

This issue of the newsletter is lovingly dedicated in memory of Jeremy Harty and Jared May.



Empty Arms Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 2

January/February 2006

Coming Soon:

- Care Basket Meeting



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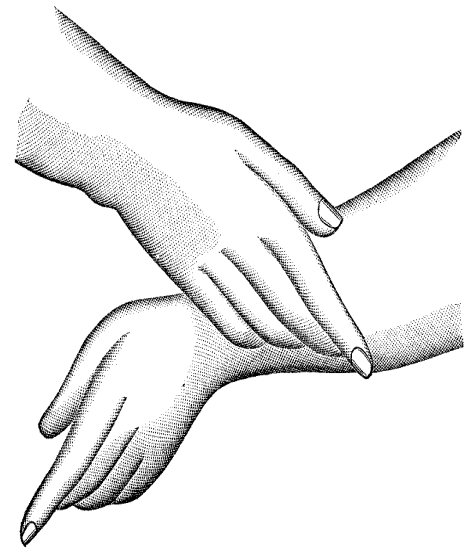
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Ministry Update

Happy New Year! Surely it can't be 2006. It seems like yesterday we were preparing for Y2K. It has been said that the older one gets, the quicker time flies. I believe this to be true, but hopefully we use our time more wisely as a trade-off. Hmmm...

My resolution that I will undoubtedly break this year is to simply be more conscious of the moment instead of always looking ahead. I'm constantly thinking of what needs to be done instead of just enjoying what I'm doing! This may be my toughest resolution yet, but God has convicted me about this and with His help, all is not lost.

These past months have been busy for the ministry. In addition to hosting the Candlelight Memorial Service, ten care baskets have been delivered since October. Five of these baskets were delivered in six days. It is heartbreaking to hear of so many losses in such a short amount of time. These families need prayer, as well as the medical



staff who had the privilege of caring for them. The losses are included in the "Prayer Needs" section on page 2.

This issue of the newsletter focuses on grandparents and the complicated grief they face after losing their precious grandchild. Many times, they are quite forgotten, but their pain is doubly difficult to bear.

Cookie Swap Care Basket Meeting

We're low on care baskets and it's time to put together more! The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, February 7th at 6:30** in the F.L.C.

Bring a batch of your favorite cookies along with the recipe (cards will be provided), so everyone can get a sample of all the delicious treats.

We have enough supplies to assemble 25 care baskets, so there's lots of work to do! At this time, no childcare will be provided, so please make arrangements for your little ones if possible.

Hope to see you there!

Prayer Needs

Please remember these families in prayer:

- Brett Briley, son of Clint and Michelle, has a hemangioma which could hinder his breathing if it continues to grow.
- Amanda Graham of Lovelady, whose baby girl was stillborn.
- The Lopez family lost their 3 month old baby girl.
- The Beauchamp family, lost their 2 month old son, Blaine as a result of SIDS.
- Amy and Keith Mitchell of Houston lost their second baby who was stillborn.
- A local family whose baby girl was stillborn.
- Ashley Parks, whose baby girl was stillborn as a result of prematurity.
- Kevin and Megan Workman, 2825 N. 47th #3, Lincoln, NE 68504, who are suffering the loss of their baby.
- Several other local families who are mourning the losses of their precious ones. We do not know their names, but God does!



**THE PRAYER
OF THE
RIGHTEOUS
IS POWERFUL
AND
EFFECTIVE.**

J A M E S 5 : 1 6

“With Hope”



This is not at all how we thought it was supposed to be. We had so many plans for you. We had so many dreams. And now you've gone away. And left us with the memories of your smile. And nothing we can say, and nothing we can do can take away the pain. The pain of losing you, but...

We can cry with hope. We can say goodbye with hope. 'Cause we know our goodbye is not the end, oh no. And we can grieve with hope. 'Cause we believe with hope. (There's a place by God's grace.) There's a place where we'll see your face again. We'll see your face again.

by Steven Curtis Chapman

And never have I known anything so hard to understand. And never have I questioned more the wisdom of God's plan. But through the cloud of tears, I see the Father's smile and say well done. And I imagine you where you wanted most to be. Seeing all your dreams come true. 'Cause now you're home. And now you're free, and...

We have this hope as an anchor. "Cause we believe that everything God promised us is true, so...

We wait with hope. And we ache with hope. We hold on with hope. We let go with hope.

Empty Arms a Model

As a result of the Empty Arms Ministry and God's calling, two other churches have created similar ministries, using ours as a model. Dana Akers and Cindy Hoskins of Georgetown Church of the Nazarene, have begun a grief ministry called "Healing with Hope" for families who have experienced the loss of a child. They currently have about 20 volunteers and have already delivered several care baskets in the Austin area.

Judy Steagall of First Baptist Church in Center, found a brochure at our church while attending a Calvary Boys concert and promptly called inquiring about details on how to start a similar ministry through her church. She indicated the lack of resources in her area and was excited that a ministry exists for such a special need. Please pray for these special ladies as they heed God's calling for such a unique ministry.

A Grandmother's Tribute



by Nell Harty

Jeremy Shea was born on the 28th day of June to my daughter, Faith. He was a beautiful little boy with long blonde hair and blue, piercing eyes. He was a dainty baby, but very active and on schedule with all the things babies do and way ahead in others. For instance, he held his bottle with both hands when he was only four months old and after sleeping all night, he would play and entertain himself for several minutes before he would think about needing anything. He was nearly always happy, even woke up from naps smiling and looking around to see what was going on. He was so good; I used to wonder if he was for real, even thought he might be an angel. But I was there at the hospital when he was born and I know that angels aren't born; they are created.

Then there was the morning the call came that Jeremy was not breathing, and Faith was on the way to the hospital. My husband and I got there as soon as we could and found out they had met the ambulance, but it was too late and the beautiful baby boy with the happy smiling face was gone. My Mother and Daddy were there and Daddy had tried to breathe life into this precious child to no avail.

Life was a blur for awhile and after the autopsy was completed, we heard the horrible results: Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, also known as SIDS. The date was December 17th, 1981, so just 11 days short of being 6 months old, this precious, beautiful, happy baby was carried straight to the waiting arms of Jesus in Heaven. And, oh, how we missed him!

Our vivid memories and many pictures would become so important and even 24 years later, I can still see him in my mind backing into a corner in his walker, smiling at strangers on the street, or at the mall, playing in the playpen and going to sleep in his swing.

I cannot imagine how handsome Jeremy would be today as a twenty-four year old young man, but I'm content with my memories of that special little baby boy with the blonde hair and blue eyes and happy face. I do hope and pray that God lets me keep that memory a long time. I feel I was privileged to be Jeremy's grandmother or whatever he would have chosen to call me.

Gone From My Sight

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength. I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.

Then someone at my side says, "There, she is gone!"

Gone where?



Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in mast and spar as she was when she left my side and she is just as able to bear her load of living freight to her destined port.

Her diminished size is in me, not in her. And just at that moment when someone at my side says, "There, she is gone!" there are eyes watching her coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"—and that is dying.

Anonymous

Resources for Grandparents

A great internet resource specifically dealing with grandparent grief can be found at: www.angels4ever.com. From the home page, click on "Grandparents of Angels" then "Helpful Links". These will take you straight to the sites.

Some of the links are:

SIDS Network
Texas Moms of Tiny Angels
MEND Newsletter
M.I.S.S.
A.A.R.P.

Also, don't forget that our church library has many books dealing with this topic as well. Check them out!

THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF JEREMY HARTY AND JARED MAY.

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 bi-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...



Nell Harty is a firecracker of a lady who exudes energy and fun! She and her husband Elza have been members of DABC since 2001 and this past June they celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary. They have three children and three step-grandchildren. She is a faithful church-goer who is

very active in her Sunday School class, as well as Goldenagers fellowships and Joy Sessions.

Mrs. Harty became involved with Empty Arms because she has two grandbabies in Heaven. Her daughter Faith had two baby boys who died. Jeremy, who is featured in this issue, died from SIDS at 6 months old and Jared lived to be a little over 3 years of age. “They would be 24 and 21 years of age now, but I know how bad it hurts to lose a grand-

Volunteer Spotlight: Nell Harty

child. The Lord gives you precious memories and the strength and ability to go on with your life,” says Mrs. Harty.

In addition to volunteering with Empty Arms, Mrs. Harty uses her talents to help families who have faced the loss of an infant in a very special way. She sews premature baby clothes and delivers them to the Houston hospitals. She also volunteers at Memorial Hospital two days a week. I personally benefited from Mrs. Harty’s talents when she graciously provided our tiny Gracie some much needed preemie clothing. We were so appreciative of her concern and willingness to help.

Her favorite verse is found in Romans 12:18. “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” Mrs. Harty certainly reflects peace given all that she has faced, still allowing the love of God to shine through. We are glad she is a part of this ministry.