



My journey:

Mom's letter

By Suzanne King

My husband and I are honored to be a part of MX9 — the Assemblies of God's endeavor to plant 1,000 new churches by the end of 2009 — and to serve as church planters in Cabot, Ark. Many exciting miracles have occurred along the way to the launch of our church plant. Little did I know that God had orchestrated amazing events throughout my life that would bring about a very personal miracle for me.

As Bryan and I prepared for our



Suzanne King (right) with her mom, Wanda Culbreth

church's preview service, we found our days filled with the kind of stress that only a church planter can understand. We had completed all of the strenuous tasks required for a successful church plant: *raising funds*, church planting boot camp, an assessment, developing strategies, *raising funds*, gathering resource tools, networking and *raising funds*. All of the planning and resource coordination should culminate with a successful preview event.

The days before the preview service brought a whole new set of stressors to me personally. The person I had depended on most of my life was not around — my mother.

She and my dad had been involved in full-time ministry in the Assemblies of God in Arkansas. My mom was my biggest fan, my cheerleader and my go-to person. She was diagnosed with a very rare cancer in August 2005. Eight months later, in April 2006, she went to heaven.

I wanted to hear some encouraging words from Mom about our upcoming service. No one else's words

would suffice. I needed her desperately. I cried. I prayed. I begged God to just let me hear from her. Even a dream about her would ease my fear. *If He is a God of the miraculous, I wondered, and I know He is, why can't I have my mom when I need her the most?*

I knew God is a big God. He provided us with a free sound system, a new truck, a great location to rent, an awesome worship leader and a great launch team. All of these needs He had met, and yet I could not be consoled just days before our preview service. I just needed to hear from my mom that everything was going to be OK.

I am a registered nurse working the night shift on a busy medical-surgical unit, the mother of a 4-year-old son, and a pastor's wife for a new church plant. I needed my mother!

The preview service arrived. Many new families from the Cabot area attended, and at least one individual received Christ as Savior. Bryan spoke on dreaming big dreams because God is a big God.

"Ask God for something big," he said, "and He will provide." Little did I know that my big request to God was about to be fulfilled.

The next night we went to my sister's house where my dad's new wife, Patti, had prepared dinner for us. When we arrived, my dad gave me a folded pink piece of paper.

Dad had recently gone through some boxes that had been stored in a closet after my mom's death. One had some cardboard stackable shelves with copier paper of various sizes. When he was about to throw the copier paper out, he noticed a pink piece of paper folded up inside.

It was a handwritten note to me from my mother!

As I began to read, I slumped to the floor and cried like a baby. The letter was short and not even finished, but it contained those words of encouragement from her that I needed to hear the most. She talked about how very proud of me she was and that God had big plans for me to work alongside Bryan in ministry. How amazing!

My dad was curious about how an unfinished letter found its way into the copier paper supply. I knew! I knew exactly what this letter was all about and its purpose in my life at this exact moment.

About 10 years earlier, when Bryan and I were youth pastors at El Dorado (Ark.) First Assembly of God, my mom was the guest speaker for a mother-daughter banquet at Sheridan (Ark.) First Assembly. Mom ended her session by passing out pink stationery with instructions to both moms and daughters to write each other a letter of encouragement and seal it up. She told us to hold the letter and send it at a time when we thought it would be really needed.

I took very good care of my letter to Mom and mailed it a few weeks later. I anticipated the arrival of her letter to me on many occasions. It never came. I was actually kind of angry that she never sent the letter. After a while, I assumed she forgot about it or lost it. I never said anything about it to anyone.

When Mom died, I carefully looked for the letter in her desk and among her things. I never told anyone how disappointed I was that I could not find it.

My mom did exactly what she was supposed to do with that letter. She sent the letter precisely when I needed it the most. I am not sure what she can see and know about my life here on earth, but I do know that she is busy about her Father's business.

God cares about the little things in life that we need. In the midst of all the great miracles God had done in order for our church to begin, He did something special just for me. I needed to hear from my momma, and I did! **tpe**

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Editor's note: Send your 1,000-word, first-person My Journey article for consideration for publication to tpe@ag.org.

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