

Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 1, No. 2

“And ye are complete in him.” Col. 2:10

Nov. / Dec. 1998

The Privilege of Prayer

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Prayer is as vital to the spiritual life as breathing is to the physical. The person who refuses to breathe, brings upon himself the sentence of physical death. Likewise the person who neglects or refuses to pray, cuts off the source of spiritual life and the means of maintaining it.

Prayer is the very soul of the Christian religion. Without it, profession becomes a hollow and lifeless form and religious experience a valley of dry bones. Prayer is the most holy exercise of the soul. It takes the worshiper into the holy of holies of devotion, the inner sanctuary of spiritual experience. It is the secret of the beauty of holiness.

“He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Luke 18:1. The parable was of the unjust judge who finally granted the request of the widow, not on the basis of justice, but because of her persistency. The word “parable” comes from the Latin *parabola*, which means a comparison or illustration. It is a thing figuratively expressed—a figure or similitude.

The purpose of this parable was to teach Christians not to lose heart in prayer and give up too soon. Faintness is a condition of weakness or weariness. It symbolizes the loss of hope and faith. It describes one who becomes discouraged and gives up. It is the opposite of hope, faith, courage, and persistency.

The widow of the parable repeatedly came and entreated the judge. She refused to take “No” for an answer because she knew that her cause was just and that it was the duty of the judge to grant her request. The judge is called “unjust” by way of contrast with a just God. If an unjust judge will finally render justice and grant the persistent request of a suppliant, surely “the God of Justice” will hear and answer the requests of His people when they are in harmony with His will.

Prayer does not change God, nor does it change His mind. He already knows our needs and longs to supply

them. Prayer changes us. It changes our attitude and our character. It prepares us to receive and appreciate what God finally gives us.

Parents ruin their children when they immediately grant every request. Such children become greedy, selfish, self-centered, proud, and unappreciative. They are often ruined for this life and for all eternity. The best children, and later the most useful and unselfish men and women, are those whose requests were often denied or at least delayed until their characters were developed. By years of self-denial and discipline in the school of experience, they learned to be unselfish and appreciative. Would our heavenly Father be less wise than earthly parents in training His children?

In Revelation 14:12, we are told that our Lord will be welcomed at His return by a people who have “the faith of Jesus.” The kind of faith that Jesus had will be obtained in the same way He obtained His faith—“by prayer and fasting.” (See Matthew 17:19-21.) Only praying people develop faith, and only those who enter into the prayer life of Jesus can have the same kind of miracle-working faith He had. Such a people will be on earth when He returns. A people of faith who are persistent in prayer will proclaim a message that will lighten the earth with its glory.

Prayer is the greatest privilege of Christians in this sinful and rebellious world. It is the breath of spiritual life to the soul. It is to the spiritual life what breathing is to the physical. Its neglect leads to certain spiritual death. Prayer is communion, or conversation, with God. It is the golden cord that connects man with God, earth with heaven. It is the power that moves the arm that moves the world. Prayer can change the most hopeless, discouraging outlook. It makes the future as bright as the promises of God.

Someone has said that “prayer is the golden river at whose brink some die of thirst while others kneel and drink.”

[Abridged from *Prevailing Prayer*, by Taylor Bunch, published by Review and Herald Publishing Association, Copyright 1946.]

Editor Profiles:

In the first issue, we introduced *Hearth to Hearth*. Now, we would like to introduce ourselves.

Grace Cox, our managing editor, is a housewife who, for the last seven years, has lived in rural West Tennessee. As a middle-aged lady, she enjoys being a friend to her husband's daughters and a grandma to their children. Her home and family (and now this newsletter!) keep her busy, but she also enjoys reading and crafts.

Esther McDaniel, our layout and design editor, is a wife, mother and grandmother whose youngest daughter's upcoming marriage is turning into an "empty nester." Esther has moved around a great deal throughout her life, but is currently making her home in rural Mississippi. Though her home and family responsibilities—caring for and being a companion to her mother as well as her husband—keep her occupied most of the time, she also enjoys reading, writing, traveling and camping.

MAIL CALL:

I REALLY enjoyed *Hearth to Hearth*! I also thought that it looked very nice!
Heidi/WV

Got the newsletter today in the mail; it came out really nice. The [graphics] you put in really help to make it attractive and more interesting. I can't wait for the next issue already.
Debbie/TN

Thank you for sending *Hearth*. The graphics are very nice. My mom is reading it first.
Anna/HI

"Hello! Am I excited! You have fulfilled my dream. I've so wished ...women had an uplifting spiritual newsletter...Praise the Lord."
Kathie/OH

"Thanks for the *Hearth to Hearth* newsletter. I did appreciate reading it and to sense the purpose you have in its existence...May God bless His precious people to the end that Jesus will be seen and heard via His servants, as they are

Spanning the Seasons

We have gazed entranced at the flamboyant splendor of Autumn! With swift, broad strokes the Master Artist has transformed every hill and valley, painting for us in brilliant hues a visual grand finale to the season. Autumn—that spectacular season that bridges summer and winter—will soon be over.

Squirrels are scurrying about, gathering their food for storage. Flocks of birds are noisily discussing their flight plans; some have already taken to the air. We are sorry to see them go. The katydids are hushed now, and the frogs have been silent for some time.

The wind lately has been whispering urgently in the treetops, and brilliant cascades of leaves come swirling down. Early evening shadows steal across the landscape, and the pungent odor of burning wood is in the air.

Yes, fall is giving way to winter! We welcome the cooler days and the slower pace, and look forward to the warm, cozy glow of a fire on brittle-cold winter evenings.

The year itself is quickly drawing to a close. With thankful hearts we review the way God has blessed in so many areas of our lives during the past year. We trust that you also have realized God's blessings and guidance during this year.

We are especially grateful to Him for making *Hearth to Hearth* a reality, and for the lessons in patience and trust that He taught us along the way.

Grace Cox

taking the kingdom and possessing the kingdom for ever and ever." (see Daniel 7:18.)
Helen/TN

"Received your *Hearth to Hearth* newsletter, and it is very interesting. Am looking forward to the next issue."
Sadie/WV

"Got the newsletter today. Very nicely laid out. The articles are informative...Thanks for sending it to me."
Jackie/MS

"I just had to write and thank you so much for *Hearth to Hearth*. I read it and enjoyed it very much."
Sandy/CA

I just received the newsletter and it is wonderful! Thank you for including me in that mailing. Some of these subjects have been on my daughter's mind a lot lately, such as care for children and organizing the home.
Kay/WV

Read your *Hearth to Hearth*. I found it very sweet and simple. I enjoyed it and I hope it is helpful to others within their home life...You had good input into the people's homes with this issue: prayer, the family altar, getting organized and a personal experience of God's salvation from despair. Thank you for sending me this issue."
Sally/MT

PRAYER CALL:

"Please pray for me that I will be able to focus on the positive until I can truly forgive as my Father has forgiven me."

"Please pray that I will be motivated to follow Biblical health principles more closely. I do realize that my body is the temple of God, and I need to take better care of it. My spirit is willing, but my flesh is weak."

(Continued on pg. 6)

Come to the Water

The lovely green plant was a special birthday gift. The nursing staff had selected a low-maintenance plant to spruce up my closet-sized, windowless office. Not known for my green thumb, I was relieved to know that the plant



required only minimal light and once-a-week watering. I purchased a pretty green antique bottle, filled it with water, and set it beside the flowerpot to serve as a reminder to me.

I took much pleasure in tending my plant and watching it grow and flourish over the weeks that followed. As time passed, however, I must admit that I became a bit lax and inconsistent in my caretaking.

One Monday morning I opened the office door to discover my plant had collapsed in a wilted, lifeless heap. How long had it been since I had watered it? I couldn't remember. I quickly poured the entire contents of the green water bottle into the flowerpot.

When I left at the end of the day, the plant remained crumpled and lifeless; but—as if by magic—an amazing transformation took

place overnight. I returned the next morning to find my plant had sprung back to life. Its leaves were standing upright and firm—as good as new. What a difference the little drink of water had made!

My plant experience has served as a spiritual object lesson for me. I too have known dry spells—dry spells in my Christian life. There have been times when my own spirit felt as wilted and dry as the leaves on that parched plant. We are told that thirst is one of the body's ways of telling us when we are "empty." In states of severe dehydration, the sense of thirst itself may be lost. Is it possible to become "spiritually dehydrated" and lose even one's sense of spiritual thirst?

God has said that He would be like an artesian well in the life of a believer, but Jeremiah 2:13 warns us: "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Have we become neglectful, inconsistent and lax in tending to our spiritual thirst? In the business

of our daily lives, do we no longer sense our state of spiritual dehydration?

It's a very dry land in which we live. What seems like a good thing today, so often comes up dry in the mouth--void of any meaning or value. The psalmist says: "My soul thirsteth for thee...in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." (Psalms 63:1.)

Are you thirsty? Could you use God's help in your daily life? Do you long for peace of mind...abundant life...re-creation and replenishment of your body and spirit? Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14.) The words of God are the well springs of life.

We need not experience dry spells in our lives. God invites us, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." (Isaiah 55:1.) An everlasting supply is always available to us.

Living water—it makes all the difference. Don't forget!

Karen Jenks

"He who seeks to quench his thirst at the fountains of this world will drink only to thirst again. Everywhere men are unsatisfied. They long for something to supply the need of the soul. Only One can meet that want. The need of the world, 'The Desire of all nations,' is Christ. The divine grace which He alone can impart, is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul.

"Jesus did not convey the idea that merely one draft of the water of life would suffice the receiver. He who tastes of the love of Christ will continually long for more...The constant cry of his heart is, More of Thee...our Redeemer is an inexhaustible fountain. We may drink, and drink again, and ever find a fresh supply." (E.G. White, *Desire of Ages*, P. 187.)

Getting Organized Part II

One day I was inspired that God wanted to *redeem my kitchen* [to a state of order]. He wanted me to do it, but it would be Christ in me, not me in the human will power alone. This is the application of Galatians 2:20.

First my old thoughts and ways must be crucified. I must turn from them, and this is done by giving heed to God-led thoughts instead. Christ can actually change my thoughts, my desires, my feelings, my habits, even my old ways of working or responding-- whatever I commit to His care! Have you experienced this as well?

He can change all inherited or cultivated habits of thinking or acting. This is the redemption of the inner me; it's the inside of the cupboard of my heart and life that God wants to redeem and transform. He teaches me this spiritual application by physically showing me what it takes to redeem my kitchen cupboards to order and cleanliness. How did God do this for me?

Getting my home organized began first with one room of my house. I can't handle, mentally or physically, all of my home at once, but God inspires me to begin with one room. This I can handle with Jesus. My kitchen is dealt with daily, so I thought this was a good place to start. Once I get that in order I must daily exercise some new habits of housekeeping to maintain that order. Begin in one room, get that room clean and orderly with Jesus, then add to that room the next room, while main-

taining the order of the first room. Follow in this manner, led of God, until the entire home, yard, garage and garden take on heaven's order. God led me first with the overview plan in my mind, but still I had to learn to cooperate, to listen and to follow Jesus in the moment.

I stood looking at my kitchen and asked God, "Where do I begin?" Even this one room looked like too much for me. I sensed despair at my heart's door. "Look to God's strength available to you upon request, resist looking at your weaknesses or inabilities," was God's suggestion to my mind. I responded, "Lord help me!"

The reasoning continued, "Why not just begin with that group of cupboards; you have time for those today." These thoughts are the "still small voice" of heaven leading me in the path of righteousness. It is God encouraging me that He is with me and will enable me to perform His will.

Making a decision is a vital part of becoming organized. I decided to do it, led of God. To my surprise, when I began sorting the contents of the cupboards and drawers, I had a pile of things that didn't belong there, a pile of items to get rid of or sell, and a third pile of things that needed to be returned to the cupboard.

As I thought of the contents, I decided it would be more logical for these stirring and serving utensils to be closer to the stove for easy access and more efficient kitchen work. The knives and peelers I would put next to the cutting board. That made for greater efficiency and a new order of things.

This cleaning and reorganizing of the cupboards and drawers became more involved than I first anticipated, but oh! what a feeling of confidence that this was the right thing to do, and I would be happier for all this work and effort! The Lord was indeed leading me and empowering me for the task, and I found a cheerful spirit created within me.



Toward the end of this redeeming adventure, I became weary when doubt came into my thoughts and feelings. Self and Satan suggested thoughts to my mind as well. I must learn to discern the Spirit to whom I listen and whom I will serve. The Lord led me to persevere by giving these “I can’t do it anymore” thoughts and feelings to Him, and Jesus freed me of these wrong thoughts and feelings by His transforming grace.

My thoughts, feelings, and kitchen cupboards were undergoing a similar cleansing, transformation, and reorganizing as I cooperated with heaven. By surrender and grace this was accomplished today. Tomorrow God and I would tackle another section of my kitchen. It was in this way that my kitchen became thoroughly cleansed and organized with Jesus.

I began to see that redeeming my kitchen cupboards from disorder began with redeeming my attitudes and thoughts first. Some attitudes needed to be discarded, some just straightened up. Taking Jesus with me was and continues to be the secret of success.

The physical was teaching me the spiritual sorting of my thoughts and feelings. Getting them orderly and upright is a big job, and maintaining them requires “little attentions often.” As in the physical, so in the spiritual realm; only God can clean the rooms of my mind and heart! Then I must give myself to Him as often as wrong thoughts and attitudes are recognized as disorderly, and He is faithful to clean them with my cooperation.

Next, I stood back and looked over my kitchen. God led my thoughts to think, “Are your countertops attractive, do they give you a restful, clean look?” God wanted me to exercise thought and evaluation of the job.

I saw my countertop was too cluttered; so I asked a question of each item on my counter: “Does this need to be out? This one makes it too cluttered. I’ll put this away. There, that looks better. Really, this item need not be here either!” This process went on until, through trying different ideas, I could say, “There, that looks real nice! Only a few items are restful and attractive.

Lord, is there anything else that needs changing?” When my conscience was silent, my soul was satisfied and joyful. My kitchen, inside and out, was very pleasant to the eye. It was redeemed by surrender, effort and God’s grace.

Becoming organized is a good way to come to know God in a very personal way.

We must first learn to be led of God and to hear His voice to our conscience. Recognize it is the daily, moment by moment repetition of the new habits of thinking and reacting with Christ that makes the new way of order replace the old way of allowing untidiness.

Now I can take Jesus with me—in this method of union, communion and surrender—to my bathroom, my bedroom, my basement, attic, garage, etc., until the entire home is neat, clean and orderly by grace.

I give away or sell the excess that doesn’t fit neatly into my home, drawers, closets or cupboards. I must evaluate the difference between need and want, filtering all through Jesus.

Years later when we moved to Montana God called for another deeper cleansing of my cupboards because my kitchen size was drastically reduced. I had four sets of

dishes in my tiny kitchen area. The reduced space necessitated me to reorganize to one larger set of Corel dishes that I bought with the sale of the other four sets. It fits nicely now.

God led me to be reasonable, yet make hard decisions. One set of those dishes was sentimental: they were my grandmothers; yet I didn’t have room to store them properly. You too will have your own trials and difficulties bringing your home into heaven’s order, but Jesus is there to help you and direct you. Follow thou Him!

Becoming organized is a good way to come to know God in a

very personal way. As God helped me get my kitchen in order I learned many practical lessons on how God wants to clean up the cupboards of my thoughts and feelings.

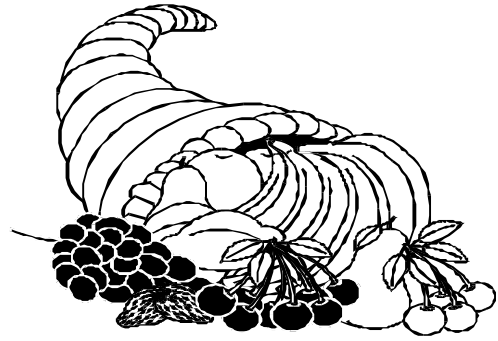
Erroneous thoughts, or bondage thoughts get tucked in the recesses of our minds and need to be discarded just like my kitchen cupboards needed some things eliminated, led of God. When God reveals these things to me, it’s His way of asking, “Do you want this? Shall I get rid of it for you?” It is the power of God on the inner man that cleans up my thoughts, my feelings, my desires, and appetites or whatever, with my cooperative effort. Isn’t God good? (*To be concluded.*)

Sally Hohnberger

[Reprinted by permission of *A Voice From The Wilderness*, a publication of Restoration International, Inc., 14000 North Fork Road, Polebridge, MT 59928.]

How to Observe Thanksgiving

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
 Count your gains instead of your losses.
 Count your joys instead of your woes;
 Count your friends instead of our foes.
 Count your smiles instead of your tears;
 Count your courage instead of your fears.
 Count your full years instead of your lean;
 Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
 Count your health instead of your wealth;
 Count on God instead of yourself.



Author Unknown

November

Never, as far back as we can remember,
 has anyone known so fine a November!
 The gold leaves have stayed on the aspen trees,
 And equally lovely and glowing as these
 Are the linnets that flit through the golden haze,
 Still singing their eloquent roundelays!
 This is the peak of a peaceful year
 Heaped with the beauty the heart holds dear.

Author Unknown

“THE LORD BLESS THEE”

How Shall He Bless Thee?
 With the gladness that knoweth no decay
 With the riches that cannot pass away
 With the sunshine that makes an endless day.
 Thus May He Bless Thee.

“AND KEEP THEE”

How Shall He Keep Thee?
 With the all-covering shadow of His wings
 With the strong love that guards from evil things
 With the sure power that safe to glory brings.
 Thus May He Keep Thee!

Selected

(Continued from pg. 2)

NOTE: Prayer requests will be printed without identifying the individual; God knows each need. Please join our *Hearth to Hearth* intercessory prayer circle, and lift up these requests each day as you kneel before the Lord. “...pray one for another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16..]

Penpal Call:

Kathie Shaffer: “Greetings! 2 Peter 1:2! I am a mother, wife and homemaker. My interests include cooking, gardening, a simple modest lifestyle and reading the Bible. I’d

like to correspond with any other women who share similar interests and would like a pen pal.” 7394 St. Rt. 97, Box 13, Mansfield, OH 44903

Heidi Stump: Heidi is 15 years old. She likes to play the piano, hike, go camping, read, write poetry and letters. In addition, she loves horses. Her address is: HC 64, Box 128-B, Welch, WV 24801. E-mail address: heidi@smyrna.org.

please feel free to submit articles that you feel would be appropriate and of interest to other women. All articles submitted will be given due consideration.

There are several papers in circulation which provide in-depth study of theological issues. One such paper that we highly recommend is *Present Truth*, published monthly by Smyrna Gospel Ministries. It is sent free upon request.

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NOTICE: The editors solicit your participation! Keeping in mind that *Hearth to Hearth* is not planned as a "theological" paper, or for in-depth study of doctrines or issues,

Phoebe's Hospice

Do you enjoy entertaining visitors in your home? I do, and I hope you do too. I have come to realize that hospitality is important! The Bible puts a lot of emphasis on the practice of hospitality, even stating that we should "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Hebrews 13:2.

Evidently Phoebe opened her home to the early Christian gospel workers, including Paul himself. Perhaps she operated a "hospice," which was "a house or shelter for pilgrims, strangers, etc., especially one kept by a religious order." (*The Random House College Dictionary.*)

We all know people who seem to just naturally radiate warmth and have a relaxed demeanor that makes us enjoy being with them. Phoebe must have been that kind of person, and I want to be like that too, don't you? Romans 12:13 tells us to be "given to hospitality," and in 1 Peter 4: 9 and 10 we are told to "Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

I like to think about Phoebe. She is mentioned in the Bible only once, but she must have made quite an impression on Paul. In Romans 16: 1 and 2 he said, "I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchræa: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also."

Everyone has received the gift (it says so!), and we are told to use it as good stewards of the grace of God. God's bidding is our enabling. There-

fore, if we choose to be hospitable, Jesus living in us and working through us will make it so. May I share some of the things that I have learned, and am still learning, in my process of cultivating the gift of hospitality?

For many years, the prospect of visitors threw me into a real "tizzy." I wanted everything—*everything*—to be perfect. I spent days, and even weeks if I had enough advance notice, cleaning and refurbishing our home. I spent many hours planning the meals, a lot of money shopping for the food, and many, many hours cooking it. By the time the guests arrived, I was too tired to enjoy them very much. What was worse, I never felt that my preparations were adequate. Something always seemed to be missing, or not quite right. As a result, I wasn't very relaxed, and I doubt that our guests were either!

A wise Christian writer once said "It is a denial of Christ to make preparation for visitors which requires time that rightly belongs to the Lord. In this we commit robbery of God... Needless worries and burdens are created by the desire to make a display in entertaining visitors."

I am learning not to prepare very elaborately when we are expecting guests. Certainly I want the house to be clean and orderly; but I want it to be that way every day. I no longer wear myself out with unnecessary tasks just to "make a display." I am learning to plan simple meals that

don't break my grocery budget and don't require excessive preparation. Christ himself, when feeding the multitudes, kept it simple. Though He could have spread for them a feast of gourmet delicacies, He chose instead to feed them with the simple fare to which they were accustomed.

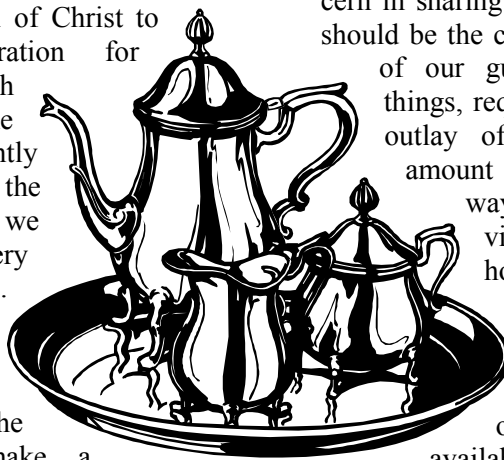
I want our home to reflect the atmosphere of heaven, and be a little bit of heaven on earth where not only our human guests, but also angels will love to visit. Keeping my physical preparations for visitors simple allows me time for spiritual preparation, which is far more important.

It goes without saying, of course, that the guestroom should be clean, neat, and orderly. If the floor plan of your home allows, the guestroom should be close to the bathroom.

My dictionary defines hospitality as, "the friendly reception of guests or strangers; the quality or disposition of receiving guests and strangers in a warm, friendly way." Our first concern in sharing our gift of hospitality should be the comfort and well-being of our guests. A few simple things, requiring neither a large outlay of funds nor a great amount of time, can go a long way toward making a visitor's stay in our home comfortable and pleasant. May I suggest a few?

An extra blanket or two should be available for your guest to add to the bed if needed; likewise, a place should be provided where they may place the comforter or other covers that are *not* needed.

Your guests will need a little bit of closet space and a few sturdy hangers. In addition, they will appreciate an empty, flat surface (other than the floor), where they may set some of



their things; a chair, and perhaps a small fan would be appreciated. An adjustable drapery or blind at the window is a “must.”

Some other things that will make their stay more comfortable are: a clock, facial tissues, a wastebasket, a good reading lamp at the bedside, and some reading material, including a Bible. Another nice touch is a small basket or bowl containing a piece or two of fruit, a few packages of crackers and some mints, arranged on a tray with a few paper napkins. Include a covered pitcher of water along with a drinking glass. A fresh flower, or even a lovely silk flower, in a pretty vase, is a small gesture that exclaims, “Welcome! We are glad you are here.”

Does it take a lot of money to practice hospitality? Not at all! A humble home made bright with air, sunlight and the cheerful dispositions of the inhabitants, who extend a kind, welcoming manner toward guests, is all that is required.

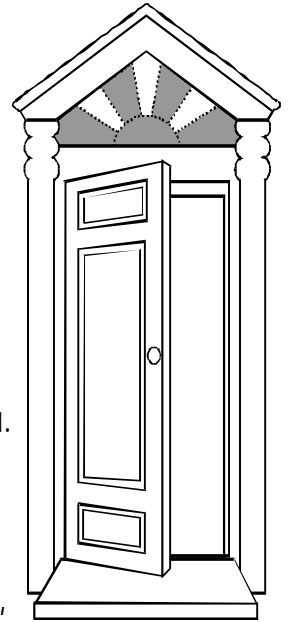
I am determined, by God’s grace, to be a Phoebe and make our home a hospice for pilgrims and strangers, as well as for the friends and family members who come our way.

Amanda Mallory

[Amanda Mallory is the author’s penname.]

Motto for a Front Hall

If you come cheerily,
Here shall be jest for you,
If you come wearily,
Here shall be rest for you.
If you come borrowing,
Gladly we'll loan to you,
If you come sorrowing,
Love shall be shown to you.
Under our thatch, friend,
Peace shall abide for you,
Touch but the latch, friend,
The door will swing wide for you!



Nancy Byrd Turne

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Mission Statement: “Believing that we can find completeness in all areas of our lives only ‘in him, who is the head of all principality and power’ (Colossians 2:10), it is the mission of *Hearth to Hearth* to provide a forum for Christian women to reach out to each other in friendship, with joy and hope; and to encourage each other to find our completeness in Christ as we sojourn here on our way to the kingdom.”

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