

# Sew Precious In His Sight

Volume Seven, Issue 2



January 2005

## 14TH NATIONAL PERINATAL LOSS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 24TH –27TH 2004



By Debbie Fowler, R.N.

**LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**—Sissy and I joined several hundred other professionals, caregivers, and bereaved parents in Las Vegas for this conference. I was scheduled to speak on Tuesday morning. Sissy presided over the Threads of Love booth.

**DAY ONE**—We arrived at the hotel and stood in line with lots of other attendees to get our room. To the left is the view from our room. We then put our things in our room and ran to the exhibit



hall to set up the Threads of Love Sissy go for a display usually worked travel-



hall to set up Threads table.

Sissy opted to smaller than she did and it well for



ing. Just about everything fit in one suitcase. **A Song to Hold Your Heart**, was held pool-

The welcome reception and keynote address, side at 4PM. There we listened to speeches down, we got really cold!! We had been in such a hurry to get everything set up we still had our south Louisiana clothes on. Our hotel was on a golf course at the base of the mountains so the wind was coming right down the mountain. We were seated at the edge of the group of people and we quickly became human popsicles. After the speeches and music we helped ourselves to the buffet and headed up to our room and turned the heat on.

and music, lit candles, and as the sun went down, we got really cold!! We had been in such a hurry to get everything set up we still had our south Louisiana clothes on. Our hotel was on a golf course at the base of the mountains so the wind was coming right down the mountain. We were seated at the edge of the group of people and we quickly became human popsicles. After the speeches and music we helped ourselves to the buffet and headed up to our room and turned the heat on.



"Safe In The Arms Of Jesus"  
used with permission by the artist,  
Alice Craig © 2005  
www.aliceart.net

**DAY TWO**—We were up early the next morning for the buffet breakfast and keynote address, **Grief: The Breakfast of Champions**. Then Sissy was off to the exhibit hall and I went to the concurrent session-**The Dance of Life...The Impact of Pre & Perinatal Loss on Future & Ongoing Relationships**. This class went through lunch so Sissy and I touched base about 1PM. Sissy was making friends with the exhibitors on either side of her. On one side was Alice Craig. She does beautiful artwork that reflects her love of Christ and her personal experience of perinatal loss. On the other side was Tim Nelson who had a table for his company **A Place to Remember**. He is an author and publisher. From those conversations Sissy got a really good book for fathers that we are hoping to make available to Woman's Hospital soon. In the afternoon I was off to the session, **Perinatal Hospice of El Paso: A Program to Support Families Faced with Lethal Fetal Anomalies**. It was very informative. At 3PM Sissy and I met up in the Grand Ballroom for the afternoon keynote address **Companionship in Adversity: Caring for Others, Caring for Ourselves**. By now we had developed a system...I would get us a table close to the front, then get a snack for the two of us. That way Sissy could wind up what she was doing and just come straight to the table. It worked pretty well. At 6:30 we met at the pool for the Memorial Service.

By now we had learned to sit in the middle of the group to stay warmer. Sissy saved our seats and I got us some hot coffee. The service was nice, but we learned that our Season of Hope is very well done. I know I felt very proud of what First Presbyterian and Threads of Love has done to provide a place for grieving parents to remember their children. After the service, we went to check out my classroom. I was very nervous about using the projection equipment. Wouldn't you know there was someone there explaining how to use the equipment to another set of people. It's amazing how God takes care of things. Then Sissy and I went to our room where I went through my slideshow for my class one last time. Then after a long day we went to sleep. Then Sissy and I went to our room where I went through my slideshow for my class one last time. After a long day we went to sleep.

**DAY THREE**—This morning was the morning that I was going to teach my class. When they called me to let me know they would be setting up my room to accommodate 100 people, but could add more spaces if necessary, I suddenly got very nervous. I have never spoken to that many people. Of course the speaking wasn't so scary as the equipment that would be projecting the slideshow from my laptop. If that didn't work then my whole class was doomed. We had breakfast at one of several restaurants



in the hotel. By now I thought I was pretty much over my nervousness, until I put sweetener on my eggs instead of salt. So much for being calm, cool, and collected. This is how my class was listed in the program: **C 2 Perinatal Loss: Making Memories.**

**Debra Fowler, RN, Ballroom C, Learn the art of presentation of a deceased infant and explore the effect positive memories can have on a grieving family. Step-by-step instructions given for taking photos, making hand and foot prints, and more.** We brought 75 copies of the handout with us and had to make more copies twice, so there were more than 100 people there. As soon as the equipment started to work correctly, I was comfortable and the class time flew by. Sissy took a picture during my class. (left) After the class I gathered up my things and ran to tell Sissy everything went well. The Threads of Love exhibit was crowded with lots of people. It was a very popular place. I

think we started several new chapters from the appearance from the conference. Then I was off to a class on Mentoring. Sissy and I met up again at the noon keynote address on the **Spiritual Dimension of Healing**. We sat with some nurses and social workers from Minnesota. Their hospital had sent 5 people from this conference. Imagine that! It was interesting to exchange information and ideas. After the lunch address, I was off to a perinatal loss group meeting and Sissy was back to the exhibit. After the activities ended we decided to take the shuttle to the Las Vegas strip. I had never been there, so wanted to see it. Apparently so did 100 or so other conference attendees. The shuttle bus only held about 25 people, so it was going to be a long wait in the wind and cold. We decided to go to the fabulous buffet in the hotel, have dinner, and then go back to the shuttle at about 7PM. Once we were fed and warm again we decided the trip wasn't worth it and stayed in the room to rest. Fortunately we didn't go because Sissy got sick and I was off to the gift shop to find medication for Sissy. We spent a quiet and more importantly warm night getting rested and recuperated.

**DAY FOUR**—The next morning we attended the breakfast keynote address on **Perinatology: Past, Present, and Future**. We had a nice breakfast and then Sissy was back to the booth and I was back to classes. I went to: **The Power of Compassion: A Phenomenological Approach to Perinatal Death**. The closing luncheon and keynote was Significance - **The Death of a Longed-for Child**. Sissy and I had lunch and I took a few notes. Then we both went to the exhibit to answer questions from the last minute visitors to the hall and then to pack up our exhibit. We had already checked out of our room because we didn't have any time to spare if we were going to catch our flight out of Las Vegas. We were among the first on the shuttle to the airport and arrived at our gate just in time to catch our flight. Whew!!! We thought we were home free. Then we found out our flight would be delayed because of a cold front that was causing a large snowstorm in the mountains. The airplanes couldn't get to Las Vegas. We along with (it seemed like) thousands of other people were stranded at the airport. Bob, (Sissy's husband), was calling us with updates that he got from the computer before the airport announced updates. The World Series final game came on the TV and as seats closer to the TV opened up I would drag Sissy and our carry-on luggage to the closer seats. Once two seats came open right in front of the TV. I jumped up to grab them and a man saw me. He jumped up too and got there before me. Then he went to sleep. I told Sissy I should go over there and thump him on his head for that. We both laughed. After about 7 hours in the airport, we finally got on our plane to come home. I got to my house at 6AM.

We met lots of nice people and learned a lot about everything from perinatal loss to jockeying for better seats in front of the TV in the airport. One of the most important things that we learned was that as progressive as things have gotten the last 10 years especially, there is so much to be done. I am very proud to say Threads of Love and First Presbyterian Church are leaders in this area. Even though some find this subject too painful and prefer to ignore it, Threads of Love and First Presbyterian church push forward. They stand up for the rights of families too devastated to know their rights. They have been so supportive of my work in this area. They have been the ones to step up to let me know what I do is important and they are behind me all the way. I can't tell you how much that means to me. Thank you, for supporting me and thank you for remembering those families grieving for their children who have died.

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**2nd Threads of Love National Conference**

**First Presbyterian Church**

**Baton Rouge, LA**

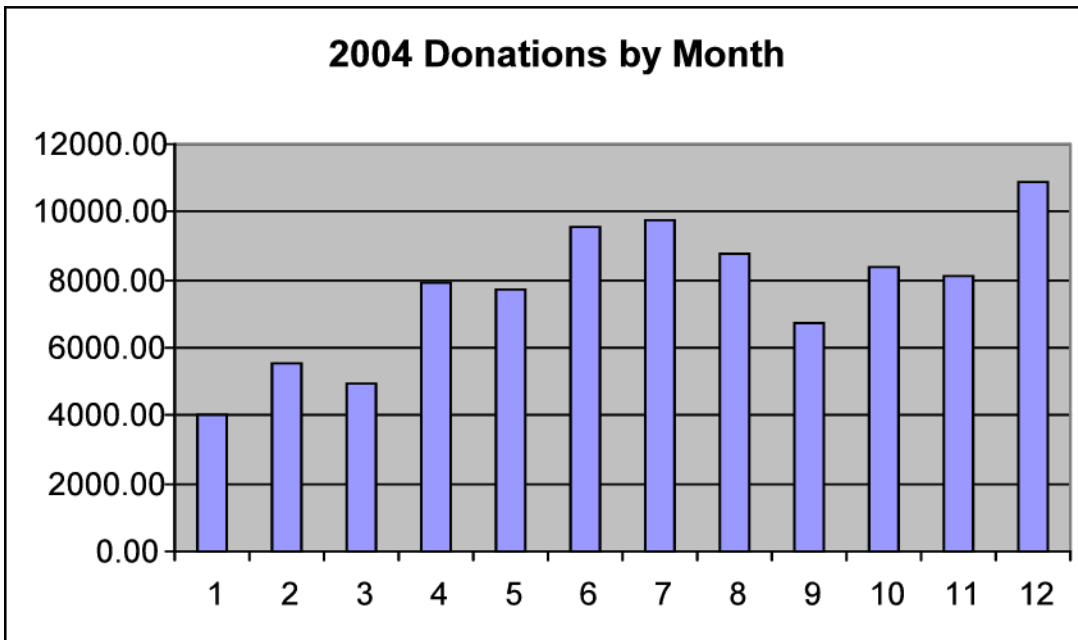
**Thursday Sept 28 - Sunday Oct 2, 2005**

**Stay tuned for more details!**

## 2004 Monthly Donations

Remember, that it takes every chapter to reach our 2005 total of over 100,000 items donated to families in need!

WELCOME TO  
OUR NEW  
CHAPTERS!



**Central Baptist Church**  
**Threads of Love**  
Chatanooga, TN  
Betty Bennet  
Email: prben-  
net@bellsouth.net

**Little Angels Threads of**  
**Love**  
Beloit, WI  
Margo Young  
Email: babybluecos-  
tumes@aol.com

### **"I have my mission" by Cardinal Newman**

God has created me to do him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission - I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good. I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place while not intending it - if I do but keep His commandments.

Therefore I will trust in Him. Whatever, wherever I am. I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me - still He knows what he is about.

Hello!

I am the mother of a premie at UAB Hospital. Let me correct that, I am the mother of a MIRACLE at UAB Hospital....McKenzie Grace. I went into early labor at 21 weeks and she was born at 25 weeks. She weighed only 1 pound 7 ounces and 11 inches long. She was born April 5th and will be 11 weeks old Monday.

I can still remember the first time I saw her. She was hooked up to all sorts of machines, in a skin tent because her skin was so fragile, skin so transparent you could see her organs and was so tiny. But what I do remember most was the quilt she was laying on. A quilt that was lovingly made by your group. She was laying on her quilt and had a love doll in the bed with her. The first days are a blur, trying to recover from a C-section and trying to grasp that I had a baby that was so tiny and was fighting for every breath she was taking. What is very real in my memories of those early days are all the items that were made by your group for her, the dolls, the dresses, the tiny afghan, hat, I could go on and on. It seemed like each week we would find another love pack from your group.

I can not begin to tell you how much those items meant to me. At a time which seemed so hopeless, you gave a ray of hope. You will never know what it means to walk in and see your teeny baby laying on a quilt, made just for her.

We have had many weeks of time in the NICU - 11 weeks total. We have had good days and we have had bad days. We have had days we weren't so sure that she would make it. But through it all, your group has been a part of good and bad days. To walk into the NICU and to see that the nurses have dressed her up in a new dress or new hat and booties. More than words can say.

For weeks, I was so mad, questioned, "Why God? Why do I have to go through this? I did everything to the T - I took every precaution when I was pregnant? Why did McKenzie come so early?" And now, as I look into her eyes and hold her close, my question is still "Why, God?" but now it is "Why God? Why am I so fortunate that you LET me go through this miraculous journey with McKenzie?" Each day I look into her eyes, I know with all that I am that I am looking into the eyes of a miracle. For whatever reason, God has chosen this teeny tiny package for great things, I am not sure what they are, but I know they are great. Already in her short time, she has brought me to my knees over and over again.

I have always heard that God performs miracles, I just never in my wildest dreams thought I would be Mommy to a miracle....but I am.

So, in the midst of all the craziness of this world, God shows me on a daily basis that He Is Still God! If you ever find yourself wondering, just look at one of McKenzie's pictures and you will know, too.

If you had told me 10 weeks ago that McKenzie would be not just surviving, not just growing but THRIVING, I would not have believed it. We have had a few scares, but all along our prayer has been that McKenzie would not just survive, but that she would prove the doctors wrong in a huge way, and that she has done. She has far surpassed any expectations that doctors had for her when they first discovered she was coming too soon. Every day I am amazed by her.

I took a picture of her in her latest duds and wanted to share it with you. Your work is very important to all the mothers living the NICU rollercoaster.

I would like to donate materials, or whatever would be beneficial for you to continue your work. I am not a very crafty person but would be happy to donate my time in any way that would help you. If you have a list of items you are in need of, I would love to have it and me and my family are interested in donating. And if there is anything I can do, I would love to donate my time. My home number is 815-1511.

God Bless You All,  
Jamie



To whom it may concern:

On June 9th 2004 i delivered a baby girl in which she passed away due to she was too little to survive at St. Joseph's Woman's hospital in Tampa Florida. I wanted to thank you, Threads of Love for the prayer, the dress and the comfort you have given me and my family. Without this memory that you have given me, I don't think i would be some what strong to-day. I still mourn my daughter and will always have her in my heart. I would like to that you for what you have given me to always remind me of my daughter. Once again thank you.

-A mom in Tampa, Florida

From Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital in Cleveland Ohio,  
Dear Faith Hope and Charity Stitches, Inc.,  
Thank you so much for your most recent donation of quilts, hats blankets, snakes and clothing for the infants in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit(NICU) and our Transitional Care Center (NICU Step- down) here at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital. All of the items are beautiful, and they arrived just in time, as we were running out of several items, particularly quilts for the isolettes.  
Thank you!  
Your continued generosity toward the patients and families at Rainbow is much appreciated. I am sure a great deal of thought and effort is put into each item; thank you for donating your valuable time to our families. Best wishes for all of you.  
With Warm Appreciation,  
Deborah CCLS—Child Life Specialist

Dearest Threads of Love members,  
I am writing in regards to Dionne and Chris. In September of 2003, Dionne gave birth to twins Mia and Tess. They were born premature due to developmental complications with Baby Tess's heart and lungs. Tess lived for 28 days. In Dionne and Chris's time of great heartache and sorrow, your organization brought a ray of light, a moment of job, and a memory that they will cherish for eternity. They were given the opportunity to see their precious baby girl in a gorgeous dress. Dionne's parents and siblings have decided that we would like to make a contribution to your organization in memory of our angel, Tess. We hope that other families enduring these hardships can also experience the joy your organization provides through your thoughtfulness and kindness.  
Thank you very much.

Sissy,  
I cannot begin to tell you how much the 'Season of Hope' service touched my heart. It was the first time my baby was acknowledged publicly. My heart was touched in a way you cannot imagine. Your work is greatly appreciated.  
Thank you, Tracie

Dearest friends;

While preaching at 1st Presb. Rock Hill last Oct. 10th I saw your bulletin board and it moved me to tears. The ministry of 'Threads of Love' is one of infinite compassion and critical to the life of the Church. Two years ago, while taking a class at the Memphis Theological Seminary, one of my classmates, a Chaplain with one of the local hospitals, told the sad story of how he and his wife lost their first child (it had happened a few months before) and how the church was unable to minister to them in their time of need. All they got was: "Oh you are both young, you'll have more opportunities for having babies." This embittered my classmate's wife and was a source of additional grief for both of them. Thank God for "Threads of Love"! Your ministry will bind broken hearts with the love of Jesus.

You'll be in my prayers from now on.

In His grip;  
Ramiro  
Pastor, Beth-El Mission

Threads of Love  
A Ministry of First Presbyterian  
Church of Baton Rouge  
763 North Boulevard  
PO Box 2006  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

ADDRESS LABEL GOES HERE

## 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.

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

**- 1 Corinthians 13:13**

### IN THIS ISSUE

Las Vegas Convention Recap

Mark your calendars....

Our Mission

Thank you notes