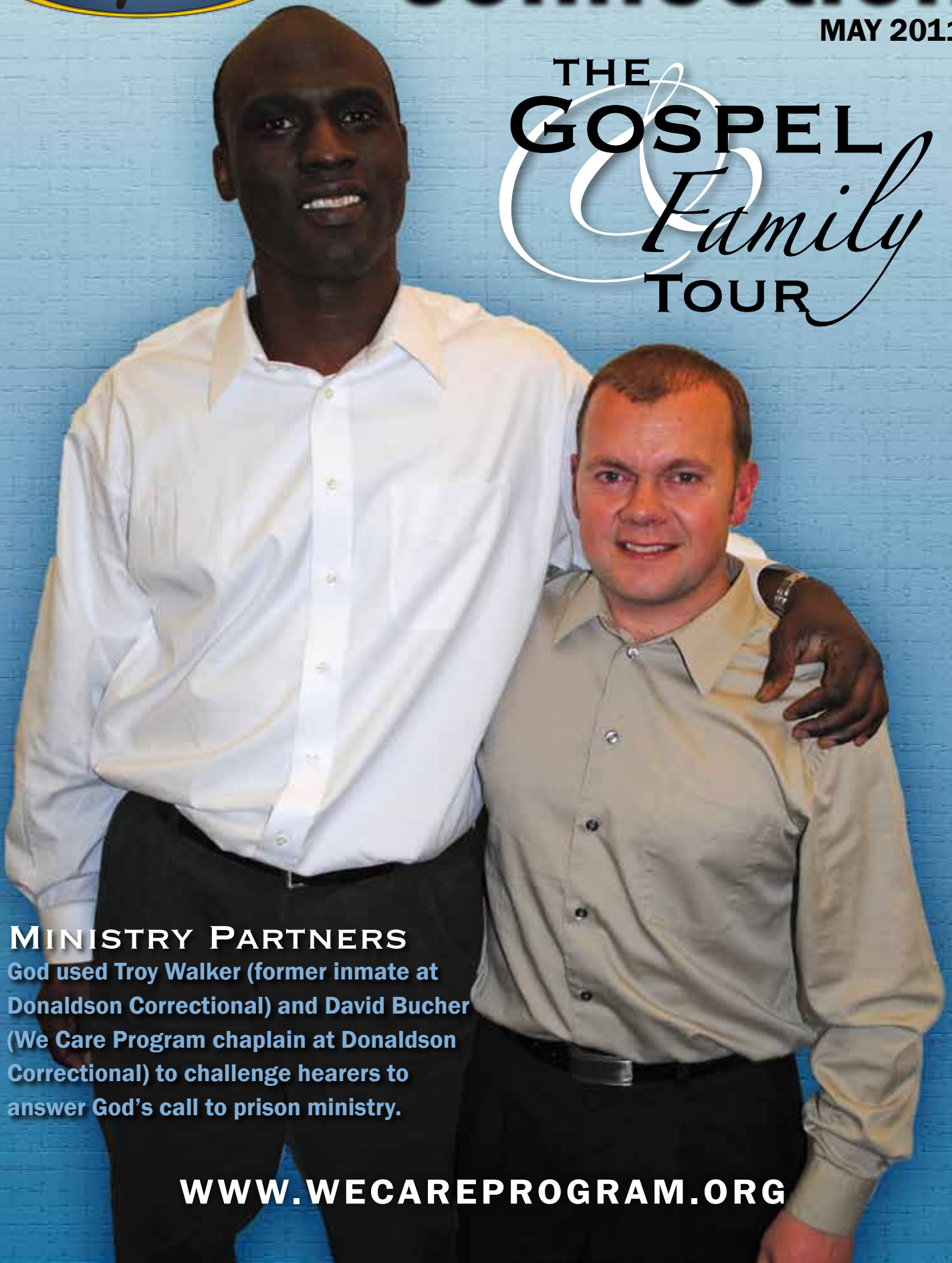




the connection

MAY 2011

THE GOSPEL *Family* TOUR



MINISTRY PARTNERS

God used Troy Walker (former inmate at Donaldson Correctional) and David Bucher (We Care Program chaplain at Donaldson Correctional) to challenge hearers to answer God's call to prison ministry.

WWW.WECAREPROGRAM.ORG

THE GOSPEL & FAMILY TOUR

Photo Journal

FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 27, 2011



We were amazed by the generous crowds in quite a number of locations. (Pictured: New Holland, PA, banquet)



God used former inmates Michael Fields (pictured) and Troy Walker to speak powerful words of testimony during the tour.

Watching a "working" family unit night after night was a message in itself. (Pictured: The Bontrager Family from Kalona, IA)



The warm reception we received in several "new" locations encouraged us greatly. (Pictured: Arthur, IL. Chambersburg, PA, and Bittinger, MD, also made impressions.)



Praying before each program helped us to cast our cares on Jesus.

We Care Read-A-Thon

July 2011

ENJOY READING?

No matter your age, you can make a difference in the lives of prisoners! Detach this form to participate in We Care's Summer Read-A-Thon.





You Can Make A Difference! . . . In the Lives of Prisoners

We Care Read-A-Thon

Supports Missionary Prison Chaplaincy Workers

Here's How It Works...

- 1 Complete reader information form below. (please print) **Set your goals.** (other side)
- 2 Ask family and friends to sponsor your reading efforts. (per page or donation)
- 3 Collect the books you want to read. (age appropriate please)
- 4 Beginning July 1, **READ, READ, READ!** (As you finish each book, note finish date on reading list form.)
You must finish reading books by July 31. (Or read for any 31 consecutive day period between June 1 and July 31).
- 5 Beginning August 1, collect pledges from sponsors in the form of a check or money order made out to **WE CARE PROGRAM.** After collecting all pledges, put in envelope along with **PLEDGE FORM** and send to:

We Care Program, 3493 Highway 21, Atmore AL 36502

- 6 After We Care Program receives your pledges, we will send a receipt to your sponsors for their tax-deductible gifts. (checks and money orders only)
- 7 Pledges received by August 31 will qualify reader to be eligible for prizes.
(gift certificates to Christian Book Distributors)
Ages up to 12 - Most money raised - 1st place \$50 gift certificate, 2nd place \$25 gift certificate
Ages 13 to 17 - Most money raised - 1st place \$50 gift certificate, 2nd place \$25 gift certificate
Ages 18 and up - Most money raised - 1st place \$50 gift certificate, 2nd place \$25 gift certificate
- 8 All readers collecting over \$150 in pledges will receive a free T-Shirt from We Care Program.

Questions? Call Noreen at We Care Program 251-368-8818

We Care Read-A-Thon

Reader Info

Beginning Date: _____ **Ending Date:** _____

Reader's Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone: _____

Birthdate: _____ **Church:** _____

T-Shirt Size (If raised over \$150) *Please check one size*

Youth Medium Youth Large Adult Small Adult Medium Adult Large Adult X-Large

Feel free to make additional copies of this form as needed.

We Care Read-A-Thon

Sponsor List

Sponsor's Name	Amount Per Page	or	Donation	Money Collected
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
(use another sheet for additional sponsors) My Goal: \$ _____				Total Money Collected

We Care Read-A-Thon

Reading List

Book Title	# of Pages/Date Completed	Book Title	# of Pages/Date Completed
1.		13.	
2.		14.	
3.		15.	
4.		16.	
5.		17.	
6.		18.	
7.		19.	
8.		20.	
9.		21.	
10.		22.	
11.		23.	
12.		24.	
(use another sheet for additional books) My Goal: _____ pages			Total Pages Read



Our traveling crew for the first week: Jonathan Zook, David Landis and son David, and Troy Walker.

Towards the end of the trip we were privileged to join the Bontragers at their home in Kalona, IA, for a morning brunch.

Meeting friends along the way. (Pictured: Percy and Lois Yoder, Belleville, PA)



“...SUFFER *little children* TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT: FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.” - LUKE 18:16

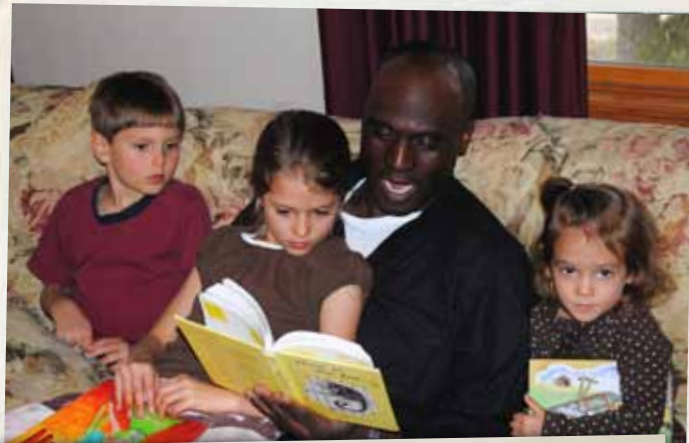
By: Troy Walker

There were many teachers and prophets during the days of Christ, so much so that it was hard to distinguish those who were true from those who were not. In fact, I believe some of these figures themselves wrestled inside as to whether they were sent from God or were being deceived by their own hearts. Theologically, with all the clutter and uncertainties, it was relatively easy to confuse even the sincerest mind. But who can deceive one of these little ones? One of these who rely not on doctrine or religious garb to validate a man. One of these who have not yet been taught by the world to ignore the tug of God that gently draws them towards His peace. One of these whom Jesus testifies that of such is His Kingdom. I think these children coming to Him validates who He was.

My name is Troy Walker and I'm a former inmate of the Alabama Department of Corrections. I spent several years at Donaldson Correctional where David Bucher served as my chaplain. Even now he serves faithfully as the same.

I was recently invited to travel with We Care on what was called the Gospel and Family Tour. We traveled along with The Bontrager Family, a singing group from Iowa. I was blessed to be able to share my testimony with many people in several different states. This alone was a joy of joys, for in my heart I yearn to proclaim His Gospel, even through my life, and this chance to do so was a godsend.

During this tour I quickly realized that this was about more than my ministering to others, but rather my



Troy sharing a story with Hudson, Elizabeth, and Rebecca.

being deeply ministered to. Once again We Care was an instrument in the hands of God to influence my life to the glory of God.

We Care President Dave Landis viewed me as his equal, as a man, even as a man of God. Such a feat I struggle with myself sometimes, especially in light of where I've been. We Care has helped me see myself as God sees me.

I spoke to many crowds during this tour and witnessed God's Spirit move on many faces. However, to end with these children on my lap conveys a message to my soul like none other. It magnifies the reality of God in me and validates His call on my life, a call that in the name of Jesus I will answer. Thanks, We Care, and thanks, Bontrager Family, for being used by God.



Bob Depew
**Holman Corr. Facility
Atmore, AL**

Not long ago one of the men was sharing his life story with me. He told how he grew up lying and being deceptive in all his relationships. He shared how that had affected his relationship with God today. Though he has a desire to be honest with God, he felt that his deception in the past was keeping him from being free in Christ. I shared with him the story of Jacob in Genesis 32 where Jacob wrestles with

God over his past. Jacob had been a deceiver as well, and God wrestled with him until he came face to face with who he was. Jacob had to realize that all blessings come from God, not through manipulation and deception. I related how God changed Jacob's name to Israel. My friend asked me to pray with him that God would change his name and restore him to a person of integrity and truth. As we prayed, God began a new work in his life. I praise the Lord for the Word of God that has so many great examples.



Wilma Mallet
**Ohio Reformatory for Women
Marysville, OH**

The Perrys, a Southern Gospel group, sing, "If you think His loving arms cannot reach to where you are, look close at Jesus, you'll find the answer in His scars."

Those arms keep reaching out to us regardless of what we've done or where we are. He could have and should have pushed me away and shut me out a long time ago. I'm so thankful He never did.

Felicia felt that way as she burst into my office one day. "I call this 'God's Camp'! I never got it the other

times I was here. Now I do and I'm amazed at my new way of thinking!

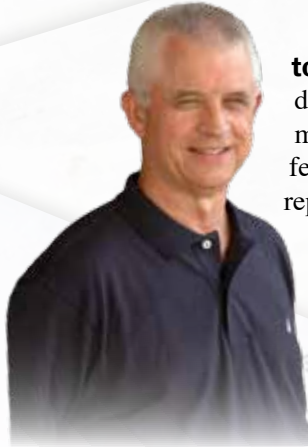
"Used to be, just SMELLING peanut butter would set me off. I'd be so angry and jealous because I 'didn't have.' Then I'd be on the phone yelling at my family for neglecting me and not putting money on my books. My whole day, plus theirs, would be ruined.

"I still 'don't have,' but now I see how much I'm blessed. I have what I need to get by, and once in a while someone

blesses me with some peanut butter or something else I can't buy. He's providing for me!

"Oh, I know there will still be 'downer' days, but I'm not sitting around waiting for those days to come. This is a whole new way of thinking that I probably never would have known if I hadn't come here. I just love learning all I can about Him!" And she waltzed out of the office.

She is learning. Weekly, she sits in the Bible studies, glowing, soaking it all in. In awe, I thank God His loving arms kept reaching out to both of us. Those scars proved that He thought we were worth it. Now I'm privileged to teach her more about Him! Wow!



Sid Chapman
**Camden Work Release
Camden, AL**

When asked to respond to the question, "What is God doing in your particular field of ministry?" I thought, "I have very few accomplishments to report about my

ministry at Camden!" As I questioned, fretted, then prayed over that, God's Spirit said, "You're right, you have done nothing, but I am doing great things in that place with My ministry!" Following

are some changes I have seen at Camden CBF:

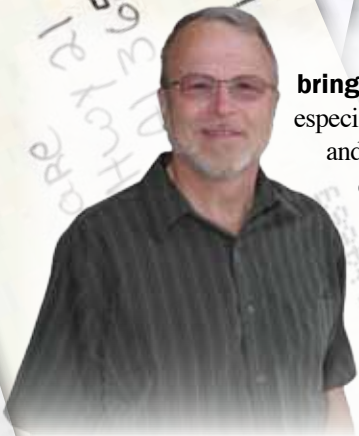
From three faithful volunteers in 2006 to six in 2011.

From one volunteer-led service every other week in 2006 to one service and one Bible study every week, as well as one inmate-led Bible study, prayer time and Christian movie time, each on different nights of the week, in 2011.

From an average of ten to twelve men per service in 2006 to an average attendance of twenty or more men in 2011.

From no approved We Care Crusade participation in 2007-2010 to allowing the family group Simple Grace to lead a worship service with music and a message on the Sunday night which began the 2011 crusade week.

What I have not seen at Camden is an awakening, a great moving of God's Spirit, which we all desire to see in the places we minister. However, I rejoice greatly in seeing faithful, godly men come back week after week after week proclaiming the same message, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to those who are lost and dying! These are men compelled to obey God's will, because He has revealed to them, just as He did to Paul in Acts 18:10, that He still has people in this place!



Richard Heatwole
Atmore Work Center
Atmore, AL

What do you do when someone brings an accusation against you, especially when you feel it is not fair and maybe not even true? I posed the question to a class that I was teaching on how to handle offense. The answer given was better than I could have scripted it. "Take a look to see if there is any truth in it." Those are wise words. Oh, how I want to defend myself, point my finger and blame someone else, or expose the sins of the other person.

Just recently an inmate shared with me his concerns about my chaplaincy at Atmore Work Center.

He had four main points and spoke for longer than I wanted to listen. I prayed, "Holy Spirit, what do you want me to do with this?" I

heard Him whisper, "Remember the wise words." I had to resist the temptation to point out his "seven" sins.

I had barely finished the first conversation when another inmate came up and shared just how thankful he was for my work at AWC. He listed several things he was especially thankful for, and some of them were the same issues the other inmate had just condemned me for. "Holy Spirit, how do I reconcile the two?" Answer, "Remember the wise words." I am thankful for the affirmation God gave my hurting spirit.

Proverbs 15:31 says, "An ear that listens to life-giving rebukes will be at home among the wise."

I have been pondering Hebrews 1:3, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." Jesus was God in the flesh. Immanuel, God with us. And I think, "Wow, God has committed to



David J. Landis
Holman Corr. Facility
Atmore, AL

me a message of reconciliation, making peace between God and man."

This is often on my mind as I ask myself how well I am reflecting the Father's heart in my daily routines at Holman. Relating to men that are mentally challenged I wonder what they can even understand about the Gospel. Putting up with a lot of conversation that does not seem to edify God or man, I question when I should say "that's enough." Many of the men say that they are believers in Jesus and yet their actions speak otherwise. When should I confront? When is it time to speak the word of truth, and how long should I hold off and just listen?

Jesus was a friend of sinners. He could be a friend of sinners because He knew who He was. He was the "exact representation of his being," God's being! I hope that I am learning to be faithful to the Holy Spirit's promptings, and I pray that each day I may also more accurately reflect His image, being a man full of grace and truth.

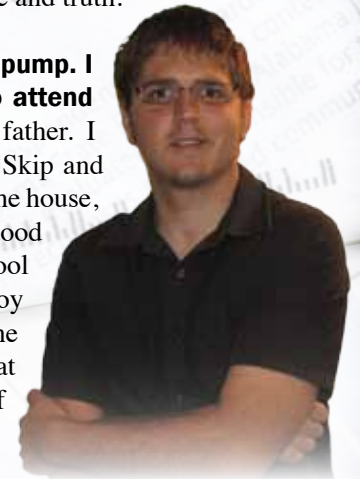
It all started at the gas pump. I was on my way to Mobile to attend

the funeral of an ex-inmate's father. I was looking forward to seeing Skip and his family, but before I went to the house, I decided to top off my tank. I stood by the pump enjoying the cool breeze of the morning and the joy of knowing that I would have the opportunity to comfort a friend at a time of loss. The moment of bliss abruptly ended with the click of the gas pump. I looked down in horror to realize that I had just put five gallons of gas into my diesel car. Recognizing the damage that could be done if I started the car, I pushed it out of the way and called Skip.

When he arrived, we attempted to siphon the gas out of the car. After we both filled our mouths with gas several times, we decided there had to be a better way; besides, time was running out. We freshened up as best we could, but still the lingering flavor of gas stayed in my mouth during the entire funeral.

After the graveside ceremony, I didn't want to bother the family anymore, so I had them drop me off at the gas station. I then made arrangements with a tow truck and car dealership to take care of my car. I still needed a way back to Atmore, so I called another ex-inmate who works in Mobile and lives in Atmore. He was more than willing to pick me up after work and take me home.

That morning I was planning on ministering to friends that had been in prison, but as it turned out, by the end of the day they had ministered to me.



Blaine Copenhaver
Fountain Corr. Facility
Atmore, AL

in the Field

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Tour Reflections

A MESSAGE FROM DAVID R. LANDIS, PRESIDENT

There are those few times in life where one feels that they were a part of something very special. The Gospel and Family Tour was one of those times for me. Feeling the need to focus some energy on raising awareness and support for We Care Program, our staff worked hard at putting together an itinerary that took our traveling team on a 5000-mile journey through 11 states. Along the way, 25 programs (including five banquets) were presented to thousands of old and new friends alike. And God showered us with the blessing of His provision.

But I think what impacted me the most were the interactions I experienced with those God allowed me to journey with: Former inmates Troy Walker and Michael Fields, Discover Intern Jonathan Zook, the 12-member

Bontrager family, along with several other staff members and my son David who also joined us for parts of the trip. There was something about pressing through the challenges of each day and each program, working with and learning from each other in a spirit of humility, and praying together before each program that bonded our group in deep Christian love.

With our hearts unified to lift up Jesus Christ, we stood before crowds large and small, young and old, expressive and subdued. But in each place, it seemed that God took the little that we had and used it to bring needed ministry in each and every location, so that in the end the tour wasn't so much about We Care Program or The Bontrager Family as it was about the Gospel touching lives...ours, and those we were blessed to share with.

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