

COME AND SEE

PROVIDED BY THRIVE LADIES MINISTRY
CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, KANNAPOLIS, NC

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Fill a Cup, Friend...

BY MARTI TIDWELL (WRITTEN IN 2016)

Someone very dear to me and I had an interesting and somewhat heartbreaking conversation several weeks ago. I can't remember exactly how it came up, but we were talking through the challenging place in life that she finds herself.

To explain, all my friend ever wanted to be was a wife and mom. She left her daddy's house and went straight into marriage at a very early age and, within just a few years, had the only child she would ever be able to conceive. She talks about those years with great fondness. She and her husband now have a very successful business and all the financial security they could ever want, but those years they were scraping pennies and raising

their boy were, by far, the years she looks back on with the most fondness. She wrapped her identity around her son, and he became her everything.

It sounds sweet, noble even. Children are so innocent and need our guidance so desperately in those formative years. And it's certainly biblical! Raising and forming our little children into men and women that will soldier and strengthen the body of Christ is one of the highest callings on earth.

The problem with raising children, though, is that it has a shelf life.... we are eventually called to leave and cleave. My friend's boy grew up, strong and capable, and he left home to start a life of his own. The truth is, she has never really gotten over that.

She associated her joy and fulfillment with her child... and that burden is too heavy for anyone to carry.

Only Jesus can carry that load.

I'm certain she isn't the only one, and I am sensitive to the fact that I am speaking of something I know nothing of. I haven't yet held my baby girl in my arms and been willing to give her my everything and my all. I have not yet poured my heart and soul and energy into raising her well... and then watched her leave. My time is clearly coming though and, believe me, if there are words I need to eat the good Lord will show me! But, the truth is, the

FILL A CUP, FRIEND... (cont'd)

Bible does call us to leave mom and dad and cleave to our spouse... which can be a pretty hard journey for Mama Bear.

My husband is a tad on the high-maintenance side. Not in a clingy way, but his main love language is quality time and he likes to have me nearby. I'm an introvert by nature, and value my alone time. Because of this reality, marriage has been a struggle and an adjustment for me.

I am a people-pleaser and I completely adore my man. I want to give him all he wants of me, but I have come to realize that just isn't possible. Recently, I went back on Worship Team at church after taking a hiatus during our courtship and early marriage. I was so excited to get back into the ministry of leading worship, but it would mean some adjustments for us. It would, first of all, mean another night that I wouldn't be home until around 8:00pm...I already lead a Bible Study one night a week that keeps me out a bit late.

When I talked it all through with him, he balked a bit. He certainly doesn't want to keep me from doing anything that I love but, again, he likes me home, with him. As we talked through it, I explained to him that he rarely comes in the house before 8pm anyway... he's an outside dweller... so very little would change. He would hardly know I was gone! And then, I heard myself say the words, "I have God-given gifts, and I will be a better wife and better Marti if I use those gifts and cultivate them." It was the Holy Spirit, not me.

He showed me the truth even as I spoke the words.

The truth is, if I am going to be my very best for God and my family... and the kingdom of God... I must use and cultivate the gifts God intentionally gave me. I need to nurture friendships that encourage and affirm me in those gifts. We all have them...you have gifts!

Show your spouse and your children what using your gifts looks like, and inspire them to do the same! A "me and mine" mentality... only taking care of the needs of you and your own people... has no place in the Truth of Scripture. We are called to community, we are called to give ourselves away, to serve our fellow man. Only worrying about ourselves and our own will wear us down over time. We will begin to feel unappreciated and taken advantage of, even resentful of all that is expected of us.

Our children may begin to get the idea that since our world revolves around them, the rest of the world should too! And that isn't what we want to teach our kids... it doesn't foster humility and character in them. Let your children see you serve the needs of others in the name and power of Christ, and do it well! Let them see you help those who cannot help themselves. Nothing... nothing... will bring joy and renewal like giving a little of yourself away by utilizing what God has graced you with to help and encourage others, to serve those that God has called us to serve...to do a little something for someone

who can do nothing for you. That will fill a cup, friend. And, BONUS, it will bless and affect your family beyond all your expectations.

As a child, some of my fondest memories are watching my mother do the things that she was called to do. Teaching, singing, admonishing, prophesying... ***I was never prouder of her and never wanted to be more.***

Then, when your children are grown and the house seems empty and sad... you have something you have cared for and nurtured in the name of serving Christ to call your own. Your joy and fulfillment will not be a burden that you placed on your family...your joy and your hope will be in the Lord. And, listen, if you have raised your babies and you're in a later season in life, or if you are single and find yourself in an even different season of life, you aren't off the hook here! If we are living and breathing and walking this earth, God has a plan for us to fulfill. Ask Him to show you a way to recognize and utilize your gifts, and then get after it!

That will fill a cup, friend. And, BONUS, it will bless and affect your family beyond all your expectations.

Whatever the season we find ourselves in, blessing others as God has called us to do by sharing our gifts will serve to bless us in return with a more fulfilling and joyful life in Christ.

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. – I Peter 4:10



Season of Truth

BY REBECCA SCOTT-FIELDEN

I often reflect on Ecclesiastes 3, you know, “To everything there is a season...”

And I sometimes wonder how many people just hum along to the 1960s tune by “The Byrds,” or if they actually reflect on God’s words in the scripture...how completely accurate it is, in its’ entirety and how it mirrors our lives.

For us, the cyclic seasons are literal and the season we dread most, is Spring. Springtime ushers in with the beautiful, but pungent, bloom of the Bradford pear, but with it, comes sudden, downward spirals in our daughter’s health. She is struck with an increase in seizures, hospital stays, myriads of experimental treatments, surgeries, cognitive decline, additional diagnoses, and hosts of other bizarre symptoms. This year is no exception; albeit, slightly later in the season.

When Lexie was first diagnosed with a rare epilepsy at 5 years old, I was confident in the doctor’s ability to find the right concoction of

medicines to put the physical and emotional anomalies to rest. I clung to their hopeful encouragement that she may “grow out of it”. I believed it because I was also confident that God was faithful to hear my prayers and the prayers of others. I was confident in His ability to heal her and expected Him to answer our prayers according to my desire. So, I patiently and expectantly waited for God and the medicine or treatment to “do its’ thing”. And while I know God heard every prayer, He had different plans; plans to call me into a season of long-suffering, that would last years, to a place of complete surrender, drawing me closer to Him in a way I never dreamed possible and along the way, He showed me great and mighty things (Jeremiah 33:3).

Satan attacks when God calls us into a new season and when we are physically or emotionally vulnerable (Matthew 4). With every failed treatment, the doctors’ prognosis for Lexie became increasingly bleak. I desperately

hung onto hope, and still do. But the enemy whispered lies to me in the restlessness of the night, watching her sleep, listening for her breath, and failed attempts to intercept seizures; “*Who am I that should God listen to me? My sin is to blame for her suffering.*” The enemy twisted the context of “the Lord gives, but He also takes away,” rolling it around in my head like an ominous threat (Job 1:21). He contrasted me to Abraham; his devotion and trust in God...His willingness to sacrifice His son. He exposed my fear and refusal to sacrifice my daughter, my inadequate love, minuscule faith, and disobedience to God. He wailed in my ear, grievous thoughts and fears pertaining to Lexie’s future; thick, with challenges and isolation, or the possibility of God calling her home before morning.

Satan attacks us in our isolation. God’s Word warns & instructs us to, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

I should've exercised more care. My heart exposed an unguarded gate when fear and grief became my constant companions. I shamefully tucked my fears deep inside and meagerly attempted to carve out a small slice of normalcy in our lives. I would try to be at church, social functions, family get-togethers, and small outings as often as we could. With friends & family, I would try to talk about our lives and Lexie in the same fashion as they talked about their own. I found myself repeatedly apologizing for Lexie's communication and cognitive challenges, and for her demeanor when she was having a particularly difficult day. I sought forgiveness for our absences, tardiness, or having to cancel at the last minute.

The older Lexie got, the gap between her & her peers continued to broaden. A couple of painfully honest souls even admitted that Lexie's "special needs" made them uncomfortable, sharing they had no commonality with us. Eventually, I looked around and saw my relationships had faded away with only a few exceptions, as did Lexie's. In my foolish naivety, I didn't understand how difficult all of this was for others to digest and how our challenges made others uncomfortable and even fearful. Soon, I began fearing others' perceptions of us; their judgment, cynicism, discomfort and even worse, pity. I was angry...no, I was hurt. So, I purposefully set my face with feigned assurance, while inside, the torrents of fear and loneliness consumed me like I was drowning; desperately treading water with one hand, while fiercely sustaining Lexie with the other.

Satan attacks us through others.

Perhaps the most hurtful is when Satan comes to a believer through the sin of another believer. I think about Job and his well-intentioned friends who came alongside him extending their "help" and "words of encouragement."

And I'm just going to leave that one there.

But God...In His grace and mercy, and through an unsuspecting vessel, God used a loving woman in our church, who, one day, just casually glanced at Lexie, smiled, and said, "Isn't it funny to think how God loves her more than you do?" It was such a simple statement, yet so profound to my grieving heart.

The Holy Spirit immediately brought to mind Isaiah 43:19, "*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*"

It was in that moment, I fell completely surrendered to God's Truth and chose for His Voice to echo louder in my soul than any of the deceiving clamor of the enemy. The realization that He was present and lovingly, in control of every detail of this season consumed me.

God's Truth teaches that EVERY person conceived is a unique creation of our sovereign God (Psalm 139:16).

God's Truth says He uses our weaknesses for His glory (Romans 11:36) "... ☐ that the works of God should be made manifest..." (John 9:3).

God's Truth tells me, "Do not be afraid." He tells me that I do not have to fear because He is my God and is with me. He holds me, strengthens me and helps me (Isaiah 41:10).

I sometimes think people fear "special needs" because we've been taught "don't stare" and "don't say anything" because we don't want to offend. So, it's easier to just avoid, to look away, to ignore or even pity. We live in a culture that is not accepting of disabilities. We perceive success by worldly standards and not God's. Frankly, we just fear what we don't understand. I think some even fear how they would respond if God called them to a similar task. God doesn't want us to fear "special needs" and disabilities. He desires us to see others with the same eyes He does.

God's Truth teaches us to trust in Him, and not in ourselves. He promises to equip us for the tasks He calls us to (Proverbs 3:5-6, Hebrews 13:20-21).

God's Truth is that it is not His will for anyone to perish. Christ loves everyone and desires for everyone to be saved, even those with "special needs" (2 Peter 3:9, John 3:16-18).

God's Truth is that people with "special needs" are indispensable members of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:22). These "special" people, need witnessing, be discipling, develop a relationship with Christ, serve and have fellowship with other believers, just the same as everyone else. They are bestowed with gifts to serve our Holy God, often, just needing the opportunity to (1 Corinthians 12).

God's Truth promises joy in

seasons of trials. The apostle Paul, who himself, suffered from some infirmity, asked the Lord three times to remove it, but he accepted Christ's sufficient grace so that Christ's power may rest on him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Yes, I have asked Him abundantly more than three times to heal Lexie. But, do you know she has never asked Him to remove it? She is completely satisfied.

Now, I'm not going to pretend it's as easy for me, as it is for her. When I'm faced with the challenges that come with watching a child who suffers medically and struggles with other needs, it is my mind and emotions that suffer, but it is also here that God's victory is experienced because this kind of suffering brings me to that place of trust, rooting out fear and insecurity. It gives me opportunity to learn, obey and grow in Him (Hebrews 5:8).

So, I consider it all joy because God is working strength and patience in me! His goal is to perfect me and complete me (James 1:2-4).

And while not trying to over-spiritualize my daughter, or people like her, consider, just for a moment: Lexie accepts His grace with complete childlike faith; her

endurance already perfected! It is beyond my comprehension, but He lets me bear witness to it! She also has a way of making me feel like I'm the best mom in the world, in spite of my imperfection. She is grateful for the smallest things that I do for her...like making her a sandwich, or simply putting her hair up in a ponytail; "Thank you so much, Mommy!" She still wants me to tuck her in bed at night and she still holds my hand. She celebrates the life God has given her with worshipful exuberance and is fully aware of where her help comes from (Psalm 121). Her unconditional love is infectious. I am truly blessed and overwhelmed with joy.

Lastly, God's Truth promises that all sickness and disabilities are temporary. It's just part of this fallen world, not the world to come. All of God's children, those who by faith in Christ are made children of God (John 1:12), have the hope of a glorious future. When Jesus returns, the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then the lame will leap like deer, and the mute tongue will shout for joy (Isaiah 35:5-6).

God's healing for Lexie may not be what I asked for, or be on this side of heaven, and just maybe, the healing isn't for her, but for you & I (2 Corinthians 12:9).

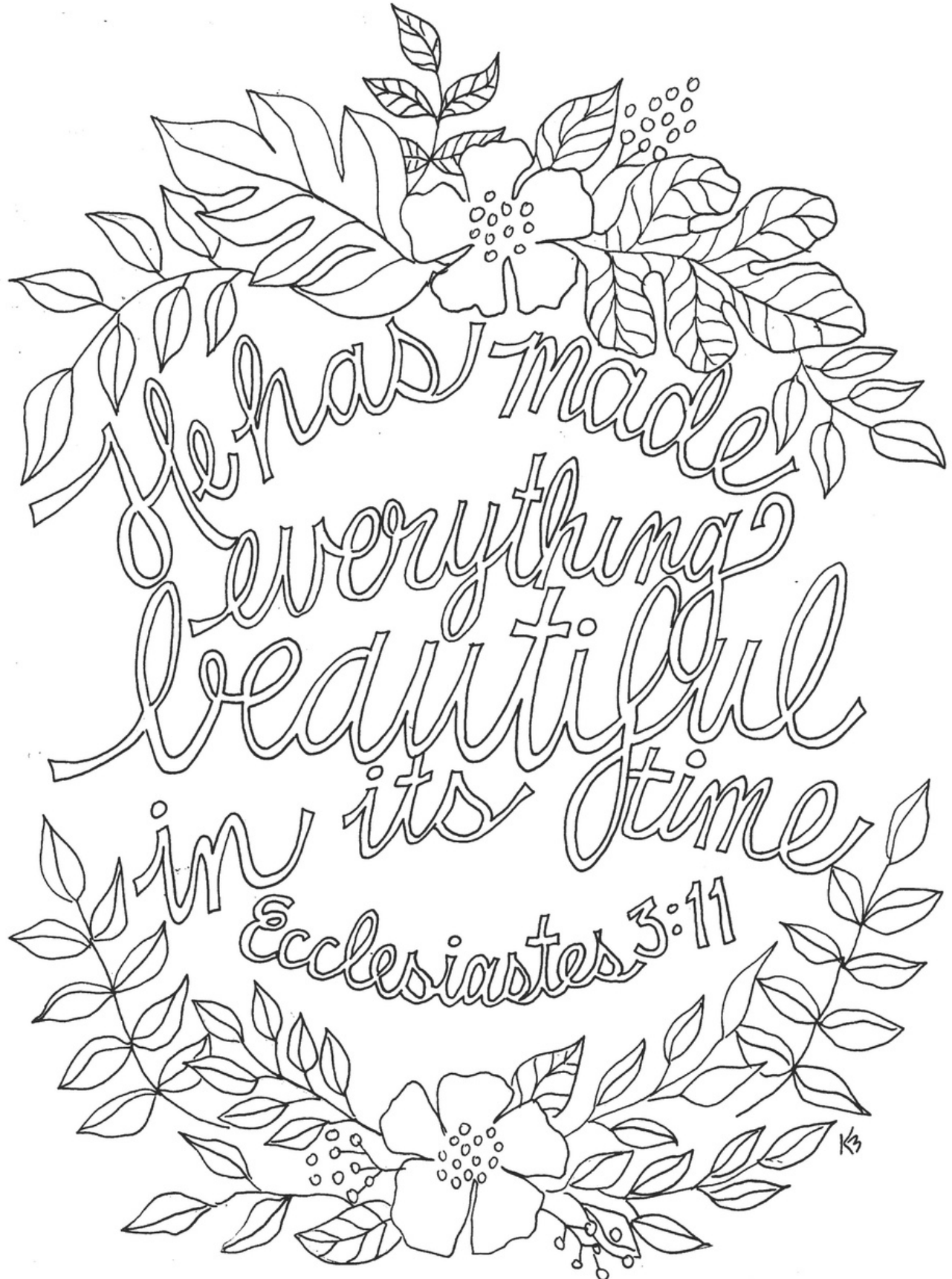
He is in control and knows every detail about us and always has our best interests in mind. His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are our ways His ways,...they are so much higher (Isaiah 55:8-9)!

So now, I hear only God's Truth in this long season and reflect on the blossoms of the Bradford pear a little differently. They are the first hopeful sign of what is to come, but they are often only here for a short while. Yes, their fragrance is pungent, and may even cause your eyes to tear. Most, admire their magnificent splendor from a distance, but each delicate blossom, perfectly formed by Him, is worth a closer look.

I pray that God uses my season to soften the hearts of others; to see "special needs" as He sees them... loved, valued and for His purpose and glory. I pray for others to see the beauty of God's glory and how He works in all circumstances and in all seasons.

Since the beginning of time, the radical grace of God calls us to uncomfortable places. It's in this place and in these seasons, that we can lean into God's Truth and continue to hope in the Lord, renewing our strength and soar on wings like eagles (Isaiah 40:31).

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. --Ecclesiastes 3:1-8





who am i?

Do you know who each of these significant biblical women are?
Text your answers to 704-680-2613 to claim your prize!
Be sure to include your name!

- 1) She said to her husband, "I have suffered many things in a dream because of him."
- 2) I became the wife of Hosea.
- 3) I am the daughter of Jacob and Leah and I loved to sightsee.
- 4) I told my daughter to ask for John the Baptist's head on a charger.
- 5) I am the mother of Moses.
- 6) My father was Jethro and I was married to Moses.
- 7) I am the second daughter of Job (Hint: find me in Job 42:14).

Notes and Journaling

- When we understand that God is sovereign, and sanctification (to make holy; to set apart for special purpose) is the predominant purpose for why we experience joy, pain, blessings and trials, we can prepare our hearts to receive whatever comes our way so that our faith will not be shaken by the seasons of life that attempt to undermine our faith and trust in the Lord. What season of life are you currently in? How are you responding? Does how you respond need to change?
- **READ:** Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
- **WRITE or DRAW** your thoughts:

Notes:

FALL RECIPES

- **SALTED CARAMEL APPLE PUNCH**
- **CARAMEL APPLE DIP**



SALTED CARAMEL APPLE PUNCH

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 2 quarts ginger ale
- 1 c orange juice
- 1 c salted caramel syrup, Torani, DaVinci, etc.
- 1/3 c lemon juice, or to taste
- 4 red-skinned apples, diced
- 4 c ice cubes
- Caramel ice cream topping, optional
- 1/4 tsp flaky sea salt, optional

Directions:

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. In a large stockpot, combine the apple juice, ginger ale, orange juice, caramel syrup, and lemon juice. Taste and adjust, adding more syrup and/or lemon juice, as desired.
3. Transfer the mixture to the refrigerator to chill thoroughly.
4. Fill the punch bowl and add a ladle for serving or transfer the chilled punch to pitchers.
5. Chop the apples and add them to the punch along with ice cubes just before serving.
6. Put the caramel ice cream topping or dulce de leche in a bowl and lightly dip the rims of serving glasses. Sprinkle with flaky salt.
7. Enjoy.

thespruceeats.com

CARAMEL APPLE DIP

- 8 oz cream cheese (softened)
- 3/4 c brown sugar (light or dark)
- 1/2 tsp caramel extract/flavoring
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 c crushed peanuts (use for topping)
- 4-6 sliced apples of your choice

Directions:

1. Put first four ingredients in a medium mixing bowl. Use a hand mixer on medium speed for two minutes or until all ingredients are thoroughly mixed.
2. Place in serving dish and refrigerate for at least three hours or preferably overnight.
3. Sprinkle with peanuts right before serving with sliced apples.

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thrive! Ladies Ministry...Who are we?

The thrive! Ladies Ministry mission is to facilitate Christian growth through prayer, Bible study, discipleship, and fellowship. As CBC women grow and mature in godliness, we will be better equipped to nurture and serve our families, enrich our church, evangelize our community, and support missions locally and globally. Currently, there are nine ministry teams working to accomplish these goals.

- **Helping Hands Ministry Team**
- **Media and Communications Ministry Team**
- **White Rose Widow Ministry**
- **Expectant and New Moms Ministry Team**
- **NextGeneration thrive!**
- **Grace Missions Team**
- **Large Scale Events Ministry Team**
- **Visual Impact Ministry Team**
- **Missions and Evangelism Ministry Team**

The thrive! Leadership Team would like for you to serve with us as we minister to our fellow sisters at CBC and women in our community. Please see Julie Kimmins or email her at jkimmins21@gmail.com for more information or to get connected with a ministry team.

9 Steps to a More Meaningful Holiday Season

1. DON'T OVERSPEND.
"GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN"
(1 TIMOTHY 6:6).
2. HAVE A GRATITUDE ATTITUDE (PSALM 107:1).
THIS WILL GO A LONG WAY IN DISSOLVING HOLIDAY BLUES.
3. SHARE WITH THE NEEDY.
VISIT A NURSING HOME, BUY GIFTS FOR A NEEDY FAMILY, OR
BRING A MEAL TO A SHUT-IN. YOU'LL BE "LENDING TO THE
LORD--AND HE WILL REPAY YOU!" (PROVERBS 19:17; MATTHEW
25:40)
4. CELEBRATE CHRIST'S BIRTH WITH SOMEONE WHO IS LONELY
OR FACING DIFFICULTIES. "WHEN YOU GIVE A BANQUET, INVITE
THE POOR, THE CRIPPLED, THE LAME, THE BLIND"
(LUKE 14:13).
5. PAUSE AND PRAY OFTEN (PHILIPPIANS 4:6; 1 THESSALONIANS
5:17).
6. SING, RECITE SCRIPTURE, REJOICE! SINGING PSALMS AND
HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS" (EPHESIANS 5:19).
7. PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BELIEVERS (HEBREWS 13:3).
THE CHRISTMAS SEASON OFTEN BRINGS INCREASED
PERSECUTION.
8. TAKE A GIFT OR PLATE OF COOKIES TO UNSAVED
NEIGHBORS.
9. MAKE "THE MOST OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY"
(COLOSSIANS 4:5).

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 12 - FESTIVAL OF TABLES

DECEMBER 10 - TOY SHARE

DECEMBER 11 - CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DECEMBER 16-18 - DRIVE-THRU NATIVITY

JANUARY 31 - THRIVE MINISTRY FAIR

'SHE READS' BOOK CLUB

MEETING ON ALTERNATE SATURDAYS @ 10:00 AM
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
REBECCA SCOTT-FIELDEN 704-680-2613

"WHEN GOD DOESN'T FIX IT"

BY LAURA STORY

BEGINNING NOVEMBER 5, 2022

GRIEF SHARE

"IT HURTS WHEN WE LOSE SOMEONE. FIND HELP AT GRIEF SHARE."

THURSDAY EVENINGS - 6PM
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
LISA SCEARCE 704-640-4381

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH OFFICE
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CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
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PREGNANCY SUPPORT CENTER
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PRESENT AGE MINISTRIES
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COUNSELING CENTER AT CONCORD
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[HTTPS://WWW.COUNSELINGGCENTERATCONCORD.COM](https://www.counselinggcenteratconcord.com)

**"THOSE WHO
LEAVE
EVERYTHING IN
GOD'S HAND WILL
EVENTUALLY SEE
GOD'S HAND IN
EVERYTHING."
-UNKNOWN**

CENTRAL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
704-934-2050
VISIT CCA@CBCKANNAPOLIS.COM
FOR MORE INFORMATION



**Follow thrive! Ladies Ministry on
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