



# The SHARinG Org

JANUARY 2004

Dear Prayer Partners,

The close of December marks the end of our first four months of ministry to the nursing home residents. We thank each and every one of you for your faithful support and encouragement as we consider the start of this ministry to be a huge success.

Not only have we been able to provide Sunday morning services to a group of Christians who are not able to worship at a traditional Church on Sunday mornings, we were also able to pass on a donated computer to a college student who was in need and a donated car to a single mother who was in need of reliable transportation. Last month we asked you to pray that the Lord would grant us the ability to fix up a donated car and give it to a single mother, and he has answered that prayer. We were actually given two cars for this purpose and our mechanic suggested that only one of the cars was mechanically sound enough to give to a single mother. So he worked on the better vehicle and had it ready in time for Christmas. When it was time to settle up our account we learned that we were only charged for the parts as he donated his labor and garage fees. Praise God for an honest and generous mechanic! Although these are small accomplishments we are prayerful that they will lead to further missionary efforts in our community to share the grace of Christ to the lost.

One thing that is immediately new this January is that we have created a formal prayer letter that will be mailed to all of the prayer partners we have mailing addresses for. We realized that some of our prayer partners were not getting the prayer letters because they do not have computers or e-mail, so we wanted to distribute a format of the letter that reached all of our partners. Those of you that have received the letter via the mail will have also received some of our new pens. Please keep one and pass some out to your friends and family. If you did not receive a letter with pens, please e-mail me with your mailing address and I will be happy to put you on the mailing list and get some pens out to you.

As you know I like to share a story from the previous month's experiences at the nursing home. This month's story is very touching but it is longer than can be included in this letter. It involves me doing a visitation to an elderly lady named Elizabeth and how I was able to comfort her through a time of prayer. If you have the paper version of this letter, the story is printed on the back. Those of you who received the e-mail version of our letter can read the story under **HIGHLIGHT** on our website - [www.thesharing.org](http://www.thesharing.org).

In this coming month please continue to pray that the Lord will provide families with children who will be willing to volunteer once a month by joining us in serving at the nursing home for Sunday morning services. The residents love the interaction with children, and through this interaction they are more likely to feel and hear the love of Christ.

Remember that the invite to visit and worship with us is always open to each of you—just let us know beforehand so that we can make sure to have extra food for lunch! We appreciate and love all of you and look forward to how the Lord will use us together to comfort the folks in the nursing home with the love of our Savior.

God bless,  
John Rock on behalf of The SHARinG Org Team

(John, Megan, Brad, & Melissa)

[www.thesharing.org](http://www.thesharing.org)

The following is an excerpt from a correspondence from John to his mentor...

After our third service this morning, one of the ladies who attends faithfully every week called me over and told me about a woman who has been praying for God to send her a minister. I was told that the woman prayed twenty minutes for this every night before bed for the past few nights. So I was asked to go see her - the name of the woman is Gertie\*. So Megan and Melissa left for home and Brad and I set out to meet with Gertie. I was quite excited that I was doing my first real visitation and calling on someone. I loved the idea of the opportunity of assisting a dear elderly lady to become secure in her faith in Christ. As Brad and I walked down the hall I imagined going home to Megan and announcing how God had used me to do a great work for the kingdom today and how if only for the soul of this one elderly lady by the name of Gertie that all efforts were worth it. The head nurse took us into Gertie's room, and when Gertie noticed my collar she instantly brightened up and sheer joy sparkled in her eyes. The nurse left and I knelt down and held Gertie's hand as she pulled me to her. She put her forehead against mine and we embraced as dear old friends and she told me how glad she was that I had come. I knew that Brad and I were the answer to her prayers and our meeting was nothing short of divine intervention and that we were a part of a God thing.

When Gertie began talking she told me that she was trying to keep the babies dry. When she could tell that I was not sure what she meant, she pointed out her "babies" - stuffed bears and animals that were scattered everywhere. She continued to explain how she has been working feverishly to keep the babies dry and that she was not able to do the job successfully. The problem was, as she saw it, that the girls (nurses) would not help her and she could not figure out why they wouldn't help her. In fact, she explained, the girls simply stood by and laughed at her. She questioned again why the girls were being so mean as to not help her. It was at this moment that I realized that I had to do something, anything to help this dear woman. I thought about going to the nursing staff and scolding them for not helping this woman keep her babies dry. Then I thought better of it. So I did the only thing a competent pastor could do - I offered to pray that God would help her keep her babies dry and that God would take care of her babies. Gertie eagerly accepted my offer. My words had all the pomp and loftiness of anyone who had just two days earlier received his Bachelor of Science in Biblical Studies degree. As I petitioned God to keep some stuffed animals dry and to assist and comfort Gertie in the process, I felt a pride well up in my soul that told me that I was praying the most important prayer of my day, and when I had finished I knew that it had been.

As Brad and I walked out of the nursing home toward my car I could not keep the smile off my face when Brad told me in a half-joking, half-serious tone that he is not so sure that he could have seriously prayed for some stuffed animals. My comment back to him was that the best thing we can do in this ministry is to check our theology at the door. Gertie did not need an explanation of how her stuffed animals were not real, how she needed to repent and get right with God, or even to be cajoled into repeating the sinner's prayer after me. What she needed was to feel the comfort of the Living God who loves her enough to care for her and her babies.

I am impressed with what God is doing to me in this ministry. I am starting to see things differently than I have ever seen them. I am seeing the grace of our Lord in a way that is far more elevated than the results of my best theological abilities. This nursing home is my Church, and as I write this my nose and eyes feel the pressure of emotions rising. Today they gave me a graduation card that all the residents had signed, and as I opened it and saw all the names on the inside scratched out by arthritic hands too weak to properly hold a pen, I realized that I loved these people and that I have developed a compassion for them that I did not think that I would have when I first began. What is really interesting is that I am finding that my appreciation for God is increasing because He is caring for these people that I am becoming very passionate about.

\*Names have been changed to protect privacy.