

A Gift to Remember...



And so it begins...my life as Mrs. Richards! You would think after spending a week on a honeymoon that my story this month would definitely be about that, but it's not. Maybe next month! See, I have never planned this article ahead of time- I kind of sit here and let the words come to my fingertips. Sitting here today, with fingers anxiously waiting above the keyboard, the only thing that comes to mind is gratitude.

In my life, I have tried to live by specific promises to God. One of these promises is to give all that I can to those who need it. And yes, I am sure sometimes I get taken advantage of, but that's between them and God. I don't require much to be happy, and I have never prayed for more than the ability to take care of my family and to let them have healthy and happy lives. Ok, so once in a while I pray to win the lottery, but that seems to be going nowhere! I don't crave riches, notoriety, beauty or popularity. I have always felt like the girl with just a few friends and I have been fine with that. I didn't realize how blessed I was...until the wedding.

So many people made this day possible for Brad and I. We were definitely on a tight budget, so I planned on doing everything from flowers to mashed potatoes myself. I looked for bargains, hunted for coupons, and glued floral arrangements most nights until well after midnight. I was becoming exhausted. The list kept growing, and I began to worry I would be running down the aisle on my wedding day with my hair in curlers and an apron on! Then, one by one the tasks got smaller- people started insisting on helping. Kathryn Jones took the worry of the food preparation and serving off of my plate, and put it on hers. Charles ran for the chicken. Ron and Carol Schupp made sure I had enough seats and tables, and Carol not only helped with preparation to the wedding, but on my wedding day made sure she was there, running back and forth before it started, to make sure I didn't need anything at the last minute. Spencer Fricke loaned me a friend, Les, who took on the task of cooking and preparing some of the food. Sam Quint and a friend of hers made sure the reception area was ready to go, and then helped keep the food

stocked during the dinner. Darin Starr made the arch, and his wife Julie took the pictures and ran a million errands. Julie Hoffmeyer gifted me with a bridal luncheon. My daughter Destiny arrived and helped with food preparations and last-minute errands. Torey not only choreographed a dance routine for my wedding, but kept me sane the hours leading up to the ceremony- not an easy task. Donna Smith played, and played, and played (I was late due to a dress mishap). Kay and Abbey Wise provided the vocal solos. My mother shopped, glued, sewed and ironed for months with me! Several more



helped in the preparation- more helped clean up after the celebration. The entire ceremony and reception was so beautiful for me, mostly because I realized it was only possible because of the help from friends. I am still overwhelmed and humbled at the blessings we received during this special time for us, and I can't help but feel like the luckiest girl in the world.

All this time I thought I was the one being the giver. I didn't stop to see how much was being given to me. Now, I will never forget it.

Learning and leaning, Hope

Upcoming Sermons

- May 31 "Trinitarian Doctrine: Family, not Dogma" (*Trinity Sunday*) Romans 8:12-17
- June 7 "Hide-and-Seek in the Garden" Genesis 3:8-13
- June 14 "Jesus' Mysterious Parables" Mark 4:26-34
- June 21 "Building a Better Father" (*Father's Day*) Ephesians 6:1-4
- June 28 "Answering the Call" Ezekiel 2:1-5