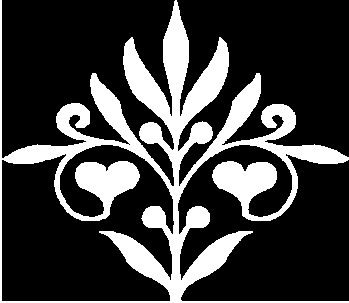


December
2006



Newsletter of Terri L. McFarland

TLM MINISTRIES



A Child Is Born!

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

Dear Friends,

Over 2000 years ago, the angel Gabriel appeared to a teenage girl and told her she was to give birth to the Son of God. Mary couldn't have understood the implications of that statement when she responded with, "May it be to me as you have said." Soon after her encounter, she left for a town in the hill country to visit Elizabeth. *Life changed forever.*

An angel also appeared to Mary's fiancé, Joseph, to confirm in his heart the divine plan. After his vision, Joseph immediately went and took Mary as His wife. *Life changed forever.*

She will give birth to a Son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

I wonder what questions ran through Mary's mind when the angel told her that, as a virgin, she would become pregnant. Mary may have had doubt until she began to *feel* pregnant, but even before she visibly changed on the outside, the *living Spirit of God* was residing inside!

Could this have been a prelude of what was to come? Each one of us given, just like Mary, the opportunity to have the *life giving Spirit of God* powerfully at work on us from the inside out. Impregnating us, if you will, with His love, power, and grace, enabling us to fulfill His call on our lives.



A few months ago a friend of mine excitedly announced she was pregnant. She didn't look pregnant but she was beginning to feel that

way. Not long ago she had an ultrasound and saw the baby moving. Suddenly it was all very real. The lives of her and her husband were about to be *forever changed*.

As my friend began to plan for her new baby, she started eating differently, avoided certain medications, stopped flying, and took better care of her body. You could hear soft classical music playing in their house, and her husband talked to their unborn child as though the infant could already hear his words of affirmation and love.

The lifestyle of the couple was dramatically altered. Their spending habits changed; they no longer were out past midnight; weekends were spent working on the nursery. All preparing for the day the baby is born.

There is no looking back now!

This begs the question...are you pregnant? Is the life giving, heart changing, miracle making Spirit of God allowed residence in your heart and soul? Have you asked Him to change your life? What are you doing differently as a result of the resurrection power alive and working in you right at this moment?

I have not had the privilege of being pregnant with a child (never say never), however, I have, and even am now, pregnant with a vision of the Lord's call on my life! *I pray my life never returns to what was; that my choices are altered, passion ignited, and my focus refined as I look forward to the birth of God's plan as He fulfills it in my daily life.*

This Christmas, as we celebrate one of the most miraculous events to ever occur on this planet, may we respond to the incredible love of our Heavenly Father, Who longs to be in a continual relationship with us, as simply as Mary did...**may it be to me as You have said.**

Blessings!

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**Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace,
goodwill toward men!
Luke 2:14**

Repentance and Restoration

A few months ago, I attended a “*Be In Health*” Seminar by Pastor Henry Wright and I was convicted of the importance of a consistent relationship with my Father, the need to remain in fellowship with others, and the value of forgiving myself.

As a result of decades of medical research, Pastor Wright showed a *powerful* connection between the sin in our lives and our general well being. *In the big picture*—I learned I simply have way too small a view of what sin is. Sin, by definition, is missing the mark; an old archers term used to describe how far away the arrow was from the bulls eye. I miss the mark a lot!

We are probably familiar with the Ten Commandments, and with the exception of one or two, most of us would say we do alright. But there are other areas in our lives that we have become accustomed to, that the Lord wants to remove for our benefit. This will only happen, however, when we recognize the hold it has on us and decide to do something about it. Every critical thought or a twinge of jealousy is not sin, but when we justify our behavior with “*That’s just how I am!*” and let it dwell unchallenged in our hearts and minds, it is.

I am beginning to see the open doors I give to sin and can understand what Paul meant when he said we should *pray without ceasing*. That’s because I need to repent a lot more than I used to! 😊 By **recognizing** how Satan gains inroads into my life, I can take **responsibility** for it, **repent** of it, **renounce** the hold it has on my life, **remove** it, **resist** the sin with His Word, and **rejoice** in the amazing, healing power of God!

True repentance comes out of the desire to **restore relationships**, not out of guilt. It is a longing to be in fellowship.

Satan attempts to keep us out of relationship in some of the following ways, but **this is not who we were created to be...**

...full of unending guilt, fear of failure, resentment, insecurity, confusion, disobedience, anger, fear of rejection, holding a record of wrongs, lack of trust, criticizing others, conflict of identity, impatience, worry, doubt, perfectionism, not praying for others, making decisions out of hurt, rolling your eyes, unwilling to forgive, speaking negatively about a pastor, bitterness, being overly competitive, frustration, fear of poverty, having to know everything, an independent spirit (won’t ask for help), temper tantrums, sensual conversation, feeling superior to others, impure thoughts, the inability to give something away, fear of not being loved, or needing to be in control.

I thought about putting in bold the sins I struggle with but I would pretty much have to bold the whole paragraph. 😊

May I encourage you, as I do myself, to take time today to start the process of restoration and break the hold Satan may have in your life. Repent and turn back to Jesus! **He offers no greater gift at Christmas than His passionate, loving embrace and forgiveness.** The Holy Spirit will not condemn, but He does convict. Let Him begin to change you from the inside out, but be patient. Perfection will finally come where we see Jesus face to face. *Praise God for His deliverance!*

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

I Corinthians 1:9

Christmas CD's

Copies of our CD, *O Holy Night*, can be delivered in time for Christmas.

**Take advantage of our special offer -
We know you will enjoy this album!**

**1 CD for \$15
or
4 CD's for \$50**



Fall/Winter Itinerary

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Time</i> |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| October 29 | Sentinel Pointe Concert <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i> | 10:45 am |
| November 8 | Worship Team <i>Grand Haven, MI</i> | 7:00 pm |
| November 15 | Worship Team <i>Grand Haven, MI</i> | 7:00 pm |
| November 19 | Worship Team <i>Grand Haven, MI</i> | 10:00 am |
| December 2 | Word & Deed Benefit Concert <i>Bethany United Reformed Wyoming, MI</i> | 7:00 pm |
| December 3 | Christmas Concert <i>Vriesland Reformed Zeeland, MI</i> | 6:00 pm |
| December 7 | Christmas by Candlelight Concert <i>Community Reformed Church Zeeland, MI</i> | 7:00 pm |
| December 10 | Borculo CRC <i>Borculo, MI</i> | 6:30 pm |
| December 24 | Worship Team <i>Grand Haven, MI</i> | 10:00 am |

visit www.tlministries.com for schedule updates



Ministry Update

Over the past few months, we have enjoyed many opportunities to sing and share testimony of God's faithfulness. **It is our desire to listen to and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit** as He guides this ministry through prayer and His Word.

This fall, the worship leader at my local church graciously agreed to let me participate on their worship team when my schedule permits. I am grateful for this opportunity to learn how to better lead a worship team and congregation into the presence of the Lord.

I have also contacted a Christian Speakers organization to help us match the needs of various churches, ministries and other groups around the Midwest with our God given talents. **I trust the Lord will give us wisdom** in the scheduling of future events.

Thank you for your continued prayers on our behalf! You help sustain us more often than you realize. It would be a privilege to be able to pray specifically for you as well.

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**Please note the new email address!!*

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A Humble Beginning

**And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped
in swaddling cloths lying in a manger.**

Luke 2:12

What an entrance! The King of kings, Omnipotent God, our Saviour, Jesus, chose to be born surrounded by animals. His willingness to endure a humiliating death makes *new life* possible for each one of us! And what have we done to deserve this? Absolutely nothing...

Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.

James 4:10

Humility is a choice. We can **be** humble just like we can **be** nice. It is this humility that enables us to shine as a nightlight in a hallway instead of a chandelier in the foyer.

After all...the nightlight probably keeps a lot more people from stumbling.

