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I am a recently retired research coordinator having spent 30 years studying pathogenic and symbiotic bacteria. I have four adult children that live in Atlanta, all married, five grandchildren and three more on the way. My hobbies include gardening, reading, fishing, sewing and visiting the grandkids. Another great pleasure is singing with church choirs, Friendship Community Choir and Athens Chamber Singers. My most cherished outreach has been conducting small groups based on the works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and writing my annual Lenten devotional. The later effort has grown from writing the first devotional for my family fourteen years ago into sharing my work with family, friends and local congregations. I also am serving my second consecutive term on the church council at Holy Cross in Athens, GA and have served in other lay capacities. For the past ten years I have been sewing fleece blankets (>100 per year) to donate to those in need including local senior centers, native Americans in both South Dakota and North Carolina, homeless and others in need. Many of these blankets have gone to children. I pray while making the blankets that the people they will unfold will feel comfort and know God's love.

My favorite Bible verse is John 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Our choir sang a song based on these words. The song was powerful and inspiring. This verse speaks to my heart. Being someone who enjoys writing, I realize not only the power of the word, but also the sound of words and how they impact people. I like the imagery that from the very beginning of time, God's word was and always will be true. God is constant and is steadfast. Life seems to constantly change but God's love for us doesn't waver.

The pandemic has caused our congregation to utilize Zoom meetings and just seeing familiar faces on my screen is a blessing. Our congregation has been busy helping out those in need of food. Our Member Care committee (of which I am a member) tries to contact via phone our church members to see if they have any prayers requests or are in need. Simply talking on the phone has taken on new meaning and significance. When I began to write my latest devotional, I wanted to offer a topic of study that would encourage and warm the reader's hearts. I asked friends to share a time in their lives where they felt God's presence in the way of a coincidence. People were not only willing to share their stories with me but gave permission for me to include the stories in the devotional. Each year I am humbled that people will read my devotional, which is a precious and encouraging gift to me. I had sent the devotional to a friend who is a pastor at a local church and he asked if he could share it with his congregation. Even though we aren't halfway through the devotional I have received many comments indicating that people are moved by the stories. All of this is a gift from God.

My whole life has been blessed by God's abundance. I realize that the more I give of myself to others the more I have received. I was blessed with loving parents, brothers, husband, children, in laws, grandchildren, friends and church families throughout my life that have encouraged me in my creative endeavors. I have met amazing people that inspire me to do more. I am a beloved child of God and for that I am grateful.

