Discover how to have a close, loving, vibrant family!

Forever Family

Winter 2011 - Volume 3, Issue 4

A Mother’s True Confidence

Between Blessings

Safe Within His Hand
Dear Reader,

It is hard to believe that this is the last issue of Forever a Family magazine for 2011, concluding three full years of publication. It has been a delight to see interest in the magazine continue to grow and to hear how much people are enjoying each new issue. We are especially happy to hear how many are finding encouragement in the simple articles offering practical ways to grow in our relationships.

The Forever a Family staff is excited to share with you our plan to add a new section on health beginning with the Spring 2012 issue. This section will replace the Developing Character series that has been a part of the magazine since its beginning.

If you are new to receiving the magazine, you may find all previous issues online at www.foreverafamily.com or www.restoration-international.org.
We welcome any comments you may have on the magazine. Please let us know what has especially blessed you and how you have used the magazine as a sharing tool. We look forward to hearing from you and doing what we can to help meet the needs of our readers.

Alane Waters
Editor

“Pause & Ponder

“How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a weary world.”
William Shakespeare

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
Matthew 5:16

Have you been blessed by Forever a Family?
Drop us a note—we would love to hear from you!

California
Thank you so much for your little magazine. I read it from cover to cover and then share it!

Oregon
I really enjoyed the last “Forever A Family.” I especially enjoyed the article, “On The Road Again.” I really identified with it. The text from Isaiah 54:5 has been mine too, for a long time!

Georgia
I enjoy your beautiful Forever a Family magazine very much.

Michigan
I believe my women’s Bible study group would really enjoy your magazine as much as I do. I am very grateful that you send them to me. Thank you!

Pennsylvania
Thank you for your interesting magazine.

FROM THE
MAILBOX

www.foreverafamily.com • Winter 2011
My heart thrilled with the anticipation of being a mother!
I looked forward to raising a kind, noble, godly man, bravely facing the challenges of such a wonderful responsibility and opportunity as motherhood. I felt confident I would find all the answers needed in raising our son, as I followed the One who entrusted him to our care.

Of course, there is much more to learning than just knowledge; there must also be experience on a practical level. When our son arrived, our precious training as parents really began. New to this role, I could not have anticipated every challenge we faced. Through the eyes of my ever-learning child, I began to see my own inconsistencies. I saw my character defects reflected in him. I learned of his sinful heart. I also found that I was not able to guard him from all the dangers that I wished.

It is easy to get discouraged when we meet the inevitable challenges of parenting. Satan tempts us to feel alone, that we’ve failed, that it’s too hard, or that there’s no need to put so much effort and carefulness into parenting. He even offers wrong solutions for our problems. Negative thoughts keep us focused on our failings and earthly solutions. When we turn to Jesus, light shines through these dark clouds.

Jesus loves mothers. We can still come to Him today, bringing our children to be blessed. When I don’t have answers, I go to God in prayer and study. He guides me to principles and answers that I need, and they work! As I see the Holy Spirit changing my own heart, I gain even more courage as a mother. I’ve also learned that when He brings an issue to my attention, even though it seems it will be hard to deal with, it is rarely, if ever, as challenging as I think it will be. As my son grows, I’ve been able to explain when I’ve made mistakes and where I want to do better. He is so loving, forgiving, and amenable to change. The other encouragement that God gives me is showing me the areas where we have done well, beginning to bear fruit. What a thrill to a mother’s heart! I find that I can walk forward with confidence as I follow Jesus.

Hope is a homemaker who lives in Indiana with her husband, Dale, and their two children.
Kindness

We live in a society where self-centeredness and selfishness are on the rise, leading to misunderstandings, pain, frustration, aggression, and destroyed families. There is a simple scriptural principle that most of us are familiar with—“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” or “Treat others as you want them to treat you.” This principle is known as the “Golden Rule” and is taken from Matthew 7:12.

Our family once read a story about a young girl who heard about the Golden Rule in a sermon and decided she would apply it in her own unhappy family. The results were phenomenal! Everyone began to respond to her words and acts of kindness and in time peace and happiness reigned in the home. We have experienced the same thing in our home and have found it only takes one person to ignite the change.

Following are a few ways we can make our homes happier places.

• Determine to speak words of kindness to everyone in your family. Be the one to initiate. Don’t be discouraged if you encounter skepticism. Persevere and change will happen.

• Show at least one act of kindness to every member of your family each day. This may mean helping your wife carry in the groceries or helping your brother with his homework. Often it is the simple things that have the most profound result. You will find that the one act of kindness shown will grow into more acts of kindness every day.

• If you can’t think of what to say or do, God has limitless ideas. If you go to Him in prayer He will bring these ideas to your mind as you cooperate with Him in applying the Golden Rule.

• Don’t give up! Things will change! It takes time to change the climate of a home, but in time the storms will lift and the sun will shine. Be encouraged by the little changes and continue to shower kind words and deeds on those around you.

Alane is a co-founder of Restoration International and lives in Montana with her husband, Tom.
Savings are not always realized in the upfront cost of an item. When my wife and I married we saved our money to purchase a bread machine that would enable her to make four large loaves of bread at a time. The cost of the machine was significant, but the savings of making our own bread as compared to purchasing bread were greater. These savings were realized in the long term. This only works, however, if the item is put to use. We also purchased a sewing machine with the intention of making our own curtains. This did not happen and the potential “savings” were lost. Nevertheless, we have since used the sewing machine for many other things, redeeming that loss.

When I look for tools for my finish carpentry work there are a few things I consider. How much will I use the tool? If needed, what will it cost to repair the tool? How long will the tool last? If the tool will be a primary use tool, I purchase a high quality brand. If the tool is a secondary tool that will be used as a backup or only occasionally by a helper, I will purchase a less expensive, off brand.

Utilizing the Internet, I am able to price parts for the tool in question. I had one tool that needed repair and found it was less expensive to purchase a new tool. Some high quality tools have high priced parts to go with them and others are more reasonable. I opt for the more reasonable parts replacement brands. There are times when I need a tool but the high quality tool does not last significantly longer than the off-brand, lower priced tool. When I can purchase two off-brands for less than the one high quality brand, and the two will cumulatively outlast the one high quality brand, I will purchase the off-brand.

There is more to stretching the dollar than the out-of-pocket cost. Will the tool, or any other item you may be considering, be a cost and time saver in the long run? God is fully able to bless anything and He has promised to give us wisdom if we ask. We should use that wisdom to the glory of God and seek for savings whenever possible.

Mike is a finish carpenter who lives in Nebraska with his wife, Diane, and their two youngest children.
A Time to Pray

On Sunday afternoons, I usually connect with my good friend, Linda. Over time I began to notice that at the end of every conversation she would mention that she always prays for me on Sunday. She said that she prays alphabetically for each of her friends on different days of the week. I found this to be so encouraging and creative! How many times had I promised to pray for someone or something I felt passionate about only to realize weeks later that I had completely forgotten about the request?

One day the Lord impressed me with an idea similar to my friend in that I should categorize prayer requests and assign them to different days of the week.

On Sundays I pray for the sick and bereaved followed by prayer for single friends on Mondays. Tuesdays find me praying for family and neighbors and then married couples on Wednesday. On Thursdays I pray for those I am witnessing to and those I desire to see saved. My prayers are concentrated on pastors and their families on Fridays, and Saturdays are reserved for praying for ministries and our national government.

I keep a prayer journal that grows weekly, and I look forward to praying for each name and need individually. This routine has given my prayer life substance, and the jolt it so desperately needed. I often ask those on my list how they are doing and let them know that I am praying for them just like my friend Linda did for me.

We are always growing and learning by God’s grace and lest you think I am now a perfect “prayer guru,” let me share that in the midst of my intense commitment to praying for others, I was reminded recently of the importance of praying for my children. Wow! With all this praying, had I forgotten to systematically and intentionally include my children and husband, their needs, weaknesses, and areas of needed growth in my prayers? I have now made it a point before I address my prayer list for others each morning to begin with my children, my husband, and myself. The Lord is so good and I am so thankful that He has taught me about the great need of prayer and creative ways in which to pray.

Lisa works as an RN in New York where she lives with her husband, Alrick, and their two children.
I jumped out of bed, yelling “HEY!” at the top of my voice and charged at the figure in the doorway. He turned and ran down the stairs with me close on his heels. He raced through the living room, dining room, and kitchen and out the garage door. When I got to the door that leads from the garage into the kitchen, I found both it and the outside garage door wide open. “How did that happen?” I wondered. Without thinking, I left the doors open and walked back through the house. Phillip was at the top of the basement stairs. “Dad, they have a gun!” he said. Shocked and dazed, I went back upstairs to check on my wife and call 911.

The person who charged at the intruder was not me! That person had not one bit of fear, hesitation, or concern for his life. Kevin has nagging fears about the simplest things. Kevin had always assumed that he would be completely paralyzed in a sudden emergency. God was the Person who took over at that moment. He kept me from fear and inspired me to get up, yell, and run.

A little earlier Phillip had woken up to a gun in his face and someone yelling, “Don’t move or I’ll kill you!” He slowly realized what was happening and told God that he didn’t want to die. There were two armed robbers in his bedroom. The older one was in charge and poked around until he found Phillip’s wallet, laptop, camera, and iPod. He then told Phillip to come upstairs with him.

The men left Phillip’s things in a bag in his room. It was when they pounded up the stairs from the basement that we were first alerted to something out of the ordinary happening in our home. From the first floor, the younger of the two robbers was sent upstairs to see what he could steal from my wife and me.

When I chased the younger man out, the older one ran out with him, leaving...
the bag of stolen property in the basement. While I was on the phone upstairs, the men came back in, again held a gun on Phillip, and retrieved what they had left behind.

The police arrived in an amazing seven minutes. They took notes and listened carefully. As they left, a very sympathetic officer told me, “We’re sorry, but those people will never be caught. If you think of anything else that we should know, please give us a call.”

After the police left I was inspired to go online and check Phillip’s bank account. I found that something had just been charged at the corner gas station. With this new information, the police went to the store and viewed the film of the transaction. One of the officers said, “I know that guy!” They went straight to his apartment, arrested him, and retrieved most of Phillip’s things before calling to tell me they had apprehended the robbers. What wonderful news!

We eventually pieced together how the robbers had gained access to our home. The evening before we had left our unlocked car parked outside the garage. The thieves were wandering around trying car doors and used the garage door opener that they found inside our car to enter the garage. Once inside the garage they were able to enter our home through the kitchen door which we had also forgotten to lock.

What if, after I chased the robbers out, I had locked the doors that had been left open? They would not have been able to come back and retrieve their loot, including Phillip’s debit card, which was instrumental in their being caught. Despite how thoughtless it was not to lock our doors, it was part of God’s providence that led to their almost immediate arrest. Normally, we were very meticulous about locking things up at night. Even though the car and kitchen door were unlocked, it was that same unlocked kitchen door that led to the thieves’ capture.

Obviously I would rather not have had this experience. However, God brought blessings out of the armed robbery. We praise the Lord that nobody was hurt. Almost all of Phillip’s valuables were returned. The men were arrested very quickly and we were saved from wondering if they were still in the area and if they were going to come back. I experienced first hand the mighty power of God to give me courage and decisiveness in an instant. The Angel of the Lord was definitely at work that morning. Often when tempted, I remember the time that God changed me in a moment.

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We don’t live in a city condo anymore. We now have a farmhouse in the very quiet countryside where our closest neighbors are cows. That’s another story of the blessings of God!

“The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7

Kevin lives in Indiana with his wife and nephew. He teaches college business classes and also has a consulting business.
Seven years ago, when my husband and I were still dating, we made plans for him to come to my apartment for dinner. At this time he was going to school and to my disappointment, he called to tell me how sorry he was, but with his load of homework and studies he wouldn’t be able to make it that evening. Before hanging up, he also told me that I should go look outside my front door. With a glimmer of hope of finding him there, I opened the door. Instead of my dinner date, I found a small stuffed monkey and a card that read, “Sorry I could not be with you tonight. Monkey will have to take my place.”

A year after we were married, we had to be apart for the first time. My husband had to attend training in the States for three weeks which can seem like an eternity to newlyweds! Since I could not go with him, I had the idea to send Monkey. He would “have to take my place.” I generously sprayed Monkey with a perfume I knew my husband especially liked and placed him in a plastic bag. The bag, with its aromatic contents, was then placed inside Shane’s luggage. Now, though we would be miles apart, my husband would not have to be alone. This little surprise soon became a tradition with us. That same year I traveled to visit family in North Carolina for a week, and guess who came with me? Monkey! Smelling like cologne!

Since then, Monkey has been substitut-ed for each other when we cannot be together. Whether my husband is gone on a three week training trip or I am gone for one night to visit grandparents, Monkey goes along. Even on the occasional night when I make it to bed after my husband, I will find Monkey propped up on my pillow.

I praise God for my husband and for the little things, like a monkey in a bag, that remind us how much we love and care for one another.

Jessie and her husband, Shane, live in Germany where Shane works for the Air Force and Jessie is a stay-at-home mom. They are expecting their second child next summer.
Several years ago my employer relocated me and changed my job description. Before I knew it I was working seven days a week for several months with no end in sight. Even when I had worked thirty days straight with only one day off, I didn’t recognize the symptoms of the rejection that my family was feeling. My brother said he thought I was working too many hours. Somehow I thought it was okay. After all, I hadn’t chosen it; it was what my employer expected.

After my brother’s comment, my wife and I spent much time in prayer regarding my employment situation. We also talked with close friends and family. With God’s help we came to the conclusion that it would be better not to have a job than to have a job that required me to be gone so much of the time. We made the decision that family time was more important than my career.

When my wife and I told our sons about the decision, our oldest son said, “Thank you, Dad.” He will never forget that decision as long as he lives. In ten years our sons will be seventeen and twenty. At that point I don’t want to look back and say, “Where did the time go?” Our children need fathers who will seek God’s will in their lives. We praise God that He opened our eyes when He did.

I started work for a different employer three weeks after leaving my previous job. I now work four days a week and travel about a quarter as much as I did previously. We have made some sacrifices in income and in my overall compensation package, but we have gained family time, which is priceless.

It is easy to think that our kids will not be happy unless they have all the material goods we can provide them. I don’t think our children will be happy unless they have time with their fathers. Recently I started spending one hour of dedicated time a week with each son. We love that time.

Sometimes when we pray, we like to fit God’s answer into our box. I challenge you to pray that you fit into His box. Listen to God. Listen to the people God has put in your life. He who sees the end from the beginning will provide all the answers we need.

Chad lives with his family in Michigan where he works as a sales manager. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Mandy; and their two sons, Tyler and Brandon.
Between Blessings

When circumstances surround a person with difficulty they are said to be ‘between a rock and a hard place’ but I have been blessed with a very different kind of ‘between.’ In a very special way, I live between generations.

I live with my eighty-five year old mother who is crippled with arthritis and living with congestive heart failure. She also has a failing memory and other health issues, but daily exhibits one of the sweetest, most patient Christian characters. Despite decreasing physical abilities, she constantly seeks ways to help and spends hours embroidering lovely things for her family while listening to God’s word. Her example both inspires and reproves me.

I live next door to my son, his wife, and my four youngest grandchildren. They are an example to me as they prioritize time for personal devotions, family worship, and service while making a living, homeschooling, gardening, and caring for a special needs child requiring therapy and extra time and attention.

One of the challenges of living so close is respecting each other’s differences. With my mother it means balancing the demands of making sure she stays safe with her need to be independent and useful. While it is true that the child must begin to parent the parent, it is important to remember that a lifetime of experience and wisdom needs to be respected and honored and dignity preserved.

On the other side of the ‘between,’ it is critical that I keep in mind that my son is now not only my son, but the head of his own family. He is husband to a lovely wife whom God has directed he cherish as his own flesh and for whom he is to leave all others. He is a father and has both the heavenly mandate and authority to direct his children’s upbringing. This sacred circle must be respected and honored. I must take care to uphold the values and decisions my son and daughter-in-law make.

As in every position of life, as a ‘between-er’, daily surrender of my will to the will of my heavenly Father is essential. As long as I am His, living ‘between’ is a place between two blessings.

“Grandchildren are a crown to the elderly, and the glory of children is their parents.”

Proverbs 17:6 Clear Word

Linda is a retired teacher who lives in Missouri. She works in customer service, and loves to garden and give Bible studies.
The Right Choice

It was a sunny autumn day and my brother and I were outside winterizing the garden. I was busy pulling up basil plants and my brother was digging up onions. As I reached down to uproot another plant I heard him yell, “Watch out!” The words were still coming out of his mouth when something hit my leg. Ouch! Looking down, I saw it was a huge dirt clod. Turning toward my brother I immediately knew he was responsible. Now I had a choice. How was I going to respond? I could get irritated and tell him he had hurt me or I could remain calm and ask him what happened. Praise the Lord I decided to use the calm approach. It turned out that he hadn’t meant to hit me with the dirt clod. He just intended it to land close so it would make me jump. He apologized and I readily forgave him. I also thanked the Lord for helping me to respond in a kind and loving way!

In Proverbs 15:1 it says, “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” You may have times when you are tempted to speak unkindly. Remember to ask your Heavenly Father to help you give soft answers instead of harsh ones.

Work the puzzle to find out what James 1:19 says about being slow to anger. Replace each letter in the sentence with the letter beneath it in the grid.

Gny nwnat fre qn zvib yd knra, zgdv yd zcnrh reo zgdv yd varyk.

Abigail writes to us from Michigan where she lives with her parents and younger brother. She enjoys music and working with children.
What is the best investment choice for 2012? Your family!

Make your family a priority and plan to attend one of the eight family camps across the US or the new family camp in British Columbia, Canada.

Growing together spiritually, learning to communicate in a deeper way, forming more intimate bonds, and developing friendships with other families who are seeking the same thing are just some of the blessings you’ll experience at family camp.

This investment of time and resources will far outweigh any other investments you may make. Begin planning now to attend one or more family camps in 2012. Only eternity will reveal the full return on your investment!

Visit our website www.restoration-international.org for more details and future updates for each camp.
UPCOMING EVENTS

2011
November 18 – 20, SWANZEY, NH
Keene SDA Church
Contacts: Pat & Rosa Warner
(978) 544-5886 patrickandrosa@gmail.com

December 3, ROME, NY
Rome SDA Church
Contact: Aaron Purkeypile
(315) 560-4657 aaron.purkeypile@gmail.com

December 9 – 10, SPRINGFIELD, MO
Springfield SDA Church
Contacts: Doug & Julianne Downs
(417) 838-5886 downs.julianne@gmail.com

December 16 – 17, SACRAMENTO, CA
Sacramento Central SDA Church
Contact: Steve Allred
(916) 457-6511 steve.allred@gmail.com

December 27 – 31, NOVO FRIBURGO – RJ, BRAZIL
Sitio Professor Cardinot
Contact: Angelica Rosa
+55(21) 3072 4346 oest@iestrj.com.br

2012
January 12 – 15, BOYUP BROOK,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Nature’s Guest House Camp
Contact: Jenny Payne
(08) 9776-0013 littlebrookfarms@westnet.com.au

January 13 – 14, CENTERVILLE, OH
Centerville SDA Church
Contact: Carol Leen
(937) 433-7007 centervillechurch@sbcglobal.net

Jan 20 – 22, PERTH, AUSTRALIA
Rivervale Community Center
Contact: John Horvath
0429 796 159 Cell  08-9298-8763 Home
jazhorvath@hotmail.com

Jan 27 – 29, CONCORD, NSW, AUSTRALIA
Concord SDA Church
Contact: Lyle Southwell
0412 447 684 lyle.southwell@gmail.com

Feb 10 – 11, LOS ALAMITOS, CA (Waters)
Los Alamitos SDA Church
Contact: Dee Dee Santoyo
(714) 360-3406 rissa0818@hotmail.com

Feb 10 – 11, BENTON HARBOR, MI (Raynes)
Fairplain SDA Church
Contact: Eva Eagan
(269) 422-2330 eagans@foreverafamily.com
Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter. Psalm 74:17