

From Buds to Blossoms to the Rescue

by Kenita Gibbins

The latest commitment on my schedule loomed out in front before I could sneeze in honor of springtime. Six months ago I volunteered to teach a ten-hour course called “God’s Mission, A Journey” for the Metro and Mile High District’s Lay Servant Classes representing the United Methodist Church. I wanted to teach this class. I’m devoted to going on mission trips and I feel passionate about the subject.

I obtained the teacher’s guide and the student book. I asked a mission oriented man from my church to co-teach with me. He said with enthusiasm, “Yeah!”

Panic set in two weeks before April 26. I started staring out the window of our condo. The big tree outside my window was beginning to sprout tiny pink buds. Believe it or not I started humming Louis Armstrong’s song “What a Wonderful World.” I turned to my lessons and immediately became engaged. I started looking for mission choices for the class to discuss. Each day I would look out and make sure the buds were still there. After looking I could resume my work.

The Denver Art Museum assignments interrupted my progress. I had to go downtown for five days in a row.

Previously my partner Richard and I made plans for the sections each of us would cover. This saved lots of time, since I could concentrate on my part. We agreed to also interject ideas during each teaching session. Finally I found two whole days to knuckle down and work on God’s mission for me. I went to my window for inspiration. The tree stood proudly straight with the brightest pink blossoms. I started thinking of my notes for the class before I sat in front of my computer.

We felt ready. We greeted five perfect students. Everyone participated. Everyone shared interesting stories. We were able to engage them with types of missions they didn’t know plus Bible lessons most of us had forgotten. One man who had been in a wheelchair most of his life had been bullied when he was young. Bullying wasn’t labeled when he was a kid but that is what happened. He plans to talk with the spring confirmation class about bullies. Another lay servant existed on the streets for two years. Her mission now is to serve the hungry at a food bank. Hopefully we gave her more tools to use with the people who come seeking help. Another man fascinated us with stories about being a mediator for the court system. Our youngest participant struggles to raise her daughter, but has faith and the desire to help others. She will find the best mission. She also works at a food bank. The fifth person sings in her church choir. Her choir is going to New York City in the fall to sing at Carnegie Hall. She is interested in many missions. With her voice she can and does make the world more beautiful.

Richard and I turned into Abbott and Costello. Our students laughed as they planned for their new adventures serving God in the name of his son Jesus.

I’m still looking at our delightful tree. Sister trees popped out yellow buds today. I continue to be rescued by loveliness.