

November 2008

Teachers' PETS

Practical Encouragement for the Teacher's Soul



HEARTBEATS

My name is Tammy and I am a P.E.T.S. "newbie"--meaning this is my first year to serve in this ministry. I have known about P.E.T.S. for many years and have always thought that it was a great idea and a fabulous ministry; however, I have never been involved. At times, this frustrated me, but I continued to trust God for the places He called me to serve. Well, this year, all that changed, and God called me to P.E.T.S.

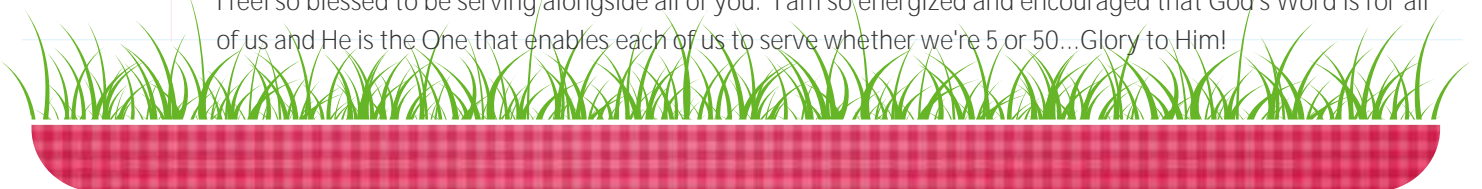
In a nutshell, I had been praying about how to kindle quality time with my two kids, ages 2-1/2 and 5, who are both home all day. I wanted to serve together, teach them how to share Jesus' love, and how to cultivate a life of prayer. After some trying times for our family the past two years, I deeply desired a time to connect with them. Well, God spoke to me during a church service during the beginning of September and led me to P.E.T.S. On the sign-up form, I listed my name and my kids' names because I knew that THIS is what God had for my family!

We were quickly matched with Robin, a kindergarten teacher. I have learned that when God leads you into ministry, He also takes care of every single little detail! You see, Robin was the helper in *my* class when I was a teacher at Cameron seven years ago. Now, I have the opportunity to help and bless *her*...God is so good!

To say that my daughter was excited the first time she met Robin would be a huge understatement. Robin's favorite color is pink, and so Greta wore a pink dress, pink leggings, and pink bows around her curly pigtails. She walked in carrying a large container of pink M&Ms and with a big pink smile, she said, "Hi. My name is Greta and I adopted you this year." It was a joy-filled moment, and I knew without a doubt that God would use P.E.T.S. to answer my prayer about connecting with my kids for a Kingdom purpose.

Since our first meeting, Greta has sent drawings in the mail and called Robin early on a school morning to wish her a happy day. We delivered a homemade sack lunch to her on conference day. And since we can see her classroom windows from the front of the church, we pray for her while we wait for the church bus to pick us up on Sunday after church.

I know that the purpose of P.E.T.S. is to bless a teacher, and we are definitely doing that. But God has also used this ministry to teach me as I learn to trust Him. Adopting Robin has turned out to be a blessing for *my* family. If there's a little person in your life--maybe a child or grandchild, I encourage you to include in them in your ministry whether it's delivering a treat, coloring a picture, or offering a prayer. As a P.E.T.S. first-timer, I feel so blessed to be serving alongside all of you. I am so energized and encouraged that God's Word is for all of us and He is the One that enables each of us to serve whether we're 5 or 50...Glory to Him!



Coordinator's Corner

As the season of Thanksgiving approaches, I want to express my sincere thanks to all of you who are a part of P.E.T.S. Thank you for your commitment to use your time and your resources to invest in the lives of Cameron Staff. Thanks to those of you who have signed up to do special ministry jobs such as **monthly treats, Box Tops and Campbell's programs, and special events.** Thank you to Michelle who has worked so hard behind the scenes to design our newsletter and much more. Lastly, a special thank you to Rosann who has been an on-going source of support and encouragement both in ministry and in my personal life. I am overwhelmingly grateful.

Bits o' Business

Included in this newsletter is a response card that I would love to receive back from you as soon as possible. (If you receive your newsletter by email, please email the response). I use these cards for many purposes; please read below.

- * These cards provide great ideas that I can share in our monthly newsletters.
- * They let me know what kinds of things you are doing so that we are not repeating the same kinds of things in our Monthly Treats.
- * They are a way for you to communicate any questions, concerns, or comments concerning this ministry.
- * They are a means of accountability to make sure that we are upholding our commitment to serve our staff members a minimum of once a month. This is very important to me because it is my responsibility to make sure that P.E.T.S. is a blessing to all parties involved. Furthermore, the only negative feedback I have ever received about P.E.T.S. is **when staff members' feelings are hurt when they have not had any contact from their P.E.T.**

We are trying a new thing this year in efforts to make the Cameron Lounge a positive place to be during the school day. (In my days as a teacher, I remember the lounge being a place where it was easy to complain and gripe about **our jobs, students, parents, coworkers, etc...** It was very difficult to rise above the "negative talk" that was happening there.) So this year, I have started a thing called "Table Talk." Each month we create a small holiday/seasonal centerpiece to put on each table. Then every week we put a card in each centerpiece that has 5 or so fun questions that staff can use to prompt "positive" conversations with one another. On the back of the card, we add a quote or inspirational story. The hope is that these cards will help create more enjoyable conversation amongst the staff and help to meet their expressed need for better relationships with their coworkers and a more positive staff moral. **If any of you have any ideas, fun "get to know you" questions, stories, clean jokes, etc., that you would like to add to these cards, I would love any of your ideas.**

Ministry Opportunity: Although it is not a required part of P.E.T.S. here is another way that we can join other Cameron ministries in serving our staff and students. On Saturday, December 6th, the Kids Hope USA program is putting on their annual "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" Christmas Party. They need volunteers to help decorate and cook and serve food. Contact Rosann at rosannh@cccgreeley.org for more information.

NOVEMBER IDEAS

Professional Needs:

- * Send them a card or email thanking them for what they do for students on a daily basis. Thank them for the little things that nobody notices.
- * Donate a pair of gloves and a hat that they can keep at school, especially if they do recess or bus duty.
- * Make or purchase a holiday/seasonal pin or necklace they can wear to school.

Personal Needs:

- * Write down some of your favorite Thanksgiving recipes on cards and attach them with a holiday magnet or clip.
- * Make or purchase a holiday centerpiece for their Thanksgiving table.
- * Assemble an emergency "bad weather" kit to keep in the car. Include an ice scraper, a gallon of water, a couple of snacks, a blanket, batteries and flashlight, etc.

Important Dates/Events

- Nov. 26th-28th
Thanksgiving Break
(no school)
- Nov. 27th
Thanksgiving Day