

I Have Placed Before You An Open Door (Rev. 3:8)

A word from Deborah L. Roeger, Executive Director



“Now to Him
who is able
to do
immeasurably
more than all
we ask or
imagine”

Ephesians 3:20

Recently I read a true story about God’s provision for a young mother in Colombia. I want to share the story with our readers because it captures the heart of what Stand in the Gap (SITG) is all about! We find it hard to put into words what happens in our SITG spiritual families. I hope after reading this story, your eyes will be opened to new possibilities and you will enlarge your faith enough to explore ways in which God might be calling you to stand with us. Few of us can stand in the gap, but many of us can close the gap!♥

God provided immeasurably more than what was ever imagined

A nurse was working among the displaced population in Columbia when she examined a severely malnourished 3-day old baby boy. After hearing the mother’s story, she knew that the fact the baby was even alive was a miracle. The baby’s mother explained that the doctor had written an order when her son was born instructing her not to breastfeed him because of the epilepsy medication she was taking. The doctor advised the mother to purchase a supplement for the baby, but it was outrageously expensive.

Because the mother had no means to buy the formula, she had only been able to give her son occasional teaspoons of water for the past 3 days. The nurse knew that the baby would die within the next day or two if he didn’t get proper nutrition. She sat there staring at the frail baby and the desperate mother in front of her. She strained her brain for a solution. How could she possibly find the funds among this impoverished people to help the mother purchase the life saving formula her baby son so desperately needed?

Have you placed God in a small box by limited thinking?

What would you do? How would you pray? What options would you explore to meet this mother’s need? Would you be thinking and praying that perhaps the mother could possibly go off her own medication in order to feed her child? Would you pray that some generous person would step forward and offer to pay for the formula? There seemed to be no other possibilities . . . no other options.

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Prayer That God Answers

I know what it feels like to want help, to need help, to be so desperate for help that I won't make it unless I get it. I want to reach out and ask another person and say I need help. But something holds me back. Is it fear? Yes, sometimes it is fear. Other times it's just our busy schedules and our lack of connection. Sometimes I can't believe that the other person really cares about me or my problems especially if the problem seems to hang on for a while. I've half-heartedly listened to another's concern and flippantly said I'd pray only to forget about the request until I saw the person again. Then in shame and embarrassment I'd quickly shoot a prayer heavenward and secretly hope that in the end they would be a better friend than I. But on the other hand I have also fasted and prayed for others that I am deeply connected with - a deep heartfelt connection with another human being...the kind of connection we were created for. Relationships like this don't happen overnight, they form over time. Matthew 18:19 provides an incredible promise that if we will join together, share and pray our prayers will be heard and answered. The promise has a requirement, that is, we must agree. I like contemporary jazz music, but I don't care for old-time jazz jam sessions where all the musicians do their own thing. To me this is chaos and sounds like just a bunch of noise. There is no harmonizing together, no flow, no continuity. But it is a good illustration of the type of prayer Jesus says is not effective. Rather, Matthew 18:19 emphasizes we must harmonize when we pray. We must hear the flow of God's heart and not just make our own demands. This type of harmony comes about by being in community with the Spirit of God. It flows out of us and joins with others to whom we are connected. The result is that a symphony of prayer is orchestrated. This is prayer that is answered. And this is the concept behind a Stand in the Gap spiritual family, a group of people connected through the Holy Spirit to find the ebb and flow of harmonizing (coming into unity) prayer for each member of the family.♥

by Collyn Wooden, Mentor Coordinator

But God.....

The solution God provided would not have occurred to many of us; but the God who knows all and sees all and does immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine provided an answer full of wisdom and perfect in solution. It was an answer that pointed to Him alone as the Creator and Sustainer of Life.

Four other nursing women in the church volunteered to take on the responsibility of feeding the infant. The missionary concluded her story, "It was amazing to see how God not only provided for the child, but in a manner that took the emphasis off the foreigners [who were serving in Columbia] and focused it on Him."

This is such a powerful illustration of what Stand in the Gap,[™] Ohio is all about. A group of 6 - 8 volunteers surrounding one prescreened ex-offender meeting twice a month so that each one can encourage the other to keep their focus on God and what He alone can do.♥

Summarized from the November 7 devotional reading called "A job for the church", Voices of the Faithful, 2005 published by Integrity Publishers.

You can be part of a Spiritual Family

New Spiritual Families are waiting to begin - maybe one of these families is waiting for **you**. Formerly incarcerated adults are prescreened by a Christian counselor. Then 6 - 8 volunteers are trained to become a spiritual family who walks in covenant relationship with the ex-offender for a year. The requirement is to meet twice each month for one year. Opportunities are open for married couples or individuals. **For more information** about becoming involved in a SITG spiritual family, contact either:

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Prayer

is the

best

wireless

connection

www.OpeningMoreDoors.org

Have you visited recently?

If not, we hope you will stop by our website soon. Grant funds from the Federal Compassion Capital Fund allowed us to work with a wonderful creative team. They created new tools to help us better explain who we are and what we do – including Sarah's House. These things have just been added to our website.

A Thank You Note

~ God's People Are Such a Blessing ~

Jon and I have been so blessed by the out pouring of volunteers that have come to Sarah's House and volunteered their time, money and talents. This time in our life has truly given us the opportunity to see God's hands and feet in motion. I wish you all could have been here to watch what we have been able to witness. God's people have landscaped the yard, furnished and decorated (with great talent) the bedroom called "Faith". You have given gifts to furnish this home completely, dressed the windows with such elegance and grace. You have clothed the walls with God's Word in pictures. You continue to work to support this ministry financially through fund raisers, donations and food drives. You have given a Bible, money for clothing, and a treasure chest full of personal items to Victoria, our first resident of Sarah's House.

Not only have you been a blessing to Jon and me but Victoria has been truly amazed by the showering of gifts and talent. She finds it hard to believe that there are so many people who want to help in this ministry. She loves her room and her warm house. She is so grateful to everyone as Jon and I are. We just wanted to say "thank you" from the bottom of our heart.

*Jon & Peggy Pence,
Sarah's House Resident Directors*

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- † New prayer warriors to join in the prayer assignment for Opening More Doors for Women (trauma recovery for incarcerated women)
- † Breakthroughs for the women participating in Opening More Doors for Women
- † New volunteers for SITG spiritual families & for youth program facilitation
- † For the State to develop a housing voucher system
- † Funds to offer substance abuse recovery services to incarcerated women
- † Church partnerships for Sarah's House

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PRAISE REPORTS

- ✚ Increasing numbers of incarcerated men and women we are serving are beginning to explore the truth and power of forgiving themselves and others.
- ✚ Victoria (resident at Sarah's House) has been approved for financial aid which will permit her to begin taking classes at Columbus State.
- ✚ God's continuing provision day-by-day for Sarah's House.
- ✚ New corporate partnerships that are being explored.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Many Americans think of Thanksgiving as a wonderful time to celebrate a long weekend, eat a great dinner, get together with family or get a jump start on Christmas shopping. But Catherine Millard sets the record straight when she reminds us we can trace this historic American Christian tradition back to 1623. After the harvest crops were gathered in November, William Bradford, Governor of the Plymouth Pilgrim Colony proclaimed:

"All ye Pilgrims with your wives and little ones, do gather at the Meeting House, on the hill... there to listen to the pastor, and **render Thanksgiving to the Almighty God for all His blessings.**"

The origin of our annual Thanksgiving Day celebration is focused on God. May we each remember to render thanks to Almighty God for His abundant blessings all through the year. (Psalm 50:14)♥