



To Teach Keepers™

Fall-Winter 2008

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The Lord is My Portion

by Sylvia Britton

The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

Psalm 16:5-6

The first time I read those lines I didn't really understand them, but something in me held on to them. Many years later I began to see what they mean.

I grew up in the family of people who were familiar with Christ and His Church. My Mother was a Christian. My Dad, well, I don't really know about

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October: Pastor Appreciation Month

by Karen Twombly

"The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."

— 1 Timothy 5:17

The pulpit, the hospital bedside, the altar kneeling beside the hurting, the graveside, sharing Christ with the

unsaved, celebrating new birth, in the office studying, on the sidelines cheering on the weary, in the midst of the crowd. In all these places and more you will find your pastor. He has no set hours because every hour is an hour in which you might find him ministering. Talking to him on Sunday is a huge challenge because the crowd

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Reflections on Fall

by Linda Maria Reddoch

It's finally FALL! Or Autumn, as some call it. I'm just glad it's here! I love the weather changes. When the hot, summer, sizzling temps finally cool down to crisp fall evenings and mornings. When you have to put socks on to keep your toes from getting frozen. Mornings where you have to eat Cream of Wheat and drink plenty of hot cocoa, coffee, or cappucino to be warm

on the inside to make you warm on the outside. Days where you step outside and smell leaves burning and that cool wind about takes your breath away. How awesome is that? God has designed the perfect world for us to enjoy.

Psalm 37:11 says that "the meek will inherit the earth; and will delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Don't let what the secular media is

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The Lord is My Portion (continued)

When my first two children were very small, I made a commitment to God to follow Him hard and to make a godly heritage for them.

him. Mother was a nurse and Dad was a policeman. We probably had more than our share of stress at home because Dad was an alcoholic. His Dad was an alcoholic, too. And who knows how far back that went. But I did have lots of exposure to one set of godly Grandparents, a loving Church family and some friends who were Christians.

By any stretch of the imagination, I did not have much to brag about in the genealogical department. My family is ordinary, my pedigree unimpressive. And while I was not truly a first generation Christian, I could be termed a first generation committed follower of Christ.

When my first two children were very small, I made a commitment to God to follow Him hard and to make a godly heritage for them. My husband made that commitment, too, and though it has been hard and we have stumbled, God has honored that commitment and given us strength and grace every day to live for Him.

Its not impossible to change the kind of heritage your family has handed to you, to hand on down to your children. In fact, that's the way God works. He changes people, and ultimately changes the lives of their families.

I don't discount my godly Mother's and grandparents' prayers; they were crucial to God's moving in my life. But I also know that given my family circumstances, it would have been very easy to choose to go the other way. It seems like at every turn in my life there were choices to make and many I made poorly. And yet, I didn't finally go that other way, and that is God's grace at work.

I imagine that you, too, have made choices of which you aren't proud; choices that have changed your life the lives your family members who are living today. For example, you may have chosen not to attend church many years ago. Maybe you rationalized it by saying that it was just too hard to work into life. Today, you are aware that your own children are suffering in the area of spiritual growth and development, which can only be had in the context of a Christian Church.

The good news is that God can change the heritage you are making for your children right now. He will give you a new hope and a new future when you ask Him to forgive your sins and tell Him that you believe that Jesus, His only Son, came to earth to die for your sins. And if you are already a Christian, He can change your course and alter your heritage by forgiving and redirecting your life. It's simply never too late, while you are alive, to ask God to change things. But don't presume on God and figure that He'll be found forever. He is precise in telling us that there will come a day when He will not be found (Isaiah 55:6).

When I first read Psalm 16:5-6, I thought it meant that my own family was a good heritage. I wasn't sure how to reconcile that. Later, I found that it means that God provides His children with a wonderful inheritance. Just like I was trying to do for my children! God was providing this for me, His child. So, it wasn't important that my family wasn't much in the spiritual giant department. God is providing me with a goodly inheritance because I asked

The Lord is My Portion (continued)

While I am building a beautiful inheritance for my children, God has built one for me. Regardless of my family's history, my children and I are co-heirs with Jesus of all that our Father owns.

Him to grow me, and because I committed myself to being His disciple.

I love this verse especially in the English Standard Version:

The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

Truly, the Lord God holds my future in His hand and He has given me a beautiful inheritance. While I am building a beautiful inheritance for my children, God has built one for me. Regardless of my family's history, my children and I are co-heirs with Jesus of all that our Father owns.

Pastor Appreciation (continued)

October is a great time to do something special for your pastor to demonstrate your love and appreciation for him.

has already gathered before the last "amen." His phone is often busy...

Did you know that October is Pastor Appreciation Month? Though we can, and should, show our pastor appreciation throughout the whole year, October is a great time to do something special for your pastor to demonstrate your love and appreciation for him. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

A SPECIAL TREAT

Perhaps you could provide a special treat for your pastor. It could be a gift certificate to his favorite restaurant. You could offer to baby-sit his children so that he and his wife could enjoy it together. Or how about a local spot that would be for the whole family: an amusement park, a movie, a play or concert? Perhaps you could pool your money together with others in the church for a fun day out for him and his family. Even a gift certificate to a coffee shop can be a real treat. When my husband pastored, a family in the church used to give us a gift certificate

yearly to buy our children snow boots. This was such a blessing to us! We had such fun taking them out and getting them quality boots and not having to worry over where we would find the money.

A HOMEMADE TREAT

The Pastor's life is a busy one for he and his family. You could organize meals for him for a week or a month to take that burden off of them. Take it a step further and ask everyone to use disposable dishes so that he does not have to worry about returning dishes and pans. Now, that's a treat! If you can't get a group together, even one meal provided by you with a note that reminds him of how you appreciate him would be long remembered.

A SHARED SKILL

Now this has been my burden for a long time and if you like this idea too, Pastor Appreciation Month would be a great kick-off time. Most pastors make less money than the average income in

Pastor Appreciation (continued)

Whatever you decide to do for Pastor Appreciation Month, do not forget to give the gift that never stops giving. Commit to pray daily for your pastor and his family.

their area. In my state, most pastors hold a second job. What if an auto mechanic in the church offered to provide service to the pastor's vehicle with the parts given at cost and the labor free? And what if a plumber in the church did the same? And an electrician? And a hairdresser? What if women who sew offered to make clothes for their family, or quilts when they are needed? And if painters painted? And if knitters would knit dishcloths and blankets? This would be the same to him as income yet it would be tax free! Pray about committing your skill to your pastor and his family. Spread the word and get others involved!

THE GIFT THAT NEVER STOPS GIVING

Finally, whatever you decide to do for Pastor Appreciation Month, do not forget to give the gift that never stops giving. Commit to pray daily for your pastor and his family. Pray for his spiritual walk, for his stamina, for his study of God's Word, for his sermon, for his overall ministry, for his health, that he would be sensitive to the needs of his family, and that he would be a godly and loving husband and father. Pray for his wife, that she would be encouraged, for her spiritual walk, for her role as his wife and the mother of their children, and that her needs would be met. Pray for his kids, that they would grow to love and serve Jesus, for their health, for their provision, and that they would find joy in their daddy being a pastor. Pray through Scripture on his behalf. Check

out the first chapters of Paul's epistles for such prayers! For example, use Colossians 1:9-12, starting in the middle of verse 9: "I ask you God to fill Pastor Barry with the knowledge of Your will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And I pray this in order that Pastor Barry would live a life worthy of the Lord and please you in everything; that he would bear fruit in every good work, grow in the knowledge of God..." Do you get the idea? You can pray Scripture for your pastor. Choose Pastor Appreciation Month to make a commitment to pray for your pastor and his family, and to let him know you are praying for him. Send an occasional card to him through the year to remind him that you are still praying.

The ministry of the Pastor holds many challenges. It is exhausting — physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Your acts of love and appreciation can be used by God as a healing salve to your pastor and an encouragement that keeps him striving and working on God's behalf. I hope these ideas have helped you to think of the various ways you can bless your pastor and his family for this October's Pastor Appreciation Month, and beyond.

Fall Reflections (continued)

Sometimes, I don't think we have the real understanding of God's love for us. If we did, we wouldn't doubt His Word and we would trust completely in Him.

telling you about the economy, terrorists, hurricanes, floods, famines – reports that can have a negative impact on your life and how you serve God. But, be at peace. GOD is in control. After all, HE designed this earth and the life you live. God wants you to live in peace. Psalm 122:7 says “Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.”

What is peace? Webster's Dictionary defines peace as: *a state of tranquility or quiet; freedom from disquiet or emotional fears.* I like that. Freedom from fear! God wants us to be free from fear. After all, fear is the opposite of faith.

Psalm 4:8 says, “I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.”

We can go to bed at night and sleep in peace. No matter what's going on in the world or our own little worlds. We can have freedom of peace.

Psalm 89:17 says, “For thou art the glory of their strength: and in they favour our horn shall be exalted.” Verse 18 says, “For the LORD is our defense; and the Holy One of Israel is our King.”

The LORD is OUR defense! He's coming to our rescue! God is such a big God and He loves us so much.

Sometimes, I don't think we have the real understanding of God's love for us. If we did, we wouldn't doubt His Word and we would trust completely in Him.

Keep your mind on the Lord. Isaiah 26:3 says, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

John 14:27 says, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as

the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

God has given us His own peace. This is a not a peace that the world, the news media, doctors, or anybody else can give. John 14:27 in the Amplified Bible says, “stop allowing yourselves to be agitated and disturbed; and do not permit yourself to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.”

John 16:33 – “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

Is that not awesome or what? Jesus gave us a gift of peace.

When you find your mind slipping into fear, you get out your Bible and look up the verses I have listed. You are a child of the Most High God. He is your peace. He is your tranquility. He is your freedom. He was victorious over death, hell, and the grave. The Lord is our light and our salvation. WHOM shall we fear? The LORD is the strength of my life. What is it we have to be afraid of? Put your faith and confidence in the Lord. He's not going to disappoint you.

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.”— 1 Corinthians 14:33

“Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”— Philippians 4:6. The Basic Translation says, “Have not cares; but in everything with prayer and praise put your request before

Fall Reflections (continued)

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.”

— 1 Corinthians 14:33

God.”

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” — Philippians 4:7

“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” — 1 Peter 5:7. The Amplified Bible says, “Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully.”

God cares about you affectionately. Wow, that’s so good. He wants you to toss your entire worry on Him.

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought

can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.) For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” — Matthew 6:25-33

Take heart, Body of Christ! Have the mind of Christ. God is in control of everything.

Preparing for Winter

By all means, don't wait too long before performing the winterizing tasks listed here. Your efforts will be better rewarded if they are completed and the home is ready for the cold winter winds before they are blowing in-force.

by Sylvia Britton

Great Grandmother learned early on that the home in winter time could be a stuffy, dusty place. All the items collected over the spring and summer, books, papers, toys, clothing, nick nacks, nature specimens, scraps of fabric, art work, would soon be closing in on the family as they closed up the house for protection from the cold winter weather.

Many times the bedclothes used in the warm nights of summer are not appropriate for the winter. Our family's comfort and health depend on our preparedness for winter.

By all means, don't wait too long before performing the winterizing tasks listed here. Your efforts will be better rewarded if they are completed and the home is ready for the cold winter winds before they are blowing in-force.

Winterizing the home can be divided up into three categories.

- Organizing Clothing
- Heavy Cleaning
- Preparing for the Weather

You may find that these suggestions can be used in the Spring, also.

ORGANIZING CLOTHING

We all have items of clothing that we wear only during one or two seasons. We sometimes have shoes, too, that are only worn during a certain season. How many of us go through the "Fall Confusion" when we really need two wardrobes for every family member because the weather changes so rapidly from warm to cold? That can be a difficult managing opportunity!

However, there are some things that can be done to alleviate the confusion, and to prepare for the seasons that are ahead.

First, prepare boxes for storage. They do not have to be plastic storage boxes, they can be cardboard. I find that the boxes used for shipping fresh oranges and apples are sturdy and very good for this purpose. They also have lids.

Moth balls will sometimes repel mice. However, if you have a mouse problem, you should probably use the plastic containers. I really don't like the smell of moth balls and it is really hard to get the odor out later. I also don't like the idea of that chemical on any family member's body. So I usually opt for using cedar chips and plastic boxes if I know I have a mouse problem.

Instructions for making a cedar bag are included in this ezine (see page 10).

To prepare the boxes, make sure they are clean, then line each box with some type of paper like old wrapping paper. Let the paper cover the bottom of the box and drape over the sides. Later you will use this to cover the contents of the box, keeping the clothing protected from dust, etc.

If you do decide to use moth balls, here's how: take an old pair of panty hose, knee highs or thin socks, cut out pieces of the nylon and place three or four moth balls in each piece. Tie them up with string and place one sock in two of the bottom corners of the box. You will have to wash the clothes before wearing them again.

Now, take inventory.

Look at each family member's clothing and shoes. Lay the clothing out

Preparing for Winter (continued)

Don't let the guilt of giving away good clothes that you may need at some indeterminate time in the future deter you from getting your home in order. Give them to someone who needs them.

on a bed if necessary and really examine each article. How many Sunday outfits does this person need? How many play outfits or leisure outfits does he/she need?

Is this person a small child? Then he/she will not be able to take care of his own clothes; you will have to do it. How much can you take care of properly? Are many of the pieces of clothing worn out to the point that they are not fit to wear? Then get rid of them! Don't let the guilt of giving away good clothes that you may need at some indeterminate time in the future deter you from getting your home in order. Give them to someone who needs them.

Fold the clean clothing neatly, being sure to include any extras that may be part of the outfit. Making repairs now to clothes headed for storage will save frustration when the clothes are needed later. Cleaning the clothing first will also help the fabric to last longer.

Pack the boxes snugly, but be aware that some fabrics need extra room, usually velvet and corduroy. These fabrics have a "nap" that will be mashed out of shape by too much weight and overly crowded conditions.

Store boxes out of the damp and out of the way of frequent foot traffic. Resist placing the boxes in plastic bags, or placing fabric in plastic bags. Any moisture that accumulates in the fabric that does not evaporate will eventually cause mildew to form. This is because plastic will prevent the moisture from escaping from the fabric.

HEAVY CLEANING

Clean out the fireplace or wood stove. Check for any cracks in the structure; have them repaired. Have the chimney cleaned. Accumulations of creosote and soot can catch on fire. Also consider maintenance for your gas logs. I was suprised to learn that they get caked with oils and dust and need to be cleaned.

Here is the rest of my Heavy Cleaning List:

- Wash kitchen walls and ceiling
- Wash out kitchen cupboards
- Wash curtains
- Clean floor vents
- Clean light fixtures
- Wash fireplace/stove
- Clean and straighten closets
- Wash mattress pads and blankets
- Organize recipes - yes, at my house, where there are three meals a day cooked.... it's heavy alright!

PREPARING FOR THE WEATHER

To get the house ready for the cold weather, think ahead. Remember any problems you had last winter keeping the house warm and the heating costs down. Take care of these needs now, and the house will be a warmer, more comfortable place.

Caulk doors and windows. An alternative for windows is the plastic

Preparing for Winter (continued)

Most homemakers are not aware of the necessity of pads and covers to protect expensive mattresses and pillows. Your bedding will last much longer if it is properly protected from body oils, spills, etc.

sheets that are taped up and shrunk to fit the window with a blow dryer.

Make “draft dodgers” by using fabric and sand. These are made the length of the bottom of door frames and bottoms of windows. Instructions for making draft dodgers are included in this ezine. (see page 10).

Lay out room size rugs on the floors. Even if you have carpet, these will help keep the floor warm.

Prepare bedding for all beds. Wash and dry mattress pads, flannel sheets, blankets and comforters. This is a good time to give your quilts a break. Wash them and store them properly.

Turn mattresses over.

Seems like too much work? Delegate! Get the whole family involved! Set goals for completing each task by a certain time.

Now get the beds ready. Depending on the weather where you live, a properly winter-prepared bed consists of:

- Mattress cover
- Mattress pad
- Flannel or heavy cotton sheets
- One light-weight blanket
- Two medium-weight blankets OR one down comforter with cover
- Pillow covers
- Pillow cases
- One large bed spread or blanket to protect the bed clothes and keep them neat (more blankets can be added as needed)

Most homemakers are not aware of the necessity of pads and covers to protect expensive mattresses and pillows. Your bedding will last much longer if it is properly protected from body oils, spills, etc. If you or family members suffer from allergies, the pads are also helpful in cutting down on the dust.

With a little fore-thought and preparation on your part, your home and family can be toasty warm all winter!

Preparing for Winter Projects

If it can, the cold wind will blow around the house and right in through the cracks and crevices of your home!

HOW TO MAKE A DRAFT DODGER

If it can, the cold wind will blow around the house and right in through the cracks and crevices of your home! To put a stop to that old wind, make a few of these draft dodgers, also known as draft catchers.

Measure the width of the bottom of your door or window. Cut two pieces of fabric to that length PLUS four inches.

Make the width of the fabric six to eight inches. Place the two pieces together, right sides facing. Beginning with one of the longer sides, stitch around three sides. Leave one short side open. Hem the short side. Make sure your stitches are very small and tight, otherwise the sand will leak out!

Now get your sand ready. Either place it in a plastic bag before you put it in the fabric sack you have just made, or place it directly into the sack. I prefer to use a plastic bag. Often I use plastic dry-cleaning bags and just roll up the sand and tie the plastic up so that it doesn't leak. Fill it up about 3/4 full, with just enough give to drape nicely, but still having body enough to stand up on its edge.

Now, sew up the remaining short end tightly. Place it at the bottom of your door or window and see how it keeps the wind at bay!

HOW TO MAKE CEDAR CHIP BAGS

For years and years, moth balls have been used to repel cloth-eating insects from clothing. It takes many washings and airings in the sunshine to get rid of the odor. Instead of moth balls, try this old-fashioned preventative: cedar chips. Buy them in the pet section of a variety store and make some cedar bags from fabric you have on hand.

- Cut two pieces of fabric, 4"x6".
- Place the fabric pieces together, right sides facing.
- Beginning at the 6" side, stitch around three sides, leaving one 4" side open.
- Hem the open end and turn right-side out.
- Fill with crushed cedar chips, about 2/3 full. Leave an end to tie up with some ribbon.
- Tie up with a ribbon or some of the same fabric. Add a few silk flowers if desired.

All Done! Place these cedar bags in drawers, hang them in closets or put them in boxes of stored clothing. The open end makes it easy to replace the cedar chips when their aroma fades.

My Best Sewing Tips

These tips are born out of my own desire to create higher-quality, useful garments that will stand the test of time, will look good, and will lay right.

by Wardeh Harmon

I love to sew! Thankfully, my skills have improved over time. I used to be the Queen of Cutting Corners. Truly. I wanted to sew the fast, easy way. And my results always showed this tendency because the garments didn't fit right, didn't lay right, and quite often fell apart. So these tips are born out of my own desire to create higher-quality, useful garments that will stand the test of time, will look good, and will lay right. Some of the tips make sewing easier, too, but not in a slip-shod way.

1. PREPARE YOUR PATTERN AND CUT IT OUT CAREFULLY

What is your preferred seam allowance? Half an inch? Three quarters of an inch? If constructing the garment with a serger, use 1/4-inch. Trim the seam allowances on all pattern pieces down to your preferred amount. The only exceptions would be any hems, which should be left alone, or enlarged to the desired hem amount (such as one inch). Now, use these trimmed down pattern pieces to cut out your fabric.

However, standard seam allowances of 5/8-inch give room for letting seams out during fittings. So only trim the seam allowances down down if you're sure you don't need any extra room for fitting.

When cutting out your pattern, make sure you line up the grainline (usually it runs up and down the body) parallel with the salvages. If you neglect this, your garment won't lay right on your

body. Also, transfer all pattern markings to the fabric so you can line pattern pieces up properly when constructing the garment.

2. PIN, PIN, PIN

I used to skip pinning, really! I figured I could save time. Well, I learned after too many years, that not pinning meant I couldn't sew as quickly, smoothly, or as straight because I would have to stop frequently on a seam to adjust the alignment of the fabric layers.

When sewing, the feed dogs on the sewing machine touch the bottom layer of fabric, but not the top, which means that the bottom layer usually feeds faster. The two layers shift out of alignment, and by the end of the seam, the bottom layer can be one-quarter of an inch up to several inches ahead! If you try to compensate for this by stretching the end of the bottom fabric to match up with the end of the top fabric, you end up distorting the seam and it will never lay right. The best way to prevent this shifting is by pinning ahead of time. Pin the top of the seam, the bottom of the seam, and at even intervals in between.

For everyday pinning, use dressmaker's pins. For quilting, use quilting pins. These will take care of most average sewing needles. For more information, see **A Pin for Every Purpose** (taunton.com/threads/pages/to0237.asp).

It is helpful to insert pins parallel and about an inch away from the raw edges of the fabric. This way you can sew the entire seam, without having to stop and

Best Sewing Tips (continued)

It is helpful to insert pins parallel and about an inch away from the raw edges of the fabric. This way you can sew the entire seam, without having to stop and remove pins from out of your way.

remove pins from out of your way. This is especially helpful when using a serger because of its high speed stitching.

3. USE THE RIGHT SEWING NEEDLE FOR THE FABRIC

I'm not kidding when I say that the right needle could make or break a project! In my sewing area, I have three main types of needles: ball-point (for knits), denim (for heavy fabrics, such as denim or duck cloth) and universal sharps (for almost everything else). There are other needles, too, such as for fancy dress fabrics, but I won't cover those because they're outside the scope of these general sewing topics. Get more information in **Machine-Needle Know-How** (taunton.com/threads/pages/to0185.asp).

Every sewing needle should provide eight to ten hours of sewing. I find it helpful to start with a fresh needle for every project. Sewing needles can be purchased by the hundred at significant savings. One online merchant I recommend for this is **All Brands** (allbrands.com).

4. SEW SLEEVES IN FLAT IN KNIT TOPS

This method works best for simple patterns where the sleeve cap is fairly flat, as opposed. To use this method, you attach the sleeve to the bodice before the side seam is sewn. Here's the process. First, sew the shoulder seams of the bodice. Then sew the sleeve to

the bodice, matching all marks. Then sew all the way from the wrist (or upper arm, if the shirt is short-sleeved), past the underarm point and down the side seam in one long seam. The tricky part of this is lining up the underarm point. I tie my thread tails together to hold those points together, and I also pin it securely.

5. KNIT SHIRTS: ADD BINDINGS TO NECKLINE AND ARMHOLE IN THE FLAT

What this means is: sew one shoulder seam, sew binding to neckline, then sew the other shoulder seam. If the garment is sleeveless, you would then sew the binding to armhole curves, and then sew down the side seams. If the garment has sleeves, you would then sew the sleeves in flat (see #4), and then sew the sleeve seam and side seam.

6. WOVEN FABRICS: USE BIAS TAPE INSTEAD OF FACINGS

I hate facings, I really do. They need to be pressed and they show through the garment when wearing it. One alternative to facings is to fully line the bodice during construction and that's a good solution. However, there are times when one doesn't want a lined bodice. So what I do is bind the neckline edge and armhole edges (if the garment is sleeveless) with bias tape. For more information on this, view a tutorial on my blog: suchtreasures.com/2008/06/14/apply-ing-bias-tape-at-neckline-and-armhole-curves-as-binding/.

Best Sewing Tips (continued)

The most economical way to make “muslins” (test garments) is to use sheets or cast-off fabric from a thrift store.

7. CONSTRUCT A PRACTICE GARMENT (OR TWO, OR THREE...)

This is so important. Why waste good, expensive fabric on your first attempt at a garment? (Or at a first attempt of a garment on a different person.) The most economical way to make “muslins” (test garments) is to use sheets or cast-off fabric from a thrift store. An alternate inexpensive choice would be actual muslin fabric from a fabric store (watch sales and buy a bolt). Try to choose a practice fabric that is close in weight and weave to the finished garment's fabric. This can't always be matched perfectly. The most important facet of this is to choose a knit for practicing if the finished garment will be from knit. And use a woven fabric (not stretch) if the finished garment will be made from a woven fabric.

Kids' Coloring Page Links

Here are some coloring page links for your children, grandchildren, or even your Sunday School children, from Linda Maria Reddoch.

THANKSGIVING

- coloringbookfun.com/fall/
- coloringbookfun.com/thanks/
- apples4theteacher.com/coloring-pages/fall/
- apples4theteacher.com/coloring-pages/thanksgiving/
- activityvillage.co.uk/fall_coloring_pages.htm
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Review: Mystery of History, Vol I

The Mystery of History's author, Linda Lacour Hobar, wrote: "In all the volumes, I will seek to demonstrate the hand of God in world events and reveal His fingerprints making history much less of a 'mystery.'"

by Wardeh Harmon

Let me tell you what we'd been doing before finding Mystery of History. For the six homeschool years prior, we used a wonderful but time intensive history-through-literature program that had us reading from half a dozen books at a time. My oldest daughter thrived on this program, being a book-lover. The youngest two enjoyed much of it also, even though the load was probably too much for them. The primary difficulty we found was that in order to keep up with it, we often didn't have the time or energy to explore other disciplines that sparked our interest. If we spent time on those other interests, we got behind in the history/literature study.

To think that we needed to find another history curriculum was was not easy for me to accept; I love our old curriculum, being a literature-lover like my daughter. Without completely wanting to pursue another course, I began looking at simpler, yet comprehensive, history programs.

The Mystery of History's website says (themysteryofhistory.com):

"Created as a guide through the annals of time, The Mystery of History will lead all ages clearly through the labyrinth that many find this subject to be. Up until now, most world history and Bible history have been separated. With a classical approach, [the author] weaves the story line together of both world and Bible history in Volume I."

I had a few simple reasons for my interest in, and eventual choosing of,

The Mystery of History. First, it was a one book read-aloud. We could use it simply as a read-aloud, or with more in-depth suggested activities. Perhaps that sounds silly, but I am still so excited that I only have one book to use! The second reason was the weaving of Bible History together with World History, so that we would be able to fit the Bible happenings into the fabric of the world's events. According to the author, Linda Lacour Hobar, "In all the volumes, I will seek to demonstrate the hand of God in world events and reveal His fingerprints making history much less of a 'mystery.'"

We purchased The Mystery of History, Volume I, for our history curriculum this year. We are seven weeks into Volume I. One of the first delights was to learn that Abraham was a Sumerian — part of the first artistic culture of the world, the culture that developed the first writing, cuneiform. We'd studied Abraham, we'd studied the Sumerians, but did we know he was one of them? No! That was just too cool to learn.

The format is simple. At the beginning of each week there is a pre-test, called a "What Do You Know?" test. At first my children were alarmed that they would be tested on things they didn't yet know. But that's not the point, I assured them. These pre-tests clue them in to what they will be learning. I like it because they get a hint in advance of what's coming up so they recognize it when they see it or hear it in the week's lessons.

After the pre-test, there are three lessons for the week. You can schedule

Review: Mystery of History (continued)

I really appreciate that the format of Mystery of History doesn't overwhelm our homeschool. This leaves us time for other important, educational

these however you want (there are suggested schedules in the book, too). I suppose the most common schedule would be three days per week. We have chosen to do our three lessons all on the same day. At the end of each lesson, there are suggested "take it further" type of activities for three different age groups (young, middle and older students). We love the fact that The Mystery of History lessons are also available on audio CD, so we listen to the lessons as we read along.

Then, after the week's three lessons is a review activity or test. This always includes some review of information covered prior to that week. I like the constant recycling of information to keep it fresh. The tests vary in format and sometimes they're just activities.

In addition, at the end of the week, there are timeline activities, mapwork, and an index card activity (creating cards for the major events in history to be reviewed consistently). These are suggested activities and do not have to be incorporated. My oldest daughter is keeping track of our timeline. We sometimes do the mapwork (all map keys can be found at: themysteryofhistory.com/volumeI_mapkey.shtml). I hadn't planned on completing the index card activity, but my two daughters decided they wanted to do that. I won't discourage them!

In the back of the book, there are reproducible pages containing all the master maps, pre-tests and post-tests, as well as other appendices and answer keys. Almost everything you need is included. The only exception is the map

answer keys, which can be found can be found at: themysteryofhistory.com/volumeI_mapkey.shtml. We found it very convenient to buy the CD-ROM of all reproducibles for easy printing at home. Printing at home on the printer is easier for us than going to the copy shop.

I believe this comprehensive curriculum is a great match for my family. This thorough and comprehensive history program is giving us a sound background in world history, which includes Bible history. And I really appreciate that its format doesn't overwhelm our homeschool. This leaves us time for other important, educational pursuits.

In addition to the Volume I, these other volumes are available:

- Volume II: The Middle Ages
- Volume III: The Renaissance

Of the intended five volumes, Linda Lacour Hobar is also planning the future releases of volumes IV and V:

- Volume IV – Revolutions and Rising Nations (1708-1914)
- Volume V – The World at War and Present Day (1915 to Present)

For more information, please visit: themysteryofhistory.com.

Household Schedules

From 5 to 6, I read books to Jonathan, play with him, help him practice a few of his “learning” games like touching all his body parts, practicing words, learning animal sounds, playing with blocks that emphasize colors and shapes, etc.

There are no two moms, nor households alike. We thought we'd take a picture, so to speak, to give you an idea of what life is like in the homes of some of our T2CHK Message Board members. We hope you enjoy reading how other moms get things done and coordinate household activities. Perhaps you'll read something that will inspire you, encourage you, or affirm what you're already doing. God bless your homes, and may we do all to give God glory!

AUBREE

Our family stats:

- Dad—semi-retired, stay at home dad
- Mom—works at home 40 hours a week
- Son—Jonathan, age 20 months
- Daughter—Lizzy, age 4 months

Weekdays:

I work from 8:30-5 at my desk in my home office area.

I have a break at 10 am during which I nurse the baby.

At noon every day I have lunch with my husband and son, feed the baby, and read books to Jonathan.

I usually work straight through the afternoon, my husband gives the baby expressed milk.

While I'm working my husband gives our son naptimes at 10 and 2, he also feeds him dinner at 4:30.

At 5, I try to take over the kids so my husband has a break.

From 5 to 6, I read books to Jonathan, play with him, help him practice a few of his “learning” games

like touching all his body parts, practicing words, learning animal sounds, playing with blocks that emphasize colors and shapes, etc.

At 6, I begin Jonathan's bedtime routine, I give him a bath, change him, and give him a bottle and have snuggle time in the rocking chair. He goes to bed at 7:00.

My husband then cooks dinner while I watch the baby. After dinner I do the washing up/leftover storage.

Twice a week my husband does laundry, usually Tuesday and Thursday. One day a week he cleans the bathroom and kitchen floor. The rest of our cleaning is as-you-go—we vacuum every time there's a need, and the kitchen counters, etc. get cleaned every time we cook.

On Tuesday evenings we work together to make a menu plan and grocery list from that plan.

Wednesday my husband does the grocery shopping. He also runs other errands like the bank, library, etc during the week. He always takes our son with him and goes at times of the day I don't have conference calls for my work.

On weekends we try to focus on family time as much as possible. I try to do the cooking on the weekends as much as possible, and I do some baking for the week on Saturday afternoons. Sometimes the needs of nursing the baby at this stage in her life require John to do the dishes or weekend cooking but we try to keep that as even as possible.

Household Schedules (continued)

11:15 pm - Kiss Gary good night. He heads off to work and I have control of the remote (for all of 15 minutes before I turn it off and go to bed!).

LISA

I am a slug if not for my schedule. As a teen I could work, go to school, hanging out with friends and then sleep for hours (days) on end. Now with working from home, I need to be conscious of my time, be a good steward of my time, and adhere to my schedule.

I spent years searching for hints and guides. I found that there is no golden magic schedule. By practice and adapting the good points from schedules such as FlyLady or some shared on T2CHK, I found a schedule that worked for us. Incorporating Gary working the night shift has been a little tough, but it is getting there. No schedule is permanent; it goes, evolves and changes with our daily needs. So, here is a day in the life of the Whitneys. This is our routine for Monday through Friday. Saturday is a day of sleeping later and doing chores around the house. Sunday is a day of worship and rest.

5:15 am - Up, get the boys up and ready for school.

6:30 am - Coffee and devotionals.

7:00 am - Get Lizzy up and ready. Dinner in the crockpot and bread in the machine. Catch the morning news.

7:30 am - Dressed and ready for the day.

7:45 am - Walk Lizzy to the bus.

8:00 am - Start work - either walk back home and do data entry or walk to the bus stop for rounds.

8:30 am - Gary home and off to bed.

12:30 pm - Lunch break, start a

load of laundry.

1:00 pm - Work, data entry, follow up on calls.

2:45 pm - Walk to the bus stop to get Lizzy. Finish up work.

4:30 pm - Clear off the desk, lay out work for the am and close the "office" door!

5:00 pm - Another load of laundry, check dinner and start homework w/ Lizzy.

6:00 pm - Dinner.

6:30 pm - Dishes, tidy the kitchen.

7:00 pm - Knitting and family quiet time.

8:00 pm - Lizzy lays out her things for the next morning and back pack on hook. (Her launch pad.) I make Gary's lunch for work and set up coffee pot for the morning.

8:30 pm - Lizzy off to bed. I can read or knit.

10:15 pm - Bring Gary his coffee and dinner. Get him up and ready for work.

11:15 pm - Kiss Gary good night. He heads off to work and I have control of the remote (for all of 15 minutes before I turn it off and go to bed!).

Gary has men's Bible study on Mondays, and prison ministry on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. I have women's Bible study on Tuesday nights.

Household Schedules (continued)

Friday is project day, as my husband has Fridays off and we like to spend time together. I try to schedule my extra time in the day to be flexible. Some things that fall into this are sewing, painting, cleaning out a closet. Whatever needs to be done, but if it has to wait a week will not be the end of the world.

MARGERY

My daily routines begin when I wake up and head for the kitchen and make my husband breakfast and lunch and send him off to work. This is around 6 am. Then it's a little time with me and God . Then at about 6:15 am, I start waking teens, starting with the girls. Then I head downstairs to wake the boys, stopping off at the freezer room to grab whatever food I need. Then it's on to the laundry room to throw a load of wash in. I go back up the stairs make sure the girls are up and moving, and then into the kitchen. I pull out the food needed to make their lunches and place it on the table for them to do. As they get dressed and showered and show up in the kitchen, I will take their orders for breakfast (how they want their egg cooked). While I am doing this, I also unload the dishwasher, reload it, and do any kitchen stuff that needs doing (like starting dinner). It's out the door for them at 7:20 am. I head downstairs to wake up Nolan and change the wash around. Then I head back up-stairs to wake up Kathryn. While they are getting dressed, I am back in the kitchen to fix their breakfast. While they eat I clean up the upstairs bathroom. When they are finished eating, I clean up the lunch-making mess and breakfast mess. Then it's off to school for them.

Then it's time to start my daily jobs, usually with Aidan's help. Here are my daily jobs:

Monday, I focus on laundry. Even though I do laundry every day, Monday is the time to focus on extra wash (sheets, blankets) and making

sure the laundry room is picked up for a new week of work. Plus I straighten the downstairs rooms (family room, boys' bath, and boys' bedrooms).

Tuesday, I focus on floors. Every floor in the house gets washed or vacuumed. Some weeks I use a mop, other weeks it's the old way on my knees with the scrub brush. Plus, I straighten the living room, dining room, and Kathryn's Bedroom.

Wednesday is errand day. This is the day I go to Bible study, out to lunch sometimes, food shopping, post office, etc. Any running around that needs to be done. This is also the day to clean out the van.

Thursday is kitchen day; I spend extra time in the kitchen. This could be deep cleaning, cooking, or menu planning — basically anything having to do with the kitchen or food. And I try to clean my bedroom on this day.

Friday is project day, as my husband has Fridays off and we like to spend time together. I try to schedule my extra time in the day to be flexible. Some things that fall into this are sewing, painting, cleaning out a closet. Whatever needs to be done but if it has to wait a week will not be the end of the world.

Saturday is outside day in the spring, summer, and fall, and indoor cleaning day in bad weather. Plus, I supervise the kids in their cleaning.

Sunday is a day to rest.

Then, after my daily work is done, here is how the rest of the day goes. At 11 am, I take a break to spend one-on-one time with Aidan for about hour.

Household Schedules (continued)

I use Sylvia's weekly cleaning schedule that's posted on her website. I've just tweaked it a little to fit around my week. I have the lists printed up and stuck on the inside of my kitchen cupboard doors.

Then it's time to feed him lunch and then a little time outside to play before his nap. I use his nap (at around 1:30 pm) to rest with him, to blog, to read, to drink a cup of tea, make phone calls, mow lawns, and/or to finish work.

The rest of my day is planned day by day, as the kids start coming home around 2:45 pm. Each evening from 3 to 8 pm is never the same, but includes dinner, showers, dinner clean-up, sports, scouts, church, homework and so on. Once the kids are in bed, I spend sometime with my husband and then fall asleep myself.

YVONNE

I use Sylvia's weekly cleaning schedule that's posted on her website. I've just tweaked it a little to fit around my week, but I haven't made many changes...I have the lists printed up and stuck on the inside of my kitchen cupboard doors.

- Sylvia's Basic Household Schedule is at:
christianhomekeeper.com/2008/04/29/a-basic-household-schedule/
- Sylvia's Weekly Household Cleaning Lists are at:
christianhomekeeper.com/weekly-household-cleaning-lists/

What Kids Can Do When It Rains (or Snows)

by *Wardeh Harmon*

Adjusting to being indoors most of the time can be difficult for moms, dads, and kids. I find that if my children aren't bored during the winter, everyone keeps in much better spirits. Here are some of our favorite rainy day (or snowy day) activities.

- Painting — watercolors or acrylics on big sheets of unprinted newspaper or wooden items
- Drawing — use colored or drawing pencils and big sheets of paper
- Sewing — by machine or by hand, simple project like bags and bookcovers

- Embroidery — trace a simple line drawing on muslin, then the child uses a simple backstitch to outline the drawing. See Sharon B's Dictionary of Stitches for instructions on many stitches:
inaminuteago.com/stitchindex.html.
- Build with Legos, K'NEX
- Play games — Chess, Checkers, Connect-4, Scrabble, Boggle, Monopoly, Risk, Crazy 8's — some of these games last for hours and mom will have fun, too!
- Put together puzzles
- Bake — cookies, muffins, bread, favorite main dishes, smoothies, hot cocoa; teach your children to cook their favorite treats and meals!

Homemade Tortillas

by Wardeh Harmon

Once you've eaten a homemade tortilla, it is hard to go back to store-bought. Just ask anyone in my family! I will share with you my best tortilla recipes — both regular and gluten-free.

WHOLE WHEAT TORTILLAS

Makes 24 large or 32 small tortillas

I have tried several whole wheat tortillas recipes. I never found a recipe that resulted in soft, fluffy tortillas until I made up my own. In my opinion, homemade tortillas need a good bit of oil to be fluffy and soft. So here is my recipe for whole wheat tortillas, which does not skimp on the oil.

- 6 cups whole wheat flour (preferably freshly ground)
- 2 cups cold filtered water
- 1-1/2 teaspoons non-aluminum baking powder
- 1-1/2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- extra virgin olive oil or olive oil spray for frying

In bowl of mixer, combine flour, baking powder, and salt. Turn mixer on dough setting and add oil. Add water gradually until mixture cleans sides of

bowl and forms ball in center of bowl. Let the machine knead the dough for 2 minutes. Remove dough. Divide into 32 parts for small tortillas or 24 parts for large tortillas. Roll each part into a ball and spread on a cookie sheet. Spray with oil and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Let rest 1 hour.

Heat a flat cast iron frying pan over medium heat and add a small amount of oil. Oil a clean, flat work surface, such as a countertop. With an oiled rolling pin, roll out one ball of dough into a circle that is approximately 1/8" thick, or your desired thickness. Place rolled out tortilla in the pan. Let it cook for about 25 seconds or until there are several bubbles in the dough. Flip the tortilla with a spatula and cook the other side for another 15 to 25 seconds, or until the bubbles are browned*. Remove tortilla from pan and place between towels to stay warm and moist. Meanwhile, roll out the next tortilla. Repeat until all of the balls have been rolled out and cooked. Add oil to pan and/or rolling pin as needed. Store in a zipper seal freezer bag in refrigerator or freezer.

**Adjust heat or cooking times to account for your stove, pan, or thickness of tortilla.*

Homemade Tortillas (continued)

GLUTEN-FREE CORN & RICE TORTILLAS

adapted by Wardeh Harmon from Living Without Magazine

Everyone in my family agrees — these are the best tortillas ever! Who needs gluten?

This recipe makes about 8 tortillas.

- 1-1/4 cup corn flour*
- 3/4 cup brown rice flour*
- 1/3 cup potato flour
- 2 teaspoons xanthan gum
- 1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder
- 1-1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 to 1-1/4 cups pure water, room temperature

**Flour Tortilla Variation: Increase the brown rice flour to 1 cup. Use 1 cup of buckwheat flour instead of the corn flour. No other changes are necessary. This is a very yummy variation!*

Combine all the dry ingredients. Whisk to combine. Add the oil and cut it in with a whisk or a fork. Add 1/2 cup water. Mix well. Add more until the dough becomes soft and hangs together when made into a ball.

Heat a cast-iron skillet over medium heat.

Generously flour a clean counter-top with corn flour, for rolling. Form a 2-inch ball of dough, then flatten it.

Using natural wax paper (from Natural Value) between the dough and a rolling pin, roll the dough into a 1/8-inch thick circle, about 8 inches in diameter. Rotate the dough as you roll to prevent it from sticking to the counter; dust with more flour as necessary. If the tortilla does stick to the counter, release it by sliding a spatula between it and the counter.

Transfer the tortilla to the heated cast-iron skillet. Oiling is not necessary if the skillet is well seasoned. Allow to cook on the first side until big and puffy, about 1 minute.

The underside will have spots of browning. Flip over and let the second side brown. Transfer cooked tortilla to a dinner plate and cover with a towel to keep soft and warm.

Begin the process again with a new tortilla — shaping it and baking it. Once you develop a rhythm, you'll be able to roll one out while another is cooking.

Unfortunately, this is one of those foods for which I can't figure out a plastic-free method of storage. So, store them in a zipper-seal plastic bag in the fridge or in the freezer for future use.

Bread Baking 101

You can make bread by hand, without a bread maker or machine of any kind. That's how people used to make it, and you can, too.

by Sylvia Britton

Anyone can make bread. After all, people have been making bread for thousands of years. You can make bread, too! This is a very simple recipe for making a white bread. It is an Amish recipe that can be used for loaf bread or rolls.

You can make bread by hand, without a bread maker or machine of any kind. That's how people used to make it, and you can, too. It will take perseverance and lots of energy. You will need a heavy spoon for beating the ingredients until the dough gets too stiff to beat. Then you will turn it out onto the countertop and knead the dough. To knead, you will push your fists into the dough and push the dough forward. Then you will grasp the dough that has been pushed forward and pull it down over the rest of the dough, pushing it into the rest of the dough. Do this over and over. Add flour if the dough is sticky, just a little at a time, until you have a smooth, elastic dough.

Ingredients:

- 2-1/2 cups warm milk
- 2-1/2 teaspoons yeast
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 heaping tablespoon shortening
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 6 to 7 cups bread flour
- 1 tablespoon lecithin powder (optional; helps the bread stay fresh longer)

I have been having lots of trouble with bread not rising lately, and it has been due to the yeast. Sometimes bread will

rise one time and then not again, this is usually due to weak, almost dead, yeast. So, I've gone back to proofing my yeast. Here is how to do that.

Put the amount of yeast you are using in a teacup. Add a pinch of sugar and about 1/2 cup warm milk. Let it sit until you can see the yeast start to foam and bubble. This will take from one or two to ten minutes. If it doesn't foam and bubble, you know that your yeast is not going to make your bread rise. Discard it and go buy some new yeast.

Preheat your oven to 500 degrees Fahrenheit. When your dough is ready to rise, you will turn the oven off and place the dough in the oven with the door cracked open.

Proof your yeast as instructed above and let it sit in the cup until you have the other ingredients combined.

Combine the rest of the milk, sugar, lecithin (if using), shortening and salt. Add the yeast/sugar mixture.

Add four cups of flour, one cup at a time, beating well. I use a dough hook from the very beginning, but you can start with a paddle and change to the hook if you like.

Now start adding the flour just 1/2 cup at a time. Depending on the weather, you may need from six to even eight cups of flour for this recipe. Today I used just 5-1/2 cups. Knead the dough well between additions of flour.

As you add flour, look for the dough to stop being sticky, and watch for it to start pulling away from the sides of the pan. You may need to stop your machine and scrape the dough from the sides of the bowl a few times.

Bread Baking (continued)

As you add flour, look for the dough to stop being sticky, and watch for it to start pulling away from the sides of the pan.

Now allow the dough to knead for 10 minutes. If you are kneading by hand, you will knead it for 15-20 minutes, and that will depend on how strong and good you are at kneading. :)

While it is kneading, you can grease a large pan for the dough to rise in.

After it has kneaded for 10 minutes, you can see how smooth the dough is and how it has cleaned off the sides of the bowl.

Take the dough out of the mixing bowl and shape it into a mushroom by folding the edges under, under, under all the way around.

Now grab the dough firmly and place the dough in the greased pan, top side down. Rub the dough around in the grease, then turn it over so that both the top and bottom will be greased.

Turn off your oven. Place a clean cloth over the dough in the pan and place the pan in the oven. Leave the door cracked and allow the dough to rise until it is doubled in size. This can take from 30 minutes to an hour and a half, depending on your oven and the weather.

OK, now your dough is risen!

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit.

Grease two loaf pans. I prefer smaller pans because the bread rises higher in them and I get big slices for sandwiches. As you make more bread, you can decide what kind of pans you like. If you don't have loaf pans you can use casserole dishes or even place the dough on a cookie sheet for a round loaf with lots of crust.

Take out the dough and divide it into two equal portions. I just pinch the

dough into two portions, but if you prefer, you can put the dough on the counter and cut it into two portions.

Shape each portion into a mushroom and pinch together the dough on the bottom of the mushroom. Place each portion of shaped dough into a greased loaf pan (photo, below).

Pierce the tops of the dough with a fork a few times. This allows air to flow through the bread and gives the tops a nice look when the bread is done.

Cover with a clean cloth and allow to rise until it is at least 1 inch above the pan. If you are not using a pan, you should let the dough rise on a greased cookie sheet until it is doubled in size. This rising is not done in the oven but on top of the oven, since it is nice and warm now.

Now place the risen pans of dough in the oven and bake for 25 minutes. When you take them out, leave the bread in the pans for five minutes. While the bread is still in the pans, rub the tops and sides with butter. This makes the crust soft and delicious.

After five minutes, turn the bread out of the pans and allow to cool on a wire rack. If you don't have a wire rack and you bake a lot, you really should get one. They are very helpful for cooking baked goods quickly and evenly.

Once the bread is cool enough to eat, you are going to have a hard time keeping people out of the kitchen, so go ahead and slice one loaf and serve it with butter and jam.

To store this bread, you must wait until it is cool, then wrap in paper or plastic. Without the lecithin it will last about four to five days on the shelf, but

Bread Baking (continued)

I don't think your bread is going to be around that long.

For many more recipes and tutorials, visit Sylvia's blog, **The Christian Homekeeper** (christianhomekeeper.com)

Pork and Apple Stew

This stew is very delicious and rich. If you can allow the pork to simmer slowly it will be more tender. I like to find pork roasts on sale and make this stew using about 2 to 2-1/2 pounds of pork instead of the amount listed. This is an excellent cool weather dish that can quickly become a family favorite. The recipe will feed about four hungry adults.

- 1-1/2 pounds of lean pork cut into chunks
- 1 pound onions, chopped
- 3 tablespoons of butter, oil, or bacon drippings
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1-1/2 cups water or stock
- 2 cups apple slices, fresh (Granny Smith are good or you can use dried apples)

Mix the flour, salt and pepper together in a small bag or ziplock bag. Place chunks of pork in and shake to coat it thoroughly.

Heat half the fat in a good heavy-bottomed saucepan and brown onions lightly.

Remove onions and add remaining fat to the pot and brown the pork in it.

Pour in the liquid, scrape any browned bits on the bottom of the pan into it and then add onions and brown sugar. Reduce heat to low and cover and simmer 1-1/2 hours or longer until the meat is tender. Add the apples and continue to simmer until apples are soft, but not mush! Add broth as needed, as it evaporates.

Adjust seasonings to taste. Serve with noodles, rice, or potatoes and whole wheat bread for "soppin"!

Peppermint Delight

Bring 1 quart water to a rolling boil.

In a 2 quart pitcher, place 8 to 10 stems and leaves of mint that have been twisted and bent.

When the water comes to a boil, add 3 tea bags of your choice. Apple Spice is good. Orange pekoe or English breakfast are also very good with peppermint.

Pour water and tea bags over mint in the pitcher.

Allow to steep for 10 minutes.

Remove tea bags and mint stems.

Serve over ice with a twist of lemon.

Pure Peppermint

Bring 1 quart water to a rolling boil.

In a 2 quart pitcher, place about 20 mint stems and leaves that have been twisted and crushed.

Pour the boiling water over the mint and cover the pitcher with plastic or a dish and allow it to steep for 10 minutes.

Take out the leaves and stems and strain the tea if necessary.

Sweeten with sugar if desired, or use agave nectar, and serve over crushed ice.

Add a squeeze of lemon, if desired, and garnish with a sprig of mint.

Thanksgiving and Christmas Recipe Links

- www.holidays.net/thanksgiving/recipes.htm
- www.razzledazzlerecipes.com/thanksgiving/index.htm
- www.foodnetwork.com/holidays-and-parties/index.html
- www.foodnetwork.com/paulas-home-cooking/southern-thanksgiving/index.html
- allrecipes.com/Recipes/Holidays-and-Events/Thanksgiving/Main.aspx
- allrecipes.com/Recipes/Holidays-and-Events/Christmas/Main.aspx
- www.christmas-cookies.com/recipes/thanksgiving.html
- www.northpole.com/Kitchen/cookbook/
- familyfun.go.com/recipes/special/specialfeature/holiday_mainmeal_ms/
- recipes.kaboose.com/holidays/christmas-recipes/christmas-recipes.html
- www.christmas-joy.com/recipes/
- southernfood.about.com/library/holiday/blchristmas.htm

Christmas Corner

JESUS was born! He came and took on the form of man. He left Heaven, came to earth and because of HIM we have freedom. He is our Emmanuel – He is GOD with us.

by Linda Maria Reddoch

I absolutely love and adore Christmas. As a child I would be so excited when I saw the first Christmas decoration! Not much has changed about that except that I'm 40 years old now and I have a wonderful husband and four precious kids to share the joys of the season with!

I'd like to share why it is such a special time for me. Take some time and read the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1–40. The story begins just about the time that Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire and ends with the birth of our Savior.

“There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, “Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger.”
— Luke 2:8–12

JESUS was born! He came and took on the form of man. He left Heaven, came to earth and because of HIM we have freedom. He is our Emmanuel – He is GOD with us.

Can you imagine the shepherds' surprise as the skies filled with angels

(the Heavenly hosts) telling them to “Fear Not! For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord. Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”?

I absolutely love babies. I always have and I always will. To imagine our Jesus as a baby is really awesome. He was a precious, tender, smelling-like-a-baby newborn. I just know he was soft and tender with that duck-down feathery hair. Just to hold that baby, you were holding GOD!

It is also interesting to me how when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple for His circumcision, Simeon was there. Simeon had been told by God that he would see the Messiah, the Savior before he died. Oh, the joy he must have felt as his very own eyes beheld the face of the Savior, Jesus, Emmanuel – God with us.

Anna the prophetess was also there. She was a woman of fasting and prayer. She probably had a lot of insights of God and the things of God. She was also a worshipper. What a gift to be able to physically see Jesus.

This Christmas Season, remember it is Jesus' birthday. We will make a birthday cake for Jesus and sing “Happy Birthday” to him on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. We have a little two-year old in the house this Christmas. What better tradition to start than that.

Remember this Christmas that JESUS is the REASON for the SEASON! This is why this really is “The Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” Merry Christmas Y'all!!

Meet the Writers



Sylvia Britton is the owner of the T2CHK website and ministry. She and her husband Mark live in Tennessee. They are the parents of five children and have homeschooled since 1990. She enjoys reading, mentoring women, writing articles for several magazines, gardening, Bible study and creating a peaceful, holy home. You can read about daily life at Sylvia's home at her blog, **The Christian Homekeeper** (christianhomekeeper.com).



Karen Twombly and her husband Robin have three children. Karen spends her time homeschooling her children and serving in her local church. She is involved in discipleship ministry, teaching in childrens' ministry and serving on the worship team. Karen's passion is fulfilling the mandate of Eph. 4:12-15 "to equip the saints for works of service so that they may be mature in Christ and not deceived by false doctrine." Karen's blog is **Gatherings** (karengatherings.blogspot.com).



Wardeh ("Wardee") Harmon lives in Oregon with her husband, Jeff, and their three children, Haniya, Naomi & Mikah. They live on five and a half gorgeous wooded acres, which they are in the process of turning into a productive homestead. Wardeh's passions are sewing garments and healthy cooking, although she loves to create just about anything from scratch, should the mood hit right. Wardeh keeps a family blog called **Such Treasures** (suchtreasures.com) and she maintains a kitchen/recipe site called **GNOWFGLINS™** (gnowfglins.com).



Linda Maria Reddoch was raised in a pastor's home and then she married a minister. She and her husband John have four beautiful kids which they homeschool. Linda enjoys helping other people experience the joy of the Lord. She also loves music and conducts a praise and worship ministry. Linda keeps a family blog at xanga.com/faithmom6.



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