

Stories to use for the Quilt.

I want to be open-ended, not boxing gals into what I think they should write or reflect on. This is the Holy Spirit's time.

Allow the story and the drawing and the reflective writing to gently move them from being in control and knowing what they are doing and what will happen next, to being vulnerable, and open to watching God unfold a mystery as they take the risk and let him lead their retreat. Don't box them in with a leading question. Let the Holy Spirit lead them.

I see this exercise as the gentle unfolding of a flower in the warmth of the sun's light, or the imperceptible slow movement of a germinating seed, getting oriented, putting forth roots, finding nourishment, putting forth a shoot, springing forth from the soil, orienting to the light, growing, and flourishing, and bearing fruit. It happens from within. Our part, as the flower or the seed, is to trust that we will unfold, that we don't have to "do it" but simply to allow the Lord to bring about our growth. This exercise is designed to help us stop being in control, to stop us from staying within our comfort zone, to stop us from being afraid of taking a risk, and to show us in a very normal activity what we are seeking on a spiritual level. Just as we will get an idea of using this color and drawing this line and then that color and that line, then that object even though we don't know why, and then another. We don't have to understand what it all means or why we drew what we did, we can simply let it unfold and entrust that in a process that is mysterious to us, it will reveal to us something that the Lord wants to bring to our attention. And as we ponder what we have drawn on our paper, the meaning will emerge, and if it doesn't, that's OK.

Let the hour we spend together bring us to the other side of our brain, where we don't analyze and plan and control, to the side where we ponder, and wonder, and reflect. Leave behind the mathematics and embrace the creative, even if you don't think you can or will be very good at it. Perhaps this is something that is new to us, some place we haven't been, where we can shyly walk in, knowing we are welcome but not knowing anything other than a deep desire to watch our Father unfold the mystery before us. This exercise is the beginning of our discovery, relinquishing our clenched fists on the reins of what will happen and letting God lead us.

Let the coloring help us to become children, who don't have everything planned and solved and neatly organized but are free to scribble to their hearts' delight without the self-consciousness of needing to be good, or right, or better than anyone else; we are free. Take the risk. Jump in.

Trust that he will be our Guide during this retreat, leading us, ^{even if it means going} perhaps, as Jesus said to Peter, to places we do not want to go, and finding there the mystery of union, of branch with Vine intimacy, of love and mercy.

During our retreat we want to shed all pretense of being established in our own abilities, and know-how, and instead bask in the freedom of a dearly loved child, who sings and dances and colors and wanders and marvels and rests and chatters without being self-conscious and worried and fearful, but free as she trusts her Savior's leading.

QUILT

A kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's artwork. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

As we begin our retreat, we need to open ourselves to the Lord and begin positioning ourselves to really listen to him. Sometimes we have so much inner conversations and thoughts – it's hard to hear, to quiet ourselves so we can hear the quiet voice of God. This exercise is designed to help us stop all of our analysis and figuring strategizing, and switch over to enjoying being more reflective—in his presence and listening.

This exercise is called The Quilt and it's designed to help us build community between us and to help us begin to be present Here, and with the Lord, and turn our attention to listen.

We thought as we begin our time, it would be good to look back in order to remember how the Lord has been with us in the past. In a few minutes we'll each create a quilt square – and then we'll write our reflections about what we created, and then pin them up on the large blue cloth to create a community quilt.

Far away and drew us near
Helped us to grow
Difficulties he took us through
Fears we had
Painful times
How he provided for us
Joyful times
When we heard his calling us to follow him – to serve him
When we knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he loved me.

Mary treasured up all "these things" in her heart. We have things that we too treasure as well. As we want to remember them. What treasures do you remember?

Before we create our quilt square I want to read to you a story:

What has been your journey? This is a time to REMEMBER and look back over your life. Remember times when you grew...when things got really hard...when you were full of joy, when you took a detour and how you got back on the road...milestones along the way... God is always there in our fears, our anguish, our struggles...our Shepherd, our Healer, our Friend.

HISTORY OF QUILTS

Quilts have been around since the 1300s. Patchwork quilts are part of the fabric of American frontier. Born of necessity to stay warm in drafty log cabins through the new England winter. Born of frugality – patching together scraps of material saved over the

years. Born out of a need for community – bonding the women together. Reminded them of their favorite dresses, grandmas curtains...reminded the children too. Passed down from generation to generation.

Then we'll take the next 15 minutes to create your square.

FEELS TOO RISKY

- It can feel a little risky – OK a lot risky! Somehow between kindergarten and now we lose our confidence.
- But taking a risk is good.
- Often Jesus calls us out of the safety of our fishing boat and out onto the stormy waves, **to teach us about Himself.**
- **Coming on retreat can feel risky – it's OK. Step out of a comfort zone.**
- **90 yr olds asked what they'd do differently "I'd take more risks- wouldn't play it so safe."**
- Take a risk, step out of the boat, try something you don't feel very good at, let the Lord lead you

I CAN'T DRAW

- **But I can't draw! OK. It's not about a beautiful picture but about the treasured memory.**
- **Stick figures are fine. Remembrance not a Rembrandt.**
- **Create a square with a passage of scripture or words, design.**
- **As you are thinking you might start coloring a border.**
- **Words are fine. Begin to draw and see what comes.**
- **No pressure.**
- Let the Lord bring to mind the ways he's guided you in the past. Shown you His love. Times when you knew he was present with you.

After you draw, attend to the Lord. Listen. What is the Lord reminding you about? Then write, reflect on his word to you.

Story #1 God's Care

I was driving home from a meeting this evening about 5, stuck in traffic on Colorado Blvd., and the car started to choke and splutter and die - I barely managed to coast, cursing, into a gas station, glad only that I would not be blocking traffic and would have a somewhat warm spot to wait for the tow truck. It wouldn't even turn over. Before I could make the call, I saw a woman walking out of the Quickie Mart building, and it looked like she slipped on some ice and fell into a gas pump, so I got out to see if she was okay.

When I got there, it looked more like she had been overcome by sobs than that she had fallen; she was a young woman who looked really haggard with dark circles under her eyes. She dropped something as I helped her up, and I picked it up to give it to her. It was a nickel.

At that moment, everything came into focus for me: the crying woman, the ancient Suburban crammed full of stuff with 3 kids in the back (1 in a car seat), and the gas pump reading \$4.95.

I asked her if she was okay and if she needed help, and she just kept saying 'I don't want my kids to see me crying,' so we stood on the other side of the pump from her car. She said she was driving to California and that things were very hard for her right now.

So I asked, 'And you were praying?'

That made her back away from me a little, but I assured her I was not a crazy person and said, 'He heard you, and He sent me.'

I took out my card and swiped it through the card reader on the pump so she could fill up her car completely, and while it was fueling, walked to the next door McDonald's and bought 2 big bags of food, some gift certificates for more, and a big cup of coffee. She gave the food to the kids in the car, who attacked it like wolves, and we stood by the pump eating fries and talking a little.

She told me her name, and that she lived in Kansas City. Her boyfriend left 2 months ago and she had not been able to make ends meet. She knew she wouldn't have money to pay rent Jan. 1, and finally in desperation had finally called her parents, with whom she had not spoken in about 5 years. They lived in California and said she could come live with them and try to get on her feet there.

So she packed up everything she owned in the car. She told the kids they were going to California for Christmas, but not that they were going to live there.

I gave her my gloves, a little hug and said a quick prayer with her for safety on the road.

As I was walking over to my car, she said, 'So, are you like an angel or something?'

This definitely made me cry. I said, 'At this time of year angels are really busy, so sometimes God uses regular people.'

It was so incredible to be a part of someone else's miracle. And of course, you guessed it, when I got in my car it started right away and got me home with no problem. I'll put it in the shop tomorrow to check, but I suspect the mechanic won't find anything wrong.

Sometimes the angels fly close enough to you that you can hear the flutter of their wings...

This was written by a Metro Denver Hospice Physician www.holybible.com

Story#2

The Day we Flew Kites by Frances Fowler

Story #3

Woman Behold your Son, from Max Lucado, No Wonder they Call Him the Savior, pg. 40

Story #4

Giraffe from A View at the Zoon

Add exact times
 10 minutes for set up
 5 minutes brainstorm
 30 minutes draw
 15 minutes reflect
 15 min. share } 1 hr. 15 min.

THE QUILT

Set up tables ahead of time. Hang up background material for the Quilt pieces to be tapes to. Trace squares onto the background so people know where to hang their pieces. Have tape readily available.

During our retreat, we've planned chapels, times for us to be together, and times for us to be alone with the hope that the Lord's presence will be ministering to your heart.

Have you noticed in your study of the Scriptures
 In my study of Mark this fall, I've noticed how often Jesus asks his followers to take a risk, do the unusual, step out of the boat, feed the 5,000 people, leave your business and follow me. It is often in the new experience, when we feel at risk, that the Lord teaches us to trust Him in the midst of fear, and we grow. *For instance, Peter*
 My experience is that some hate to risk because the reality of failure is so raw, painful, hurtful, that they pull away. Some love to risk, sense of adventure and anticipation, it's fun. *the family business to follow Jesus that the Lord teaches us to trust Him.* We know you'll come at writing or drawing or being alone in difference places. This Springs retreat may at times place you in a situation where you feel at risk. *standing on the water, facing 5000 hungry people, explaining to our family that we're giving up the family business to follow Jesus* I understand the panic that can take hold when you must risk. I remember when I decided to learn to ski, I determined that I would not be timid, but would attack the hill. So what if I broke a leg. I determined I would take the risks. The Springs is a safe place. We encourage you to try something new in the next few days. Take a risk. See how it goes. *however, is that we respond to risky situations in 2 ways. We grow our faith to follow Jesus that the Lord teaches us to trust Him. We learn to trust despite our fear. When we get pushed or entranced/lured out of our safety zone, when we are at risk - we grow in faith and learn how to trust. Risk demands faith. Risk you to write for 5 min, or draw a picture, or spend some time in silence.*

Throughout the Scripture the Lord admonishes us to REMEMBER. *Throw yourself into the new experiences w/ gusto*

- Remember this and never forget how you provoked the Lord your God to anger in the desert (Deut 9:7) *that simply coming on this retreat has been a huge risk for some of you. We also know that we may be asking you to write out how the Lord has built "remembrances" into the Jewish culture from my journal.*
- Remember it was not your children who were punished in the Red Sea
- Remember the alien for you were once strangers in a foreign land
- Remember the Amalekites (Duet 25:17)
- Remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth...Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded...foreigners...without hope. (Eph 2:11)
- Do this as a remembrance of me *Write out how the Lord has built "remembrances" into the Jewish culture from my journal.*

A theme throughout Scripture: Remember. And the testimony of Scripture demonstrates how quick we are to Forget.

We thought it would be good, as we begin our time today, to begin by looking back into our lives in order to remember. Remember the times in our lives when we grew, when we'd say that God brought us along in our walk with Him. Remember how the Lord met us in our anguish, in our fear, in our struggle, in revealing Himself as our Provider, our Banner, our Father, our Healer, our Friend. The good, the dark, the difficult.

Quilts have been around since the 1300's. Patchwork quilts are part of the fabric of American frontier. Born of necessity to stay warm in drafty log cabins through the new England winter. Born of frugality--patching together scraps of material saved over the years. Born out of a need for community--bonding the women together. Our grandmothers made quilts reminding them of a favorite childhood dress, their mother's curtains, their grandmother's pillow cases. Quilts helped the children to remember.

Read Lucado, pg. 40 Mary treasured up all these things pondering them in her heart. *What experiences, have you been pondering - what events have you treasured in your heart? We'd like to give you some time as we begin our retreat to*

Patchwork quilts full of memories, pieces of *bric* bursting with memories, passed down from generation to generation, made special for your children. Made to help you remember, made with friends, a chance to look back at where God has brought you - the road you've traveled - your pilgrimage - and then give you a chance to share your story w/ us - much like Mary did w/ Luke. We thought we'd do this by each of us creating a quilt square. Quilts have been keepers of memories for hundreds of years.

Read Kites *No.*
 Special memories hidden away. As Max looked back over his life this experience stands out. He learned in a new way the value of living like Jesus, the secret of his father's spiritual strength as he faced a lingering windy death. The Lord touches each of us throughout our journey--sometimes in cemeteries, and bathrooms, along the Kings River, or in our living rooms.

was asked to
the disciples were given a few leaves and asked
the 12 were asked
when I think of taking a risk, I remember learning to snow ski. I was a child who never took a risk. Over-protective mother, sheltered me from any potentially dangerous experience.
learning to snow ski was going to mean I'd have to take risks. If I never tried a hill that was a challenge for me, I'd never grow on my ability to ski. I had to determine to take the risks - throw myself at the challenge with gusto - all that was really at risk was a broken leg. I really was "safe" - at least not in any mortal danger.
Here at the Springs you are in a safe place - no mortal danger. We won't ask you to raise your hands in worship - or sing a solo - or dance before the Lord. But we will ask you to read and write and draw and be silent.

For instance, Peter the family business to follow Jesus that the Lord teaches us to trust Him. We learn to trust despite our fear. When we get pushed or entranced/lured out of our safety zone, when we are at risk - we grow in faith and learn how to trust. Risk demands faith. Risk you to write for 5 min, or draw a picture, or spend some time in silence.

great venture

See Journal
I've just seen Jesus -
(as He turned the storm around)

Where you've met the Lord. We meet the Lord in various places that we
area + depicting. Moses met the Lord in the desert, in a burning bush -
Shadrach met the Lord in the furnace -
• Emmaus road
• in the garden at the tomb
• Disciples met Him on the Cross, Sildeus, too
• Nicodemus came in the dark - Women at well at noon

Where had you realized you just met the Lord -

Look back and remember the milestones along your spiritual pilgrimage. Draw your memory. One or many images may come to mind. You may want to think about specific milestones, stages along your journey. Or an image (41 baby carriages, a forest of trees, a NEWIM heart with lots of little hearts). Or write out a verse of scripture. Or create a square full of colors, an abstract design. Or maybe no color. All words, or no words. What you draw is not important. How you draw is even less important. Stick figures are fine. We are not creating a Rembrandt, but a Remembrance. This time is more of a time for you to remember, and often we don't even know what we are remembering until we begin to draw. Once I began with a stack of books. I didn't know why. It grew to include a coffee table, and a mug of coffee, then two mugs. I realized I was remembering my dining room table and all of the conversations, and Bible studies, and conversions that had taken place there. I didn't know why I started drawing a book, then a stack of books, but as I drew, I remembered. We'll give you a relaxed time to draw. When you are ready, please take your square and tape it to the background material. We'll join our memories into a Spring's quilt, and begin to form our community here at the Springs.

After you draw, we'd like you to take 20 minutes to write reflectively in your journal. Remember in your writing and reflect on your drawing. Then we'll gather together and take turns sharing our pieces. You may want to talk for 3 minutes about your drawing, or maybe you'll want to read what you wrote, or maybe you'll read something someone else has written that expresses your heart. We'll begin to share our Quilt pieces at 4:30 ??as we conclude this time in the community room.

So complete square
Hang it up
Reflect
Share

From "A View from the Zoo"
Stories from the LA zoo

"I noticed the calf's front hooves and head were already visible and dripping with amniotic fluids. I also noticed that the mother was standing up. "When is she going to lie down?" I said to Jack, who still hadn't said anything.

"She won't," he answered.

"But her hindquarters are nearly ten feet off the ground. That calf might get hurt from the fall," I said. Jack just gave me that look that told me I had probably said something that revealed my ignorance.

I wondered why no plans were being made to procure a fireman's net to catch the baby, so I asked. "Listen, Gary," he said. "You can go try to catch the calf if you want, but remember that its mother has enough strength in her hind legs to kick your head off, which is what she'd do if you get anywhere near that calf. They've killed lions that tried to get their calves."

I was able to sit quietly for a while and observe the calf's journey down the birth canal. Its neck and front legs were fully extended and angling freely, ten feet above the hard ground on which it was soon to fall. It seemed unbelievable to me that in just a few minutes this newborn was going to be introduced to such trauma. Ten feet! To the hard ground! (It had taken me twelve years to get up the nerve to jump off a high dive approximately ten feet high into clear deep water. This giraffe calf was going to top that during its first thirty minutes of visible existence.

The moment we had anticipated was not a disappointment. The calf, a plucky male, hurled forth, falling ten feet and landing on his back. Within seconds, he rolled to an upright position with his legs tucked under his body. From this position he considered the world for the first time, shaking some of the last vestiges of birthing fluids from his eyes and ears.

The mother giraffe lowered her head long enough to take a quick look. Then she positioned herself so that she was standing directly over her calf. She waited for about a minute and then did the most unreasonable thing. She swung her pendulous leg outward and kicked her baby, so that it was sent sprawling head over heels (or hooves, in this case. I turned to Jack and exclaimed, "why'd she do that?"

"She wants it to get up, and if it doesn't she'll do it again."

Jack was right--the violent process was repeated again and then again. The struggle to rise was momentous, and as the baby grew tired of trying, the mother would again stimulate its efforts with a hearty kick.

Finally, amidst the cheers of the animal care staff, the calf stood for the first time. Wobbly, for sure, but it stood. Then we were struck silent when she kicked it off its feet again.

Jack's face was the only face not expressing astonishment. "She wants it to remember how it got up," he offered. "That's why she knocked it down. In the wild it would need to get up as soon as possible to follow the herd. The mother needs the herd, too. Lions, hyenas, leopards, and hunting dogs all would enjoy young giraffes. They'd get it, too if the mother didn't teach her baby to quickly get up and get with it."

3:30-3:45 - Intro
3:45-4:05 - Draw
4:05-4:15 - Write
4:15-4:35 - Share
5:00 - Chapel
3:40

come hoping for concerns

THE QUILT

Set up tables ahead of time. Hang up background material for the Quilt pieces to be tapes to. Trace squares onto the background so people know where to hang their pieces. Have tape readily available.

During our retreat, we've planned chapels, times for us to be together, and times for us to be alone with the hope that the Lord's presence will minister to your heart.

Tony Campollo quotes a study done where researchers asked people in their 90's if they had their life to live over, what would they do differently. One of the top three answers was: I'd take more risks. I wouldn't play it so safe.

Campollo

In my study of Scripture, I've noticed how often Jesus asks his followers to take a risk, do the unusual,

- Peter step out of the boat, - come stand on the waves
- Borrow that boy's lunch feed the 5,000 people, and face 5,000 hungry people w/ a few loaves of bread
- leave your ^{family} business and follow me.

Why take a risk - learn to trust.

It seems that in the new experience, when the disciples certainly felt the most at risk, that the Lord taught them to trust Him, even in the midst of panic and fear. And we see the disciples faith in Him grow. Risks demands faith... Faith has great reward.

You have taken a huge risk to come to the Springs retreat...most of you have come alone. It's an unfamiliar place. It's Catholic. You're not sure what we'll be doing. It's risky. We learn trust. We learn that we can trust Jesus. We learn that He is trustworthy.

Some love

Some of you probably love to take a risk, there's sense of adventure and anticipation, it's fun.

Others hate

Other's of you hate to risk. It's scary. You might be asked to do something that you don't want to do. You might feel uncomfortable or embarrassed or miserable. You might not know what to do.

- The Rose - ^{stepping out, talking a risk demands faith. Don't really grow - learn to live w/out risk -} On the far side of risk is a deeper faith - firm confidence that He is trustworthy - *

Signing up was a risk - coming was a risk

In many ways, it is like stepping out of the boat and onto the Sea of Galilee. You've come to open yourself to Jesus...to spend time with Him and to deepen the intimacy of your friendship. You've taken this step of faith, you've decided to take a risk because you want to grow. You've come.

Pull back Go for it I pulled back ski

But now that you've come you may feel uncomfortable

When I think of taking a risk - I remember learning to ski.

This Springs retreat may at times place you in a situation where you feel at risk. There's two responses: either pull back, or go for it. I was always of the persuasion to pull back, hide, take the safe route, until I decided to learn to snow ski. I determined that I would not pull back, but would attack the hill. I knew that I would never be a good skier if I played it safe. So I decided to go for it. So what if I broke a ski! The worst that could happen to me would be that I might break a leg. I determined I would take the risks. I shocked everyone, especially myself, and became a pretty good skier--I did break 3 skis but never my leg. I learned to love the mogels and the tough hills. In the same way, I

True for skiing Learn to attack the hill Turn for music

Remember how God is faithful

Spiritual life does take a risk, too - centering prayer, reading, Novena, prayer weeks

encourage you during the next three days to not pull back and play it safe, but to venture out and try something new. *To take a risk in hopes of growing deeper in your walk with God.*

Honestly, the Springs is a safe place. There's nothing here that will hurt you. We'll read, and write, and draw, and sing and be silent...nothing out of the ordinary. But we know you'll come at writing or drawing or being alone from difference places...Take a risk. See how it goes.

Remember

So, with that said, let's begin... *with an adventuresome spirit - Ready to take a Risk. Let's begin by Remembering*

Throughout the Scripture the Lord admonishes us to REMEMBER. I recently did a study of all of the things that the Lord commanded in order to help the Israelites to remember: *Over 30 specific ways I found in Gen-Deut God established to Remember. And for us today... He gives us communion "Do this in remembrance"*

Re-set their calendar so every new year began at Passover. Special feasts. Blood on doorpost. Lasted ally. Special meals. Go live in tents

Remember this and never forget how you provoked the Lord your God to anger in the desert (Deut 9:7)

Remember it was not your children who were punished in the Red Sea

Remember the alien for you were once strangers in a foreign land.

Remember the Amalekites (Duet 25;17)

Remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth...Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded...foreigners...without hope. (Eph 2:11)

Do this as a remembrance of me

A theme throughout Scripture: Remember. The Lord wants us to remember where we've come from. He wants us to remember how he has met us. And the testimony of Scripture demonstrates how quick we are to Forget.

Max Lucado ->

Take out paper and brainstorm a list -

We thought it would be good, as we begin our time today, to begin by looking back into our lives in order to remember. Remember how far away we were from the Lord. Remember the times in our lives when we grew, when we'd say that God brought us along in our walk with Him. Remember how the Lord met us in our anguish, in our fear, in our struggle, in revealing Himself to us. Remember a time when He healed us. Remember how He Provided. Remember when we came to Him as a child and He met us as a Loving Father. Remember. Remember the joyful times as well as the difficult ones.

Brainstorm a list as I slowly read this

Read Lucado, pg. 40 *as Luke went to the eye witnesses to gather the info - carefully in investigating* Mary treasured up all these things pondering them in her heart.

In the gospel of Luke we meet of Jesus' birth. Who was there?

What events have you treasured - what things are you pondering - Take some time to remember

Woman Behold Your Son

"Woman, behold your son."

Mary is older now. The hair at her temples is gray. Wrinkles have replaced her youthful skin. Her hands are calloused. She has raised a houseful of children. And now she beholds the crucifixion of her firstborn.

One wonders what memories she conjures up as she witnesses his torture.

The long ride to Bethlehem perhaps.

A baby's bed made from cow's hay.

Fugitives in Egypt.

At home in Nazareth.

Panic in Jerusalem. "I thought he was with you!"

Carpentry lessons. Dinner table laughter.

And then the morning Jesus came in from the shop early, his eyes firmer,

his voice more direct. He had heard the news. "John is preaching in the desert." Her son took off his nail apron, dusted off his hands, and with one last look said goodbye to his mother. They both knew it would

never be the same gain.

In that last look they shared a secret, the full extent of which was too painful to say aloud.

Mary learned that day the heartache that comes from saying goodbye.

>From then on she was to love her son from a distance; on the edge of the

crowd, outside of a packed house, on the shore of the sea.

Maybe she was even there when the enigmatic promise was made,

"Anyone who has

left...mother...for my sake."

Mary wasn't the first one to be called to say good-bye to loved ones for the sake of the kingdom. Joseph was called to be an orphan in Egypt. Jonah was called to be foreigner in Ninevah. Hannah sent her firstborn son away to serve in the temple. Daniel was sent from Jerusalem to Babylon. Nehemiah was sent from Susa to Jerusalem. Abraham was sent to

sacrifice his own son. Paul had to say goodbye to his heritage. The Bible is bound together with goodbye trails and stained with farewell tears.

"Woman, behold your son."

John fastened his arm around Mary a little tighter. Jesus was asking him to be the son that a mother needs and that in some ways he never was.

Jesus looked at Mary. His ache was from a pain far greater than that of the nails and thorns. In their silent glance they again shared a secret. And he said goodbye.

Lucado, No Wonder they Call Him the Savior, p. 40-41

Quilts have traditionally been a way to remember.

Quilts have been around since the 1300's. Patchwork quilts are part of the fabric of American frontier. Born of necessity to stay warm in drafty log cabins through the new England winter. Born of frugality--patching together scraps of material saved over the years. Born out of a need for community--bonding the women together. Our grandmothers made quilts reminding them of a favorite childhood dress, their mother's curtains, their grandmother's pillow cases. Quilts helped the children to remember. *I have a quilt wall hanging in my bathroom - a gift from Karen - I remember*

Patchwork quilts full of memories, pieces of fabric bursting with memories, passed down from generation to generation, made special for your children. Made to help you remember, made with friends, a chance for you to share your lives a bit.

We'd like to create a quilt together (this afternoon). Born of frugality we've brought paper & crayons. Born of community - bond us together as we take a risk together, as we share our lives with one another, made to help your remember Kindergarten teacher story -

Look back and remember the milestones along your spiritual pilgrimage. Draw your memory. One or many images may come to mind. You may want to think about specific milestones, stages along your journey. Or an image (41 baby carriages, a forest of trees, a NEWIM heart with lots of little hearts). Or write out a verse of scripture. Or create a square full of colors, an abstract design. Or maybe no color. All words, or no words. What you draw is not important. How you draw is even less important. Stick figures are fine. We are not creating a Rembrandt, but a Remembrance. This time is more of a time for you to remember, and often we don't even know what we are remembering until we begin to draw. Once I began with a stack of books. I didn't know why. It grew to include a coffee table, and a mug of coffee, then two mugs. I realized I was remembering my dining room table and all of the conversations, and Bible studies, and conversions that had taken place there. I didn't know why I started drawing a book, then a stack of books, but as I drew, I remembered. We'll give you a relaxed time to draw. When you are ready, please take your square and ^{Pin} tape it to the background material. We'll join our memories into a Spring's quilt, and begin to form our community here at the Springs.

After you draw, we'd like you to take 20 minutes to write reflectively in your journal. Remember in your writing and reflect on your drawing. Then we'll gather together and take turns sharing our pieces. You may want to talk for 3 minutes about your

Remembering the highs & lows - Times of triumphs faith & hope - Times of darkness and doubt - Scriptures - Songs - How did God speak to you?

Think back and remember - who's Jesus to you - Is there an image that comes to mind - a symbol or a metaphor that describes who He is to you. Maybe you've known Him in different ways over the years. Peace. Healer. Rock. Ocean. Light. Bread. Dear, Vine

*3:55 - 4:30 Draw
4:30 - 4:45 Write
4:45 - 5:00 Share*

Tell your story by the scriptures of prayers that marked your way.

*Where have you met Jesus?
I've just seen Jesus
Moses - desert
Shadrach - lions den
Nicodemus - dark
Woman at Well - noon
Mary - Garden
Thief - Cross*

*Who is Jesus to you today?
Ask yourself the question - How close do I feel to Jesus - Am I intimate - Am I distant - Seeking abandoned - Lifeless - Warm Cold Why*

drawing, or maybe you'll want to read what you wrote, or maybe you'll read something someone else has written that expresses your heart. We'll begin to share our Quilt pieces at ~~4:30~~ ^{4:45} as we conclude this time in the community room.

11/08

Quilt

This retreat to walk you through a personal retreat.

4:15 - 4:25

Begin our retreat - ① Be present here - quiet inner & outer noise
② Focus on the Lord's love for you - You are His Beloved.
③ Be intentionally aware of His Presence with us here.

Early words "Come" -
Be present - ^{mentally} quiet noise
Love of God
Be conscious of God's Presence

This exercise is designed to help us switch to the right side of our brains - switch off the analytical & critical thinking → experiential, creative
In a few minutes we'll create a quilt piece.

Why a Quilt?

Part of American heritage

As we quiet noise - leave all
behind - open to the
Lord - Freak Out!

born of necessity - drafty log cabins New England winter
frugality patching scraps
community social connection bonding contributing community

Like a tapestry artist Grandmothers made quilts, each piece REMINDING them of a favorite dress, mother's hanging mid air, waiting curtains - children remembered

What next?! I get my solid footing by remembering

We are going to create our patchwork quilt - full of memories made w/ friends create community -

How many times the Lord taught his people to remember!

FOCUS - "prayer"

- ① Remember your earliest memory of praying -
- ② Consider the people who have prayed for you -
- ③ Reflect on what prayers were answered - remarkably so prayer that are still unanswered

Back to Kindergarten - Color crayons & string Remember how the Lord has taught us in Past - so we can build going forward.

- ④ Reconnect your journey of learning to pray - the people, books, insights
- ⑤ Your favorite Bible passage on prayer -
- ⑥ Your favorite Biblical passages.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS - Open to the Lord - Begin Border - Design - A picture + see where it leads Like a Polaroid photo - let it develop -

Before we begin, I thought I'd read you a story - Carol's reads first memory of prayer. Carol's Trends - pg 23 -

4:25 - 4:45 DRAW 20 minutes

4:45 - 4:55 Flip over & write your reflection - Then pin to fabric leaving border - Create our Patchwork Quilt.

Opportunity to share your reflection & build community over next few days. Take home at the end

Isaiah 58:11 says that "The Lord will guide us always" and yet there are times in our lives when we are seeking his guidance and it doesn't seem to come (Jeff church planting) and we read in Scripture about the Apostles being shipwrecked and arrested and chased out of town. God's guidance doesn't mean that everything will go easily, but that

Ever been confused by God? Ever claimed the verse in scripture that say "Whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give you." And pray. And pray. And pray believing that the Lord would answer your prayer—only for him not to answer the prayer the way you thought He would?

That was Mary. Lord, where were you! How many times do we lose our way because we are confused, or disappointed, or left exhausted by grief.

Bill Sprague is a professional musician who ministers around the world. He writes of his experience with prayer:

Spring 1979... en route to Fort Worth Texas from Austin I write a lullaby called "Dream a Dream." It is a song to sing a child to sleep. Before I know it I am crying as I drive down the Interstate. A deep longing has surfaced. I imagine singing it to my own daughter one day and pray, *Dear God, give me a little girl to sing this to someday.*

The next year... I fall in love with a young woman I want—more than anything—to spend my life with. She falls in love with me. And out of love. And back in love with her last boyfriend. I pray every night and day for a year that her heart will turn again to me. It doesn't. They marry the next year. Request denied.

Eight years later. Climbing the stairs at my home, I collapse in tears. I am terribly lonely. For someone to share my life with. I have so many friends. But no "someone." I scribble a prayer.

The next year, "In one week the woman I intend to marry and I will make our engagement official at her home. We will be married next spring. Today she stands beside her car about to drive several hours to surprise me. An older woman standing with her says a quick prayer for "traveling mercies." Nine miles down the road RosaLynn is killed in a head-on collision. I am marooned. Again. This time on an island of grief.

For the next year my main prayers are : Dear God, keep me going and protect me from evil. By which I mean extreme, unhealthy behavior—in the short term—sleepless exhaustion, drinking, even suicide. And in the long term—bitterness, cynicism, unbelief. I survive. With a little help from my friends. With a lot of help from my friends. And no doubt their prayers. I survive that year, but do not thrive. For nine months I take up smoking, initially to keep me awake on long drives. I see too many sunrises, flicking cigarette butts into the backyard and wondering if thriving is possible.

July 1992, Barcelona, Spain... I am a guest artist at an outreach during the Olympics. One of the speakers delivers a talk asking the question: What do we do with our personal pain, which we all have, in regard to our mission in life? Do we get well and then get on with our calling? Or do we respond to our calling and get well along the way? His counsel is the second—get well along the way. We are all wounded. If we wait until we are well to be fit for our mission, life will be over. He concludes by asking us to turn to two others near us and ask for prayer for a very specific pain in our life. I turn to my Dutch friend Tjebbo who knows me from two previous trips together in Sweden. I tell him I am coming back to life, functional and even thriving, able to enjoy so much and be useful and productive. But I still carry a fisted knot in my soul about RoseLynn's death. No doubt it is part anger, bitterness, and confusion with a sense of betrayal or unrightness about it. And I don't know how to untie it. He prays one sentence. "Dear Lord, don't let Billy's memories remain anchors that he has to drag along. Turn them to treasures he can carry with him." I begin to feel the warm tears gather in my eyes and then drip onto my folded hands. I weep gently. No tumult. No great upheaval.

That's all Tjebbo prays. We sit in silence for a minute or so. Then he counsels me to re-check and let go of any unspoken "vows" I may have made like "remaining single" or "finding a manageable level of melancholy." Instead of coming fully back to the land of the living.

He is our guide
He is moving us
along a path
and He will be
our guide until
the very end.

How has God
guided you?
As I read the
story of Billy,
a professional
Christian
musician.
Think about
your own life
and how God
has guided
you.
We'll draw a
picture...

God guides Israel
with a pillar
of cloud & fire
He says He is a
shepherd guiding
us.
parents
prophets
advisers
Word of God
H.S. guides us
into all truth

God guides us
- thru His unfailing
love
- His strength
- w/ light & truth
- w/ His counsel
- w/ His hand

Led Abraham's
servant to the
right wife for
Isaac by an
answer to pray
Paul - dream
Gideon - fleece

Pre reqs for guidance
- humility
- integrity
- discernment
- wisdom

Example & teaching
of Jesus
- indwelling of His
- godly models
- parents
- spiritual leaders
& adviser

movement along
a path

God guides His people to the Promised land, to safe & right paths, what is right, truth,
Ps 48:14 God will ^{be our} guide even to the end.

In less than fifteen minutes I am different. Lighter: the knot in my soul is gone. I take a deeper breath than I have taken in over two years.

The most surprising thing of all is what replaces the knot. Gratitude. I am actually grateful. For RoseLynn. For knowing her. For the time we had. I am thankful for the tenacious love of so many along the way. And thankful to God Who in those moments answered so many prayers.

5 years later "I am standing at the front of a church. Next to me is my "one and Only, Kellie. We are dressed in our finest. Most of my "please" prayers are about to be answered."

19 years – confusion. Kept coming to God

Luke writes to Theophilus that he carefully investigated everything that happened in order to write an orderly account. He wanted to get it written down - so that he could be remembered.
Lk 19:26, 51

The Unfolding
Woman Behold Your Son

"Woman, behold your son."

Luke is at the door -

Mary is older now. The hair at her temples is gray. Wrinkles have replaced her youthful skin. Her hands are calloused. She has raised a household of children. And now she beholds the crucifixion of her firstborn.

She knows the pain of having a sword pierce her soul.

She felt that a sword had pierced her soul as she had watched her firstborn be crucified.

Luke wonders what treasured memories come to mind as she looks back. He's writing her story. How had God revealed himself to her? She remembers
One wonders what memories she conjures up as she witnesses his torture. The long ride to Bethlehem perhaps. A baby's bed made from cow's hay. Fugitives in Egypt. At home in Nazareth. Panic in Jerusalem. "I thought he was with you!" Carpentry lessons. Dinner table laughter.

The unexpected visitors from the East -

seeing Egyptian Pyramids & temples - being so young, so poor, God provided through the Magi's gifts. far away from home.

And then the morning Jesus came in from the shop early, his eyes firmer, his voice more direct. He had heard the news. "John is preaching in the desert." Her son took off his nail apron, dusted off his hands, and with one last look said goodbye to his mother. They both knew it would never be the same again. In that last look they shared a secret, the full extent of which was too painful to say aloud.

Mary learned that day the heartache that comes from saying goodbye. From then on she was to love her son from a distance; on the edge of the crowd, outside of a packed house, on the shore of the sea. Maybe she was even there when the enigmatic promise was made, "Anyone who has left... mother... for my sake."

she had learned God would be with her.

Luke realized that Mary's story isn't unlike Joseph's, Moses, Daniel, Nehemiah or Paul's.

Mary wasn't the first one to be called to say good-bye to loved ones for the sake of the kingdom. Joseph was called to be an orphan in Egypt. Jonah was called to be a foreigner in Nineveh. Hannah sent her firstborn son away to serve in the temple. Daniel was sent from Jerusalem to Babylon. Nehemiah was sent from Susa to Jerusalem. Abraham was sent to sacrifice his own son. Paul had to say goodbye to his heritage. The Bible is bound together with goodbye trails and stained with farewell tears.

God's unfolding story is a story of

AND GOD REVEALING HIMSELF TO MAN - TO US. even in difficult & painful experiences - especially in them.

REMEMBERING - LOOKING BACK OVER YOUR LIFE - IF LUKE WERE TO INTERVIEW YOU -

"Woman, behold your son."

John fastened his arm around Mary a little tighter. Jesus was asking him to be the son that a mother needs and that in some ways he never was.

"WHAT ARE YOUR EARLIEST MEMORIES OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE? HOW HAS HE REVEALED HIMSELF TO YOU OVER THE YEARS? what images, stories come to mind?"

Jesus looked at Mary. His ache was from a pain far greater than that of the nails and thorns. In their silent glance they again shared a secret. And he said goodbye.

The Day We Flew the Kites

Frances Fowler

"We never knew where the hours went on that hilltop day. There were no hours, just a golden, breezy Now."

String!" shouted Brother, bursting into the kitchen. "We need lots more string."

It was Saturday. As always, it was a busy one, for "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work" was taken seriously in those days. My father and Mr. Patrick next door were doing chores about their large yards. March was a busy time.

Indoors, Mother and Mrs. Patrick were running around in their usual Saturday marathon, complicated by spring cleaning. Such a windy day was ideal for "turning out" clothes closets. Already, woolens flapped on clotheslines which snaked across the adjoining back yards.

Somehow the boys had slipped away to the back lot with their kites. Now, even at the risk of having Brother impounded for beating carpets or washing windows, they had sent him to the house for more string. All theirs had played out— heaven knows how many yards! Apparently there was no limit to the heights to which kites would soar today.

My mother looked out the window. The sky was piercingly blue; the breeze fresh and infinitely exciting. Up in all that blueness sailed great puffy billows of clouds. It had been a long, hard winter, but today was Spring.

My mother looked from the pie-baking clutter on the kitchen table to the disordered sitting room, its furniture all moved out of line for a really Spartan sweeping. Again her eyes wavered toward the window. "Come on, girls!" She fumbled in the kitchen-table drawer for a new roll of twine. "Let's take string to the boys and watch them fly the kites a minute."

On the way we met our neighbor, Mrs. Patrick, laughing guiltily, escorted by her girls.

There never was such a day for flying kites! God doesn't make two such days in a century. We played all our fresh twine into the boys' kites, and still they soared. We could hardly distinguish, the tiny, orange-colored specks. Now and then we slowly reeled one in, finally bringing it, dipping and tugging, to earth, for the sheer joy of sending it up again, feeling its vibrant tug against the twine as it sought the sky. What a thrill to run with them, to the right, to the left, and see our poor, earth-bound movements reflected minutes later, in the majestic sky-dance of the kites! We wrote "wishes" on slips of paper, punched holes in them, and slipped them over the string. Slowly, irresistibly, they climbed up until they reached the kites. Surely all such wishes would be granted!

Even our fathers dropped hoe and hammer and joined us. Our mothers took their turn, laughing like schoolgirls. Their hair blew out of their

decorous pompadours and curled loose about their cheeks, their gingham aprons whipped about ~~z~~ their legs. Mingled with our puppyish delight was a feeling akin to awe. These adults were playing with us, really playing! The gulf between parent and child was greater then than now. Once I looked at Mother and thought she looked actually pretty! And her over forty!

We never knew where the hours went on that hilltop day. There were no hours, just a golden, breezy Now. I think we were all a little beyond ourselves. Parents forgot their duty and their dignity; children forgot the combativeness and small spites. "Perhaps it's like this in the Kingdom of Heaven," I thought confusedly. All our personalities stood out clearer, more individual than ever, and yet there was no sense of separateness.

It was growing dark before, drunk with sun and air, we all stumbled sleepily back to the houses. Things were just as we had left them, but Mother looked as if she hardly saw the half-rolled pastry, [the stripped sitting room. I suppose we had some sort of supper. I suppose there must have been a surface tidying-up, for the house on Sunday looked decorous enough, or do I remember?]

The strange thing was, we didn't mention that day, afterward. I felt a little embarrassed. Surely none of those other sensible, balanced people had thrilled to it as deeply as I; none had ridiculous, sacrilegious thoughts about comparing flying kites with the Kingdom of Heaven. I locked the memory up in that deepest part of me where we keep "the things that cannot be and yet are" . . . and the years went on.

A good many years had passed, and one day I was flying about a kitchen of my own in a city apartment. I was trying to get some work out of the way while my three-year-old insistently whined her desire to "go park and see ducks."

"I can't go!" (My reasonableness was wearing thin.) "I have this and this and this to do first, and when I'm through I'll be too tired to walk that far."

My mother, who was visiting us, looked up from the peas she was shelling. "It's a wonderful day," she offered, "really warm, yet there's a fine, fresh breeze. It reminds me of that day we flew the kites." I stopped in my dash between stove and sink. So she remembered! The locked door flew open, and with it a gush of memories, and the application of her little parable. There had been much to do on that long-ago Saturday.

I pulled off my apron. "Come on," I told my little girl. "You're right, it's too good a day to miss."

Another decade passed. We were in the uneasy aftermath of a great war. All evening we had been asking our returned soldier, the youngest Patrick boy, about his experiences as a prisoner of war. He had talked freely, but now for a long time he had been silent, watching his cigarette smoke curl upward into the summer darkness. The silence seemed suddenly to throb. What was he thinking of . . . what dark and dreadful things? What was he going to tell?

"Say!" A smile twitched his lips. He looked like the little boy he used to be, the very little boy always tagging behind us others. "Say, do you remember

... no, of course you wouldn't. It probably didn't make the impression on you it did on me. It was the first time I'd seen them."

I hardly dared speak. "Remember what?"

"I used to think of that day a lot in POW. camp, when things weren't too good. Do you remember the day we flew the kites?"

Winter came, and the sad duty of a call of condolence on Mrs. Patrick, recently widowed. Her family had moved away many years before, but she had brought back her husband's body to our town for burial. I dreaded the call. I couldn't imagine how Mrs. Patrick would face life alone.

I found her quite gray, a little stooped, much thinner than in her vigorous, maternal middle years. But she still had those warm, brown eyes, that low, caressing voice. We talked a little of my family and her grandchildren and the changes in our town. Then she was silent, looking down at her lap. I cleared my throat. Now I must say something about her loss, and she would begin to cry.

When I looked up, I was dumbfounded. Mrs. Patrick was smiling. "I was just sitting here thinking," she said. "Henry had such fun that day. Frances, do you remember the day we flew the kites?"

1. *Spartan* (spart'n), severe, stern, and simple, like the lives of the people of Sparta, a city in ancient Greece known for its strict discipline.

"The Day We Flew the Kites" by Francis, *Parents Magazine*, May 1949, Copyright 1949 Gruner + Jahr USA Publishing. Reprinted by permission.

"Tradition In Literature" Pages 667, 668, 669

From "A View from the Zoo"
Stories from the LA zoo

"I noticed the calf's front hooves and head were already visible and dripping with amniotic fluids. I also noticed that the mother was standing up. "When is she going to lie down?" I said to Jack, who still hadn't said anything.

"She won't," he answered.

"But her hindquarters are nearly ten feet off the ground. That calf might get hurt from the fall," I said. Jack just gave me that look that told me I had probably said something that revealed my ignorance.

I wondered why no plans were being made to procure a fireman's net to catch the baby, so I asked. "Listen, Gary," he said. "You can go try to catch the calf if you want, but remember that its mother has enough strength in her hind legs to kick your head off, which is what she'd do if you get anywhere near that calf. They've killed lions that tried to get their calves."

I was able to sit quietly for a while and observe the calf's journey down the birth canal. Its neck and front legs were fully extended and angling freely, ten feet above the hard ground on which it was soon to fall. It seemed unbelievable to me that in just a few minutes this newborn was going to be introduced to such trauma. Ten feet! To the hard ground! (It had taken me twelve years to get up the nerve to jump off a high dive approximately ten feet high into clear deep water. This giraffe calf was going to top that during its first thirty minutes of visible existence.

The moment we had anticipated was not a disappointment. The calf, a plucky male, hurled forth, falling ten feet and landing on his back. Within seconds, he rolled to an upright position with his legs tucked under his body. From this position he considered the world for the first time, shaking some of the last vestiges of birthing fluids from his eyes and ears.

The mother giraffe lowered her head long enough to take a quick look. Then she positioned herself so that she was standing directly over her calf. She waited for about a minute and then did the most unreasonable thing. She swung her pendulous leg outward and kicked her baby, so that it was sent sprawling head over heels (or hooves, in this case. I turned to Jack and exclaimed, "why'd she do that?"

"She wants it to get up, and if it doesn't she'll do it again."

Jack was right--the violent process was repeated again and then again. The struggle to rise was momentous, and as the baby grew tired of trying, the mother would again stimulate its efforts with a hearty kick.

Finally, amidst the cheers of the animal care staff, the calf stood for the first time. Wobbly, for sure, but it stood. Then we were struck silent when she kicked it off its feet again.

Jack's face was the only face not expressing astonishment. "She wants it to remember how it got up," he offered. "That's why she knocked it down. In the wild it would need to get up as soon as possible to follow the herd. The mother needs the herd, too. Lions, hyenas, leopards, and hunting dogs all would enjoy young giraffes. They'd get it, too if they mother didn't teach her baby to quickly get up and get with it."

You may feel like this baby giraffe - kicked off your feet, again... and maybe it's not an enemy whose giving you a swift kick - but the Lord. Doors slammed shut. You're just trying to serve the Lord, you sought His direction and chose to follow - sacrificed a lot to minister and people have made it tough and you wonder if you heard right. Feel betrayed. Feel kicked.

The baby giraffe doesn't know about the lions - but ~~his~~ mother does. ~~We~~ That baby needs to be taught to get up! That's true for us as well. The Lord knows we have ^{Satan's} lions ^{prodding about} seeking to devour us - What may feel like abuse - may be our salvation.

How do we sort it all out? How do we make sense of all life brings?
For me - Reflective Writing, ^{Journaling and interacting with the Scriptures.} and Sacred Reading.

Use this in the conclusion
God kicks you off your feet so you don't forget how you got up - your trust in Him will be strengthened - you will be more rooted in Him.
The next time you get swept off your feet you'll remember how you got up.
Sell the book!

Ever been confused by God? Ever claimed the verse in scripture that say "Whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give you." And pray. And pray. And pray believing that the Lord would answer your prayer—only for him not to answer the prayer the way you thought He would?

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QUILT

A kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's artwork. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

As we begin our retreat, we need to open ourselves to the Lord and begin positioning ourselves to really listen to him. Sometimes we have so much inner conversations and thoughts – it's hard to hear, to quiet ourselves so we can hear the quiet voice of God. Time to stop all of our analysis and figuring strategizing, and switch over to enjoying being in his presence and listening.

This exercise is called The Quilt and it's designed to help us build community between us and to help us begin to be present Here, and with the Lord, and turn our attention to listen.

We thought as we begin our time, it would be good to look back in order to remember how the Lord has cared for us in the past. In a few minutes we'll each create a quilt square – and then we'll pin them up on the large blue cloth and create a community quilt.

- Far away and drew us near
- Helped us to grow
- Difficulties he took us through
- Fears we had
- Painful times
- How he provided for us
- Joyful times
- When we heard his calling us to follow him – to serve him
- When we knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he loved me.

- phone call
- friend
- Bible verse
- \$
- word

Mary treasured up all "these things" in her heart. We have things that we too treasure as well. As we want to remember them. What treasures do you remember?

Before we create our quilt square I want to read to you a story:

God's Care

I was driving home from a meeting this evening about 5, stuck in traffic on Colorado Blvd., and the car started to choke and splutter and die - I barely managed to coast, cursing, into a gas station, glad only that I would not be blocking traffic and would have a somewhat warm spot to wait for the tow truck. It wouldn't even turn over. Before I could make the call, I saw a woman walking out of the Quickie Mart building, and it looked like she slipped on some ice and fell into a gas pump, so I got out to see if she was okay.

When I got there, it looked more like she had been overcome by sobs than that she had fallen; she was a young woman who looked really haggard with dark circles under her eyes. She dropped something as I helped her up, and I picked it up to give it to her. It was a nickel.

At that moment, everything came into focus for me: the crying woman, the ancient Suburban crammed full of stuff with 3 kids in the back (1 in a car seat), and the gas pump reading \$4.95.

Ps 23 ~

Begin our retreat
still our inner noise
releasing to do
expressing our heart
we say -
Here I am
word of God speak

Ps 23 3x
word to us

Time alone

→ Continue our reflection
on God's Care for us -
He said "May
treasure"
Hold them precious

We want to be diligent
remember/to treasure God's care
- easy to forget
- easy to believe we've
been abandoned

Hard to trust
oblivious to
his care.

Truth is that God cares
for us -

Create a Quilt square
American Tradition
created community
practical necessity
remembrance

Before we begin story
of God's Care for

How has the Lord
cared for us?
Look back over
our lives & see
his care -

I asked her if she was okay and if she needed help, and she just kept saying 'I don't want my kids to see me crying,' so we stood on the other side of the pump from her car. She said she was driving to California and that things were very hard for her right now.

So I asked, 'And you were praying?'

That made her back away from me a little, but I assured her I was not a crazy person and said, 'He heard you, and He sent me.'

I took out my card and swiped it through the card reader on the pump so she could fill up her car completely, and while it was fueling, walked to the next door McDonald's and bought 2 big bags of food, some gift certificates for more, and a big cup of coffee. She gave the food to the kids in the car, who attacked it like wolves, and we stood by the pump eating fries and talking a little.

She told me her name, and that she lived in Kansas City. Her boyfriend left 2 months ago and she had not been able to make ends meet. She knew she wouldn't have money to pay rent Jan. 1, and finally in desperation had finally called her parents, with whom she had not spoken in about 5 years. They lived in California and said she could come live with them and try to get on her feet there.

So she packed up everything she owned in the car. She told the kids they were going to California for Christmas, but not that they were going to live there.

I gave her my gloves, a little hug and said a quick prayer with her for safety on the road.

As I was walking over to my car, she said, 'So, are you like an angel or something?'

This definitely made me cry. I said, 'At this time of year angels are really busy, so sometimes God uses regular people.'

It was so incredible to be a part of someone else's miracle. And of course, you guessed it, when I got in my car it started right away and got me home with no problem. I'll put it in the shop tomorrow to check, but I suspect the mechanic won't find anything wrong.

Sometimes the angels fly close enough to you that you can hear the flutter of their wings...

This was written by a Metro Denver Hospice Physician www.holybible.com

Another reason
strong
Have you had ^{another reason} experience when God cared for you? Take the next 20 minutes to create your square. It can feel a little risky – OK a lot risky! Somehow between kindergarten and now we lose our confidence. But taking a risk is good. Often Jesus calls us out of the safety of our fishing boat and out onto the stormy waves, **to teach us about Himself. Coming on retreat can feel risky – it's OK. Step out of a comfort zone. 90 yr olds asked what they'd do differently "I'd take more risks- wouldn't play it so safe."** But I can't draw! OK. ; It's not about a beautiful picture but about the treasured memory. Stick figures are fine. Remembrance not a Rembrandt. Create a square with a passage of scripture or words, design. As you are thinking you might start coloring a border. Words are fine. Begin to draw and see what comes. No pressure. The Lord brings to minds, ways he's cared you in the past. Shown you His love. Knew he was present with you. **After you draw, attend to the Lord. Listen. What is the Lord reminding you about? Then write, reflect on his word to you.**

Prayerful reflection - open - listening - see what emerges - reflect

The Most Caring Child

Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four year old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."

What It Means to Be Adopted

Teacher Debbie Moon's first graders were discussing a picture of a family. One little boy in the picture had a different color hair than the other family members. One child suggested that he was adopted and a little girl said, "I know all about adoptions because I was adopted." "What does it mean to be adopted?" asked another child. "It means," said the girl, "that you grew in your mommy's heart instead of her tummy."

Barney

A four year old was at the pediatrician for a check up. As the doctor looked down her ears with an otoscope, he asked, "Do you think I'll find Big Bird in here?" The little girl stayed silent. Next, the doctor took a tongue depressor and looked down her throat. He asked, "Do you think I'll find the Cookie Monster down there?" Again, the little girl was silent. Then the doctor put a stethoscope to her chest. As he listened to her heart beat, he asked, "Do you think I'll hear Barney in there?" "Oh, no!" the little girl replied. "Jesus is in my heart. Barney's on my underpants."

Discouraged?

As I was driving home from work one day, I stopped to watch a local Little League baseball game that was being played in a park near my home. As I sat down behind the bench on the first-base line, I asked one of the boys what the score was. "We're behind 14 to nothing," he answered with a smile. "Really," I said. "I have to say you don't look very discouraged." "Discouraged?" the boy asked with a puzzled look on his face. "Why should we be discouraged? We haven't been up to bat yet."

Roles And How We Play Them

Whenever I'm disappointed with my spot in my life, I stop and think about little Jamie Scott. Jamie was trying out for a part in a school play. His mother told me that he'd set his heart on being in it, though she feared he would not be chosen. On the day the parts were awarded, I went with her to collect him after school. Jamie rushed up to her, eyes shining with pride and excitement. "Guess what Mom," he shouted, and then said those words that will remain a lesson to me: "I've been chosen to clap and cheer."

A Lesson In Heart

A lesson in "heart" is my little, 10 year old daughter, Sarah, who was born with a muscle missing in her foot and wears a brace all the time. She came home one beautiful spring day to tell me she had competed in "field day"-that's where they have lots of races and other competitive events. Because of her leg support, my mind raced as I tried to think of encouragement for my Sarah, things I could say to her about not letting this get her down-but before I could get a word out, she said "Daddy, I won two of the races!" I couldn't believe it! And then Sarah said, "I had an advantage." Ah. I knew it. I thought she must have been

To welcome at beginning to lighten the anxiety of a table w/ crayons

We are each adopted