

This issue of the newsletter is lovingly dedicated in memory of the Bohall babies.



Empty Arms Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 6

May 2005

Coming Soon:

- SUMMER!!



Inside this issue:

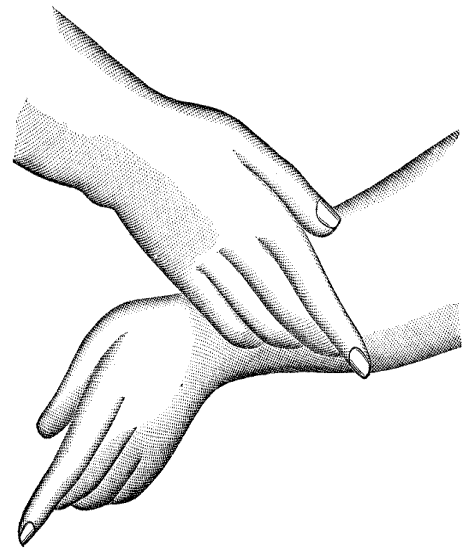
Ministry Update	1
New Addition to Care Baskets	1
Prayer Needs	2
Donation Update	2
A Bittersweet Mother's Day	3
Past Addresses	3
Volunteer Spotlight—Kara Bohall	4

Ministry Update

It's been another busy month for the Empty Arms Ministry. We collected donations for Mother's Day and had a wonderful response. See "Donation Update" on the next page for more details.

Our "Chips and Dip Care Basket Fellowship" is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10th from 6:30-8:00. We will be making quite a bit more baskets than our meeting in January. This not only is a testament that this ministry is very much needed, but that we have also been blessed with the financial resources to continue this special outreach. We have enough resources to assemble about 40 baskets. There's lots to do so please try to come. It will be fun!

In April, five care baskets were delivered for the following losses: one miscarriage at 15 weeks gestation, two stillbirths and two infant deaths. Since November, a total of 24 baskets have been delivered to grieving fami-

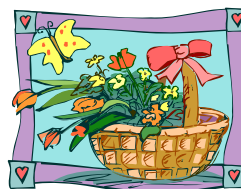


lies in the Lufkin and surrounding areas.

In addition to the precious Bohall babies, this issue of the newsletter is also dedicated in honor of all Moms who never held their babies in their arms, but hold them forever in their hearts. Please don't forget them this Mother's Day.

New Addition to Care Baskets

There will be a new addition to the care baskets that will be assembled on the 10th. Dana Akers generously donated small stuffed animals with special scriptures or words of encouragement attached.



Heaven in February. This is part of Dawson's legacy and included with the stuffed animal is a touching letter from Dana to the parents sharing how God has revealed Himself to them during their journey with Dawson.

As you may recall, Dana and Dan are the parents of sweet Dawson, who returned to

Thank you Dana!

Prayer Needs

Please remember these families in prayer:

- Paige (Rush) Wolf will deliver by C-section on May 5th. Their baby boy has been diagnosed with Brittle Bone.
- The Kittingers (live out-of-state) who lost their baby boy at 15 weeks gestation.
- A local mom whose baby was stillborn at 33 weeks.
- Jacob Runnels, infant son of Richard and Davelyn Runnels, remains at Texas Children's Hospital with complications resulting from lack of oxygen at birth.
- Christy, friend of Sherri Flynt, whose baby has been diagnosed with chromosome abnormalities. She is due in July and doctors are unsure of what to expect.
- A friend of Sabrina Lillard who suffered an early miscarriage.
- The Rothenbergers of Lufkin, who are grieving the loss of their infant who was stillborn.
- Chris and Angi Rodriguez, who are grieving the loss of their baby boy, Marcus. Marcus died on April 30th as a result of Trisomy 13.

*He will yet fill
your mouth with
laughter
and your lips
with shouts of
joy.*
Job 8:21

Book Review—"Tear Soup"

Recently, a dear friend of mine gave me this wonderful book in memory of Gracie for inclusion in the church library. The author, Pat Schwiebert, is a registered nurse who has worked in the area of bereavement for 25 years. She has authored other books dealing with grief as well.

It is an affirming, sweet book written for adults and children alike and helps to illustrate how grief is much like soup making — ingredients

*"To make matters worse, grief
always takes longer to cook than
anyone wants it to."*

and cooking times may vary. The back of the book also contains helpful "cooking tips" and bereavement resources.

One of my favorite quotes describes the character, Grandy's experience when different friends respond to her loss. "Grandy found that most people can tolerate only a cup of someone else's tear soup. The giant bowl, where Grandy could repeatedly share her sadness in great detail, was left for a few willing friends."

Donation Update

Wow! The donations we received for Mother's Day was incredible. The total amount given was \$ 600! We also had a total of 21 donors. This will be tremendous help to the ministry.

Along with the acknowledgements, we also

included our brochure to help explain what we're all about to those who may be unfamiliar. This will hopefully help get the word out to more people outside of our church walls.

Thanks to all of you who helped man the tables. We couldn't do it without you.

A Bittersweet Mother's Day

Last Mother's Day was one I will never forget. It will forever be etched in my mind as one of the sweetest Mother's Days I'll ever experience. For I had the privilege of celebrating it with both of my children. Joseph was six and Gracie was less than 3 weeks old. Joseph was so excited to bring me breakfast in bed (it was funny because I don't recall sleeping in my bed too much at the time!)

The menu consisted of cereal and a pop tart with orange juice. Yummy! It was the best breakfast ever! Joseph and Jonny showered me with wonderful gifts, one of which is my treasured charm necklace consisting of a dolphin and a ladybug, two things that will always remind me of my children.

It was a glorious feeling having my newborn in our home to nurture and to love for Mother's Day. I do believe one of Gracie's missions in life was to soak up as much love as she possibly could in 6 1/2 weeks. She certainly succeeded!

Looking back, I realize it was God's gift to me. He knew how difficult subsequent Mother's Days would be, but just having this memory eases the pain a bit. This Mother's Day will be different, but celebrate I will!

If you're a Mom that's blessed to have healthy children—rejoice and be thankful! It is a gift that we all take for granted.

If you're a Mom who's lost a child but has surviving children—celebrate! They need you to.

If you're a Mom who's lost your only child, I pray for God's comfort and peace. This day will be doubly difficult.

If you're a woman who longs to be a Mom but God hasn't answered that prayer yet, I pray that He will fill that longing in your heart in a way that only He can.

If you'd rather just stay in bed until this day has passed, know that better days are ahead. Happy Mother's Day!

Past Addresses

Mother's Day is a difficult time for Moms who have said an early goodbye to their precious ones. Please take some time to send these Moms a special note:

Chrystal Wheeler, P.O. Box 443, Etoile, 75944—daughter, Emalee Grace

Lisa Rothenberger, 904 Brenda, Lufkin, 75901— son, Connor

Casey Baker, 135 Charles Street, Crockett, 75835—son,

Chase

Bridgette Thornburgh, 5399 Hwy. 21 West, San Augustine, 75972—daughter, Kami.

Dana Akers, 1133 Berry Lane, Georgetown, 78626—son, Dawson.

Tanya Kittinger, 165 Diamond Pointe Dr., Maumelle, AR 72113

Angi Rodriguez, 6812 N. Lakewoods, Georgetown, 78628—son, Marcus.

Book Reviewers Needed

If you are an avid reader, we have a great opportunity for you! As part of the newsletter, we'd like to add a short book review of books that may be helpful to those who have experienced the loss of a child.

Our library is stocked with the books that we recently purchased and we'd love to hear what you think about them—OR—submit a review about a

book that you feel may have helped you during a difficult time. The review must be brief due to space limits (see "Tear Soup") but will give us a glimpse of the overall topic of the book and what you thought of it.

So, if you enjoy reading (Sue Jones and Susie Jones), think about being a book reviewer!

THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF THE BOHALL BABIES.

Empty Arms Ministry
Denman Avenue Baptist Church
1807 E. Denman Avenue
Lufkin, TX 75901

Charles M. Roberts, Pastor
Phone: (936) 634-6691
Jill Gerland, Coordinator
Phone: (936) 634-3175

Issues of this newsletter will be distributed monthly. If you would like to submit an article or any information to be included in the newsletter, please contact Jill Gerland or Kelli Slaga. Each issue will be dedicated in memory of one of our precious babies.

*Editor: Jill Gerland
Co-editor: Kelli Slaga*

The Empty Arms Ministry of Denman Avenue Baptist Church was created in October 2004 to reach out to those who have suffered the loss of a child through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death.

Ministry opportunities include delivering care baskets, grief partnering by sharing experiences and information with someone who is beginning their grief journey, praying and offering support through a variety of ways to the ministry. It is our prayer that we will be a valuable, Christian resource for those who are hurting as a result of losing their child.

“God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort!”

Matthew 5:4 (CEV)



SPOTLIGHT ON...

“I was born in Lufkin to Karol and Sandra Green who joined DABC in 1963 and accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior when I was 7. My family moved to Montrose, Colorado when I was 15, which is where I met my husband, Troy. We were married in 1980 and will be celebrating our 25th anniversary this summer. We moved back to Lufkin in 1994 from Durango, CO. and joined DABC shortly after.

Troy and I have two sons; Kalob is 20 and Brendon is 3. I keep the books for our business, Texaco Xpress Lube. Troy and I enjoy working together.

I love working in graphic design, growing columbines and finishing our house. I worked for several years in different graphics studios and still free lance when I have the time. I also enjoy hiking in the mountains and cross country skiing. I especially enjoy spending time with my family. They are my joy.

Over the years I have served in various ministries in our church and community. These include Lamplighters, VBS and Kool Kids at DABC, as well as Gloria Russell Children’s Ministries, Salvation Army and KSWP/KAVX Christian Radio. Troy and I are also members of Gideons and have served as officers in both Colorado and Texas.

Volunteer Spotlight: Kara Bohall

I became part of this ministry for several reasons. The first was to reach out to other women and their families that have experienced a loss similar to that of my family. I know there is a need for support, guidance and comfort in those times. I also know that the loss of a child affects the entire family and husbands, children and grandparents grieve too. Another reason was for my own healing and the need to be with others that understand. I admire the strength and resolve of the women of this ministry that have been through so much more than I. They are a great encouragement and testimony to God’s love and healing power.

Troy and I have lost 6 babies; 5 in a period of 3 years. All were very early losses, one was ectopic. I felt like they had been snatched away before I’d even chosen names for them. Those 3 years are kind of a blur to me now. I am afraid I did not react with the strength of those I so admire. I withdrew and hid away, not wanting to talk about it. I know now, that wasn’t a healthy way to deal with it. Through it all, God never left my side. He truly was and is my “Rock and Fortress”. I want others to know that they don’t have to hide away, like I did, and that God does heal and bless.”