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Episode 2 -- GOD SPEAKS!

By Ed Simmons, Jr. (Patch Poster) - (<http://patch.com/users/ed-simmons-jr>) August 4, 2013 7:32 pm ET
(<http://my.patch.com/article/17048664/edit>)

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By Edgar Littlefellow

“EEEEKKK! A mouse!” Kay cried. “Dear God! Don’t let it run up my legs!”

There I stood on my four paws in the pastor's study, Pentecost Sunday. I was a mere field mouse tiny on the carpet too frozen with fear to dash back to my mouse hole. On the couch Kay Barnes had jerked her feet up in horror. She's British, very proper and director of missions. Rev. Keary Kincannon towered over me

"Step on it, Keary!"

I shuddered attempting to plead but all that came out was "Squeak! Squeak! Squeak!"

"How awful! Trounce upon it!"

Though I'd been incapable of speaking human words, God in all His Glory heard my squeaks.

"Relax, Kay," said the pastor. "He's a field mouse. Only house mice run up ladies' legs."

I was saved! Then came a rush of wind. I blinked my beady eyes astonished to see a miniscule tongue of flame appear over my head. Suddenly two human words popped out. "Fear not!"

The two people jumped. Deep within I heard a gentle voice. "*Get thee back to thy mouse hole and await further orders.*"

Scrambling inside, I peeped out. I saw Kay slowly lowering her feet. "Good heavens, Keary. Did you hear that wee thing speak?"

"I certainly did. God has sent Rising Hope many blessings but what could be his purpose in sending a talking mouse?"

"Well I'm not so sure a talking mouse is a blessing. What if hundreds more arrive?"

Again I heard the voice. "*Tonight Pastor Keary will leave his laptop open upon his desk. Thou shalt teach thyself to type. Then thou shalt start a blog on the Mount Vernon Patch and let the community know all about Rising Hope. For I am well pleased with this mission church. I am also well pleased with the many churches and benevolent individuals who support its mission to aid The Least, The Lonely and The Left Out.*"

I taught myself that night. Using all four paws on the letters and my tail to hit the space bar I found I could dance over the keys leaping, twisting, jumping and everything came out spelled right. Again came the voice. "*Now goest thou and snoop around!*"

In the days that followed I explored twisting passageways through the walls. I bored a hole into The Milk And Honey Food Pantry in the basement. I observed people coming for free food. Many looked anxious and fretful. I got a peek at Sarah Heckman's monthly report. She's the church secretary and coordinator of the pantry. I was astonished to learn that each month representatives of over 300 families come for food for over 900 people. Over the last quarter she's had 120 new people, 34 new families in all. I introduced myself causing her to leap out of her chair. After she

calmed down we chatted. Then, making me promise not to gnaw into things she gave me a dozen roasted peanuts to take back to my mouse hole. It took several trips. I piled up nine behind the electric wiring for midnight snacks and ate the rest. Delicious!

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Again burrowing through the walls I bored a hole into Mary Hamilton's office. She's coordinator of community ministries and a busy person she is! Over 300 people a week visit The Rags To Riches Clothes Closet for free clothes. That's a bunch of people! I also learned she and Venisa McCormick listen, talk and pray with distressed people, as many as 25 a week. That's a lot of distress! A lot of prayers! They give bus tokens, metro cards. They organize daily chapel services followed by hot meals. Over the past month they've helped 17 people get sleeping bags, suitcases. They help also with furniture, appliances, toiletries, emergency housing assistance, financial assistance, social services referrals. It makes my "wee" head spin!

From Mary I learned of the good deeds of Emma and Guillermo Barbosa from Keller Williams Real Estate. I learned about Trinity United Methodist Church providing a hot lunch for 60 or more on Sundays. About the youth of Redwood UMC in Rocky Mount, Virginia who visited for two days and conducted the chapel service. About June food drives organized by Fairlington UMC, Christ Church youth, St. Stephens UMC. Such godly generosity!

Then came a wonderful surprise. Mary gave me a miniature Bible that came from a doll house she had when she was a little girl. Clutching it I scampered back to my mouse hole. I decided to learn a verse every night. The first was...

"Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these, ye have done it unto Me."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

You are invited to snoop around Rising Hope too! Drop by Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to noon and introduce yourself. Ask for a tour! Volunteer! Donate! Or just visit! Worship at our Noon Chapel Service and stay for lunch!

You are also invited to come to our Open House on Sunday, Sept. 8 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Then for an evening of dinner and dancing and helping with God's work at the same time come to our Fall Gala on Friday, Oct. 4 from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. at The Waterford in Springfield. Tickets are \$100 and can be ordered online at RisingHopeUMC.org.

And, if the Spirit moves you, host a dinner party to benefit Rising Hope. Rev. Kincannon will attend to tell about Rising Hope's mission.

And also! Don't bother washing your car because the ladies of Rising Hope will wash it for you! Saturday, July 27, from 8:00 a.m. to noon, in the Rising Hope parking lot!

Rising Hope Mission Church

A United Methodist Congregation

8220 Russell Road, Alexandria, VA, 22307

703-360-1976

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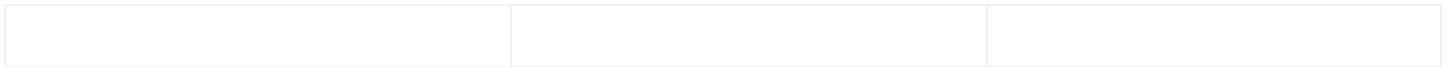
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