



# Love Thy Neighbor Ministries

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## Blessed Reunions

by Steve Kacprzak

Over the past few weeks area nursing homes have been reopening to in-person visits. And we've been blessed with the opportunity to visit with folks that we haven't seen in over a year. So many residents have expressed to me the joy and excitement they are feeling in having outside visitors again. So, this is a call to volunteers who were visiting before the pandemic and would like to reunite with a special friend, and to those who would like to begin visiting and meet a new special friend. Please call us at 520-906-5842 for more information.

We're also excited to announce that the Good Neighbor Get Together events will be restarting, beginning on May 20th and continuing the third Thursday of every month. We're looking forward to reuniting with the guests who were part of the program before the pandemic.

The Good Neighbor Get Together (GNGT) was originally designed as a program to renew a weary at-home caregiver by providing them with a period of respite, a time away for family caregivers through an activity program prepared for their loved ones who had Alzheimer's disease. The Get Together was active at Vistoso Community Church for three years until the Covid-19 pandemic forced its closure in March of last year.

But for the new program we will be opening participation to anyone who needs a time away from home. Each GNGT event consists of a time of fellowship, built around fun activities (good exercise), games and music. The event will operate from 10 am to noon on the third Thursday of each month beginning May 20<sup>th</sup>. A pre-packaged snack and a beverage will be served.

All guests and volunteers must have completed Covid-19 vaccinations. Social distancing will be maintained for each event.

Because of the continuing social distancing requirements the size of the event will be limited. If you or someone you know would benefit from this program and would like to attend or if you would simply like more information please call Virginia Kacprzak at 520-203-6519. Come join us!



## Reunion with Charlotte

by Charlene Van Pelt

March 23, 2021, was a remarkable day that began in a usual way. Since the April devotional from Vistoso Community Church was ready, my plan was to drop it off for Charlotte in her assisted living community in Tucson, as was my monthly habit in 2020. The last time Charlotte and I had been face-to-face was March 6, 2020 – a little over a year.

This usual day became remarkable when the Patient Care Coordinator answered the door bell. When I handed Lupita the booklet with my request to give it to Charlotte, she asked, "Would you like to give it to her yourself?" Lupita could not see my jaw drop behind my face mask,

**Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39.**

but she did hear my exclamation: "Are you kidding? Yes! Of course, I'd love to give it to Charlotte!" Lupita then took my temperature, sanitized my hands, had me fill out a questionnaire about COVID symptoms and instructed me not to speak to any residents on the way to Charlotte's room.

My knock on the door surprised her too, beginning squeals of laughter that were heard down the hall. We hugged tightly, and Charlotte cried tears of joy. "You're my first visitor! Even my daughter hasn't visited me yet!"

The reunion of two Christian friends was one of overflowing joy. In a moment the year-long separation dissolved. We prayed, giving thanks to our wonderful Lord for arranging this meeting. We began to reminisce, and I learned more about Charlotte's walk with the Lord. We had met in 2018 when Charlotte first moved in and began attending the weekly Bible Study that I facilitated through Love Thy Neighbor Ministries. A life-long Christian, Charlotte was always enthusiastic about the Lord, His Word and her love for Him. Her joy was contagious to the group and she was a tremendous encourager to me, a new Bible teacher.



Charlotte

Charlotte and her family attended a non-denominational church in Weaver, CA. At the age of five she became His. "I knew then and there that I was His and I've never lost that experience." She loved to sing the hymns and joined the choir. "When I couldn't remember the words. I just made up my own!" Even as a child, Charlotte loved the Bible. "I was hooked on the Book! I love the Bible anytime," she said to me.

Charlotte, who is 93, has been widowed twice. Her first husband was a firefighter in Williams, Oregon. "I prayed every night that the Lord would keep him safe. And He did." They had a long and happy Christian marriage, with two beloved children who were raised to know the Lord. They had a five-acre sheep ranch with one registered buck and seven ewes. She learned to shear the wool and then spin it. She said that she loved to spin the wool, and that it was like a long prayer to the Lord. It always gave her a deep sense of peace in the Good Shepherd. When a Jewish family purchased a lamb for Passover, she began reading the Old Testament, where she learned the history of the Passover feast. It was then she deeply understood the title of Jesus as the Lamb of God and the significance of His substitutionary sacrifice.



At the villa in which she lives at the assisted living facility, Charlotte is the Librarian as well as the Ambassador for new residents, whom she helps during their settling-in period.

Throughout 2020 her daughter visited by sitting outside her patio door and talking on the phone daily. "I really didn't suffer in 2020 because I had the Lord. He has always kept me.

Charlotte is a living testament to a life well lived, "in love with Jesus Christ." The joy of the Lord is "her" strength. *Nehemiah 8:10.*

*Charlene Van Pelt is a long-time volunteer, visiting and facilitating Bible Studies at several long-term care facilities and serving at Good Neighbor Get Together events. She also serves on the Board of Directors of Love Thy Neighbor Ministries.*

### Memorials gifts received

#### In Memory of Ken Budd

From Steve & Virginia Kacprzak

#### In Memory of Ken Kunkle

From Judith & Frederick Jabara  
Fromy Steve & Virginia Kacprzak



Love Thy Neighbor Ministries has partnered with PMHDC Southwest Medical Aid. Through that partnership we are able to secure a variety of medical equipment and supplies, free of charge, for residents and others who cannot afford them.