

THE VOICE

WHITE MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2026

God's Grace In My Broken Heart

By Dianne Pender



I want you to know that God is just a prayer away and He is faithful to show His grace in our time of need.

My story begins with a devastating car accident that claimed my husband's life. He was only 32 years old. At the time, we were living in a tiny town, raising our four children, and we owned a gas station. My husband's mechanical abilities provided for our family. When he passed away, I became a single mom of four, ages 6, 8, 10, and 12. I had no education except High School and an EMT certificate from Yavapai College. I had to count totally on God for help. He sent me my father-in-law who came and lived with me and my children and taught me how to run the Service Station. I could never have made it on my own.

God knew what was ahead of me in my life and he later sent me a wonderful man named Tim, who has been a rock through the years in raising our children. After we married, we were blessed with an additional son, and our family felt complete once again. We have now been married 49 years.

Through the years, loss and difficulty continued to plague our family. In a total of just of 15 years from the loss of my first husband, I lost my mother at age 42 of cancer, my 8 year-old niece to Epiglottitis, my 8-year old nephew was killed in a car accident, my younger sister died from cancer, my father passed away from emphysema, and recently my older sister passed away. The verse that kept me going during this time was Psalm 119:105 "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Even in the midst of loss and grief, I knew that God was providing direction and guidance in my life.

In addition to the losses we experienced as a family, I also experienced the loss of my health in 2009 when I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer and diabetes on the same day! But God was with me, and today I am 16 years cancer free. Praise the Lord for his provision in the midst of pain!

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Even more recently, and especially devastatingly, we lost our oldest son, Freddie, in a very disastrous accident that caused him to become a quadriplegic. When Freddie was in the hospital after his accident, he told us that he had made his peace with God, and he would accept anything God gave him, asking everyone to pray that God's will would be done. Shortly after that, God called him home.

The kindness and support that WMBC gave our family helped get us through this recent loss. Thank you all for being there for me and showing me God's love. Even though my life has been filled with many family losses and trials, through each and every one, God provided someone to come beside me and help me walk the journey of grief. My pastors and Christian friends and family members were there when I needed them most.

Sometimes we think God is cruel and doesn't care but the difficulty of our struggles prompts us to turn to Him. Often, I take God for granted when things are going well and when they are not, He has to hit me upside of the head to get me to cry out to Him for help!

The lesson I have learned through loss is that God is always there even when we stray away, and it is up to us to reach out and come back to Him. Life happens to us all, and God is there to help us through. Just remember, we are all just passing through this temporary life on earth. God is trying to get His children to come to Him so that our second life is with Him in Heaven in peace and eternal happiness.

Buy Yourself the Flowers

When I became single again at the age of 40, I struggled with my identity. I was still a mom, but no longer a wife. No longer part of a whole. Alone again, in a place I never thought I would ever be. Interestingly, one of the thoughts that bothered me was that there would be no more flowers in my life! I LOVED receiving fresh bouquets of flowers on special occasions. Now, with no one to buy them for me, I pictured my dining room table empty for the next 40 years, and it made me sad. It seemed like a small thing, but it mattered!



My wise and wonderful big sister said to me, "Laurie, if flowers make you happy, buy yourself some flowers!" The first time I did, I felt almost guilty for spending the money on myself. But having beautiful flowers brightened my day and brought me joy. So now, I buy myself flowers on special occasions, and sometimes just because! In this Valentine's season of showing love toward others, it is okay to show love to ourselves as well! Find a little thing that brings you joy. You are worth it! Buy yourself some flowers.

