

This issue of the newsletter is lovingly dedicated in precious memory of Baby Nolaba.



Empty Arms Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 6

November/December 2006

Coming Soon:

- Merry Christmas!
- Avery Grace Kargel Memorial Golf Tournament
- Care Basket Assembly



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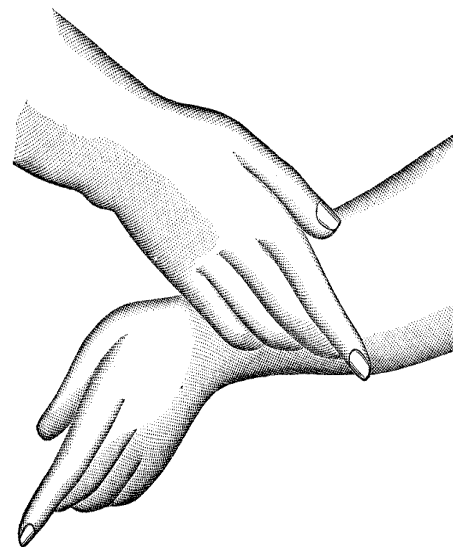
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Ministry Update

By the time you receive this newsletter, you've probably had your fill of turkey and dressing and all of those yummy holiday desserts. 'Tis the holiday season with many things competing for our time and attention. While activities are great, be careful to avoid being too busy to truly celebrate the true meaning of the Christmas season. I hope that whatever your circumstances, you are able to see the blessings God has for you.

This issue includes a variety of subjects relevant to grieving during the holidays. As we were trimming our Christmas tree over the Thanksgiving weekend, many tears were shed. It's been 2 1/2 years since Gracie's passing, but the memories of her presence and the awareness of her absence are still very fresh. Thankfully, the pain is not as raw as it was in the beginning and God has been so good to remind us of where she is—in His loving arms.

After a very busy couple of months,



there has been a bit of a respite for the Empty Arms Ministry. Unfortunately, it will be short lived, but we are prepared. Since the last newsletter, four care baskets were delivered. Two were the result of premature deliveries and two were for stillbirths. One miscarriage packet was delivered as well. Please pray specifically for God's comfort during this holiday season.

Care Basket Meeting after Holidays

Due to the lower volume of care baskets distributed these past two months, our supply is sufficient to sustain us through the Christmas holidays. Our next meeting will likely be in mid-January. Postcards will be sent out with the specific date and time, and as always, there will be food!

First Baptist Church, Diboll, as well as several individuals, have generously donated a number of baskets for our use. We can always use more. We are also in need of small lotions, candles, etc. to include in the care baskets.

Enjoy the holidays!

Prayer Needs

Please remember these families in prayer:

- Dayna (Owens) Zyblot suffered an early miscarriage.
- The Thomas family lost one twin at 33 weeks gestation. The other twin was taken to Shreveport, and was stable (last report was shortly after delivery.) The mom had to undergo an emergency hysterectomy due to complications from the births.
- The Nolaba family who lost their baby when the mother delivered prematurely while en route to the hospital.
- The Benton family whose baby boy was stillborn at 30 weeks due to a cord accident.

- The Tamez family whose son, David, was born and died on November 18th.
- The Akers family who have undergone 3 unsuccessful in-vitro procedures. Please pray for God's peace and guidance as they decide what path to take in order to have a family.



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

J A M E S 5 : 1 6

Avery Grace Kargel Memorial Golf Tournament

The 1st Annual Avery Grace Kargel Memorial Golf Tournament is just around the corner! It will be held this Friday, December 1st at the Southwyck Golf Club in Pearland. The response has been great (100 players signed up) and the Empty Arms Ministry is honored to have been chosen as the beneficiary of the proceeds. This tournament is a tribute to the daughter of Heather and

Jason Kargel. (Heather is the daughter of Derald and Alicia Douglas).

Avery was born into Heaven on July 13, 2006. The day of the tournament would have been her due date. It's a wonderful way to remember their daughter and help other hurting families. Please pray for good golfing weather! An update on the tournament will be in the next newsletter.

Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support, Inc.



In the next several newsletters, we will highlight some organizations that deal specifically with pregnancy and infant loss. Contact information is included in our care baskets as well.

Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support, also known as Share, has been in existence since 1977. Their mission is to serve those whose lives are touched by the tragic death of a baby through early pregnancy loss, stillbirth, or in the

first few months of life.

Their website is: www.nationalshareoffice.org. A wealth of information can be found at this site including: newsletters, topics on loss and grief, rights of parents, funeral and memorial ideas, creating memories, downloads of pamphlets, etc. They also have links to other organizations relevant to early loss. This is a fantastic site to refer to grieving families because the information is endless. Take a look for yourself.

Never Say “Never”

Towards the end of this summer, Jonny and I were told some frightfully wonderful news. Lab results revealed that we were expecting! I wish I could say that we were ecstatic, because we should've been. Unfortunately, our past experiences led us to come to the conclusion that this pregnancy would more than likely end quickly. After losing Gracie, our desire to have another child remained. We took a leap of faith and tried again, only to realize that after 4 miscarriages, our hopes were crushed.

I also wish I could say that I stood firm in my conviction that we would have another child. The truth is, I thought it was the most unlikely thing to happen at that point. The sooner I accepted this fact, the better off I'd be. Time to move on. Then...the news. Now I'm 23 weeks pregnant, from all appearances the baby is thriving, and we found out we're having another girl! Unbelievable!

There are moments of course, when I wonder why Gracie's life was so short and all of the other pregnancies ended so quickly, while this child appears to be OK. I can never be able to comprehend why God chooses to take us down certain paths. I still don't know what He has in store for this little one, or even for me, but I know through faith that **He Is** and that is enough.

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely
happy with Him Forever in the next. Amen. -- Reinhold Niebuhr

Wish You Were Here



I wanted to tell you how closely I've kept the memories of you in my heart. And all of the lifetimes that we've had to share, live even though we're apart. But don't cry for me 'cause I'm finally free...

To run with the angels on streets made of gold.
To listen to stories of saints new and old. To
worship our Maker that's where I'll be when you
finally find me.

Lyrics by Mark Harris

No don't you be weary cause waiting for you are wonders that you've never known. Just hold on to Jesus, reach out for His hands and one day they'll welcome you home. And that's when you'll be finally free. Finally free.

And all of the dreams that you treasure will soon come together. And that's when your sorrow will end tomorrow and you will rise again. I wish you were here. I wish you were here.

Help for the Holidays



As difficult as holidays can be for those who have lost a child, there are ways to celebrate while remembering the precious life that is missing during the festivities. Here are a few suggestions:

- Pray specifically that God surround you with peace and comfort.
- Hang a stocking with your child's name.

- Decorate a small Christmas tree with special ornaments. Choose an ornament each year to add to the tree. Encourage siblings to do the same.
- Donate toys that you would've purchased for your child at that age for a child in need.
- Visit the cemetery and release a balloon or light a candle in memory of your child.

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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 at (936) 634-3175. Each issue will be dedicated in memory of one of our precious babies.

Editor: Jill Gerland

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...

Jere' Johnson is in the spotlight this month as our volunteer. Many of you have probably seen her in the choir and have heard her beautiful voice as she occasionally sings special music during the worship service.

She and husband, Paul, have been members of DABC for about a year and a half, though Paul grew up here as a youngster. They've been married for 7 years and during most of that time, they were residing in Tennessee. Luckily, they found the errors of their ways and made it back home to Texas! They have three beautiful boys: Daniel just turned 3, Philip is 21 months and David is nine weeks old. I'm tired just typing that!

Her hobbies include scrapbooking and napping when the opportunity presents itself. Ha! Along with being in the Adult Choir, Jere' also partici-

Volunteer Spotlight: Jere' Johnson

pates in the HUGS Ministry.

When asked why she became involved with Empty Arms, Jere' responded, "It is a beautiful example of Romans 8:28. 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.' My heart goes out to families (especially moms) who have lost infants either through miscarriages or infant death."

We are honored that Jere' is a part of this ministry. Her sweet spirit is certainly felt by all who know her.

