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EMPOWERING CHRISTIAN WOMEN TO ARISE

LeadingHearts



HOLIDAY EDITION 2025-2026

Vol. 12, Issue 5



Janet McHenry
The Gift that Keeps on
Giving



Holiday Issue 2025 | VOL. 12, ISSUE 5

LeadingHearts

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Leading Hearts magazine for Christian Women is published bimonthly by Right to the Heart Ministries 2025.
ISSN 2380-5455

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MANUSCRIPTS | Writers guidelines are available at leadinghearts.com.

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MEMBER | 2024 Evangelical Press Association. Award of Excellence 2014-2021, 2023 Evangelical Press Association Award of Merit Winner—Christian Ministry Digital | 2024 Christian Ministry Print Publication & 2022 Christian Ministry Digital Best in Class

Cover Photo Courtesy of: Bryan Chris Photography

Photos courtesy of: Adobe, Bryan Chris Photography (Brenda Yoder), Canva, Matthew Berinato on Envato Elements (Rachel Purcell)

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Good News of Great Joy...

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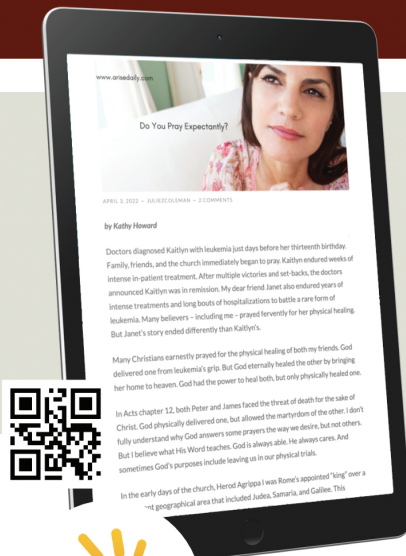


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A Prayer of Blessing

As I write to you, my Christmas tree is glowing softly in the corner—each light a tiny reminder of the miracle we celebrate this time of year. The scent of gingerbread is drifting from my kitchen, and for a moment, the world feels hushed ... almost as if heaven itself has leaned closer.

I know this season can feel busy and hurried. But before you turn the page, I want to offer you something simple: a moment to breathe. A moment to remember that Christmas is not found in what we accomplish... but in Who came to set us free.

This issue of *Leading Hearts* is filled with stories of miracles—some sparkling and immediate, others quiet and slow like snow falling at dusk. They invite us to pause and consider the greatest miracle of all: that the Son of God stepped into our world, wrapped Himself in humanity, and chose to dwell with us.

Emmanuel. God with us.
Not far.
Not distant.
But right here.

When Jesus arrived in Bethlehem, He didn't come to overwhelm us—He came to be with us. To be our peace in uncertainty, our hope in longing, our joy in sorrow, and our steady light when the world feels dim. And the beautiful truth? His presence has never left. As we turn the page into a new year, I want to gently invite you to carry this miracle with you. Not the busyness of the season, not the pressure to make everything perfect—just the miracle of His nearness.

Let this be the year you slow your steps just enough to notice Him.
Let this be the year you invite His peace into the corners of your life that feel hurried or heavy.

Let this be the year you remember that the same Jesus who arrived in a manger now walks with you into every tomorrow.

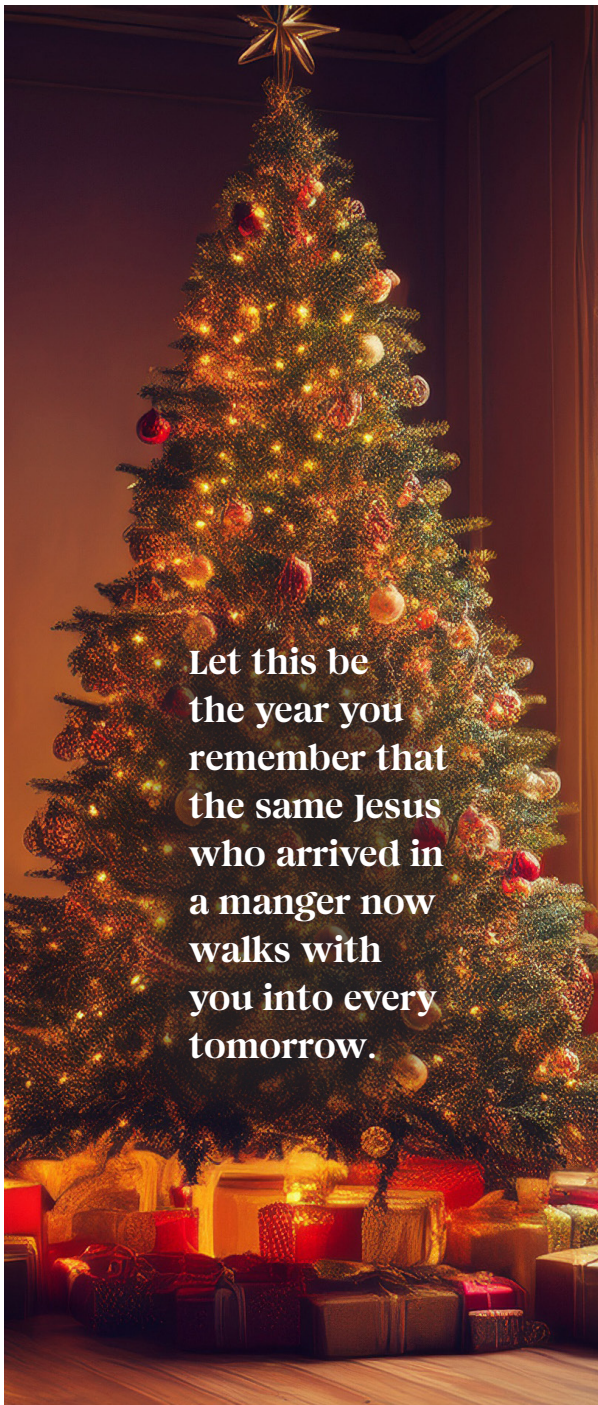
May I pray a simple blessing over you?

"Lord Jesus, as we celebrate Your birth and step into a new year, settle our hearts with Your presence. Quiet our worries, brighten our hope, and draw us close enough to hear Your gentle whisper: 'I am with you always.' Fill our homes with Your light and our days with the sweetness of Your love. Amen."

May your Christmas be full of wonder, your new year full of grace, and your heart full of the miracle that Jesus is still—beautifully, faithfully—with us.

With love and warm gingerbread thoughts
and Happy New Year blessings!

— Linda



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EDITOR'S LETTER | AMBER WEIGAND-BUCKLEY

Getting Beyond Pinterest Christmas

So I was scrolling through social media the other day—which, let's be honest, is probably my first mistake—and I saw yet another post about

“living your best life.” Perfect lighting, perfect coffee, perfect Christmas everything. And I'm sitting there in my yoga pants, barefaced, thinking, “Okay, but WHAT does that even mean when your brain is actively working against you during the most wonderful time of the year?”

Because here's the thing about those Pinterest quotes, those “Choose Joy This Christmas” signs—when you're at your lowest, they just bounce off you. They're flat. One-dimensional words that don't mean anything when you're suffocating inside your own head while everyone else is singing carols.

But here's what I've learned: the problem isn't the words themselves. The problem is when we treat them like they're enough.

There's a massive difference between a sign that says “cozy Christmas” and actually **FEELING** a warm blanket wrapped around you by the fire. Between a quote about Christmas peace and actually watching Christmas lights twinkle. Between “joy to the world” in cute script and feeling winter sunshine on your face.

If you never get outside of your head, you will always see life in ONE DIMENSION. And Christmas deserves more than that.

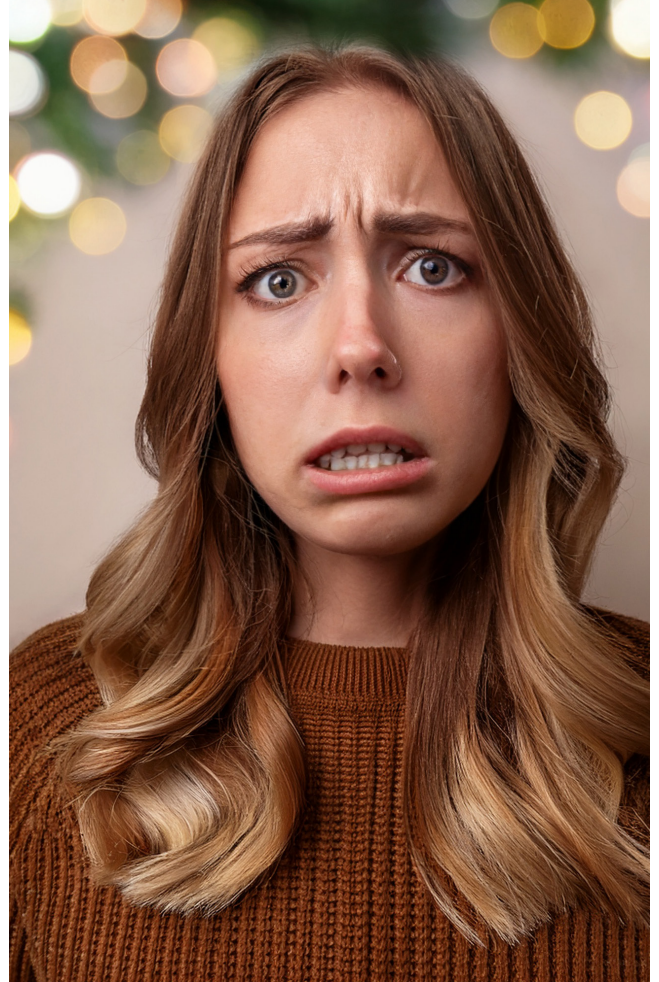
As you read this issue of *Leading Hearts*, I want to challenge you to refocus on the joy of the season—not by trying harder to feel the right feelings, but by getting out of your head long enough to **EXPERIENCE** the three-dimensional beauty that's already here.

Christmas wasn't meant to be a one-dimensional card. The Incarnation itself was God stepping **OUT** of the heavenly dimension and **INTO** our three-dimensional world—Emmanuel, God **WITH** us in tangible, touchable, experienceable flesh.

So this holiday season, when the Pinterest ideals and the anxiety threatens to trap you in your own mind, remember: there's a galaxy of stars out there. Twinkling lights. Warm fires. People who love you. Small moments of wonder.

Your best Christmas—your best life—might just be outside your own head. May you feel His love wrapping your Christmas and the year to come,

—Amber



“What does [living your best life] even mean when your brain is actively working against you during the most wonderful time of the year?”



AMBER WEIGAND-BUCKLEY
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Expect the Wonder



by Joy Dunlap

My dad had a sled. In Alabama. Our city got less than an inch and a half of snow a year on average, and most year received trace amounts or none.

But Dad expected snow to come. He had no doubt snow would show up—sometime. He had seen it happen.

And, Dad didn't want to miss a minute of enjoying it with us when it did! On the rare occasions that snow came, Dad was ready to enjoy it with us.

How thrilling it was to fly down the hill on that wooden sled with its metal runners. As a child, I lay on top of Dad's back and held on tightly. I trusted him to steer well and protect us. And he, along with our heavenly Father, always did. Oh, what fun we had!

When Wonder Slides Right Past Us

We often miss the miracles God puts on our path. We don't prepare our hearts to enjoy them.

Perhaps we don't believe we'll see them.

Mostly though, we don't notice them; or if we do, we don't take time to fully experience and enjoy them.

In some cases, worldly woes weaken and distract us so we become oblivious to the gifts God distributes throughout our days.

Yet, miracles happen all around us.

The birth of a baby. The blooming of a flower. The transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly.

The unique design of each snowflake that falls.

And, miracles happen *within us* as the quiet stirring of the Holy Spirit nudges us in the way to go.

When we do experience "God-touch" times through people we meet, messages received, or a Scripture we read at just the right time, do we acknowledge God's gift and the wonder of His timing? When we experience the amazing in creation, do we credit the Creator?

Miracles call us to be mindful and missional: mindful of the Giver of them and missional in giving God the glory for them.

Let's look at 4 Ways to Experience the Wonder in Life – Not Just the Holidays!

1. Ask God to Awaken Your Awe of Him and His Works

Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. 1 Chronicles 29:11 NIV

Awaken my heart and my senses, Lord, to the wonder You put in my path. Let me see the gifts you so generously give.

2. Anticipate God's Gifts and Wonders

You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples. Psalm 77:14 NIV

Lord, I expect to feel Your presence and see Your fingerprints as I go through this week. I eagerly desire a fresh encounter with You whether through Your Word, Your Creation, or in divine encounters You orchestrate.

3. Give Thanks for Past Blessings and Wonders.

I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds. Psalm 77:11–12 NIV

When I feel weary, discouraged or far from you, Lord, bring to my mind the times You've touched my life. Remind me also of Your power unleashed in the parting of the Red Sea, the feeding of 5,000-plus with five loaves and two fish, healings of the damaged in heart and body, the virgin birth, and Your resurrection.

4. Tell others about God's faithfulness, powerful acts, and good gifts.

Declare His glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. 1 Chronicles 16:24 NIV

Embolden me, Lord, and open doors for me to tell Your story and give You glory. Give me the words and heart that point people to You.

Lights, Carols, and the One Behind It All

God put wonder in the world to point us to Him, not just at Christmas but throughout the year.

In Romans 1:20, we are reminded "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse" (NIV).

But the Word also gives us a warning.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Romans 1:21 NIV

They worshipped the wonders instead of the One who created them.

As we enjoy the decorative lights this holiday season, let us meditate on the Light of the World. As we sing carols, let our voices be raised in praise to the Lord. As we give presents, let's share the gift of Jesus, telling others what He means to us.

For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise. 1 Chronicles 16:25 NIV

Greet each day with an expectation of God's divine handprints, and a heart open to hear from Him. Look for the Wonder. ❤️

Joy Dunlap served as a women's ministry director and worked as a print journalist, radio news director, nonprofit advocate, and broadcasting association executive. Joy delights in seeing God's hand and witnessing His heart in the everyday. Speaking Joyfully is her award-winning blog.

The Gift that Can't **Stayed Wrapped**





with Janet McHenry

My Christmas plans seemed doable. A hay wagon caroling party for our church. A gift-exchange dinner with friends. A speaking event for a women's ministries brunch.

A handful of songs on my stand-up bass for the Christmas Eve service. And our family of twenty for a week of food and fun.

But as the calendar turned, my stress levels escalated as I tried to make each event perfect and memorable. In the years since then I have found that the greatest gift I can give others—prayer—is also one that keeps on giving . . . not only to them but also to me. As we surround the days ahead in prayer, we will find this spiritual gift has a lasting impact.

“When leaders look up, burdens shrink, clarity grows, and decisions align with God's wisdom rather than urgency.”

Prayer Gives Us the Gift of God's Nearness

When women feel stretched thin by ministry demands, prayer brings them back into the presence of the God who is never far. Scripture reminds us, “The Lord is near to all who call on him” (Psalm 145:18 NIV). Prayer isn't just a discipline—it's an open invitation into God's nearness. For leaders God's nearness renews strength, softens stress, and re-centers their calling.

It's ironic that the Christmas season—which is supposed to draw us closer to God—often makes us feel isolated and lonely. One year one of my kids chewed me out: “You care more about what the house looks like than the reason for the season.” While I may not have agreed with her at that moment, when I prayed that evening, I realized she was right.

Leader takeaway—

Before you pour out for others, pause and breathe in God's presence. Prayer grounds your leadership in intimacy, not intensity.

Prayer Gives Us the Gift of Perspective

Ministry carries moments that can feel overwhelming—team dynamics, relational tensions, event planning pressures, emotional exhaustion. Prayer lifts our eyes. Jeremiah prayed, “Ah, Sovereign Lord . . . Nothing is too hard for you!” (Jeremiah 32:17 NIV). When leaders look up, burdens shrink, clarity grows, and decisions align with God's wisdom rather than urgency.

I led a prayer partners ministry for many years for prayer Sunday mornings over church leaders prior to our services. A few years ago, God gave me a taste of what worship team members give for the sake of leading us. I play a little stand-up bass, and that year the music minister wanted that sound for the three

Christmas Eve services. With travel, set-up, and practice, plus the full day of serving, I learned what a sacrifice the others regularly give. So I now pray with greater insight for our worship leader and the team.

Leader takeaway—

When challenges loom large, let prayer remind you that God is larger still. Perspective is one of prayer's most stabilizing gifts.

Prayer Gives Us the Gift of Peace in the Middle of Pressure

Paul links prayer directly to supernatural peace: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer . . . present your requests to God. And the

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Looking Up!

Finding Joy
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through the Bible

Janet Holm McHenry

peace of God . . . will guard your hearts and your minds" (Philippians 4:6–7 NIV). We notice from these verses that peace is found not in the absence of problems but with the guarding presence of God. The world will pour chaos all over us, whereas God alone is the peace-giver.

As someone who has organized and led community prayerwalks, I know the uncertainty of how many will show up can frazzle me. One year we barely had enough folks to cover the six planned areas. But this year I put that concern in the Lord's hands, and peace rested on me that whole day.



“ Prayer is not a passive practice—it is participation.

Leader takeaway—

As you carry the emotional load of your ministry, pray not only for solutions but also for peace to reign in your heart and ministry spaces.

Prayer Gives Us the Gift of Partnership with God in His Work

Prayer is not a passive practice—it is participation. Jesus told us, “Ask the Lord of the harvest . . . to send out workers” (Matthew 9:38 NIV). Prayer moves the mission forward.

One fall season I strongly felt the women of our church would love a Christmas brunch event, but as I prayed over a to-do list, I realized I did not have the bandwidth to organize it. So I gave it up in prayer to the Lord, and sure enough, a gifted organizer, Michelle, stepped forward and created a beautiful event.

For women's ministry leaders, prayer is the eternal work behind every earthly effort—changing lives, softening hearts, opening doors, shaping events, and drawing women to Christ.

Leader takeaway—

Don't see prayer as the support work—see it as the spiritual forefront of your ministry. What you cover in prayer, God covers with power. ❤️

Janet Holm McHenry is an inspirational speaker and the author of 27 traditionally published books—eight on prayer, including the bestselling PrayerWalk, Praying Personalities and Looking Up! Finding Joy as You Read and Pray Through the Bible. Janet serves on the California leadership team for the National Day of Prayer and leads the prayer ministries at The Bridge Church in Reno. She and her cattle rancher husband, Craig, live in the Sierra Valley in northern California, where they raised their four kids and where she taught high school English.

You can connect with Janet on social media or at JanetMcHenry.com.



Glimpse into Glory

*“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human
mind has conceived—
the things God has prepared
for those who love him”
(1 Corinthians 2:9 NIV).*



with Pam Farrel

When a miracle touches one spouse, it touches the other.

Though I was the one who nearly died, God performed miracles for both Bill and me. For years I'd managed Diabetes 1.5, a rare and difficult form to regulate. After a steady rise in my A1c, my doctor prescribed a new medication, but supply shortages delayed its arrival. I left for a speaking engagement in Texas, planning to begin the medication when I returned.

During the trip, I believed I had simply strained my shoulder lifting an overstuffed backpack. Over-the-counter pain relievers, ice, and prayer offered only brief relief—worship and teaching God's Word seemed to be the only thing that could dull the pain.

Once I returned home, Bill took me to urgent care. Even with stronger medication, the pain persisted and my system began to shut down. A few days later, I shivered under blankets despite warm weather. My heart raced, I felt nauseous and dizzy, and finally gasped, "I think I'm having a heart attack!"

“

Lord, whether Pam goes to You or stays, I trust You. Me and the kids and grandkids love her so much...

Bill immediately said, "I'm taking you to the ER now!" Strangely, I felt no fear—only supernatural peace.

What followed was unmistakably God. My 63-year-old husband carried me to my father-in-law's wheelchair and then to the car. By God's grace, we were together—not separated by ministry travel. The ER, normally overflowing, was completely empty. They admitted me immediately and rushed me to ICU. Two doctors—one a cardiologist and the other a diabetes specialist—were on duty. The diabetes specialist quickly diagnosed Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA), a life-threatening emergency. As they prepared to place me in a medically induced coma, Bill became my eyes and ears.

Around 4 a.m., the ICU team sent Bill home to rest. They told him, "She is in a medically induced coma. When she wakes—if she wakes—she will need you strong." The doctor added quietly, "I'll do everything I can to keep her alive. I'll call if anything changes."

Driving home in tears, Bill prayed words that mirrored Christ in the garden: "Lord, whether Pam goes to You or stays, I trust You. Me and the kids and grandkids love her so much ... please, don't let my phone ring tonight. But not my will, Yours be done."

Bill contacted our sons, extended family, and ministry partners. Within hours thousands were praying.

My Heavenly Perspective

As my body lay unconscious, my spirit was ushered into God's presence. I

experienced peace beyond anything imaginable. The scene opened like black velvet lit with shimmering gold—the radiant, living light of God. Angels danced in the glow, their wings glittering. Time didn't seem to exist.

I sensed Jesus—my Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). I didn't see Him physically, yet His presence surrounded me with perfect peace and provision. Scripture became alive around me, especially the truth of "Immanuel, God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

His Earthy View

CONTINUED ON P. 17



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CONTINUED FROM P. 15

“**You do live in My love ... but I have more for you to do. It's time to go back.**

We communicated mind-to-mind—deep, peaceful, holy. I asked repeatedly, “Am I dead, Lord? Is this heaven?” I was ready to stay if that was His will. I praised Him for my family's strong faith and thought of the grandchildren I longed to see grow. Even so, my heart whispered, “Your will, not mine.”

Then the scene shifted. The dancing angels transformed into a golden mountain range with rivers of gold flowing downward. Loved ones gathered the treasure. Jesus showed me that this vision reflected the abundant answers to my daily Ephesians 3:20 prayer at 3:20 p.m.—His heavenly view of “exceedingly, abundantly above all we could ask or imagine.”

Though I longed to remain in the beauty of His presence, Jesus finally said, “You do live in My love ... but I have more for you to do. It's time to go back.”

When My Eyes Opened

With those words, my eyes opened in the ICU. Machines beeped as nurses rushed in. My hands were restrained to prevent me from pulling out the ventilator. A nurse explained everything kindly. I gestured for the whiteboard across the room and wrote “Thx” with a smiley face and heart. She began to cry—“Patients never thank us.”

Moments later, Bill walked in. Relief washed over his face. “Thank you, Jesus! Pam, you're back! You're going to be okay!” with a twinkle in his eye, he added, “You are all the way back! You're writing and bossing people around!” He kissed my forehead and prayed praise over me. I stayed another day on the ventilator and asked Bill to play worship music—because worship had saturated heaven, and I knew worship was my key to wellness.

When I could speak again, I told Bill everything I had experienced. As we compared notes, we realized that God had given us parallel miracles—his peace on earth, my peace in heaven, and both of us praying Jesus' words: “Not my will, but Yours.”

Our hearts beat as one, and in that holy hospital room, we knew they beat with His. ❤️

Pam Farrel is the author of 61 books, including Glimpse of God's Glory: One Woman's Near-Death Experience. She and her husband, Bill, have been married 46 years and lead Love-Wise Ministries. They are parents to three sons, three daughters-in-love, and eight grandchildren. They make their home on a live-aboard boat in Southern California.





AMBER WEIGAND-BUCKLEY
LH EDITOR



The Symphony and the Sears Wishbook of Dreams

(7 Ways to Unwrap the Presents in His Presence)

Christmas 1979. Jimmy Carter was president, and I was a little kid with a bowl cut sitting cross-legged on the carpet with what I can only describe as the holy trinity of childhood desire: the Sears catalog, the Montgomery Ward catalog, and the special JCPenney catalog.

This was peak Wishbook era, and I would go through those pages circling things with precision. And there it was—a tiny wooden upright piano. Not a real piano. This thing had little bells inside. It was basically a fancy xylophone having an identity crisis. But to little me? It was everything.

Christmas morning came, and there it was under the tree. I have a picture of that moment—me at that piano, hands on the keys. You can see it on my face: pure wonder. Because in that moment, I wasn't just a kid with a toy. I was part of a symphony.

When Xylophone-Pianos Point to God

Every time I think about wonder, I think about that piano. And honestly? I still am part of a symphony. We all are.

Here's what I've been thinking about—there is a

present of discovery as we sink into God's presence every day. You hear that? Present. Presence. We get to unwrap His presents—these gifts He's giving us—in His presence. Every single day.

But do we? Do we wait for them? Do we see them? Do we have that anticipation, that excitement we had as kids circling things in the Sears catalog? Or have we just ... lost the wonder?

Starlight is miraculous despite the scientific framework we give it. The sunrise is miraculous. How a tree grows is miraculous. All of it. And yet somehow, the beauty of these presents becomes an afterthought. Or not even a thought at all.

The Astronomer, the Wise Men, and Why Science Doesn't Ruin Christmas

A few years back, I interviewed an astronomer from Answers in Genesis about the Star of Bethlehem. You know that celestial GPS of The Nativity?

Matthew tells us: "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.' ... the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed" (Matthew 2:1–2, 9–10 NIV).

They were overjoyed when they saw the star. That's wonder. That's discovery. And it led them straight to Jesus.

So I talked with this astronomer about the theories. Was it a comet? A supernova? A planetary alignment? And he said something that's stuck with me: "You know, we can hypothesize all day about what that star was—scientifically speaking. But here's the thing: it doesn't discount the wonder."

We can study stars, understand physics—and none of that makes the miracle less miraculous. That star—whatever it was scientifically—led those wise men to worship Jesus. The wonder led to discovery. The discovery led to worship.

God Isn't Threatened by Your Questions (He Made Photosynthesis, Remember?)

God gave us minds that crave discovery. That curiosity? That's not despite God. That's because of God.

When a kid asks "why is the sky blue?" we don't say, "Stop asking questions!" We explain it. And somehow, understanding the physics makes the sunset more beautiful, not less.

God isn't threatened by our questions. He's the one who made photosynthesis! He's the one who embedded these discoverable patterns into creation and then gave us the brains to find them!

I think of faith like unwrapping Christmas presents. Every question we ask, every discovery we make—we're unwrapping another layer. We're seeing another facet of the One who made it all. We're finding ourselves in the symphony.

And the beautiful thing? The box never runs out.

7 Ways to Unwrap the Presents in His Presence

So how do we actually do this? Here's what I've learned:

1. Appreciate the simple things outside of yourself. Stop looking inward and look out. Notice the steam rising from your coffee. The specific sound of your kid's laugh.

2. Look at the world with wonder. Ask "how does that work?" like you're five years old again.

3. Recognize the faces around you. The people pouring into your life—see them. They're part of God's gift to you.

4. Get out of your house. Change your scenery and watch what happens to your perspective.

5. Be thankful for things that make your life easier. These aren't mundane—they're miraculous.

6. Ask questions without needing all the answers. Let mystery be mystery.

7. Wake up expecting presents. Not Amazon packages, but actual moments of discovery in God's presence.

When Wooden Pianos End Up in the Attic

When you're a kid with a wooden piano, you believe you're part of something bigger. But then life happens. And suddenly that wooden piano is just a toy in the attic. The presents we could be unwrapping in God's presence every day become afterthoughts. The miraculous becomes mundane.

But what if we refused to let that happen? What if we kept digging? Kept discovering? Kept asking, "God, who am I in this beautiful thing You're creating?"

“There is a present of discovery as we sink into God's presence every day.


Still Proceeding, Still Following

This Christmas, I want to shift my whole relationship with God into one of discovering these great presents I get to unwrap in His presence.

The wise men followed a star of wonder, and it led them to Jesus. That same wonder is available to us today.

May we never lose that childlike posture of awe. May there always be presents to unwrap in His presence. May we never stop following the star of wonder that guides us to perfect light.

Because every single day, you and I are part of some beautiful symphony that God is conducting.

That's the wonder. That's the discovery worth chasing. 

Amber Weigand-Buckley, editor of Leading Hearts, is an award-winning author and podcaster. For more insights like this, subscribe to #randomdevothoughts with Amber: Insights on the Jesus Heart from an ADHD Mind, available on all podcast platforms and Coffee Chat with Amber & Lisa.



The Rocking Horse Miracle

“There was no fanfare, no expectation, simply love in action. We had done our part, now we had to trust Him to do what only He could do.



BY PENELOPE CARLEVATO
PENELOPECARLEVATO.COM

The Thanksgiving weekend had barely wrapped up when the Christmas season came rushing in with its familiar flurry of plans, traditions, and to-do lists.

My friends and I were looking forward to one of our favorite events: the annual Holiday Homes Tour and Tea. This event was our Christmas delight—a charming afternoon tea served from gleaming silver teapots inside a breathtaking 32-room Italian villa overlooking the Pacific Ocean. After tea, guests toured exquisitely decorated homes in the upscale neighborhood. It was magical and a fun way to celebrate our friendship.

The Garage Sale That Changed Everything

Just days before the event, our plans took a sudden turn when one of our most organized friends sent out an S.O.S., an urgent plea for help. In a burst of early holiday energy, she had carried out a full-on “winter cleaning” and gathered up many “unused” items for a very successful garage sale, or so she thought. Only after everything was sold did she realize she had parted with something precious—a wooden rocking horse that had been in her family for generations. Her five-year-old daughter was heartbroken. Although the horse had stood hardly used in a quiet corner of a bedroom, the child had not forgotten it.

Our friend quickly contacted the neighbor who had purchased the horse, but it was too late. The rocking horse had been whisked away as an early Christmas present for the neighbor’s grandson—a little boy being raised by a single mom with limited means. He had

instantly fallen in love with it; and the grandparents, knowing the joy it brought him, could not bring themselves to take it away.

Feeling embarrassed, regretful and desperate to fix her mistake, our friend called and asked if we would pray, and more importantly, if we might be willing to give up our cherished Holiday Home Tour and Tea to go with her on Saturday to comb garage sales and thrift stores in search of a similar horse.

A Day of Empty Hands and Full Hearts

Before sunrise on Saturday morning, we climbed into her car, armed with coffee and determination. Before we left, we prayed Luke 11:9. Then off we went. We searched garage sales, scanned online listings, and even visited the local Toys-R-Us, only to discover that rocking horses had long since been replaced with molded plastic. For the entire day, we had looked, prayed and hoped. But, by late afternoon we were empty-handed. Yet, strangely we were peaceful about this situation. Christmas is, after all, God's season of miracles. We had done our part, now we had to trust Him to do what only He could do.

The Miracle on the Front Porch

A phone call arrived just after dawn. Our friend stepped outside to find the original rocking horse sitting on her front porch—polished wood gleaming, reins tied with a big red ribbon, and a simple note tucked beneath the bow: "Merry Christmas."

Later that morning, the story unfolded. The neighbors—the ones who had bought the horse—had sat down with their grandson and explained what had happened. They prayed as a family. Together, they decided that the little girl who had lost her rocking horse needed it back more than they did.

Their grandson, a child being raised with little, reached a tender maturity beyond his years. He agreed to give the rocking horse back.

That little boy gave up something precious so another child's sorrow could turn to joy. It reminded me of the gift Jesus gave us all—not from scarcity, but from abundance; not reluctantly, but freely.

When God Restores What Was Lost

This was Christmas—not the glittering trees or perfect plans, but Christmas found in a little boy who understood generosity, in grandparents who chose compassion, and in God's orchestration of hearts.

That weekend, we discovered a truth more beautiful than any home tour. Yet God restored that joy too—the organizers exchanged our tickets for the next afternoon. A reminder that when we place His kingdom first, He takes care of every detail. A simple wooden rocking horse became a symbol of the quiet miraculous ways God brings lost things home.



One of the delightful treats we enjoyed at the Holiday Home Tour and Tea was these delicious Mini Mince Pies. They are something my English mum made every Christmas. If you don't want to make them, World Market does sell them during the Christmas season, but they are much better homemade.

Mini Mince Tarts

2 cups flour
½ tsp salt
1 Tbsp sugar
1 cup butter
2–3 Tbsp iced water
1 jar mincemeat filling
Mini muffin tins

- Grease the muffin tins well. Preheat the oven to 400° F.
- Combine the flour, salt, and sugar with a fork.
- Add the butter with a pastry blender until the mixture resembles coarse meal.
- Add the water slowly until the dough just holds together when pinched. If necessary, add more water.
- Put the dough onto a floured surface and pat into a ball. Divide the ball in half and form two balls. Wrap each ball in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- Roll out the dough between two sheets of wax paper until about ⅛ inch thick.
- Cut into rounds that are slightly larger than the muffin tins.
- Place the rounds into the muffin tins and form to fit the pan.
- Place one teaspoon or more of filling into each dough-filled tin, about 2/3 full.
- Top with a pastry star that you have cut from the dough. Pinch the edges of the star gently into the top of the dough in the muffin tins.
- Brush the tops with egg wash (1 beaten egg with a couple teaspoons of water) and sprinkle the surface with sugar.
- Bake at 400° F for 13 to 15 minutes until lightly browned.
- Cool on a wire rack, then dust with powdered sugar before serving.
- Makes 24 2-inch tarts. They freeze well. ♥

Find more of Penelope's recipes at leadinghearts.com.



Jamie

MacDonald

Singing Through the Struggle



BY JENNIFER TAYLOR
LH MUSIC CONTRIBUTOR

Despite the defeat and shame that came after her parents' divorce, a troubled upbringing, and delays, Contemporary Christian Music Artist Jamie MacDonald shares how God's grace turned her story around from desperate need to "Desperate" success.

Her debut single spent seven weeks at No. 1 on Billboard and Mediabase Christian charts that led to a Dove Award nomination and three KLOVE Fan Award nominations. And the reimagined version of the song featuring Lauren Daigle continues to entertain new audiences all before her self-titled debut album drops on January 23.

The Michigan native loved singing, and she sang in many choir programs throughout her childhood. However, memories of singing with her dad and family in the car really reminded her that singing was her first love. "He would belt out in the car and sing lots of Michael W. Smith and Steven Curtis Chapman songs. It was like there was no talking in the car because it was only singing."

Finding Her Voice in the Woods

Sadly though, the family sing-alongs did not last forever. When her father's professional boxing career ended, he began to struggle with mental illness. Those struggles led to her parents' divorce, and she was estranged from her father for years. Jamie's mother would remarry, but her stepfather did not allow singing in the house. "So, I would go sing in the woods a lot, and I still kind of do that to this day," she said. "Around that age when my mom remarried, I actually got invited to church camp, and I gave my life to Jesus. I just had my own experience with Jesus there, and you know, the singing never stops at camp. So, I was like, 'Okay, this is the family for me.'"

"I've always had a dream in my heart to sing," Jamie said. "I was pretty shy, but a feeling started growing

in my heart like I want to do this. I feel like I was made to do this." However, she never really pursued it as a career until everything changed during the Pandemic. During that time, she reunited with her dad, who was battling Parkinson's, dementia, and facing end of life issues. So, Jamie moved in to help care for him.

When Music Became Medicine

"He didn't always know who I was because of the dementia and not seeing me my whole life. He would remember me as a little girl, not as a grown woman," she said. "Something beautiful that happened was I still remembered all his favorite songs that he used to play when I was a kid. So, I started playing him all his favorite music, and something unlocked in him. He started remembering every word; he had not heard those songs in probably 20 years or more. Suddenly we had this bonding where we could sing together. Maybe we couldn't always have a conversation, but we could sing these songs together. It unlocked my passion for music and a deeper reason to go for it."

Jamie admits she always had a lot of fear and shame in her life that kept her from really going for music. "But finding my deeper why was really what got me to go for it with all my heart. That experience with my dad got me thinking, I really want to sing again. I really want to release music again."

It had been about seven years since she released anything. She got involved in leading a prison choir and started teaching songwriting in a women's prison. She knew she wanted to sing and use her gifts for God, but she was not ready for the industry yet because she was caring for her father.

From Prison Choirs to Platinum Charts

"Singing in that prison unlocked another layer of purpose behind the music and brought hope back into my world. Those girls encouraged me. They walked me through losing my dad. From then on, I was like 'Alright ladies, I love you so much, but I feel like I gotta move back to Nashville and go for music. If I could get a song on the radio, I could reach all the prisons at one time,'" she said. "I saw the way music was keeping them alive in there and changing lives inside the prison. I thought, *Okay, this is my deeper why. And now, I feel that nothing can stop me.*"

CONTINUED ON P. 25

Praying the Word:

90 Scripture-Powered Prayers

—A Beautifully Designed Spiral Prayer Journal—

Praying the Word invites you to slow down, breathe deeply, and anchor your prayers in God's Word. Each day weaves Scripture, prayer, and reflection—bringing peace, clarity, and hope.



BY LINDA EVANS SHEPHERD

from



Christian Art
GIFTS

CONTINUED FROM P. 23

Healing with a Limp

Jamie said it has been beautiful to see people respond to her music. "I'm not singing from a place of victory. I'm still limping along, and facing a lot of my own issues, family traumas, and different things. And it's like singing these songs is healing me, and it seems like it's healing others along the way, which has been so beautiful."

She started writing parts of the album when she was caring for her dad. She feels that the main theme is God can take any mess and make it into something that redeems you and a lot of other people. "I want people to know no matter what they've done, no matter how messy their life is, it's not too late," she said. "Give it all to God and start over. Live the life you were meant to live. I've messed up so many times, and God has always met me there in the mess and presented a way out. He's never left me, even when I've run out of His will and done things my way. I don't want anyone to ever run from God. When they're at their lowest or when they mess everything up, that's the time to run to God."

In her first year, Jamie has released multiple power ballads, collaborated with the likes of Lauren Daigle, Chris Tomlin, Toby Mac, Lecrae, Passion. And there are more collaborations on the way. She just wrapped up touring with Benjamin William Hastings. She tours with Chris Tomlin this Christmas season, her album drops in January, and she will be touring with Phil Wickham and Tauren Wells in the spring.

Bigger Than Me Is Where God Steps In

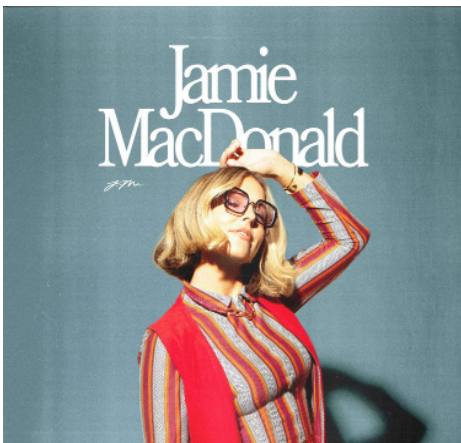
Jamie said she felt like she was going from zero to 500 mph, but it's been really good. Honestly, she does not always feel ready. But she knows if she waits until then she would never be ready. "It's like God's pushing me in, and I feel He's with me. Some of it is crazy, and I'm like 'Are you sure we can do this?' It feels bigger than me; I've never done any of this stuff before," she said. "So, it's fun to lean into Him and have Him meet me there in those moments. This spring I will be doing my first arenas. I'm just thinking about taking a deep breath and wondering what that is going to be like. God is going to meet me there."

"I'm kind of a one day at a time girl. So, I look at what God's called me to do today, and I find the grace and strength for that moment. Then I don't think too much about what I have coming up until I get closer to it. That's kind of a way I protect my nervous system," she said. "I just feel so welcomed and supported in the industry for my first year. It's been really, really beautiful." ❤️

Find out more about Jamie listen to more of her music, check out jamiemacdonaldmusic.com and [@jamiemacdonaldmusic](https://www.instagram.com/jamiemacdonaldmusic) all socials.

“I’m kind of a one day at a time girl. So, I look at what God’s called me to do today, and I find the grace and strength for that moment.”

CLICK ALBUM BELOW TO LISTEN TO ALBUM





CLSIMMONS.COM

The Big Question *with Cynthia L. Simmons*

Q: How can you endure Christmas if you have just lost a loved one?

So many of us understand the ache of losing a loved one, especially during the holidays. My father died the Sunday before Thanksgiving, which plunged me into grief. That December, I had gum surgery and then succumbed to the flu. I battled depression throughout that holiday. The joy around me accentuated my sorrow and the empty place in my heart.

A Mother's Unbearable Sorrow

I'm actually reminded of the story of tragic loss of Elizabeth Prentiss, a diminutive pastor's wife with a sharp wit and knack for writing. Medicine in 1852 couldn't cure her poor health or protect her family. Within ten days, she lost both her three-year-old son, Eddy, and her infant daughter, Bessie. At that time, she was also sick and crawled to the nursery to see Bessie before she died. Her resources gave way, and she sank into depression. Longing to escape her sorrow, Elizabeth wrote about her empty arms and broken body.

In her despair, she cried out to God and prayed to love Him more. Jacob's story from the Old Testament came to mind. She thought about the interactions he had with God. After he left home for the first time, he dreamed of angels ascending and descending a ladder to heaven. The Lord stood above and reassured Jacob of his covenant. Later, when Jacob worried about facing his brother again, he fought with a mysterious man all night and received the strength he needed.

From Despair to Devotion

Elizabeth asked the Lord for an encounter like Jacob's to ease her suffering. One night, as she meditated on the Bible, she penned the poem "More Love to Thee." Afterward, her husband noted her improved stamina and commented that she had "... entered in the fellowship of Christ's suffering." Years later, William

Doane set the words to music, and the song appeared in a hymnal in 1870.

Elizabeth's example demonstrates true wisdom. Our father knows the pain and cares more deeply than we can imagine. The psalmist wrote "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18) Therapists tell us we must acknowledge and feel the sorrow before we can heal. Indeed, our maker possesses the unique ability to restore our hearts.

10 Ways to Ease a Broken Heart

Here are some ideas to assist you in easing the grief you are experiencing.:

- **Pour out your heart to God** – He can handle your emotions.
- **Record your feelings in a journal.** Write by hand, if you can.
- **Honor your loved one** by making a special ornament or cooking a meal the person loved.
- **Share your feelings with a person** who understands your grief.
- **Avoid large crowds.**
- **Enjoy time with a few close friends.**
- **Come up with a new plan** for Christmas Day.
- **Donate** in your loved one's name.
- **Find ways to relax.** Maybe a hot bath with scented candles.
- **Treat yourself gently.** Grieving takes time.

The Lord can heal your heart over time, even though the sadness of losing someone never really goes away. He wants us in those moments just to lean into Him. As He does, He can make us more attuned to the needs of others who suffer. That's truly a deep pain into a purpose-filled miracle as we pour out that same compassionate care we needed to others. ❤️



BY LINDA EVANS SHEPHERD
GOTTOPRAY.COM

Praying Your Way Out of the Holiday Blues

Why is it that heartbreak so often

happens during the holiday season? As the world sings, "O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant," tragedy can suddenly zap away our joy. Loved ones can pass away, and lives can be turned upside down.

A Christmas Collision with Heartbreak

Even though Jesus came to set us free from sin and death, these enemies of humanity still seek to steal our peace and joy. I should know. I am a survivor of a Christmas season marked by unimaginable heartbreak. During a car crash, my baby was thrown onto the freeway, still strapped into her car seat.

Even as I faced this tragedy, it was the Lord who gave me the courage to stop the doctors from pulling my daughter's life support during her year-long coma.

My precious daughter awoke—not to the life we had known, but to a life of severe disability.

“

"We received the miracle we'd hoped for, though it wasn't exactly the one we'd prayed for."

Finding God in the Wreckage

We received the miracle we'd hoped for, though it wasn't exactly the one we'd prayed for. Yet I found blessings as the Lord helped me live into His incredible love and presence. He filled me with peace and joy and my remarkable, joy-filled daughter lived until her 30th birthday.

I miss her deeply. My home now endures a quiet that can sometimes overwhelm me, even during this season of joy.

But God is still with me. He teaches me to overcome as He holds my hand and grants me peace.

Perhaps you, too, have experienced the pain of a holiday tragedy or found yourself grappling with loss during the season of merry. Perhaps you've wondered,

Does God care? Does He even see me?

Today, I visited that place again. A speeding driver swerved into my lane, nearly causing an accident. Though it was a near miss, the screeching brakes brought me right back to the wreckage that surrounded my daughter's car seat three decades ago. The sorrow followed me home, and I spent the afternoon wrestling with God as I searched for my joy.

Scripture and prayer brought it back.

A Prayer for Holiday Heartache

If you need to lift your eyes out of the holiday blues, please pray with me:

Dear Lord,

I take my eyes off my pain and difficulties and turn them back to You. Your Word says in Colossians 3:2, "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (ESV).

Lord, as I look to You, I lay down my sorrow and pain at Your feet, knowing that You understand. I trust You with my heartache, knowing that when I place it in Your care, You will help me find peace. As Isaiah 26:3 says, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you" (ESV).

So, Lord, I ask for Your power to help me let go and rest in You.

You remind me in Isaiah 41:10: "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (ESV).

Lord, grant me Your peace and teach me how to trust You through these difficulties. Thank You for being with me and for returning my peace.

In Jesus' name. Amen. 🙏



7 Ways to Help the Hurting

The Silent Struggle of the Holidays



BY DR. MICHELLE BENGTSON
DRMICHELLEB.COM

It's the most wonderful time of the year—or so we're told.

Streets sparkle with holiday lights, mailboxes overflow with cheerful cards, and homes glow with decorated trees, twinkling ornaments, and perfectly wrapped gifts. Calendars fill with concerts, parties, and tree lightings. Even television and shopping malls join in with festive music, reindeer, and snowmen promising happy endings.

But behind the “Merry Christmas and Happy New Year” greetings, many silently struggle. For some, the holidays bring not joy but despair, loneliness, and depression. If you’ve ever felt a pang of sadness during the holidays, you’re not alone. For many, this season magnifies feelings of loss, isolation, or unmet expectations.

I'm often asked: How can I walk alongside someone who is depressed—especially during the holidays?

Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40 NIV).

When we reach out to those who are hurting, we honor Christ. But sometimes, we need guidance on how to love well. Here are some practical do's and don'ts for supporting someone who is battling depression at Christmastime.

What to Do

1. Be mindful of holiday triggers.

If holiday events intensify their depression, spend time together in other settings. You don't have to drag them to the office Christmas party or expect them to attend a cookie exchange. Instead, suggest going for coffee, taking a walk, or enjoying a simple meal together. Avoid gift exchanges if they bring financial or emotional stress.

2. Include them wisely.

If loneliness worsens their sadness, invite them into your holiday rhythms—but thoughtfully. Including them doesn't have to mean joining your family for every intimate tradition. You might invite them to a Christmas Eve service, a choir concert, or even to drive through a neighborhood with Christmas lights. These activities can foster connection without overwhelming them.

3. Keep expectations low.

Depression drains energy. Even simple tasks—returning a call, preparing a meal, or showing up on time—can feel daunting. Extend grace if they cancel plans or seem withdrawn. Meeting them where they're comfortable and offering practical help (like bringing a meal or helping with errands) speaks volumes.

4. Respect their feelings.

Depression isn't simply "the blues." It's a medical condition, like diabetes or heart disease, and no one chooses to feel this way. Even if you can't relate personally, you can honor their struggle. Words like "I can see this is really hard for you" validate their experience.

5. Redirect conversations when needed.

For some, the holidays heighten grief over loved ones who are gone. While reminiscing may bring comfort to one person, it can deepen sorrow for another. Pay attention to cues. If talking about loss is painful, shift to

lighter topics like hobbies, books, or shared memories that bring joy.

6. Simply be present.

Often, the best gift you can give is yourself. Sit with them in silence, watch a movie together, or run errands side by side. Your presence tells them they're not forgotten. Invite them along, but respect their "no." Your steady availability speaks louder than any lecture could.

7. Pray for and with them.

Before meeting with them, pray—for them, for yourself, and for God's mercy and grace to flow through you. Depression whispers lies about worthlessness and hopelessness. Ask God to help you embody His truth in your words and actions. Offering to pray with them, even briefly, can also remind them they're not alone in their struggle.

What Not to Do

1. Don't judge or criticize.

If you haven't experienced depression, it can be tempting to think, "They just need to snap out of it." But that response only adds shame to their burden.

Instead, follow Jesus' example of compassion.

2. Don't compare.

Avoid comments like, "Well, at least you don't have it as bad as so-and-so." Their pain is real, regardless of someone else's circumstances. Comparison rarely comforts—it usually isolates.


3. Don't minimize.

Phrases like "It's not that bad" or "This too shall pass" might seem

encouraging, but to someone deep in depression, they feel dismissive. A more loving response is, "I'm sorry you're hurting. I'm here with you."

Paul encouraged, "Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15 NLT). This verse reminds us that our role isn't to fix others but to walk alongside them in empathy.

You cannot remove another person's depression. But you can lighten their load by offering presence, patience, and prayer. You can remind them, by your actions, that they matter to God and to you.

And that gift—though not wrapped in ribbons or topped with a shiny bow—may be the most meaningful one you offer this Christmas. 

Dr. Michelle Bengtson is a hope concierge! Whether as a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist, host of the award-winning podcast Your Hope-Filled Perspective with Dr. Michelle Bengtson, or the author of several award-winning books. Her newest release is Sacred Scars: Resting in God's Promise That Your Past Is Not Wasted.



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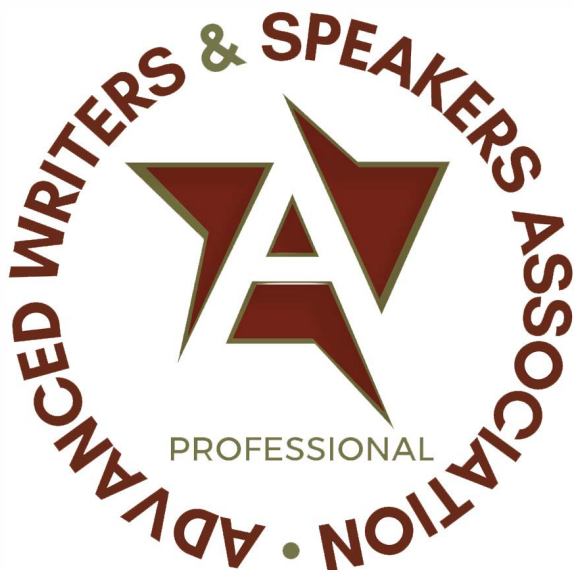
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The Miracle of Online Ministry:

EMBRACING YOUR
CALL AS A
MEDIA MISSIONARY



BY EDIE MELSON
EDIEMELSON.COM

I hear the concern everywhere— complaints about social media and fears about what our time online is doing to us society.

Combine that with the frustration of not knowing what's real and what's not and we have a recipe for throwing up our hands and throwing out all digital connections. Online danger is real. Discouragement is real. Fatigue is real. But if we focus only on the negatives of interacting online, we risk missing one of the most miraculous tools of our time. Because for the first time in all of human history, we can reach the entire world from our homes.

Ministry from Your Kitchen Table

From a kitchen table, a home office, or even our phones while waiting in line, ministry leaders have the capacity to speak into the lives of hurting people nearby and far away. We can encourage a sister in Christ in Nairobi before finishing breakfast. We can pray with a woman in London over Instagram direct messages. We can share Scripture with someone in Kansas City while standing in line at the grocery store. No ministry movement in history has ever had this level of instant, global reach. This connectivity is a powerful tool provided for us by God.

When Miracles Meet the Mess

Yet often, instead of seeing the miracle, we see only the negatives. We whine over the noise, the comparison traps, the trolls, and the overwhelm. But we must remember that miracles show up in the messiest parts of life. The online world is now an open door to reach a world that's hurting. And every ministry leader with a smartphone has the potential to step into the role of a media missionary.

You Don't Need a Stage Anymore

We no longer need a physical stage or microphone to serve God. We don't have to travel. All we have to

do is use what we have. And believe me, the enemy is doing everything he can to keep us from using this tool.

So, how do we connect?

- **Post Scripture**
- **Share what God is doing** in our lives right now
- **Pray for those who are hurting**
- **Offer encouragement** in a comment section where someone feels unseen
- **Write a blog post** or article that travels farther than a plane ever could

This new paradigm requires us to reach out with compassion instead of complaint, courage instead of comparison, and purpose instead of perfection—using the tools God has provided.

God didn't place us in this technological era by accident. Acts 17:26 reminds us that God determines

“the times set for us and the exact places where we should live.” This means He has chosen this moment in history for us. He has trusted ministry leaders—especially women—with an opportunity no one has ever had.

“ **The online world
is now an open door
to reach a world
that's hurting**

Called to the Hard Places

Absolutely, being online is challenging. It's dangerous and there are evil people out there. However, God didn't call us into a ministry consisting of what's safe and familiar. Instead He warned us the world would hate us, we would need to take up our crosses, and suffering would come.

All of this describes the digital missionary field before us. But we have other promises from God as well. He assures us He will be with us, He will give us the words to say, and He will give us strength.

So, the next time we feel tempted to complain about social media, what if we paused and remembered the incredible privilege we've been given? What if we approached our online interactions—not with dread—but with holy expectation? God has called us for such a time as this, let's not allow our fears make us miss the miracle we have been called to. ❤️



From Receipt Chaos *to Christmas Joy*



BY RHONDA RHEA
RHONDARHEA.COM

Do I want the receipt emailed to me?

Printed out? In the bag? Do I even want a receipt at all? What is this crippling pressure to make all these rapid-fire receipt-based decisions at every shopping stop? I'm embarrassed to tell you, I make a different decision every time. All based on nothing whatsoever.

Do I want it printed out?

Should I go the email route?

Do I want it in the sack?

Do I even want it back?

(Tell me, please, if there's a hack.

Tell me or I might just crack.)

Ashes to Ashes

Okay, I might enjoy them for inspiration to come up with weird poems—maybe a song or two. But what do I do with receipts I've saved throughout the season, walking through the winter shopping-lands? Kindling for the firepit?

Later on, we'll perspire. With receipts in the fire.

I do understand sometimes you might actually need those receipts. For tax purposes. Or to get reimbursed. Or in case you might require an alibi (I've seen that on TV).

The Receipt Kept Going and Going and...

An additional point to consider: coupons. I recently bought a hairbrush and a lipgloss. Two things. Pretty sure the receipt was printing through most of whatever Bee Gee's song was playing. About a quarter-mile-long register tape, ya'll. A half inch the sale, all the rest coupons.

Still, when I get a receipt, I almost always stuff it in my purse. Sometimes a pocket. Coupons and all. Then I wait until all the coupons are expired. Then trash it. Along with a big bunch of others that might be

padding and over-padding my pockets and purses. If you scan me at just the right moment, though, you might get at least 35 cents off a nice bottle of store-brand mouthwash.

The Only Receipt That Never Expires

Receipts. Good for noting what we've received. Plus maybe a 35-cent coupon. In the physical. But on the spiritual side—the eternal—there's no way to fully note all we've received in Christ. Isaiah 6:9 prophesied, "For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace" (CSB).

Every day is a day to note what we've miraculously received in our Counselor/God/Father/Prince. Is there any other prince who, in a heart of gracious mercy, could take on the sins of the world? Is there any royal who would be willing to suffer and die to buy freedom for undeserving, mutinous subjects? What a miraculous act of matchless, majestic love.

Prepare Hearts, Not Filing Cabinets


We never need doubt our God-King's love for us. The love-wrapped redemption plan proves it. It's the receipt of all receipts. Jesus—the proof of purchase of all time. What joy! Just as the angel said to the shepherds at the birth of Jesus, "I proclaim to you good news

of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is Messiah, the Lord" Luke 2:10-11 CSB). We're singing it still.

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King!

Let every heart prepare Him room"

So come on, every heart! Make room for the miraculous receipt of the glorious King. 

Prepare hearts. Not pockets or purses.

“ **Every day is a day
to note what we've
miraculously received in our
Counselor/God/Father/Prince.**



Speaking Joyfully



Joy Dunlap
WRITER | SPEAKER

- Experienced Communicator - broadcast, print and podium
- Award-winning Blogger - Speaking Joyfully
- Certified P.O.W.E.R. Speaker - Advanced Writers and Speakers Association (AWSA)
- Worked as VP, Radio Operations - National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)

WHAT'S BEING SAID...

Joy Dunlap's "Speaking Joyfully" messages always encourage and uplift, bringing hope and truth in each one. She takes everyday things we often overlook or count as "that's just the way it is" and turns them into opportunities for her readers to experience more fulfilled lives.

Practical, thoughtful, and always applicable, Joy has a remarkable way of bringing biblical truth to light by sharing the observations she makes in daily life.

I marvel at how (Joy) has taken personal experiences and turned them into teaching moments...and, most importantly kept it interesting and funny, albeit at (her) own expense in some cases.

("Speaking Joyfully") is thoughtful and fun, and always a reminder of our Loving God and His presence in both the simple and the miraculous.



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Meet the Team



meet the publisher

LINDA EVANS SHEPHERD @LINDASHEPHERD is publisher of Leading Hearts magazine. She is also a best-selling author, an in-demand speaker, YouTuber and president of Right to the Heart ministries. She is founder of the Advanced Writers and Speakers Association (AWSA). She lives in Colorado with husband, Paul, and son, Jimmy. Subscribe to her "Prayer Investigator" show on YouTube and visit her at www.lindashepherd.com as well as gottoprayer.com.

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Equipped & Empowered
to do Great things!



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This is YOUR Moment!