

# HOPE HOME

Bringing the message of Hope to the community

## My Second Life as a People Greeter at SAMS CLUB

Dale Lewis

I'll have finished celebrating my second anniversary as a Sam's Club People Greeter as this issue of Hope to Home hits the website. While not worthy of an all-night party or even a standing ovation, I'd like to share some thoughts on my days at Sam's without underwhelming you.



One of the hardest battles I've struggled with at Sam's Club #6309 is not what you might expect — being on my feet for hours or dealing with frustrated members. It is simply day dreaming about what I deserve to have . . . the American right to have what others have purchased and possess, especially when a 60" flat screen TV rolls by me at the exit door. To be honest, I really did believe I was beyond this consumer-oriented mindset but envy has reared its ugly head too many times in my life.

Some of you may ask if it has become more than a job to help pay the bills? My Samaria (cf. Acts 1:8) is the Sam's Club in White Bear Lake, MN. The daily moments encountering the diverse population of its membership has stirred deep within me the need to step out and (standard Christian clique coming) see them through HIS eyes. I have no idea what that means except my selfish agenda needs to be replaced. Nothing earth-shattering . . . just the Holy Spirit breathing on my lukewarm heart.

This past December, I invited two of my fellow people greeters to "Hope for the Holidays" as their Christmas gift and they willingly accepted. It was so good to see them in the front row and then to visit with them afterward around the table about why Hope does this event every year.

Although I'm a "part-time" employee of Sam's Club, I'm a "full-time" representative of Jesus Christ! It's not enough for me to continue just being a believer! Lord, make me as uncomfortable as I need to be to get it!

So as I begin each new shift at Sam's (often weary from my day job at the EFCA National Office), my prayer will simply be "Continue to open my eyes, soften my selfish heart and push me to reach out in my 'Samaria.'"

### Editor's Note:

Thank you to Jason Van Tassel for designing the new Hope To Home masthead at the top of the page as well as Marlene Dolney and the Hope Communication Team for their support in launching the web newsletter.

### Things I'm Learning while working at Sam's Club

1. People want and need to feel appreciated.
2. People still are impatient and rude (but so am I).
3. Yes, Saturday is the busiest shopping day of the week.
4. You need to know how to draw a "smiley face" if you're thinking of becoming a Sam's People Greeter!
5. Although people are very different, they're also the same in many ways!
6. I'm not so sure I like living in the retail warehouse world.
7. People still can't believe they spend that much money on so few items.
8. It never seems enough for some folks! (Contentment is still a foreign concept to Americans).



## Five Finger Prayer

1. **Your thumb is nearest you.** So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."
2. **The next finger is the pointing finger.** Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. **The next finger is the tallest finger.** It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.
4. **The fourth finger is our ring finger.** Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
5. **And lastly comes our little finger** - the smallest finger of all which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

- Anonymous

## QUICKFACTS

According to a 2005 survey, most Americans—including children—spend at least nine hours a day watching TV, surfing the web, or talking on their cell phones. Of those hours, one-third of the time is spent using two or more of those media at once.

Breakpoint, 2009



## [Meet The ORTMANNS]

David, Gabriella, Sarah, Daniel and Laura

### Wedding day date and memories:

July 15, 1989 (in Warroad, MN)—20 year anniversary this year! We had beautiful designer programs printed up and then forgot to have them handed out! Singing to each other as part of the ceremony! No one from Gabriella's family was at the wedding (her father was in the hospital in Hungary at the time and died within a few months of our marriage). After a honeymoon in the U.S. and Hungary, we spent the next three months separated from one another due to immigration issues!

### Family facts:

4 of 5 family members are dual citizens (Hungary, USA) We've moved 15 times since we were married!

### Three words that best describe you or your family:

music, sports, faith

### Occupation:

David—Manager for US Bank (Information Technology); Gabriella—Gate agent (Mesaba Airlines)

### What do you do in your spare time to relax?

Run, read, listen to music, watch tv, play video games (kids)

### Favorite book/movie/CD:

David—Books by Tom Clancy, Robert Ludlum, Vince Flynn, Jack Higgins, David Baldacci; Gabriella—Jane Eyre (movie) Sarah—Tobi Mac (music); Daniel—Alex Rider series (books); Laura—High School Musical (this week!)

### Places you would most like to visit:

David—China, New Zealand, Australia; Gabriella—Anywhere as long as it's someplace new!

### Most memorable experience:

David—Being hit by lightning; Gabriella—1, the birth of our kids; 2, being escorted off a train by Hungarian secret service upon entry into Hungary after our wedding and then being interrogated and threatened (yep, a single bare light-bulb hanging from a cord and all!)

### Favorite family activity:

playing games together; vacations (particularly outdoor, active); bowling

### Commercial product you'd endorse:

David—Under Armour winter gear; Body Glide; Gabriella—How much will they pay me?

### Why do you worship at Hope?

Worship style and freedom of expression

### Favorite Bible verse:

Matthew 6:33

### Who has been your greatest inspiration?

Bill Taylor

### Volunteer activities:

At Hope: elder, adult education teacher, worship team, assist in nursery  
Other: KIA board members (Hungarian book publisher); occasional activities via US Bank and Hope or in our sub-division; assist teachers and coaches at our kids' schools.



## [Visiting the Forgotten]

*Serving with Missionary & Evangelism to Corrections (MEC)*

**Lori Michalski and Cheryl Lewis**

Since Chuck Colson founded Prison Fellowship in 1976, the country's prison population has risen from 300,000 to more than 1.5 million. Add in jail inmates, and we have a staggering 2.3 million people behind bars. That is only the tip of the iceberg. According to a recently released study by the Pew Foundation, one in 31 Americans—that's 7.3 million of us—are either in prison, in jail, or on probation or parole. Just 25 years ago, that figure was only 1 in 77.

Lori Michalski and Cheryl Lewis are two of Hope's newest prison volunteers. They are both excited to meet with women so zealous to read the Word and ask for prayer. Cheryl and Lori pray before they enter the prison walls and then let the Lord speak through them by presenting Biblical truths and applying them to the women's lives.

### Share your journey in becoming a volunteer for Ramsey County in their prisons.

*We have talked about this type of ministry for several years. The doors began to open for us after working out work schedules, phone calls and prayers. We had the privilege to be invited to a National Prison Re-Entry Conference in October 2007 in Minneapolis. What an exciting and humbling experience to begin our journey. Cheryl and Lori started jail ministry in May, 2008 at the Ramsey County Corrections Dept (RCCD) on Century Avenue in St. Paul. We meet twice per month for 1 1/2 hours and enter with our badges and Bibles.*

### Describe your time with the ladies every other Thursday.

*Our primary goal is to reach out to women who feel hopeless and helpless by presenting His love, His grace and His salvation through Jesus Christ alone.*

*We spend a hour and a half to two hours with the women in the afternoon. We ask them where they are spiritually if they want to share with us. We have met with women who are thirsty and hungry for the Word of God and admit to their hopelessness. They ask for prayers for their situations, along with their family concerns.*

*Singing worship songs and doing Bible studies are also included in our time. We use videos if they are allowed by prison officials. We like to hand out resources for aftercare and a list of churches in their area if interested. Cheryl and I have become support people and a source of light of Jesus in their dark place.*

*We have witnessed women coming to know the Lord as well as women who want to grow in their relationship with the Lord. Some of the women just come to be in a safe place and be with people who care about them and their families.*

### Organization you are affiliated with besides Ramsey County?

*We meet with the women through an organization called Missionary to Evangelism to Correction (MEC). Karen Selby is the contact person. MEC is involved in 23 Twin Cities jails. We have resources through Prison Fellowship and Christian Association for Prison Aftercare (CAPA). The women enjoy getting their own Bibles and we go through International Bible Givers led by Wally and Tiger Johnson. They are donation-based in helping supply Bibles to volunteers who work in the prisons.*

### Prayer Requests:

1. Each of the women have questions as well as many unspoken prayer requests
2. Lori and I as we present the Gospel when we are with them. We do that because we don't know if they will be there when we return.
3. The spiritual warfare battles that go on in the jails.
4. Our health issues.

### Praises:

1. God has given me the opportunity to see His awesome changing power working in the lives of these women. We are more alike than we are different. They teach us something every time we are there.
2. The little seed we plant will carry with them when they leave the county jail.
3. God has given me a special sister in Christ and awesome friend to do ministry together.

### Contact Information

If you have an interest in jail or prison ministry, feel free to call us:

Lori Michalski 651-399-3465 or Cheryl Lewis 651-748-0070

Karen Selby 651-408-1300 (home) or 651-208-1497 (cell)

MEC Fundraiser, Sunday, April 26, 6-8 pm, Lakes Free Church, Lindstrom, MN, \$10 tickets

Their web site is [www.mecjailministry.com](http://www.mecjailministry.com)

The contact for Prison Fellowship is Lois Severson 763-566-8121

How many Bibles  
Lori and Cheryl  
have handed out  
since May '08?

46

How many  
Volunteers in  
Corrections for  
Ramsey County?

250



### [My Life as a Worship Team Member]

Wendy Hawkins, Greg Thompson, Linda Melin, Rachel Streifel and Troy Burger

God has made us for worship and called us to live a life of worship. The church is to be full of worship and focused on the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Each week, we at Hope, are led into worship by a team of people who have chosen to be upfront (in spite of how their week turned out), still desire to lift their own expression of praise with the body of Christ and to pursue excellence in their craft. I've sought out the insights of several team members in describing "the life of a worship team member" here at Hope.

**Briefly explain your motivation for leading worship at Hope.**

*"I feel its part of God's plan for my life. He has given me the tools and desire so I feel I have to act on them."*

—Greg Thompson, Music Team, Vocals, 25 years

*"God has given me some musical ability and I believe I'd be wasting a gift if I didn't use it. I do feel satisfaction in doing what I do for the Lord and Hope."*

—Rachel Streifel, Music Team, Keyboards, 30 plus years (pre-Scott)

*"My motivation begins with my desire to use whatever gifts I have in a way that I enjoy. I have waited until my children were older and more independent so that I could have the time to invest in memorizing lines and going to practices."*

—Linda Melin, Drama Team, 2 years

*"For me - music seems to redirect my mind and heart to God. It pricks and prods my soul to reflect on His awesome power, strength in my weakness, truth of His Word . . . So I lead with the desire for others to encounter and see God in a very real and personal way, through the worship of a 'team'."*

—Wendy Hawkins, Music Team, Vocals, 8 years

*"I believe that worship is not a spectator sport by its very definition. It is a privilege and a blessing to serve the body of believers in this way."*

—Troy Burger, Drama Team, 8 years

**Share with us some of the steps you follow in preparing to lead worship on Sunday.**

*"I practice and pray about any decisions to make about music to play. I pray for God's help in my motives and performance as well as for the congregation to respond to the Spirit."*

—Rachel Streifel

*"For me as a drama team member it usually involves a lot of memorization but it also involves a search for the message in what we are presenting and praying for guidance in presenting the message well. Asking God to work through me and not trying to go 'solo.'"*

—Troy Burger

*"The obvious is the practice time on Thursdays, but the evening before I sing I try to have a quiet night at home to start focusing on the morning service."*

—Greg Thompson

**Share with us a few of the obstacles to personal and corporate worship.**

*"In being an upfront person, there is always the quandary of pride in excellence (performance) and humility of motive and Spirit leading. While the two (excellence and Spirit leading) are not mutually exclusive, there is a battle going on! The fact is we must be thinking of where we are in the order of worship, where we are in the song, following the leader, what the notes are, and what interlude comes next. It's sometimes very hard to hear what is really being said, the words of the song and truly hear what the Spirit is saying to me. This makes our preparation beforehand even more important."*

—Rachel Streifel

*"Mostly the day-to-day things in life that get in the way of focusing on Christ. We are just like the people we are leading."*

—Greg Thompson

*"Some of the obstacles to personal and corporate*

*worship for me are having a vision that is too horizontal and not very vertical. I need to put more of what takes place into God's hands and be the instrument to be used by him."*

—Troy Burger



**Whether you're on stage or off the stage, how do you worship well?**

*"By being prepared, being still or in reality by being uninhibited by what is around me. If we're talking about in the actual church service, I actually have a 'vision' that plays out in my head. Some Sundays it feels very real . . . as if it's actually taking place. I envision Christ, the King, literally sitting up in the sound booth. He's on a magnificent throne. There is purple shiny fabric rippling down from Him. His eyes are closed, his head is back and he's listening to all the sounds we are making, on instruments, with our voices and within our hearts. He is breathing it in very deeply - the fragrant offering of our praises. In my mind, He is so filled with joy. It's in those moments, I'm humbled to my core that He hears and takes delight in us!"*

—Wendy Hawkins

*"I worship well when the words that I say are in tune with my heart and my heart is focused on Jesus and what he has done for me."*

—Troy Burger

*"On days when I am open to the Holy Spirit, He speaks, whether I am up front or in the congregation."*

—Rachel Streifel

*"I pour out my heart the most when I am in my car with my worship music on. Just me and God!"*

—Greg Thompson

*"I worship well in a quiet atmosphere with the use of symbols, meaningful and thought provoking music, prayers and scripture readings. The Good Friday service is my favorite. However, I can worship God whatever the format. I try to come to any service with an open heart and mind to discover how I can listen to God and love Him in that moment."*

—Linda Melin

**Any closing thoughts on worshipping at Hope?**

*"Many Sundays I'm amazed at the way I'm led into the presence of God. This is why I go. I need to be a part of that group worship, that group entering into God's presence. Recently, I saw a picture of angel orbs floating across a congregation in worship. That is how I picture us. God is there. His angels are hovering over us listening and rejoicing in worship with us."*

—Rachel Streifel

*"I love to be a part of the whole message that is trying to be communicated in any given presentation. It seems like a true picture of the scripture describing the church like a body."*

—Linda Melin

*"I am indescribably humbled to serve with the most humble, serving people I've known. When Scott says 'For the King,' it is for no one else!"*

—Wendy Hawkins



# [Children's Ministry Update]

Katie Bliss



A few weeks ago, we had the Children's 'Communion Class' here at Hope. This is a class designed to teach kids why we take communion and what it symbolizes. It gives kids a chance to learn some of the history of Passover and about the last supper where the first communion takes place. More than anything, the class serves as a time to exercise the command of Jesus to "Remember Me." We talk about our need for the salvation He offers.

The best part of the class is nine interactive stations where parents lead children through Scripture reading, prayer, and an experience of some of the Holy Week events. They paint red paint around a door frame to symbolize the Passover event. They get to sample foods that may have been eaten in Jesus' time. My favorite station of all

is the foot washing station. At this station, parents are asked to serve their children by washing their feet. There is a short description explaining why this is an act of service, along with the scripture passage where Jesus tells us He washed feet to set an example for us. What an honor to humble ourselves and wash the feet of our children!

I enjoy leading and watching families participate in this class as it truly becomes a day and an experience where both parent and child have created a memory and learned together from the word of God.

Editor's note:

*Please continue to keep Katie and her volunteer staff uplifted in prayer.*

## Jesus

Here I am alone on my knees,  
begging for your love  
I'm scared, I don't know what to do  
but I feel that You are the only one I can turn to.

**Jesus**

I remember why You sacrificed your life for me  
It's because You love me more than anything.  
You died for me so I can live now  
To You, love is all I give.

**Jesus**

Every night and day, I pray to You  
because without You I wouldn't know what to do.  
2,000 years ago You died for me  
now I'm ready to leave.

**Jesus**

You stuck with me through thick and thin  
You even died for my sins  
Sometime I felt that I was alone  
but Your love for me was always shown.

**Jesus**

I'm here Lord inside of the boxing ring  
ready to fight my enemy  
just like You fought the devil for me  
Now I'm here facing my fears  
Sometimes when I have these fears,  
I don't even know if You're there.

**Jesus**

Our relationship has been strong Lord  
When we are together, we are like a giant sword  
One day Lord, I'll be face-to-face with you  
and when that day comes, I will never let go of You.

**Jesus**

I love You, Jesus  
I love the way You are inside of me  
because now I can actually breathe.

— Kyle Lewis

*I have three different kinds  
of convictions.  
We might think of them  
in this way:  
what I say I believe;  
what I think I believe;  
and what I reveal  
I really do believe  
by my actions.  
The best indicator  
of my true beliefs  
and my true purposes  
are my actions.  
They always flow out  
of my mental map  
about the way  
things really are.  
What I say I believe  
might be bogus.  
What I think I believe  
might be fickle.  
But I never violate my idea  
about the way things are.  
I always live in a way that  
reflects my mental map.  
I live at the mercy of my  
ideas about the way things  
really are. Always.  
And so do you.*

— Faith & Doubt  
John Ortberg





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**Bill Hamel**

**Efrem Smith**

**Music**

**Sarah Renner**

**and The Elements**

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# BOOKS

## Non-Fiction

Wild Goose Chase, Mark Batterson,  
Multnomah, 2008

Is Believing in God Irrational?, Amy Orr-Ewing,  
IVP, 2008

Don't Stop Believing, Michael Wittmer,  
Zondervan, 2008

The Sacred Echo, Margaret Feinberg  
Zondervan, 2008



## Fiction

BloodLines, Mel Odom,  
Tyndale, 2008

Dark Pursuit, Brandilyn Collins,  
Zondervan, 2008

Skid, Rene Gutteridge,  
Multnomah, 2008

Conspiracy in Kiev, Noel Hynd,  
Zondervan, 2008

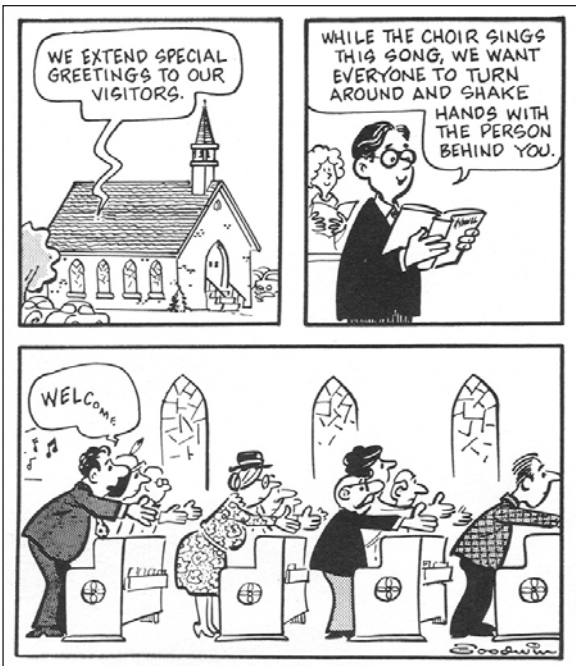
Full reviews are available at [titletrakk.com](http://titletrakk.com)  
or email [dale.lewis@efca.org](mailto:dale.lewis@efca.org)

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[efca.org](http://efca.org)

[LeeStrobel.com](http://LeeStrobel.com)

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