

4-7 CHURCHES WITHOUT PEWS

By John Simmons

More companies are realizing the benefits of investing in chaplain care for their employees, such as improved morale, teamwork, attitude, and loyalty. This discovery is opening up multiple doors to ministry outside the walls of our churches. Meet some Open Bible members taking advantage of this awesome opportunity.

8 A GREAT DAD

By Cathy Hines

Deployments are hard on any family, especially families with small children. However, one father's ingenuity will ensure priceless memories of a dad fully present in heart, if not in body.

9 DEAR GOD

By Katherine Thompson

How does one pray if never taught how? How does a five-year-old know how to "bless" her family? Meet a precious young lady who had a heart for God before God and she had even been officially introduced.

12 LEARNING HUNGARIAN

By Mike and Nancy Juntunen

Share some of the challenges, faux pas, and triumphs of new missionaries Mike and Nancy Juntunen as they attempt to master one of the most difficult languages for English speakers.

Plus Much More!

God Doesn't Waste Pain



ANDREA JOHNSON/Editor

Responding to an emergency call, Chaplain Joyce Pavlik arrives at the hospital and finds a young woman sitting alone beside the body of a man in his 30s. She

holds his hand but her fiancée, her best friend, is gone. He had promised to care for her, and had – while he was alive.

Not yet his wife, the young lady has no say in where her friend will be buried or other matters. Nor does she have a great relationship with his family. Joyce stays with the lady, letting her grieve until other loved ones arrive.

On another day Joyce walks into the room of an older lady facing surgery. Although raised in a Christian home, she has not been faithful to the Lord. Joyce prays for her health and asks if there is anything else she can do. Reaching out her hand, the woman asks, "Would you help me get back to Jesus?"

Joyce has waited with families losing loved ones, prayed with those in pain, spoken with folks who have nearly drunk themselves to death or overdosed on drugs, and shared with those in the hospital's research program who are coming out of prison and adjusting to life on the outside.

My first memories of Joyce are from early childhood. Mom's "baby" sister, Joyce was a favorite aunt. On many Friday evenings Mom would load us five kids into the station wagon and drive an hour to Vernard College in Oskaloosa, Iowa, to bring Aunt Joyce and our cousin Jimmy back home for the weekend. I did not realize then how unusual or difficult it was for a single mom, without a car, to survive and complete her degree. I remember only a woman who laughed easily and often, played guitar and sang beautifully, had a deep fear of spiders

and the loudest scream ever (as my practical joker brothers can attest to!), and modeled incredible courage and faith.

We rejoiced when Aunt Joyce received her degrees. We sighed when the beginning of her missionary career took her halfway across the country to Fairhaven Home and Hospital in Sacramento, where she worked with teenagers from cross-cultural backgrounds. We worried when Aunt Joyce and Jimmy suffered a terrible car accident that left Joyce hospitalized for weeks, on crutches for months. As soon as possible, my mom loaded us kids and my grandmother into the dreaded station wagon to trek out west and check on her little sister.

A few years later Aunt Joyce moved to Southwest Indian School in Phoenix, Arizona. The dusty climate was not good for her COPD. And it had to be difficult to leave Jimmy, now an adult, in Sacramento. Serving as dorm parent, counselor, Dean of Students, and in other capacities, Aunt Joyce came to love the Native American culture, but she missed the births of Jim's kids and other family celebrations. We were thrilled when God sent her a husband whose heart also beat with compassion for others; yet winced when they talked about their grandkids, knowing they would love to see them more often.

I've never heard Aunt Joyce complain about her challenges. "I can see now where each of these experiences prepared me for the chaplain's position," she says. "I can relate well to my patients because I've been there." Though physically old enough to retire she does not. "I don't want to fail to minister to others just because I am retired."

Aunt Joyce's life reminds me that God never wastes our trials, and He doesn't waste our pain.

Andrea Johnson,
Managing Editor