

THIS IS WHAT CHRISTMAS IS ALL ABOUT

Better bundle up— the goose bumps will freeze you! I think I need to read this every year at Christmas.

Pa never had much compassion for the lazy or those who squandered their means and then never had enough for the necessities. But for those who were genuinely in need, his heart was as big as all outdoors. It was from him that I learned the greatest joy in life comes from giving, not from receiving.

It was Christmas Eve 1881. I was fifteen years old and feeling like the world had caved in on me because there just hadn't been enough money to buy me the rifle that I'd wanted for Christmas. We did the chores early that night for some reason. I just figured Pa wanted a little extra time so we could read in the Bible.

After supper was over I took my boots off and stretched out in front of the fireplace and waited for Pa to get down the old Bible. I was still feeling sorry for myself and, to be honest, I wasn't in much of a mood to read Scriptures. But Pa

didn't get the Bible, instead he bundled up again and went outside. I couldn't figure it out because we had already done all the chores. I didn't worry about it long though, I was too busy wallowing in self-pity. Soon Pa came back in. it was a cold clear night out and there was ice in his beard. "Come on, Matt." he said. "bundle up good, it's cold out tonight." I was really upset then. Not only wasn't I getting the rifle for Christmas, now Pa was dragging me out in the cold, and for no earthly reason that I could see. We'd already done all the chores, and I couldn't think of anything else that needed doing, especially on a night like this. But I knew Pa was not very patient at one dragging one's feet when he'd told them to do something, so I got up and put my boots back on and got my cap, coat, and mittens. Ma gave me a mysterious smile as I opened the

door to leave the house. Something was up, but I didn't know what.

Outside, I became even more dismayed. There in front of the house was the work team, already hitched to the big sled. Whatever it was we were going to do wasn't going to be a short, quick, little job. I could tell. We never hitched up this sled unless we were going to haul a big load. Pa was already up on the seat, reins in hand. I reluctantly climbed up beside him. The cold was already biting at me. I wasn't happy. When I was on, Pa pulled the sled around the house and stopped in front of the woodshed. He got off and I followed. "I think we'll put on the high sideboards," he said. "Here, help me." The high sideboards! It had been a bigger job than I wanted to do with just the low sideboards on, but whatever it was we were going to do would be a lot bigger with the high sideboards on.

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Check out our website!
www.pbaok.org

Above & Beyond Offering 2016 receipts

\$2,339.00 to date

EMAILS addresses: let us know yours!

Office:

pbaok221@gmail.com

Associational Missionary:

221pbaamiss@gmail.com

All contributions
for 2016 must be
postmarked by De-
cember 31, 2016.

CALENDAR EVENTS

December

12 Special Called Executive Board, 10 a.m.

22-January 3, Office Closed-Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year

January

13 Associational Missions Committee meeting, 6:30p.m.

16 Office Closed MLK Day

23 Executive Board, 10 a.m.

28 Deacon & wife Training, Boise City FBC— 10

to 3-preregister by 1-8

30-31 Oklahoma Evangelism Conference, Del City FSBC

February

17 Oklahoma Vacation Bible School Training, OKC Southern Hills (by invitation only)

20 Office Closed Presidents Day

27 Executive Board, 10 a.m.

March

2 Associational Missionary Evangelism Conference, BGCO, 8-2

PANHANDLE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING

WHO IS LOTTIE: Many Southern Baptists don't know who Lottie Moon is or why their churches are constantly raising money for her at Christmas.

Lottie Moon was a missionary who was commissioned by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1873 to serve in China. By 1885 her letters stressing the need for more missionaries and financial

support for them led women's societies to receive offerings in their churches for missionary support.

Lottie Moon has come to personify the missionary spirit for Southern Baptists and many other Christians, as well. The annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions has raised a total of \$1.5 billion for missions since 1888, and finances half

the entire Southern Baptist missions budget every year.

What will you give this year. We cannot just pitch a penny in now and then. We must continue to give sacrificially. Miss Lottie did. To learn more about her and the offering's specific need this year: Google-Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

First Priority: Pray, pray specifically for our 8 featured missionary families :

1. Harrell family in Mozambique
2. Copland Family in Italy
3. Harris Family in South America
4. Haun Family in Ghana
5. Dove Family in Norway
6. Cregg Family in South Asia
7. Amber family in South Africa
8. Murphy Family in Southeast Asia

Pray about what you can give:

2016 Goal: \$155 million



Miss Lottie's famous cookie recipe: adapted

- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 heaping cup of sugar
- 1 well-beaten egg
- 1 tablespoon cream

Cream the butter and sugar. Add the egg and mix well. Add the flour and cream. Dust a board with flour. Roll the dough very thin. Cut cookies with a round cookie cutter. Place on a buttered or nonstick cookie sheet. Bake at 475 degrees for about 5 minutes.

Pray for our Church of the Month
Clearlake BC; Wayne Moore pastor

Pastorless churches
Guymon, SLBC, David Moore is transitional interim; Hardesty Bethel

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

DECEMBER

Pray for our Church Staff and their families:

Make a habit of praying for these individuals and their ministry on their birthday. That is a great day to think of them and lift them before the Lord.

Date
 1
 4
 9
 16
 18
 18
 21
 25
 31

Name
 Miciah Krenzin
 Lisa Flanagan
 Jerry & Deborah Rice
 Ginny Krenzin
 Acacia Hoover
 Amanda Bolinger
 Mark & Cara McDonald
 Micah Hall
 Ashley Johnston

Church
 Guymon, FBC Family Pastor's daug
 Guymon, FBC secretary
 Kenton BC Pastor & wife
 Guymon, FBC Family Pastor's wife
 Beaver, FBC Youth Pastor's daug
 Beaver FBC, Secretary's daug
 Beaver, FBC Music Min. & husband
 Forgan, FBC Pastor's son
 Balko BC, Pastor's wife



Deacon Training Seminar

Saturday, January 28, 2017

Boise City, FBC

for Deacons & their Wives

10 a.m. –3 p.m.

Led by Dr. Ted & Jerri Kersh

PLEASE pre-register by January 8th

(office@fbcboisecity.org)

An excellent opportunity for your deacons to gain a greater understanding of the biblical model for the office of deacon in the New Testament Church, and to receive practical ministry training– how to make home and hospital visits, how to support the pastor, how to care for widows in the church. Dr. Kersh will lead the deacons, while his wife Jerri will lead the deacons' wives.

**CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES
JANUARY**

Date

6
6
6
8
13
13
13
18
25
26
26
28

Name

Linda O'Leary
Gary Stone
David Coffey
Ira Townsend
Garlan Flanagan
Miciah Krenzin
David & Amanda Coffey
Tiffany Vickrey
Maribel Avalos
Cody & Eva Camilli
Jeremy Krenzin
Gene Brooks

Church

Guymon, FBC Secretary
Tyrone BC Pastor
BCM Director
Guymon, FBC Discipleship Pastor's son
Guymon, FBC Secretary's husband
Guymon, FBC Family Pastor's son
BCM Director & Wife
Forgan, FBC Youth Pastor's Wife
Hooker, FHBC Pastor's Wife
Boise City FBC, Secretary & Husband
Guymon, FBC Family Pastor
Guymon, Grace Southern Music Minister

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After we had exchanged the sideboards. Pa went into the woodshed and came out with an armload of wood—the wood I'd spent all summer hauling down from the mountain, and then all Fall sawing into blocks and splitting. What was he doing? Finally I said something. "Pa," I asked, "what are you doing?" "You been by the Widow Jensens's lately?" he asked. The Widow Jensen lived about two miles down the road. Her husband had died a year or so before and left her with three children, the oldest being eight. Sure, I'd been by, but so what?

"Yeah," I said, "Why?"

"I rode by just today," Pa said. "Little Jakey was out digging around in the woodpile trying to find a few chips. They're out of wood, Matt." That was all he said and then he turned and went back into the woodshed for another armload of wood. I followed him. We loaded the sled so high that I began to wonder if the horses would be able to pull it. Finally, Pa called a halt to our loading, then we went to the smoke house and Pa took down a big ham and a side of bacon. He handed them to me and told me to put them in the sled and wait. When he returned he was carrying a sack of flour over his right shoulder and a smaller sack of something in his left hand. "What's in the little sack?" I asked. "Shoes, they're shoes. Little Jakey just had gunny sacks wrapped around his feet when he was out in the woodpile this morning. I got the children a little candy too. It just wouldn't be Christmas without a little candy."

We rode the two miles to Widow Jensen's pretty much in silence. I tried to think through what Pa was doing. We didn't have much by worldly standards. Of course, we did have a big woodpile, though most of what was left now was still in the form of logs that I would have to saw into blocks and split before we could use it. We also had meat and flour, so we could spare that, but I knew we didn't have any money, so why was Pa buying them shoes and candy? Really, why was he doing any of this? Widow Jensen had closer neighbors than us; it shouldn't have been our concern.

We came in from the blind side of the Jensen house and unloaded the wood as quietly as possible, then we took the meat and flour and shoes to the door. We knocked. The door opened a crack and a timid voice said, "Who is it?" "Lucas Miles, Ma'am and my son, Matt, could we come in for a bit?"

Widow Jensen opened the door and let us in. she had a blanket around her shoulders. The children were wrapped in another and were sitting in front of the fireplace by a very small fire that hardly gave off any heat at all. Widow Jensen fumbled with a match and finally lit the lamp.

"We brought you a few things, Ma'am," Pa said and set down the sack of flour. I put the meat on the table. Then Pa handed her the sack that had the shoes in it. She opened it hesitantly and took the shoes out one pair at a time. There was a pair for her and one for each of the children—sturdy shoes, the best, shoes that would last. I watched her carefully. She bit her lower lip to keep it from trembling and then tears filled her eyes and started running down her cheeks. She looked up at Pa like she wanted to say something, but it wouldn't come out.

"We brought a load of wood too, Ma'am," Pa said. He turned to me and said, "Matt, go bring in enough to last awhile. Let's get that fire up to size and heat this place up." I wasn't the same person when I went back out to bring in the wood. I had a big lump in my throat and as much as I hate to admit it, there were tears in my eyes too. In my mind I kept seeing those three kids huddled around the fireplace and their mother standing there with tears running down her cheeks with so much gratitude in her heart that she couldn't speak.

My heart swelled within me and a joy that I'd never known before, filled my soul. I had given at Christmas many times before, but never when it had made so much difference. I could see we were literally saving the lives of these people.

I soon had the fire blazing and everyone's spirits soared. The kids started giggling when Pa handed them each a piece of candy and Widow Jensen looked on with a smile that probably hadn't crossed her face for a long time. She finally turned to us. "God bless you," she said. "I know the Lord has sent you. The children and I have been praying that He would send one of his angels to spare us."

In spite of myself, the lump returned to my throat and tears welled up in my eyes again. I'd never thought of Pa in those exact terms before, but after Widow Jensen mentioned it I could see that it was probably true. I was sure that a better man than Pa had never walked the earth. I started remembering all the times he had gone out of his way for Ma and me, and many others. The list seemed endless as I thought on it.

Pa insisted that everyone try on the shoes before we left. I was amazed when they all fit and I wondered how he had known what sizes to get. Then I guessed that if he was on an errand for the Lord that the Lord would make sure he got the right sizes.

Tears were running down Widow Jensen's face again when we stood up to leave. Pa took each of the kids in his big arms and gave them a hug. They clung to him and didn't want us to go. I could see that they missed their Pa, and I was glad that I still had mine.

At the door Pa turned to Widow Jensen and said, "The Mrs. Wanted me to invite you and the children over for Christmas dinner tomorrow. The turkey will be more than the three of us can eat, and a man can get cantankerous if he has to eat turkey for too many meals. We'll be by to get you about eleven. It'll be nice to have some little ones around again. Matt, here, hasn't been little for quite a spell." I was the youngest. My two brothers and two sisters had all married and had moved away.

Widow Jensen nodded and said, "Thank you, Brother Miles. I don't have to say, May the Lord bless you, I know for certain that He will." Out on the sled I felt a warmth that came from deep within and I didn't even notice the cold. When we had gone a ways, Pa turned to me and said, "Matt, I want you to know something. Your ma and me have been tucking a little money away here and there all year so we could buy that rifle for you, but we didn't have quite enough. Then yesterday a man who owed me a little money from years back came by to make things square. Your ma and me were real excited, thinking that now we could get you that rifle, and I started into town this morning to do just that, but on the way I saw little Jakey out scratching in the woodpile with his feet wrapped in those gunny sacks and I knew what I had to do. Son, I spent the money for shoes and a little candy for those children. I hope you understand."

I understood, and my eyes became wet with tears again. I understood very well, and I was so glad Pa had done it. Now the rifle seemed very low on my list of priorities. Pa had given me a lot more. He had given me the look on Widow Jensen's face and radiant smiles of her three children.

For the rest of my life, whenever I saw any of the Jensens, or split a block of wood, I remembered, and remembering brought back that same joy I felt riding home beside Pa that night. Pa had given me much more than a rifle that night, he had given me the best Christmas of my life.

Don't be too busy today. Share this inspiring message.

God bless you!

Merry Christmas to You and Yours!

COPIED



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Monday—Thursday

Mission Statement: "The mission of Panhandle Baptist Association is to strengthen, assist, and resource the church and produce itself here and around the world."

Vision Statement: "The Panhandle Baptist Association has a vision to strengthen the church here and around the world."

Eddie and Michelle Knight and Abby (Moderator/Interim Associational Missionary)

David and Amanda Coffey, Abigail, David, Jacee (BCM Director)



Moises and Maribel Avalos (Hispanic Liaison)

Lula King (Ministry Assistant)