



## Loved Well by Carol Landis

“Above all, love each other deeply...” (1 Peter 4:8)

A number of years ago, blinded by grief and deep disappointment, anger at God established a stronghold. This was my first major crisis of faith. While the danger to remain stuck was strong, I had someone in my life, a sister in Christ, who loved me well.

Those who've been in small group settings with me may have heard parts of this story, but please keep reading, because recently a new lesson emerged from this life-changing experience. As a young wife and mother, my father's terminal brain tumor diagnosis, sent seizure-like waves through my foundation with God. I wrestled with thoughts that eventually I verbalized: Either God didn't truly love me, or He wasn't all powerful. It could not be both. No, I didn't mirror David in Psalms. These feelings, a friend shared many years later, made her want to move away from me, for she feared God would strike me dead.

She didn't try to fix, correct, or defend God.

She simply asked: “Can I pray that you don't stay here?”

(Miriam Nyce)

There are other stories within the story of God lovingly drawing me back to Himself, but this woman's role was central. My friend, who'd experienced more than her share of heartache, had been part of our small group from church. She represented Jesus, “with skin on,” calling to check in, and then verbally praying for me. She wasn't blown away by my grief, or anger at God, rather the presence of the Holy Spirit oozed out of her. Her standard reply was: “I'm sorry.” After a while she'd ask, “Can I pray that you don't stay here?” Then she'd wait for my response. After a pause, I'd whisper, “yes.” And so, she did. She could have quoted Scripture. The only time I remember was Job 13:15: “though He slay me; yet I will trust in him.” She could have stopped calling; I certainly wasn't remorseful. She could have asked the pastors to do so. But she didn't. No, she called, and asked, and prayed for me, and with me. Weekly. Lovingly and faithfully, she prayed that I wouldn't stay there. And I didn't. I was loved well. What a gift.

*Lord, please anchor me in Your love and help me remain in sync with Your Spirit, so that I love with passion, humility, and compassion. I desire to be embodied with Your grace & truth so that I encourage healing and rest in You to those You place in my life.*

# May 2022



WOMEN'S MINISTRY MISSION STATEMENT: Encouraging women to connect in deeper, genuine relationships both with each other and with Jesus Christ.



# Making Connections

My name is **Lori Menzies**, and I am the wife of David Menzies. We have 4 daughters - Isabella, Arianna, Emelina, and Liliana - and one adorable little grandson who will be three in June. I grew up in New York City with a strong Italian influence, my grandparents on both sides being immigrants from Italy. As a child, I was very close to my grandparents and admired their strong faith but had no concept of ever making it my own. My immediate home life was chaotic and my parents did not know the Lord. But God instilled in me a strong yearning for children of my own. Motherhood would ultimately have a profound influence on my faith.



I met David after graduating from college. He had only just arrived in America after a brief period in England working for a pharmaceutical company. Born and raised in Sydney, Australia, David was eager to make his fortune and return home. But God had other plans for him. We got married in 1993 and started a family. Life was good with three daughters yet our family was incomplete. God was calling me again into a very special form of parenting - adoption. We got our paperwork together and sent it to Beijing, China in August 2008, interestingly at the same time that our baby girl would be awaiting life-saving surgery in Beijing. We did not know of Liliana at that time. Her name was Cao Chun Li and she had been born just a few months earlier in Southern China with a severe cleft lip and palate. At 2 ½ months of age, she was found at the gate of a hospital and taken to the nearby orphanage where she resided until becoming a part of our forever family in 2010.

Though Liliana's cleft had been repaired in China, she had no speech ability as well as poor motor skills and needed a lot of intervention for the first several years. But it was the community of people I met in the adoption world through which I came to intimately know God's heart. These were families like ours who had adopted children from overseas, not with moderate special needs but with serious medical conditions, in fact listed as "terminal". Yet they possessed a hope that could only come from God and firmly believed their efforts were all for His glory, no matter the outcome. In addition, motherhood itself has given me witness to God's unending grace. Yes, there are certainly many challenges in raising 4 daughters. But our daughters have also each uniquely demonstrated their own passionate pursuit of the less fortunate around the world. I have learned from them as much as they from me.

In December of 2019, our family walked into Franconia Mennonite Church for the first time, and I was warmly welcomed into the hands of a loving congregation that has become my extended family. With their encouragement, I received the precious gift of baptism at Branch Creek in May of 2021. One of my favorite verses is from Psalm 143:8, "Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life." As a believer, I will endlessly delight in God's love for me and cherish His spirit renewing me each and every day.



# What's Happening for Women



## You are invited to a *Ladies' Spring Tea*

Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

9:00-11:00 am

Upper Fellowship Hall

The morning will include breakfast, special music, and speaker Deb Rotelle, who will share about her ministry, Living Streams Ranch, and finding freedom through the power of forgiveness and receiving God's grace.

Cost: \$10 donation

\*We will also be collecting nonperishable items for Keystone Opportunity Center as a way of blessing families in our community.

Please **SIGN UP** at the Women's Ministry table in the foyer, or [franconiawomen@gmail.com](mailto:franconiawomen@gmail.com) by May 15<sup>th</sup>

All are welcome; we look forward to a morning of fellowship and encouragement with our sisters in Christ!



Do you enjoy fresh air, exercise, and good conversation? Come join us for a

## Walk in the Park

at Franconia Park  
Tuesday, May 10  
7:00 pm

All are welcome; walk however long you like!

## Mommy & Me

Tuesday,  
May 17  
11:00 am  
Church  
Playground



## Save the Date!

Walks in the Park –  
June 7 & 23, July 7,  
August 4 & 16

Freddy Hill Mini Golf &  
Ice Cream – July 13

# May 2022

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Philippians study 7pm	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Sewing Circle 8am-4pm Walk in the Park 7pm Prayer Shawl Min 7pm Philippians study 7pm	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Philippians study 7pm	18	19	20	21 Ladies Tea 9-11am 
22	23	24 Philippians study 7pm	25	26	27	28
29	30					

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**THE SPICE**