

Lives of Fragrance

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2 Corinthians 4:14-17



Jo Roberts has shared some thoughts and ideas with us on how the Lord has led her into different areas of service. As a new member of TBC, she has actively looked for ways to serve the Lord and the TBC body, for which we are very thankful!

Where He Leads, I will Follow

Jo Roberts

Happy New Year! It's always hard to believe how quickly time continues to pass, and here we are in 2025 at the start of a new year. I tend to begin the new year with a focus on how I can improve my relationship with God and others, as I'm sure many of you do. I plan to focus on my study habits, spend more time in the Word, and continue to grow my relationship with the Lord. Continue to be in prayer daily: who knows, the Lord could be calling you for something new this year. I encourage you to listen and watch for where He may lead you next.

As for myself, the Lord has been pulling some strings within my heart in a new and exciting way. Justin Ennis and I will begin meeting in the 10-40 cafe starting January 5th with a new TBC Sunday School class for young adults called Connection. I truly believe that having a faithful community of God-fearing people is one of the most important things that has helped me continue to grow my relationship with the Lord. I am so excited to grow in faith, grow in ministry, and grow in God's love with this new class. I feel so incredibly blessed that God has placed me here to be able to experience this new beginning for our church.

One other thing I've really enjoyed, coming into this new year, is having the pleasure to host an online accountability group for young Christians who want to grow their faith. This all started with wanting to develop a more intentional faith-filled life for myself by looking at my habits, and quickly morphed into finding a group of 20+ people wanting a way to develop a community to talk, pray for each other, and hold each other accountable for being in the Word.

What's New

January

Happy New Year's Day! January 1st

TBC Women's Bible studies begin the second week of January. Information and registration are available online at tulsabible.org.

Our group has committed to reading one chapter of the Bible every day to grow their faith and deepen their relationship with the Lord. The number of individuals has also grown to over 100, so I am confident that the Lord will use this as an opportunity to open my eyes, draw me closer to Him in prayer, and lead me deeper in my faith.

This is just another example of how our glorious Lord uses us in surprising, unimaginable ways! I pray that I am always able to help lead people to Christ in whatever endeavors I may have. Regardless, I rest in the knowledge that God has a plan for me and for all of you. I wish you all a blessed start to 2025, and encourage you to deepen your relationship in the Lord even further.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Recipes

Sharon Cole

Homemade crackers

Sharon states, "These homemade crackers are delicious and nutritious. I know exactly what's in these soup-worthy crackers."

- 1 c. plain flour/all-purpose flour (plus extra for rolling out)
- ¼ tsp cooking salt (kosher salt)
- 1 tbsp white sesame seeds
- 1/3 c. water (regular tap water)
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp white sesame seeds
- ½ tsp salt flakes
- Olive oil spray

Mix dry ingredients, make a well, stir in wet ingredients. Divide in half, roll out 3 mm=1/8-inch thick. Transfer to paper, sprinkle with sesame seeds and flakes, roll to 2 mm=1/12th-inch. Cut into 5 cm/2-inch pieces, transfer to tray, spray with oil. Bake 12 minutes, rearrange to color evenly, bake 8-10 minutes until light golden.



Everything Bagel Sourdough Focaccia Bread

Sharon says, "I love baking fresh bread. It's comforting and delicious."

- Sourdough starter
- Water
- Raw honey
- Unbleached bread flour

Mix 100 g. sourdough starter and 500 g. warm water. Add 25 g. raw honey. Stir. Add 500 g. unbleached bread flour and 10 g. Himalayan pink salt. Mix well. Cover and let sit 1 hour. Pull and fold 8 times. Cover and let sit till doubled in size.

Gently move dough to a 10 x 8-inch pan that has 2 tbsp olive oil in it. Turn dough in the oil. Cover and let sit until doubled in size. Add any flavorings now. Mash into the dough. Preheat oven to 425°. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Note: If you have questions about sourdough starter or baking, ask Sharon.

Thankfulness and Praise

It can be easy to look back at the past year and become discouraged, looking to the New Year as an escape from what has been; however, Sharon invites us to intentionally reflect on God's blessings in the past year by weekly writing down a blessing or answer to prayer and collecting them in a jar to be read at the close of the year as a joyful reminder of our Lord's faithful care.

A Worthy Resolve

Karen Krueger

At the conclusion of each year, we celebrate the Nativity of Christ; it is a high point of wonder and awe at the Incarnation. We cherish family gatherings centered around Christmas traditions.

But as we step into the new year, we are faced not only with the reality of daily life and its challenges, but also with the uncertainty of the coming twelve months. We do not have a recipe for the coming year to assure us that if we follow directions and add ingredients in the exact recommended proportions, we will have a delicious or happy result.

A popular way to begin the new year, hoping for good results, is to make resolutions which are designed for self-improvement. Making resolutions may cause us to take a few moments for introspection about our behavior or habits; while giving us a goal, resolutions often do not take into account the root of the problem — our hearts. This year, prioritize time in God's Word and in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of sin and idols of the heart. God is faithful to answer that prayer; He continues to work in our hearts so that He is preeminent.

Charles Spurgeon, shortly before his death, spoke in January of 1892 about what he resolved to see in the coming year:

I see a highway cast up by the foreknowledge and predestination of God. Nothing of the future is left to chance; nay, not the falling of a sparrow, nor the losing of a hair is left to haphazard; but all the events of life are arranged and appointed. Not only is every turn in the road marked in the divine map, but every stone on the road, and every drop of morning dew or evening mist that falls upon the grass which grows at the roadside. We are not to cross a trackless desert; the Lord has ordained our path in his infallible wisdom and infinite love... I see, next, a Guide provided, as our companion along the way. To him we gladly say, 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.' He is waiting to go with us through every portion of the road... Beside the way and the Guide, I perceive very clearly, by the eye of faith, strength for the journey provided... One thing more, and this is brightness itself: this year we trust we shall see God glorified by us and in us.

We have assurance that God has planned our days, that He will be with us and strengthen us, and that by his grace our lives will bring glory to Him! Trust his plan, his promise, and his provision, knowing that his presence is always with us. 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 (ESV) states, "To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." Step into 2025 with joyous trust in God!

Lives of Fragrance is a publication of the Women's Ministries of Tulsa Bible Church. For corrections, comments, or written contributions, please email fnewsandviews@gmail.com.

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