**Foreword**

A rewarding part of my life, as a minister’s wife, has been the privilege of meeting interesting people, mentoring some, and observing their spiritual growth.  Such has been the friendship that developed between Martha Dobson and myself.  From 1992 to 1998, six years, my husband, Dr. Edward L. Williams, served as pastor of the Landmark Church in Statesville, North Carolina.  During this time, though busy teaching French and English as a Second Language in the public school-system, Martha, with her husband Ben, faithfully supported the church with their time, talents and means. Prayer became top priority.

    When Women’s Ministries at the church voted Martha president, she won state honors for energetic, innovative, and creative projects.  She organized unique Bible studies, a variety of prayer ministries so that every church leader was prayed for each day.  At the end of the year, she held a prayer banquet acknowledging every pray-er.  Martha put out newsletters routinely encouraging and welcoming others to become part of the fellowship.

    Martha, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, along with Ben, the pastor, and the church council’s endorsement, began the project of adding a Prophet’s Room to their home for ministers and missionaries needing respite.  Though this project took several years to complete, it is a reality to the glory of God and proves to be a beautiful blessing.

    Martha and Ben, also with the church and Pastor’s Council’s approval, set up a scholarship fund in honor of the pastor and his wife.  That scholarship fund is very beneficial providing assistance for college students.

    In her earlier teaching career, Martha taught overseas; however, her first mission trip was to Europe with a team from the Statesville church.  With much prayer and preparation, the Lord began mission ministry that has become Martha’s calling.  Her short-term mission trips include traveling with the Jewish Voice Ministry to Ethiopia, working with a team teaching women’s conferences in Uganda with Pastor Robert Kaahwa, ministering with a group in China, ministering with Pastor Hudson and a team in Ecuador, being part of a prayer team to the Middle East, and partnering with teams who make prayer their mission in Israel.  Israel has become an integral part of Martha’s prayer ministry. At this time Martha also is studying Hebrew.

          Between mission trips, Martha teaches Bible classes and continues prayer ministries at Landmark.  Sometimes it takes a lifetime to fulfill the purposeful plan God has for a person’s life. Sometimes a person learns to pray by hearing others pray. Sometimes a person is encouraged to believe for healing when an encourager, full of faith, prays with her. Sometimes a person is waiting for someone to share the Good News of Jesus and pray with her to receive Christ as Lord and Savior. Ministry to others, for Martha, is as natural as breathing.

          Martha is an example of an encourager; for even in her busy schedule, she faithfully prays for my personal prayer requests and health issues during my senior years.  I treasure her prayers and friendship, and find joy in the Lord for her spiritual growth of being a woman full of faith, full of the Holy Spirit in ministry.  Special thanks to Martha for writing and sharing so that others may Be Encouraged.

—Irma B. Williams