

From the Pastor's Wife
"The Pastor's Office"

Three days before Christmas a sleek, black limousine pulled up outside our home. Inside the house, our grown children, our son-in-law, our daughter-in-law, and I were making every effort to keep my good husband away from any of the front windows, in an attempt to prevent him from seeing the limo. We were all dressed up very nicely—decked out—you might say, and taking pictures by the Christmas tree. All of us—with the exception of my husband—knew the doorbell would sound any moment, but when it did, it startled us just the same. Trying to act completely surprised at the bell, we literally pushed my husband to answer the door, trying to stifle giggles and laughs all the way. There, at the door stood a handsomely dressed chauffeur, who apprised my good husband that his limo had arrived. My husband turned to look at us and with smiles and laughter we told him that his birthday festivities were about to begin! Because in our hearts there would never be another man just like him, we determined to make this celebration of his 50th birthday like no other jollification he had ever experienced before. After hugs and kisses were exchanged all around, everyone grabbed last minute things: the Christmas CD's, coats, jackets and gloves, but especially the cameras, knowing this would be a night to remember. Soon we were all inside the luxurious limo, taking pictures and heading for the heart of Little Italy—Mulberry Street—to Angelo's, a 104-year-old establishment renown for its delectable Italian cuisine.

The ride in was terrific. We laughed and talked and wondered if we were all absolutely crazy to be heading right into downtown Manhattan three days before Christmas and yet I noticed the smile never left my husband's face. The streets and the sidewalks were a sea of cars and people. But

I must say we were very impressed with our driver's adeptness in guiding the limo down the narrow, winding path that is Mulberry Street and soon we were right outside our destination. A word about our chauffeur: A very amiable chap from Brooklyn, complete with the greatest New York accent you've ever heard. (You know, the type everyone tries in vain to imitate when they mimic New Yorkers.) Just as we were all about to hop out of the vehicle, he turned and instructed us: "Now you's guys stay seated whiles I come 'round and letcha's all outta da limo, okay? It's all parta the amenities." This just added to the fun—to think a chauffeur was actually going to come around and open the door for us was just over-the-top. So we sat a moment, laughing, half-embarrassed to actually step out of the thing, seeing all of the people outside trying to look in the tinted windows to find out just who was in that limo. And again, we're all really dressed up for this big occasion—I mean my husband's fiftieth, the limo and all. I wore a black dress and my short silver faux fur jacket I bought for our son Tim's wedding a year ago. All the girls looked gorgeous with their hair done and their festive, holiday skirts, and the guys all looked spectacular in suits, ties, and dress wool overcoats. So when the chauffeur opens the door, everyone outside on the street starts to look at us—(just like we look at someone getting out of a limo. You're always wondering—when you're in Manhattan, anyway—if somebody important or famous is inside there.) We stepped out onto the street—and believe me, that sounds much more graceful than it actually was. I was standing half-way up, trying to decide what would be the most ladylike way to get my legs out, twisting and turning and attempting to look sophisticated, with all of my hair in my face.

In This Issue

- "From the Pastor's Wife" ~ "Happy Birthday, Mr. Senator"
- "Welcome Home" ~ "New Year, New Style"
- "Tips on Tact" ~ I.O.U.
- "For the Pastor's Wife" ~ A new column!
- "For Girls Only" ~ It's a brand New Year!
- "The Way It Is" ~ Sugar's in!
- "What's Cooking" ~ Super Bowl Feast!
- "Kids in the Kitchen" ~ Blustery Day Snowman Cupcakes
- "A Gathering of Herbs" ~ Sugar's out!
- "Character Corner" ~ God's omnipresence
- "Home is Where the Heart Is" ~ Speaking of goals...

Contributors

Mary Engesetter ~ Jen Fryman ~ Liz Graf
Sally Johnston ~ Millie O'Brien
Holly Pichardo ~ Joyce Pratnicki

Staff

Editor-in-Chief.....Liz Graf
Editor.....Linda Androvich
Lay-out & Design.....Mary Engesetter

Apples of Gold

is published by
Long Island Baptist Church
PO Box 205
~ Holtsville, New York 11742 ~

No part of this publication
may be reproduced or transmitted
in any form or by any means
without written permission.

While we waited outside the restaurant momentarily for our room to be readied, we overheard someone say that my husband was a senator. Well, that was all John, Tim, and Josh had to hear and the rest of the evening they considered themselves Senator Graf's personal bodyguard/secret service agents—and they played it up to the hilt. We were shown to a small private room all the way in the back of the restaurant and it was delightful. There was a cozy round table all set up for us, with the most attractive centerpiece many of the members in my family could have desired: a big, full basket of fresh, chewy Italian bread. Beside it was a stash of butter that almost brought tears to the eyes of the bread lovers, so great was its abundance. And the evening played on and the senator was very well cared for by his staff as they saw to it that his every need was met.

During the middle of the meal, our huge-hearted son-in-law brought up the fact that we needed to give "Dad" his birthday compliments—a tradition we have carried out for years now for the well-loved birthday person in our family, whomever he may be. And so we all took turns and spoke of our great admiration and love for this giant of a man. It was a first century writer who said, "Few men have been admired by their own households." The longer I live I see that to be quite true. But this man could not be any more respected and adored by any of us. There was not a dry eye around the table by the time they got to me and just then, our waiter, Antonio (that's the perfect name, isn't it?), stepped from around the corner and refilled the beloved bread basket, raising his hand as if to assure us and saying in his charming broken English, "I know, I know, I'ma bringing the butter too..." He stood just around the corner, we noticed, when he was through serving, and just watched. (I'm sure it was interesting to him that we ordered no alcohol and yet we laughed and cried and had the time of our lives. Afterwards, my husband had an excellent opportunity to witness to him and one of the other waiters walked over to listen in on the conversation.) And so we closed out compliments with my accolades to my very good husband. How do you fit all the love, affection, appreciation and esteem you feel for someone who has been your partner and very dearest friend for over thirty years into words? Though barely able to speak, I was able to say that my marriage to John and the tremendous privilege it has been to serve the King of Kings beside him has been the most wonderful journey of my life. And that if it were possible, I'd do it all over again.

After this, the kids dismissed the senator and his wife and summoned Antonio. My husband and I stepped

page two...

into another room and looked back to see the kids all gathered around the bill, figuring out how much everyone would contribute to cover the cost for the magnificently memorable evening. And then, the real fun began. We decided to go to a splendid, renowned, two-story pastry shop just around the corner. We would not need the limo to drive us; however, there is great protocol involved in even something as simple as a walk around the corner to a bakery, when you're dealing with a senator, that is. The guys gave us our instructions. The girls and I were to walk along—and be quick about it—heads down and single file. Josh led us, John went straight to the bakery to guard the door and clear any crowds, (oh yes, he actually did this, bless his heart) and Tim, of course Tim, guarded the senator. We were rushed across the first floor of the eatery and were immediately shown to the elaborate staircase all the way in the back of the restaurant, where we made our way to the second floor. When we arrived in such a rush, as embarrassed as I am to tell you, people stared and it was all the girls and I could do anyway to keep from bursting out laughing—particularly because John, Tim, and Josh were so serious. Yet we didn't dare because it would blow the senator's cover. One by one the desserts we ordered were beautifully presented: a raspberry-chocolate mousse cake, a few napoleons, and the senator's dessert brought out with sparkler candles, while the whole place joined us in a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday."

As we left this place the same way we entered, a waitress was headed for the staircase at the same moment I was. Tim put out his hand and told her to stand back so I could go first. She put her hands over her heart and gushed to Tim, "Wow! I just knew you were a body guard!" That was all he had to hear. So the guys were even more serious on the way back, clearing the streets of onlookers, literally pushing the girls as we got to the limo, seeing that we were dying laughing and would surely foil their pretense. Then a few moments later the senator rounded the

corner, flanked by his bodyguards. In timing which couldn't have been more perfect, our faithful limo driver hops out of the car and rushes to open the door, calling out just as my husband is splitting the crowds, "Hey! Where's da birthday boy?" Arrrrgggh! The secret servicemen's plot was thwarted! In truth, the senator was just an ordinary citizen, out on the night of his birthday, with his ordinary family, his sons and son-in-law, just regular, good ol' citizens too. John, Tim and Josh were Cinderella's footmen turned back into mice.

And so the driver saw my husband and the guys in safely, and took us on a tour past the tree in Rockefeller Center and right down through beautiful Times' Square. We laughed and looked and, because all four harmony parts were present, even belted out a pretty decent rendition of "The Hallelujah Chorus." All too soon, the evening was ended, but what an evening it was. A light rain had begun to fall as we pulled up in front of the house and our courteous chauffeur instructed us once again, "O.k., guys, let me get Mom and Dad in first and I'll be back for da rest of ya's." Walking us up the long driveway under his big, black umbrella, our driver remarked, "Dat was real nice what ya's were doin' back there tonight, I mean, singin' an' all. People don't do dat stuff anymore, ya know? Ya got a good family, ya know?" As John and I walked into the house alone and stood momentarily in the soft glow of the white Christmas tree lights, I quietly answered our kind driver, "I know, from the bottom of my heart—I know."

Encouragingly Yours,

Liz



The senator's dessert came to him with sparkler candles...



Welcome Home

by Holly Pichardo

"New Year, New Style"

Happy New Year! I hope this year brings many blessings to you all. I have been blessed in so many ways this past year. Among them, my daughter celebrated her first wedding anniversary in December with my dear, new son-in-law, someone I have come to know and love more every day. God has blessed me with a wonderful family and a good church. Also, my fledgling design business is beginning to take off, giving me an additional income and the chance to really spread my wings as a decorator. Many prayers have been answered and I am really looking forward to the New Year ahead.

I have left the decor of my home office to last on my list because I have changed my mind at least three times about how I wanted my office to look! This is an important room to me. I will use it often and it needs to be not only motivating for me, but well organized too. To tell the truth, organization is not my strong point. However, I do have a sister who got a heavy dose of the organization/neat gene. Now if organization is the key to victory, this woman wears it around her neck on a perfectly appointed silver chain. It is important to recognize one's strengths and weaknesses and to learn to delegate tasks that may put you either behind schedule or off the trolley altogether. Drawing upon and learning from what others do best can take a huge weight off your shoulders. My sister doesn't know it yet, but I will be calling on her very shortly. But on to the design plan. This may be a bit shocking, but imagine with me, if you will, the complete vision. The walls? Black. Yes, I said black. Before you suspect that I have gone completely mad with design fever, please bear with me. This is not a depressing or morbid look at all, but a classic and elegant decor done in very good taste. I promise!

Starting with the walls, I am using an eggshell finish—not too flat and not too shiny, which I will apply with a sponge roller for a more smooth finish. Next are the moldings. I cannot over emphasize the importance of beautiful trim. It gives a room a sense of history, even in the newest home. I have chosen a 4" crown molding at the ceiling and a 6" baseboard trim. These will be painted in a creamy, cot-

tage white semi-gloss paint. I felt bright white would be too high contrast and a darker ivory would be too dull. Now with the walls and trim finished we can begin to think about lighting. I will have recessed high hat lights installed in the ceiling with a dimmer switch for diverse task lighting. Because this room will serve as a library also, an appropriate table lamp will complete the look. For furniture, I chose an off white distressed wood desk and bookshelves to stand out against the wall color, which I will purchase online and have shipped right to my door. (Some assembly required!) I am incorporating a perfect black and cream toile print fabric with a coordinate stripe on the reverse for simple window treatments to tie the whole design theme together. Over the summer I had French doors installed that connect the living room to the office. This allows ample light to pass through during the day and gives a much-needed open flow from one room to the other. Last, but not least, I like to have a bouquet of fresh or silk flowers nearby for inspiration while I work. This black and white "non-color" scheme allows me to use any color arrangement I like that will change with the seasons. While this style may not be for everyone, I hope to encourage you to see that it's ok sometimes to step a bit outside the box and be more daring in your decorating adventures. Your house will truly say, "Welcome Home" to all who enter.



I think one of the most awkward things to do is to approach someone who owes you money. But it must be done since, you know as well as I do, that the amount owed you becomes the first thing you think about every time you see the "ower." So what to do? Since there are so many different situations that could characterize this particular scenario, let me cite a few examples. Someone might owe you money you laid out for them at something as simple as a lunch together somewhere. Maybe you sell a particular line of cosmetics, or home décor items and someone has already received their merchandise and left you paying for their purchase. Maybe you teach music lessons to someone's child and the parent keeps promising to pay "next week" or tomorrow. Since we want to be good Christians,

we may want to believe that the IOUer just simply forgot. So what you must do, at first, especially if you are really uncomfortable about approaching them, is to write a friendly little reminder. But be very sure you word it in a way which implies that a response to this letter is expected. Something like this:

Dear Shelly,

Thank you so much for coming to my home décor party! I so appreciate your order—it was the biggest of the night and set me up for a very nice hostess gift! I hope you are enjoying the beautiful mirror you purchased. Just so you know, I still need to collect the \$275.00 from you for the cost of the item. (I'm sure it was just an oversight.) Be a dear and let me know you got this note.

Thank you,
Liz

Sometimes, especially if the money owed you is part of your weekly income, you need to address the problem directly and don't mince your words. Like this:

Dear Lucy,

I am so thrilled at little Esmerelda's progress on the harpsichord. Thank you for encouraging her to practice—it shows up at lesson time.

I need to remind you that I haven't been paid for lessons for the entire month of May and it is now the third week in June. Please contact me as soon as possible so we can bring your payments up to date. Again, it is my pleasure to teach your child—keep up the good work!

Thank you in advance for taking care of this for me.
In Christ,
Liz

Now, if you are the owner, make things right as soon as possible. It is very true that sometimes, busy people really just forget. You must apologize and as soon as possible, make things right. Remember, any one who does a service for you, whether tutoring your child, giving musical instruction, or even cutting your hair, should be respected and paid well and on time. This is right and shows a good Christian ethic. Have a blessed New Year.

*for the
Pastor's
Wife*
by Liz Graf

This column is especially written to the many pastor's wives who read our "Apples" and who have sent me many letters all through the years of its publication. I have so much on my heart that I'd like to share with you. There are so many misconceptions concerning the ministry, so many man-made philosophies for the role of the pastor's wife that it's hard to know where to begin. For example, there seems to be a set of unspoken rules of social conduct, dress, and all manner of living that pertains to her. Never is this so evident as when we all meet at some preacher's conference somewhere. You know we're all thinking the same thing—(besides, "what on earth am I doing here???) "Oh, so that's Bro. So-and-so's wife...huh..." It's so easy to pick out the pastors' wives in the group. I remember being fresh into the ministry with my good husband when he first took me to a few pastors' meetings. I could spot a pastor's wife from a mile away. There she would be, sitting way up front, alone in her suit (who says we have to wear suits, anyway?) with a faint smile on her face. And most had an air of unapproachableness about them. But I really don't think they meant to be that way—I think that most pastors' wives feel it is expected of them to act, oh, I don't know, aloof, maybe? After all, the few "Pastor's Wife's Handbooks" out there instruct us to be this way. Not that these things listed as prerequisites are found in the Bible or anything, mind you.

Now, some pastors' wives I've known seem to really get into this role of acting detached and divine. They place themselves in these ethereal positions as patron saint for all the poor, "inept" women in their churches. Women, who, bless their hearts, would never make it through this world of woe without their pastor's wife. These are man-made...er...excuse me, women-made roles, however, and nowhere in the Bible does God give any credit to such philosophies. In fact there are very few instructions given to the pastor's wife—many instructions for Christian women, but little is said to the pastor's wife. Could it be, that being an excellent Christian woman, whose faith in God, love, and submission to her husband, and one who has reared godly



children, is of much greater value to our Righteous Father, than a room full of pastors' wives who have jumped into the position of co-pastor and have their little manicured fingers into every single facet of the ministry? So let us, in the ensuing months ahead, take an honest look into the life of the pastor's wife in light of God's Word. And let's pray for each other, asking for God's leadership and strength to enable us to be excellent ambassadors for the King of Kings.



Okay girls—perk up! No one's allowed to have the "post-holiday blues" —we have too many things to be thankful for (don't we?) than to walk around moping and mourning Christmas past! So, need some new, bright, challenging things to attempt this brand new clean slate we call 2007? Have I got a list for you!

1. Now be honest – did you drink one too many cups of egg nog this past holiday season? One too many trips to the cookie plate? Then you'll need to start exercising to take away those extra pounds! Write an exercise list for yourself and do your exercises faithfully every morning and night. Also any extra walking you can do would be terrific!

2. You are never too young to take good care of your skin. Of course, really beautiful, clear skin comes from a healthy diet and drinking plenty of water. But don't forget to wash your face morning and night and moisturize as needed.

3. Take good care of your hair during these harsh winter months. Maybe your mom would sit down with you and choose a new style for you one day!

4. Go through your wardrobe and decide which color schemes are best for you. For example, girls with brown hair and brown eyes can usually wear deep (even loud!) colors well. Colors such as true red, royal blue, Kelly green or

magenta look great on them. A girl with a softer coloring, maybe light brown hair and hazel eyes, would wear more muted colors well, such as sage green, cream, pale gold or peach. There are lots of books at the library on this subject and it might be fun to find out what looks best on you!

5. Read more this year. Depending on its size, try to read at least a book a month—then you'll have read twelve books by the year's end! Try not to read only fictional things. There are some wonderful biographies written on your level; maybe your pastor's wife or youth leader can suggest a few.

6. Start writing to a pen pal. I know plenty of girls in our church who would love to do this. If you write to me c/o this paper, we'll be glad to begin corresponding.

7. Read your Bible more—make it a priority daily. Memorize passages that will help you grow to be a sweet, submissive, beautiful testimony for the Lord. Because no matter how we change the outside, the inside is so much more important—and remember:

"...the king's daughter is all glorious *within*..."



Everyone has a favorite candy bar. Mine is not a bar, but two round chocolate cups filled with pure white, marshmallowy cream and a few wisps of coconut sprinkled throughout. I know, I know—I wrote that sugar is not our friend. But guess what? Sometimes I really don't mind it; because Mallo Cup with all its sugar-laden, chocolate-covered, marshmallowy creaminess feels like a friend, like a very good, very sweet friend. It's for the better, I am sure, but I cannot find a single store on Long Island that sells Mallo Cups. Oh, but Pennsylvania has 'em! Lots and lots of convenience stores and gas stations sell Mallo Cups down there.

We went to Pennsylvania recently—not to get Mallo Cups of course, but to visit the famous Sight and - Sound Theatre where beautiful productions of well-known

Bible stories are produced for eager audiences. “The Miracle of Christmas” was lovely to see, especially during Christmastime. The whole musical was full of Scripture and portrayed the story that may have happened in the lives of those present when Christ was born. Live horses, lambs, and llamas were all included in the cast. Real oxen gently swayed in the dim light of the manger while Mary and Joseph adored their newborn baby boy and Saviour. And I sat in my seat, taking in everything, and quite thankful that my allergies to barnyard creatures were behaving quietly. When it was all over, I had a few tears in my eyes, a zillion wrinkles in my skirt, and two very wobbly legs. And even though I had thoroughly enjoyed the play, I was glad it was time to go.

We made a wrong turn on the way home and had to stop as a gas station/convenience store for directions. (Imagine that—a husband actually stopping for directions...) All three men got out to go inside, but not before our good family friend, John, popped his head into the backseat where all the lady passengers were, “Want anything while I’m in there?” he asked, earnestly wanting to make us happy. My sweet tooth jumped at the chance to be satisfied, “Mallo Cups!” I told him, “LOTS of ‘em!” Of course I was only joking—one wicked Mallo Cup would have suited me just fine. Minutes later he came out—four Mallo Cups in a plastic bag landed in my lucky lap. “Thank you so much!” I gushed. “I can’t believe you got me four! This is great, John. Thank you!” Soon to follow was Brother Clayton, a plastic bag swinging from his hand as he walked to the van. He situated himself in the front seat and passed the mysterious bag back to me. I was flabbergasted when I looked inside: SIX more Mallo cups lay in the bottom of the bag. “Bro. Clayton! Thank you so much, thank you, I mean really, thank you so much!” For twenty-six seconds I sat in guilty silence, wondering if it was too presumptuous of me to even ask for *one*. But I consoled myself and twenty-seven seconds later I was absolutely fine, thankful to be in the company of such good and generous friends.

Then Randy came out. “Happy day!” I thought to myself when I saw his plastic bag. “The more Mallo, the merrier,” I sang inside my head as yet another plastic bag was passed into my possession. Down in the bottom of the bag lay a single bottle of iced green tea—diet. Was I disappointed? Not even a little. One bottle of diet iced tea and ten twin-pack Mallo Cups was nothing to complain about! Did I think that the diet iced tea would reduce the amount of calories in all those Mallo Cups? Not even a little... that’s just the way it is.



It’s a great excuse for a party! Celebrate the season with a Super Bowl feast.

Game Time: Dip

- 1 can (11 ½ ounces) condensed bean with bacon soup
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ½ cup thick and chunky salsa
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- Sliced green onions
- Sliced pitted olives
- Tortilla chips

Mix soup, sour cream, and chili powder. Spread in microwave-safe, 10-inch plate. Top with salsa, cheese, onions, and olives. Microwave dip mixture on “high” for 2 minutes. Serve with tortilla chips for dipping.

Super Bowl: Roasted Pork, Peppers and Onion, Mozzarella Sandwiches (10 servings)

Pork~

- 4 large garlic cloves
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons dried basil
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 2 teaspoons dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon dried sage
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 9-pound whole pork shoulder with bone
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar, or apple cider vinegar

Vegetables:

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 pound onions, halved, cut into ¼-inch thick slices
- 1 pound red bell peppers, seeded, cut into ½ inch wide strips
- 10 crusty rolls, split, toasted
- 1½ pounds fresh mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced
- ½ pound green bell peppers, seeded, cut into ½ inch wide strips.

For Pork:

Chop garlic on work surface. Sprinkle with 1 ½ teaspoons salt and mince until paste forms. Transfer paste to small bowl; mix in parsley and next 6 ingredients. Using small sharp knife, make 20 evenly spaced 1-inch-long, 2-inch-deep slits in pork. Stuff seasoning mixture into slits. Sprinkle outside of pork with salt and pepper. Let stand 1 hour for seasonings to penetrate.

Position rack in bottom third of oven and preheat to 325° F. Place rack in large roasting pan; place pork on rack. Roast about 4 ½ hours. Let pork rest 30 minutes. Transfer to work surface. Maintain oven temperature, reserve roasting pan.

Thickly slice pork off bone. Coarsely chop or tear slices and place in large baking dish; cover with foil. Pour juices from roasting pan into 4-cup measuring cup. Spoon off fat. If necessary, add enough water to degreased juices to measure 2 cups. Stir 2 tablespoons juices and cornstarch in small saucepan until cornstarch dissolves; whisk in remaining juices and vinegar. Whisk over medium heat until sauce boils and thickens about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

For vegetables:

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and all peppers; sauté until vegetables are tender and brown, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Arrange roll bottoms on work surface; mound with warm pork and drizzle with sauce. Cover with cheese, vegetables, and roll tops. Serve warm.

Do ahead tip:

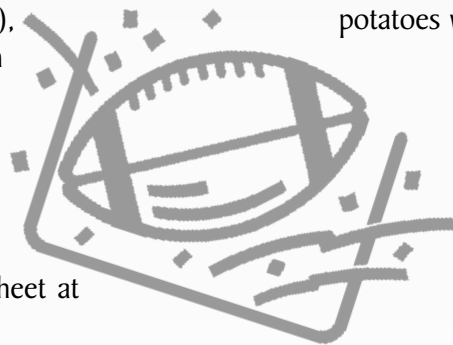
The pork, sauce, and vegetables can be made one day ahead. Cover and refrigerate everything separately. Before serving, re-heat pork, covered, in 350°F oven about 40 minutes; re-warm sauce and vegetables over medium heat.

Field Goal: Zesty Fried Chicken

(Makes 12-servings)

- 2 cut-up chickens (3 ½ pounds each)
 - Olive oil, peanut oil, vegetable oil, or a combination, for frying
 - ½ teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon salt
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 2 tablespoons chili powder
 - 2 tablespoons ground cumin
 - 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - ½ teaspoon cayenne
 - Lemon or lime wedges (optional)
1. Trim chicken pieces of any excess fat, then rinse and pat dry with paper towels.
 2. Heat about ½ inch of oil in a deep fryer, or a large deep skillet with a cover. While oil is heating, season chicken with ½ teaspoon of the salt. In a plastic bag, mix together flour, remaining tablespoon salt, chili powder, cumin, black pepper, and cayenne. Toss the chicken in the bag, 2 or 3 pieces at a time, until they're well coated with flour. Put them on a wire rack as you finish.
 3. Heat oil in skillet and add the chicken pieces, skin side down. (Do not overcrowd; if necessary, cook in batches). Cover the skillet; reduce heat to medium to medium-high for about 7 minutes. Then uncover the skillet, turn chicken, and continue to cook, uncovered for about another 7 minutes.
 4. Turn chicken skin side down and cook for about 5 minutes more, turning to ensure that both sides are golden brown.

5. As the chicken pieces finish cooking (the juices near the bone will run clear), remove them from the skillet and drain on paper towels. Keep warm in 250° oven until all batches are completed. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature with lemon wedges, if desired. Chicken can be refrigerated for several hours. Reheat, uncovered on a baking sheet at 325° for about 10 minutes.



Boil potatoes until tender; drain. Peel and chop potatoes while warm and place in a large bowl. Add next four ingredients and mix well. Add salt and pepper to taste; mix. Garnish with sliced tomatoes and more bacon bits. Chill before serving.

**Dessert: Joyce's
Chocolate Chip Cookies**

Tackle: Party meatballs (40 meatballs)

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 cup shredded provolone cheese
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs
- ¼ cup spaghetti sauce
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1 cup spaghetti sauce
- Pretzel sticks, if desired

1. Heat oven to 400°. Mix all ingredients except 1-cup spaghetti sauce and the pretzel sticks.

2. Shape mixture into 1-inch balls. Place in ungreased jelly roll pan, 15½ x 10½ x 1 inch.

3. Bake about 12 minutes or until beef is no longer pink in center and juice is clear; drain well.

4. Meanwhile, heat 1-cup spaghetti sauce in 1-quart saucepan over medium heat until hot. To serve, spear meatballs with pretzel sticks and dip into spaghetti sauce.

Touch-down: Pratinicki Potato Salad

- 5 lb. bag potatoes
- 6 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and chopped
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 tablespoons bacon bits
- 3 cups mayonnaise
- Salt and pepper
- Sliced tomatoes

1. *Cream together:*
1 cup shortening
½ cup granulated sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2. Fold in 2 well beaten eggs and beat.
3. Sift together 2 cups and 4 level tablespoons of Presto® flour and add to other mixtures.
4. Stir in jumbo package of chocolate chips and 1 cup chopped walnuts.
5. Bake at 300° for 10 minutes on middle rack in oven.

Joyce's Seven Layer Bars

- 1 stick butter or margarine
- 2 cups of crushed graham crackers
- Small bag chocolate chip morsels
- Small bag coconut flakes
- 2 cups chopped walnuts
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Melt butter in long baking pan. Sprinkle crackers evenly in the pan. Press down with spoon or fingers. Then sprinkle walnuts, chips, raisins, and coconut flakes. Make two holes in milk can and slowly pour milk evenly on all the ingredients.

2. Bake 25 minutes, cool 2 hours. Cut in quarters and place on paper towels. Then cut in two-inch squares.

3. Serve with ice cream sundaes.

Now that's a football celebration!



Kick-off the New Year and make your own snowy days with lots of wintry family fun recipes!

Coconut Snowballs (12 servings)

- 2 cups flaked coconut
- 1 half-gallon ice cream (any flavor)
- Food coloring (any color), optional

Line 12 medium muffin cups, 2½ x 1¼ inches, with paper or foil baking cups. Spread coconut in shallow pan or on plate. Scoop ice cream into 12 balls. Roll each in coconut, using 2 forks. Place balls in muffin cups. Freeze uncovered at least 3 hours until firm. Wrap, label, and return to freezer. Serve frozen in paper baking cups. Store up to 2 weeks. **Tinted Coconut:** Shake coconut and 4 drops of food color in tightly covered container until coconut is evenly tinted.

Blustery Day Snowman Cupcakes (8 snowmen)

- 1 package cake mix (your favorite flavor)
- 1¼ cups water
- ½ cup oil
- 3 eggs
- 1 can vanilla or cream cheese frosting
- 8 small paper doilies
- 40 miniature chocolate chips
- 18 small gum drops, including 1 orange and 1 red
- 8 large gumdrops
- 1 pouch chewy fruit snack string, any flavor (from 4.4 oz. package)

1. Heat oven to 350° F. Generously grease and flour bottoms and sides of 8 regular and 8 miniature muffin cups. In large bowl, combine cake mix, water, oil, and eggs at low speed until moistened; beat 2 minutes at high speed. Using about half of batter, fill greased muffin cups 2/3 full. (Bake

remaining batter according to package directions in paper-lined muffin cups or in greased and floured 8-inch round or square cake pan for a later use.)

2. Bake miniature cupcakes at 350° F for 12 to 15 minutes and regular cupcakes for 20 to 25 minutes or until cake springs back when touched lightly in center. Cool in pan on wire rack 10 minutes; remove from pans. Cool completely.

3. To make each snowman, frost sides of 1 regular cupcake. Place dab of frosting on center of doily; place bottom of cupcake on doily. Frost top of cupcake. Frost sides of 1 miniature cupcake; place, right side up, in center of regular cupcake. Frost top. Smooth frosting over entire snowman, rounding shape slightly.

4. To decorate each snowman, use 2 miniature chocolate chips for eyes and 3 for buttons. Cut small sliver of orange gumdrop for nose and small piece of red gumdrop for mouth. Place large gumdrop on head for hat. Place 2 small gumdrops on sides of body for arms. Cut fruit snack string into 8 (7-inch long) pieces; arrange 1 piece around neck to resemble scarf. The snack string can be found near the fruit roll-ups in the supermarket.



As promised in last month's article, here are some ways to begin kicking the sugar habit:

- Eat sprouted grains, seeds, nuts, and fresh vegetables, or fruits at each meal.
- Eat three regular meals at consistent times.
- Use healthy snacks between meals so blood sugar doesn't drop.
- Stop eating all refined foods, sweets, junk and fast foods (anything with white sugar), chocolate, and pastries.

- Avoid coffee and alcohol, which are stimulants, as well as other drugs.
- Try to live your life at a slower pace.

Once a person has his craving for sugar under control, some of the healthier substitutes for processed (white) sugar can be used, but with moderation! Examples would be unpasteurized (raw) honey. It contains the enzyme amylase, which aids in the digestion of starches (such as bread). Another possibility would be Sucanat (SUGar CAne NATural). This is a dehydrated organic cane sugar. It is full of vitamins and minerals and tastes like brown sugar (which, by the way, is nothing more than white sugar with molasses added). A third possibility would be stevia, which is an herbal extract and, according to everything I've read, is 100% safe, even for diabetics.

I hope last month's article along with this month's will help you to understand the danger of sugar and how important it is to at least limit its usage in your life and in the lives of those who depend on you to feed them!

PS – The following ingredients are also sugar, and are found in hundreds of food items located on your grocer's shelves. Be aware of these:

Barley malt	Beet sugar
Brown sugar	Buttered syrup
Cane-juice crystals	Cane sugar
Caramel	Carob syrup
Corn syrup	Corn syrup solids
Date sugar	Dextran
Dextrose	Diastase
Diastatic malt	Ethyl maltol
Fructose	Fruit juice
Fruit juice concentrate	Glucose
Glucose solids	Golden sugar
Golden syrup	Grape sugar
High-fructose corn syrup	Honey
Invert sugar	Lactose
Malt syrup	Maltodextrin
Maltose	Mannitol
Molasses	Raw sugar
Refiner's syrup	Sorbitol
Sorghum syrup	Sucrose
Sugar	Turbinado sugar
Xylitol	Yellow sugar



Today, after screeching my car to a halt, nearly missing the truck that pulled out directly in front of me, I was reminded of God's omnipresence. As children of God, we need to remember that God is always with us, everywhere, and at all times.

Jesus, our example, always knew that God was with Him. When Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, the devil took Him up on a pinnacle of the temple. The devil tempted Him to cast Himself down to prove God was there to take care of Him. However, Jesus replied, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Jesus knew God was with Him and did not need to prove this fact. In front of Lazarus' tomb Jesus prayed aloud, thanking God for hearing Him, not for Himself because He knew the Father always heard him, but for those who heard Him pray that they might believe. And He spoke of God's omnipresence to His disciples in the garden. He knew that all would forsake Him; yet, He knew that He was not alone because the Father was with Him. Such love He had for us, to go to the cross, to have the cup of our sins poured out upon Him, which caused Him to grievously cry out, "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" All this, so that we may never be forsaken by the Father.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Let us rejoice in this wonderful promise of God! Hagar was encouraged throughout her trial with Sarah by the angel of the Lord, whom she called, "Thou God seest me." She knew God was always there. Let us be comforted by God's presence as Paul was comforted in Corinth when, in the night by a vision, he heard the Lord speak, "Be not afraid but speak, and hold onto thy peace: for I am with thee." Let our daily walk be as Joseph's walk, with God ever before His eyes. He lived godly, was delivered through all His afflictions, and was given favor and wisdom because of God's presence.

We can trust in God's omnipresence. God's presence everywhere and at all times should bring great comfort into our lives. Let us remember that the true source of our strength, success, and knowledge of the omnipresence of God comes from the Lord.



The world-wide web. When our beloved pastor shared the wonderful news that our ladies' newspaper would be published for all to see on the web, I was overwhelmed. My first thought was, "Not the world-wide web... so many people!" Then panic set in. How could this be? I'm a wife, mother, and grandmother, but not a creative writer. Then the Lord reminded me that He wants me to grow in Him and depend on Him for leadership and wisdom in what to write. He promises me that if I ask for wisdom, He'll give it liberally. His Word tells me that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me and He tells me that He will never leave me or forsake me. His promises are mine to claim. At that point, I understood the verse, "Be still and know that I am God." He gave me peace. And now I only feel humbled by the fact that the Lord is giving me this opportunity to become what He desires, which is one of my goals for the upcoming New Year.

And speaking of goals, our children need to have goals in their lives. Also, since we have a brand new year before us, we should prayerfully dwell on these thoughts. Let's begin by asking the Lord to give us the eyes to see each one of our dear children in the proper way, without excusing or overlooking any area in their character, attitudes, or behavior that needs changing. Oftentimes, the very things we see in our children are the character traits or actions about which the Lord has dealt with us. Let's not be over-zealous, but lovingly prioritize the changes to be worked upon. For example, if we have a child who lies, doesn't always make his bed, and doesn't feed the dog when he should, what should we work on changing first? Lying is probably the answer. No one wants a child whose words can not be trusted. Once we have made our list of goals, we need to ask for guidance on how to accomplish them. We, as mothers, know our main concern is to bring our children up to know the Lord and serve Him all the days of their lives. We also desire for our children to be productive citizens, those who will have good morals, manners,

and will stand apart from the world. This is a full-time job and not one to be taken lightly!

Please remember to be consistent in correcting any change in a character, behavior, or attitude. Don't react one time and then let it slip the next. Remember it's not an easy task to make changes. It takes work. But the blessings you will receive when your child grows in areas you have desired will be glorious to you.

We need to ask the Lord to guard our lips so the correction will be applied in a loving manner. If we feel we are becoming frustrated, we need to walk away for a time. To correct in anger is not the Christian example we want to leave with our children. It will only lead them to also have a hard time keeping their emotions in check.

When advising our children, we need to explain the reason why we would like them to apply these changes to their lives. For example, perhaps we have a child who just doesn't want to share. We need to explain to him that it is kind to share with others. The Lord loves a cheerful giver and Jesus shared everything with us. It may be helpful to point out different people in the Bible who shared food, housing, and even valuable belongings, like jewelry and money. Let's be mindful to encourage our children when we see growth in any area.

Another child may have to learn self-control. Keeping the body under control is a very valuable lesson for all children to learn. This is one of the goals that will take much prayer and diligence on the part of the parent. It is a trait that we will have to determine in our hearts to be on guard for continuously. Much effort throughout the day will be required in order to accomplish this. At times, it will seem as if nothing else gets done, but it will be a blessing when the child grows up and becomes someone who conducts himself in a very appropriate way under any circumstance. Remember ladies, reaching these goals will be an ongoing task. As our children mature, there will be different issues for self-control.

It's a good idea that an assessment be made of our goals at the end of each month. Let's be willing to make any adjustment needed to reach our goals. We need to ask the Lord for continual guidance and wisdom to nurture our children. Sometimes, in order to meet the goal, the Lord will lead us to make changes in our own lives.

Remember, it's not an easy task to make changes. It takes work, but the blessings you will receive when our children become what the Lord desires will be abundant.

