



January, 2014



Welcome to New Subscribers in Holmes County, OH!

It was JOY, JOY, JOY to speak to two different groups in Walnut Hills and Berlin, Ohio, in December. There are many people providing care to loved ones who said they were blessed by our message of encouragement and hope for the emotional stress of caregiving. One lady said that “it felt so good just to laugh”.

I can't tell you how much we enjoy meeting caregivers and nursing home staff, etc., because this is our passion. . . bringing JOY to the hurting. If you would like to have us come to speak to your group, contact me at the above email address for information.



What is Love?

I found this post on my Facebook and wanted to share these true words:

“If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I’m just a decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I’m just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the tree with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir’s cantata but do not focus on my love for Christ, then I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way. Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure." *Many thanks to my sister-in-law's friend Melinda who shared these important words.*



Cookies for Caregivers

In our December caregiver support group which my friend Annetta and I host each month, we thought we would surprise our special caregivers with a Christmas cookie exchange. The event was kept secret from the caregivers. Annetta and I baked 12 different kinds of cookies, hid them under tablecloths, and at the appointed time revealed the dozens of cookies to the caregivers. Each received a large Chinnet plate and they circled the tables until the cookies were gone. All were overjoyed to receive this special gift because most said they had no time or energy to bake cookies this year. (That's what we thought! 😊) Perhaps this is an idea that you might share at your church or support group.



New Year's Resolutions?

Do you make New Year's resolutions? I never can stick to it, so I've given up on it. But I have five New Year's resolutions that I want you, the caregiver, to think about. Adopt these five thoughts:

1. Applaud your courage in handling day-to-day challenges.
2. Be in God's Word for hope and encouragement to support you throughout each day.
3. Caring for yourself is vital to ensure that you can continue your daily care for your loved one.

4. Don't be afraid to ask for help and accept it when offered. You're not being weak; you're being very wise.
5. Eliminate thinking too far ahead; take one day at a time.



Recipe Corner

Slow Cooker Sausage Breakfast Casserole

We had this during the holidays with our family, and I really enjoyed being able to put this together the night before and getting up in the morning to a tasty hot breakfast dish. But this is not just for breakfast! This would make a great family supper dish or a potluck dish to take away. Serve with fruit and/or juice. Enjoy!

- 1 pkg. (26-28 oz.) frozen shredded hash brown potatoes
- 1 lb. cooked sausage, crumbled
- 2 cups (8 oz.) shredded mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup (2 oz.) shredded Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup julienne-cut sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, drained
- 6 green onions
- 12 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

Spray a 6-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. Layer half of the potatoes on the bottom of the slow cooker. Top with half the sausage, mozzarella and Parmesan cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, and green onions. Repeat layering. Beat eggs, milk, salt, and pepper in large bowl with a wire whisk until well blended. Pour evenly over potato/sausage mixture. Cook on low setting for 8 hours or on high setting for 4 hours, or until eggs are set. Makes 12 servings.



I Need Your Help

I'm in need of some research help from each of you for a speaking event in a few months. I want to know what the JOYS are for you in your caregiving. What brings you JOY and happiness? Email me at joy4caringhearts@gmail.com.



When a Meltdown Is Imminent, Say a Prayer

Heavenly Father, in the midst of uncertainty about what the New Year will bring, fill us with the certainty of Your loving presence and Your eternal truths. Bless others who are in a caregiving role that they, too, may know the peace that only You can give. Thank you for the blessings that You give to us each day. Keep us in Your care that we may continue to serve You with joy and gladness. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Happy New Year to All!

*Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart,
All you who hope in the LORD.
Psalm 31:24*

What keeps us from attempting - let alone accomplishing - great things?
None other than fear! No wonder the phrase "fear not" is found more than 100 times throughout the Bible. The psalmist tells us that there is something we can do to build our courage: hope in the Lord (Psalm 31:24).

My prayer for each of you is that the year 2014 is one of hope, love, and faith.



JOY, JOY, JOY – have you seen the JOY that seemed to be everywhere this season? McDonalds cups, store shopping bags, TV advertisements – JOY just seemed to be in front of us everywhere we went. The word JOY seems to have a festive connotation that is contagious. The JOY of the season for Christians is the birth of Jesus, our Savior.

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
Break forth into joyful song and sing praises.
Psalm 98:4*

What JOY we feel celebrating His birth! Let's hold onto this JOY as we head into 2014. Let people see the JOY in you. Pass it on, and enjoy the feeling of giving.

*Let those who delight in my righteousness shout for joy and be glad and say evermore,
"Great is the LORD, who delights in the welfare of his servant!"*

Psalm 126:2