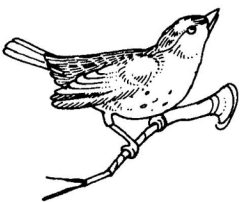


*Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?*

**Matthew 6:26** (NIV)

I went out for a walk this morning even though it was terribly hot. I like walking at the Mebane Arts and Community Center because the path is smooth, marked for distance, and I've walked it so much that I know it pretty much by heart. As I walk, I pray or think. Walking at a good pace this morning I had just gotten into my walk, when I turned slightly left clipping off the corner of the sidewalk and then I moved into the second leg of my now heating routine. As I made the left leaning movement, a mockingbird swooped across my path grazing the bill of the baseball cap I was wearing. I was so stunned that I stopped dead in my tracks and just stared at this grey and white, long tailed bird sitting at the base of the crape myrtle just off

the edge of the sidewalk.



walk.

I looked at the bird and the bird looked at me, as if to say, "How dare you not pay attention!" It took a moment for me to gather my wits after almost being run over by this small creature. My first thought was, "crazy bird!" After I collected myself and continued my now slowed walk, I felt the need to keep my head up and my eyes on the path ahead for any more 'sidewalk' hazards that might be in my way. As I walked I thought about why this bird might feel so inclined to come that near to me. I came up with a couple of ideas: maybe it was a mama bird and she was warning me to stay away from her nest; maybe she/he couldn't see very well and accidentally ran into me. Of course I find that reason hard to believe since I'm what . . . 100 times bigger than the bird. (Well maybe only 75 times. I do hate to think I'm that much bigger than anything. Vain, aren't I?)

One other reason occurred to me during my musings: maybe this bird really did have a message for me. What if, the message was that I should lift my head up

and pay attention to where I'm going? I was walking with my head down, looking at the sidewalk and my feet. I was missing the incredible beauty all around me; I was missing the journey. Yes, it was hot, but my difficult circumstances should never keep me from paying attention to the beauty around me. Another thought crossed my mind as I moved further down the path: maybe I need to keep my eyes on the path to ensure my steps are intentional and I'm going the right way. Up ahead the sidewalk had some slight lefts and rights, up and downs. Nothing major to worry about, after all I had walked this path many times and felt secure about my ability to maneuver those small adjustments with no problems.

Then it occurred to me: just because I had walked here before didn't mean that something unexpected (like a bird) had not entered the path up ahead. **Proverbs 4:26** reminds us, "*Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways.*"

Pastor *Judy*

## Young and Community and BEYOND!

August 2011

### Red Springs Mission Trip



Marian Farmer, Theresa Hooks and Margaret Robertson went to the NC Baptist Men's Camp in Red Springs, NC July 6 - 8. During their time there they bagged around 400 lunch bags (minus the sandwich) for 200 youth coming soon for Deep Impact, replaced shower curtains and cleaned light fixtures in the shower trailers for the youth, prepared fresh food for canning for use later on, and cleaned the floor, vacuumed and re-arranged

the furniture in the Commons area (large hall).

We had some great conversations with the managers of the camp, Larry and Teresa Osborne, while doing our tasks. During the evening hours we had a great time with others also at the camp.

*Hope next year additional ladies can go with us!*

