

## On The Shoulders of Giants

AUDREY PURDUM



Audrey can't remember her first time in church because she would have been a newborn infant. It was at the old Clayton Street church before the new building was built. She said that later they added on a

Sunday School addition then tore down the old building and built the new one that exists now.

She says, "I was blessed to be born into a godly home with godly parents. I cut my teeth on the song books and slept on the church pews."

"We had no TV but we did have family prayer every day, and we would pray for any one who was sick and anoint them with oil."

She can still remember that the olive oil was kept in the kitchen cabinet and that she would use it to anoint and pray for her sick pets. "We always had dogs and cats around the house and when they were sick I would anoint them with oil and pray for them." she said.

She would hear her mom who would go into the bedroom, shut the door and start praying and interceding and singing in the spirit. Sometimes people would call them in the middle of the night to pray. Her mom and dad would do odds jobs around the church, visit the sick and bring food to those who needed it. "We were never sheltered from sickness or death." she says, "I would go with my mom and dad to the hospitals and the funeral homes."

Her dad taught the Men's Bible class and later, because new people were uncomfortable being separated, he combined this together in one Adult Bible class. She can remember her dad buying coal for a widow lady to heat her house because she could not afford it.

She relates, "I was never bored in church, I love the shouting and worshipping!" She gave her heart to the

Lord at 11 years old and was baptized in Twin Creek by the old bridge on Trenton-Franklin Road. "It was spring and the water was a little cool."



She took piano lessons and would play the piano in church and sing when she was just in Junior High. She remembered her dad coming up to her and asking her if she had the Holy Ghost. When she replied "no" he told her, "You need the Holy Ghost." Later in a revival Audrey received the Holy Spirit. She would memorize the word and as a kid she remembers that with no TV, they would entertain themselves by playing church. "We would never mock it. Just have fun doing church." "Everybody would get a chance to preach." she said.

Later when she was in high school she taught the 3rd grade girls Sunday School class, and she remembers that one of her students was Carolyn Flatter, later to become Carolyn Ford.



After that she took on the 7th grade girls class and was asked to team teach a younger married class with the Pastor's wife, Sister Adams. This later split into Single's and Married's and she taught the Singles class.

In 1986 Ron Medley asked her to start a Prime Timers which started with about 50 people, and she has been teaching that class ever since.

Audrey sings in the choir, was involved in the nursing home ministry every Wednesday night for 15 years, and works in the kitchen whenever she is needed.



Audrey got married at the age of 19 and can still remember, when at the age of 36, the doctor told her, her husbands condition was dire and that she was about to lose him. She can still remember the clothes she was wearing and that it was a beautiful spring day. She now had to go home and tell her son who was 13 and two daughters who were 10 and 8 the bad news. But as she walked out of the hospital on that beautiful spring day the Lord brought to her mind a songs some men in the church sang, Marion Barnes and

Don Lairson. "I Got Peace That Passes Understanding" and "I've Got The Holy Ghost, Who Could Ask For Anything More." She remembered in High School reading Isaiah 43:2, "*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*" With those things running through her mind she says, "The Lord gave me such a great peace, I knew we would make it."

She then started nursing school which lasted for 3 years with the Lord providing for them. She did not remarry until the children were grown.

When I asked her what her greatest memories were, she replied, "Oh there are so many." The one she picked was, "I was so blessed to be able to travel to the Holy Land. It was so awesome to see the places that I

had studied about all my life, what was talked about in the Word. It was overwhelming!" She ended up going back two more times.

"If you ask me I will do it." she says, "Whatever your hand can find to do, do it. Don't be afraid to try. You don't know what you can do unless you try and then the Lord can anoint you." This is awesome advice from a woman who has lived her life by those very words and seen them fulfilled.

"Love God with all your heart and don't be afraid. He never promised that you would not have problems. He did promise that He would sustain you through them. He does not want us to fear and don't worry about tomorrow but enjoy every day."

What wonderful words from a woman who has faced the deaths of two husbands and being a single mom. "God is so faithful!"

### Royal Rangers Overnighter



On Friday night, May 8th starting at 6 PM, we will be having night of fun and fellowship with our Ranger Kids, Discovery Rangers and Adventure Rangers. The Ranger Kids will stay until 10 PM and the Discovery and Adventure Rangers will be staying overnight.

We will be camping out in the field behind the church, building a campfire and cooking hamburgers and hotdogs. Pastor Ray will be giving a devotional, and we will be having games and a movie. In the morning breakfast will be served and everything will be taken down. The kids will need to be picked up by 8:30 AM.

Bring your boy Friday evening and stay if you would like.

Let Hans Oney or Frank Perfetti know if you are planning to bring your boy and if you have any questions.

### CROCODILE DOCK VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



ARE YOUR KIDS READY TO SINK THEIR TEETH IN **BIG FUN!!!**

That's just what they'll do at Crocodile Dock, where fearless kids shine God's light! Crocodile Dock is filled with incredible Bible-learning that kids see, hear, touch, and even taste! Bible Point crafts, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the Crocodile Dock activities that help faith flow into real life. (Since everything is hands-on, kids might get a little messy. Be sure to send them in play clothes and safe shoes.) Plus, we'll help kids discover how to see God in everyday life--something we call God Sightings. Get ready to hear *that* phrase a lot!

**SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS**

**MONDAY, JUNE 15--FRIDAY, JUNE 19**

**10:00AM-12:00PM**

You will find Preregistration forms in Rock Island hallway or online at [shcog.com](http://shcog.com). Those interested in working contact Miss Carolyn.

### Royal Rangers/Missionettes Garage Sale

Saturday, May 23rd  
from 8AM to 2Pm

Accepting clothing, household, toys and furniture donations.

The deadline is May 20th.

See any Royal Ranger or Missionette if you have any questions.  
All proceeds go to the Royal Rangers and Missionettes Programs.





Russ remembers after he accepted the Lord a neighbor, noticing the change in him, inviting him to go on a visit to the jails. Russ enjoyed it so much that that is what started him working in the Jail Ministry. He got started at the Chillicothe Prison and also has visited Middletown City Jail, Lebanon Jail(LCI), and Lucasville Prison.



At Chillicothe Prison they packed 2400 Christmas bags with various items like food, toiletries and bibles, passing them out among the prisoners. Also, at LCI, they worked for three days passing out over 10,000 dozen cookies to inmates. This would start with 42

prisoners who were leaders in their cellblocks arranged around 7 tables with ministers at each table. Then the prisoners would be taught various courses such as salvation and giving. At the completion of these courses, the prisoner would have to make a poster and do a skit showing that he understood what he had been taught. Then they would take this lesson back to their cellblock. Russ would get remarks such as, "first time I ever felt love." They would "Come for the cookies but leave with a lot more." Russ said, "They would really take pride in those posters and skits and there would be a lot of competition between these men for the best one." "They would end up with their arms around each other singing to Jesus!" These leaders would then go back and influence others. "That is why they always picked the leaders." Russ said. Russ related that, "We had two Muslims saved at LCI and have seen over 1200 people give their lives to Jesus through this ministry."

Right now the Jail Ministry visits Middletown City Jail every 4 weeks. Russ' team consists of Robert Napier, John Hawthorne, Rick Wiley and Lawton Chapman.

Charlotte accepted the Lord at the Hoover Ave. Church of God in Dayton 46 years ago. She says, "When my family moved to Dayton we moved into an apartment where next door a preacher and evangelist live and you could hear him praying through the walls sometimes. Well, they invited us to church and I went, accepting the Lord the very first time at the church." "It was the joy and love I felt at the church that really attracted me," she says. She would travel with these people sometimes when they would go to revivals. She says, "My father was a very hard man, almost an alcoholic, so my parents did not accept the Lord at that

time." "But I never stopped praying for them and two years before he died, my father accepted the Lord in his life and my mother also got saved."

Charlotte has taught Sunday school and worked in the Nursing Home ministry for a number of years. She also worked VBS and helped out whenever she was needed. Charlotte also has a collection of artifacts from the Holocaust which she has shown a number of times, including Middletown and Bellbrook Junior High schools in front of at least 250 students each time.

She got interested in the Jail Ministry when her son Josh was involved in it. She always wanted to hear his stories when he would come back from a visit. She never felt qualified to do it though, but the Lord impressed on her a scripture Matthew 25:34-40. She says, "The Lord always dealt with me through the scriptures and this time was no different."

When she got involved in the Jail Ministry, Cindy Abney, Angie Kelly, Rhonda Johnson and Elaine Hardesty were going. The Lord had impressed on Cindy that He wanted her to get involved in another ministry and Charlotte felt that that was why the Lord sent her. She says, "Being alone in the jail was my worst fear. But God brought it to light and made me face it." For the past 8 months that is exactly what she has been doing! "I look right into the faces of people who are at rock bottom." "We then have church."

Right now Charlotte is working alone so if you would like to get involved she would love to have you along. She says, "God can use you if you are a willing vessel; you don't have to think whether you are qualified are not, God will qualify you!"

A service at the jail consists of;

First, they greet the inmates and get their first names. Second, they take prayer requests and pray for each person. They will then sing a few songs. Then give testimonies and preach a sermon or just tell them about Jesus Christ and His love. After that they have an altar call and pray the sinners prayer. They will pass out bibles to all who want one and also a copy of "The Father's Love Letter."(Unfortunately I did not have enough room to publish this letter but if you would like to see it go to [www.fathersloveletter.com](http://www.fathersloveletter.com) and click on the 'Read' link. It is very beautiful). Both Charlotte and Russ say that the people are hungry for their message and very receptive. Russ usually gets to hold his service in a large common room where Charlotte will preach in a hallway lined with cells. She says, "Usually they have chairs out in the hallway and are waiting for me." "You may be the only chance that person has to be saved from an eternity in hell!"

## JAIL MINISTRY

When I asked them both what they felt was the most memorable moment they had in the Jail Ministry, they both replied that is was, "the privilege of being able to experience a little bit of the persecution that Jesus experienced."

Russ relates one incident; "The Jail was having work done on the 'Day Cell' where we usually have services, so they allowed us to go back to the cell blocks. The very first cell I came to had three men and they said, 'Get out of our faces, we don't want to hear about Jesus!' I told them, to have a good day and moved on to the next cell where I started talking about Jesus to the men there and as I continued talking to men in the following cells, several gave their lives to Jesus, but the three men in the first cell kept mouthing off to me. As I was praying with some prisoners an object flew toward me and landed at my feet. These men had thrown a bible at me. I ignored it and when I finished praying, I picked it up and returned it to the men who had thrown it and

prayed that the Holy Spirit would close their mouths. The instant I did that, they stopped and I told them to have a good evening and they said, 'You too, sir.' I wanted to talk to them about Jesus but my time was up and I had to leave."

Charlotte relates, "Where I preach, the cells behind me are men and the ones in front of me are women. As I started talking about David and Goliath to the women, a man behind me started heckling me and the women started getting upset. After a while, this man started cussing. and I had to shut the door to complete my message. Afterward, I asked the man what his name was and he said, 'Michael.' I then told him that I will be praying for him.

Read Matthew 25:34-40 because this ministry fulfills that scripture. Then talk to Russ or Charlotte. They both could use some help and you will get blessed as the Lord has blessed them many times over.

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## ABILITIES FIRST

CINDY ABNEY AND LIZ AMBURGY

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It was my great privilege to sit in on the Abilities First class last month and watch two very caring ladies minister to these wonderful people.

Liz got started in this ministry when Debbie Walters brought one of the Abilities First people into service in a wheelchair. Going up to Debbie to greet this individual Debbie explained that this is where she worked and took care of these people. The county had just recently voted that they could go to one church service a month.

The staff then started taking them to various churches. These wonderful, handicapped people would sometimes make noise or talk out loud reacting to the worship. Afterward people in the churches would ask them not to come back. This broke their hearts.

As soon as Liz heard this she said, "We'll take them! Let me talk to Pastor Watkins first to see if it is OK.

Pastor Watkins and later Pastor Ray were all for it and so started this ministry.

Liz, knowing Cindy's experience with this, asked her to help, and she agreed.



Because of space available on the bus and the fact that they are in wheelchairs, they can only bring a maximum of six, but each if them is very unique.

"You can watch them react to the service and each has is own way of worshipping. One will just start singing and won't stop. Another will squeal in delight. Another will laugh out loud. But this is when they are expressing their joy and worship the greatest," says Liz.

Cindy immediately fell in love with these people and they love her back but especially one!

One day Donnie told Cindy, "I love you!" Cindy responded, "I love you too" From that point onward he had to sit next to Cindy. She says, "He knows the names of my children and my husband, and always asks about me when I can't make it and will pray for me when he knows I am sick."

Liz says, "They always leave me feeling blessed." "They are really excited about coming to church."

They do various things for them, even though they get to come only once a month. They initially started meeting in a classroom where people like Brother Brandenburg would play his guitar. Lucas Rogers was the biggest hit! He would



## ABILITIES FIRST

bring his own CD's in and sing for them and Barb Rogers would bring puppets, they loved that!

Liz would get most of her teaching material from Carolyn or Valerie. Using various different things like flannelgraphs. Liz would give them the elements and then she would bring the flannelgraph board around and have them place them. "They have quite a sense of humor." She says. "Sometimes they would place the items upside down or in the wrong place then laugh out loud."

Instead of feet washing, Liz did hand washing with them and they absolutely loved that, worshipping and even some tears.

The Sunday School class would sponsor them for Christmas. Abilities First has a list for each person of what you can buy them. So they would fill up bags for each one and give it to them at church so they could take it back with them to open later. Liz says, "They love stuffed animals, any thing soft and cuddly."

All of these people were born with their handicaps and many of them have very little family and in our church we are their family. "Besides the workers this is the only time they get to interact with others and feel loved." Liz says. "This is why this ministry is so important."

Not only have Liz and Cindy reached the handicapped ones, but also by opening our doors to

them they have reached the staff as well with some even accepting the Lord for the first time!

Abilities First began in 1958 as the 'Doty' house where they started with eight children, providing them with educational and therapy services that were not available in public schools. They have since expanded into over 1200 clients covering an eight county region. They also have two residential centers. The Doty House which opened in 1985 and is home to twenty children and adults who need special care and the Hopewell Residential Center which opened in 1987 and currently houses 10 adults with special needs.

"The goal of our Adult Day Program is to enhance the lives of people with disabilities by providing community inclusion, independent living, social and vocational skills that incorporate the person's strengths and needs into daily living. The program emphasizes a safe, stimulating environment with a nurturing staff that promotes independence and inclusion of people with disabilities."

In Matthew 25:45 it says; "Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." This is definitely fulfilling that scripture and showing the love of God to our community.



**Men's and Women's Encounters**

Joel 2:28    Acts 2:17

Women's Encounter  
May 15-17  
The cost is \$125.00

Men's Encounter  
May 29-31  
The cost is \$125.00

Both Encounters are to be held at  
Camp Lebanon  
4464 Emmons Road  
Oregonia, Ohio

See Dave or Missy Anderson, Christian or Francella Mays for any questions.



4419 Nelson Road  
Middletown, Ohio 45042  
(513) 423-0797  
fax (513) 423-4219



Pastor Ray Phillips

[www.shcog.com](http://www.shcog.com)

### MISSION STATEMENT

We will passionately embrace God, connect with one another, pursue discipleship into all the world through Jesus Christ!

The Church of God of Middletown, Ohio  
Stratford Heights Church of God  
4419 Nelson Road  
Middletown, Ohio 45042

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP

#### SUNDAY

Early Morning Worship-8:30am  
Sunday School-9:30am  
Morning Worship-10:45am  
Evening Worship-6:00pm

#### TUESDAY

Oasis-6:30pm

#### WEDNESDAY

Missionettes & Royal Rangers-7:00pm  
Family Life Night-7:30pm

Noah's Ministry for children 0-3 years old  
offered for all services except 8:30am.

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