

Parmeleeesâ€™ triple treat: Jesus, music & drama

March 3, 2007
Posted: 3/02/07

Parmeleees' triple treat: Jesus, music & drama

By Leann Callaway

Special to the Baptist Standard

KILGORE—Who would have thought God would take a Southern Belle from Dixie and a Yankee from New Jersey, lead them to each other deep in the heart of Texas, and call them to minister around the world?

That's exactly how God worked in the lives of Glenn and Karla Parmelee.

The husband-and-wife team entertains audiences in a variety of unique settings while sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

Glenn and Karla Parmelee

The Parmelees perform at 200 events each year, and they serve as worship leaders at First Baptist Church in Kilgore.

They have entertained at the Baptist General Convention of Texas'

Epicenter Conference, LifeWay Christian Resources' Fall Festival of Marriage, women's ministry events, worship services, youth camps, singles' retreats, community outreaches, church banquets and drama workshops.

While growing up, music and drama played an important role in both of their lives.

"My dad was a preacher, and my mom was a music teacher, so at a very early age, I learned to love Jesus and love music," Karla Parmelee said. "I started singing when I was 3 years old, began taking piano lessons at 5 and became the church pianist when I was only 11 years old."

Glenn Parmelee started playing drums as a toddler—banging on pots and pans in the kitchen. He went on to play drums for musical groups while also studying theater.

"I grew up in a Christian family, and my parents were a positive influence in my life," he said. "Because of their nurturing, I had opportunities to fellowship with other Christians at a young age."

He recalls attending a Christian camp in Georgia. "During an invitation, the speaker asked if anyone present would like to become a 'soldier for the Lord,' and I raised my hand," he said. "All the kids surrounded me and prayed for me."

Years later, he prepared for ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, where he joined a drama troupe, The Company.

"During this time, I met the greatest gift God has given me outside of salvation, my wife, Karla," he reported.

As a platform for their drama and music ministry, the Parmelees created [Tender Heart Ministries](#). Their ministry is based on Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in

Christ God forgave you.”

“Our ministry allows us to be goofy during one sketch and serious in the next,” she said. “The audiences are wonderful. They share their laughter and their heartaches with us. We’ve even had people ask us if we had hidden a camera in their house or car, because they could see themselves so much in the sketch.”

The Parmelees are amazed and humbled at how God uses them to minister to others.

“Through God’s mercy and grace, he saw fit to call me into this ministry,” she said. “Over the years, my understanding of that call has grown as my abilities and wisdom hopefully have grown as well. God can take a yielded, obedient heart and do much for the kingdom.

“He also gave me the heart to become a counselor and teacher. ... God has opened doors for this ministry that I never dreamed possible. We’ve had the opportunity to minister to pastors and chaplains, to feel their burdens and hear the cry of their hearts.

“Sometimes, it just helps to listen, and sometimes, we have cried with them. Other times, they just need a good laugh, and we are happy to be the source of their laughter.”