

Sew Precious In His Sight

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Mission Statement

Threads of Love is a sewing ministry meeting the needs of tiny premature infants. The ministry is about healing and binding hearts together – the hearts of parents at a time of uncertainty about their baby’s health or when they lose an infant. Our mission is to show parents the love of Christ at a time when their personal pain is hard to endure and let them know that God is faithful. Through acts of obedience and donation, His work can and will continue. Pray that this ministry will have an impact far beyond our expectations.

There are three things that remain: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

- 1 Corinthians 13:13

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Season of Hope

SEASON OF HOPE 2003

Since 1996, the Baton Rouge chapter of Threads of Love has held a service at Christmas called the "Season of Hope." This has become a seasonal service dedicated to the memory of those precious children lost to miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant death. The service is designed to reassure the families that their baby now rests safe in the arms of Jesus. It is a service where a family can gather with other family members to find healing and comfort in their loss. The service offers a special time of remembering that the love that they still have lives on in their hearts for their beloved baby.

I can't think of a more appropriate way to celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas, than to bring hope to those families who have lost their special little baby. As Christians, Christmas is a time of spiritual reflection and family traditions. But for those who have suffered the loss of a child, it is a lonely and difficult time of the year. Season of Hope is a reminder that all babies are a gift from the Lord, especially when we live in a time when so many babies are killed through abortion. As we remember the loss of our wanted babies with this service, maybe it will change the hearts and minds of those that see no harm in abortion.

I encourage all of the Threads of Love chapters to start such a service in your community to bring hope to those families at the Christmas season. It's a great way to be a witness for Christ and as a ministry to let these parents know that we understand their grief and pain and remind them of the support He gives us during the hard times.

-Sissy

This year we were so happy to have Joanna Woodworth as our speaker. Joanna is our senior pastor's daughter, one of the members of First Presbyterian, and someone

Trusting in God's unchanging character

Words by Joanna Woodworth given at the Season of Hope
Baton Rouge, LA—December 2003

As we worked through our grief in the months following, I remember the pain so deep that sometimes I would tell myself just to keep breathing in order to stay alive. I remember being so angry with God because I didn't know who to be angry with and if anyone could've prevented this, He could have. Can I tell you, we had some words! And I remember that hopeless, helpless, powerless feeling... "She's gone and I can do nothing to bring her back." And I know that each one of us has our own story. The Bible teaches that trials make us stronger people, that we develop a deeper faith in Jesus Christ, that we grow and mature as we work our way through it, and that if we are called to God's purpose, He always works the bad stuff out into good. And everyone's journey is different.

And when you tell someone that you have lost a child, what is it that they say to you? "How did you survive that? I don't think I could live through that?" I don't know about you but my first response is: "Gee, I don't know how I survived that, but here I am, living and breathing and hardly believing it myself!" But I do know how - it was only by the grace of God! It was only on His strength and not on my own. I really didn't do it myself, or at least not BY myself.

Beth Moore, at her most recent conference, focused on the book of Job and pointed out that when calamity hits, Satan wants us to curse God and die! The first words out of Job's mouth when he was first struck was to praise the Lord and to blindly trust that He was in control, taking care of everything, even when Job had no idea what was going on. Beth Moore pointed out that God wants us to win! ~ To get to the other side victorious! ~ To be able to say, "I lived through it! ~ I survived! ~ I am still breathing! Thanks be to God! So we can choose God's way - praise in the face of pain and the unknown, or we can choose Satan's way - to curse God and die.

And we do not know what God is thinking or what his plans are for this life. What we need to do is cling to the God that we do know. We need to trust in his unchanging character and in the promises that he gives us that are clearly laid out in the Bible. So what do we know about God? Well, the Bible tells us that God IS Love, God is patient, slow to anger, he is Just and almighty. God is righteous and the great shepherd. He is trustworthy, He extends grace to those who don't deserve it and forgives those who repent. God is the same, yesterday, today and forever. He is holy, all powerful, everywhere all of the time and He knows everything. God is Good! Just to name a few. So how does this jive with what I have just experienced in Amanda's death? In the "Experiencing God" study I did shortly after Amanda's death, the author of that study, Henry Blackabee, was discussing a trial of his own and likening it to a little child, who when told by a loving parent, "you can't have that", the child responds, "you don't love me if you won't give me what I really want!" I confess that I felt this way and I had to be reminded that nothing could separate me from the Love of Christ. I had to continually remind myself that even though God allowed Amanda to die, that he still loves me. Dr. Blackabee would pray, "Dear Father, don't ever let me look at the circumstances and question your love for me. Your love was settled on the cross. That has never changed and will never change for me." Has God's love for you been settled on the cross? Do you know that what he did for you there was the greatest expression of love for you? And in the big picture, God sees all kinds of things that we cannot. This includes the perspective of time. God is all-existing. He was in the beginning and will be forever. How can my tiny little mind comprehend the enormity of an everlasting life? How can I put my own life here on earth into perspective with eternity? I know that I just get baffled! Psalm 90 says in verse 2 "Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God... 4 For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. 5 You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning- 6 though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered. 10 the length of our days... quickly pass, and we fly away. 12 Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

We still have several Threads of Love documentaries left. This video, 20 minutes in length, tells the story of Threads of Love in a beautiful way. This is a wonderful resource for any church or individual involved in this ministry. The suggested donation for these videos is \$5. If you want a copy of the documentary, please email Sissy Davis at sissy@threadsoflove.org.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHAPTERS!

First Presbyterian Church Threads of Love
New Port Richey, FL.
Contact: Pat Reeves
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La Vernia UMC Threads of Love
Rock Hill, SC
Contact: Meredith Spradley
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Hearts and Hands Project of Calloway County
Threads of Love
St. Hedwig, TX
Contact: Jeanne Vickers
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East Leesville Baptist Church Threads of Love
Leesville, LA
Contact: Lynn Tanner
Email: ltdollhouse@aol.com

Threads of Love
Almo, KY
Contact: Nancy Burcham
Email: nburcham@murrayhospital.org

Sulphur Threads of Love
Sulphur, LA
Contact: Katie Fontenot

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK

I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate what you do. My daughter passed away sometime during my 21st week of pregnancy. She had Turner's Syndrome. I delivered her at Willis Knighton Pierremont on 12/11/03. I will **ALWAYS** treasure the blanket, dress and cap the nurses placed on my beautiful little Sera. I know I have a long road ahead of me but it is such a comfort to know that there are people like you who care. Thank you so very much!

A dear friend of mine passed away several years ago. We were out of touch so I never knew. When visiting her gravesite this fall, the engraving read "Threads of Love" Which leads me to believe she probably lost a child or someone close to her did. I got on your website and want to say what a great thing it is that you have started. We need more institutions/foundations like this.
Thank you, Ron

Dear Threads of Love,
Your talent and caring has touched my life on more than one occasion. On September 23, 2002, I lost twin boys. Your garments made by hand have been a comfort to me many times. On October 17, 2003, I had a baby boy born at 30 weeks at 3.5 pounds. He wore your little vests in the NICU and his crocheted hat home from the hospital. We continue to enjoy the precious blanket in his bassinet. He now weighs almost 7 pounds and is a thriving 2 month old. Your ministry is so appreciated. My family thanks you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our Daughter was in the NICU from the moment she was born up until six days later. It was a very long six days. However, she had a beautiful fleece blanket to keep her warm that had been made by some loving hand. Thank you for what you do because those special blankets keep babies like our secure at night. God bless you for your stewardship.

Dear Ladies,

I just had to write and thank you for all you do. My family and I have been personally touched by your kindness.

On September 22, 2003, I gave birth to twin girls—Mia and Tess, at Woman's Hospital in Baton Rouge.

I had transferred to the high-risk OB doctors in Baton Rouge in late July. After my regular OB/GYN detected a problem in Tess after a routine ultrasound. She had fluid build-up in her abdomen, indicating that her heart wasn't functioning properly. Two weeks later, the doctors detected a problem with the other baby, Mia—the blood flow through her umbilical cord was restricted, so she wasn't getting the nutrients she needed.

We had to monitor the babies' condition weekly, and I was told that once either condition got worse, we would have to deliver the babies. This day came at 30 weeks; I was told that if the condition worsened, and if there was any chance to save Tess, the babies had to be delivered that day.

Our first encounter with your kindness came when the babies were admitted into the NICU, and we got the 'welcome package' with the shirt, crocheted booties and cap, and sock dolls. Knowing these items were handmade with love really touched our hearts.

When Tess passed away three weeks later, we were given a beautiful handmade Threads of Love gown. We were so grateful to have this, as we had nothing else to dress Tess in.

I am enclosing a picture of Tess taken during her short time with us. Although she looked perfect on the outside, there was one little heart defect that did her in. This has left the doctors scratching their heads, as with identical twins, what one baby has, the other should have. Mia does not have the same defect, which we are so thankful for.

Mia has been home for almost five weeks now. She is eating and growing, and doing fine.

We will never forget the short time we had with Tess, nor will we forget the kindness of strangers (Threads of Love) who helped make the pain and uncertainty of those days in the NICU a little easier to endure.

I am enclosing a donation so that you may continue to spread your love and kindness to other new parents faced with the same heartbreak that we had to endure.

God bless you and all you do.

Dear Threads of Love - Tampa,

Your precious clothing were such a blessing to my husband and I while at St. Jos. the week of August 25, 2003. We had an emergency surgery with Dr. Quintero on Tuesday, 8-26, which went well. Unfortunately, early labor began that evening late and I delivered identical twin boys, stillborn, early Wednesday morning. This was not the outcome we had even considered and, therefore, had not brought any clothing with us.

When I held my babies in your beautiful clothing my heart was touched. How very thoughtful of your church to provide this at such a time. I have to believe, it is a much needed item when such situations arise. The pictures I have of my beautiful babies in your clothes will always bring a prayer for you as you provide this blessing to hurting parents.

My husband and I love the Lord, and are so blessed to come from Christian homes. We know our little boys are safe in their Father's Arms, perfect and complete. We have the hope of one day seeing them. This brings comfort amidst the sadness. We know God has not deserted us, but has sent His Comforter; for He promises to not leave us comfortless! Our God is good.

God bless you as you bless others in their time of great need. Thank you! As I hold these clothes and look at the pictures of my babies in them, my heart is truly blessed

GLORY, BABY

Words and Music by Watermark

Glory Baby, You slipped away
As fast as we could say baby, baby
You were growing, what happened Dear,
You disappeared on us baby, baby

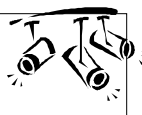
Heaven will hold you before we do; Heaven will keep you safe
Until we're home with you Until we're home with you

We miss you everyday, miss you in every way
But we know there's a day when we will hold you, we will hold you
And you'll kiss our tears away, when we're home to stay
You'll just have heaven before we do

Sweet little baby, it's hard to understand it
Cause we are hurting, we are hurting
But there is healing, and we know we're stronger people
Through the growing, and in knowing

All things work together for our good
And God works his purposes
Just like he said he would, just like he said he would

I can't imagine Heaven's lullabies
And what the must sound like
But I will rest in knowing
Heaven is your home,
And it's all you'll ever know, all you'll ever know



Spotlight Chapter Our Lady of Lourdes Threads of Love—Louisville, KY Contact: Anna Maria Trier

The Our Lady of Lourdes-Outreach Chapter has become so active recently; it warms my heart. Let me begin by saying that we have expanded the number of patterns we use to about 26 (not including blankets that have no patterns), and it seems that every month, someone brings in something different that they have made - so, we add another pattern!

On October 23 we had a Halloween Workshop where we involved our Youth Group. Several of the Threads of Love members came with their sewing machines, and a couple of new ladies showed up with machines as well! I was so overwhelmed when twenty-five Youth Group members and their minister walked through the doors! Fortunately, I had setup work stations for each of the two projects we were to undertake. In the end, we made Halloween costumes for 70 babies; we also made 43 syringe holders (the nurses expressed a great need for something that would stabilize the syringes used to feed the preemies that are in covered isolettes). The kids had such a great time that they asked when the next workshop is! (I have enclosed a couple of pictures for you.)

On November 1 and 2, we had a Baby Shower following each of our four masses. The turnout was wonderful! We had so much fabric and twice as much trim donated; we also received a nice monetary donation that assisted in reimbursement for the Halloween Workshop. We are continuing to receive material donations even now. Last night, we held our monthly meeting where the donations were laid out so members could take what they wanted. I could not keep control of the meeting due to all the excitement! After everyone took what they wanted, they all stood around showing each other new techniques, new patterns, and they even came up with some new ideas.

The shower yielded more than donations. Several youth and women asked if they could join, taking patterns home with them to begin working immediately. I heard people saying how they wish they had known about Threads of Love a little earlier since they had lost grandbabies/babies recently. One woman even stopped to mention that she had been a 2 pound baby and that her mother would really have appreciated our efforts when she was born. I was particularly excited when a couple from Missouri who were in town visiting their children stopped to get information about the ministry; they took the website information, the Mission Statement (I always carry these with me), and telephone numbers etc. They expressed a great interest in forming a chapter at their church; I told them information on the website would assist them.

We are planning a second workshop with the Youth Group in December. We hope to generate 80 Christmas outfits and stockings for the babies. We have our monthly meeting prior to the workshop; in this meeting, we will do most of the cutting out since that seems to be a bottleneck. The ladies were all so excited about it; I'm wondering if a monthly meeting is even often enough!!!

Picture at right—youth group sewing with the Our Lady of Lourdes chapter

LETTER TO WOMAN FROM GOD:

When I created the heavens and the earth, I spoke them into being. When I created man, I formed him and breathed life into his nostrils. But you, woman, I fashioned after I breathed the breath of life into man because your nostrils are too delicate. I allowed a deep sleep to come over him so I could patiently and perfectly fashion you.

Man was put to sleep so that he could not interfere with the creativity. From one bone, I fashioned you. I chose the bone that protects man's life. I chose the rib, which protects his heart and lungs and supports him, as you are meant to do. Around this one bone, I shaped you....I modeled you. I created you perfectly and beautifully.

Your characteristics are as the rib, strong yet delicate and fragile. You provide protection for the most delicate organ in man, his heart. His heart is the center of his being; his lungs hold the breath of life. The rib cage will allow itself to be broken before it will allow damage to the heart. Support man as the rib cage supports the body.

You were not taken from his feet, to be under him, nor were you taken from his head, to be above him. You were taken from his side, to stand beside him and be held close to his side.

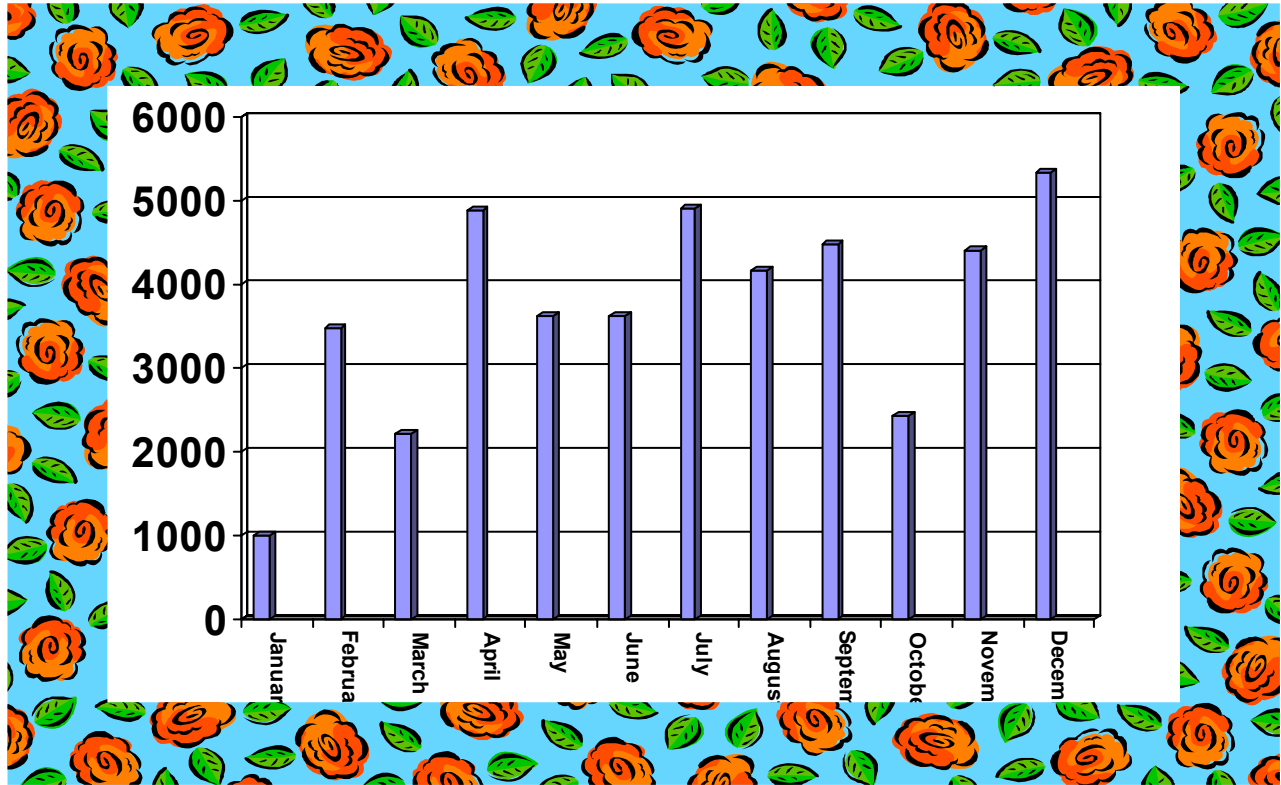
You are my perfect angel.... You are my beautiful little girl. You have grown to be a splendid woman of excellence, and my eyes fill when I see the virtues in your heart. Your eyes.....don't change them. Your lips -- how lovely when they part in prayer. Your nose, so perfect in form. Your hands so gentle to touch. I've caressed your face in your deepest sleep. I've held your heart close to mine.

Of all that lives and breathes, you are most like me. Adam walked with me in the cool of the day, yet he was lonely. He could not see me or touch me. He could only feel me. So everything I wanted Adam to share and experience with me, I fashioned in you; my holiness, my strength, my purity, my love, my protection and support.

You are special because you are an extension of



This graph represents items donated by Threads of Love chapters during the year of 2003!



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