

WIT - "Widows in Touch"

Volume 1, Issue 2

March, 2002

Dear Ladies,

This newsletter features a letter from my friend and co-worker, Phyllis Tucker, who serves alongside her husband who is our Church Planting Coordinator. You will also find some helpful — and perhaps healing — thoughts from our friend Merle Brock, whose husband also served as our State Representative. Last, but not least, you will enjoy letters from several of you, telling us about the ministries you shared with your husbands. Thanks for sharing!

* For Next Time — please send a picture of yourself and a profile of your current situation or ministry. I look forward to hearing from you.
Love, Pat

Phyllis Tucker writes ...

First of all, I would like to say I share Pat's feelings in regard to this new endeavor of "Widows in Touch". As this mailing reaches you, may it prove to be a real blessing and encouragement to you personally, and in return be the same to those with whom you come in contact.

This June is my 50th year as a pastor's wife; 48 years in the pastorate and, in August, 2 years serving with my husband who is the church planting coordinator for the OARBC. I have always felt it a great honor to be the wife of one of God's called ambassadors. I know each of you share these same feelings.

When a couple dedicates their life to serve the Master full time wherever He leads, they cannot see what lies

ahead. It is a path of faithful obedience to His will. It's marvelous how He opens and closes doors thus giving direction.

In the summer of 2000, we were beginning to think about these last years in His service when David Warren, our State Representative, along with the Council of Twelve, contacted Max about considering the new position as church planting coordinator for the OARBC. After much prayer and feeling it was the Lord's will, he accepted and then resigned our church. It has been so wonderful serving in this position, and serving along side of David and Pat Warren. We share some wonderful experiences.

God has blessed us with two sons, both married (four grandchildren) and faithfully serving the Lord.

Dear co-laborers in Christ, our lives are in His hand. Until He calls us home He still has more for us to do. Each day of every new year I think perhaps this is the

Anniversaries

Merle Brock writes ...

Merle Brock reminds us how vivid the anniversary of your husband's death remains. To turn this day into a positive day, Merle suggests that you think of something special you could do to remember your mate or honor his memory.

Set a verse to music

"I set a verse that Bill used frequently, or had marked, to music as a positive tribute to him. That also gives me a positive ... lift for the day. Others may think of something associated with your mate — flower garden, hobby, reading a book that your husband enjoyed, even singing some of his favorite hymns."

Perhaps your family will tune into this next idea for your Wedding Anniversary

"Something else that was just great for me was a 50th anniversary party my children gave for me. ... my children sent me a surprise invitation for date and pick-up and took me to [a special restaurant]. It was just family and my brother and wife, but they said they wanted to celebrate that I had married their Dad 50 years before. I took my wedding outfit and shoes and pictures to share and we had a wonderful time. How I treasure that memory."

Feel free to share something that has helped you on either of these anniversaries?

(Phyllis, Continued from page 1)

day/year He will return and take all of His children home forevermore; thus uniting us once again with our dear loved ones. What a day that will be! What a great hope we have! This alone should give us all the encouragement needed to face each new day. Your letters are a real encouragement also to Pat and I. Thank you for your prayers. Some of you I have not yet met, so please make yourself known to me as we travel your way. My prayers for you.

Dorothy Barkley writes ...

“While attending Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, we served in a small ministry in Watson corners, MI. It was originally an American Sunday School Union work on Sunday afternoons but we started morning and evening services as well.

After graduation, we were on deputation under Baptist Mid-Missions and went to Sterling, Alaska in 1953 and established a station there and built a parsonage and a church. We returned to the lower ‘48 and served in churches in Porter Township at Hebron, IN, and at First Baptist in Russiaville, IN We were there in April 1965 when a tornado flattened 85% of the town including our church and parsonage. We worked with the people to buy more property and build a new parsonage and church. From there we moved to First Baptist in Grove City, PA and from there to First Baptist, Lancaster, OH, and from there to New Harmony Baptist outside of Caldwell, OH

There are many, many blessings and joys and also some trials and sorrows in ministering where the Lord places you, but it’s a privilege to be in His will.

Milton retired from New Harmony in 1984 but continued pulpit supply and interim work. We served for a few months in Otsego, OH, trying to keep a dying work together but it was too late. In 1985, Calvary Baptist in Coshocton, OH needed some help. Milton was not feeling too well even then, but we served there about 2 years helping to stabilize the work. In 1987, Milton retired again but continued filling in where needed as he was able. In early 1992, after many tests, he was diagnosed with amyloidosis, a rare muscle disease which has no cure and no treatment. The Lord called him Home June 8, 1992.

Have you ever noticed that when you're of a certain age, everything seems uphill from where you are? Stairs are steeper. Groceries are heavier. And, everything is farther away?

Pearl Morris writes ...

My husband, Dave, was the first Pastor of Grace Baptist Church, London, OH. Cedarville College had a vital part in the beginning of that church, including the Swordbearers, who took a survey of London before our arrival. . . .

It was a challenging and rewarding time of our lives, and in the lives of our growing family. Dave and I were transplanted from the East coast (Dave from Rhode Island and I was from New Jersey), having met at (then) Providence Bible Institute, in RI. This move alone was an adjustment, to a slower pace of living.

Dave served as pastor at Grace, from the very beginning, to the building of a church building on Madison Rd., London, to an addition.

We were actively involved in the music ministry at Grace as well, because our study at P.B. I had been the Bible/Music course — Dave in Vocal and Choir directing and me in piano and organ. Dave served at Grace from 1967-1987 (20 years). I would say the years from 1977-79 were the most challenging. Our youngest child, Debbie (18), was killed in an auto accident outside of London. “Giving thanks always for all things” (Eph. 5:20), took on new meaning!

Also, during this period, 10 of our established families left Grace, moving from one end of the country to the other. A time of rebuilding, but again the Lord saw us through his difficult time.

We stayed in the London area after Dave resigned from Grace in ‘87 because we owned our home and felt established here. Dave took counseling positions both here in London and later at Southgate Baptist Church, Springfield.

Dave suffered his first stroke in 1994 . . . before the Lord took him Home on May 25, 2001.

Margaret Howell writes ...

Dr. Lewis was called to Nottingham Baptist Church at Willoughby Hills as pastor the year I graduated from Bob Jones University. The following year after Jesse and I were married at BJU we spent that summer and the next two summers in Cleveland. Pastor Lewis had a tremendous influence in Jesse’s life those three summers.

In fact, near the end of the summer of 1951 as we were looking to the Lord to direct us to a church where Jesse might serve as pastor, we received a call

from the business manager at BJU urging us to come back there so that Jesse could assume the oversight of the work/loan scholarship students and, after the approaching birth of our first child, I could resume teaching I had done since 1948. BJU had been my home since 1941, and Jesse had been there since 1946. Just prior to our leaving, Jesse had been in the seminary and managing the Student Center. Mr. Johnson's offer was attractive, and our hearts cried out to return to our comfort zone.

At that point in time there seemed to be no church that was interested in having Jesse as their pastor. As we struggled to know the mind of the Lord in the matter, we explained our dilemma to **Pastor Lewis**. We knew that we would be serving the Lord if we returned to BJU. Pastor Lewis in his great wisdom gave no advice, but asked just one question -- What do you believe the Lord has called you to do? For Jesse to answer that was a very simple matter. He said, "I believe He has called me to be a pastor."

The matter was settled, and that determined the direction of our lives for the next 50 years. Shortly after that when their current pastor had a fatal heart attack, the congregation of the New Richland Baptist Church began to seek a replacement. They contacted Jesse. We learned many valuable lessons as we served the Lord there for the next 15 months. **Mildred and Fred Hussey** were at that time ministering at the Calvary Baptist Church in Bellefontaine. Through the very difficult winter that we were at New Richland, the Husseys extended loving Christian hospitality to us many times and were a wonderful source of encouragement. *I am so thankful to the Lord for the blessing of our association with the Lewises and the Husseys.*

Jesse and I served the Lord as a team in four churches from 1951-2001. Jesse taught the Word with simplicity and clarity, as he lovingly and compassionately ministered to the needs of the people the Lord entrusted to him. He relied upon me to contribute whatever was needed in the music ministry of the churches, in the children's and youth ministries, and to do whatever clerical tasks he and the church might need. I have been greatly blessed to have had the privilege of serving the Lord side by side with Jesse, but as all pastors' wives know the day-to-day responsibilities were not without trial and difficulty. Much of the time from 1960 to 1991 I was also a full-time high school reading and English teacher. As I look back over the years, I can see how wonderfully the Lord met every need physically, emotionally, spiritually, and materially. I can never cease to praise Him for His goodness.

Jesse's second pastorate was the Oak Grove Baptist Church of Bartonville, Illinois, where we served from

Virginia Fields writes . . .

My husband and I did a lot of the ground work to start two churches in OH. The first one was Bethel Baptist in Pataskala and the second was Berean Baptist in Pickerington. These were started because there were no churches that taught the Word in either of these towns. Several core families formed the nucleus. We were at Bethel for seven years and at Berean for about 5 years.

During those years I served as president of the OARBC West Moriah ladies' group for one year. We were also involved in the Youth ministries. Many of our teens went on to Cedarville University as students.

My husband, Jerry, was murdered in May of 1978, while still pastoring the Berean Baptist Church at Pickerington. He was helping out one of the church members by working as a night watchman on his night off, because his regular replacement had quit. Our children were 10, 6 and 3 at the time. We pastored some pretty special people is all I can say and they are my dearest friends to this day. We are probably bonded forever. Can't imagine a better group to be bonded with in this life.

1952 to 1960. This was an independent Baptist church when we went there. What we did not know prior to our going there is that the previous pastor, hoping to persuade them to abandon their Baptist doctrine, had led them out of the GARBC. The church remained Baptist but because of negative attitudes toward the GARBC, they joined the Conservative Baptists. Jesse was not comfortable with that alignment and subsequently resigned in 1960. We returned to Ohio and were led of the Lord to consider a church planting ministry. The newspapers in Cleveland carried many large advertisements about homes available in Streetsboro, a mushrooming community strategically located with quick access to four major highways.

One Sunday after Jesse had supplied the pulpit at the North Royalton Baptist Church, we decided to drive to Streetsboro to find out what we could about the community and its churches. We stopped to eat dinner at a small restaurant in Twinsburg, where the Lord brought us in contact with Pastor Paul Schenk of the First Baptist Church of Twinsburg. When we shared our thoughts about Streetsboro as a possible location for a new GARBC church, we learned that he was already meeting with a group of folk living there but driving in to some of the Cleveland churches. The Cedar Hill Baptist Church of Cleveland Heights had extended its missions outreach to the church at Twinsburg and was considering doing the same thing

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for a GARBC church in Streetsboro if it were to come into existence.

Subsequently Jesse met with the folk at Streetsboro and with the extension committee of the Cedar Hill church and was called to be the mission pastor. Between the years of 1960 and 1973, the Faith Baptist Church was organized, became a part of the OARBC and the GARBC, and put up an attractive church building on the corner of Frost Road and State Route 43. After having carried on the ministry in a small log-cabin restaurant until 1964, we were thankful for a beautiful and comfortable building.

During a part of that time Jesse worked at a small grocery store in Brecksville since the grocery business was the only area of work he had done aside from the Army and the ministry. The fact that our two girls were in school enabled me to take a full-time teaching job in Streetsboro. Early in 1961 Cedar Hill began giving Jesse some support to supplement the small amount that the local Streetsboro congregation could give us so that he could quit his grocery job and devote all of his time to the ministry. In those days the state of Ohio issued little sales tax receipts each time a purchase involving sales tax was made. Churches who collected and bundled these little receipts according to the amount of tax they represented could send these to the department of taxation and receive a percentage of the sales tax that had been paid. The building fund for Faith Baptist Church of Streetsboro was started with \$2.98 we received in that way. We broke ground for the church in 1964, the year that our third child, our son Scott, was born. Some Christian builders put up the shell of the building and the men and women of the church completed the project. Jesse was good at carpentry and plumbing and worked shoulder to shoulder with anyone who would take time to come and help with the building. In those days he was strong enough to do that, but it did take its toll on him. We have rejoiced in the continued growth of that congregation and in the additions that have been made to that original building since Jesse resigned in 1973. We have had blessed fellowship through the intervening years with the pastors who have served the Lord in that church and with the people to whom we ministered for those 13 years.

In August of 1973 we moved to Bellefontaine, my present town of residence, where the Lord called us to minister to the folk at the First Regular Baptist Church. They had just experienced the loss of a sizable part of the congregation so the plans that they had for building a new church building on a 9-acre plot of choice land that they had purchased on the edge of town had to be shelved. Through the years, although there have been many spiritual victories and souls saved, there have been many struggles. The church built in 1850 is located on a main street just

Ohio Women's Missionary Union Spring Rally

**Tuesday, April 9, 2002 - 10:00 am
Camden, Baptist Church
17901 SR 511
Wellington, OH 44090**

**Theme: A Taste of Home
Lunch Provided**

**Project Goal: \$4050
Homes for Romanian Gypsies**

(Margaret continues)

behind the Logan County Courthouse. It is hemmed in by other buildings and has very limited parking places. However, the congregation has never had a majority who agreed that building a new church was what should be done.

Jesse and I have been greatly blessed to serve the Lord with a group of people who have been very loving and kind. Although I believe that Jesse would have liked to have continued to minister until his last breath, for the good of the church he retired April 29, 2001, his 79th birthday. Three weeks later he suffered a heart attack and went to be with the Lord July 14, four days after open heart surgery. At this time my heart is greatly burdened for the church as they seek another pastor, and I know that that would have been the burden of his heart if he were still here. I do not know where or how the Lord will use me in the days to come, but I rejoice in the wonderful peace that He gives and the lessons I'm learning as I wait upon Him.

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