

# Lives of Fragrance

2 Corinthians 4:14-17

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## What's New

September

Women's Bible studies begin in September; find information and register online at [tulsabible.org](http://tulsabible.org).

September 12–13<sup>th</sup>

TBC Women's Fall Retreat

September 28<sup>th</sup>

Missions Sunday

December 6<sup>th</sup>

TBC Women's Christmas Tea

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## Missions Emphasis

Tulsa Bible Church continues to obey Christ's command to go into all the world to preach the Gospel and to make disciples of every nation. For over 70 years, TBC has sent missionaries not only to Tulsa, Oklahoma, but to nations around the globe to preach the truth of the Gospel and to be disciple-makers. TBC's Missions Emphasis Sunday is on September 28th. Two of TBC's missionaries share some of the ways in which God has led them throughout their ministry.

Tom and April Graney serve at New Life Ranch, which has grown and expanded since its beginning in 1959, and which continues to proclaim the Gospel and to equip believers for ministry. Tom and April have deep roots at TBC, as you will read in April's article.

### April Graney

Tom and I love coming home to Tulsa Bible Church. TBC has been our training ground, our family, our community and support for our 30 years of marriage. When I was a baby in the mid-1970's, my parents, Travis and Marlene Jones, brought me to TBC. My young faith was nurtured and formed in the pews of the old church building on 51st street. I was a "junior high" kid my entire growing-up years as my parents served in the junior high Sunday school classroom for over 35 years.

When I began dating Tom in college, since his family didn't have a home church, Tom started attending with us. Ours was the first wedding that John Barnett performed at TBC in 1995. After a year of marriage, when we weren't sure where the Lord was leading us, the elders of TBC encouraged us to attend Dallas Theological Seminary, and sent us off with a blessing and financial gift.

Upon graduation, the Lord called us to New Life Ranch, where TBC enthusiastically supported us as missionaries. After 7 years at NLR, we were feeling led towards church ministry, and TBC called Tom to be the youth pastor. Serving at TBC allowed us to deepen and form many new relationships with the church body. In 2010, the Lord called us back to NLR, and TBC has supported, encouraged, and partnered with us again for the last 15 years. During most of that time, I was at home raising and educating our kids, while Tom served in various roles: summer camp and retreats manager, program director, guest services director, and currently, CEO.

My dream has always been to use my gifts of writing to help further the kingdom of God in the hearts of his people and the world. In 2017, after the Lord opened many doors I never could have done myself, my first children's book, *The Marvelous Mud House*, was published. In 2020, God again performed a miracle, and *The Marvelous Maker* released. This past summer, *If Jesus Came to My School*, released and is encouraging kids everywhere to shine the love and light of Jesus in our schools. I've been able to begin speaking at schools, retreats, and at camp. I owe a lot of my confidence and ability to speak in front of a group to my experience singing solos as a young girl in church at TBC, and the solid foundation in the faith I received at Tulsa Bible Church and Dallas Seminary. Tom and I are both incredibly thankful for the support and partnership that Tulsa Bible Church has been to our family over my lifetime and our 30 years of marriage. Thank you for being faithful and spreading the good news of the gospel in Tulsa and around the world as an example to me and encouragement for my entire life.

Jim and Lynn Kessler serve with Cru in the Faculty Commons ministry at OSU and OU. The Faculty Commons ministry seeks to encourage and connect Christian professors as they live out their faith on the college campus.

## Lynn Kessler

Lately God has been impressing me that His plan is for a lifetime. These are three quick snapshots.

Last month I was at a Cru conference where I reconnected with old mentors and friends. Some I'd known since my college days, others I served with in Eastern Europe, and some were now using walkers. My heart filled with emotion as we sang of God's faithfulness and worshipped Him together. Forty-five years ago, the Lord called me to serve Him. He has consistently led, provided, and protected Jim and me our whole lives. What a privilege!

Then, last week I found myself with 18 OSU professors serving 400 hamburgers and a whole roasted hog to 700 new freshmen. Sweltering heat, volleyball, and free food. What could be better? We joined the Cru undergraduate campus ministry in serving hamburgers and barbeque sandwiches to new freshmen during move-in day and the first day of classes. Students met new friends, heard about new Bible studies and saw OSU faculty members identifying as believers. Several students recognized their professors and thanked them. Who knows? One day some of these freshmen may be the mentors using walkers.

Last, let me rewind 3 years and share about my mother. She was NOT happy when her doctors said she could no longer live at home but needed to be in an assisted living facility. Little did she know that the Lord had a new and very dear friendship waiting for her. Polly, 98, befriended and loved my mother. They ate and laughed together; Polly shared her devotionals and prayed with Mother. Gradually Mother's love for the Lord rekindled. I saw a new countenance on her face and joy in her heart. God transformed my mother through this relationship, and I realized He is faithful and has a plan to the very end.

The Lord is still in the business of seeking and saving the lost. He invites us into His harvest, regardless of our age or station. We are co-laborers with Him for life!

## Lord of the Harvest

Karen Krueger

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together." (John 4:34-36, ESV) Let us follow Christ in His compassion for all, being joyously compelled by the love of Christ to share the Gospel with those who are without hope.

C.H. Spurgeon eloquently stated, "Of all creatures under heaven, the most precious thing to God is man. He cares nothing for gems of the mine or pearls of the sea, but men he values so much that he gave his only-begotten Son to bleed and die that they might not perish, but have everlasting life. The souls of the multitude are precious in the sight of the Lord, even as corn is precious to the husbandman" (Spurgeon, 1873).

## Recipes

Charlotte and her husband, Hal, recently retired from Family Life, a Cru ministry, which seeks to strengthen marriages and families. Charlotte and Hal continue to serve at TBC and to show hospitality to friends, family, and their neighborhood, making connections and serving with love. Charlotte shares two recipes which have been favorites over the years.

### Poppy Seed Chicken

- Poppy Seed Chicken
- 2 ½ lb. cooked chicken, chopped
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 1 can (4-oz) sliced mushrooms, drained (opt)
- 1 ½ c. crushed Ritz crackers (1 sleeve + more)
- ¼ c. margarine (or butter), melted
- 1 Tbsp poppy seeds

Put chicken in bottom of casserole pan. Mix soup, mushrooms, and sour cream. Spread over chicken. Mix margarine, poppy seeds, and cracker crumbs together. Sprinkle over chicken and soup mixture. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

### Cream Cheese Party Cupcakes

- 3 (8-oz.) packages of cream cheese, softened
- 1 c. sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 8-oz. carton sour cream
- ¼ c. sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- Strawberry preserves

Beat cream cheese in a large mixing bowl until soft and creamy. Gradually add 1 c. sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in 1 ½ tsp vanilla. Spoon batter into paper-lined miniature muffin pans, filling 2/3 full. Bake at 300° for 30 min. Combine sour cream, ¼ c. sugar, & ½ tsp vanilla, stirring well. Spoon ¼ tsp of sour cream mixture into each cupcake; top with a small amount of strawberry preserves in the center of sour cream mixture. Return cupcakes to oven; continue baking 5 min. Yield: about 6 dozen cupcakes.

## Fun Missionary Fact

The Apostle Paul traveled more than 10,000 miles on his missionary journeys!

**Lives of Fragrance** is a publication of the Women's Ministries of Tulsa Bible Church. For corrections, comments, or written contributions, please email [fnewsandviews@gmail.com](mailto:fnewsandviews@gmail.com).

**Editor/Contributor:** Karen Krueger

**Contributors:** Charlotte Driver, April Graney, Lynn Kessler.

**Editors/Design:** Lydia Strobe & CTS