

# The Blessing Box: Living with Gratitude

For more than 50 years, the women of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have had a special way to express their gratitude to God for the blessings they have received - the Blessing Box. It was created in 1953, the result of a dream of the women who founded Christian Women's Fellowship. Jessie Trout, who was CWF's co-founder and first executive secretary, developed the idea as an over-and-above way to

help fund the wider mission of the church.

Since that time, Blessing Boxes have been kept in the homes and offices of women across the church to enable them to express their gratitude for everyday blessing by giving to others. Thanks is given for a sunny day, a birth, a welcome phone call, a child's smile, a beautiful snow fall, a flower, relief from pain, a safe journey and many other things.

For those who participate, it is a spiritual disci-

pline even more than a financial one. The amount put in may be a dime, a quarter or more. The amount is not nearly as important as the discipline of regularly remembering God's goodness.

From 1999 to Spring 2009, Blessing Boxes have contributed a total of \$2,663,882 for the mission of the church, with \$322,814 of that going to support women's ministries.

Our women will take our gifts to the Women's Retreat in Gonzales in September. There will be a blessing box at the foot of the cross in the sanctuary for those who wish to celebrate their blessings!

*Rudy Shepherd*



## Blessing Box testimonies: Showers of blessings

I have been blessed by God all my life. He blessed me with Godly parents and grandparents. I was blessed with a husband for 49 years and two children and three grandchildren who either call or come by to check on me every day. I had a special blessing this week when I was able to go to a golf tournament and see my grandson win second place.

God has blessed me with good health. He has blessed me with a loving and caring pastor and church family who give me strength and encouragement every week.

My mother taught me at an early age, we have only today. Yesterday is not reclaimable, tomorrow is not ours to presume upon. All of us are blessed every day if we catch a glimpse of God's creation and his gifts in whatever form they may take. If we stop to pet a puppy, view a garden, enjoy a favorite flavor, hear a friendly voice, smell a warm meal, or enjoy life in any sense today, we have succeeded in living in the present and receiving God's blessings.

*Betty Hardin*

When I was asked to write a letter about one blessing it was hard to choose because I am so blessed, Praise God. I finally chose the Holy Spirit. God, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one and the source of all my blessings.

Jesus promised in John 14:16-26 that he would send the Holy Spirit and that he would live in us. The Holy Spirit is my door into the holy of holies. I have to go through that door for God to be manifested in my life.

Isaiah 40:31 says but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles. Eagles wait for the wind and when the wind comes they are carried to great heights. The Holy Spirit is my wind.

My prayer is that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the Holy Spirit be with you always.

Your sister in Christ,

*Dottie Moore*

## Women's Link Sample Supper: Food, Fellowship and Fun

**An invitation to all of the Women of First Christian Church:**

A storytelling preacher and Christian educator will touch our souls with stories on Sunday, October 25, at our October Women's Link meeting and Sample Supper, which begins at 5 p.m.

Her stories will make you laugh, make you cry and sometimes send goose bumps up your spine. Who is this? It's Vanessa Potter, storyteller, Christian educator and minister who is currently in ministry at Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly in Hunt as

its Director of Human Resources and Volunteer Ministries.

Throughout her ministry Vanessa Potter has told stories to touch the souls of others so that they are encouraged, inspired, hopeful, consoled and taught. She was mentored by one of our own Disciples of Christ, Dr. Fred Craddock, who was her first preaching professor in seminary. She'll be telling some of her tales as we gather for our October women's meeting with supper. Vanessa has her Bachelor's degree from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas, a Masters of Religious Education from the Presbyterian

School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia and a Masters of Divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.

Bring a friend for an evening of fun, to build community and to reflect on our faith through Vanessa's stories, and expect your soul to be touched. This Women's Link meeting will also be a sample supper, where we will sample the food that will be sold at our Buttons and Bows Bazaar on November 13. Child care will be provided, and all ages of Christian women are welcome to attend!