

Margery Williams Terpstra: two expressions of her belief prompted by two stillborn boys.

"We Have Seen His Star

7/31/2004

and Are Come

to Worship Him." Mt.2:2

The Wise Men

10/29/2016

4/12/2007

WOW! The Wonder of Worship!



ALOHA KE AKUA (God is Love)

*Aloha, Beloved, Ones, (twice) from the
cotton of my heart!*

7/20/2013

10/22 & 12/19/2008

Advent 2016 – Epiphany 2017

PREAMBLE: No, you do not have someone else's letter! This is meant to be a conversation starter when we "meet again."

Dear Mom,

Wouldn't it be nice if we could talk together? Maybe even meet Marius together? His birth made me a great-great-grandmother. He'll be 3-years-old come January and I haven't seen him yet. I thought he could at least enjoy the STAR. Maybe we could sing "Twinkle, Twinkle..." then tell him that a man named Mozart, who lived long ago, wrote the tune we sing it to, when he was 3-years'-old!

I've been thinking of you a lot this year. How you loved letters! I think and pray for family and friends when I'm in my Holy Chair. You may not have called yours that – at 1851 NE 60th, yours was actually a blue sofa facing the big window; mine is what gets me up in the morning, meeting with the Lord. My view is more expansive: the Olympic Mountains to the south (you must have seen them, too, as a girl living in Victoria, B.C.); sunrise to the east, with clouds that give the sky its glory; a BEAM through the stained glass window in the apex on bright days; and, often, deer at play. On the north wall near the door hangs a framed copy of the Bellingham Herald dated 11/11/1918, with a big, bold headline of PEACE ON EARTH – "Mom's last Canadian and first U.S. homes," I tell guests.

Early this year, I was looking forward to 7/31/2016. The date would mark graduation from *Advanced Studies in Spiritual Growing On (12 years)!* Before the third week of January, a full-blown acronym of the word R-E-V-I-T-A-L-I-Z-E-D had been noted in my scribble sketch-book – seemed a good focus for Lenten study. The R: *Remembering, Reviewing, Repenting* have played out all year!

At about the same time, calls arrived from the Makiki Christian Church Pre-School 50th Anniversary Committee asking for my memories of its founding days. I served as (volunteer) First Director during its start-up and its first year. After the school received its license (part of my responsibility) and hired its first teacher, my position became more of a "sub-of-the-day." Mom, I mention this because **you were** my pre-school for the first 5 ½ years of my life. Thanks to you, I would entitle my book on those years "Many of Life's Most of Valuable Lessons I Learned at Pre-School." You had so wanted to be a teacher, and Bellingham had a "normal" school. But Grandpa met your request (read "demand") that he not move the family until your graduation from HS. I learned the ditties you created for my welcome at the S.S. program (I'm just a little girl of 3 and yet I know the Lord loves me....., etc.): Daddy loves me, Mama loves me, Grandpa and Grandma love me, Jesus loves me; and Bible verses like "God so loved the world that he gave.....;" and practical things, like how to make to make breakfast when Daddy goes to work and Mama wants to sleep in! Thankfully, I had the assurance that I was one of God's beloved as I entered Kindergarten and *12 years of Basic Public Education* in Portland, Oregon (K 9/30/1930 through HS 6/1942).

During the election campaign, I was really thinking of you. I am rather glad you didn't have many U.S. election years in your memory bank. For me, 2016 has proved to be like no other. Strangely, it REVITALIZED me like nothing else has this year. My President was FDR! I'm so glad Mr. Holland's Opus was filmed at U.S. Grant HS auditorium; I was there on a Monday a.m., 12/8/1941, listening to him declare that yesterday was "a day that would live in infamy." Even though he won the election 4 times, I was never old enough to vote for him. As school kids, we chanted "Vote for Landon and Landin (fill in the blank)!" As a college student at Wheaton speaking about FDR's accomplishments, someone of more conservative persuasion dumped a bucket of ice water on me (from up a story higher). But this year has unexpectedly stirred me. Perhaps it was because I had committed to 40 days of prayer for the Nation – we are the Nation. I had to remind myself that no person is perfect. In times like these, we especially need a candidate with an unusually high level of excellence, wisdom and integrity – *Under God, with Liberty and Justice for All*.

So, I did watch and listen, often turning off the TV lest I end up disgusted or, worse yet, depressed. I had hoped to live long enough to see a woman elected as President. For most of the campaign, I thought I would end up **not** voting. But, motherhood, the primary gift of God to carry on his creation, kicked in. And to you, Mom, I thank you for the gift of life, and I was reminded on your birthday (10/29 - just before Election Day) of the words *Life, Liberty and Justice for All* (which, in my book, includes the unborn).

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Kolonia, Ponape
July 30, 1952

My dear Mom:

Well, we may go back to Oa tomorrow so I should get my mail ready this evening. I know that you will be looking for another letter from me and since I promised to write I will see how much I can get done. Chet and Florence are both typing away on typewriters so I will enjoy using my pen which I just got back from being fixed in Honolulu.

The Lord has certainly been good in being with me and strengthening me. When I wrote last week I was really very weak but now I am up and have been out to do necessary things, and now I really feel far better than would be expected. I have certainly witnessed the power of the Lord in my life as I have never known before and the blessing has been well worth the time of trial and suffering. Yesterday when we had the funeral for the baby, I experienced the joy of the Lord as I have never known it before.

We really don't know what is the customary procedure for stillborn infants in all places but it was up to us to make some arrangements for little one. Of course, all our people would be looking to us and we wanted to do the right thing by the little life which passed by earth. How happy I was with the leading we received for I know it was right and it has brought me real happiness.

The baby was put away for us by the hospital (under refrigeration) until I could regain enough strength to be present at a burial. The public works dept. made us a little white box for a casket and we decided to bury the baby here in Kalonia before we went back to Oa. The closing two days of the special meetings were to be Mon. & Tues. so I thought that Tues. afternoon, after the other services, would be a good time if I were able to be around. The Lord wonderfully undertook and raised me up really beyond my expectation. My condition this time was of course different from the other two which were not complicated by the heavy bleeding. I was so weak after this that I couldn't even move without the blood pounding in my head, etc. etc. I was so white that you could hardly see where my lips were supposed to be and I still have very little color in my eye sockets, etc. Well, I won't worry you now with details which might make you feel bad - enough to say He was with me in the valley and has brought me forth and my heart is really filled with praise. I have felt ever since like quoting psalms of praise.

On Tuesday morning I set out with Florence and a girl whom I had made arrangements to take me shopping in her jeep and we went to buy cloth etc. to make the box into a casket. Chet was busy with the services here so Florence offered to go with me and it was a big help to have her. We bought blue cloth, pink and blue ribbon, tacks and white eyelet lace to make a ribbon. I hadn't been sure I wanted to work on the baby or not, but oh, I have been so glad that I did. I wouldn't have missed it now for the world. We made the box darling, padded it inside and out with cotton on the edges, gauze and then cloth. The lady at the store put in two little artificial flowers and we put one at each end and made a little raised pillow.

Then I started to work on the baby. I bathed him a bit at a time with warm water to thaw the flesh and what a doll he was! Perfect hands and feet and nails and so like Merrill. I cried but I also smiled and I think laughed too as he was so sweet and I got to love him at least that

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once. He was really fatter than Merrill and may be his hair would have been more blonde. His two little hands were in the most darling position one (the right) flat out, the left sort of pointed up to his little mouth and his head was turned to one side. I had a plain little white nightgown which I ran a blue satin ribbon through the neck so that it could be drawn up to fit him. Then the bow was right at his chin. It folded and draped just like a little choir or angel robe and I put an edge of ribbon at the sleeve. I tied a bow at the end of his feet and the rest of the gown pleated so cute. I wanted M. & M. to see him and I wanted it to be a lovely sight for them and it certainly was. We had not known if we could show him at the funeral but he was so darling that we did and I know the people loved seeing him.

We worked at the hospital until after 12 and left everything ready to be brought over at 3:30. By then we knew the face would be ready to show and all was darling. In the afternoon I made a little floral piece with BABY on the ribbon - you would hardly have known we were thousands of miles from an undertaker, etc. All very reasonable, too - \$2.18 at the store.

I guess many people don't have a service if the child was born dead but we didn't think it was right to bury the baby without anything so we had what turned out to be a lovely funeral. The church was packed with natives who had been here for the other meetings and some from the American group came too. We took 25 feet of black and white movies which we hope come out for you folks. Cres spoke in Eng., the songs were in Ponapean and Martin gave a fine message in Ponapean. The public works dept. dug the grave, had it covered and did everything very professionally. I really appreciated it.

It was not until Cres was speaking that the Lord blessed me with the reality of the fact that I now had a child in Heaven. I don't know that theology really teaches us much about infant deaths but I knew for mine that the Lord took his little spirit to Heaven that night as I labored and he will be there to greet me when I reach the other side. May be Daddy and Chet's Mother needed some work to do and so the Lord has given our little one to them to nurture. This has been such a wonderful realization and has made me so happy about having the baby and has made the seven months most worthwhile. I think in my heart I sort of named him Marshall, but Chet didn't like that name so we wouldn't have named him that had he lived. I guess I thought the three M's would have been cute if I had had another boy.

I really think Michael was sorry the baby didn't live. I think both of the boys would have liked us to have a baby but I trust that His time will come later and that all will go well. I will get built up and take hormones from the start, etc. I will also try not to do so much when I am pregnant, I guess.

It appears now that Florence and Cres are going to take over the house here in Kalonia and work around here. We think this will work out well. It looks as though they are going to sell the Star.

We are enjoying Cres and Florence and I think we have all been drawn together through this time. I feel so much freer with them now and I think that we will all be of help to one another. Lela will be with us in Oa for awhile at least.

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It will be nice to get back to Oa, I am sure. I will have to take things slowly for a time, but I have learned quite a bit about taking things easy.

I do hope to hear that this news of the baby does not upset you. I am praying for you as you get these letters. If I can remember even some of the lessons the Lord has taught me I shall be grateful for all the experience.

I want to give Roger and Marion something. What do they need? If I enclose a check with this letter that is what it is for.

How I love you and how I pray the Lord's best for you. The hardest thought in my time of illness was that I might cause you more sorrow. That is the main reason why I rejoiced to be made well!

Lovingly,

Margery