

Ruth Glaser

I was born in Minneapolis on July 25, 1917, the eldest of three children. I don't know if it was family planning or happenstance, but my brother, Raymond, followed 4 years after, and 4 years later my sister, Lorraine, arrived. Our father, Knute Reiersen Juvet, emigrated from Norway at age 17. My mother, Johanna Neolina Anderson, was age 5 when she arrived in Canada with her family from Sweden. Later her family homesteaded in Montana, where Mother met Dad, who was also homesteading.

When I was age 4 we moved to the small Scandinavian town of Maryville, North Dakota, where Dad set up the first tire vulcanizing shop in the area. Our home was close to downtown, so I soon discovered that if I could slip away while Mother was tending to baby Raymond, I could run the Nelson Grocery Store, where they would set me up on the counter and give me candy until my poor mother came to fetch me home. She tried tying me to the clothesline with a long rope to give me freedom in the yard, but I protested so loudly each time that she was afraid the neighbors would think she was abusing me.

When I was 5 I challenged Red Soholt, a neighbor boy, to see how many times we could run back and forth across the road by Dad's shop before oncoming cars would stop. Red had the good sense to "chicken-out" before I did. My dad scooped me up and set me down firmly on the front counter of his shop, where I had to sit in embarrassment for an extended period.

As a child I apparently didn't understand baptism for I was afraid that I would die before being confirmed, and therefore would not end up in heaven. The nightly prayer "If I should die before I wake..." didn't help any!

After three years of Saturday morning confirmation classes (held in the public schoolhouse) we were scared almost to death at the thought of being tested on Luther's catechism in front of the whole congregation. We all did survive!

The great depression squashed any plans to go away to college, but there was a teacher's college in town, so I studied to become a teacher. (It's a good thing it was not a school for welding or pipe-fitting!)

Being a good student, upon graduation I was going to opt for a salary of \$100 a month. However, no hard-pressed school board was about to pay that for a first year graduate, so I had to settle for \$97.97 per month for 9 months. My duties included teaching English to all four grades of high school, directing the class plays, and coaching debate and speech. Since then I have attended several class reunions, the last one being the 65th reunion of the first graduating class I taught.

Later I moved to Seattle, where my brother and sister-in-law lived, and went to work in the Personnel Department of the Boeing Airplane Company. I met my husband, Bill Stone at a party a friend gave for some of us skiers. Bill was on a year's leave of absence from Oregon State University in Corvallis to work at Boeing. Not long after the party Bill asked me to go out. I thought all he was interested in was tennis and mathematics, so later when a mutual friend told me that Bill and I should get married, I thought that was the most ridiculous idea. Then one night at dinner he started talking about music and literature, quoting the Bible and poetry, and I realized there was much more to this guy than appeared on the surface.

Before marrying we agreed that if we did not have "borned" children, we would adopt. The happiest day of our lives was when our two little French-speaking sisters from Morocco came to us, 7-year-old Dorothy and 5 ½ -year-old Karen.

About this time the Highway Department was planning to build a highway along Corvallis riverfront. I became active with a group trying to make a park out of the precious area. I worked up a slide show featuring the progress we volunteers had made on beautifying the riverfront, and showed it to a number of community organizations in the hope of garnering their support for the project. We were successful, and the highway was no longer a threat.

Our girls had had some terrible early experiences, and that can result in problems in adolescence. Because at that time parents were usually blamed for their children's bad behavior, I began studying about the factors that can cause many problems, factors such as undetected learning disabilities, biochemical abnormalities such as hypoglycemia, inability to handle sugar and food additives, physical problems, etc. As I learned new things I wrote letters to the editors, talked to the school board, was a regular testifier at hearings in the Oregon Legislature, urging diagnosis and treatment for troubled children. I joined several organizations such as the Juvenile Judges' Association and duplicated informative material to pass out at their conferences. I continued in this until I moved to Bellingham. I must have been effective, because Governor McCall, during a conference once quoted something I'd written, saying "You all know her!" That was the epitome of my lobbying career!

In 1976 Bill died from diabetic complications. In the midst of my grief at his death something that surprised me was the overwhelming feeling of compassion that swept over me, compassion for everyone who suffered for any reason. A Bible verse that comforted me was "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away - blessed be the name of the Lord!"

In 1988 I married a friend of Bill's from Boeing, Ray Glaser. It was a very romantic beginning - his wife Helen had died in 1986. He went on a search for an old girlfriend in the Midwest. He learned she had died, so when he was returning to Bellingham on I-5, he saw a sign for Corvallis. "Corvallis", he thought. "That's where Bill Stone lived - he used to tell me about Ruth - if she was good enough for him, she must be OK." So he looked me up.

We were married by Gary here at CTS, and I became a member. Ray professed to be a Druid, so he did not join. I knew no one in the congregation, so felt like an outsider for awhile, but before long CTS became my church family. I liked the fact that it was a young vibrant congregation with a wide range of ages and interests, and so many dedicated members working for the welfare of the church. When Ray was ill and died in 2004, the church was an immeasurable support.

Like most of us here, I'm sure, I have experienced deep sorrow and pain, as well as great blessings and joy in my life, especially in the love of family and friends - and at this stage I can say that the blessings and joy have far surpassed the pain and sorrow.

In conclusion, I truly feel that our subconscious minds are non-judgmental - they accept as truth whatever we feed into them. If we deposit positive thoughts, those positive thoughts are fed back to us. Therefore, I begin each day repeating "This is the day which the Lord has made - let us rejoice and be glad in it!", followed by this prayer which a pastor's wife in Seattle kept posted by her kitchen window, a prayer that of course can never be achieved, but can be striven for:

"Lord, in the quiet of this morning hour, I come to Thee for peace, for patience, power to view the world today through love-filled eyes, be tender, gentle, thoughtful, wise to see beyond what seems to be, to know Thy children as Thou knowest them, and so, naught but the good in anyone behold. Make deaf my ears to slander that is told, silence my tongue to aught that is unkind - let only thoughts that bless dwell in my mind. Let me so kindly be, so full of cheer, that all I meet may feel Thy presence near. Oh, clothe me with Thy beauty, this I pray. Let me reveal Thee, Lord, through all the day. In Jesus' name - Amen."