

Winter 2013

# CHAP

CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA



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### CHAP MAGAZINE

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# The

by Bruce Eagleson

Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) just finished our second Renew Conference. The Renew Conference is aimed at leadership. We want to offer practical skill training for homeschoolers who are in leadership. Whether that leadership is in support groups, churches, or something else we believe that our world will be a better place if we are better leaders.

Leaders aren't born. They are called, and they can only learn their craft by practice and training. We all can get better at leading. The whole organization is improved if our leaders are improved.

Our guest speaker was Doug Bartsch, a homeschooling church leader who has made a ten year study of leadership. Doug is a superior teacher who challenged me to be a stronger leader. Of course I applied his teaching to CHAP.

One of the first steps in leading is to have a clear vision about your organization's mission. It is wise to start with some questions. Does our mission matter? Is what CHAP does worth the investment we ask our volunteers to make? Do we offer something that is unique and valuable?

What is the product of CHAP? We train, support, and encourage parents to raise their children in the way God instructs in His Word. As I am fond of saying, we believe in Christ-centered, parent-directed, privately funded, home-based discipleship. God demanded this type of discipleship of the Israelites, and that is why it matters. I believe God gave them this instruction because He knew that it would produce committed believers with the character, knowledge, and skills to be His army. Currently Christian homeschooling is the leading proponent of God's instruction on this. I believe this answers the question, "Do we have a mission worth sacrificing for?" We certainly do! It is because the mission is so vital that we can ask you to homeschool your children. The vitality of the mission is why we can, and must, ask you to support CHAP with gifts, time, and energy.

The Renew Conference is held in late fall every year. When you hear the announcement next year, please make attending a priority. God wants you to teach and to lead.

# CONTENTS

# Side by Side in Pennsylvania

## Parents

Patrick & Maria Pietrak

## Children

Matt, Jessica, Abby,  
and Danny

## Hometown

Gilbertsville, PA

### How long have you been homeschooling and what was one of the main reasons you chose to homeschool?

We have been homeschooling 11 years. Our two oldest children have graduated and are in college at this time. We now have one middle school and one high school student. Our journey to homeschooling was a long one. We started out in a parochial school with our oldest son, since that is how we both were educated. We did not know about homeschooling. We had some issues and transitioned to public school with the oldest two children. In the meantime we had found the Lord and had become committed Christians. We tried a public virtual charter school from home with all of our children and thought that was homeschooling. We started to investigate other options when the elementary principal made a point to state that reading the Bible could not be counted as reading.

By the grace of God we discovered Harvey Cedars Bible Conference (HCBC) on Long Beach Island, NJ, while listening to a Christian radio

commercial. We visited the first homeschool week Harvey Cedars hosted and began learning what traditional homeschooling freedom meant. We have been attending HCBC homeschool week each year since 2004. Interestingly we found home education was more about heart-training, character development, and the freedom to educate your children to gain wisdom, not only knowledge. *When You Rise Up: A Covenantal Approach to Homeschooling* by R.C. Sproul, Jr. helped us to solidify our commitment to our children in the area of their education.

### What activities does your family participate in?

For the last five years our family has been in ministry together at our local church running an Awana club. In summer 2008 we had learned about Awana and were looking for a Bible curriculum. The next Sunday our pastor announced that we were starting an Awana club at our church! We became involved on the ground level of setting up the club, and all of our kids have volunteered for the ministry in some capacity. We have been in 4-H animal clubs, archery, sewing, and Junior Toastmasters. Currently our son is in robotics. Our daughter wants to be an animal trainer, so we are visiting the Seeing Eye puppy club.

### What have been your most helpful resources?

Our local co-op has been an incredible support for our family. We treasure our friendships with other homeschool fami-

lies. The Mom-to-Mom time is essential. We chose a co-op with general interest classes (rather than academics), and we go on field trips together. We encourage everyone to get connected with other homeschoolers as a community.

Membership with Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) has been an incredible resource. Their website includes many necessary forms and advice. We have called and spoken to representatives about the homeschool law. It is well worth the peace of mind a membership brings with it.

The Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Convention has given us a lot of encouragement and a broader perspective on home education in the USA, and worldwide, with nationally-recognized speakers and many helpful resources. For a couple of years we made it a special Mother's Day by staying in Hummelstown for the weekend. It is a lifeline for us!

### What educational philosophy/curriculum do you follow?

Our older two children used A Beka Academy (dvd) and an eclectic mix of materials, but we definitely lean toward the classical Christian education model. Our oldest son was able to Skype with a mentor, whom we met at CHAP, to teach him Latin and Calculus. God always makes a way! We currently use online science classes with Landry Academy. Our daughter, who is now in high school, uses

A Beka streaming online, and our youngest son uses a diverse mix of materials. We like the Institute for Excellence in Writing's materials. We have found it is not especially about the curriculum you use, but the ability to be consistent and work hard as unto the Lord. Pick something that works with your child's learning style and stick to it.

### What has been one of the highlights for you in homeschooling your children?

We were having trouble committing to an evening Bible time as a family, although Pat enjoys teaching our children with "Character Sketches" whenever possible in the evening after his long work day. Our son Matt volunteered and began reading the Bible aloud to his siblings (and Mom as she prepared breakfast). This was years ago and our first time reading through the entire Bible during our homeschool years. It was a real eye opener to read the Bible aloud together. We were all saying how the people in the Old Testament were really a mess, and these are pillars of the faith we were talking about! It made us realize even more that the need for a Savior is across the board, even with those who are held in high esteem. How great is our God! The message of God's redemption and love is for everyone.

### What was your favorite field trip(s)?

We were able to travel to the state of Indiana to visit our son's college, Verity Institute, as a family. The Creation Museum in Kentucky is within a day's drive from there. We were also able to have a day trip to the city of Chicago, Illinois. For a big city it was incredibly clean, unique, and beautiful with Lake Michigan at the coast.

### What was one of the funniest things that has happened during a homeschool day?

The morning that we opened the door to go outside and our entire hobby farm of animals (chickens, ducks, sheep, cats) were standing by the deck waiting for

breakfast! They each have a way of making an escape now and again, but that morning it was the whole crew!

### What have you found to be a challenge? Any tips in dealing with that challenge?

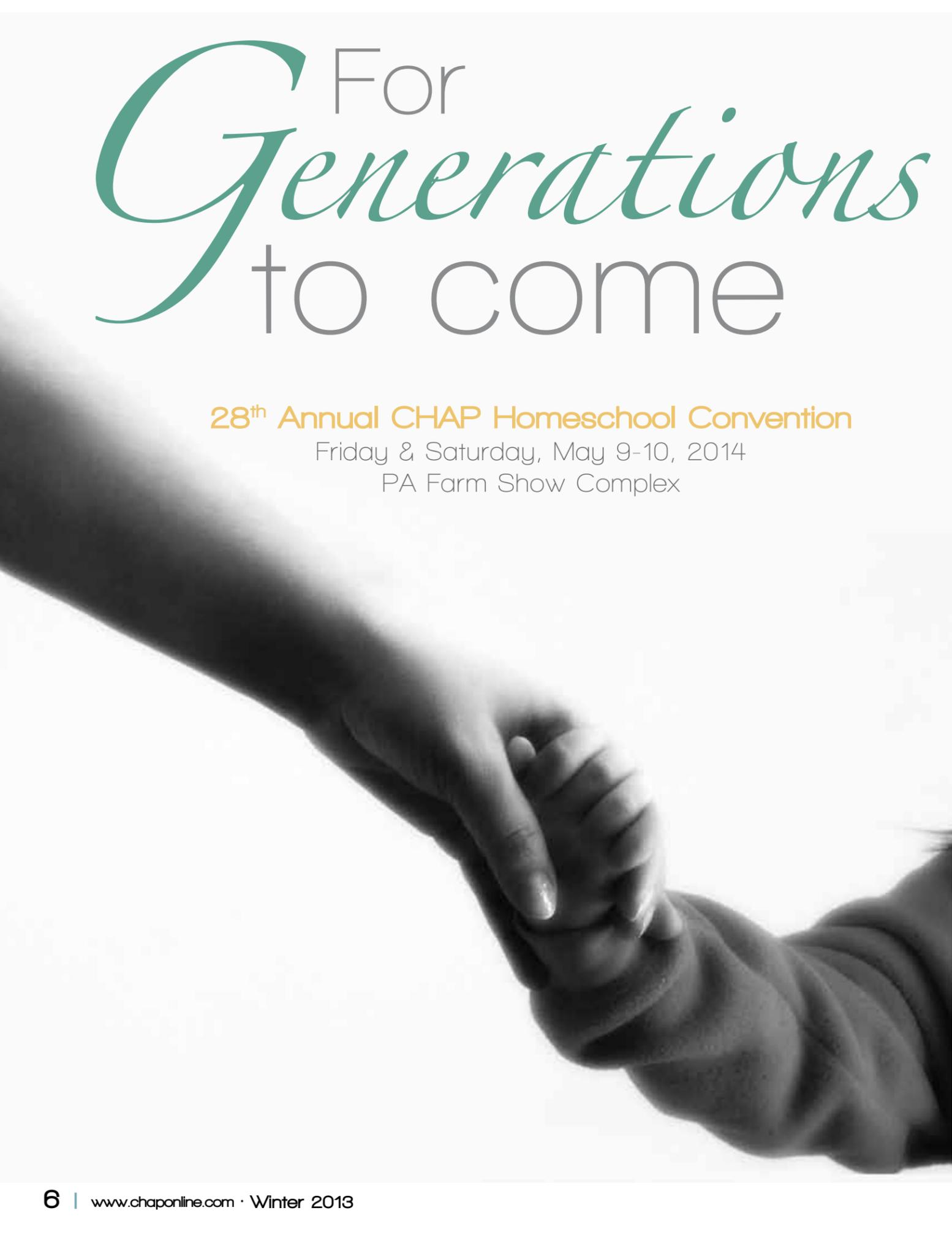
We have a variety of different learning styles in our family. Having each person work around the other and being respectful of differences has been a challenge. We have learned to keep a peaceful environment by praying for unity and giving one another grace. We have a couple of early risers and a couple of night owls. We have found that working with each child as an individual is most effective. Let's face it. As homeschoolers we are around one another more than the average family, and that can make our

sins more apparent to one another. We cannot gloss it over. We must commit to pray for each other as we endeavor to honor the Lord with our lives and with the children He has entrusted to our care in our home.

### What advice would you give to someone who has just begun homeschooling?

Pray hard and make your time with the Lord a priority. Pray together with your spouse regularly. Set realistic expectations for yourself and your children. Be willing to make adjustments. Make time to have fun as a family. You will get more work done in a shorter amount of time, so please do not compare yourself against a school or another family's schedule. Give yourself, and the one's you love, a lot of grace.





# For Generations to come

28<sup>th</sup> Annual CHAP Homeschool Convention

Friday & Saturday, May 9-10, 2014

PA Farm Show Complex

# For Generations to come

*Psalm 78:5-6*

"Teach this testimony and law to your children, so that the next generation would know it, so that the children not yet born would themselves arise and tell their own children, who could then put their confidence in God."

by Tami Perrin, CHAP Convention Coordinator

**Together each year, the CHAP Board, CHAP Advisory Board, staff and hundreds of volunteers spend countless hours planning and executing the CHAP Homeschool Convention.** So why do we go through all the trouble? The Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Convention is just one more way to support and encourage homeschoolers throughout the year as we raise our children in a Christ-centered, home discipleship environment.

The Convention occupies most of the PA Farm Show Complex and is comprised of 16 amazing speakers, over 200 vendors, Children's Program, Teen Track, Used Curriculum Sale, Silent Auction, High School Graduation Ceremony, Science Fair, Art Contest, and much, much more. Its magnitude and information are vast, while still offering a strong sense of unity with fellow homeschoolers. An odd feeling of reassurance takes over as you're surrounded by 7,000 homeschoolers who share in the same struggles and triumphs.

The theme for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual CHAP Homeschool Convention is *For Generations to Come*: "Teach this testimony and law to your children, so that the next generation would know it, so that the children not yet born would themselves arise and tell their own children, who could then put their confidence in God." Psalm 78:5b-6

Wow! What a huge responsibility we have as parents. We all strive to teach our children to be wise, honest, kind, loving, responsible, God fearing... and the list goes on and on. It can be so overwhelming, regardless of what stage we are in.

Let us not forget to pray for our children, to pray for one another, and to pray that our hearts and testimonies as parents are pleasing to the Lord. Let our children see us on our knees with teachable spirits yielding to our Sovereign Creator. Let us not be afraid to be real with our kids and share our fears, struggles, and sins.

And let us not be hesitant to reach out for help and encouragement. The homeschooling community is blessed to have an abundance of resources available at our fingertips; a myriad of curriculum, a measureless amount of information, seasoned homeschool veterans willing to impart experience and knowledge, support groups, and organizations with a sole purpose of helping homeschoolers.

The annual CHAP Convention is one of the few places in the state that encompasses all of these resources into one package. CHAP exists to see each generation of homeschoolers grow into mighty servants for the Lord, achieve great academic success, and continue preserving the educational freedom to homeschool. Come to the CHAP Convention and be inspired to teach this testimony for generations to come.

*Tami is a wife, homeschool mom, breast cancer survivor, Penn State graduate and most importantly, a sinner saved by grace. Tami and her husband Jim have been happily married for 14 years. They've been traditionally homeschooling their two boys, Jimmy (age 9) and Cody (age 6), for the past four years. In her free time, Tami enjoys spending time with family, keeping in touch with friends (old and new), escaping practical jokes set by her boys, and simply enjoying the life God has blessed her with. Tami has been on staff with CHAP as the Convention Coordinator since June 2013 and is eager to help others press on in their homeschooling journeys. Tami's favorite Bible verse is Psalm 73:26 - "My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; He is mine forever." (NLT)*



# Living in the Present:

## All Lit Up With Eternal Rays

by Laure Covert

**“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.** Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.” (Psalm 46:1-2)

I have often heard the good advice “live in the present,” but I didn’t understand the deeper reason why until recently when I read the answer in this psalm. God is “an ever-present help,” and we must live in the present to receive what He offers us.

C.S. Lewis illuminates this truth in *The Screwtape Letters* through the words penned by his fictional character, Uncle Screwtape. This senior demon advises his inexperienced nephew, Wormwood, how to ensnare his human patient. Screwtape is painfully aware that God desires humans to live in the present: “He therefore, I believe, wants them to attend chiefly to two things, to eternity itself, and to that point of time which they call the Present. For the Present is the point at which time touches eternity.”

When we live in the present, we touch the luminous eternity that we desperately need in our day-to-day lives. These shining words flow from C.S. Lewis through this ironic messenger, “In a word, the Future, is of all things, the thing least like eternity – for the Past is frozen and no longer flows, and the Present is all lit up with eternal rays.” The first time I read these words, I felt as if radiant beams of sunshine had shot out of the pages and lit up my heart. No matter what is happening in my present, God lights it up with eternal beams. As God told Isaiah, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.” (Isaiah 41:10a)

God wants us to focus either on the heavenly realm or on the present moment. C.S. Lewis’ Uncle Screwtape tells us more, “He would therefore have them continually concerned with eternity...or else obeying the present voice of conscience, bearing the present cross, receiving the present grace, giving thanks for the present pleasure.” Wondrously, God’s glowing presence provides all we need for our circumstances: perseverance for our duties, strength to bear our hardships, and gratitude for our pleasant moments.

Unfortunately it is all too easy for us to move away from the comforting, snug present into the cold, gloomy future. I believe C. S. Lewis included this topic in his letters because he knew that if we were to become consumed with worry and fear about the Future (or even consumed with dreams and hopes for it), we would be robbed of the intimate, sheltering presence of God.

Another great voice to help us stay in the light is Mrs. Charles E. Cowman, an American missionary to China and author of *Springs in the Valley*, a classic devotional published over seventy years ago. Mrs. Cowman recounts the testimony of a man who carried the burden of worry from the future: “The other evening I found myself staggering alone under a load that was heavy enough to crush half a dozen strong men. Out of sheer exhaustion I put it down and had a good look at it. I found that it was borrowed; part of it belonged to the following day; part of it belonged to the following week – and here was I borrowing it that it might crush me now? It is a very stupid, but a very ancient blunder.”

Sometimes we simply move too fast to really enjoy the sunny moments. Our children need our present attention, making eye contact with them, and responding with smiles and praise to their efforts and interests. Mrs. Cowman tells another pithy story about hurrying: “In the deep jungle of Africa, a traveler was making a long trek. Men had been engaged from a tribe to carry the loads. The first day they marched rapidly and went far. The traveler had high hopes of a speedy journey. But the second morning these jungle tribesmen refused to move. For some strange reason they just sat and rested. On inquiry as to the reason for this strange behavior, the traveler was informed that they had gone too fast the first day, and that they were now waiting for their souls to catch up with their bodies.”

Amazingly the conclusion of this story seems like one that we could write about our current culture: “This whirling, rushing life which so many of us live does for us what that first march did for those poor jungle tribesmen. The difference - they knew what they needed to restore life’s balance, too often we do not.” The actions of breathing deeply to receive the warmth of God’s presence and looking around to see His eternal rays, will reconnect us with the shining resources of Heaven.

I wish to clarify that dispelling gray clouds of worry and dark thoughts of the future doesn’t mean we abdicate our respon-

sibility to plan for events and duties. As C.S. Lewis observed, “to be sure, God wants men to think of the Future too – just so much as is necessary for now planning the acts of justice or charity which will probably be their duty tomorrow.”

Our compassionate Heavenly Father knows our propensity to entertain fearful visions of the future. Sometimes just listening to a person going through a trial creates a swirl of cold fear that the same will happen to us. Although we may tremble and think, “I could never do go through that,” we need to look at the way God’s present help is lighting up that friend’s circumstance and trust that whatever future events come our way, we will have the same bright and holy Presence to embrace us. A wonderful story from *The Hiding Place* shows us this trust. Just before World War II a little Dutch girl named Corrie Ten Boom asks her father how she can cope with the death of those she loves so dearly:

“Father sat down on the edge of the narrow bed. ‘Corrie,’ he began gently, ‘When you and I go to Amsterdam when do I give you your ticket?’

‘Why, just before we get on the train.’

‘Exactly. And our wise Father in heaven knows when we are going to need things, too. Don’t run out ahead of Him, Corrie. When the time comes that some of us have to die, you will look into your heart and find the strength you

need – just in time.’”

The sunshine of God’s presence makes it possible for us to live in our present, whether pleasant or difficult, and commit the future to our loving, heavenly Father who is our ever-present help. May our lives be all lit up with eternal rays!

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*Laure Covert is a freelance writer who blogs on literacy and inspiration for living: [www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com](http://www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com) and <http://bluebirdsalwaysfly.wordpress.com>. Laure and her husband, Glenn, make their home in Harrisburg, PA. This year they are homeschooling just two teen girls, since their oldest has already graduated!*

“In a word, the Future, is of all things, the thing least like eternity – for the Past is frozen and no longer flows, and the Present is all lit up with eternal rays.”  
– C.S. Lewis



# Along the Way

by Mary Shenk

## I love the book of Acts. The story of the beginning of the church.

Lives turned upside down, pivotal decisions made, the church growing and spreading like wildfire. The disciples are in the thick of it, learning and growing and spreading the good news of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit is moving in the hearts of men drawing them to Himself. God is about the business of reconciliation.

What amazes and challenges me is the willing obedience demonstrated by these amazing men and women who step out in faith to do whatever it is that God is calling them to do. Their “stable” worlds are upended when they meet Jesus, and life is never the same for them again. They are filled with an enthusiasm and passion that puts me to shame. Peter, fully restored in his relationship and fully surrendered to Christ, is used to preach that first sermon at Pentecost and goes on to be used amazingly for the kingdom. Stephen’s daring sermon and challenge to the Sanhedrin which ends up costing him his life. Philip, a willing servant, goes down the road to which the angel directs him and shares with a person that he does not know. All done in faith and obedience. Of course there is Saul, later known as Paul, and Barnabas, Silas, Cornelius, James the brother of Jesus, Lydia, Timothy, Apollos, Priscilla and Aquilla... I could go on.

I like to think that if I could talk to them now, they would tell me that their lives did not turn out quite like they may have expected or planned. Everything changed when they encountered Jesus. The mundane became expressions of worship. Grace and mercy triumphed where the law had reigned just a short time earlier - beauty out of ashes. These people understood fully who they were because they had a correct understanding of who God is, and it changed them and made them willing to be living sacrifices to God. Their plans for life may have changed along the way and turned out differently. Sometimes even in the midst of ministry

Grace and mercy triumphed where the law had reigned just a short time earlier - beauty out of ashes.

God redirected them elsewhere, and they were willing to go wherever to do what God asked of them.

I wonder, do we have that passion? Do we have that same understanding of what God has done for us? Do we have a desire to do whatever He asks of us, even if that changes and challenges our plans? Are we passing this on to our children? Are we passionate about making disciples? It starts with each of us.

I think back over the course of our lives, and I can tell you confidently that without our Savior, we would be in a totally different place today. It is because of Him and His great grace and mercy that we have been transformed. He’s moved us around placing us in different ministries and positions to learn, grow, and impact others with the Gospel. We’re at one of those pivotal moments again. I have been serving with the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) for the last 15 years – first in a volunteer role and then in the last several years in different staff positions. (Duane joined me of-

ficially this last year, but has always been an avid supporter.) I can’t even express how blessed we’ve been to serve and be part of this organization. It’s been amazing to meet so many of you. But God is calling us onward to a new challenge, and while it will upend our status quo, we’re looking forward to stepping out in faith to see what He has in store for us. We’re walking along beside the great I AM as He leads us on the adventure of life lived for Him. Trusting that what He has in store is grander than what we could have ever planned for ourselves and conveying His story to others through the story of our lives all along the way.

*Mary is married to her best friend Duane. They have homeschooled both of their sons (Jeremy and Derek) since the beginning in the style of Charlotte Mason. Jeremy is now married to his sweet wife Amanda, and granddaughter Skylar was born a year ago. Derek is in his junior year of high school. Spending time with family and friends, working with kids, being outdoors, traveling, and riding motorcycles are some of their favorite pastimes. Mary enjoys helping and mentoring moms on their homeschool journey.*

# Calling on His Name

*Because He turned his ear to me, I will call on Him as long as I live. Psalm 116:2*

by Sue Eckert

**Moses and Aaron were among His priests, Samuel was among those who called on His name; they called on the Lord and He answered them. Psalm 99:6**

French-speaking West Africa—I went to the market to buy cloth. On the way I saw a man with a cart of pineapples. Good supper dessert; I stopped to buy one. Next to him was a vegetable seller who recognized me. “Madame!” he called out, hoping I’d take a look at what he had to offer too. I turned and smiled, but kept remembering the cloth I needed to buy. Taking the pineapple, I continued towards my destination.

The white sweet potato seller was on the way. He greeted me with “Hajjiya!” a term used for women who have made the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. The veil I wear in public elicits this title; it often gives me an open door to talk about Jesus. Picking a pile of his vegetables, I paid, said goodbye, and started walking again.

At the cloth seller I got, “Hello, Nassara,” a title given to white people in this country. I put the bag of sweet potatoes down and started looking through his selection.

“Hey! Someone left a bag of sweet potatoes here!” he commented after a minute or so.

“They’re mine,” I said.

“No, they’re not. Nassaras don’t eat sweet potatoes,” he countered.

“Oh, really?” Amused, I continued, “Then what do Nassaras eat?”

“They eat meat. They drink liquor and sodas too.”

“Is that so? My family does eat meat, and we like sodas from time to time, but we don’t drink liquor.” Then I playfully began to list all sorts of local food we eat that I knew would surprise him. Whether he chose to believe me or not, I’m sure he had something to talk about later with his market buddies!

My last stop was to leave the cloth with my friend Victoria, a Christian seamstress. As I entered the low-roofed, tin shack, a young apprentice greeted me, “Bonsoir, Tanti!” (Auntie). She took the market bags from my hands and invited me to sit on a wooden bench.

Madame. Hajjiya. Nassara. Tanti. Titles and names attributed to one woman, me. Yet they all reflect facets of who I am, or who people assume me to be. They all cause me to turn, to engage, to respond. I won’t turn my ear to a mocker or to someone calling someone else. People call on my name, so to say, and I answer them.

What do you call God? When we are sick, He is Healer and Physician. In our weakness and fatigue, He is Strength and Comfort. When we confess our sins, He is Forgiver and Restorer. In our confusion, He is

Wisdom and Peace. God’s Word has given us many titles and names to describe I AM WHO I AM, and each name gets His attention.

Have you ever stopped to consider that many of our favorite worship songs focus on different facets of God’s Name? It’s Him we want, every bit of Him, yet contemplating who He is in little bits. We call to Him, and He turns His ear to us. We don’t need to go through an exhaustive list in order to connect with Him. When we call on His name, invoking one title and truth this time and another the next, our gracious God answers. He owns the names; He responds in perfect wisdom, engaging our bodies and souls according to our truest needs.

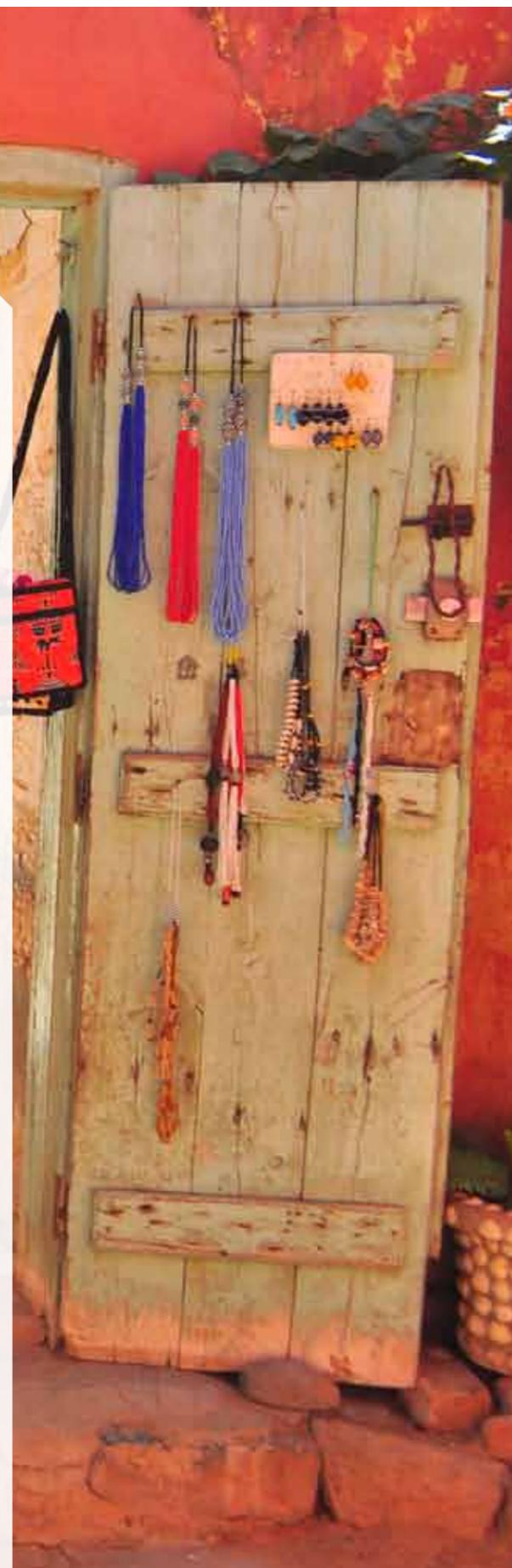
The best education I can offer my children is to help them develop the habit of calling on the Lord. The greatest need in my own life is to do the same. Brothers and sisters, He is near to those who call upon Him! Be encouraged.

*Sue Eckert is learning to call on the Lord with her family, currently in West Africa. She and her husband Tim have been blessed with seven children, three of whom are still in the home. They have been homeschooling for over 20 years and call the Hershey area their USA “home.” Sue’s e-book, Mamane’s Journey: An African Muslim Youth Learns of Christ, is available at <http://masterdesign.org/eckert.html> and makes a great family read-aloud.*

## Photos!

If you have candid images of your family homeschooling or taking field trips or just being a family, we’d love to use them in the CHAP Magazine!

Images should be high-res and can be submitted through <https://chap.webconnex.com/homeschoolphotoupload>



# CHAP CONTEST CORNER

## ESSAY CONTEST

MOVE OVER  
C.S. LEWIS!  
LET'S HEAR FROM  
OUR YOUNG WRITERS IN  
THE CHAP ESSAY CONTEST!

This year's essay contest will be based on the Convention theme verse: Psalm 78:5b-6 "Teach this testimony and law to your children, so that the next generation would know it, so that the children not yet born would themselves arise and tell their own children, who could then put their confidence in God." Each participant should write on what this verse means and how it applies to the student. The essay should be no more than 1,000 words in length (typewritten and double spaced). The essay contest will be divided into two age groups: 10-14 and 15-18. Prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place in each age group. Entries must be submitted online by March 15, 2014. Winners will be announced during a brief ceremony at the CHAP Convention on May 10, 2014. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) for more details and to enter online.

## SCIENCE FAIR

PUT THAT  
HYPOTHESIS TO THE  
TEST AND ENTER THE  
FIRST EVER CHAP SCIENCE FAIR!

Enter one of three CHAP Regional Science Fairs to compete for prizes and a chance to compete at the CHAP State Science Fair at the Convention on May 9-10, 2014.

Regional Science Fairs:

1. Locations & Dates:
  - a. Hershey Free Church in Hershey, PA – March 8, 2014
  - b. Biblical Seminary in Hatfield, PA – March 15, 2014
  - c. Fellowship Church in Dallas, PA – March 22, 2014
2. Divided into three age groups:
  - a. ages 4-9 (for display only – students will receive a small gift – no prizes awarded)
  - b. ages 10-14 (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners will receive prizes and be invited to compete at the CHAP State Science Fair)
  - c. ages 15-18 (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners will receive prizes and be invited to compete at the CHAP State Science Fair)

State Science Fair:

1. CHAP Convention at the PA Farm Show Complex on May 9-10, 2014
2. Divided into two age groups:
  - a. ages 10-14 (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners will receive prizes)
  - b. ages 15-18 (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners will receive prizes)

Entry fee applies. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) for more details and to enter online. Visit for more details and to enter online.

## SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

PLAN  
FOR YOUR  
FUTURE  
WITH THE CHAP  
SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST!

Once again the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) is offering two scholarships to traditionally homeschooled students. Students should have already graduated or will be graduating in the Spring of 2014. The scholarships are for Pennsylvania resident students who are planning to continue their education. Prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> place (\$1,000) and 2<sup>nd</sup> place (\$500). All components of the scholarship applications must be printed and mailed to CHAP Scholarship, 126 W. School St., Hatfield, PA 19440 by March 15, 2014. Winners will be announced during a brief ceremony at the CHAP Convention on May 10, 2014. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) for more details and to download an application.

## ART CONTEST

UNLEASH  
YOUR CREATIVITY  
AND ENTER THE CHAP  
ART CONTEST!

The annual Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Art Contest is open to all traditionally homeschooled students between the ages of 10 through 18. The art contest will be divided into two categories (artwork using pencil, pen, pastels, and paint) and then broken down into two age groups (10-14 and 15-18). Prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place in each age group. Entries must be submitted online by March 15, 2014. Entry fee applies. Winners will be announced during a brief ceremony at the CHAP Convention on May 10, 2014. Visit [www.chaponline.com](http://www.chaponline.com) for more details and to enter online.

# 2014 Graduation Ceremony

Friday, May 9th at 7pm at the Farm  
Show Complex

Charge will be given by Dr. Jeff Myers, President  
of Summit Ministries.

Be recognized for your achievements, hard  
work, and answered prayers! The Christian  
Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania  
has once again decided to offer a graduation  
ceremony and would like to extend an invitation  
to all 2014 graduates to participate to honor  
your achievements.

Guests who do not attend the CHAP Convention  
will be permitted to enter the area of the Farm  
Show Complex for the graduation ceremony  
only with no fee for entry, please be aware that  
a parking fee may be requested from the Farm  
Show Complex which is not in our control.

There will be a registration fee of \$50 which  
covers the rental of cap and gown, keepsake  
tassel, certificate of participation and folder  
from CHAP, program costs and incidentals.

We look forward to honoring this year's  
graduates and their parents publicly for their  
accomplishments along with giving the  
honor and glory to the Lord for all He has  
accomplished through us for educating our  
children under His authority. May God continue  
to give each of you (parents and graduates) the  
patience, diligence, and endurance to the run  
the race well! See you at the Finish Line!

Please contact Angie at [graduation@chaponline.com](mailto:graduation@chaponline.com)  
with any questions.

Register online at [www.chaponline.com/2014convention/graduation/](http://www.chaponline.com/2014convention/graduation/)  
by February 15!



# Common Core & the CHAP Convention

"Bridge A is 407 feet long. Bridge B is 448 feet long. Which bridge is longer?"

by Jim Perrin

**Try to answer this math problem verbally: Bridge A is 407 feet long. Bridge B is 448 feet long. Which bridge is longer?**

If you said, "Bridge B is longer because 448 is greater than 407," you would be mostly – *wrong*. At least you would be according to a recent Common Core aligned text book used in a private school in Indiana<sup>1</sup>.

So what is Common Core? In 2010 the Department of Education released a set of national standards with the purported purpose of making students "college and career ready." The standards, known as Common Core, attempt to achieve this by enforcing English language arts and mathematics benchmarks for K-12 students across the nation. Most states have voluntarily accepted Common Core into their curricula, along with a share of \$4.35 billion in stimulus to induce their participation. The success of the program has been called into question with the myriad of ensuing implementation and testing problems that in some cases is deleteriously altering already successful state education programs<sup>2</sup>.

Currently these standards do not apply to homeschoolers but are still perceived with some concern for several reasons. The first one being that some standardized tests have become Common Core aligned with more likely to follow. The Common Core's focus on informational texts makes it easy to accentuate particular world views within the tests<sup>3</sup>. In addition to the imposition of top down, universal standards is a vast student data collection mandate that could, and probably would, expand to include homeschool students at some future point. Fortunately many states are rethinking their participation in Common Core due to popular resistance from parents, educators, and some politicians. It is important for concerned parents of all students, homeschooled or otherwise, to be informed and active in their response to this federal program.

You may notice that some curricula available at the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Convention will state that it is Common Core aligned. What this typically means is that the content already meets the criteria necessary for

this claim with no specific changes to its prior content. Others may have been modified in order to comply. If interested, please ask the vendor what changes, if any, were implemented to conform.

CHAP is honored by the participation of all our vendors and is proud to host their vast array of curriculum products, teaching tools, books, software, toys, etc (the list is truly endless!) As you walk the aisles of the Convention, please remember to thank them for coming and let them know that you look to them to be faithful allies in preserving the rights and traditions of homeschoolers in every state.

If you're wondering what the "correct" answer was to the math problem – you should have said "I analyzed the hundreds, the tens, and the ones columns individually." Now you know.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Devine, Daniel James. "Uncommon Uprising." *WORLD* 5 October 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Gass, Jamie and Jim Stergios. "The Beginning of Common Core's Trouble." *The Weekly Standard* 29 May 2013.

<sup>3</sup> "Will the Common Core impact homeschools and private schools?" <http://www.hslda.org/commoncore/topic7.aspx> (28 September 2013).

*Jim has been married to his best friend, Tami, for 14 years. They've been traditionally homeschooling their two boys, Jimmy (age 9) and Cody (age 6), for the past four years. Jim is a Deacon at the Reformed Baptist Church of Franconia, a Penn State graduate, and is employed as a mechanical engineer. Jim's favorite Bible verse is Psalm 11:7 "For the Lord is righteous, He loves justice; the upright will see His face."*



# Lasting As a Leader

14



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by Doug Bartsch

**Lasting as a leader is a tough challenge.** Burnout is a real possibility! As a pastor for nearly 20 years, I have seen other leaders disappear from our community and possibly from ministry. I know the unique challenges of serving God and people in a non-profit organization. I too have felt the sting of criticism, been crushed by overwhelming disappointment, and questioned if I should get out and do something else.

By God's grace, a wonderful wife, and the faithfulness of many leaders, I am still enjoying ministry. I've had to learn (too often the hard way) a few things that I hope you will read and apply to your life. If you want to last as a leader apply these principles to your life.

**Love What You Do And Do What You Love.** There are things in every leader's job description that we love and there are things we don't. Over time you will learn what "lights your fire" and what steals your energy and joy. Make adjustments to do more of what gives you energy and eliminate (or delegate) what pulls you down.

**Schedule Sabbath Rest.** The principle of Sabbath rest was given to us by God as part of the Ten Commandments. God commanded us to rest, not for His good, but for our good. He knew we needed to rest and recreate periodically! Rest enables us to lead from a reservoir of renewed

vision, purpose, and energy. It gives God time to speak into our victories and frustrations. So let's look at a few ways to increase the rest in our lives:

**Daily Refreshing** - Although it's important to get a good night's sleep, I want to encourage you to do more than sleep. Schedule some time each day to be with Jesus! I have heard testimonies of how moral failures often start by the neglect of a daily time with Jesus. Spend some time in God's Word, in prayer, and reading an encouraging book. It's also important to plan some exercise into your day. A healthy spirit, soul, and body allows you to lead for the long term.

**Weekly Withdrawal** - In addition to attending your local church, it's important that you withdraw from your primary vocation at least one day a week. That is the Sabbath principle. With this day, slow the pace and invest in your family and yourself. Take the initiative to schedule a date night with your spouse. Plan a game time with your kids. Also use this day to reflect on the past week and towards the end of this day plan for the coming week. It is especially refreshing if you stay close to home and avoid running errands on this day.

**Monthly Reflection** - Another good discipline is to schedule some time each month to review your personal growth, measure your progress towards your per-

sonal mandates, and lay out next steps. Sometimes you will celebrate the progress, and other times you will dread the process. However if you stick with it, you will begin to see a series of small victories that will motivate you to keep going.

**Annual Vacation** - This is a great time of year to begin to talk with your spouse and family about vacation plans for next year. Schedule a vacation after a particularly stressful time in your schedule. Give yourself time to recoup and reenergize for the next season of life. My wife and I have found a few mini-vacations of two or three days revitalize our energy and help us reconnect. Get these vacations on the calendar. Failure to schedule will result in a shortage of rest. This will put your leadership at risk.

**Forgive.** You cannot carry the hurts and disappointments of life and leadership and last as a leader. The lack of forgiveness will clog up your life. You will become a cesspool of negative and unhealthy emotions that will boil over at the most inopportune time. Leadership is often built over a lifetime; don't destroy it in a flurry of unforgiveness. Choose to forgive daily by faith. God will meet you and help you to forgive.

In life there seems to be two types of people, those who drive their cars with the gas tank at least half full and those who dread the low fuel light. Leadership is much

easier if we have some margin and cushion built into our hearts and schedule. It's your choice.

On a recent mission trip I had the privilege of reconnecting with a man who at 90 years old has been a pastor for nearly 70 years. When asked the secret to lasting as a leader, he shared two simple words: **Don't Quit!** In those moments when you feel like giving up...don't!

Lasting as a leader does not happen automatically or accidentally. Increase your joy and longevity by doing things you enjoy, building adequate rest into your schedule, and choosing to forgive those who have wronged you.

*Doug Bartsch is the husband of Kim and father of Spencer and Bailey. Sensing God's call to ministry from an early age, Doug and Kim founded His Place Family Church in 1994 ([www.hpfc.org](http://www.hpfc.org)), a growing ministry they continue to lead. Prior to launching the church, Doug spent over ten years as an accountant in public accounting and in a major corporation. Over the past ten years Kim and Doug have enjoyed homeschooling their children. Doug's hunger to develop as a leader has been enhanced by life experiences and great mentors. Doug was the guest speaker at CHAP's 2013 Renew Conference, a two day retreat designed to invigorate homeschool leaders.*

# Homeschool Easy



by Lee Giles

**Do you ever get to dinner without finishing the day's school work?** Are you always on the go with lessons and activities, trying to make sure your kids don't miss out? Did you ever imagine that homeschooling could be easy?

I used to always say that we did school easy. My kids would do math, and then they would read from our bookshelf something related to a history or science topic. I made up English assignments on the fly, using the reading for a lesson on grammar, vocabulary, or writing. Once my oldest turned eight, I started adding more subjects and more written work, as well as using websites for additional learning on our history and science topics.

Each year I got a little more organized. I started writing out assignments for my two oldest children every weekend for the coming week. I would bookmark websites and label them with the day each was to be used. At the end of the week the bookmarks were deleted and the assignment sheets thrown away, but

I knew I would just have to do it over again for the next child, and the next, and the next.

I started writing out my children's assignments online so that they would be saved. I made the decision not to write the assignments directly to my children, but wrote them so that anyone could use the lessons. I didn't want to have all of this for only my kids to use, and I also wanted to help others who needed to homeschool for free.

It took some figuring, but I managed to order the assignments so that English and math were progressive for each grade level while all the children could study history and science topics together. Because I was making the assignments for anyone to use, I made another decision, to only use free materials that were available to everyone. This released me from the perpetual search and download mission of chasing "today only" freebies.

I've continued putting my children's assignments online. I now

"My children are becoming excellent at the things they love because they have the time to spend pursuing their passions."

have four children using what I call the *Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool*. I've created assignments for every subject required by the state, so physical education, health, music, and art are covered. Safety, including fire safety, is touched on as well, so I can show that all these subjects are covered in my homeschool. I've also added in computer, logic, and Bible. These extra courses, except for Bible, are just once a week, and lessons are always kept short; so it's never overwhelming trying to get it all done. I've planned it so my kids can just go online and get to work independently.

*Easy Peasy* now goes from preschool through high school. My preschoolers learn to read with just five to ten minutes of fun a day. It's always been my strategy to teach my kids to read first, before we start learning anything else officially, because it makes "school" so much easier once they are reading well.

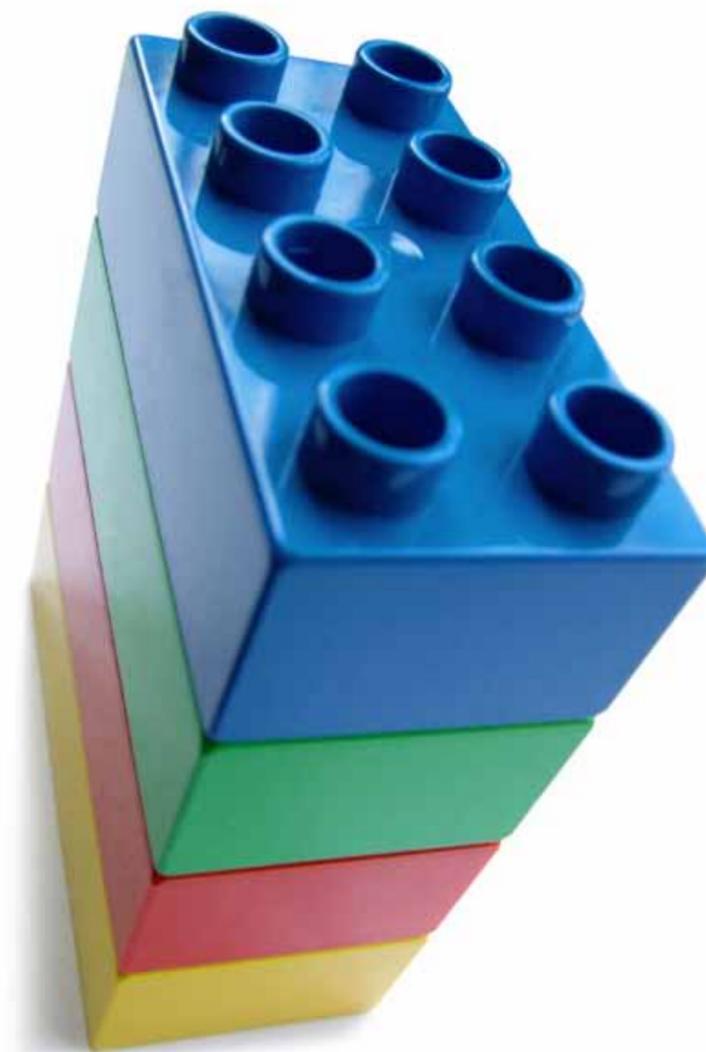
High school courses are still in the works, but I've already completed a full year's worth of courses. All high school courses offer grading guidelines. Many courses offer midterms and finals as well as quizzes and rubrics for grading papers or projects, so I don't feel like I'm making up a grade.

The assignments you see on my *Easy Peasy* site are what my children do for school. I don't enroll them in outside classes. We don't go to Latin or chess club. School lasts from five minutes to three and a half hours depending on the grade level and the day's assignments then my kids are free to do whatever it is they love to do. One loves art, one music, one computers.

My children are becoming excellent at the things they love because they have the time to spend pursuing their passions. Although I'm convinced that those passions will be important

in their futures, I also want my children to be educated and fully prepared for college and life's work. My kids may do school easy, but they still learn to solve functions and write effective essays. I think we've found the perfect balance for our family, making school comprehensive but not intensive. How are your school days? Are they Easy Peasy?

*Lee Giles is mom to five young boys and one teenage daughter and has homeschooled them all from birth. Her family has served the Lord overseas for more than eleven years. She's the author of the Christian novel, The King Will Make a Way, and creator of the Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool, a free and complete curriculum for homeschoolers. <http://allinonehomeschool.com/>*





# SEEKING MENTORS

Throughout Pennsylvania

by Angie Sellers

### Homeschooling can be a lonely journey.

I remember when I first considered homeschooling my five children over ten years ago. I was unsure where to start or how to start. I was unsure how to go about dealing with the school system or what were the requirements for my state. Yes, all this information was on the internet, but it was so hard to understand. The Lord blessed me by fulfilling a need in my life

without me actually asking for it. He brought someone who had been homeschooling for a number of years into my life to answer all my questions. She was my encourager that first year, reminding me why I made this change. She reminded me why I was making the sacrifice on the days when I was overwhelmed and felt so underequipped. She became my mentor and source of knowledge, direction, and many times prayer!

Homeschooling your children is one of the biggest decision you will make. It will change your life for the better. It will challenge you in MANY areas of your life. You will seek the Lord for strength, words, wisdom, and direction each day to mold the hearts of your children as you lead them through their education. Sometimes you can feel overwhelmed, underequipped, and totally lost. This is where our Christian Homeschooling Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Mentors can help, but before we can provide this service for homeschooling families WE NEED MENTORS!

Why a mentor? The Lord Jesus mentored, or disciplined, His disciples. He showed them how He wanted them to build His church. In so many things in life we need and use that same model. We need others to show us, encourage us, and educate us in the right direction.

What is a mentor? A mentor is someone who can answer questions and encourage others on this journey and way of life. Just as Christ had disciples to guide and equip, our mentors will guide and equip fellow homeschooling families.

We are looking for women and families that are willing to speak into the lives of others. It will be a simple process. We ask that you view this program as a way to minister to families who are just beginning the journey which the Lord has placed you on. If you have the gift of encouragement, have been homeschooling your children for at least 10 years, and are ready to share your knowledge with others in your community, we need you! What a joy it will be to walk hand in hand and help others, bearing their burdens, and loving the body of Christ as our Lord loved us.

If you are interested in becoming a CHAP Mentor, please contact Angie Sellers - [mentor@chaponline.com](mailto:mentor@chaponline.com)

*Angie Sellers is: Daughter of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wife to Beloved Samuel. Mother of 7 Warriors for the Kingdom of Christ. Homeschooler for 10 years and counting...*





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to come

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PA Farm Show Complex

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