

The Orchestration of God

The Orchestration of God

by Sandie Vick

I was born into a family of musicians. Ever since I was a little girl, I've had the privilege of sharing music with others, whether playing trumpet in the band, piano in church and recitals or singing solos. But of all my musical experiences, nothing compares to singing in a choir.

Each time I participate in great works like Handel's Messiah, I am awestruck. My mind can hardly perceive the intricate process necessary to combine musical patterns - - spine-tingling harmonies balanced with beautiful melodies each supporting the other parts and all joining to conclude in a way that satisfies our very souls. At the same time, my heart cannot contain itself for the powerful words of Scripture giving profound meaning to the music.

As I now sit in silence, the impact of the music slowly fading, I realize the similarity of the orchestration of God in my life. Having recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, I began my journey, uncertain about many things, but willing to receive this from God's hand.

One particular day stands out in my mind. I had been struggling to adapt to my new medication, living one day at a time, all the while learning more about myself, this disease and God's faithfulness in the midst of it. It was Wednesday night and my husband had returned from work to pick me up for choir rehearsal. I hadn't sung since my diagnosis and I

was anxious for some encouragement from the group.

As I was hurriedly getting ready, Dale produced a package from a dear friend. "Oh how nice!" I gratefully acknowledged, "I'll open it when I get home." "No," he insisted. "Open it now." A burst of color appeared from the box in the form of a painting with teacups and at the bottom, the verse, "Be still and know



that I am God" Psalm 46:10. It was perfect; it not only matched my décor but also my heart and the process of walking with my Lord during this time in my life.

We went on to choir practice and sometime during rehearsal, the director asked someone to read a verse. Yes, that verse was Psalm 46:10, "Be still and know that I am God." Then, we combined those wonderful words with beautiful music and my heart was full.

A gift, a verse, a song... Coincidence? Chance? No, any one of these could have been deleted but I believe God orchestrated each of these three events to remind me, His child, that HE IS GOD.

The next time God reminds me, perhaps several times in a day, of His truth, I want to remember the tune, sing it, play it, live it and most of all offer it to my Master Conductor who has seen fit to include me in His Great Masterpiece!

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Disaster Checklist

- Uniforms** - Now would be a great time to order an extra VRM Yellow shirt or two. There is a lag time between ordering and the delivery of shirts. It takes 2 - 3 weeks for the shirts to be made. Therefore, ordering them at the time of a call out will make the shirts unavailable to you for immediate use.
- Credentials** - Please be up to date with your membership dues so that your photo ID badge will show that you are active and current with VRM. (Contact Dawn at the home office, if needed, to get your membership current)
- Deployment Bag** - Make sure you have a backpack packed with shirts, navy pants, ID Badge, Bible, Flashlight, sleeping bag, towel and bathing items. Make a note to be prepared to carry any medications you require and if you have a cell phone make sure you have your charger.
- Response Availability** - If possible please contact Edward Smith and let him know that you are wanting to be placed on a disaster response call out roll. This helps tremendously in the first phases of a Disaster Response Call Out.

Questions regarding the above, contact dawn@victimrelief.org

10-Year Anniversary Special Edition



RESPONDER

the

Reflections and Praise

by Gene Grounds, Founder of Victim Relief Ministries



As I write this message to you, my heart is full of amazement and emotion in reflecting on the past ten years of watching GOD at Work in and through the staff and faithful volunteers of Victim Relief Ministries. It was June 15th, 1999 at 2:00 p.m. when God called me to full time ministry to hurting people. I heard a Police Sergeant from Lockhart, Texas talk about a way for volunteers to gain access to Victims in order to meet their physical and emotional needs.

My purpose for being at that conference was to represent Texas Baptist Men's Prison Ministry, but God had another plan and purpose in mind. He placed

within me a haunting question begging to be answered, "Who is there for the victim when the police leave?" As I sat in that conference, the still, small voice of God whispered to me to take what I was hearing about response to victims and add the faith component. God showed me in that moment how volunteers could respond to the physical and emotional needs of victims, but there was an unmet need to be addressed. God spoke to my heart that if we would add the spiritual component, and take it to the Church for volunteers from the faith community to reach victims, He would bless it.

A new nonprofit organization, Victim Relief Ministries, was formed with Dr. Joe Mosley from Dallas Baptist Association agreeing to be our Chairman of the Board. Don Gibson from Texas Baptist Men, and others became board or advisory members. The most important part of the new organization however, was

the biblical basis for the ministry - the "Good Samaritan Parable" from Luke 10:25-37. Jesus commandment is the bedrock of this ministry, as through our Love for God, we can exhibit His love by "Loving our Neighbor."

I began to interact with Lt. Anthony Williams of the Dallas Police Department in response to crime victims. And today, over 1600 volunteers have been trained to become Victim Chaplains and Victim Crisis Responders operating in six of the top ten cities in America. We have expanded the deployment ministry to include Disasters, and since 2001 have deployed to over 75 critical incidents in America and internationally.

We see God at work in the touching stories of interaction with clients that affirm how God has used the yellow shirts to be good Samaritans. Our desire is to show the gos

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Victim Chaplain Corps

Victim Chaplain Corps

by Dale Vick, Chief Operating Officer



Who is there when the police leave? After the police leave the scene and complete their report, the victim is often in desperate need of help. The main bread winner is gone and now a mother is left with 4 children, what is she to do? Where is she to go for help?

For the last ten years, Victim Relief Ministries has strived to be the answer to that haunting question in meeting the needs of those left behind. And now, through the Victim Chaplain Corps Program, we are better able to be there in that immediate moment of need. This specialty team of Chaplains and Crisis Responders under the capable leadership of Chaplain Bob Grammer, Commander along with Deputy Commanders, Pat Thorpe and James Bradley is working with the Dallas Police Department to be there when the police leave.

Through a Grant we have been able to hire a full time Volunteer Coordinator, Chaplain Joseph Borsh, for a grant term that expires in August. We are thrilled to have him on board during this time. He is a trained counselor and ordained Chaplain and is responsible to recruit, train and deploy volunteers. He also coordinates all the ride alongs with the Dallas Police.



The team responds to incidents such as is described here. Recently the phone rang by my bedside at 1:30 a.m. "Dale,

this is Chaplain Bradley. I need you to assist me in a homicide response. When we arrived, we were surprised by the number of spectators, family members and friends who wanted to know what happened. Suddenly a scream came from the crowd and a woman dropped to her knees. Chaplain Sandie Vick rushed to her side and was able to give immediate comfort.

An officer on the scene said later that they would hear someone in the crowd begin to break down and start to cry and immediately they would see a Victim Chaplain move to the person and calm them down and give comfort. He stated that the three Victim Relief Ministries volunteers worked in a way which allowed the Officers to conduct their investigation and not have to stop and deal with crowd control. This officer was extremely impressed and appreciative of the work performed by the Victim Relief Chaplains.



As a result of law enforcement and Victim Relief working together at the scene, physical, emotional and spiritual support was available immediately for the family. Hence the reason the Victim Chaplain Corps Program of Victim Relief Ministries was established; to meet the victim at the scene and offer assistance through a "Ministry of Presence" and beyond!



Victim Chaplain Corps Leadership Team

Special Events

10-Year Anniversary Conference November 6-7

Living Ready
• to Journey...
• to Respond...
• to Impact...

Training Tracks:
16-Hour Basic Training Class
Track I Advanced Classes
Track II Advanced Classes

Look for registration brochure soon.

Featuring:
Dr. H. Norman Wright
Dr. David Park
Dr. Chance Freeman
...special music and more.



Clients Honored

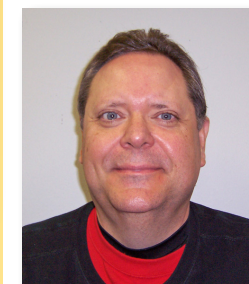
We are once again offering "GriefShare" as a support group for survivors of homicide. Twelve families completed the 13 week course last Fall and the comments they made about the effectiveness and improvement in their emotional and spiritual health through the support of VRM and the group have shown us the value of continually offering the class. Brenda McAfee, Director Client Services and Karen Easley, Victim Relief volunteer crisis responder and counselor, lead the group.

A new client was referred to us by a local church. Her son was murdered following the celebration of his 25th birthday. We were able to help her with funeral arrangements as well as other needs. Now, she is taking an active role as a sur-



vivor by seeking justice with law enforcement and Victim Service Advocates. She is shown here with Miss Texas 2006 and with Brenda McAfee from VRM at the Dallas County Crime Victims Ceremonies in April.

Volunteers Appreciated



Several Victim Relief volunteers were recognized at the city-wide event in April, including Barbara Fields and Stephen Price, for their work

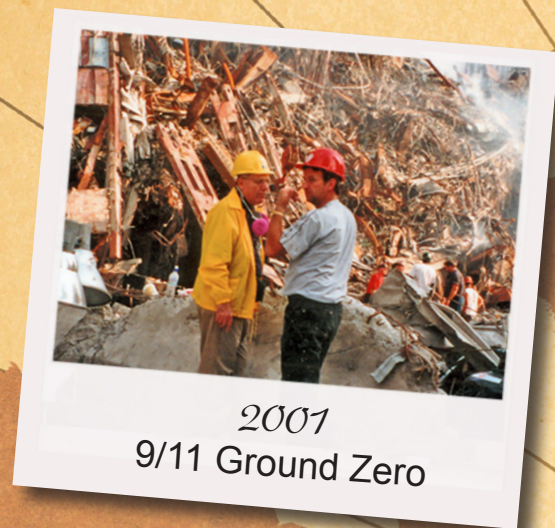
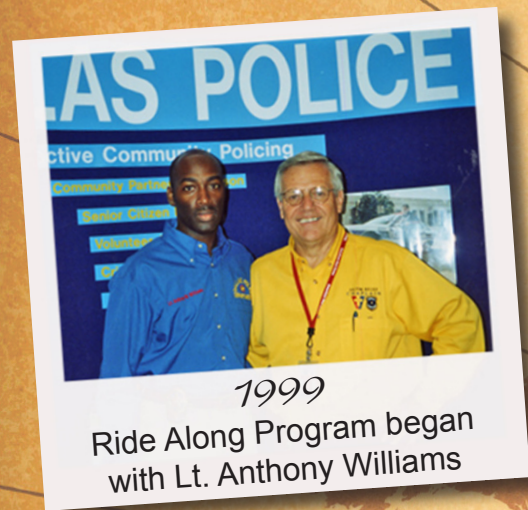
directly with victims of crime. We are very thankful for their dedication and service, and the countless hours of service to clients.



In addition, we want to give special recognition to L.S. Palmer for undertaking a monumental task in the Spring of completely cleaning out and organizing the warehouse in preparation for the next disaster. He worked tireless hours laying out the plan, installing shelving that he was able to get donated by Walmart, organizing, coordinating, driving the forklift and supervising those who served in the clean out process. Thank you L. S. It feels so good to walk into the warehouse and know what is where - a major blessing!



10 Years of Service



2009
10-Year
Anniversary!



"But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he felt compassion..." -Luke 10:37

Anniversary Disaster Readiness...

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pel through our service and love to hurting people. Thousands of lives have been impacted by the presence and touch of the wonderful volunteers who willingly go on a moment's notice to serve.

One client recently wrote "...thank you for the love and support you have given me. I thank God for your wife answering my call and Brenda for her unwavering support as well as the staff that came in and prayed with us. Now I know I can face all my fears. Words cannot express the relief that has come just by talking to someone who truly cares. Now we will witness how God will turn for good what the enemy hoped for evil."



Lt. Anthony Williams of the Dallas Police Department shared with us how his mother raised him using this slogan "Prayed Up, Mission Ready". We have adopted that for response readiness. The S.A.V.E. team name was created for us by Lt. Scott Whitten of the Dallas Police Department, and continues today to represent "Serving and Assisting Victims in Emergencies".

As the day draws near, unfortunately, the need for services to victims will increase.

But we know we are on a journey, in the ready position. I am filled with joy and anticipation in knowing the past is only the beginning of God's purpose for the future of this ministry.

God has recently brought us National leadership and management with Edward Smith as Deputy Executive Director and Director Disaster Response as a result of a grant provided by The Meadows Foundation. The need for victim services will continue and so our goal is to have a yellow shirt in every church, ready to respond to any crime or disaster victim as "Victim Chaplains" ministering to their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

Virginia and I are so thankful for every volunteer, financial partner, prayer partner; and of course, our faithful staff who carry the load of many. Thank you ALL for responding to God's call, and for being part of this incredible ministry which began ten years ago. May love abound as we continue to serve the LORD together.

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27



SAVE THE DATE!

.....
November 5, 2009
Radisson Hotel
Richardson, TX
7:00 PM
.....

We excited to announce our 10 Year Anniversary Celebration Special Event which will take place on November 5th in the Dallas area.

You don't want to miss this special event so mark your calendar now - November 5th.

Keep looking at our website for the latest information.

www.victimrelief.org

If you are unable to attend, sponsorships are appreciated. Please contact our office at (972) 234-3999 and speak with Virginia or Dawn.

Are You Ready to Respond?

by Edward Smith, Deputy Executive and Director of Disaster Response



Disasters, tragedies and catastrophes come in the guises of tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, fires, airline, car or bus crashes, famines, droughts and floods. The damage can be delivered by the power of nature, the blows of an assailant or the acts of terrorists. Whatever shape or size or method they arrive they will all leave behind a ground zero. A ground zero that can hold the debris of 100,000 homes, the headstones of hundreds of people, where empty spaces are created that can never be filled by the still missing person or persons, or the chalk outline that marks the end of a dream for a crime victim that lies just beyond the yellow tape. Sounds for help cry out from this spot.



A ground zero is the same huge, immeasurable, size for all those affected. Regardless if it is for the thousands or the hundreds or just the one victim or the victim's family or families that find them grieving and hurting in a broken circle that says- "WHY?" And knows life will never be the same again.

It is at that very place. At that Ground Zero, we as the Good Samaritans wearing the VRM yellow shirts need to be found serving in the name of Christ, the astounding and true Servant King for all those hurting and in need.

Are you ready to respond?

Eight years ago I arrived for basic training. Fresh off the attacks

of 9/11 I wanted to be able to respond to the needs of my fellow citizens of my nation. I took classes and deployed to mission after mission being willing to hand out bottled water at disaster sites, serve at prayer stations and deal with the raw emotions of people, walk alongside them in shelters, stand by the police at the yellow tape, serve as a logistics director, incident commander, operations commander, project director and now full time on staff.

The bottom line is that God moves among all of us. God can use all of us. As individuals all we have to do is make the decision to step forward with the willing heart of a servant and seek God's agenda rather than our own. If God can take someone like me that once sat on the "other side" of the training table and allow me to do the things listed above - he can do the same for each one of you. Because it is not about me, it is about the work of God through an individual life, any life that is willing.

I have watched hundreds of VRM volunteers interact with countless victims on many levels and in many different situations. Those encounters change lives and they will change yours. If you have not participated with Victim Relief Ministries, come join us at the 10 Year Anniversary Conference to receive training to equip you for response. If you are a volunteer who has served, we are counting on your presence at the conference to further equip you to continue to meet the needs of the hurting. My prayer is that you are "Mission Ready" and on call for God through VRM. And let's be a part of the next 10 years of serving those in need through service, through giving and through prayer!

So...Are you ready to respond... Following Christ the Servant King in serving those in need?



Following Christ into Ground Zero - He will calm the storm!

See "Disaster Checklist" on page 8.