

a time for every season



Approaching our 10th anniversary in 2005 reminds me... to everything there is a season. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

The first season of Acres of Diamonds is depicted by Pearl Tadema's article in this issue and reminds us again of God's faithfulness.

God continues to miraculously cover our monthly expenses. Just as He came up with the \$25,000.00 for helping with the purchase of our home, He has continued to provide donations on a regular basis as needed. We praise Him for His blessings and for helping us into the four-plex apartments thus implementing Phase II for His use.

Over the years at Acres we have had many seasons. After a long stressful pregnancy we experience a time of joy when a newborn baby comes home. A time of sadness grips us when another new baby is stillborn. We weep with a young mom as she loses her child because of her drug use. A time of planting seeds of encouragement seems like a life long task. But the joy of the harvest is when a mom asks Jesus to come and be Lord of her life. A time to embrace when a woman hasn't been hugged in years or a child needs reassurance. A time to dance and laugh when a young family receives a donated car. A season sharing a gift of love for the women Jesus brings here because He is love. So many

times of healing grasped as His love flows over the many different scars of life. How in the same house there have been times of war and occasionally times of peace.

Children living at AOD inspire a good perspective. . .

Five year-old Shyanne was asked, "If Jesus was sitting right here, what would you ask him?" Shyly, twisting her hair around her finger, she responds, "Would you play with me?"

Having lived here for almost 3 months, a five year-old asks mommy, "Isn't it time for us to have to move again?"

One 11 year-old boy apologized for damage he caused, because as a man, it was time for him to fess up to his part in the event.

Two little girls jump up and down on the beds, so excited to move in and have their own home and their own bed.

Thanks for a great decade of your prayer support and generosity.

Laura Wandoishima, *Executive Director Acres of Diamonds*



...the first
season



Rits and Pearl Tadema and friends

What does God want to do for homeless women and their children?

by Pearl Tadema,
Founder of Acres of Diamonds.

As a kid in high school, I read Matthew 25 where we are told to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give a drink to the thirsty, and visit the stranger or prisoner. The next day I saw ragged barefoot little children on the snowy sidewalks of Carnation. So I prayed, God if you want me to do something about their plight, tell me how and I will do it. I forgot about the prayer. But, God never forgets a prayer! Fifty years later, God asked me if I was still willing.

I told my good friend Joy about the prayer, and I asked if she would go with me to visit some women's shelters, and see how they helped homeless women and their children. We traveled from Bellingham to Tacoma. The YWCA had a three-story home in Redmond. It was new, had an employment office, baby-sitting service, etc. The manager spoke sharply to us, "Don't think you can do this. It takes lots of money, big organizations to back you, and a way to keep the funds coming in. Novices like you will never make it."

I thought, if God doesn't forget a fifty year-old prayer, He will show us a way. Other shelters we visited were simply large homes housing six to ten women, some with children, but most did not provide direct Christian teaching, nor did they help them become self-sufficient with a job. We came away with a number of conclusions:

1. Most women can't change from homeless to self-sufficiency in ninety days. (the limit of stay for most shelters) We would need to provide nearly a two-year stay since it takes eighteen months or more to change habit patterns.

2. Everyone who came to us would be entitled to know how to access Jesus as her Savior. Bible studies each week could demonstrate to them that God has the power to help them, and that He wants to.

3. We should teach the "14-Steps" (AA's 12-Steps plus Jesus and His Holy Spirit).

4. Urine-analysis would need to be done regularly because we are too naive to tell whether or not they were using.

5. These women needed help budgeting to get them out of credit card debt, pay off outstanding tickets, and save for first and last month's rent.

6. We should provide parenting classes to ensure they could be in control of their home atmosphere.

7. We would need to help with assistance in getting their GED, a job, or community college.



That was our start for goal setting. We described our endeavor as a Christ-centered Home Facilitating Woman with Their Children toward Self-sufficiency. We needed a board to apply for a non-profit status. Joy said she would be vice president. Joan (another friend), just returning from teaching English in Taiwan, said she would be secretary-treasurer. By default I became president until we could find a proper replacement. We were soon informed that we had a temporary non-profit status. We had to prove after one year that we had met monthly and that our goals were being accomplished. Then we could get a more permanent status. "Oh my, are we ready for this?" we asked.

I thought, "We are definitely not ready." However, this was not just our idea, it was God's. He was the One who said, "In as much as you have done it to the least of these, you have done it to Me!" As His idea, He had to make it work, for certainly, I did not feel smart enough. I said, "I think we should look around for a house, and if God provides that, we'll know we are on the right track with Him and that He wants us to proceed, ready or not."

Joy said, "Let's stop by the Duvall real estate office and see if Wes Childers knows of anything." "Nothing in Carnation or Duvall," he said, "but Dave and I own a house a few blocks away. Someone is renting now, but plans to move out in a couple of months. You could rent it until you get a down payment." We agreed, "This could be a good starter, but it only had five bedrooms." The rent was \$1,000/month so Joy and I spoke to churches, community centers, Republican Women's Club, and wherever we could get people excited about helping homeless women and their children with donations.

I couldn't get myself to beg for a quarter to make a personal phone call, but I could get passionate about women and children living in a car or under a big coat on the streets of Seattle. Every



A time... for one Eleven year-old boy to take responsibility for his actions

month, somehow, the thousand dollar rent came in, while I kept reminding myself, God, this is your idea, you know I can't pay for it. We needed to expand, but couldn't until we owned the house. Rits, my husband, was preaching at a Church that was selling their building. I begged them for money for the down payment. Imagine our ecstasy when a check came in for \$25,000.00!

God was bringing women off the street, giving them eternal life, and setting their feet on solid ground! Next we could access the volunteers who wanted to add four bedrooms, a large meeting room, and an extra bathroom... more blessings for more women.

The question was never, "What can I do for God? But what does God want me to do for His hurting and homeless kids?" And, "Was I willing to let Him use my car, my hands and my feet to do the job?"

Pearl Tadema, Founder
Isaiah 40:28-30

www.acresofdiamonds.org



Laura Wandoishima, Executive Director, and her family

Ongoing needs...

*If you can help, please contact us at:
(425) 788-9999
acresofdiamonds@cablespeed.com*

meat
laundry detergent
non-perishable food
toilet paper
cleaning supplies
dish soap
feminine products
paper towels

See our Littlest Angel Pageant

www.freewebs.com/littlestangelpageant

**Winners to be announced
in our next newsletter!**

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