

Sew Precious In His Sight

Volume Seven, Issue 1



October 2004

Nurses...our Unsung Heroes



Threads of Love works as Christ's feet and hands and we are charged to look after one another. Threads of Love held a class in Baton Rouge in September, to help nurses earn Continuing Education credits. The attendance was good and well received by the nurses. We invited student nurses to be our guests at these classes. After all, the students are the nurses of tomorrow.

I want to tell you about our own Debbie Fowler, who is not only a nurse, but a member of the Board of Directors of the Threads of Love Foundation. Debbie was reaching out to parents who had lost a baby for several years before the two of us came together through Threads of Love. Like me, Debbie had also suffered the loss of a baby brother when she was young. At a young age, God was preparing both of our hearts to do His work.

Debbie's story goes something like this..... She said that the Lord had put in on her heart to bathe and dress these tiny babies, in order to reach out to parents, so that they could remember their baby all dressed up sweet and have positive memories. At first she felt like she was a complete failure, because she was shedding more tears than the families. After a number of attempts to console parents, she just told the Lord, "No thank you, I can't do this." He kept tugging at her heart until she made a deal with Him. If He would give her the courage and the peace so she could minister to the families, then she would continue. He has helped her to have peace dealing with these families when she needs to draw close to Him and draw her strength from Him.

After sitting through two days of classes along with the nurse, I now have a better understanding of what these brave nurses must face daily. It takes a very special person to be able to reach out to these parents time and time again. At the end of the two days of classes, I told Debbie that I was glad that I did not know of all the things that can and do go wrong at a birth of a baby. Each birth is a miracle in it self and now knowing all the things that can happen, I have a much better understanding of just how much of a miracle a birth really is. It's only by the grace of God that these tiny babies are born perfect.

As lay people we will never really know what these nurses must face day in and day out. It has to be hard to see tiny babies born and know there is nothing you can do to save that precious little life, and then to have to watch parents' dreams and hopes shattered. It takes a very special person to be able to work under these conditions over a long period of time. They must feel so helpless each time they have to watch a little one die and I'm sure that a piece of them dies with each tiny little soul. It takes a special nurse with a heart that loves the Lord and knows that she is serving Him by bathing and dressing each little baby before facing the parents with their little angel, all gift wrapped in our Threads of Love. What a gift each nurse and sewer gives to these parents. All of our love and work would go in vain if it was not for all the caring, loving nurses that make all of this work. My hat is off to every one of the dedicated nurses who do this day after day...showing their love for the babies, parents and our Lord. God bless each one of them.



By: Sissy Davis, Director of Threads of Love

Thank you Notes...

DEAR MS FOWLER,

I HARDLY REMEMBER YOUR FACE: I HAD TO ASK ABOUT YOUR NAME, BUT I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR HEART...

THAT'S WHY I WANT TO TAKE A BRIEF MOMENT TO TELL YOU WHAT A BLESSING YOU ARE.

THE COMPASSION YOU SHOWED MY DAUGHTER, MISSIE, SON-IN-LAW, ANDREW, AND OUR LITTLE PRECIOUS JEFFERY PAUL ON OCTOBER 11, 1998 WAS ABOVE AND BEYOND ANYTHING WE HAD HOPED FOR.

YOU HELPED OUR FAMILY TO MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM OUR DREAMS TO OUR REALITY AS PAINLESS AS THIS REALITY COULD BE.

THE LOVING CARE THAT YOU GAVE OUR GRANDSON WAS THAT OF AN ANGEL. WITH EVERY TENDER TOUCH AND EVERY SOFT WORD SPOKEN, YOU CARRIED US THROUGH THE PAINFUL DEATH OF OUR JEFFERY PAUL.

MAY GOD SAVE A PLACE IN HEAVEN FOR YOU WHERE YOU CAN CONTINUE TO CARE FOR ALL OF GOD'S FLOWERS THAT NEVER BLOOM.

JEFFERY PAUL'S GRANDMOTHER.

Dear Debbie:

On April 30th I watched as you tenderly cared for my daughter's tiny dead baby. You handled her with such gentleness as though, at that time, there was nothing in the world more important to you. What a blessing it was to have you there at that very sad time in our lives.

Many times, since that day, you have popped into my mind. Whenever that happens I offer up a prayer that you will be sustained in this much needed ministry you provide to the families of these dear babies. What a comfort to have you treat these precious ones with such respect.

May God continually bless you and give you the peace that comes from knowing you are in His will.

Sandra

Hi, My name is Victoria and my daughter is currently in the NICU @ S&W. I just wanted to say thank you for the premie clothes that you deliver in the NICU each week. It means so much to me, and my daughter (even though she is so tiny). You're organization is a blessing and I thank each one of you personally.

Thanks again, Victoria

Mark your Calendars!

The 2nd Annual Threads of Love **National** Convention will be held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in **October, 2005**. Stay tuned for details.

The **TEXAS** Threads of Love convention will be held **March 10-12, 2005** in Texas. For more information, please contact Liz Page at texaspages@satx.rr.com

In the whole month of November 2003, our baby was very sick and in NICU at Brookwood Medical Center Birmingham, AL. I had come to visit one day and saw that he had been given a blanket, bonnet and booties. I was so touched that someone had made that for him. I want to let you know how much I appreciate the thoughtfulness. I am sorry that I am just now getting around to let you know my appreciation. I pray that God bless you all.

Thanks again for caring.

Love, Cristy and Donnie
Braxton (11/04/03)

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHAPTERS!

Jackson, Tenn Threads of Love
Contact: Marge Stumpenhorst
Email: marges@usit.net
Jackson, Tennessee

Inland Empire Threads of Love
Riverside, CA
Contact: Susan Terberg
Susan.terberg@rcc.edu

Boston Avenue Threads of Love
Contact: Gerry Arnold
Email: garnold74403@yahoo.com
Sand Springs, Oklahoma

Madeira-Silverwood Presbyterian Church
Contact: Linda Dean
Cincinnati, OH
Email: prosew@cinci.rr.com

High Pointe Church of Christ Threads of Love
Prosper, TX
Lisa Byrd
lisal@t1.com

Twin Angels Threads of Love
Contact: Christi Garner
Tomball, TX
Email: c.garner@sbcglobal.net

Wilmington Area Threads of Love
Carolina Beach, NC
Judy Billings
bertnjudy@peoplepc.com

See how God has expanded our territory!



Abingdon Bible Church Threads of Love
Abingdon, VA
Judy Lutz
jlutz@wcs.k12.va.us

Henry Baptist Church Threads of Love
McDonough, GA
Ginny Davidson
Virdav0450@aol.com

Taylor, AZ Threads of Love
Taylor, Arizona
Cynthia Owen
celizabeth12004@yahoo.com

Sewing with Love Threads of Love
Sequin, TX
Barbara Pluta
Email: barbsews@sbcglobal.net

Befrienders Threads of Love
Wichita Falls, TX
Franceann Russell
Email: franceann2@aol.com

Unto the Least of These Threads of Love
Smiths Grove, KY
Jini Lee Payne
Email: jinilee@scrtc.com

Hutchison Chapter Threads of Love
Fountain, CO
Contact: Nicole Campbell
campbenr@fotf.org

Special Prayer Request...

Occasionally we will have a new chapter who signs on and reaches a stumbling block when they approach a hospital. Some hospitals are reluctant to give out Threads of Love items with prayers on them. Our policy has always been—No prayers...no clothes. Pray that the 'powers that be' would see that the work that the nurses are doing is worthwhile and needed. Pray that they would see the need to minister to the patients whose babies die, and to offer them unlimited time to meet the needs of these parents. Pray that they would be supportive of the nurses' efforts to care for these patients in a loving and respectful manner. Pray that they could see these losses as the loss of a child not just products of conception. Pray that if their hearts cannot be soften to the point that they could be supportive, maybe they would just step aside and let the nurses do what they do best, which is care for patients in the way that they need to be cared for.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

*The following chapters have been with us
five years or more!
Fulton United Methodist Church - Threads of Love
Sallye Chapter - Threads of Love*



*Alpharetta Threads of Love
Threads of Love
St. Mark Threads of Love
La Mirada Threads of Love
Linda Maraldo-Threads of Love
Threads of Love
St. Joseph Threads of Love
SARAH Chapter Threads of Love*

SEE HOW GOD WORKS THROUGH THREADS OF LOVE!

Read this sweet note from Judy from the Ottawa Chapter of Threads of Love.....

Well our chapter just had it's big kick off last Sunday and we have a group scheduled for next week to start sewing gowns and such. During the phone call, the Pastoral Care Director said that they had a mom there who's baby had died, she was being induced, and when the baby arrives, would I go in and be a part of caring for the baby, preparing the baby for presentation to the parents? I said that was absolutely in my heart having been in that same situation before. As soon as I got off the phone a member, (Adri) of our TOL group came to my door. She had for no reason taken today off work. She had just been to the fabric store and was giving to me some lace she had purchased for me to see if it looked good with the batiste. I told her about this mom in hospital and her baby. I said "too bad we don't have any gown sets made up yet". Then I excitedly discussed with her, "maybe there was a reason you took today off work!" Long story short, she worked diligently at making a beautiful gown, bonnet and blankie, I typed up the prayer, and it was ALL ready a few hours later. I received the call from the hospital at 12:45 a.m. and was at the hospital at 1:05 a.m. We bathed the baby, measured him, did hand and footprints, a team member did a casting of a foot, took pictures and dressed him. Our first burial package was presented by the head team member to the parents who were absolutely thankful for that gift! Their baby Nicholas Bryan will be Christened in it in the morning! The nurses were amazed at the TOL gown and bonnet, the love that went into it was plain to see.

It was such an Honour and a Blessing to be able to be a part of the sad events tonight. This little child is so loved, and I can't express exactly how it felt to share some of this time with the family. It was not easy, but it's where My talents lie and my heart as well.

Thank you TOL and Thank you Lord!

THIS NOTE IS FROM CHRISTI GARNER, ONE OF OUR NEWEST CHAPTERS. SHE WAS LED TO BEGIN A CHAPTER BASED ON HER EXPERIENCE WITH THREADS OF LOVE. HERE IS HER STORY...

My identical twin daughters, Mackenzie and Jenna, were born in July. My daughters had Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome and were born at 22 weeks gestation so they only lived a few hours. My daughters were diagnosed with TTTS at my routine 20 week ultrasound where we found out that not only were we were having twins, but that they had this terrible disease. My husband and I quickly reviewed all of our options over the next few days with several visits to several doctors and decided the best chance of survival for our babies was fetal laser surgery. We had to fly to Florida because that was the closest place to us that did the procedure. The surgery itself worked but my body had gone into labor that couldn't be stopped. We knew as I was in labor that our babies would be born and no life saving efforts would be made.

The nurses at the hospital were wonderful. My nurse who was there for the delivery always referred to each girl by name and treated our daughters with love. She brought us these beautiful tiny gowns to dress our babies in so they wouldn't be naked as we held them and took pictures of them. They also later served as burial gowns which was very comforting to me. Logically, I knew it didn't matter what they wore in their casket, but the Mommy in me wanted them to look pretty. And I now picture them in my thoughts wearing their tiny gowns that fit them perfectly rather than being naked since at just under 1 pound each there would have been no clothes to fit them. The prayers that God was with me really helped to remind me at a time that I wasn't really sure what was going on except that my life was being turned upside down.

My nurse who tended to the girls during their few short hours of life found out that I had my own special memory tradition that I did for my 3 other daughters. I have saved each of my daughters first t-shirts, socks, hats, hair bows or whatever they were wearing as their first outfit in the hospital. I arranged all of those things in individual shadow boxes and spelled out each daughters name in tiny baby blocks. I hung each of these shadow boxes up in my house and all visitors to my home have remarked on how neat this idea is. On her own idea, the nurse brought me 2 additional tiny gowns with blankets and tracked down two NICU hats for the specific purpose of me having something to take home and put in my shadow boxes. I can't even tell you how much this meant to me and at the time I would have never even thought to ask for these things. I was able to make my shadow boxes to have on display at the girls' funeral and they are now hanging proudly in my home. I have 5 shadow boxes in a row for my 5 daughters. I look at these shadow boxes with love and it is my reminder of the big family I will have waiting for me in heaven.

. I would like for my new chapter to make 2 of everything so that the Mommies have one to bury the baby and one to keep to remember the baby by. As a Christian woman, this is a way that I can help spread God's love and help other parents who need to be reminded that God is with them even though He couldn't save their baby and He will help them through this.

Thank you,
Christi Garner

"I would like to say thank you for the donated gowns which were used by my premature twins: Zachary and Elizabeth, whom were born at 21 weeks on July 20, 2004. Those are the most beautiful gowns I have ever seen and I am thrilled to know that there are people like you out there with such hearts of gold. They were both buried in these gowns and also with a "Threads of Love" sock buddy on July 30th, 2004. Again thanks so much and thank God for people like you."

Sincerely, Amy and Joseph and Family

The Little Angels

Along about the first of May, the little angel came-
and went away.

Samantha "Sammi" Smith, 1964.

The love, the pain, the tears, the empty arms.

"Why did she not stay?", you ask.

"God's ways are not our ways," some say.

"Spina bifida," they say.

Still-the love, the pain, the tears, the empty arms.

Along about the first of May, the little angel came-
and went away.

Anna Catherine Aucoin, 2004.

The love, the pain, the tears, the empty arms.

"Why did she not stay?" you ask.

"God's way," some say.

"Unknown cause," they say.

Still-the love, the pain, the tears, the empty arms.

Along about the first of May
The little angels came and went away.

"Closure?" you ask.

Been forty years, most to the day since the little
angel went away.

Still-the love, the tears, the empty arms.

By: Larry Smith

in loving memory of Samantha Smith and Anna
Catherine Aucoin—For the mothers

On the occasion of the establishment of the North-
east Louisiana chapter of the Anna Catherine's
Threads of Love.

Dear Sissy Davis and all the special ladies of the
Threads of Love organization,
I recently lost my little girl Simone due to prema-
ture birth. She was born January 19th, 2004 and died
January 20th, 2004. She was only 22 1/2 weeks
old. Her life here was short. She was loved and
wanted very much, but we had to say goodbye to her
and send her home to GOD. To take her off of the
ventilator was the hardest decision we have ever had
to make, but we knew it was time for her to suffer no
more and to be at peace with the LORD and our
loved ones who have went before us. When we went
in to the NICU to say goodbye and had her dressed
in the cutest and littlest outfit we had ever seen. I
could not believe that there were clothes made to fit
someone sooooo small. That and the lovely soft
blanket made saying goodbye to her and holding her
the sweetest feeling. I cannot believe that there are
people such as you that care sooo much about giving
some sort of comfort through such a painful experi-
ence. I have been a Christian for 30 years now and
in all of my 30 years I have never had something that
touched me as much as the things I received from
your organization did.
It has been seven months now and I decided
tonight that I was ready again to look at the things I
received (her gown, blanket, prayer card, etc.....)
and all of a sudden it hit me. I need to contribute to
the people who made Simone's passing so sweet. I
can not in any way sew, so I would like to know in
what other way can I donate? Money, lace, material,
anything....I think I would love picking out mate-
rial.....anything.....please let me know.
With eternal love and appreciation to all the
special ladies who contribute their talent and time in
such a special way, Michell

Dear Ms. Blankenship,

Thank you so much for the beautiful and abundant clothes for our infants. I know that they will be forever treasured by the families who are soothed by such gifts of love. I have sent many to our main NICU in Madera where there is a greater need, however, we have kept plenty. Please share with your members how much your gifts are appreciated by the families and also the nurses who get to be the bearer of these gifts in time of great pain.

Gratefully, Andree

Threads of Love
A Ministry of First Presbyterian
Church of Baton Rouge
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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.

*Threads of Love
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Sissy Davis, Director
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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

God Bless our Nurses

Convention Information

Thank you notes

New Chapters!