

SMALL CLOUD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PRESENTS . . . **SMALL CLOUD CHRONICLES**

"With God all things are possible." Mark 10:27

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BLESSINGS ABOUND

Blessing bags—do you know what they are? One of the homework assignments during Small Cloud's annual "Giving Week" in December was for each student to put together items for five people—three adults and one family with a baby boy—who were facing financial difficulties. Students were encouraged to use their own money to purchase necessary items such as laundry detergent, shampoo, and other items to be sent to these persons. We are blessed to be a blessing!

The Nelson twins are growing well. Mrs. Nelson has sometimes found it difficult, however, to provide breast milk for their growing appetites. Therefore, she has been ever so grateful for her sister-in-law Jeannette (still breastfeeding her one-year-old), who has been providing extra breast milk for the twins. So far the boys have received only breast milk.

In December the Nelsons were also blessed with the help of a young lady from Oregon named Graceful, who not only helped with the babies, but also baked bread, did housecleaning and laundry, etc. Graceful spent five weeks with the Nelsons and was truly a great blessing.

Due to the economic pinch everyone is experiencing these days—and Small Cloud is no exception—it was decided that money could be stretched by lengthening the school day and shortening the week. Therefore, on December 9, students began a four-day week, adding one hour and forty-five minutes to each school day. As can be expected, some are happy with the new schedule and others are not. But valuable dollars are being saved by not having to run the school bus on Fridays.

January 30 marked the celebration of the fourteenth year of Small Cloud's educational ministry. During these fourteen years teachers and staff have learned much about practicing faith and have seen God work in marvelous ways. In this issue of *Small Cloud Chronicles* we will share some of the highlights of this year's anniversary program.

A newspaper reporter attended the anniversary program. She wrote up a nice, positive, and accurate article about the school. The article took up about two-thirds of an entire page and included four pictures. The reporter had nice things to say about the quality of the program, and asked to be notified about future

school events so she can cover them. Attached to this newsletter is a copy of the article that appeared in the *River Valley Times*.



The enlarged Seely family stands with the judge after the adoption (L-R): Alyssa, Maya, Mrs. Seely, Nikki, Mr. Seely, Andriana, and Judge Harlan

The Seely family has been in the process of adopting Maya, Allysa, and Veronica (three foster children) for the past two plus years. The adoption suffered many delays and brought much frustration to the Seelys. But we are happy to report that on February 11 the adoption finally took place at the Amador County Courthouse. The Seelys are very grateful that the girls are now officially theirs. And how grateful we should be that God has adopted us into *His* family!

Our honor roll students this quarter are Davey Petrovich, Viviana Martinez, Mariana Cardenas, and Megan Petrovich. Congratulations, students! ■

THE PARENTING CORNER

The harvest of life is character, and it is this that determines destiny, both for this life and for the life to come. The harvest is a reproduction of the seed sown. Every seed yields fruit after its kind. So it is with the traits of character we cherish.

Selfishness, self-love, self-esteem, self-indulgence, reproduce themselves; and the end is wretchedness and ruin. 'He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.' Galatians 6:8. Love, sympathy, and kindness yield fruitage of blessing, a harvest that is imperishable. - Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (Review and Herald Publishing Association), pp. 162-163.



SMALL CLOUD'S ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

Ms. Seely opened the program with the following speech: "I'd like to welcome everyone here tonight. We at Small Cloud especially enjoy this program every year because it gives us a chance to stop and remember just how far God has brought us. When you look around, you see classrooms; but we remember the open walls with protruding wooden studs, the garage door that the wind would whistle through on cold days, and the cows in the room next door. Like the birthplace of our Lord, this school had very humble beginnings. It was a barn.

"The theme for tonight's program is 'Hope.' The circumstances of our lives can, at times, be rather discouraging. We may have lost a job or a loved one. We might be having trouble with a spouse or parents or children. We might be facing terminal illness or chronic pain. Whatever we face, God has promised us hope.

"Before we began working on this program, we had a special time of prayer. We went around the room and, taking turns, prayed aloud for wisdom and guidance in putting these speeches together. We had written several Biblical examples of hope on the board. Each child asked God which one he or she should present. As a result, we have two presentations about Job, as well as one each about Adam and Eve, Noah, Joseph, and Jesus Christ.

"The children have worked hard on their presentations. It is our prayer that, after hearing their talks tonight, you will leave with renewed hope that God is working your situation out for good as well."

The program continued with a vocal rendition of "Jesus Is Our Lord," followed by the speeches of Viviana, Davey, and Mikey.

ADAM AND EVE

by Viviana Martinez, age 10

At the time when Adam and Eve were alive, it was peaceful. The animals were calm, and Adam and Eve enjoyed their company. The whole world was perfect, but it was not going to last.

Sin started like this: Satan was jealous because God was higher than he was. He thought he was better than God. He started spreading rumors to the angels. That caused the problem to get bigger. Soon they were having group meetings. Satan thought he was doing all this secretly, but God knew what Satan was doing. God worked with Satan and gave him a lot of chances to repent. But the problem got bigger still.



Soon there was war in heaven. Satan and his angels fought against Jesus and his angels. God kicked Satan and his angels out of heaven, and they came down to this earth. When Satan saw Adam and Eve, he started to think about how he could tempt them.

One day Satan appeared to Eve as a serpent on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He said, "Come, Eve," and she went. The serpent said, "You can eat the fruit from the tree. It'll make you wiser."

God had already told Adam and Eve not to eat from that tree. Now Eve didn't know whom to believe, God or Satan. She remembered that God had said, "If you eat it you will die." But Satan said eating it would make her wiser. Satan said things to confuse her, and he did. She ate the fruit and gave it to Adam. He ate it too. God sent them out of the Garden of Eden, but he gave them hope that they would have another chance through Jesus Christ.

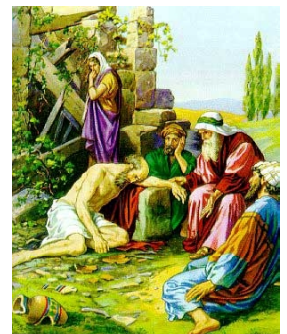
Today we also have a chance to repent. No matter what you have done, God will forgive you if you ask Him. He will turn your life around.

JOB

by Davey Petrovich, age 9

There was a man in the land of Uz; his name was Job. He feared God and stayed away from evil. He was a very wealthy man, with seven thousand sheep, a thousand camels, one thousand oxen, and five hundred female donkeys. Job had a wife and ten children—seven boys and three girls. The Lord allowed Satan to do bad things to Job, but not to kill him.

One day Job's children were at a party. Suddenly a big tornado destroyed the party and killed them all. Then all of Job's wealth was taken away. Job was so sad that he shaved his head and tore his clothes. Finally Job got boils. His wife tried to discourage him, but Job never stopped trusting in God. We should always have faith, even when the worst things happen to us.



NOAH

by Mikey Petrovich, age 12

Almost two thousand years after creation the world was filled with wickedness. People were drinking, fighting, and killing. God knew he had to put an end to it.

But there was a man named Noah who found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God asked Noah to build an ark, so Noah immediately began.

It took him over a hundred years to finally finish the ark. The length of it was about four hundred fifty feet, the height about forty-five feet, and the width about seventy-five feet.

After it was completed God sent angels to guide animals into the ark. Then came the hard part, trying to get the people into the ark. There were no angels to put the people into the ark because God never forces anyone to do anything.

When Noah did invite them, they all mocked him and refused to enter into the ark. Only Noah entered in with his family, and an angel closed the door behind them.

A whole week went by and nothing happened. No rain fell. No flood began. Was God telling the truth? Was a flood really coming? Then suddenly the clouds began to darken and flashes of lightning struck here and there. Large drops of water fell from the sky. People rushed to the ark and yelled for Noah to let them in, but it was too late. The door had been shut and it was over now. The waters were rising and eventually covered everything. Outside the ark everything perished.



Noah was in that ark for about a year until they finally hit land. Noah, his family, and also the animals were all exuberant to be out of the ark.

Noah had to have hope that what God had said was true. Because of that hope [and faith] Noah, his family, and

all the animal kinds were saved. I hope I can have that same hope and faith that Noah did; don't you?

The students then sang, "Go Tell It on the Mountain," and following the song Mariana Cardenas presented her speech about Job.

Live your life in such a way that when your feet hit the floor in the morning, Satan shudders and says, "Oh no, ... he's awake!"

JOB

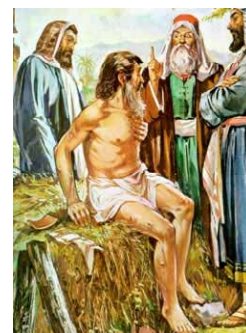
by Mariana Cardenas, age 12

The story of Job inspires us to have hope in the midst of this horrible world. Job had many problems to go through, but he had faith that he would overcome. I hope this story will inspire you, as it did me.

Job lived in the land of Uz with his wife and ten children. He had seven sons and three daughters. He was a very good man and very affluent as well. He had a thousand oxen, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, and five hundred female donkeys. His house was gorgeous. He was the greatest man of the east.

Satan wanted to tempt Job. The Lord let him. Satan took everything from Job—his wealth and his sons and daughters. Satan also gave Job boils. Job suffered a lot. His wife and friends even told him not to trust God anymore. But Job never gave up.

After all Job went through, God blessed him and honored him. God returned to Job all the cattle, sheep, camels, and female donkeys he had lost, plus more. God also blessed him with ten more children, seven sons and three daughters. His daughters were the most beautiful girls in the country. You will go through hard times in your life too, but you still need to have hope that the troubles of this life will one day be over.



JOSEPH

by Andrew Petrovich, age 15

At the time of the Egyptian empire there lived a man named Jacob. Jacob had twelve sons and Joseph was the second youngest. Jacob always favored Joseph. To show his love for Joseph, Jacob bought a nice coat that had many colors and gave it to Joseph. This made Joseph's brothers jealous of him.

One day Jacob asked Joseph to find his brothers to see how they were doing. When Joseph got to where his brothers were, they weren't happy to see him. His brothers decided to throw him into a pit.

As Joseph's brothers sat in the shade they noticed a slave caravan on its way to Egypt. While the oldest brother, Reuben, was away, the other brothers decided to sell Joseph for twenty pieces of silver. Joseph was sad and scared, but he didn't complain about his situation. He decided he would honor God wherever he was.



Joseph was bought by a man named Potiphar. He really liked Joseph. Unfortunately, Potiphar's wife did too. One day Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to lie down with her, but Joseph refused. Potiphar's wife kept it up until one day just Joseph and she were in the house. She asked him again. Joseph refused; she held on to his garment, but Joseph left his garment in her hands and ran away. Joseph was thrown into a dungeon. He was very sad, but Joseph still had hope God would work everything out for him.

One day Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, called for Joseph to interpret the ruler's dream. The next day, Joseph went to the palace and told Pharaoh the meaning of his dream. Pharaoh put Joseph as second in command over all of Egypt. Sometimes we may feel like we are in a dark situation, but if we trust God and let Him come into our hearts, He can help us do great things.

Pictures of Small Cloud, beginning in its infancy, were presented as a slideshow. At each anniversary we just have to marvel again at the providence of God and say: "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." - Psalm 126:3.

Mrs. Seely then commented about one picture: "This last picture is of a very special man. His name was Albert Schendel. He was Sandra Nelson's grandfather, and this barn belonged to him. He offered it to us as a place to start this school. We thought it might be a burden for him to have children running around on his property. But it turned out that he enjoyed the life and energy the children brought him. We provide breakfast and lunch for our students here. Back then, one child would take 'Grandpa,' as we all called him, his meals every day.

"Grandpa had a favorite song. It was 'Amazing Grace.' We sang it to him on his birthdays. When he was hospitalized, one of our students recommended we take a field trip to go visit Grandpa. The students all gathered around his bed and sang for him again. As their sweet voices rang through his hospital room, his eyes glistened and a big smile spread across his face. 'Thank you! Thank you!' he said with his thick German accent. Finally Grandpa's days came to an end. At his funeral, the students gathered before his coffin and sang 'Amazing Grace' one last time.

"But traditions are not easy to break. Even though Grandpa is gone, we treasure the memories we made with him. Each year, on the anniversary of the school's beginning, we sing 'Amazing Grace' in honor of the man who so graciously allowed us to start a school in his barn. We look forward to the day when we will be able to sing it with him in heaven." Everyone joined in singing this beautiful hymn.



Andie Seely then presented her speech about the most important person of all—Jesus Christ.

JESUS AT GOLGOTHA

by Andriana Seely, age 15

In the life of Christ we find hope. Jesus left the perfection of heaven to come to earth as a baby, live a perfect life, and then die a humiliating death. Why did He do this? Jesus loves us so much that He sacrificed all for our salvation. From His birth, Jesus was in danger.

King Herod killed all the baby boys in hopes of destroying the future king of the Jews. His parents fled to Egypt as directed by an angel. Life for Jesus was not easy. At the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus clung to the hope His sacrifice would be accepted by His Father. Jesus prayed many times to receive strength.

While they were there His disciples fell asleep, so Jesus continued to pray by Himself. Jesus knew He was going to die a horrible death, so He pleaded with His Father for strength and acceptance.

Jesus wept and sweated blood. He was scared. Was He going to make it? Was He going to save this world?

Soon He heard the soldiers' feet. Judas came and kissed Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "Is it with a kiss you betray me?" The soldiers took Jesus away. He had been betrayed by His friend. Jesus was whipped, spat on, hit, and tormented. He carried the cross with a crown of thorns on his head. Why did He do this? He had the hope of bringing us all to live with Him for eternity. He became so weak He couldn't carry the cross anymore. The soldiers made someone else carry the cross instead. At Golgotha they nailed him to the cross. He suffered and died of a broken heart. Yet He died knowing it was finished. The hope of salvation was His sacrifice, and it would be enough. He paid the price for all humanity to receive eternal life. He fulfilled all of man's hopes.



"Soon and Very Soon" was the last hymn sung by the students. Mrs. Seely expressed the hope that we will see Jesus soon. "He has promised to return. We want to be ready on that day!" The audience was invited to join the students in singing the last stanza of the hymn.

Mr. Albert Becker, who prepares breakfast and lunch for the students each day, prepared delicious refreshments for this event. Thank you, Mr. Becker! ■

