



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Continue to keep **Pam Richards'** parents in your prayers. Mr. Isler is doing MUCH better and continues to receive treatments.
- The **Kenyon family** continues to need your prayers for **Reagan** to remain cancer free and Molly is recovering from foot surgery.
- Beverly and Clifford Gunn, JO and Bonnie Vick, Joy Garner, Dick and Judy Bird, Belle Yokum, Willie Johnson, Bobbye Wright, Larry Reeder, Zell Gammill, Koben Puckett, are all in need of prayers.

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Announcements

- Joyce Roberts' sister-in-law has breast cancer and is getting opinions about treatment. Your prayers would be appreciated.
- Judy Rpybal had a double mastectomy this week. Your prayers for recovery would be great.
- Wednesday evening we will meet for class at 7 PM. The women will continue their study of the book "So Long Insecurity" in the Fellowship Hall and the men will meet in the large classroom to continue the attributes of godly men.
- December 18th, next Sunday, Miguel will be here and we will also be having a potluck. Please plan on bringing a dish and staying to share a meal after we hear

from Miguel. This will also be the same day as the Drive Through Nativity.

Benevolence Update

During **December** we are collecting canned milk for the Portales Christian Children's Home. Our goal is 50 items, and Steve is confident we can meet this goal for the Children's Home.



Silas Shotwell will bring the lesson today
Men Serving this Month

- **Announcements:** Les Miller
- **Scripture:** Bob Addison
- **Song Service:** Mark McCollum

Happy Birthday

December 11— Naomi Gunn

December 12— Alisha Roberts

Anniversaries—

None this Week

Calendar of Events

December 18— Miguel will be here. We will have a Potluck. The Drive Through Nativity will begin at the school at dark

December 21— Working for the Master

December 25— Christmas Sunday



STRAY DOGS & JESUS

BY STEVE RIDGELL

I like people who take in strays. I recently preached a funeral for a friend who loved stray dogs. He was drawn to dogs that had been abandoned and hurt. He liked to love them, heal them, and make them into functioning pets. My children had that same heart for stray animals, especially my daughter. She would bring home every stray dog and cat she came across. She thought all they needed was a good home with lots of love. Everything else could be fixed.

Of course, every stray dog cannot be healed. Some were too far gone physically, while others never could function in a healthy environment. It was as if they did not want anything better. But they got a chance at a new and different life ... a life where they were valued and loved. And some of them did make it. They lived a long time as healthy pets. Loved by a family, and loving their family.

It makes me think about Jesus and people – you and me. I think in many ways we are like stray dogs in this world. Some of us feel unloved, beat down by life, unworthy to belong to a family. Others of us function well in this world, but realize that we are not worthy enough – good enough – to be part of God's world. God is perfect and holy. We are not. Spiritually we are unlovable, hungry, mangy, and slinking through life with our tail between our legs.

But God sent His Son into this world to bring strays like us into His family. God loves us, offers us a home and a family, and gives us value. Jesus, God's own Son, died on the cross so we could become part of God's family. He makes the stray part of the family. It seems too good to be true. Maybe that is what some stray dogs think when they are rescued. Why would someone love them, feed them, pet them, and give them a home? It is because people like my friend and my daughter have a heart for strays.

Why would God send His Son into this dark world to find someone like me? Why would He offer me a home and a family? It is because He has a heart for stray people like I used to be. And I love God and Jesus because they found me when I was not lovable. They are looking for you. It seemed too good to be true, but I believed it. And it changed me forever. You can make that choice too.

I would love to share more of the God who loves you so much He sent His Son to find you. Write me at steve@hopeforlife.org or join the blog discussion at www.hopeforlife.org.

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http://www.heartlight.org/cgi/simplify.cgi?20111207_strays.html

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Check out our web site for electronic versions of the newsletter and other resources to support your walk with Jesus—

<http://fortsumnerchurchofchrist.com>