boy responded without hesitation, "Most of all, I would like to go on a fishing trip with my dad." Making family top priority requires a mind-set. This means that we will do whatever is necessary to provide adequate time for our family. What time we do spend together should entail both quality and quantity of time. Imagine paying good money for a steak dinner and the waiter brings you a one-inch square steak. You obviously protest, but the waiter responds by saying, "It's not the quantity but the quality that counts." No pun intended, but you are not going to "buy" that. In fact, when it's all over, the waiter might be wearing a beef eye patch. Meaningful family relationships require both quality and quantity of time.



The February 2006 Family News from James Dobson reported that Americans are the most overworked and vacation starved people in the industrialized world, and that we are working ourselves to death. Obviously, this is a major contributor to the breakdown of the family. The home ends up being a boarding house where family members just eat and sleep. Dobson quoted George Barna in regards to this trend, "The life of each family member is usually so jam-packed that the opportunity to spend time together doing unique activities—talking about life, visiting special places, playing games, and sharing spiritual explorations—has to be scheduled in advance. Few do so." In our fast-paced, high-tech, harried lifestyle, spending quality time together as a family may seem like a monumental task. The fact is, it is doable. The question is how bad do we want it? If your family is top priority, you'll take the time. Here are five practical suggestions to rediscovering and enjoying time with your family.

1. Initiate activities that promote communication. This may mean that we need to curb TV watching, video games, cell phone usage, computer time, and whatever else that promotes isolation. This does not mean that all of these new technologies are inherently evil—they just need to be controlled. We want to make sure that we are not sacrificing interpersonal family relationships. Enjoy more table games or interactive Wii games where a family can participate together. A great place to start would be to take meals together whenever possible. In our

home, Sunday afternoon meals were taken around the table. That was our special time together. The TV remained off, the answering machine was turned on, and it communicated loud and clear that our family time was important. This continued after our children married; it just turned into a "tribal meal" rather than just a family meal! Go for family walks and or take trips to the park. Look for creative ways to provide times and places where you can talk. Have family councils where you involve the whole family. Take time for discussion and questions and answers. Deal with areas of strengths and weaknesses in the family and what each one can do to improve family life. You might

be surprised at what you'll discover.

2. Build each other up. It's easy to criticize, put down, and nail to the floor whenever anyone does something wrong. But we also need to be quick to praise and note when someone does something right. We can look for ways to express our appreciation and encourage one another rather than take each other for granted. As a boy, when our family was visiting my aunt and uncle, I was doing some homework. My uncle just walked up, looked over my shoulder, and simply said, "You've got great penmanship." That's all he said and walked away. A simple comment, a brief moment, but it stayed with me, and I never forgot it. It encouraged me to do even better, and I did. Someone once said, "Impression without expression leads to depression." There are all kinds of things we can do to encourage and build each other up. You can use sticky notes, text messaging, even old fashioned snail mail!

Celebrate your lives together. Make special days a big deal, such as birthdays. We used a special plate that was given to us from Josh McDowell, which read, "You are special and loved," with a Scripture engraved on it. At different times, each family member was given that plate to use for special occasions in their lives. This past Christmas most of our family was with us and we didn't have enough holiday plates to go around. So, I lovingly got the plate down and used it for myself—I don't understand why the family reacted the way they did? Be involved in the lives of your children. If possible, both parents should attend parent-teacher conferences and the school's open house. This sends a message loud and clear to your children that they are important. As parents we can build a "complex" or create confidence in our kids.

3. Promote family roots and identity. It is important to stay in touch with extended family. There is a sense of family rootlessness and disconnect today like never before. Families are busy and more mobile than ever before. Such rootlessness, disconnect, and mobility can contribute to insecurity and instability in one's life. Make time for grandparents and great grandparents, and allow them to relay their

stories. Go through the old photo-albums together and update. Visit the places from your past. Learn the history of your family and create a heritage corner with photos of previous generations. Years ago our family took a day, packed a picnic lunch, and visited all the places where we, our parents, and their great grandparents lived. We actually came across the house where my grandparents, our children's great grandparents, lived. I couldn't believe it was still standing. I got out of the car because the house was vacant, but there was a city truck there. An elderly gentleman met me, and after explaining why I was there, he excitedly claimed that he knew my grandpa and the Ingle family. Amazingly, he told us that within three days the city was going to raze the house. I was glad we took that day to share with our kids some of their family history. This gives our children a sense of identity and connection.

# "CELEBRATE YOUR LIVES TOGETHER."

4. Do out-of-the-ordinary things. Don't be afraid to get down and crazy with your kids at times. Take a family skip day. Keep a kid out of school and go do something special (this should not be common practice, since I'm married to a school teacher). Get the sleeping bags out and have everyone sleep in the family room or pitch the tent in the backyard. Have an all night video or game night. There were times our boys would bring their friends over and they would all bring their Risk games over (military strategy game to conquer the world). On these Friday nights we would have a Risk tourney that would last most of the night. At the beginning there might be four games going at once in different rooms of the house. Even after our sons were gone, their friends would still come over to play games at our house. The important thing to remember here is to break up the routine, make room for surprises, and just have fun.

5. Build life-long memories. Chuck Swindoll once said that we are to build a "museum of memories." Such memories instill a sense of well being in our hearts. Take those vacations, make it a family affair, and plan ahead with the whole gang. Be involved with your children in their extra-curricular activities. I had the joy of coaching all four sons their first couple of years in little league. Establish a weekly family time and protect it! Establish meaningful traditions, especially during the holidays. Our annual Christmas treks to Santa Rosa, California from

Joplin, Missouri remain one of our most memorable family experiences. We would drive straight through (the record was just over 31 hours!) The kids would see who could stay up the longest with dad. On one such occasion, two of the boys were still awake about 1 a.m. as we were crossing the panhandle of Texas. I had classical music playing softly while the rest of the family was asleep. Off in the distance there were flashes of lightening streaking across the sky. The lightening flashes seemed to be in perfect synchronization with the classical music. It was as if God was putting on a music video just for us. It was an awesome experience, and we will never forget that heavenly light show. But a tradition can also be

something as simple as "waffle Saturdays." Establish traditions, for they are important to family health and individual well-being.

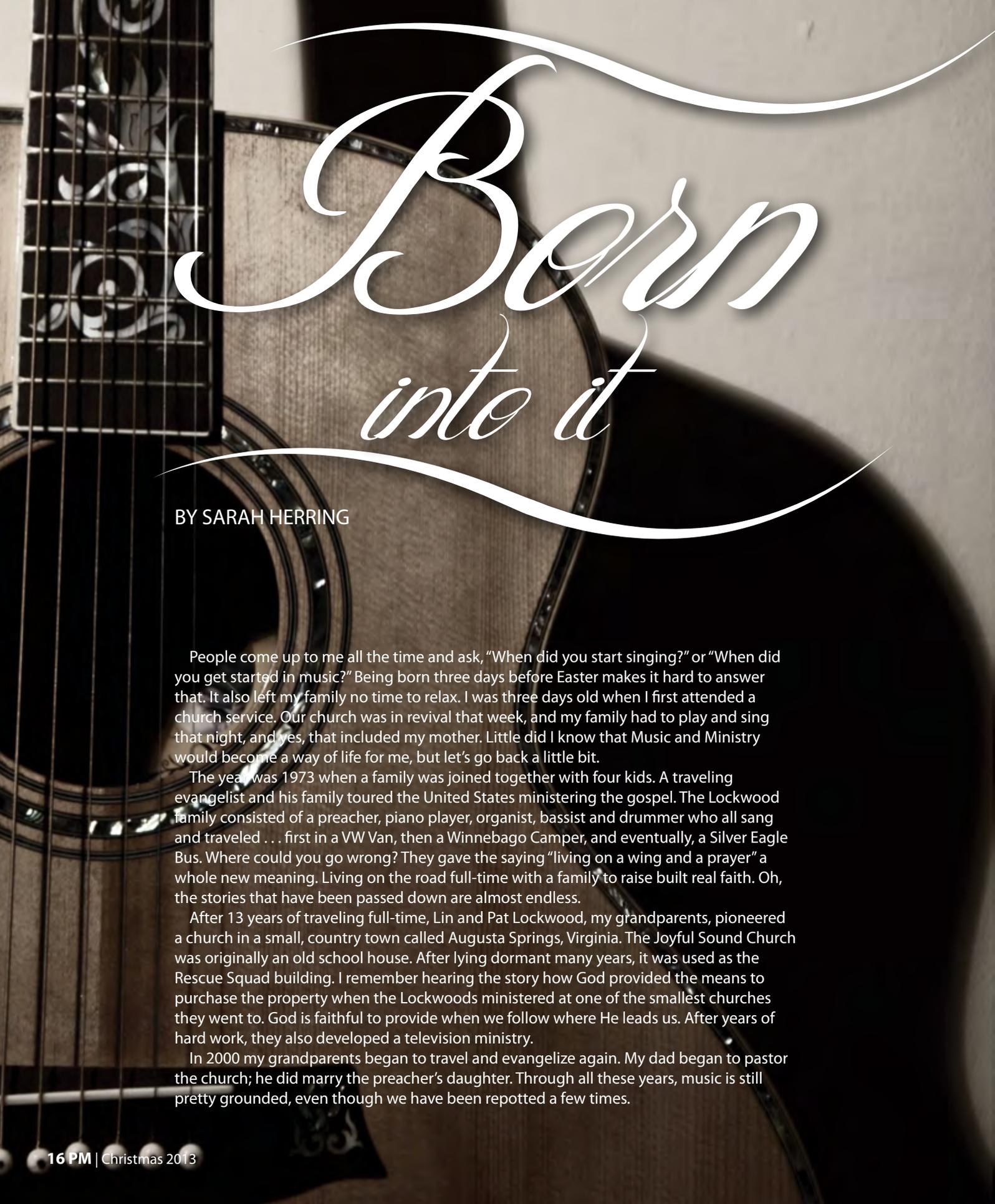
Years ago the late Senator Paul Tsongas, after learning he had cancer, re-evaluated his time with his wife and kids. After a rare meaningful evening with his family, and realizing there may not be many more evenings like this, later said, "Nobody on his deathbed ever said regretfully, 'I wish I had spent more time on the job.'" Time with family is the most precious gift that we can give. It is precious because you cannot get

it back once it is gone. My wife and I now live a great distance from our immediate and extended family. The walls of our house are plastered with family pictures through the years. There are many times I sit at our dining room table and ruminate as I look at these pictures and think, as us older types do, "Where has the time gone?"

Today, families are being torn apart by all kinds of external pressures. That is why we must be proactive in guarding our time with family. The choice is ours.

"Through wisdom a house is built,  
And by understanding it is established;  
By knowledge the rooms are filled  
With all precious and pleasant riches."  
(Proverbs 24:3, 4, NKJV)

John Dreschas was quoted in Delores Curran's book, *Traits of a Healthy Family*, "Now is the time to love. Tomorrow the baby won't be rocked, the toddler won't be asking why, the schoolboy won't need help with his lesson, nor will he bring his school friends home for some fun. Tomorrow the teenager will have made his major decision. Love today!" 📖



# Born into it

BY SARAH HERRING

People come up to me all the time and ask, "When did you start singing?" or "When did you get started in music?" Being born three days before Easter makes it hard to answer that. It also left my family no time to relax. I was three days old when I first attended a church service. Our church was in revival that week, and my family had to play and sing that night, and yes, that included my mother. Little did I know that Music and Ministry would become a way of life for me, but let's go back a little bit.

The year was 1973 when a family was joined together with four kids. A traveling evangelist and his family toured the United States ministering the gospel. The Lockwood family consisted of a preacher, piano player, organist, bassist and drummer who all sang and traveled . . . first in a VW Van, then a Winnebago Camper, and eventually, a Silver Eagle Bus. Where could you go wrong? They gave the saying "living on a wing and a prayer" a whole new meaning. Living on the road full-time with a family to raise built real faith. Oh, the stories that have been passed down are almost endless.

After 13 years of traveling full-time, Lin and Pat Lockwood, my grandparents, pioneered a church in a small, country town called Augusta Springs, Virginia. The Joyful Sound Church was originally an old school house. After lying dormant many years, it was used as the Rescue Squad building. I remember hearing the story how God provided the means to purchase the property when the Lockwoods ministered at one of the smallest churches they went to. God is faithful to provide when we follow where He leads us. After years of hard work, they also developed a television ministry.

In 2000 my grandparents began to travel and evangelize again. My dad began to pastor the church; he did marry the preacher's daughter. Through all these years, music is still pretty grounded, even though we have been repotted a few times.

Rev. Lin and Pat Lockwood now pastor the Calvary Pentecostal Church of God in Winchester, VA two hours from our house and the church they started. Not as close as we would like it, but we see them a lot. To this day, I cannot tell you a time that we have visited their church when we didn't sing. Now that we play instruments, it's become impossible to get out of it. Mammaw's number one rule is, "Everyone Sings!" Even when our district bishop came to minister at their church, she had him sing. However, they had known him since he was my age, so she wasn't afraid to ask him.

My sister, Anna, and I attended the Steve Hurst School of Music in Cleveland, Tennessee studying vocal classes in 2010, which taught me how to sing correctly, and it has been great sharpening the craft

---

**“There are several members in the family that have written and recorded several music projects, so you could say that it's almost expected of me.”**

---

of singing. This year was the first year that I did not attend, because I had the opportunity to intern as the Junior High Worship Leader for the North Cleveland Church of God for the summer; and a great opportunity it was! Anna and I have both attended and performed in our Teen Talent Expo since 2005 on the District Level and three times have made it to the National level—in St. Louis, Cincinnati and Dallas.

Anna and I are always joking with my Dad on how easy he has it with his worship team, which consists of me on the guitar, my mom on piano, and Anna on the bass. When Mom is out, whether sick or on music-related business, I switch from playing guitar to piano, but what's really funny is when we switch instruments in the middle of the service and Dad doesn't know it until he turns around to change songs.

Not only do I have music on my mom's side, but on my dad's side, as well. Being raised by a piano player in the Methodist church, my dad, his brother and sister all sang in the choir every Sunday. Three generations sang and played in that same choir, but before that my great-grandfather played and sang on the radio with his family years ago. Just recently my grandfather's banjo was passed down to me, just one of the instruments he knew how to play. So with



sing songs that mom or I have written.

As far as songwriting goes, mom has written since she was a teenager. She then attended the Steve Hurst School of Music studying songwriting many years ago and has now passed her knowledge on to me. She has had several songs on the Southern Gospel charts and now I'm following in her footsteps. A song mom and I wrote, "Fourth Man," recorded by Great Day, debuts on the radio in January. We attend the National Quartet Convention each year in Louisville, KY on Songwriting Business, working with legendary songwriter Phil Cross and other writers.

There are several members in the family that have written and recorded several music projects, so you could say that it's almost expected of me. When it runs in your blood, you just have to go with it. Many traits of different music abilities have been passed down through each generation. I'm now writing our church music material for Christmas, Dramas for Teen Talent, just like my mom and aunt did. I'm singing and playing many different instruments when the opportunity comes, and most importantly, I'm in the ministry, just like my family was and still is. This past February I had the privilege to minister in Haiti on a mission trip. I can go back many generations and tell you stories of how my family has been in church and music, and it's not fame that got us here and where we are today; it's been the grace of God that has allowed us to use our talents for Him.

Being a musician in the church can have its disadvantages. For instance, you learn your place fast. Since I learned to play an instrument at age 13, I can only recall a handful of times that I attended a church service where I didn't sing or play. That's going on 6 years now. Also, you get volunteered for things you don't know about until the moment comes, like if someone in the church has backed out of singing, guess who takes their place? Or, if someone wants a requested song at their loved ones' funeral that dad preaches, guess who sings? My personal favorite is when they set up your instrument for you and you do not know you are playing until you go to church and see your instrument.

When you're in Music Ministry like this, you're in it waist deep, from Southern Gospel to full-blown Contemporary to the 1600's Presbyterian hymns. However, I really enjoy it all. If it weren't for the generations before me in music accepting the call, I wouldn't be here doing what I'm doing today. So when people ask me, "When did I get started in Music Ministry?" I can tell them quite frankly, I never started. I was born into it!

✎

both sides of my parents being so enriched in music, you can kind of picture what a family get-together would be titled, Music.

Now our family, The Herrings, sings together. There are many times that we sing outside of our local church – everything from revivals, jails, nursing homes, Community Hymn Sing-A-Longs, to funerals; we've done it all. All this gives us the opportunity to



# FOCUSING ON FOSTER CARE

BY STEVE ARCHER



**M**y ability to write a catchy introduction dwindles with each interruption by my young children. And yet, this topic is of such importance to me, I feel the need to juggle “daddy duty” with writing. My three biological children are old enough that each one is off doing his or her own thing, but the foster children in my care take our home back to the days of reading children’s books, watching cartoons, and navigating through toys on the living room floor. I could have a quiet place to work (or just relax)

this Saturday morning, but my wife and I felt the pull a few years ago to become foster parents. We have since foster-parented up to four children at a time, which is how many are with us now. When friends ask how it’s going, I smile and say, “We are never bored!”

From a spiritual standpoint, I’m reminded of several verses one can apply to foster parenting. For example, Psalm 127:3 says, “Children are a gift from the Lord” (NCV). Notice it doesn’t distinguish that *some* children are a gift from the Lord. Just because they were born into unhealthy situations does not negate the fact that all children are gifts from God. James 1:27 tells us, “Religion that God accepts as pure and without fault is this: caring for orphans or widows who need help” (NCV). While children in foster care may have parents who are still alive, they do not have a safe place to live. Loving them when they need a family who can provide care seems, to me, like the spirit behind James 1:27.

While I try to recruit good potential foster parents at every opportunity, I believe it is important for those who enter this important role to understand there are many aspects to consider, including the children themselves, their parents, one’s own family, the foster system, and the local church body.

Focusing on Children. Children are generally placed in foster care as a result of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or significant parental neglect. The goal of Children’s Services is to protect children, and where possible, reunite them with their parents. If a child comes into care, she or he has likely experienced circumstances no one should ever face. Yet, children respond differently to their trauma. There is a stereotype of foster children as destructive and out of control. We should ask ourselves how we might respond to some of the circumstances these children have faced before we judge them too harshly. In addition, there are different “levels” within the foster system. Children who are in need of intensive supervision and therapy are placed at higher “levels” with families who are specially trained to address their needs. Our experience is that foster children are just that: children. They throw the same tantrums, test the same limits, play with the same toys, and crave the same love as any other children.

All children want stable adults to love them and be in charge. Sometimes, though, children struggle to allow foster parents to be in charge for a couple of reasons: (1) The child may have been in charge of taking care of himself or herself and even younger siblings; and (2) the child does not know the foster parent. Imagine trusting a stranger when the adults who have raised you have been inconsistent your whole life.

Yet, even when biological parents have been unable to provide care or protection, children’s first love is naturally for their birth parents. It’s important to keep in mind that for all children, the homes from which they come are likely the only homes they’ve ever known. They don’t know that all families are not like theirs. It can be hard to understand why they still love their parents after abuse or neglect, but think about friends and family in your life. Do you reject them because they have some undesirable trait? Or do you tend to tolerate certain characteristics because you love them, perhaps hoping they will change one day? The same is true of children and their biological parents.

For this reason, fostering cannot be about meeting emotional needs for the foster parents. The children will always love their parents, and it is important to speak respectfully about birth parents, despite what may have happened. Failure to do so only hurts the children and lowers their self-worth. It may also drive a wedge between foster children

and foster parents if children feel they must choose loyalty to one family or the other.

Another reason fostering cannot be about meeting the needs of foster parents is that we have little to no influence over when or if children will be returned to their biological parents. Rather than throwing up our hands in frustration, my wife and I choose to see it as an opportunity to love children and teach them about Jesus while they are in our home. Not long ago, a child in our care asked me, “Can we still call you when we go back to our mom?” Of course, I said, “Yes,” not knowing if or when this would happen. Kids need to know they are loved, and that our love for them won’t end even after they leave our care.

When foster children are placed with us, we treat them as our children. Whatever rules apply to the Archer children, apply to them. Behavior that would be unacceptable for our biological children is unacceptable for our foster children. And whatever privileges our biological children enjoy, our foster

time. Don’t we all? The difference is that, in cases where children must be removed, parents’ abilities fall short of providing adequate care and protection for their children.

It is natural for birth parents to love their children, even while they may be struggling with issues of addiction, mental illness, or lack of a support system. When parents are undereducated, they may also lack the skills necessary to get and maintain a steady job. If they, too, have come from a background where their parents were not positive role models, they likely are parenting the way they have seen it done before. The point is not to excuse parents, but to understand what factors led to placement of their children in foster care.

Where possible, it is helpful if birth parents understand their children are in a safe, loving home that is not trying to take their place, but trying to meet their children’s needs until they are returned to the birth family. Foster parents must keep in mind that reunification is always the initial goal. Termination of parental rights only occurs if/when the biological parents—and perhaps even extended family—are unwilling or unable to meet standards established by Children’s Services or the courts over an extended period of time. Federal law directs that, after a child has been in foster care at least 15 out of the preceding 22 months, states are

# “ALL CHILDREN WANT STABLE ADULTS TO LOVE THEM AND BE IN CHARGE.”

children enjoy. However our biological children are dressed, our foster children are dressed comparably. We hang pictures of current and former foster children in our house, because we have pictures of our biological children, too. Right now, I’m working to reinforce that we don’t ring the doorbell or knock on the door at our own house. Foster children are not guests in our home; they are our family. This important message helps fill the need for belonging we all have. Imagine being pulled suddenly from your home and placed with complete strangers—then living with them for months or years. It would be terrible to feel like a guest, rather than a family member!

Focusing on Parents. A key understanding for our family where foster care is concerned has to do with the birth parents. While there are parents who harm their children deliberately, this is not typical even of children placed in foster care. Most parents care for their children to the extent they can at the

required to move forward with termination of parental rights.

Focusing on My Family. Fostering is a family commitment. My wife and I are partners in all our foster parenting decisions, just as we have always been with our three biological children (who are now 18, 16, and 12). An added layer, though, is the involvement of our older children. Their lives are impacted by the foster children who come into our home. They share their home, their rooms, and their belongings. Most of the time our schedule is impacted by what our foster children need. When talking with our children about foster placements, we are careful to draw the distinction between input and decision-making; we ask for our children’s opinions, but ultimately our home has two parents who make the final call.

Due to confidentiality requirements placed on foster parents, we do not tell our biological children all the details we know about children placed in our home. There are, however, things they need to know to help them understand our foster children’s needs. When children have experienced trauma, their emotional and/or intellectual age may not be the same as their chronological age. We all have to work hard to remember we should treat a child according to her or his developmental level, not according to how old he or she is, with the

goal being to close the gap between the child's emotional/intellectual age and her or his chronological age.

My biological children are not complainers. They don't tell us if they feel neglected, so we have to be mindful to pay special attention to them from time to time. This may be as simple as making sure we attend their church and school events—even if that means bringing along several small children. It may mean giving extra hugs, reminding them of how much we love them, and thanking them for their help with the younger children.

Fostering gives us the opportunity to see characteristics from our biological children most parents do not have the chance to see as their children grow up. I see generosity as they share their rooms with foster children in our care. They rearrange or even vacate their rooms to make space for the other children's belongings. Of course, with more children, money for Christmas gifts, clothes or where we go for dinner gets divided among more members of the family, so they share in these ways, as well.

My children hug our foster children, play games with them, help watch them for us, and refer to them as "my brother" or "my sister." They show love to children who have nothing to give, understanding we are blessed, and it is our privilege to share. This is where I see my children living out James 1:27, and I couldn't be more proud. Imagine how our heavenly Father must feel when He sees their love and generosity!

**Focusing on the Body.** We are extremely blessed to attend a church (Northland Abundant Life Worship Center) that loves children. Our pastor enjoys telling the story of early members praying to hear a baby cry in a service. That's not a problem anymore. Well over 100 children attend our church each week, some with their parents, some on the bus or van, and some with their foster families. We are not the only foster family in our church, and our church welcomes and loves them all. Some families in our church have adopted, too, so it is not strange to have different races represented in one family in our congregation . . . and we love it!

I am keenly aware not every church is like ours. Nearly 50 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "We must face the sad fact that at the eleven o'clock hour on Sunday morning when we stand to sing, we stand in the most segregated hour in America." While this remains true in many places, our church is an exception largely because of our pastor's vocal stance on issues of race over many years. As a result, the children in our care will likely see someone of their race among our congregation. The value of this type of church family cannot be overstated.

While I do encourage friends to consider fostering, I realize not everyone feels drawn to this area of ministry. It's important to recognize our gifts and follow them, and not everyone should be a foster parent. But as I write, I think of a generous lady in our church who has blessed our foster children repeatedly with gifts of clothes and diapers. She, too, is ministering in the spirit of James 1:27. She wants no recognition, but sees children in need and wants to bless them. According to James, this is pure Christianity!

**Focusing on the System.** Although handled differently from state to state, foster parents go through specialized training, both prior to becoming licensed, and through on-going learning opportunities.

Monthly support to subsidize children's needs is provided, but this, too, varies by state. Someone told my wife they heard foster parenting is a good way to make extra money. Clearly that person is not a foster parent. Children typically come into care without many clothes or toys. Acquiring beds, strollers, etc., can lead to a variety of expenses that take several months to recoup. And making money should never be the motivation for serving in this role anyway.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, at any point in time, there are over 400,000 children in foster care. More than 100,000 of these children are available for adoption, but 40 percent of them will wait more than three years for a "forever family." It is sad that minority children are harder to place than white children, and the larger the sibling set, the more likely the children will be split up, intensifying their trauma. As children grow older, they become increasingly hard to place for foster care or adoption. Many families who are willing to foster only want babies, but the average age of children entering care is over 6 years old.

According to the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections, each year about 27,000 "age out" of the system without reunification with their families or adoption. The prospects for teens in foster care are not good, with 17 percent of girls being pregnant at the time they "age out" (and therefore potentially repeating the cycle of abuse and neglect). Sixty percent of boys who "age out" are convicted of a crime, and 40 percent of both boys and girls become homeless at some point.

The need for foster families is evident, and we have the best Good News children in crisis could use. It's news many of these children have never heard—let alone seen lived consistently. What a tremendous opportunity we have to change a child's eternity, just by showing the love of Christ! I encourage you to consider serving as a foster parent or finding out how you can help someone who is fostering.

After several months in our care, the night before one of our foster children was to leave, her bedtime prayer included, "And thank you, Jesus, for letting me meet Steve and Tonya, because I didn't know about You before I met them." We can't control where this child's future will lead, but we were able to pour into her while she was in our home. Because of this, she now knows she has a Father who loves her unconditionally and will never leave her. Could there be a greater reward? 

---

# 8 WAYS

## SCREENS ARE RUINING YOUR

# FAMILY'S LIFE

---

BY LORI LEIBOVICH

For her new book, *The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age*, Catherine Steiner-Adair EdD -- a clinical instructor in the department of psychiatry at Harvard, a school consultant, and a therapist in private practice -- interviewed more than one thousand children between the ages of 4 and 18 to find out how technology was impacting their relationships and their social and emotional lives. What Steiner-Adair discovered was neither surprising, nor comforting: Technology is becoming a kind of "co-parent"; too much screen time is impeding childhood development; and parents' obsession with their devices is harming communication with their children and even fracturing families.

Just in time for back to school, *The Huffington Post* asked Steiner-Adair to tell us the eight essential things parents with children of all ages need to know about screens.



## **1. DON'T PUT YOUR BABY IN FRONT OF A SCREEN. EVER.**

If you're not convinced by the recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics, then consider this: "We don't know yet the chemical interaction between a smartphone and a baby's brain," says Steiner-Adair. One 2010 Danish study of 28,000 children found that exposure to cell phones before and after birth seemed to lead to an increased risk for behavioral problems. Beyond that, one of the most important skills a baby needs to learn, Steiner-Adair says, is how to calm herself down. "If you hand [a young child] a screen of any kind when they're frustrated, you're teaching them how not to self-soothe," she says. "You're handing them a stimulant. Your baby's brain is brilliant and what it needs is good stimulation and soothing from you. You are the best app for your child."

## **2. AND THINK HARD ABOUT PUTTING YOUR TODDLER IN FRONT OF ONE, TOO.**

"A child only has from 0-5 to develop neurologically what we call the sensorium -- that's the part of the brain where pre-literacy, kinesthetic movement, and language development happens," says Steiner-Adair. This kind of brain development takes place through outdoor play, building, dancing, skipping, coloring -- all activities involving multi-sensory engagement. This kind of healthy engagement is basically the opposite of passively swiping a finger across a screen, says Steiner-Adair. While she acknowledges that decent games and apps exist -- Steiner-Adair directs parents to Common Sense Media's website for recommendations -- she insists that replacing play "IRL" with play on a screen is not what children this age need.

## **3. TEACHERS CAN TELL IF YOUR CHILD IS GETTING TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME.**

Educators interviewed for Steiner-Adair's book said that kids who spend too much time in front of screens play differently -- and less creatively -- than other children. Those who act out "Mario Brothers" or "Angry Birds" in the school yard aren't tapping into their capacity to create their own narratives, says Steiner-Adair. "Instead of saying 'look how high I can go' when they're on the swings, they say 'look, I got to the next level!'" she says. Teachers also told the author that students who play a lot of video games don't seem to have as much patience to sit still in the classroom, especially when they are being read to. "The capacity for attention doesn't develop as well when kids are used to interacting with a screen that's instantly gratifying, instantly stimulating, and provides them with the answers for the next level," says Steiner-Adair.

## **4. YOUR KIDS HATE YOUR SCREENS.**

Steiner-Adair says that what came up again and again during her interviews with hundreds of kids was how frustrated, sad, and angry they were about having to compete with screens for their parents' attention. "Children hate it when their parents pick them up and are on their phones and don't even turn to say, 'Hi honey, how was your day?' Instead they're giving them the shhh-one-minute signal, which basically says 'you're not as important to me as whoever this other person on the phone is.' Car rides to and from school, as well as dinner, bath

and reading time -- parents should be present and phone-free for all of these daily rituals, she says. "Kids do not need our undivided attention all day long, but they do in those real-life moments of talking and reading and doing the hard work of parenting -- dealing with meltdowns, teaching them how to pick up their clothes." The bottom line: If you think your kids don't notice that you're distracted, you're deluding yourself. One of Steiner-Adair's subjects told her, "I miss the olden days when families were more important."

## **5. JUST BECAUSE WE CAN BE CONNECTED TO WORK 24/7 DOESN'T MEAN WE SHOULD BE.**

Many parents argue that part of why they're plugged in during family time is because they feel they have to be available to their employers. "You either sacrifice being a good mother or father and the very limited time you have to raise your children -- or you sacrifice and risk your job to support your ability to live," says Steiner-Adair. "This is not healthy for anybody and it's a no-win choice." Being constantly on call or being afraid of missing something if you don't check your work email means you're preoccupied and stressed when you should be enjoying your family. Steiner-Adair says that if the modern workplace is ever going to change, parents must ask employers for modulated schedules and speak up about their need to unplug.

## **6. SCREENS AREN'T GOOD FOR YOUR MARRIAGE. AND THAT'S NOT GOOD FOR YOUR KIDS.**

Steiner-Adair asks parents to answer this question honestly: "First thing in the morning, do you roll over in bed and look at your phone and scroll through it -- or do you roll over and cuddle your partner?" Kids are acutely aware of their parents' disengagement from each other. In her interviews with children, many spoke to Steiner-Adair about their parents' constant bickering over screen rules (such as no phones at the table) and said that they view their parents as hypocrites when they see them flouting the family guidelines they've set up. "Kids see parents talking to each other about something important and then one of them answers a call mid-conversation," she says. "One parent has dropped the other parent. What does it say to kids about how we connect to the people we love the most?"

## **7. IN ORDER TO BE A GOOD PARENT, YOU NEED TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**

"Adults use screens the same way kids do -- to avoid interaction and to avoid relying on our own

inner resources," says Steiner-Adair. Increasingly, when parents have a few minutes to recharge, they are using that time to browse Facebook, send texts, etc. "It's so much easier than picking up a magazine or putting your feet up on the couch and having a mini moment of relaxation -- or going for a walk and getting some fresh air-- all these things that we know actually make us feel better." Some parents may feel that browsing Instagram or scanning the news is actually a calming way to take a break, but Steiner-Adair is skeptical. "Checking your email is not relaxing," she says. "Holding a tiny little hand held screen is not visually relaxing."

## **8. SORRY, BUT YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR KIDS ARE DOING ONLINE. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD GIVE UP TRYING.**

Steiner-Adair points to a June 2013 McAfee study, "Digital Deception: Exploring the Online Disconnect Between Parents and Kids," as evidence that parents are often clueless about what their kids are doing online -- and says that their ignorance is seriously harming their kids. Among the study's findings: 80 percent of parents don't know how to check up on what their kids are doing online. Not only that, 74 percent "simply admit defeat and claim that they do not have the time or energy to keep up with their children and hope for the best," according to the study's authors. But Steiner-Adair says defeat is not an option when you consider all of the damaging content kids can easily stumble upon online. While interviewing kids for her book, Steiner-Adair says, several teen boys asked her questions about sexual scenes they'd seen online.

"They would say, 'can you help me understand why a woman would want to be choked while having sex? Why would she want to be peed on?'" Indeed, the McAfee study found that over 57 percent of 13-23 year olds use the Internet to search sexual topics, while only 13 percent of parents believe they do.

But Steiner-Adair sees hope in at least one of the McAfee stats: Nearly half of the teens surveyed said they would change their online behavior if they knew their parents were watching. "This means we can have an impact," Steiner-Adair says. In addition to making sure that all computer use is done in a public place in the home, Steiner-Adair recommends that parents and kids sign an agreement that clearly states acceptable and unacceptable online behavior -- and post it prominently. "The reason you're supposed to sign it and post it is to remind kids, but also so that when other kids come over it makes it easier for your child to say, 'oh no, I'll get in too much trouble if I go to that site. See, I have the worst parents in the world,' Steiner-Adair says. "That's what you want your kids to say. You want to be that worst parent in the world."

Copyright © 2013 Lori Leibovich 

Launching February 2014



IMPACT  
LIFECHURCH

JOIN THE  
**DREAM**  
IMPACT LIVES WITH US.

[www.impactlifechurch.us](http://www.impactlifechurch.us)

888-727-3357

PO BOX 927 | Mary Esther, FL 32569



# 101 Creative Date Ideas

(For Married Couples)

## JUST FOR FUN

1. Go for a swim, just the two of you
2. Go rock climbing at a rock gym
3. Rent paddleboats
4. Tube a local river
5. Kayak a river or lake
6. Go hiking
7. Train for a 5k to run or walk together
8. Go camping (just the two of you)
9. Rent or borrow a jet ski
10. Go through a corn maze
11. Set up a tent in the backyard and order takeout
12. Have a campfire with s'mores
13. Go horseback riding
14. Ride bikes (try renting a tandem)
15. Ice-skating (even more fun in the summer months)
16. Roller-skating
17. Go bowling
18. Build a snowman together
19. Go sledding
20. Go to a batting cage
21. Pick fruit together at a local farm
22. Learn to skateboard or longboard together (Romantic? Of Course!)
23. Make fondue together
24. Go through your wedding photo album
25. Go stargazing

26. Watch the sunset
27. Watch the sunrise
28. Pack a picnic basket and go to a unique location
29. Make a nice dinner together
30. Look on Yelp, find a high-rated restaurant and recommended meal for a type of food you've never tried before, share dishes for a new culinary experience
31. Enroll in a cooking class for 2
32. Have your own cooking class at home with YouTube or Food Network video demonstrations
33. Rooftop picnic at home or a building you have access to
34. Give each other back massages at home
35. Find a hill or mountain in your area and go to the top at night to look at the city lights. Enjoy a "dessert picnic" while you look at the lights.)

## INTELLECTUALLY & CULTURALLY ENLIGHTENING

36. Go see a play
37. Go to the symphony
38. See a concert of any type (favorite band, school, etc.). \*Many are free
39. Watch TED lectures on your computer and discuss your thoughts on what you learned (I love this one and this one)

40. Take a city class together; most city websites list offerings (photography, dance, etc.)
41. Make a bucket list of things you want to do together, with kids, independently, and share your list with each other
42. Find a lecture at a local university or community college and attend
43. Watch a foreign film together (rent it from the library for free)
44. Download a vintage radio program podcast; go listen to it in a unique location
45. Rent a documentary
46. Read a novel/short story/play together
47. Borrow a guitar or other instrument, watch YouTube videos teaching you how to play, take turns and be sure to perform a song for each other.

### AT-HOME DATES

48. Play board games for 2
49. Buy cheap canvases and paint portraits of each other
50. Build an adult fort and watch a movie
51. Buy Pinewood Derby kits from BSA and build/race your carts at home
52. Buy a bunch of popsicle sticks at a craft store, have a competition for who can build the best structure out of the popsicle sticks and glue
53. Build "gingerbread houses" out of graham crackers and frosting (be creative)
54. Bake sugar cookies and decorate to look like people you know (deliver them after)
55. Draw a cartoon of how you met in sidewalk chalk on your driveway
56. Rent or borrow a Wii and play games together
57. Do "Dinner and a Movie" with a theme (like watch The 3 Amigos and make Mexican food)
58. Do a puzzle together
59. Build paper airplanes, make sure to get fancy and look up several different types, then have a flying competition
60. Get on Spotify and make a playlist of your favorite songs from high school. Take a trip down memory lane and share your favorite songs while telling a memory attached to each one.

### GROUP DATES

61. Host a dinner party (themed, formal, or casual)
62. The Amazing Race Dates (tasks for couple to complete at various locations)
63. Host your own murder mystery (you can buy games online)
64. Couples game night (Charades, Catch Phrase,

whatever group games you enjoy)

65. Build a marshmallow gun out of PVC, have a fight
66. Play "Bigger or Better" and compete for which couple returns with the best item
67. Karaoke out on the town or at home
68. Have a scavenger hunt taking pictures or retrieving items, compare findings after
69. Have a white elephant gift exchange (no need to wait for the holidays)

### PLACES TO GO

70. Art Museum (often free one day of the month)
71. Art walk (usually held as summer festivals in college towns or state capitols)
72. Go to the mall, share a bench and enjoy people watching
73. Improv comedy show :(read local reviews and look for "clean" ones of course)
74. NBA game
75. MLB game
76. NFL game
77. Visit an aquarium
78. Local high school sporting events\*
79. University sporting events
80. Visit the Zoo
81. Visit the nearest rodeo
82. Go to the circus
83. Ride go-carts at a raceway
84. Visit a home décor store (like Pier 1 or Crate and Barrel) and each of you takes a turn. Design a dream room in your house or apartment separately pretending money is no object. Meet up and give each other a "tour" of the items in your room.
85. Paint pottery at a "paint your own pottery shop"
86. Miniature Golfing (never gets old)
87. Arcade games (like Dave and Busters or Gameworks)

88. Ride the light rail and enjoy people watching
89. Go to a drive-in movie
90. Visit a car show (when they are in town--score points with your husband)
91. Walk through IKEA, it's an experience all its own! (And there are cheap Swedish meatballs)
92. Go to a bookstore and share your favorite books with each other (you can even read your favorite children's books to each other)
93. Go to a bookstore and look at the travel section. Plan your dream vacation on your own and then present yours to your spouse and listen to their ideas too. (Get a jar and start saving).
94. Volunteer at a soup kitchen, nursing home, or women's shelter
95. Visit your local "Movies in the Park" during spring or summer offering (usually free and awesome!)
96. Visit a planetarium and learn about the solar system sorry, but Pluto is no longer a planet just in case you did not know).
97. Visit your state's science center
98. Test-drive cars you have no intention of buying
99. Go look at model homes or home shows and pretend you're in the market
100. Go see lights at Christmas, just the two of you
101. Find as many old Pentecostal Messengers as you can and take a trip down memory lane.



## RENAL CARE FACILITY

Imagine hearing that there was a medical treatment that could prolong your life and the quality of that life, but knowing more than likely you will not live long enough to receive it. The resources just are not available. This isn't a bad dream, but reality for hundreds of people every day in Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies.

The vision for the Renal Care Centre of Trinidad and Tobago was birthed out of this need. Its mission is to show the love of God to these families in a real and tangible way. Our aim is to include adopting a holistic approach to Renal Care for the effective control, prevention, monitoring, treatment and transplantation. As a NGO (Non-Governmental Organization), our primary objectives are to treat the many persons suffering from Chronic Renal Failure (CRF) and/or End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), particularly, for nationals who cannot afford it financially or access such programs/treatment.

At launch, the RCCTT will have 5 to 10 units (dialysis machines), operating 12 hours a day, 6 days a week with a goal of having a facility operating 30 units, 3 shifts a day, 6 days a week. At maximum capacity, we will be able to treat 270 persons suffering with ESRD. We will also be able to offer the RCCTT as a training facility for Renal Nurses and Technicians. There is not a facility in Trinidad today that is able to offer this service. We will also offer peer to peer counseling for patients and family members. And, when in full operation, we will offer classes for food preparation by dietitians along with many other services.

The Facts: Dr. Emile Mohammed, Nephrologist at West Shore Medical Centre in Trinidad, stated in an article in the Trinidad Express newspaper recently, "One in four adults in Trinidad and Tobago has some stage of kidney disease." Dr. Mohammed says, "Currently there are 750 dialysis patients on dialysis in Trinidad with expectation of that number doubling in the next ten years. The number of patients that should be on dialysis in Trinidad is more than double the current number." Hundreds of people need dialysis and cannot get treatment for many reasons with one being the lack of treatment facilities.

In Trinidad and Tobago it costs an estimated \$150,000.00 TT\$ (\$25,000.00 US \$) per patient per year to receive treatment. Many people who need treatment cannot afford this expense. There is a government program that does help defray some of the cost, but even with that, many still cannot afford the treatment.

What We Have: Dialysis Machines, Dialysis Chairs, Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment System, Back Up Generator and a building that the government of Trinidad and Tobago has leased to us situated on 4 ½ acres of land. We also have our Medical Facility License (to our knowledge, no other dialysis center has a license).

The Need: Financial support to get the plumbing and electrical infrastructure in place. Dialysis machines need to be certified (or preferably, new ones purchased). Dialysis chairs need to be reupholstered. The building needs to be sealed and air-conditioning extended to the entire building.

As you can see, there is a vast array of things that need to be done—and they all have a cost attached to them. You can help us! We need your financial support to bring the vision of the Renal Care Centre of Trinidad and Tobago to fruition.

The vision of the RCCTT is still as vibrant today as it was in the beginning. Together we can make this vision a reality for the people of Trinidad and Tobago!

Contact the World Missions Department for more information. Send your offerings for Account 3605Clinc to:

World Missions Department  
P.O. Box 211866  
Bedford, TX 76095 📧

# MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT



## MACEDONIA

CAPITAL: SKOPJE | POPULATION: 2,058,539 | LANGUAGE: MACEDONIAN



Ohrid, Macedonia



### WHERE?

Macedonia

### WHO?

Ed and Gayla Bolay

### WHEN?

On the field since 2002

### PRAY FOR:

Open Doors for completing itineration so that they can return to the field.

### FINANCIAL NEEDS:

Monthly Support

# MEDIA

---

# REVIEW

The following is not an endorsement of the views, and opinions expressed by the presented materials and do not necessarily reflect those of the Pentecostal Church of God.

## MUSIC



### **"Kingdom come" by Bryan & Katie Torwalt**

Bryan & Katie Torwalt follow up with their "Here on Earth" worship album with the release of their new album, "Kingdom Come". This dynamic husband and wife duo declare their passion to lead people to an encounter with God is represented in their songs on this album. This album explores new sounds musically, but still delivers a message of hope and a life lived through Christ.



### **"The Glorious Unfolding" by Steven Curtis Chapman**

Chapman's songs represent the idea that God is at work telling an amazing story, but with each story comes a painful chapter. His music represents a new sound that allows him to share his story and how God is represented in everything he does. "As I've journeyed through this story, I'm more convinced than ever that He does know the plans that He has for us and He will finish what He started. God is telling an amazing, glorious, epic story and we must decide if we will trust Him with it."



### **"Greater Than" by Tye Tribbett**

"Greater Than", Tye Tribbett represents a forward and refreshing sound to Gospel Music. Tribbett's album represents hope, inspiration and musical complexity. Tribbetts collaborates with other artists and musicians to create unforgettable music that represents the core of who he serves. His songs center around the idea that God is greater than anything, represented in a variety of beats, from power-house, jumping, to slow, God-encountering.



### **"Fourth Man" by Great Day**

"FOURTH MAN," recorded by "GREAT DAY" and written by Sarah and Tammie Herring will be released to National Radio on Patterson Promotions, VOL 13 in January 2014. Please call your Southern Gospel station and request it. Read Sarah's story on pg. 16!

## BOOKS

RELEVANT



### ***Do Hard Things* by Alex & Brett Harris**

Most people don't expect you to understand what we're going to tell you in this book. And even if you don't understand, they don't expect you to care. And even if you care, they don't expect you to do anything about it. And even if you do something about it, they don't expect it to last. We do." The book may say Teenage Rebellion against low expectations, but this book pertains to multigenerational leaders. Co-authors and brothers, Alex and Brett Harris, challenge readers to rebel against low expectations of today's culture by choosing to "Do Hard Things" for the Glory of God. Alex and Brett write to inspire sharing other teens stories as well as their own, showing what it takes to "do hard things".



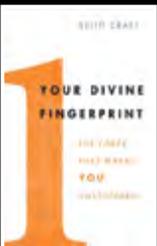
### ***Collide* by Ben Dailey**

It's inevitable. Sooner or later, our desires will collide with God's heart. His purposes are far higher than ours, his wisdom far deeper, and his love far wider. From our limited perspective, we think we know what God should do to bless our lives. We have dreams for our careers, our marriage, our kids, and every other aspect of life. Sometimes, we're right on track, but today, tomorrow, or a year from now, we'll realize our hopes and dreams have crashed. At that moment, we have a decision to make: Will we shake our fist at God, walk away, or cling to Him more than ever before? **GET A COPY OF THIS BOOK TODAY! CALL MESSENGER PUBLISHING HOUSE AT 800.444.4674**



### ***The Assignment: Journey to the Extreme* by Karl Hargestam**

"Culture – not vision or strategy – is the most powerful factor in any organization." Samuel R. Chand. Chand focuses on what culture is, different ranges of culture, and the seven keys of a culture. Cracking your Church's Culture Code embeds that culture in the church, determines how receptive people are to new ideas, encourages or suppresses creativity, builds up or deflates enthusiasm, it creates a sense of pride and discouragement, and it shapes individual morale, teamwork, effectiveness and outcomes. "



### ***Your Divine Fingerprint: The Force That Makes You Unstoppable* by Keith Kraft**

Within the pages of his motivational and inspirational self-help book, *Your Divine Fingerprint: The Force That Makes You Unstoppable*, are the tools to help you discover a unique fingerprint that you have been given. These tools will help you deploy your unique difference that your family needs, your marriage needs, your job needs, your faith needs—that the world needs. And when you embrace and live in that uniqueness, you celebrate the glory of God. **GET A COPY OF THIS BOOK TODAY! CALL MESSENGER PUBLISHING HOUSE AT 800.444.4674**

## BLOGS



### **Jon Acuff | [www.acuff.me](http://www.acuff.me)**

Jon Acuff is the New York Times Bestselling author of four books including his most recent, *Start: Punch Fear in the Face, Escape Average & Do Work that Matters*. For 15 years he's helped some of the biggest brands in the world tell their story, including The Home Depot, Bose, Staples, and the Dave Ramsey Team. Most recently he's spoken to hundreds of thousands of people at conferences, colleges, companies and churches.

# ‘I CAN’-FIDENCE



Have any of you parents been involved in a conversation with your child such as this?

“I can’t do it, Mom (or Dad).”

“Yes, you can.”

“No, I can’t.”

“Yes, you can!”

I have cut the conversation down by at least five “can’ts” and six “cans!” I have been guilty of “conning” my girls into having confidence. Are you guilty as well? Have you said things like, “OK, if you do this, then I will buy that for you,” or “OK, you can do this, and if you do, I promise I will (fill in the blank).”

It’s “Con” vs. “Can!” Let us commit to pray that God’s true confidence will be OVER our children and IN them.

We recently went to our youngest daughter’s first softball game. She was quite upset that she actually had to play a game, because she thought she had “just signed up to practice.” She actually has very skilled eye-hand coordination and enjoyed practicing and working with her father and sisters in the front yard to develop her skills. But something happened when she found out that she had to perform in a game—against another team, while a crowd was watching! Something inside her told her she wasn’t good enough, made her nervous, made her want to quit BEFORE she ever set foot on the field. I know for a fact that we did not speak that into her thoughts or being. That tells me the enemy, the devil, starts out lying to children while they are young and impressionable.

That sounds exactly like the enemy I know. He will strike our children with fear and inferiority so they will never get in the game . . . the game of life! That’s where we moms come in! Go ahead, moms, give me a fist pump and a big “YES!” We have the power of prayer to establish our children in God’s true confidence, confidence that will cause them to know who they are and Who is on their side. We repeat Philippians 4:13 together every morning on the way to school: “I **can** do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens me.” It’s not a coincidence that we say that together; we speak that on purpose!

Proverbs 14:26 says, “In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence and his children will have refuge” (NASB).

I want to raise strong, confident young ladies who will fear the Lord and will therefore be safe as His Word promises.

Holding hands and swinging our arms while walking to the dugout, my youngest daughter and I spoke the words of Philippians 4:13 again, so she could say to herself “I CAN.” We also spoke positive words like, “Today is about doing your best; today is about meeting new friends; today is about having fun; today is about trying hard; and today is about making someone smile.” By the second inning, she ran to where I was sitting, put her mouth up to my ear and whispered, “Mom, I’m not nervous anymore.” She ran back to the dugout and confidently got back in the game.

Another lesson learned . . . praise the Lord! 📧

*Teena Skiles* serves with her husband Joe as the National Youth Directors for the Pentecostal Church of God. Teena is also a sought after speaker for women’s conferences that seeks to inspire young people to pursue God passionately.

# MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

ALSO AVAILABLE AT PCG.ORG

**Pastor, West Virginia District, Buckhannon PCG Buckhannon, WV**  
Tex Walton  
304-472-0260

**Youth Pastor, Oklahoma District, Hillside PCG Sallisaw, OK**  
Pastor Edward Cunningham  
918-208-3903

**Pastor, Northern California District, PCG McKinleyville, CA**  
Presbyter James Ford  
707-218-7192

**Pastor, Northern California District, PCG Ukiah, CA**  
Presbyter Shawn Marshall  
209-483-2336

**Pastor, Northern California District, PCG Santa Rosa, CA**  
Presbyter Shawn Marshall  
209-483-2336

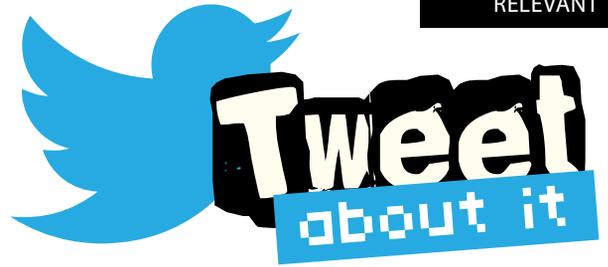
**Pastor, Oklahoma District, Heaven Bound PCG Norman, OK**  
District Office  
405-681-6942

**Pastor, Northern California District, PCG Corning, CA**  
Presbyter Mike Cox  
530-736-3366

**Pastor, Northern California District, PCG Chico, CA**  
Home Missions Director Ken Malone  
530-282-3313

**Pastor, Northern California District, PCG San Andreas, CA**  
Presbyter Ron Anderson  
209-367-0543

RELEVANT



## TWEETS FROM AROUND THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY:

**@joshuacampaign** ...and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:11 NIV)

**@impactld** I do everything to spread the Good News & share in its blessings. 1 Cor 9:23 Make an #IMPACT this week!

**@MCEagles** Jesus has given the task of changing the world to you What will you do with your time?

**@jmaldo94** So much darkness is in this world, it's our responsibility to be a light and show people what life could be like #ActUp

**@drwrnutt** You must be the change you wish to see in the world. Mahatma Gandhi

**@sevenly** Confront what's wrong in the world, and multiply what's right!

**@BrianCHouston** You are a vessel God can use, NOT a vehicle others can manipulate. Be careful who is in the driver's seat!

**@YWAMNewcastle** Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, nor out of theological arguments, but out of love Roland Allen #missions



# A HEALTHY CULTURE



It was not your typical Saturday morning around the Lawrence household. While entrenched in some video projects, our videographer Ryan had asked if I knew of any families with young children that he could come get some footage of. Busted! Having four children all under the age of 6, the lot fell upon our home. So by 8 am our house was transformed into a mini studio—lights, camera, action! After the shoot, I was helping Ryan out to the car with his gear when we heard the pitter-patter of small steps behind us. We both turned to find my 2-year-old daughter, Cali, running after us. Stopping at the end of the walkway, she yelled at the top of her lungs, “Romans 10:17 says, ‘Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God!’” She grinned from ear to ear, laughed, and then turned abruptly, and ran back inside! We both looked at each other and laughed hysterically!

As I said goodbye to Ryan and walked back inside the house that day, my heart was absolutely racing. Why? Not from the walk back to the house (I’m not that out of shape), but from the joy of knowing that the culture that my wife and I had been working to establish in our home was working! That’s right; I said the “culture” of our home. Dr. Samuel Chand says, “Culture, not vision or strategy is the most powerful factor in any organization.” Let me ask you a simple question. What is the culture of your home? I love the Message translation of a popular verse, Romans 12:2, “Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking.” How easy it is today for secular culture to invade and dictate the culture of our own homes!

How can we create a healthy culture in our homes?

## 1. We must be intentional.

The word “intentional” means, “done on purpose; deliberate.” A healthy culture in your home will NOT happen by accident. You must intentionally create the culture that you desire in your home. As parents (especially husbands) you must commit not to be the cultural thermometer of your home, but to be the thermostat! Too often we simply go with the phrase, “Know what is going on in your home and with your kids.” However, I’m afraid we’re selling ourselves short. Don’t just know the climate; *set* the climate.

In the chaos of our family dinners (remember, four kids under the age of 6) two things are guaranteed to happen. First, we will hear from everyone on their “highs” and “lows” from the day, and secondly,

we will work on our memory verses (henceforth, the dramatic presentation from Cali of Romans 10:17). This is one simple but yet intentional way we work on setting the atmosphere that we want in our home.

## 2. It is better caught than taught.

The best way to teach the desired culture of your home is simply to live it. Some of my favorite memories of childhood are walking into the living room to find my mother reading her Bible. I’ll never forget opening my father’s door on many occasions to inquire of why he was crying, to find him on his knees in prayer. If we want a healthy culture in our home, don’t just teach and talk— reach and walk! Live it out!

## 3. It will not be easy.

While speaking to thousands of young leaders, noted author and minister Chuck Swindoll said this simple yet powerful statement: “It’s always hardest at home.” There are no shortcuts in creating a healthy culture for our homes. It is hard work, but it must become our priority.

Jeanne Mayo said, “It is precisely the people and the values that are the most precious in your life that the enemy will try to make the most common.” As this year comes to a close, may we commit to evaluate the priority and culture of our home. To me, that is relevant. 📺

**Randy Lawrence Jr.** is the Impact Leadership Development Director, a part of the editorial staff for *The Pentecostal Messenger*, and currently leads the Communications team of the Pentecostal Church of God.



# WOW4

East Coast WOW4 Conference  
April 4-5, 2014  
Bethel Family Worship Center, Indianapolis IN

Speaker: Darlene Bishop

Darlene Bishop is a nationally known conference speaker with a powerful testimony. She pastors Solid Rock Church with two campuses, one in Monroe and the other in Cincinnati, Ohio. She is also President and Founder of the Darlene Bishop Home for Life, a residential home for women who are pregnant or dealing with life destructive choices. Darlene was miraculously healed by God of a terrible illness. Your faith will soar as you hear her life-changing testimony and the preaching of this mighty vessel of God.



# Connection

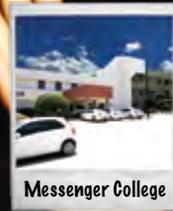
EMPOWERED WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

We invite all women to join together with us to advance the Kingdom of God in this New Year. Registration runs from January 1 - 31, 2014.

For more information contact your district Women's Ministries Department.

**Together, we can make a difference!**

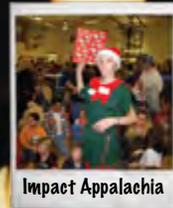
GET CONNECTED TO THESE MINISTRIES!



Messenger College



Ahikam Children's Home



Impact Appalachia



WOW4/Girl Talk



Diana Gee Homeless Outreach



CANAS VERDES BOQUETE - PANAMA



Pentecostal Church of God  
PO Box 211866  
Bedford, TX 76095

Non Profit Org.  
US Postage  
Paid  
Joplin, MO  
Permit No. 116



# MERRY CHRISTMAS

from the Pentecostal Church of God

Photo Credit: Chris Bodine Photography