

The Beauty Of Gray

O A R E N E T I O N

By Ruth Ann Clark

Jenna struggled with herself as she yanked the car door open. "I don't want to go to small group tonight. Don't feel like being with people and bearing my soul. Don't really even feel like reading the Bible."

The shining figure beside her gently touched the side of Jenna's face. Jenna turned and saw the book on the seat beside her, John's Bible. The figure wrapped an arm around Jenna's shoulder enveloping her in a soft glow. Tears threatened, fell, following the worn path down her cheek.

"God, I just don't know if I can." Her cry mingled with the rumble of the engine coming to life. The figure settled beside her, the glow surrounding them both. Jenna drove past brightly lit houses, shiny Christmas trees, people laughing, pulling packages out of their cars to carry into their warm, happy homes.

Was it just last Christmas that she had been one of them, rushing in to hide John's present before he got home? It seemed so long since the accident, like forever; each day a new, black eternity to survive. The dark hole where she lived was so deep she couldn't remember when she'd last seen light. Light and John had left together.

Just lately, occasionally the black seemed a little lighter, a dark shade of gray. Maybe since she'd started going to the group? She always went to church. John would be disappointed if she didn't, and she did feel comforted there, holding John's Bible, opening to the right places, seeing his underlining and notes. It was easy to slip in and out without talking to anyone. Once-in-a-while Megan would catch her though. A couple months ago she finally coerced her into coming to the small group at her house.

Meg - a small smile touched Jenna's lips. They'd been friends forever, even before John. Everything was measured in Before John and Since John. Her smile faded; the glow intensified. Jenna felt warmth, peace, settling over her. Her grip on the steering wheel eased. She was so blessed to have a friend like Megan; someone who'd been there BJ and SJ. Her lips curved slightly again.

She sat for a minute in the dark after parking the car. "OK, here we go." With a deep breath she stepped out into the night. She walked slowly to the house, the silent, shining figure beside her. Inside it was like the homes she had passed - warm, happy, colorful and bright; brighter than she knew in fact.

As she joined friends the angel with her joined the others already there. They formed a shining circle around the room, lighting every dark corner. A few black shapes shrunk back, searching for hidden places to take up surveillance, but giving up scurried outside. This room, this house, was claimed in the strong name of Jesus, surrounded by the shining ones. They had no place there now.

Jenna was welcomed with warm hugs and a cup of hot cider. This was one of those gray times where a little light entered her black world and she felt like maybe dawn was still out there somewhere. Slowly everyone settled down and Meg's husband opened in prayer. The shining protectors moved in close around the group, each standing behind the one they guarded.

An attempt was made at singing a few Christmas carols which mostly ended up being a joyful noise. Jenna didn't sing, but she laughed with the others. It felt good.

People in the group started sharing the challenges and triumphs they had experienced that week. Oh no! Jenna shrunk lower into the corner of the couch. Challenges? Triumphs? Had she felt either? Probably. They just didn't matter enough to remember. It was quiet. Jenna felt all eyes on her. The angel behind her reached out and placed strong, gentle hands on her shoulders. She looked up and saw love shining back at her from around the room.

"My challenge this week was to come here tonight. My triumph is making it. You're here for me every week, praying for me and caring. I still never really want to come, but when I do there's a brightness here that's just enough to make my black world a little gray. Maybe you don't know how beautiful gray can be, but for me it's that place between dark and light that makes me believe that light is still out there. Thank you for turning my world gray, and helping it get a little lighter every week."

firstBaptistchurch March 2nd, 2011

Lifegroup prayer and praise

Please continue to pray for **Jeanne Gilman** as she deals with pneumonia.

Hans Wold tripped and fell going into his house Monday night, he broke his hip. He is at Colby Campus where he is undergoing surgery today (Wednesday) Please keep him in prayer for a complete recovery.

Dave Foley had his first round of chemo on Feb. 22nd, He did ok with it, no nausea or vomiting, he is eating well. We would like prayer for his doctors that they give him the best advice. Pray that the tumors shrink and we all stay positive, that would be a huge help. Thanks again, we miss you guys.

Jennifer Foley (one of our former Navy families)

Chris Green asks for safety & health for his wife Amanda as she gives birth to their fourth "Blessing" baby, and praise God for continually allowing me to grow.

Barb Lillard had been ill, please pray for a quick recovery for her.

Our church secretary **Sheri Wiederspohn** is having knee surgery on Wednesday, March 2nd for "floaties" on her knee. Pray for a painless & speedy recovery.

I have returned to work! Praise God!, part time through the Everett School Dist. subbing. I have been told that I have not made any new progress in nerve regeneration in my back, I am now permanently disabled, please pray for healing. ~ **Rose Toscano**

Robert Johnson asks that we pray for his interview, which is scheduled for March 3rd with the Seattle Mariners as a ticket taker.

Remember **Gene Dobson** in prayer, he has his surgery scheduled in the near future.

The **McCormick** family needs prayer: **Christy** for a job, she got laid off in Feb., **David** needs some painting jobs lined up for this summer while he is on break from college and please pray for their finances.

I ask for continued prayer for **my mom, Patricia**, that the infection will heal and she will regain full use of her hip. ~ **Darcy Stanyo**

Lisa Wiebe, Gloria Love's sister is in Liberia ministering to women and children. Please pray for her safety during this time.

Please pray for; Washington to approve my application for VA housing;. ~ **Alfred Lewis**

As our students are off to college and working hard to better their future—please remember them in your prayers: **Matt Love and Alec Bird**



Camile & Nathan are pleased to announce the arrival of Shane Phillip!!!

Born February 25th at 2:11am weighing in at 8 lbs. 11 oz. and 21 inches long.

A little brother for Rudy!

VBS 2011 NEED LIST:

brown paper bags—large ones
(100 needed)

Pray for our Military

- **John Schwartz**—in Afghanistan—
- **Robin Schwartz** stateside in Everett.
- **Jason Peery**—Oregon National Guard—heading to Iraq for a year, brother of Jennifer.
- **Jonathan Michaels Estrella**—son of Sharon Boswell.
- **Jason Bjazevich**—Megan Owenby's husband—Army Special Forces— Stationed in N. Carolina.
- **Scott Harpell**—son of Brian & Lynne—Stationed at Fort Carson, CO.
- **Aaron Weston**—nephew of Ken and Kathy—Stationed in San Diego.
- **Eric Schmidt** — son of Gene and Pat Schmidt — Camp Fallujah, Iraq.
- **Benjamin Lagonia**—dear friend of the Naylor family—stationed in Manitoba.
- **Brett Love**—grandson of Wilma—Army National Guard—Serving at home.
- **Christian Chmielewski**—nephew of JoAnn Couturie' - in the Marines.
- **ENS Andrew E. Timpner** (fiancé to Christin Suthard) on deployment with USS Momsen.
- **Devin Abbitt**—nephew of Paul Abbitt - Marine, stateside.
- **Duane Neyens** brother to Kathy Chapman—Army National Guard —is back at his home base in So.CA.
- **Philip Ankney**-LCPL Afghanistan Cousin of MaryAnn Peterson.
- **Jeffrey Lillard**—son of Barbara Lillard — Srg. In Army, Stationed at Fort Lewis.
- **Aaron Chmielewski**—joined the Marines. Nephew of JoAnn Couturie
- **Shawn Berland**—deploying for 6 months
- **Andrew Sustaita**—serving on board the USS Abraham Lincoln



Lifegroup Happenings

all in the family

by Florence Miller

As friends of **Jeanne Gillman** we've all been praying for her and following her progress as she battles double pneumonia. A note from Chris Frizell after she visited Jeanne reports the following: "We talked with her daughter Michelle who is here from Minnesota. Jeanne's lungs are still full of fluid and she is retaining a lot of liquid. She is hooked up to many tubes and monitors. They have increased the oxygen she is getting and also increased the pressure as her breathing is worse the last couple days. One daughter has asked that visitors be restricted and the other tells us that visitors are welcome for short stays." Fortunately there is now a way to communicate with Jeanne via the following email address: <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/jeannegillman> It will give you updates on her condition and also a space to write a message to her. Most fortunately, our "bridge" is always open to our Lord for prayers for His Will to be done -(and hope it is ours too!)- for a complete recovery.

Bill Deller says thank you for those who have sent cards and offered prayers during this time of further probes and decisions regarding his cancer. March 16th is a day for prayer as he goes into the University of Washington hospital for further analysis and decisions.

A note from **Pastor Brian** asking prayer for **Bob Dixon**. We have missed his presence among us but his home's distance precludes that drive. According to Pastor's note, Bob continues to be well; playing a little tennis from time to time and helping pick up the grandkids from school every other week. He also is in a nearby place of worship each week.

Ron Newman stopped by the office to say Thank you to everyone for the prayers, cards and phone calls since his dad's passing. He and his family really appreciate all the care and he said the reception was beautiful.

Please keep **Gene Dobson** in prayer for upcoming surgery and recovery: March 10th -9:00am Northwest Hospital for surgery. 4-5 days in the hospital, 1 week in rehab, a few days with the Weakleys, then a month with his daughter Andrea who teaches college at Whitman in Walla Walla.

Shelly Rohde, one of our Preschool leaders, is walking in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3-Day walk. This is a 60 mile walk and each participant walks the entire 60 miles. Shelly has been preparing for the walk over the last year through conditioning and exercise. If you have any questions for Shelly you can contact her at srohde12@frontier.com or 678-463-8092

Financial Update; February 27th, \$12,639.22
Tithe envelopes are now available in the Pacific Room.

***Adult attendance: 9:00am 51 & 10:30am 172 ***Children: 9am 12 + 5 — 10:30am 21 + 10
***Elementary: 9am 16 + 7 — 10:30 am 20 + 10 ***Middle School: 13 + 2 — Youth Small Group: 15 + 2

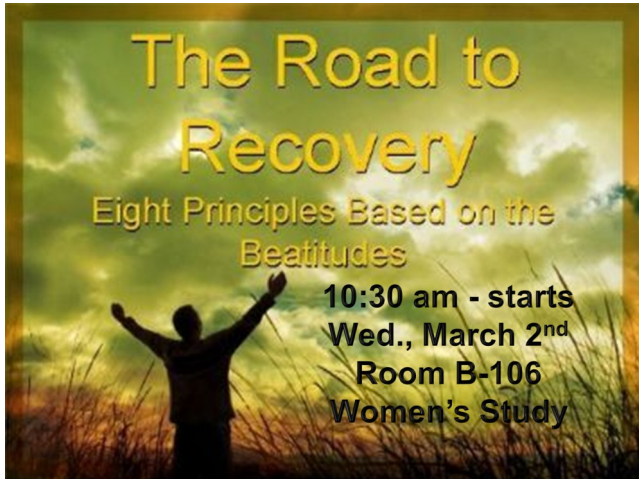
Up Coming Adventures... **S.A.M. Happenings**

March 4th - SAM Luncheon 11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. Program: Kamiak Chorale

March 5th - Benaroya Hall with the Seattle Symphony and Marvin Hamlisch as they give a Tribute to Cole Porter. Transportation in our vans.



Lifegroup Contributing Opportunities



The Road to Recovery
 Eight Principles Based on the Beatitudes
 10:30 am - starts
 Wed., March 2nd
 Room B-106
 Women's Study



GET ON THE ROAD TO FINANCIAL PEACE
 Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace UNIVERSITY
 daveramsey.com
 6:30 pm
 Cascade Room \$99.00
 Starts March 2nd, 2011
 FOR MORE INFO CALL 425-259-9166

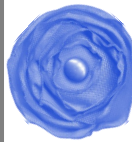
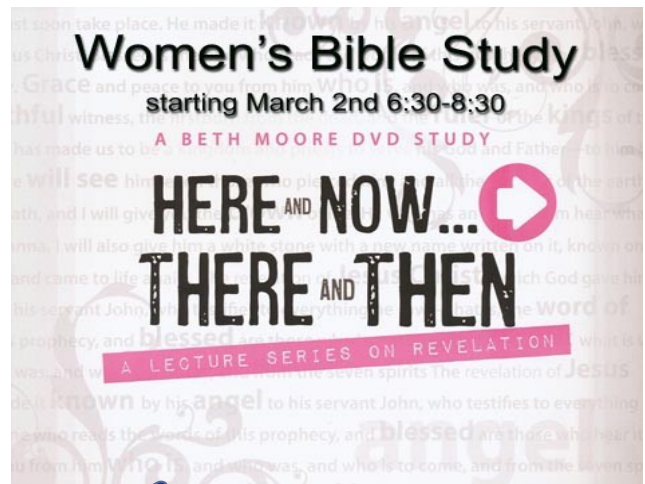
USHER CAPTAIN 2011:
 March—**Marc Owenby**
Pete Sontra

COFFEE HOUR Schedule

March 6th
Kit and John Mullen
 Sm. Pt./Arlington LG

March 13th
Laura Oversvee
 Women of Purpose

March 20th
Ruelyn Nelson
 Women of Purpose

Women's Bible Study
 starting March 2nd 6:30-8:30
 A BETH MOORE DVD STUDY
HERE AND NOW... THERE AND THEN
 A LECTURE SERIES ON REVELATION

Happy Birthday to...

Sherra Ellis....March 2nd
 Kathy Baxter, Jack Burgess & James Estep....March 4th
 Mary Beth VanDalen....March 5th
 Denise Bennecker & Shelly Rohde....March 6th
 Pamela Dehnhoff & Danielle Finseth....March 7th
 Nathan Hardy....March 8th

Smokey Point/Arlington Lifegroup

Exit #172nd Meets Friday's 7:30-9:00 pm
 John and Kit Mullen, 360-652-9617, for more info.
Come on up and see what we are all about!

***Lela Meadows Scholarships available now!**

***Greeter subs needed: call Carol Kelly, 425.210.8595.**