

COMMUNITY 50+ NEWSLETTER



February Vol. 22 Issue 1

A Message from Amy



“Set a fire down in my soul that I can’t contain, that I can’t control”. This worship chorus has been running through my mind of late and has become a prayer and longing of my heart.

That is what I want for us this year and all the days to come. A fire for Jesus down in our souls that we can’t contain, and we can’t control! I googled that sentence looking for a verse that might go with it, the one that stood out was from The Passion Translation:

Romans 12:11 Be enthusiastic to serve the Lord, keeping your passion toward him boiling hot! Radiate with the glow of the Holy Spirit and let him fill you with excitement as you serve him. ¹² Let this hope burst forth within you, releasing a continual joy. Don’t give up in a time of trouble,^[a] but commune with God at all times.

Don’t you love it when you see that passion and excitement for God in someone and they radiate the glow of His Holy Spirit? Do you want to be that person...the one whose hope bursts forth from the releasing of continual joy? If so, don’t give up or grow weary, keep the conversation with God going! Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what you may need to lay down or what you may need to receive from Him. He is faithful to forgive us the things we need to lay down and faithful to encourage and excite us about the things He desires for us to pick up, or receive from Him. Our world may be far from perfect; however, Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith is not!

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV

I am clinging to the hope that we are going to see a fresh move of God in our midst this year and I pray that you look forward in 2022 with hope, joy inexpressible, and fire down in your soul!

With Grace & Hope Always!
Amy

Happenings with the Community 50+

From Sally Klimko

We are meant to live in community, to share life's ups and downs and learn from each other as we journey on. Most recently it has been so exciting to see each other face to face. Journey with us. Here are some "journeys" from the last newsletter and some to come.

October 11th - Community 50+ hosted an enjoyable lunch with missions Pastor Praveen and his wife Veena. We enjoyed homemade soups, salad, and desserts and time together listening to Pastor and his wife discuss the need for service in the mission field and the many ways WEAG supports missions around the world.

November 11th - We honored our Veterans with dinner, patriotic music led by Pastor Bob, and the Royal Rangers color guard. Our guest speakers were Jerome Wade, and his wife, Angie. Jerome served 34 years full-time and part-time in both the Air Force and National Guard and retired from the VA Air National Guard. Angie dedicated her life's work in a civilian position supporting active military families. They were the perfect couple to help us pay tribute to the men and women of WEAG for their military service.

December 16th - "Christmas Around the World" was the holiday theme for our 2021 Christmas Party. From Australian mini pavlovas, Polish haluski, Russian borscht, UK's Scottish shortbread, Africa's milk tarts and so many more, there was no shortage of samplings of holiday treats from around the world. Appetizers were followed by a turkey and ham dinner. The highlight of the evening was fun-filled karaoke music where all could participate and holiday humor led by Lisa and John Kipley!

January 26th – We were honored to have Pastor Dave back with us for a Zoom and Learn. "From Weary to Excited." The battle is real, and we might still feel weary. Dave presented an engaging conversation with our 50+ friends.



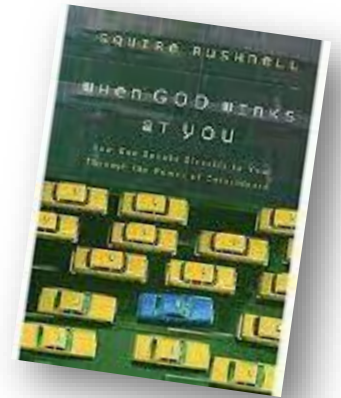
Mark your calendar for our next Community 50+ luncheon on **March 17th**. Look for an email from Amy with details.

March 17, 2022 - Luncheon – Details to follow but rumor is that Bob will be leading us in some singing. 😊

Words of Encouragement by Betty Anderson

What is a Godwink?

I recently read an inspiring book “*When God Winks at You; How God speaks directly to you through the Power of Coincidence.*” This book was written in 2006, and a few Hallmark movies have been based on Godwink stories. Every time you receive what some call a coincidence or an answered prayer, it's a direct and personal message of reassurance from God to you—that's a *Godwink!* It's God's way of giving you *His* small, silent communication.



Here is a brief summary of one of the stories in the book.

Mac and Gerry were out on a boat fishing in a nearby lake when an unexpected storm arose quickly and overturned their boat. They were in the water all day holding onto one of the paddles that they were able to grab before the boat sank. Gerry was not doing well and he was losing hope of being rescued. Mac tried to keep his spirits up but inside he felt that they would die as well. Mac was thinking about God and what he would say to him for his wicked lifestyle, and why he continued to reject God for salvation. He began to pray and ask God for a second chance.

Not too much longer after he prayed, he saw a boat in the distance coming toward them. They realized they would be rescued, and as the boat got closer to them, Mac could see the name on the side of the rescue boat...*Second Chance!* They would get another chance to live another day, and Mac would have another chance to say 'Yes' to God!

As we go into this new year, let's be aware of those moments in our lives when God gives us a nod to let us know that He's thinking about us. Whether it's answered prayer or a *Godwink*, write it down and you'll have a record of how God has encouraged you and helped build your faith in 2022.

“I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future.”

Jeremiah 29:11



God Stories

By Ed and Rhoda Perozzi

Jade's SARS-CoV-1 Story

The first year we were in China, Jade was a student in both Ed's and my classes. She shared with me several personal details about her recent family history including the recent death of her mother, her baby's birth shortly later, and how she had to keep the baby secret from the university while her parents-in-law kept the baby in a nearby apartment so she could nurse him. But the grandparents had to leave after the first semester taking her precious son with them three days away by train and bus. So, the second semester, she often sobbed to me in despair about having to live at such a great distance from her baby.

One morning that second semester the university told us that we needed to leave Beijing in less than 24 hours because what they now call SARS-CoV-1 (the original COVID) was spreading in Beijing. However, we had to arrange with all our students to continue to teach them via the internet. We spent that entire day calling and emailing students to try to arrange the details. By evening we were exhausted, but still had to pack without knowing how long we would be gone.

At about 7, our phone rang, and I answered to a sobbing voice. Eventually, I heard the word "baby" and realized that it must be Jade. The rule was that the students could not go home if they lived outside Beijing, which meant that Jade could not return to her baby. She had gone to the Graduate Student office and cried all day until the head of the office told her very cruelly that she could go home but that she could kill her baby and her entire family by doing so. She wanted me to assure her that she would not kill her baby if she went home. I desperately wanted to tell her of a God Who cares. Of a God Who understands her longing for her son because He gave up His Son for us. Of a God Who knows the future and could guide her about going home. So, I told her I would try to get over to campus to see her (the gates were locked and guarded). I was able to get in and shared these things with her while sitting in the dark on the administration building steps. She said she wanted to believe in God, but that she had prayed that if there was a God, He would help her mother when her mother was dying of cancer a few months earlier. But her mother died. So, I offered to pray for her based on my faith instead of hers. I prayed for peace and wisdom for her and for safety for her, her family, and her classmates. When I finished, she said that she would believe because I believed and then asked, "Do you think God would understand Chinese?" She was very skeptical that He would until I pointed out that Jesus never spoke English when He was on Earth. She was skeptical of that as well until I pointed out where He was from. So, she asked me what she should pray about, and we talked about sin, repentance, faith, and Lordship, and she prayed at length in Chinese. Afterwards she said that she would believe in Him because she believed. She then asked if she could believe with her heart, but not her mouth for fear of losing her opportunities in life. She told me that her entire family were Party members and that she would not be able to raise her son to be a Christian because then he could never be successful. I told her that from now on Jesus would be her boss, so He should tell her when to speak and when to be silent. At the end of the conversation, we talked about the difference between being a Christian and being a Buddhist and I said, "The

difference between all religions and being a true Christian is that all religions are based on people trying to get God to love us by being good, but Christianity is based on God's loving us because He is good." After trying several times to tell me something in Chinese that I did not understand, she exclaimed loudly, "I don't know how to say it in English, but that is the most important thing - that God loves us because He is good, not because we are good!!!"

When we arrived back in August, I asked a student, Ray, from the same class who was a believer to contact her and give her a Bible and find out if she had actually gone home during the long SARS break. A few days later, he told me, "You have to talk to Jade!" So, we threw a party (something we did a lot, but this one was especially so we could have an excuse to invite Jade over). We invited about 15-20 students, none of whom other than Jade and Ray were Christians, as far as we knew. Just before the party started, Jade called to say she would be late because she was performing an experiment that wasn't finished. So, we were all sitting down packed into our tiny living room eating dinner when she arrived. Imagine my (and everyone else's) astonishment when Jade walked in the door and proclaimed loudly to the entire group, "Guess what!?! I'm a Christian!" I couldn't believe it! I would never have told her to publicly proclaim her faith in a situation where she did not know most of the people. Then she proceeded to tell the following story instead of eating:

Soon after she got home, her baby got sick. He was only a little sick and she was not worried about him, but in China people are often put into local hospitals whenever they get even a cold to try to stop the contagion from spreading. So, he was in overnight and she was staying with him. That same night another mother was told that her baby was going to die that night. The doctors told her that they had done everything they could possibly do for him, but nothing was working, and he would die before morning. Of course, the mother was crying and desperate, so Jade said, "I felt very sad for her and wished I could do something to help her. Suddenly, I thought, 'I am a Christian! I can pray for her baby!' So, I did. The next morning the doctors said that they did not know what had happened, but the baby was completely healed and could go home immediately." "So," Jade continued, "I went to that mother and said, 'I'm a CHRISTIAN (I wish I could convey in writing the feeling in her voice as she told that). I prayed for your baby and God healed him!'"

Through this, the Lord showed that the same Holy Spirit who indwells me indwells the most ignorant of believers. Jade had never held, let alone read the Bible. She was not yet baptized. She had only a tiny amount of knowledge. But it was more than sufficient for the Lord to change a fearful secret Christian into a bold witness for His name.

If you think you can't accomplish anything for Christ during this pandemic, remember Jade!



Chinese New Year

From Jane Ching



Celebrations of the Chinese New Year traditions last for 16 days, starting from Chinese New Year's Eve to Lantern Festival. In 2022, that is from January 31st to Feb. 15th. 2022 represents the Year of the Tiger, an animal that symbolizes strength, power, and prosperity in the Chinese zodiac.



Suggestions for a Healthy Life

From Gwen Davenport

ARE YOU READY? GET PREPARED!

You ask, what am I talking about? I am talking about moving from social isolation and getting past these winter months. I love to see my grandchild and out of state family members. Maybe it is time to take a much-needed vacation and I know we all are looking forward to the return to normalcy for church services, meetings, and gatherings. I don't want Publix to be my favorite place for an outing to see people. Make a plan to engage with people.

I am not angry. I am still trying to adjust my lifestyle with the new norm brought to us by the pandemic.

Remember, we still need to be physically fit. With the winter months upon us, we cannot do as many outdoor activities but a short walk around your neighborhood allows you to get some fresh air and a change in your scenery. Always carry your cell phone with you when you are out and about. You never know when it will come in handy. You can also utilize Zoom for exercise classes, dance, Zumba, or yoga. I have learned how to get 10,000 steps within my house. You can too.

Keep your mind alert and mentally strong. Do something besides watching the news, which probably will depress you more. Read books, take online classes, do crossword puzzles, or do jigsaw puzzles.

You could even teach an online class! Have an indoor picnic and/or an indoor date. The list is endless. Take up sewing, knitting, crocheting, painting pictures, or journaling. Keep connected with family and friends. We all need human contact, so make your plan to accomplish this.

This season too shall pass. Get ready and enjoy life now. Don't wait for the future. Join me in preparing for the change. Blessings to all!



Yum Yum

From Gina Dalton

Gina's Chicken and Dumplings

- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 stick butter
- 1 lb chicken breast cut in strips
- ½ cup diced onion
- 2 10 oz cans cream of chicken soup
- 1 can refrigerated biscuits



I use a liner for the crockpot or just spray it with cooking spray. Place all ingredients in crockpot except for the biscuits. Cook on high 3-4 hours. Cut each biscuit in eight pieces. Add to crock pot and cook for an additional 30 minutes

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Enjoy!



Newsletter contributors:

Amy Mahan, Barbara Cameron, Sally Klimko, Jane Ching, Gina Dalton, Rhoda and Ed Perozzi, Betty Anderson, Gwen Davenport