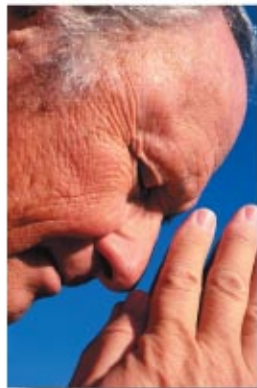


cared for by a ruler whose government is characterized by unending peace. The Hebrew "shalom" carries the concept of total well being, of wholeness, an inner and outer sense of being in harmony with life and the world around me. Our Messiah is the Prince of this kind of peace. No temporary economic upsurge, no political promise, no governmental program can bring an unending sense of well being, wholeness and harmony. Yet that is exactly what we were created and long for.



At Open Hearts we are committed to seeing people experience "shalom" in their souls. Wholeness, on one hand, is a gift. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27) By faith I receive from Christ what I cannot provide for myself. This becomes my confident foundation. On the other hand, "shalom harmony" is something I pursue as I work through damage in my relationships. "Whoever would love life and see good days... must seek peace and pursue it." (1 Peter 3:10-11) This passage addresses how to live in shalom. It makes it clear that shalom is to be sought and chased after – not achieved by simply sitting in a lotus position and thinking peaceful thoughts. In fact, there is a disruptive aspect to the pursuit of shalom. It strikes as I identify ways where evil has deceived me, keeping

me the victim of my story, trapping me in shame, contempt and a relational style that prevents me from fully being the man God has called me to be. Group members help me see the depravity that comes from believing the lies of the deceiver, and call me to embrace the truth. Only as I respond in repentance and faith will I experience shalom.

People long for shalom. They do not want to be tossed about by circumstances that roll in like the waves on a stormy sea. Groups become places where sea weary travelers find safe harbor. Time is taken to examine the "underwater" bow and stern to see where water is being taken on so that the damage can be repaired and progress on the journey can continue.

We are making steady progress in training leaders at SALTS. Couples groups that were offered for the first time in October focused on marital shalom (see testimony). Still, requests for help are becoming more frequent from disrupted regions where trauma, abuse and neglect abound. As life becomes increasingly more uncertain, we expect opportunities for ministry to grow. It is good to know the Prince of Peace, who, in uncertain times, carries us on His shoulders and offers shalom to so many others through the work He does in us.

May you know the shalom of Christ, the Prince of Peace, in your heart, soul, mind and body as you prepare for 2009!

A Message from Sandy Burdick



I am continuing another round of chemotherapy that ends in January. The side effects of chemo and radiation have been difficult. The Lord has encouraged me through

His people. He lets me know that people are praying for me and that is such a comfort.

I am in two small groups with SALTS leaders through our local church. Others are heading up the ministry during this time and just letting me be a participant. So many of you have connected with me. Thank you for

your kindnesses.

My request for prayer is:

- Endurance for the journey ahead.
- Faith, hope and love...the very things He promises.
- Healing.
- The opportunity to give back to others some of what I have been given this year.

As you labor in the ministry, your labor is not in vain. Many lives are being touched. "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in ministering to the saints." (Hebrews 6: 10)

OHM Needs Macedonians!

Paul said of the Macedonians that "out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity...they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints." (II Corinthians 8:2-4)



We are trusting God for a Macedonian response between now and year end. We need over \$40,000 to meet our 2008 budget. Donations, not events, sustain OHM.

Our ministry does not end at SALTS, but reaches over 1500 men and women in Grace Groups across the U.S. and overseas. As we minister to leaders, they minister to communities. When you join us you participate in advancing the kingdom of God in the hearts of people around the world.

Would you consider a special gift to enable us to continue to be there for people who need to know the healing touch of Christ through His body?

To be a Macedonian, simply use the enclosed envelope. Your help is needed today!